

Community Based Planning Process

Martin Ray Reilly Park, Fresno CA

1) List 5 to 10 tips for other agencies about your entire process involving residents for the park's design. In other words, what were the "key ingredients for your recipe"?

1. Partner with others: Area schools, non-profit organization or consultant to coordinate meeting
2. Schedule meetings in areas convenient to the public. Martin Ray Reilly meetings were held at schools, neighborhood recreation centers, and with CBO's.
3. Provide food or snack and childcare if possible. Free hot dogs at the park were provided for MRR session at future park site.
4. Address language concerns early: Publish bilingual notices, post on multilingual community bulletins, and provide headphones for translation service as needed.
5. Make it easy for residents to provide feedback: Conduct brief survey, use "kid friendly" symbols to identify priorities, and provide translators.

2) What were the most effective outreach/invitation methods used to notify residents of the opportunity to design their park? (what got the best results in terms of residents showing up?)

Working directly with the schools and sending multilingual (English/Spanish/Hmong) notices home with the students. The meetings with the most participants were held at the schools near the proposed park site.

3) What were the most memorable moments?

Having 90+ residents participate in a community meeting, and voicing their concerns of what they wanted to see in the park. The translation service provided a voice to the "voiceless" and they were empowered. At many meetings we often see the NIMBY's show up, but here the community has been very supportive of the construction of a new park. Additionally, a key memorable moment was the actual groundbreaking ceremony. It is very unusual for kids to hold the golden shovels during the groundbreaking, yet here again Council Member, Clint Olivier encouraged the children to hold the shovels, a symbolic gesture of all of the community involvement that led to the construction of this new park for the children in the community.

4) What surprised you?

Residents were eager to participate at every level. From the immediate residents who feel the park will be a big amenity to the neighborhood, to the school parents who are prepared to help plant trees as needed. Even when an "outside agitator" came to protest that the park was built next to the highway and the air quality would be bad at this park site, the community stood their ground on the need for the park.

5) What would you do differently?

The City would not change the process. It has been very rewarding to see the community involvement, and we cannot wait for the park dedication to invite them to their new park.

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City of Fresno

Parks, After School, Recreation and
Community Services (PARCS) Department

Community Based Planning Process—Meet People Face-to-Face



Council Member and City staff present the location of the new park site.



PARCS staff present aerial map for residents to provide feedback.

Seniors listen to presentation on new park site and voice concerns about lighting and including a walking path.



Mr. Martin Ray Reilly's grandchildren (bottom right) join community children with gold shovels at park groundbreaking. Council Members Clint Olivier and Paul Caprioglio are in the back row along with City Manager, Bruce Rudd. This was most symbolic of the community involvement for this park.

MARTIN RAY REILLY PARK COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS



Area residents meet at proposed Park site to discuss future development plans.



Council Member Clint Olivier (right) invited public to free hot dogs at park site.



Community used “kid friendly” symbols to identify future location of park amenities.



Residents responded to brief survey about amenities they would like to see at new park.