



**SoCAL
EARTH**

SoCalEarth.org Community-Based Planning Rating System



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Rate projects, yourself, your elected leaders, or your local planning system on a scale of 1 (Fully Technocratic Planning) to 5 (Fully Community-Based Planning).

1. Inclusion

Exclusivity

Decisions are made before public input stages/public input is ineffective. Co-option of community voice for project approval but no real or meaningful community engagement. Exclusion is cemented through inaccessible language.

Inclusivity

Ensures that all members of a community have the opportunity to be involved in the decision making process (collaborative decision-making).

1

2

3

4

5

2. Approach

Top-Down

Dismissal of community members based on technocratic determinations of 'expertise' and often overrepresentation of developers.

Bottom-Up

Begin project approval with community. Starting with individual micro components and utilizing them to construct a larger system that accounts for smaller pieces.

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3. Culture

Cultural Contempt

Disregard for cultural values, knowledge, and historical connection to land. Privatization of natural resources and displacement of human and ecological communities.

Culturally Appropriate

Taking into consideration the cultural values of community members to ensure that the final result reflects something appropriate and respectful to all, including linguistic inclusion.

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4. Equity

Unequitable

Divide between deserving and undeserving human communities. Disregard of long-term climate, equity, health, environmental, or other issues.

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Equitable

Ensuring that community needs are met in both the short and the long-term and promoting resilience.

5. Strategy

Single Loop

Unquestioned assumptions based on archaic views of society drive the planning process, neglecting cumulative impact, boundary crossing, or climate change. Plans created that are harmful to or not valued in resident communities, and lack resilience in the face of pressure or change. Oversimplifies or ignores societal, environmental, and equity complexity that accompanies project planning.

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Double Loop

The planning process continuously evolves with the introduction of new knowledge and conditions. Challenges assumptions and continually refines planning process based on the needs of those who the outcomes will affect and based on new inputs or information. More resilient in the face of pressure or change. Recognizes complex societal, environmental, and equity problems that accompany project planning.

6. Embeddedness

Separate

Planning is divorced from community knowledge and relationships. Neglects the expertise of community residents about the sociocultural aspects of neighborhood and can lead to co-option of community voice. "Orthodox planning relies on stakeholder engagement in controlled spaces." - Jonathan Pacheco Bell

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Embedded

Embedded planners prioritize street-level engagement by collaborating with residents in public spaces and getting to know community members personally. "We cannot plan from our desks." - Jonathan Pacheco Bell

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING RATING CALCULATION

Calculate your Community-Based Planning rating by adding your total rating score and dividing by the total number of questions (6).

Total Score: _____

Total Questions: _____

Average Rating: _____

If your average rating is:

- **Less than 2.33: Mostly Technocratic Planning** - In technocratic planning, knowledge is in the hands of 'experts' (politicians, consultants, developers, etc.). Community voice is box checking and a technical requirement in the planning process. Focuses on efficiency, profit, and financial gain. The type of planning you are seeing bolsters Wall Street instead of Main Street. Meets the letter of the law while ignoring the spirit of the law. No meaningful community engagement.
- **Between 2.33 - 3.66: Mixed Community-Based / Technocratic Planning** - In the mixed approach of community-based and technocratic planning, the focus leans towards community involvement while valuing expert insights. This method ensures community voices are not just heard but integrated, alongside the efficiency and knowledge of experts. The goal is to honor the spirit of community engagement, with a nod to the technicalities of professional planning. While it's a step towards inclusivity, this mixed model still aspires for a greater push towards full community-based planning, continually seeking to enhance community influence within the planning process.
- **Greater than 3.66: Mostly Community-Based Planning** - In community-based planning, full consideration and inclusion of communities is paramount to the planning process. Community knowledge is considered expert knowledge. Community is integrated into decision making and project approval early and often. The community-based planning you are seeing bolsters Main Street instead of Wall Street, enacting the spirit of the law to provide meaningful community engagement.