

Project-Based Engagement

Building Public Trust through Transparency + Participation

AGENDA

1

Starting Points

What is Project-Based Engagement + why is it needed?

2

Overview

What does MTC's process entail and and what are our goals?

3

Key Considerations

What's MTC's role in this process and at what level are we involved?

4

Case Study

Where has MTC seen success running this process already?

5

Measuring Success

What are some possible metrics for a project-based engagement process?



WHAT DOES MTC MEAN BY PROJECT- BASED ENGAGEMENT?

The process by which MTC **communicates, informs, and invites** community members into various neighborhood projects while building a seamless process for project leads that is predictable and productive.



WHY DID MTC DEVELOP THIS STRATEGY?

Purpose:

Facilitate transparent, inclusive, and collaborative process that actively involves community members

Goals:

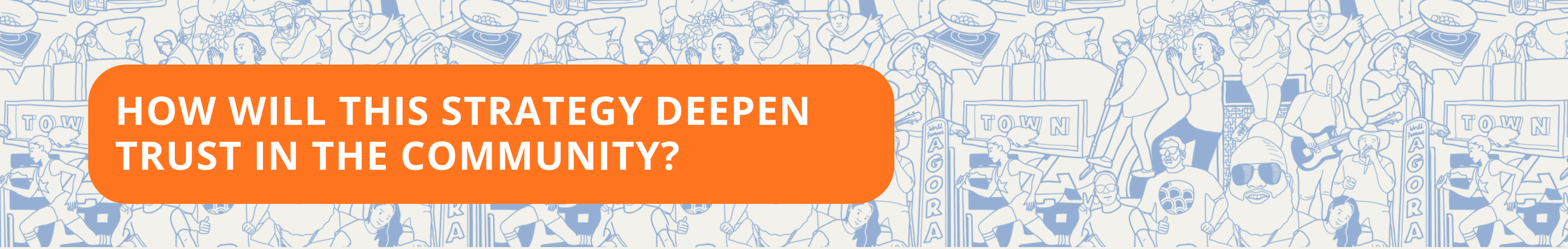
1. A more seamless process with project leads + city
2. Garner community trust and support through transparency, relationship, and accountability
3. Improved project outcomes shaped by those most proximate and knowledgeable of the neighborhood



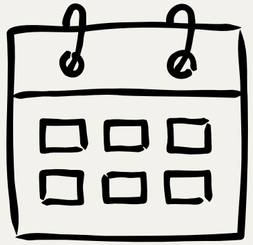


MTC'S FOUR PHASED PROCESS FOR PROJECT-BASED ENGAGEMENT

Phase	Orientation + Alignment	Engagement Design	Sharing + Gathering	Involve + Incorporate
Actions	• Intake on project scope, timeline, goals • Begin mapping stakeholders, drafting design + clarifying community power	• Finalize engagement design • Draft letter, marketing, and communications plan to neighbors	• Secure accessible gathering spaces + finalize marketing • Establish systems for capturing + delivering feedback	• Develop full engagement report • Address and integrate areas of priority or concern for community
Outcomes	**Understand project goals, provide neighborhood context, and clarify community participation levels.**	**Draft engagement plan and include timeline, methods, stakeholders and communication plan.**	**Employ engagement design and adapt as necessary. Capture feedback and make project information accessible.**	**Work with Project Lead to assess community feedback and find opportunity to integrate areas of priority.**



HOW WILL THIS STRATEGY DEEPEN TRUST IN THE COMMUNITY?



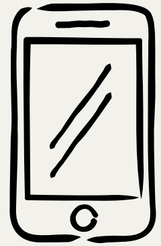
BUILT - IN ACCOUNTABILITY

- Established clarity about what decision-making influence the community has on any given project
- Predictable and accessible engagement process that community understands
- Attentiveness to key priorities or concerns
- Follow up and follow through on promises made



RELATIONALLY ORIENTED

- Stakeholder mapping for each project leverages already-existing community relationships
- Gatherings that promote + protect the dignity of everyone involved including the attendee and project lead
- Include voices that both dissent and agree with an aim to foster constructive dialogue and create improved project outcomes



TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION

- Keep community members informed through a variety of digital platforms
- Educate community members on city processes and invite to participate
- Communicate regularly and clearly to the city about what community has shared



IDENTIFYING LEVELS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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IDENTIFYING LEVELS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION OUR WORK CURRENTLY

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
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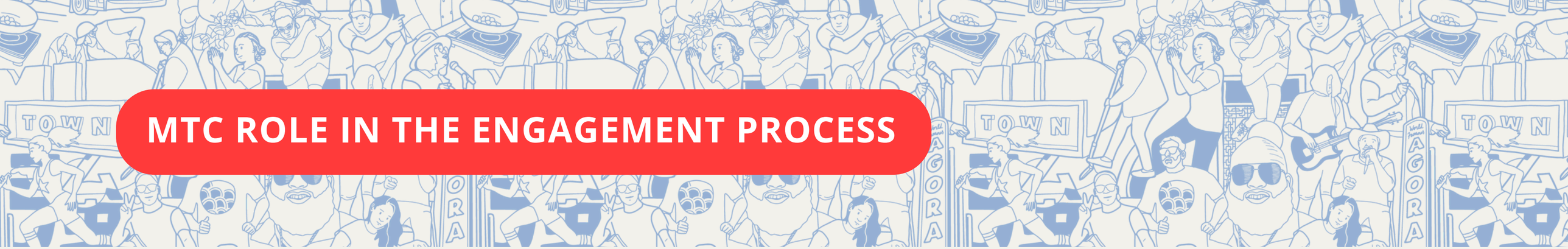
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MTC'S ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Level of Participation

Engagement Method	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Community Meetings	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐
Listening Sessions	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑
Presentation or Tours	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐
Interactive Webpage	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐
Project-Specific Newsletter	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐
Advisory Council	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
Canvassing, Social Media, Text SMS	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
Surveys, Charettes or Workshops	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑



MTC ROLE IN THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

MTC Offers an *Active* Role

- Development projects within cultural hubs or historic areas
- Major streetscape or transportation projects
- Demolitions and developments on key parcels
- Mixed use developments
- Neighborhood-wide vision plans for public realm or key parcels
- Large public space, infrastructure, or placemaking investments

Outreach | Design | Facilitation | Communication

MTC Offers a *Supportive* Role

- By right development (i.e. privately owned property)
- Planning projects with another engagement lead
- Small residential demolitions
- Small scale public art projects
- Capital investments on private land
- Minor zoning or usage changes
- Neighborhood research or studies

Outreach | Communication

PROJECT VARIABLES THAT GUIDE MTC'S LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT OFFERED

This CBA requirement for any investments of $250,000 or more provides MTC with a guide for when, and at what level, it employs this engagement strategy. Other factors include:

- ✓ Community narratives around site, proposal, or project
- ✓ Project's proximity to residential housing
- ✓ Changes to zoning code or use
- ✓ Land or structures that are of historic significance or significance to the community
- ✓ Land or structures that are situated within a cultural hub or historic area
- ✓ Land or structures that have been included in previous neighborhood studies, vision plans, or community discussions





MTC'S LETTER OF SUPPORT GUIDELINES + ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Be located within MTC's service area
2. Align with existing neighborhood plans
3. Demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the community appropriate for project scope and scale
4. Include MTC in engagement should a Project Lead decide to lead their own process
5. Be consistent with local planning and zoning policies
6. Demonstrate feasibility (financial, site control, and development capacity)

CASE STUDY: NRP GROUP + MINGYUE PLACE

MTC's Role: *Acvtive*

- The future of the former Dave's was *the* community question
- AsiaTown is a cultural hub and home to the largest AAPI population in Cleveland
- The narrative around any project was going to be sensitive and receive extreme pushback
- Zoning changes were needed



Timeline

Oct. 24 - March 25
Preliminary Engagement

April 25 - Aug. 25
Zoning Changes

Sep. 25 - March 26
Advisory Council

March 26 - Aug. 26
Involve + Incorporate

CASE STUDY: NRP GROUP + MINGYUE PLACE

	Events	Participants	Impressions
Community Meetings	6	324	
Listening Sessions	10	26	
Advisory Council	4	36	
Tours	1	12	
Newsletters	3		621
Total	24	398	621



CASE STUDY: NRP GROUP + MINGYUE PLACE

Community Influence	Inform	Consult	Collaborate
Actions	Shared regular updates through community meetings, newsletters, and tours.	Took community feedback into account on retail space uses and tenants.	Worked directly and regularly with NRP on naming, public art, greenspace and placemaking amenities, interior design, and retail space design
Outcome	**Objective, balanced, and accessible information delivered to AsiaTown community members**	**NRP and MidTown Cleveland pursued possible tenants that aligned with community aspirations**	**Community members had direct influence intro each of these areas. Clear connection between vision and decision.**

HOW DO WE MEASURE SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT?

Outcomes	People	Place
Quantitative	• # of people participated in engagement process • Diverse stakeholder representation	• Fewer delays as a result of addressed objections • # of design changes as a result of engagement
Qualitative	• Stakeholder sentiment and community trust trajectory • Quality of project lead + community collaboration	• Alignment with community priorities • Contributes to broader neighborhood fabric






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MINGYUE PLACE

Community Engagement Summary, MidTown Cleveland, Inc.



Midtown Lofts, now officially named **Mingyue Place**, is a proposed 120-unit mixed-use, mixed-income residential development located within Cleveland's AsiaTown neighborhood. The project redevelops the former Dave's Supermarket site at 3301 Payne Ave, a highly visible and long-underutilized property that has been identified by community members as a critical opportunity for reinvestment and neighborhood revitalization.

As the CDC tasked with AsiaTown's inclusive growth, MidTown Cleveland, Inc. (MTC) saw this as important opportunity to bring the community into a **robust engagement process that would 1) make project information accessible and 2) identify key opportunities where community members could influence project outcomes.**

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

1. **Community Meeting #1 + #2**
   October + November 2024
2. **5 Community Listening Sessions**
   November 2024- July 2025
3. **Bi-Monthly Community Meetings (4 mtgs) + BZA**
   January - June 2025
4. **Site Visit to NRP's "A Place for Us"**
   April 2025
5. **AsiaTown Cultural Committee Kickoff (5 mtgs to date)**
   September 2025
6. **DRC, CPC, + Community Meeting #7**
   March - May 2026

COMMON CONCERNS + QUESTIONS FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Gathering Spaces Community members frequently raised questions about leveraging the retail space for community benefit. The majority of data collected by MTC indicated a strong interest in creating a "third space," such as a coffee shop, library, computer lab, or gym, where residents could gather with community while connecting to resources and cultural programming.

Community-Driven Outcome: NRP and MTC pursued and secured a partnership with CPL to launch new library branch housed in NRP's 3500 sq ft retail space.

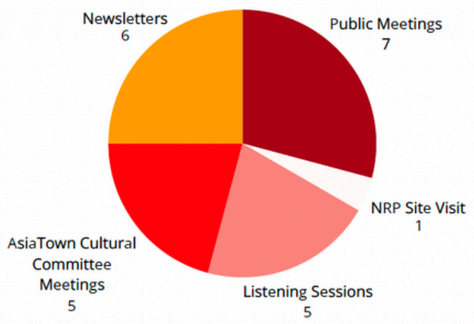
AsiaTown Identity The most frequent feedback MTC received centered on how the project would reflect the values, culture, and visual identity of AsiaTown. This included considerations ranging from bilingual signage and public art to the overall branding of the project.

Community-Driven Outcome: MTC helped to establish the AsiaTown Cultural Committee to determine project name, branding, public art, and exterior/interior design.

Community Safety Community members also expressed concerns regarding the safety measures that would be implemented as new residents were added to the neighborhood. They also voiced a desire for this project to add activity and "eyes on the street" for added comfort walking on Payne.

Community-Driven Outcome: NRP committed to add street-level porches that would enhance the pedestrian experience, donating the Square Dancing Park lot to MTC to provide a pathway to a permanent park across the street, and adding license plate readers in their parking lot in addition to perimeter cameras.

ENGAGMENT PROCESS + BREAKDOWN



Public Meetings

MTC and NRP Group have hosted **seven** community meetings to date all located at Cleveland Chinese Christian Church on Payne Avenue across from the former Dave's site.

We collected data through surveys, comment cards, and public comment. We also kept the community abreast of DRC, BZA, and CPC meetings. All meetings + materials were translated in Mandarin and Cantonese. Meetings dates to date:

- October 23rd, 2024
- November 20th, 2024
- January 27, 2025
- February 25, 2025
- April 6, 2025
- June 10, 2025
- May 6, 2026



Over the course of seven meetings, we've engaged over **400** residents, business owners, and stakeholders about this project. In addition to these meetings, MTC staff hosted **five small group listening sessions** with business owners and residents to make sure they their voices were heard and integrated into our engagement process. We utilized **digital and print engagement** through newsletters and flyering to notify residents of meetings and city processes.

NRP Site Visit



Because NRP Group serves as both the developer and property manager, community members expressed interest in understanding how the organization maintains and operates its properties. In response, MTC coordinated a site visit to NRP's westside development, A Place for Us. The visit included 12 community members, as well as Councilwoman Stephanie Howse-Jones. Attendees had the opportunity to engage directly with NRP property management staff and ask questions.

AsiaTown Cultural Committee



In September 2025, MTC invited 12 residents, business owners, and stakeholders to work with NRP on identifying opportunities for this project would contribute to the already existing AsiaTown Identity. **MTC intentionally invited a diversity of community members, which included a diversity of opinions that they held about the project.** MTC has held five AsiaTown Cultural Committee meetings thus far and invited the following community members to participate:

- Ed Hom / Business Owner
- Barb Dujan / Resident
- Andrew Ratcliff / Resident
- Kitty Lee / Business Owner
- Wilfrid Cheung / Stakeholder
- Wayne Wong / Stakeholder
- Lisa Wong / Stakeholder
- Bin Zhang / Business Owner
- Andy Ng / Resident
- Tim Spencer / Resident
- Christine Kwan / Resident
- Henry Duong / Business Owner
- Jonny Chen / Business Owner
- Ray Chan / Stakholder
- Annie Pu / Business Owner + Resident
- William Young / Stakeholder

Through collaboration with the AsiaTown Cultural Committee and neighborhood stakeholders, the project name, **"Mingyue Place"**, was selected to reflect cultural context and community input. Design conversations also informed building massing, façade materials and colors, and the integration of public art and signage intended to complement and reinforce the existing character of the AsiaTown corridor. The AsiaTown Cultural Committee is will continue to meet throughout the development process.