

PUBLIC SPACE PLANS



Highlights

- Start with the “low-hanging fruit”, then pursue the larger transformations.
- Next year or next decade? Consider both to build Orange Places.
- Ask, “What can we do within the next month to marginally improve this place?”
- Don’t be afraid to advocate for policy and system changes if they hinder your work.
- Show the community what the public space could become with some effort, resources, and their support.

Overview

This two-page handout introduces the concept of executing plans to enhance your public space. It also provides tips to help you get started – both in the short-run and long-run.

Where Do I Start?

So you’ve evaluated, engaged, and created a plan for how you want your public space to be vibrant and uplifting. Now what?

It makes sense to start by picking the “low-hanging fruit,” the small changes that don’t require a lot of resources. As you pursue those smaller transformations, then you can begin the transformations that require more coordination and resources. Go into these processes with a patience mindset.

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Tip #1: Tackle the Now

Does your space have a litter problem? Perhaps place some trash bins. How about some untidy weeds? Break out the trimmer. Is there a failing fence? It's time to remove it, repair it, or give it a fresh coat of paint.

You'll find the first steps of transforming a public space are more about basic stewardship of the space rather than eye-popping changes. And that's okay. If there is such a thing as instant results, they are small. But they show someone cares.

Take a look at your public space, and ask, "What can we do within the next month to marginally improve this place?"

Tip #3: Communicate the Dream

The desires of many people outweigh the desires of one. Wave the banner of your vision, and show the community what the public space could become with some effort, resources, and their support. And the cynics? Take their criticism seriously, but prove them wrong.

Tip #2: Plan for Then

After your evaluation and engagement about the public space, you should know your vision for the place. But maybe you don't have the money to make it happen. Or maybe regulations, liabilities, and maintenance concerns restrict you.

The truth? There's a good chance your vision of the public space won't become reality. But pieces of it can come to fruition. Don't be afraid to advocate for policy and system changes if they hinder your work.

Not realizing your space's full vision will be disappointing. But it's better to pursue and be denied than to hope and dream forever.



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