

### EMBRACING COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN 2021



The most powerful images of 2020 captured how people rallied to help each other and our collective communities.

Our industry played an important role in this.

Landlords proactively signed eviction moratoriums. Streets became restaurant dining rooms. Affordable housing providers gave children internet access for virtual school.

It's time to bring this focus on community needs to the very beginning of the development process.



# I HOPE WE CAN RETHINK AND REBUILD OUR ECONOMY IN A WAY THAT IS MORE EQUITABLE SO WE CAN ALL BENEFIT FROM THE GAINS AND THRIVE IN THE FUTURE."

- MICHELLE LANDERS, ULI BOSTON

# So what does this actually mean?

Community outreach should start earlier.

This gives you the opportunity to incorporate the community's ideas into project specs and design community benefits accordingly. That could mean repositioning restaurant space to allocate for a grocery store or incorporating different levels of housing affordability into the project.

That doesn't mean that every decision is driven by community consensus. Instead, this method assumes that you have the knowledge and understanding of the community to make informed decisions.

# Remember, the YIMBYs outnumber the NIMBYs.

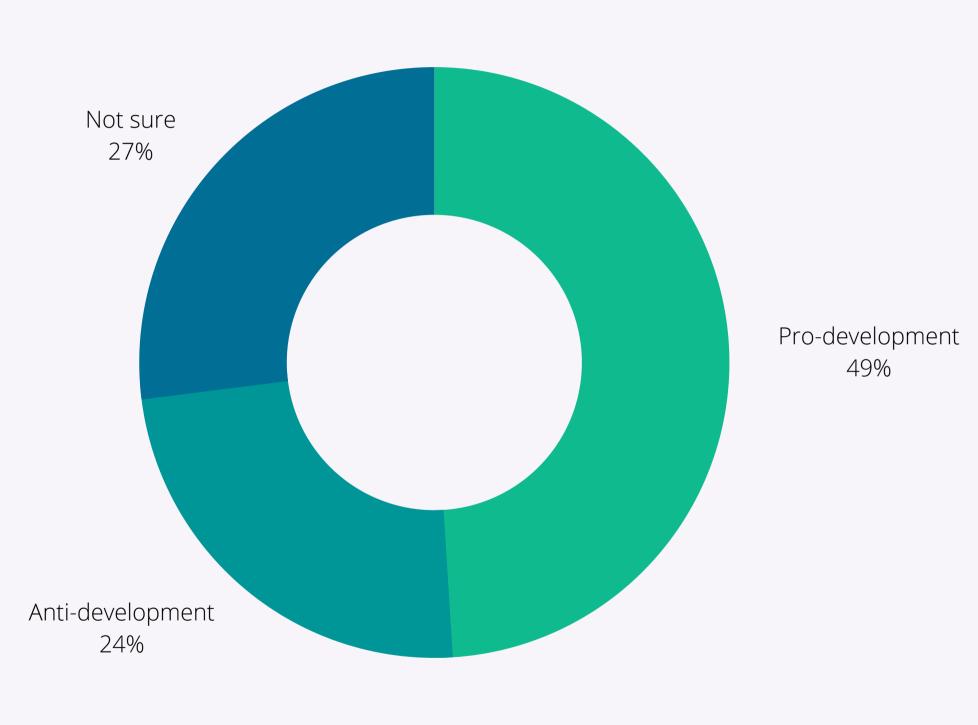
We asked people what they really think about development.

Their answers may surprise you.



86%

CITED AT LEAST ONE BENEFIT THAT DEVELOPMENT BRINGS TO THEIR COMMUNITY.



# Nearly half consider themselves prodevelopment.

"Not sure" = your swing factor

That's the opportunity to win over community members with thoughtful designs and outreach.

THE TOP 4
THINGS
PEOPLE WANT
FROM NEW
DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC GREEN SPACE

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEW RETAIL & RESTAURANTS

## So what does community-driven development look like?

IT'S PROACTIVE. IT'S TRANSPARENT. IT'S DESIGNED TO WELCOME RATHER THAN AVOID FEEDBACK.

#### **Traditional Outreach**

#### Community-Led Outreach

**Driver** Municipal regulations

and requirements

An internal commitment to

designing for community needs

**Timing** Starts when the first

project plans are revealed

Begins shortly after acquisition;

before plans form

**Methods** Revolves around meetings

(virtual or in-person)

Meetings + asynchronous

channels

**Language** English-based

Reflects primary languages

spoken in the community



## This spans the development cycle

#### PRE-DEVELOPMENT

How can this project highlight the culture and history of this neighborhood? What do current community members lack easy access to?

#### CONSTRUCTION

Which businesses and materials within a 5-10 radius can we source? How can we make the community more resilient and improve the lives of residents for years to come?

#### **ACTIVATION & OPERATIONS**

How can programming uplift the neighborhood? Can we find Black, women, or minority-owned tenants for our commercial spaces?



#### This Philosophy in Action

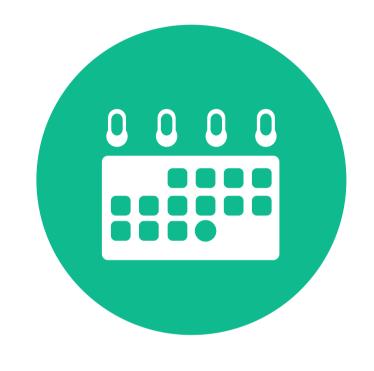
An example project | A 2-block parcel in East Boston, MA with a vision for a mixed-use development. You've worked in the greater Boston area before, but never in this neighborhood.

Your first priority for community engagement is gathering context and building trust.

That starts by understanding who lives and works here now - beyond just basic census data. What attracted them to this area to live/work/visit? What types of businesses do they most frequently use in the area? What would you say is the best quality of the area and what needs the most improvement?

### Your Outreach Strategy









Boots-on-the-ground engagement

Community meetings (virtual or in-person)

Online comments + textmessage feedback

Phone line for voicemail feedback

All communication is done in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

OTHER
RESOURCES
TO SUPPORT
THIS
APPROACH

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
PLAYBOOK

TIPS FOR

MULTILINGUAL

OUTREACH

WRITING
ENGAGING
COMMENT
TOPICS

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
DURING COVID
TOOLKIT



### Moving forward: Work with us.

#### CONCLUSION

Traditional community outreach is flawed because it's one dimensional and not inclusive. Engaging with the community online complements boots-on-the-ground efforts to build a stronger base of community support and build better projects without delays.

#### ABOUT COURBANIZE

coUrbanize is an online community engagement solution purpose-built for real estate developers and municipal planners. Paired with traditional mechanisms for community engagement, coUrbanize has helped secure faster approvals on more than 400 projects. Learn more about our <u>features here</u> or reach out at sales@courbanize.com