

# How to Engage Communities



**One Size Does Not Fit All**

Sherry Godlewski  
Upper Valley Adaptation Workgroup  
October 25, 2016

# How Can We Engage Our Communities?

- Recognize:
  - Independent municipalities
  - Different needs for each community
  - Different types of environments
    - Valley prone to flooding
    - Steep slopes
    - Low lying areas
    - Rural vs. Urban
  - Different areas of concern
  - Different community demographics
  - Different capacity (paid staff vs. volunteer boards)



# Meet People Where They Are

- Establish credibility
  - Share local scientific data (understandable)
  - Explain why we need to think about adaptation strategies
- Maintain Trust
  - Let them know you are there to help
  - Share local stories
- Stay Available
  - Maintain on going engagement



# Action must....

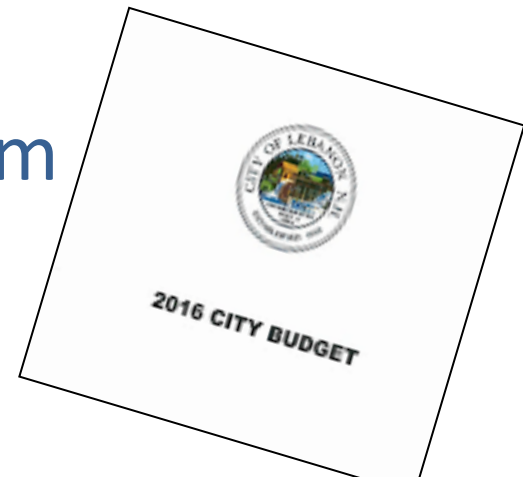
- Be rooted in local knowledge
- Respond to local needs/concerns
- Reflect local culture and values





# How Do Communities Begin?

- Start community conversations
- It's all very local – we know our community!
- Learn from each other – share stories!
- Incorporate climate science into the standard planning tools (future projections)
- Seek project funding & support from collaborative staff



# Outcomes

- Building community capacity through participation and dialog
- Incorporating climate concepts into current planning efforts
- Providing decision support
- Improving disaster and emergency response planning

“We need a ‘three-town adaptation working group’ to engage more people in our communities about climate change.”



# How Can We Help?

- Coordinating service providers - communities aren't overwhelmed
- Bringing different perspectives and skill sets to communities
- Providing local data & facilitation
- Supporting networks and discussions by hosting workshops/forums
- LISTENING





# Important to Remember!!!

- Engagement takes time
- People need to be educated again and again
- Communities need help:  
science, technical assistance,  
field trips, case studies...





# Together

- You
- Academia - research
- Communities
- Non-profits
- Businesses
- Government



together

join collaborate connect unite  
partner community work  
share move create  
build