

# Community Engagement: Connecting, Communicating, Collaborating



# About Me



**Gayle Saunders**

CEO + Founder  
The Saunders PR Group

**Bronze Telly Award for Video Excellence – 2022**

**PRISM Award for Excellent PR Strategy – COSPRA , 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2022**

**C-Suite Executive of the Year – Small Business – Columbus Business First, 2021**

**CSR & Diversity Award, Honorable Mention for Ally Award & Changemaker Award Honoree – PR News, 2021**

**Woman of Achievement Award – YWCA, 2020** □

**Communications Award – The Communicator Awards, 2019**

**“My Brother’s Keeper” Award – Greater Columbus Basketball Legends Association, 2019**

**Professional of the Year (*First Person of Color to Receive Award*) – COSPRA, 2018**

**Who’s Who in Black Columbus, Top Executive – 2008-2021** □

**Forty Under Forty Award – Business First, 1995**

# Connecting, Communicating, Collaborating

- Sharing plans without real community input
- Decide, Announce, Defend Approach
- “One Size Fits All” Approach
- Meaningful Public Engagement





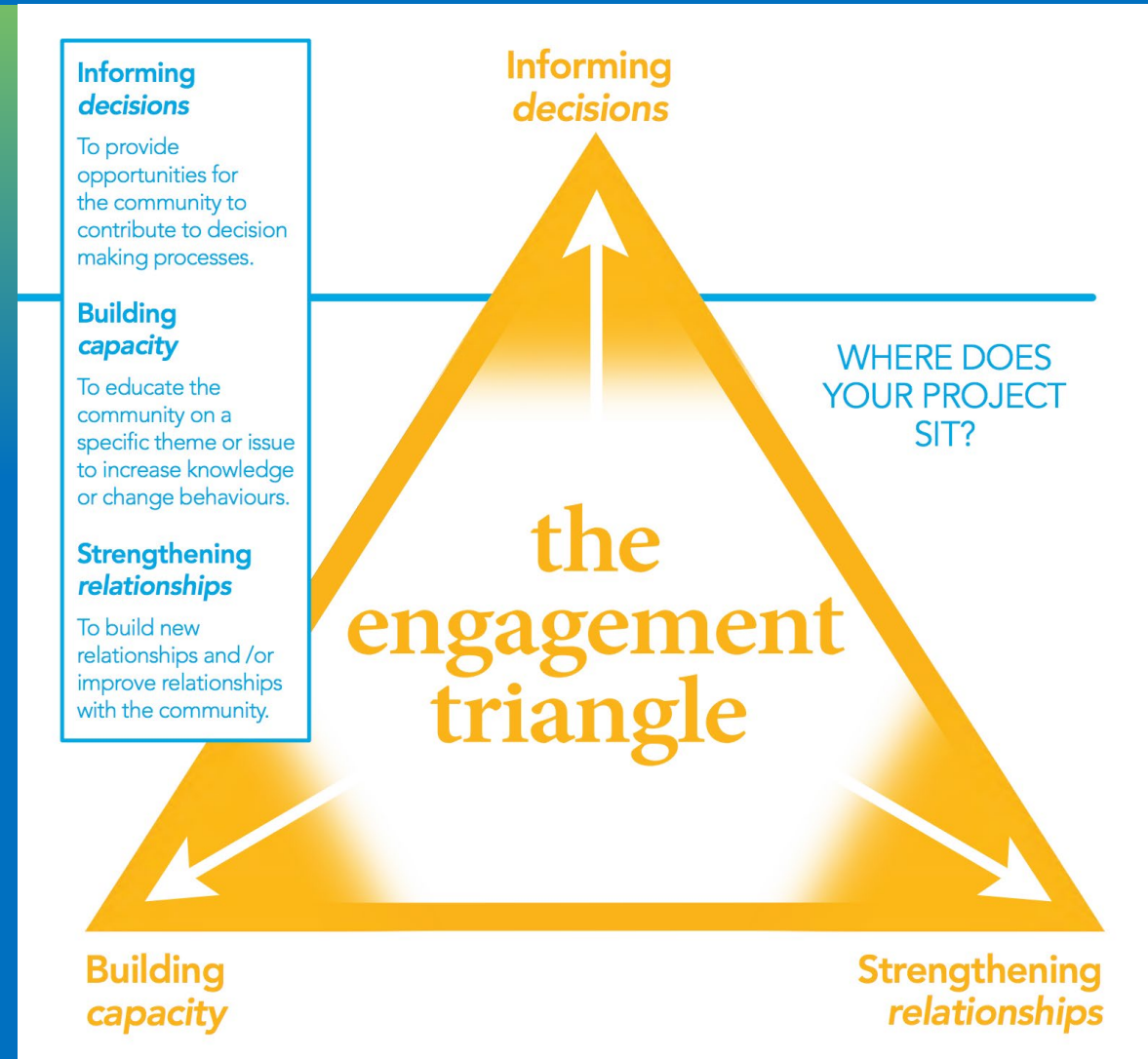
# Connecting, Communicating, Collaborating

- Engaging Communities Differently
- Making Genuine Efforts to Gather Input Early in Process
- Using Community Voices to Help tell the Story
- Reaching Hard to Reach Communities



# Connecting, Communicating, Collaborating

- Educate the community about upcoming initiatives before plans are baked
- Include community to help inform decision at the beginning of the process
- Strengthen relationships with partner agencies, community influencers, on-the-ground leaders





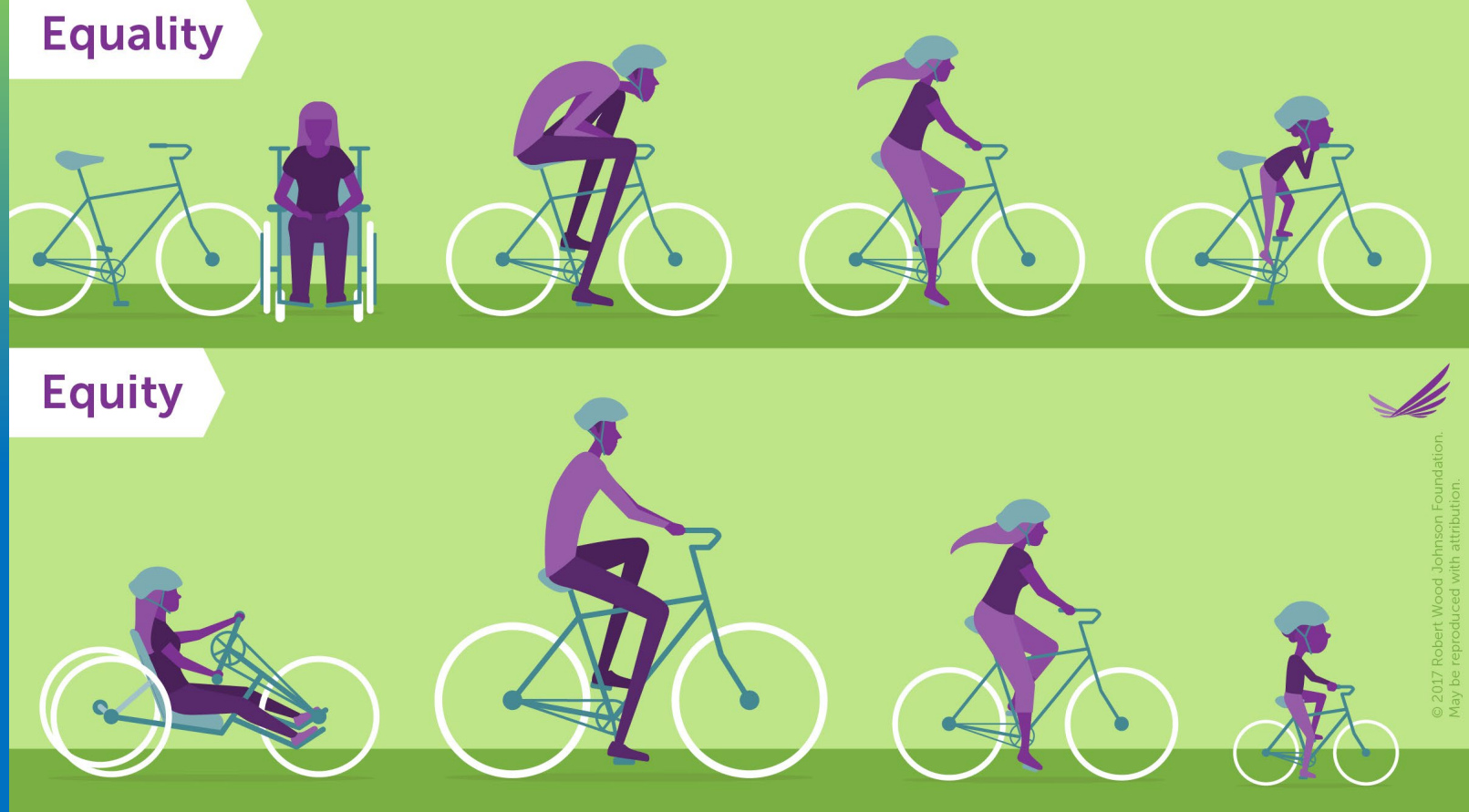
# Equity Takes Center Stage in our communications



The purpose of an equity lens is **to be deliberately inclusive as an organization makes decisions**. It introduces a set of questions into the decision that help the decision makers focus on equity in both their process, communications and outcomes.

# Connecting with Equity as our Guidepost

## Equality v. Equity



Equality: What's the Difference? Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. ... **Equity recognizes** that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

# Connecting, Communicating, Collaborating

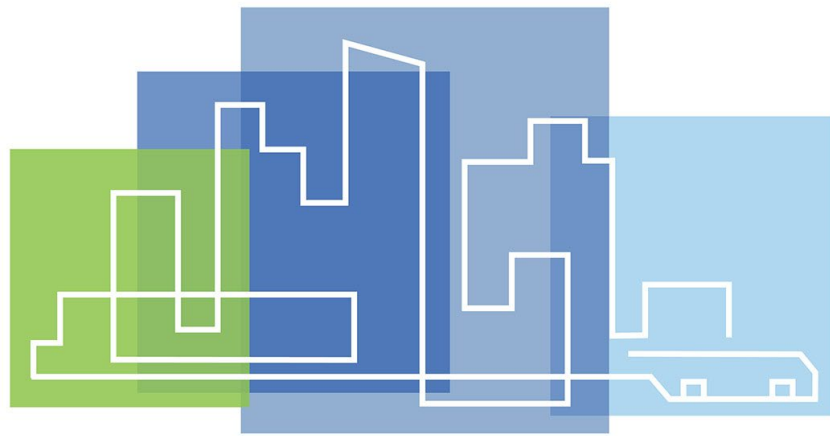
- Know the Community
- Cultural Cues
- Partner with community organizations
- Create Community Ambassadors
- Social Media





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- Radio/TV/Print
  - Community Surveys
  - Pop-Up Events
  - Social Media
  - Influencer Engagement
  - Street Team – GrassRoots
  - Virtual Community and Stakeholder Events
  - Partner Collaboration
  - Community Town Hall Sessions

# Connecting with Communities – LinkUS



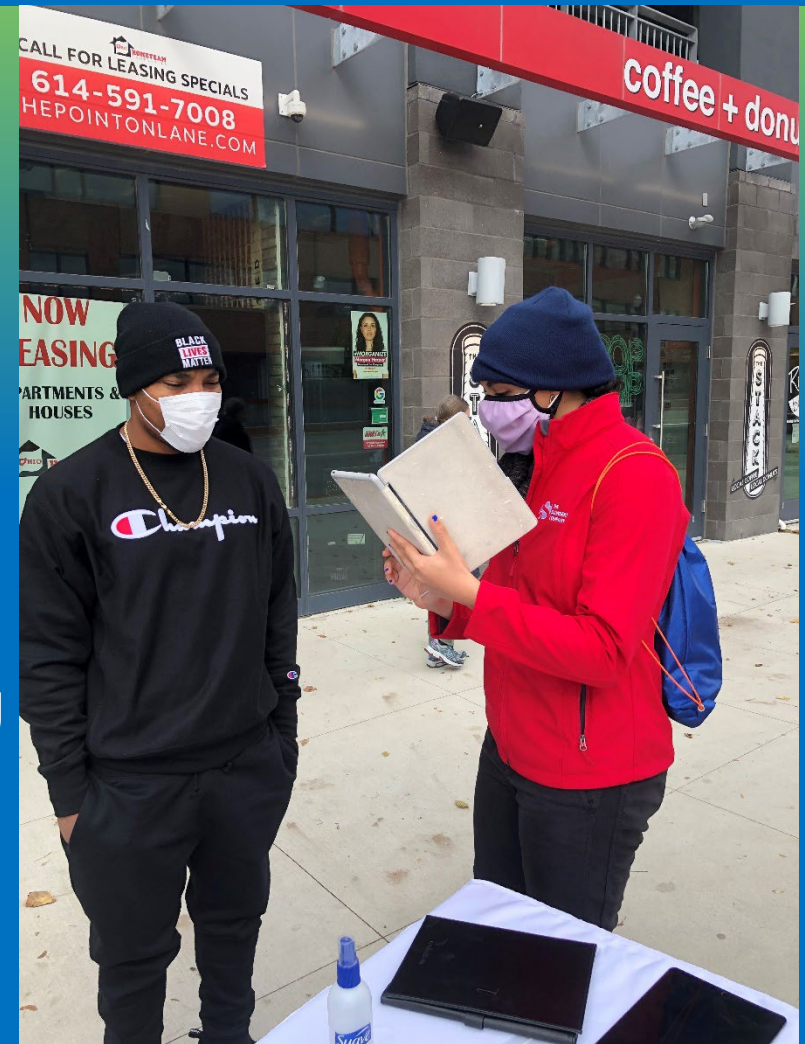
**Link US**  
Moving our region. Together.



Visualizing Rapid Transit

# Connecting With Communities – LinkUS

- Focus Group Sessions
- Stakeholder E-Blast
- Community Group Presentations
- Virtual Town Halls and Stakeholder Meetings
- Influencer Outreach
- Experiential Marketing – Events
- Social media - Owned
- Social Media – Paid Digital Buys – Targeting geofencing
- Media Engagement
- Door hangers, Hot Cards
- Field surveys – meeting people where they are
- Regional Outreach (suburban communities)





# Connecting With Communities – LinkUS

- Social media - Owned
- Social Media – Paid Digital Buys – Targeting geofencing
- Social Listening

