

Planners have the opportunity to frequently work with grass-roots organizations and groups of residents, and effective participatory planning methods are often required. Dr. Cooper has written a book that covers many aspects of effective participatory planning processes – theory considerations, management considerations, participant considerations, and financial and practical considerations. This all sets a firm foundation for actually facilitating the planning process.

Group facilitation is often times a new or infrequent role for professional planners, one that requires a different style and stance. Having effective methods laid out, in detail (as is done in this book), can provide planners with guidance and confidence that may encourage the use of these methods more often.

The book is written in manual form and is not just *about* planning. It is loaded with details that even include pre-planning considerations and participatory event set-up procedures. It then moves on to focus question development, the step-by-step participatory process of developing consensus, and then on to the group reflection on the final product and documentation.

This book references a number of facilitation methodologies. It also gives good information on where to find the actual sources, including facilitation training. It lays out step-by-step procedures, not just talking about *what* to do, but *how* to do it. Many illustrations of process designs, along with various aspects and analogies of concepts, are included in the book. It also has samples of several participant worksheets that one can use in different facilitated processes.

Every planner who finds himself in the position of facilitating groups of people needs to have “Let’s Do Some Planning” on his/her desk and reference it often. It will help facilitate participatory change in our communities.