

# FACILITATION AND CONSENSUS BUILDING — THE SMITHVILLE PLANNING GAME®



The success of a transit project can hinge on public buy-in and consensus. Nelson\Nygaard understands better than anyone how to integrate local participation into the planning process. By pairing transportation and community-building expertise with face-to-face facilitation, the firm ensures that projects reflect the shared needs of stakeholders and community members. One of the most innovative ways of achieving consensus is via the Smithville Planning Game®.

## **Smithville Planning Game®**

*The Smithville Planning Game®* is a planning exercise designed by Nelson\Nygaard that helps educate participants about the trade-offs associated with planning transit services. *The Smithville Planning Game®* is a structured and facilitated exercise best used with diverse groups. It brings stakeholders, politicians and citizen-planners together to design conceptual transportation networks that reflect local values and needs. *The Smithville Planning Game®* can build on other planning efforts by taking the previously articulated goals and requiring community members to make choices and trade-offs between aspirations and fiscal reality.

The game typically lasts three to five hours and can involve as many as 70 people. The first 30 minutes are spent drafting service objectives. Then each table spends the next several hours designing its network. Finally each table has a spokesperson present its network and how it satisfies or didn't satisfy the objectives.

## **Recent Projects include:**

- **Flagstaff MPO, Flagstaff Arizona** — Flagstaff 5 Year Transit Plan Update
- **CDTA Albany, New York** — Saratoga Springs Workshop
- **VIA Metropolitan Transit, San Antonio, Texas** — Comprehensive Service Assessment