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RESOURCE

A Ladder of Citizen Participation

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Description / Abstract

The heated controversy over “citizen participation,” “citizen control,” and “maximum feasible involvement of the poor,” has been waged largely in terms of exacerbated rhetoric and misleading euphemisms. To encourage a more enlightened dialogue, a typology of citizen participation is offered using examples from three federal social programs: urban renewal, anti-poverty, and Model Cities. The typology, which is designed to be provocative, is arranged in a ladder pattern with each rung corresponding to the extent of citizens’ power in determining the plan and/or program.

Publication year
2019

Publisher
Journal of the American Planning Association

Keywords
participation Types of Participation

Thematic Tagging
Gender
Language English
View resource

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Tool

Civil Society Organisations

B3.03

Source URL: https://iwrmactionhub.org/resource/ladder-citizen-participation