We do land differently.

If you want to aim high you have to **Think Big**
PLAYCE is our place-making methodology that integrates traditional public engagement techniques with team building and organizational development principles utilizing the power of play to build trust within a group, create consensus around an idea, and develop a strategy to move that idea forward.

JKLA’s PLAYCE approach to public engagement invites stakeholders to be collaborative problem solvers from the onset of the process by becoming active participants in site analysis. Stakeholders become project champions; ideas move to consensus sooner and concepts are tried on for size early, ensuring greater future success.

We do play differently.

Who should use the PLAYCE approach?
The PLAYCE approach engages a diverse group that includes community leaders, stakeholders, citizens, elected officials, planners, architects, engineers, landscape architects, potential developers, and representatives from local, state and regional agencies.

Why do we play differently?
PLAYCE approaches are used to engage stakeholders by inviting them to be collaborative problem solvers from the outset of a project. This approach makes the process of engagement more efficient, productive, and meaningful, as it incorporates traditional public engagement techniques with team building and organizational development principles. The result is a process that builds trust, creates consensus, and stimulates creative problem-solving among participants, ensuring greater future success.

Why PLAYCE?
After decades of relying on traditional planning models, users and stakeholders have become ambivalent with the process and are often less likely to enthusiastically participate.

JKLA created the PLAYCE approach to public engagement as a fun and interactive process that helps to form the basis of a design vision that is deeply rooted in community support. Play, in and of itself, is the backbone of these methods because after playing, people young and old approach tasks very differently.

Through play, our minds actually crave creative solutions, we seek out teams to work with rather than work in isolation, our imagination is piqued and we actively see opportunities around us that we may have never seen before.

The PLAYCE approach is easily integrated into traditional public engagement models and provides forms of engagement that foster efficient, productive and quality public participation. PLAYCE techniques cultivate a spirit of cooperation and creative problem solving among participants that when combined with a transparent process, builds trust from the onset of a project.
Fundamentally, public engagement is about building trust. Science tells us that trust forms the backbone of all relationships and without it, projects become vulnerable to failure. Design in the public realm is successful when there is trust, and trust is built through play.

JKLA’s PLAYCE method starts with conversations and building trust by “meeting the public” where they are. These small community discussions can occur at events on-site, at grocery and department stores, in the local library, at community services locations, and even at school functions and sporting events.

It is often difficult to see a place you experience every day with “new eyes.” Site Analysis Tours allow us to see the area in a brand new way. Tours can be on foot, on a bicycle or on a boat. We explore and document the site together and through careful facilitation, these tours and games will lead the group to discover the power of their landscape and of their story, seemingly all on their own.

After the conclusion of the Site Analysis Tours and Interactive Visioning Events, the team disseminates the findings and similarities in the results and help to clarify priorities for the Vision Plan, starting to translate onto actual site constraints.

The answers will form the foundations for the mission and vision of the community, and will guide the PLAYCE approach throughout the project duration. The intent will be to highlight what’s been done to date and gauge community priorities for implementation.

A ‘Visual Preference Walk’ can show participants design precedent images and allow them to ‘see’ a variety of opportunities, styles and materials and help them make decisions quickly. Various coaching exercises can be used to identify what may be happening behind the scenes that can impact project success.

It is in these moments that the Landscape Architects and facilitators step back and allow the community’s creativity to flow. For more detailed descriptions of some of our favorite games, see our full Community Visioning Playbook.

Our PLAYCE method invites the public to test out the proposed designs through a temporary tactical build-out. These events take planning ideas from paper documents to public enthusiasm very quickly. It can be big or small, but what is important to take away are the learnings from the test run. If something isn’t working, adjust in real time, engage the public to help improve the design and better understand what the public needs from this project.

Review with the owner, steering committee, community partners and stakeholders, as well as the public.

Determine the Community Objectives by asking “Why?”

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Identify your assets

- Documents
  - Strategic plan
  - Mission & vision statements
  - Historic resources survey
- People
  - Elected & citizen leadership
  - Business owners & stakeholders
  - Chamber of commerce
  - Grant writing professional
- The site itself
  - Physical location
  - Possible constraints
  - The site’s past & present story in the community

Envision the future. Glance back but look forward.
Design from the Data

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FINDINGS?
Throughout the entirety of a project, data from each and every conversation, interaction, and outcome is collected, analyzed, summarized, and qualitative information is quantified. Infographics are created to simply and clearly illustrate the findings. Data driven plans and designs that are created through engaging and thoughtful public participation, with design direction coming from within the community, are implementable and are met with little resistance from the public.

WHAT’S NEXT?
Prioritizing Next Steps

Often a large visioning project needs to be broken into manageable pieces. A prioritization effort identifies which pieces of the vision can be implemented immediately, in the short term, and over the long term.
Contact Us.

📞 716.695.1987
✉️ info@jklastudio.com
📍 65 Zimmerman Street, North Tonawanda, NY 14120