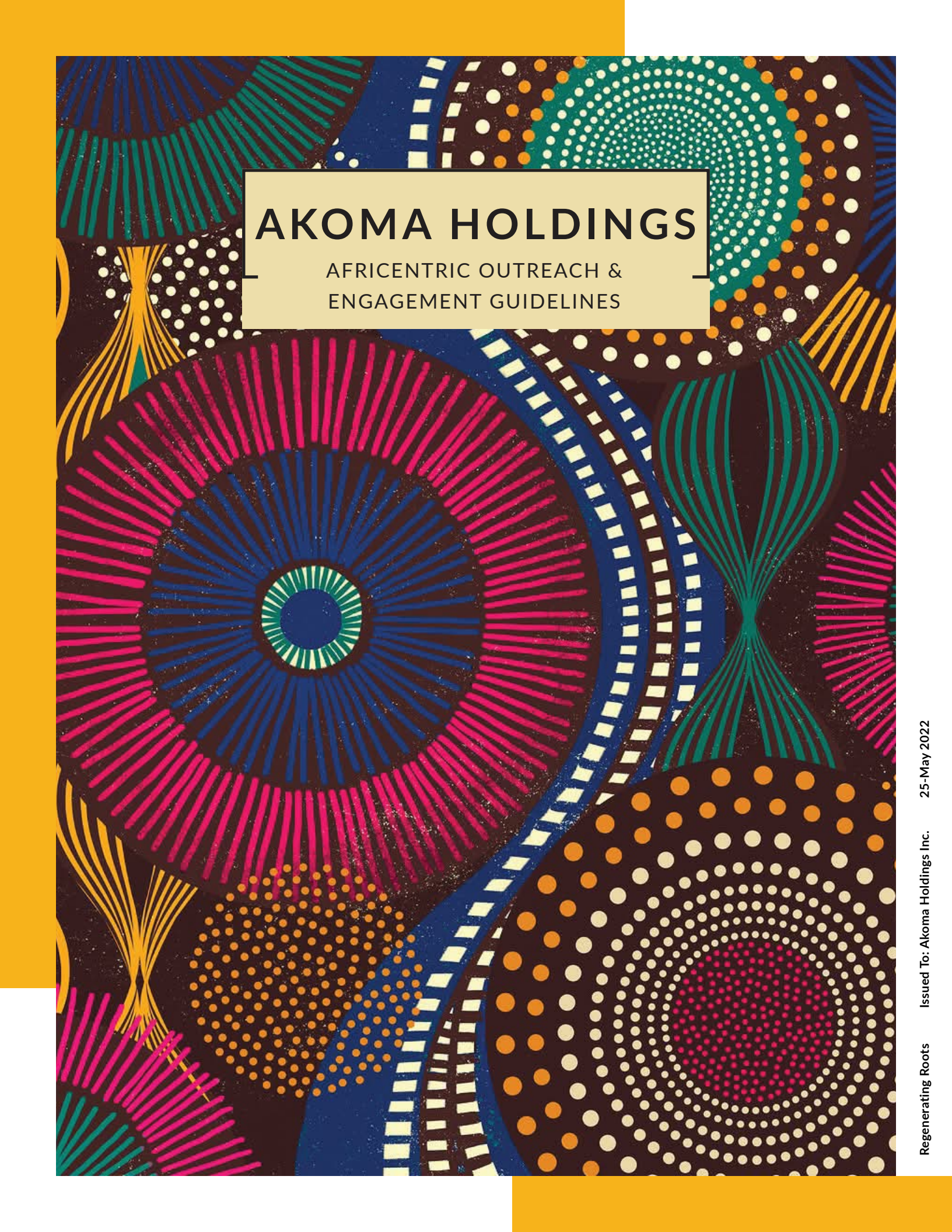




AKOMA HOLDINGS

AFRICENTRIC OUTREACH &
ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Land Acknowledgment

We would like to acknowledge that Halifax Regional Municipality, including the lands on which the Akoma Village will develop, are in the Sipekni'katik and Eskikewa'kik districts of Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

Acknowledgment of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery

We would like to acknowledge all Treaty peoples – including those who came here as settlers – as migrants either in this generation or in generations past - and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. We pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.

Prepared By

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In collaboration with Bespoke Cultural Collective

For Akoma Holdings Inc.

April 2022

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BACKGROUND

AKOMA

DESIGN

do or plan (something) with a specific purpose or intention in mind

GUIDELINES

information intended to advise people on how something should be done or what something should be

The Akoma Africentric Design Guidelines (ADGs) serve to inform the design and growth of the Akoma Holdings, Inc. property in collaboration with and integrating input from African Nova Scotian community members. This report on the Akoma Outreach and Engagement Guidelines (OEGs) both accompanies the ADGs, whilst also eliciting public information necessary to implement the ADGs.¹

The OEGs align with Africentric principles to include ANS collective visions and reliance upon community participation at every stage of the planning process. This outreach and engagement process will not simply include the sharing of information, but will solicit feedback, involvement, and input to inform the design of the individual Akoma facilities

and communal spaces.

To provide meaningful engagement opportunities for all stakeholders, the OEGs outline efforts to reach all audiences through a variety of initiatives. Communal advocacy for and ownership of the project will be cultivated through how we communicate and involve our community through this engagement plan. The goal of this process is for the Akoma Village to be a representation of the ANS community that causes all visitors to feel welcomed and safe and reinforces that we are committed to working with the community to plan for the future and become an Africentric thriving community.

While the OEGs main purpose is to inform the implementation phase, the suggestions may be used to support any future engagement process with the ANS community. This working document will be amended as the project moves forward, to advise additional or revised messaging, communication, and engagement strategies.

1 This report on the OEGs is consistent with International Association of Public Participation and Black Manifesto principles relating to stakeholder participation. This report was developed through analysis of comments supplied for Halifax Regional Council - Item No. 11.3.1 (2021-04-06) by HRM of ways identified by the community to engage. It builds on these recommendations and many existing resources, including those listed in the reference section



What is Africentric Engagement?

Engagement is a framework of guiding principles, strategies, and approaches that is based on ideologies that respect the right of all community members to be informed, consulted, involved, and empowered. Africentric community engagement is a process of collective work which embraces a sense of responsibility and self-definition to develop purpose and shared social wealth. By engaging the ANS community in the process, you are inviting them to contribute to the planning and decision making process. In turn this serves as a form of bridging the historic and ongoing disadvantages that occur within communities.

AFRICENTRIC



Jacquie Comrie, Light Vortex (2019) Photo: Lera Kotsyuba

“When Black people view themselves as centered and central in their own history then they see themselves as agents, actors, and participants rather than as marginals on the periphery of political or economic experience.”

- Molefi Kete Asante

Africentric research responds to the **local cultures, practices,** and **concerns** of people of African descent and reflects their **understandings.**

- Chambers 2021; Chilisa 2012

RESEARCH



Myla Borden, Ecstasy of Amelda Colley (2017)
Image: Black Artists Network of Nova Scotia

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CORE PRINCIPLES

The collaborative process, as outlined in this OEG report will ensure that the community design process is aligned with Africentric principles. Founded on the Ngozi Saba and BlackSpace Manifesto principles, the suggested Africentric OEGs are composed of equitable, community, and therapeutic engagement values as well.



SEVEN PRINCIPLES (NGUZO SABA)

- Unity
- Self-Determination
- Collective Work and Responsibility
- Cooperative Economics
- Purpose
- Creativity
- Faith



*BLACKSPACE, Co-designing Black Neighborhood
Conservation*

BLACKSPACE MANIFESTO

- Create less hierarchy and more dialogue
- Critical connections over critical mass
- Celebrate, catalyze, and amplify Black joy
- Center lived experience
- Reckon with the past to build the future
- Protect and strengthen culture
- Manifest the future

CORE PRINCIPLES



*Community Leaders meeting in Jackson, Mississippi
(Maina Kiai)*

THERAPEUTIC PLANNING

- Mutually beneficial two way dialogue without the power struggle
- Create spaces for individual / group experience/ story to be told and not debated
- Population speaks on behalf of themselves
- Utilize the support of trained professionals already working with vulnerable populations



Brownsville Heritage House, Cornell AAP

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Transparency
- Careful Planning and Preparation
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Impact and Action
- Sustained Engagement & Participatory Culture
- Openness and Learning



Africatown Plaza Planning, Seattle, Washington

EQUITY ENGAGEMENT

- Tailor engagement plans to the context
- Participation within an authentic and accountable engagement process
- Establish respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples
- Advance systemic equity

Sources: Maulana Karenga, BLACKSPACE, Matthews, David , 2008; Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, 2021

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

To address attitudes and ideas currently held by the community, this plan places emphasis on the following:

Faith & Trust

1

Faith, which means to believe with all our hearts in God, our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, our ancestors, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Our recommendations for guiding principles stem from the community values present within the ANS community. Faith and trust is an essential aspect of ANS community engagement. Faith is particularly key due to the historic role of the African United Baptist Association (AUBA) as a cornerstone civic institution.

- To sustain safe spaces for ANS community dialogue, build on AUBA and the Universal Negro Improvement Association's (UNIA) precedents of planning Africentric and trauma-informed Black futures.
- To increase community buy-in to Akoma Village, facilitate community participation through accessible processes.
- To rebuild trust, practice trauma-informed, therapeutic planning that honors everyone's experiences of the Home.

Protect & Strengthen Culture

2

Make visible and strengthen Black culture and spaces. Honor our sacredness and prevent our erasure. Amplify and support Black assets of all forms.

In order to strengthen culture, it is essential to reflect collective heritage in the built environment. Visualizing & narrating Black cultures & spaces honors their sacredness & prevents their erasure.

- To honor the diversity of Black culture, engagement activities must begin with listening to participants' stories.
- To make visible Black and African Nova Scotian histories, integrate storytellers and cultural producers into the planning process.
- To amplify and support Black assets, identify places and events that sustain living memory.

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Plan With, Design With

3

Walk with people as they imagine and realize their own futures. Be connectors, conveners, and collaborators—not representatives.

Community members should participate in decisions that impact them. As such, it is pertinent to plan with and design with, the target stakeholders.

- To develop design guidelines that meet community needs, the process should allow for a collective vision of the diverse ANS community.
- To be accessible, plan and set activities so that all persons are welcome and supported in attending and being involved.
- To leverage collective resources and knowledge networks, prioritize strategic collaboration with sister organizations.

Representation Matters

4

Narratives of the community must be crafted and shared by accountable representatives of the community with their many intersectional identities.

Representation matters, as such, it is imperative that engagement must include people that represent the diversity of identities within the community.

- To fully represent African Nova Scotians, seek members and create a group of representative stakeholders accountable to their respective communities.
- To be inclusive, identify and solicit accountable representatives of identity groups to participate in engagement activities.
- To create a safe space, use facilitators with similar backgrounds as the community to lead or support engagement activities and communication strategies.

Sources: Maulana Karenga, BLACKSPACE

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

As outlined in this OEG report, the Akoma Village ADGs will be implemented using a collaborative process that includes community guidance in the planning process. In addition, the suggestions may be used to inform and support any future engagement process with the ANS community.

Outreach & Engagement Guidelines Goals

The OEG goals are to create awareness of the Akoma planning process among ANS stakeholders, inspire participation across Nova Scotia's ANS community, and collaborate to express a vision and priorities essential to obtaining that vision. Thus, creating a spirit of designing for, designing with that will lead to advocacy and community buy-in into the Akoma Village's plans and planning process.

Outreach & Engagement Guidelines Objectives

Build Trust.

Provide engaging outreach and communication that is inclusive, consistent, responsive, and transparent, to lead to an increase in understanding. Be sure to help them to understand how decisions are made and what is to happen in this project.

Spark dialogue.

Provide a range of opportunities for inclusive community involvement that creates meaningful conversations and is mindful of power and privilege within engagement processes, institutions and broader systems.

Build Bridges.

Seek to foster ownership by all participants through harmonization of views and dealing with conflict between opposing ideas.

Secure Feedback.

Provide opportunities to regularly secure insights, preferences, visions, and ideas.

Empower.

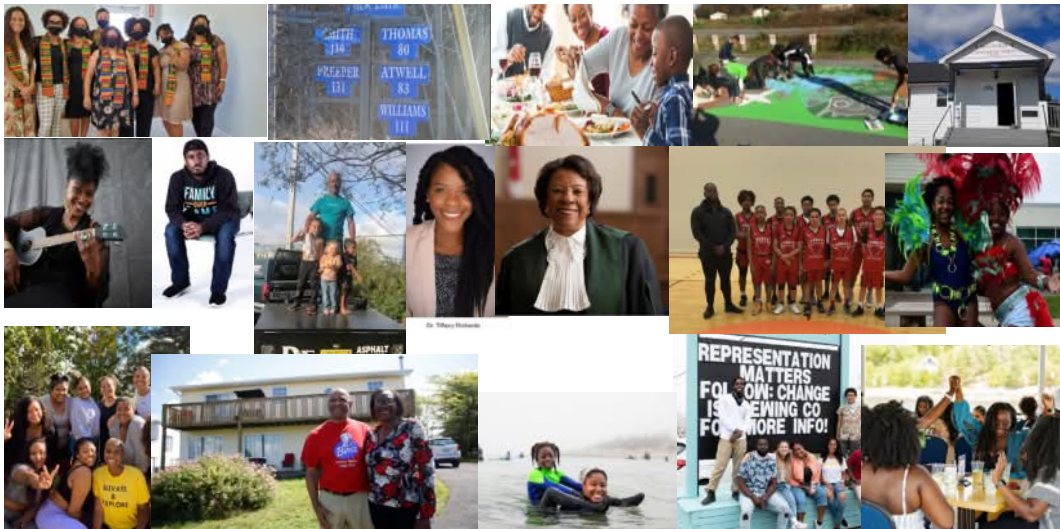
Inform, educate, and encourage involvement that stimulates action.

STAKEHOLDERS

Community Demographics

In 2021, the Canadian population grew to almost 37 million. Whereas the Nova Scotian population recently surpassed 1 million for the first time. Unfortunately, the most recent Statistics Canada 2021 census data profiles of the Black Canadian community will be released in fall of 2022. As such we are using 2016 census data to draw a profile of the African Nova Scotian population.

In 2016, the Black Canadian population consisted of almost 1.2 million people and by 2036 is projected by Statistics Canada to grow to between 5.0% and 5.6% of Canada's total population. The projected future growth continues upon a historic trajectory; considering that from 1996 to 2016, the Black Canadian population doubled in size. Thus in 2016, Black Canadians comprised 3.5% of Canada's total population and 15.6% of the visible minority population.



The African Nova Scotian Population

In Atlantic Canada, Nova Scotia has the largest Black population and is the fifth largest Black population in Canada. Black Nova Scotians totaled about 22,000 in 2016. They were 2.4% of Nova Scotia's total population.

On “average Black incomes are lower than non-minority incomes with substantial differences in comparable individual incomes. For example, 34% of the Black community is defined as being in low income, using the Low Income Measure (LIM), compared to 17% of the non-minority population. Also 43% of Black individuals make less than \$20,000 a year in income, compared to 31% of the non-minority

Nova Scotians. Black Nova Scotians earned, on average, between 14% and 27% less than their white counterparts. This gap was lowest among those with less than a high-school education (14% lower) and those with a college degree (15% lower). The gap was highest among those with some university education (27% lower) and those with a bachelor's degree or higher (24% lower)" (ANSEPC 2021, pg. 13).

To bridge the economic gap, requires a review of the systemic barriers to equitable educational attainment. Black students, parents, educators and community leaders have long been fighting for proper assessment and policy interventions to improve student outcomes. Inequities in access to culturally relevant curriculum, college preparatory courses, Black teachers, etc. produce spaces that breed racism and Black students' isolation and underachievement. (Hamilton-Hinch et

al 2021; Kakembo et al 2014).

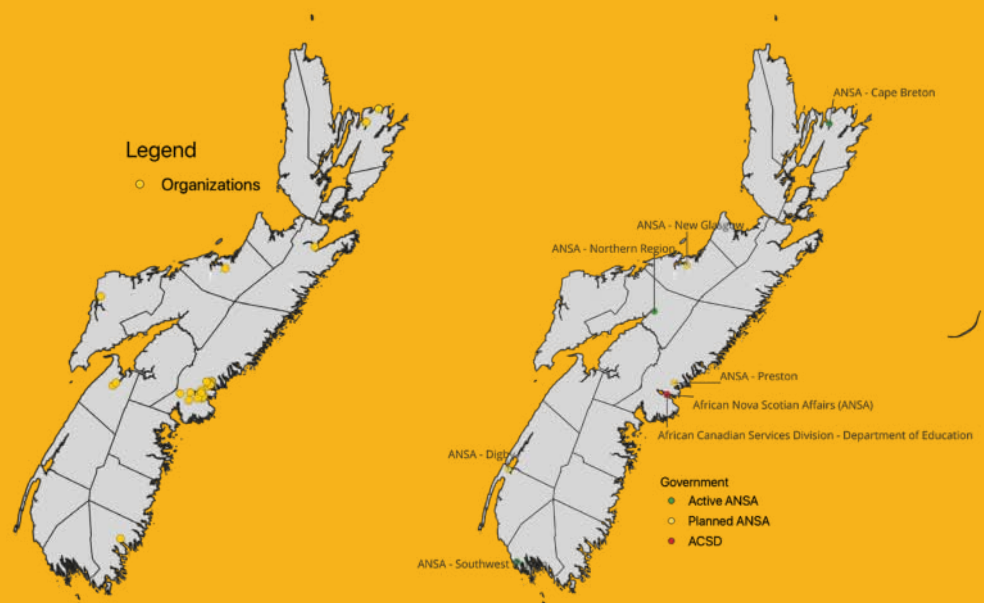
A ten member task force completed the historic 1990-1994 Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report on Education. The BLAC report includes a list of key recommendations; including advising the Nova Scotian government to create the African Canadian Services Division (ACSD) within the Department of Education and Culture. The ACSD was established in February of 1996. The ACSD serves as a key educational and government entity through which transformative policy responses to the ANS community's educational needs are being pursued.

In June of 2021, the ACSD released a policy response, the African Nova Scotian Education Framework, that has been years in the making within the ANS community (DEECE 2021). The seeds of this initiative comes from the Council on African Canadian Education's

*In a series of maps,
we identify: the
original 52 ANS
historic towns,
the location of
Black churches,
ANS-specific
government*

*offices, Black
businesses,
businesses, rural Centre*

Sources: Statistics Canada 2021,
Quebec, and the Black Business Centre

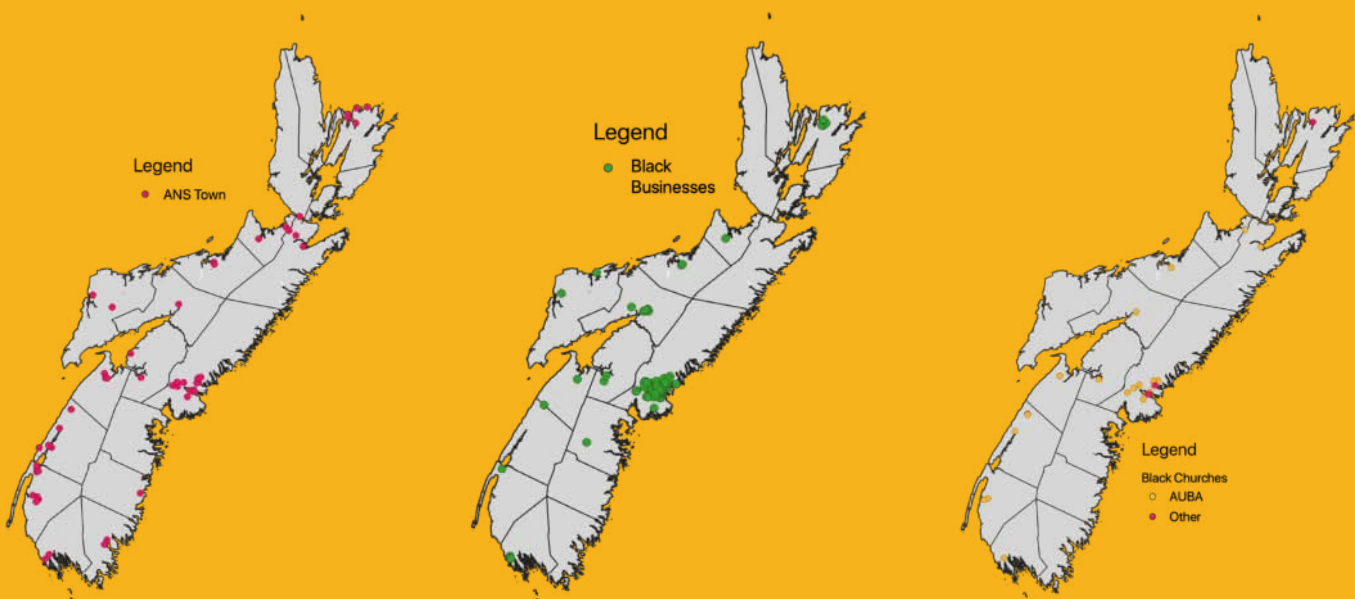


(CACE) 2018 recommendation to develop “an educational framework that would provide provincial education system leadership and accountability to support the well-being and achievement of African Nova Scotian / Black learners.” The framework centers five pillars: authentic self-identification, knowing them as they are known, educational programming and services, empowering parents and families, and equitable access and involvement. The pillars reflect similar Africentric principles being applied in the education sector that the OEGs operationalize for the community planning sector.

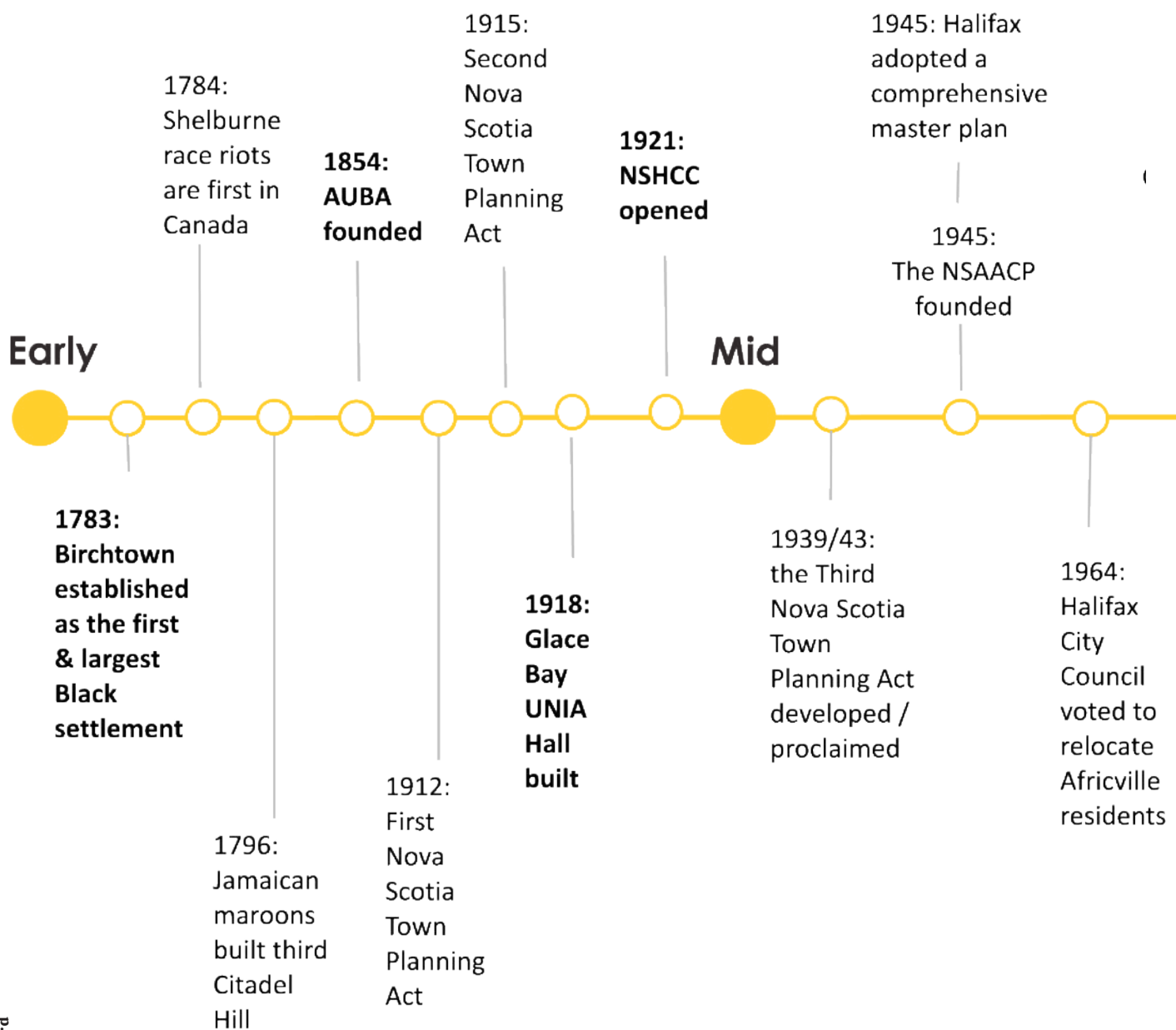
The importance of an Africentric framing is more prescient given the increasing Black population. Although 82.6% of Black Nova Scotians were the second generation or more in their families to live in Canada, there is a growing Black immigrant presence. As such, how one defines members of the Black diasporic

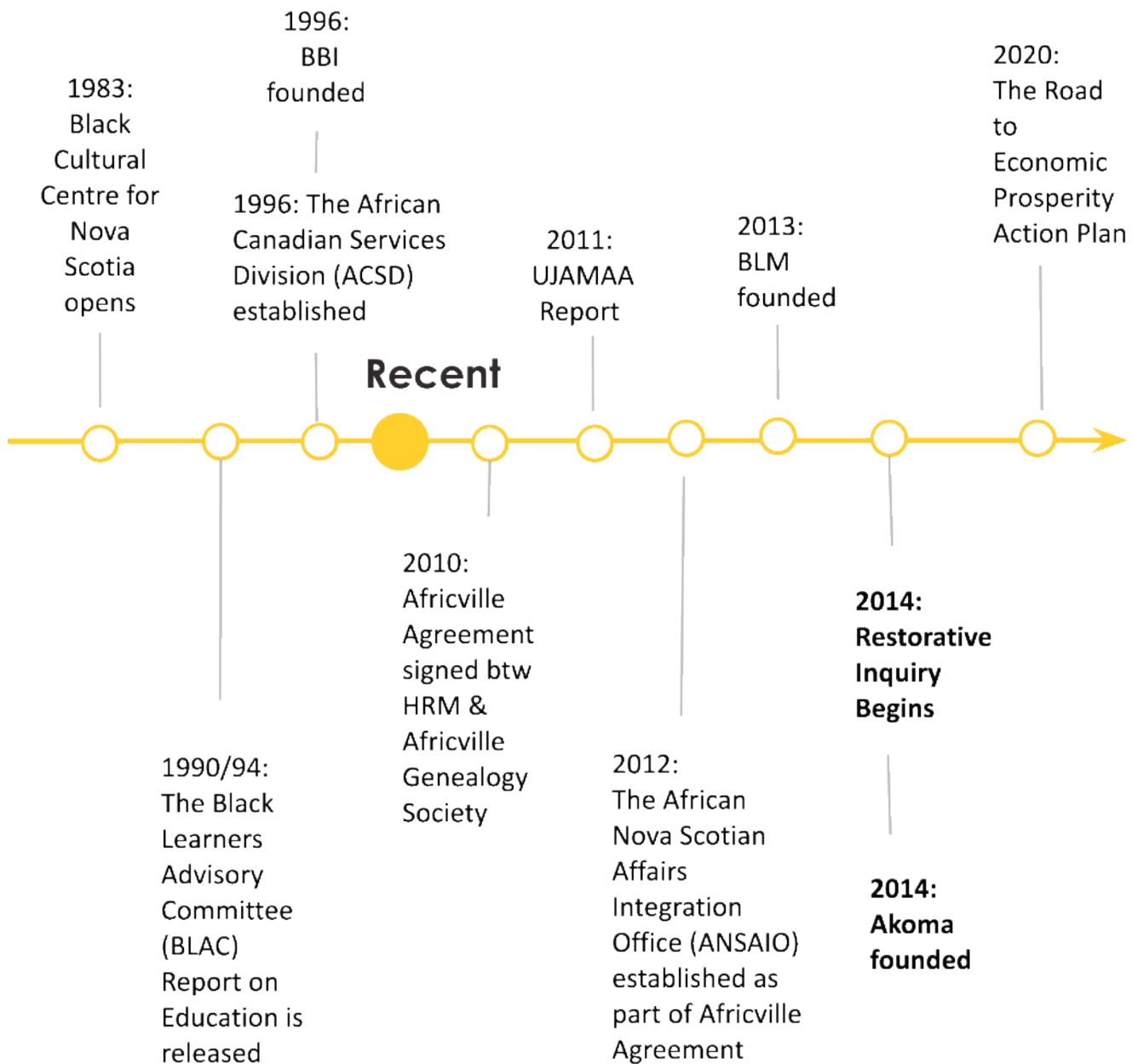
community in Nova Scotia generally and those of the historic African Nova Scotian community specifically is key. This OEG report follows the ANS community’s self-definition: “we worked under the assumption that if someone is Black [in Nova Scotia] and at least a third-generation Canadian, we can say they are part of the ANS community” (ANSEPC 2021, pg. 13).

Thus in 2016, there were roughly 17,325 ANS community members, i.e. Black Nova Scotians who were also third-generation Canadians. It is known that “the ANS community is skewing older over time. The share of the population that are 55+ has increased from 24% in 2006 to 33% in 2016” (ANSEPC 2021, pg. 13). In the Akoma Service Area, 16.6% of the population was 65 years or older in 2016 compared to 15.0% in the Halifax Regional Municipality (Akoma, 2021).



TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS FOR ANS TOWN PLANNING

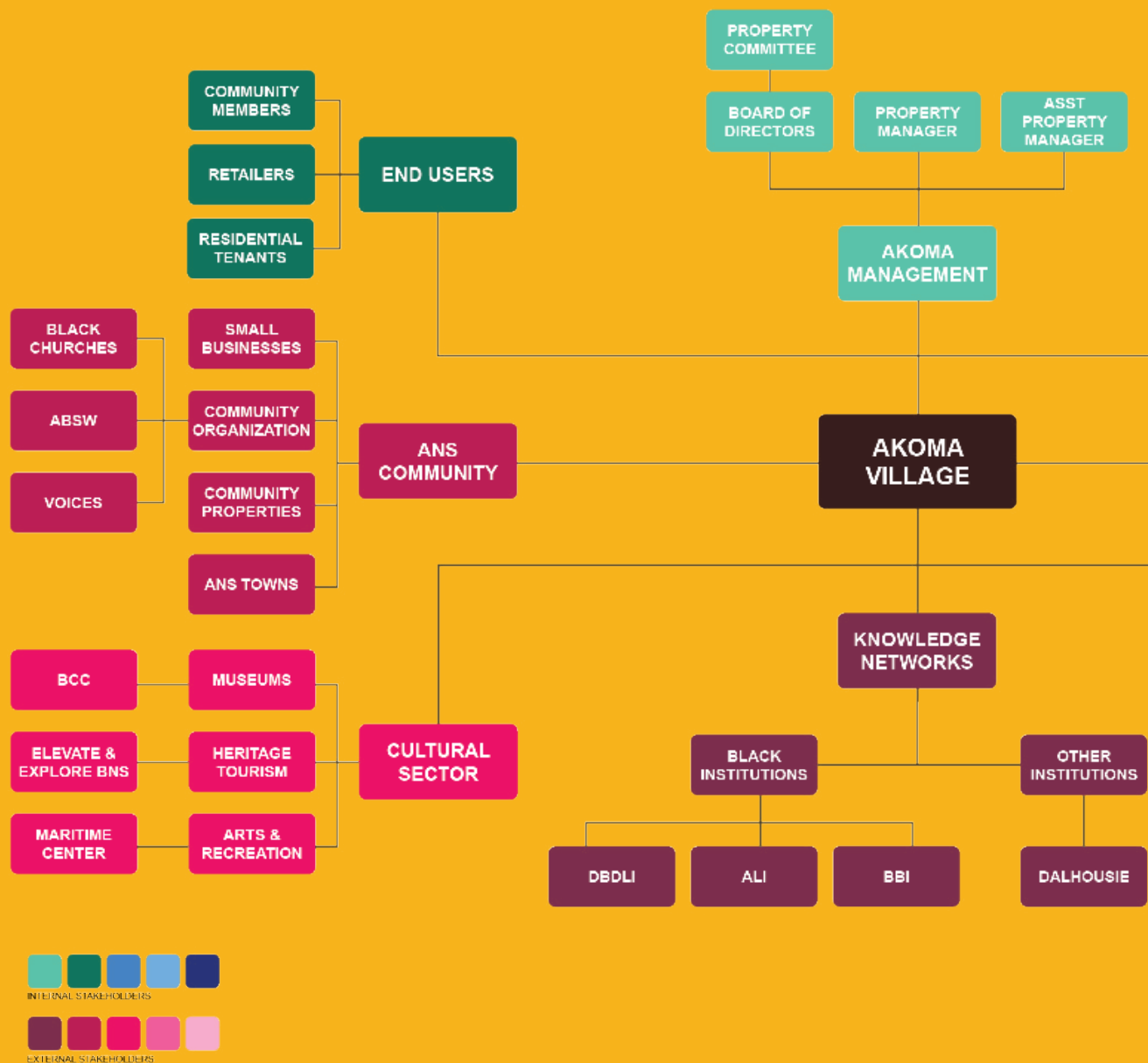




TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder analysis was conducted to analyze and gather data to determine whose interest should be considered through engagement. We use stakeholder mapping as a means to identify the specific audiences for planned outreach and engagement activities. The

stakeholder map below is a visual layout of the Akoma Village project's internal and external stakeholders. The map visually represents the groups and people who impact the Akoma Village project, while identifying the stakeholders' interconnections.



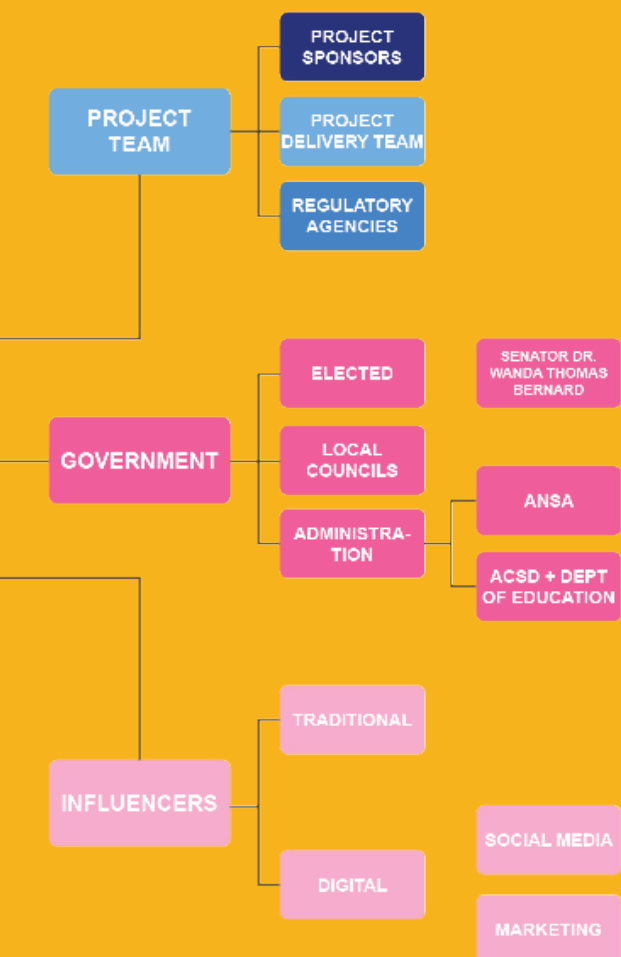
Several audiences have an interest in the Akoma Village Project, and the Outreach and Engagement Plan outlines efforts to connect with each of these audiences in targeted ways. Both internal and external audiences should be involved in the process and are outlined below.

Internal

Internal stakeholders are team members actively participating in delivering the Akoma Village project. Stakeholders' level of engagement may vary but they all have an influence on the project.

Here is a summary list:

- Akoma Holdings management team
- End Users
- Project delivery team
- Project sponsors
- Regulatory agencies



External

External stakeholders are the groups and individuals who will be impacted by the Akoma Village project.

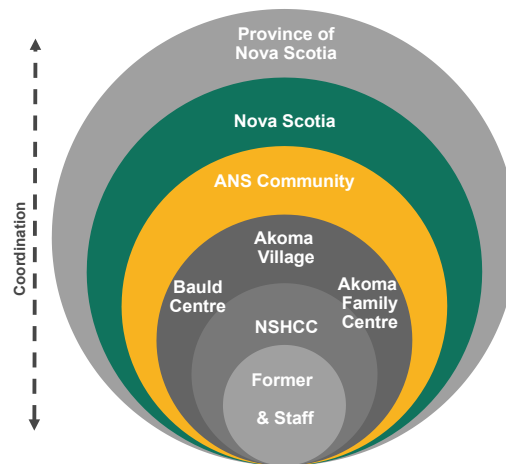
Here is a selective list with a few examples:

- ANS Community
 - ANS Towns
 - Churches / Civic Groups
 - Small Businesses (resident and non-resident owners)
- Cultural Sector
- Knowledge networks
 - Professional/Business Associations: i.e. the Black Business Initiative
 - Local Institutions
- Influencers
 - Nearby Property Owners
- Government

IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS

Visualizing Community

Visualizing the target stakeholder community involved a process of identifying the Africentric relationships of Akoma. The layers begin with an acknowledgment that the original Akoma community members are the former residents and staff of the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children (NSHCC). In the present day, Akoma Holdings serves as an institutional representative of the ANS and wider Black diaspora community in Nova Scotia. A key finding is also the provincial level orientation to coordinating Africentric outreach and engagement of targeted stakeholders.



Akoma's Africentric Relationships

Stakeholder Matrix

It was important to identify various levels of input and interest in the Akoma Village project to help align decisions. To do this a Stakeholder Matrix was developed to locate the groups identified in the stakeholder map. The matrix helps to develop an effective strategy for how often Akoma needs to stay in contact with each stakeholder, to manage their expectations, and how to keep them satisfied and/or informed.

To do this analysis, the stakeholder matrix uses two different dimensions: power of the stakeholder and interest in the outcome of Akoma.

- A stakeholder's level of influence (priority) in the system is how much they can direct or influence a project and other stakeholders.
- The stakeholder's interest is the

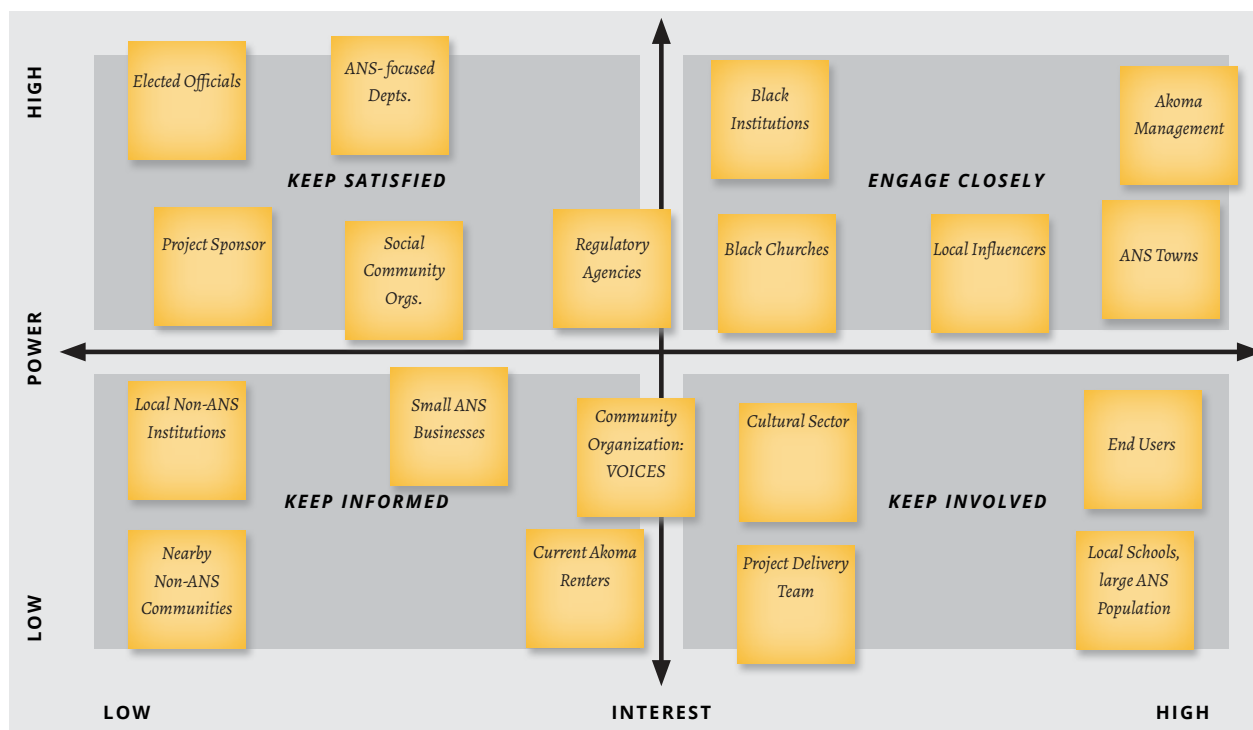
degree to which a stakeholder will be affected by the project.

High-power stakeholders are those who can change Akoma's project idea or even halt it altogether, while low-power stakeholders can't impact the project directly but may have some influence. If the Akoma project has a significant direct impact on a person or organization, they are considered a high-interest stakeholder, while if the project's impact is small or indirect they are a low-interest stakeholder.

Whether low or high power or interest the stakeholders were then grouped into four categories: Engage Closely, Keep Satisfied, Keep Involved, and Monitor.

Note: The analysis was conducted specifically for analyzing stakeholders that can inform the design guidelines. This can be modified for other Akoma projects with the adjustments on interest and power of the stakeholders.

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS



Group 1:

Engage Closely - High influence, highly interested people

Since the aim is to gain input from representatives of the ANS community, organizations with high influence on the ANS community are found in this category. It is imperative to engage the institutions and individuals that represent them or have the most access to them as a collective they are powerful. These groups include Black learning institutions, ANS Churches, Traditional ANS traditional community leaders, and Local influencers with strong ANS following on and offline. Akoma's leadership is also found in this category as they are decision makers and have the highest interest for funds used. The goal is to keep these people fully engaged, make an effort to keep them satisfied.

Group 2:

Keep Satisfied - High influence, less interested people

Agencies such as government officials or departments as well as Akoma Sponsors, are stakeholders with power but their interest in the guidelines may be little. With this group, enough effort should be put in with to keep them satisfied, but not so much that they disengage over too much information. Some people in this category may be able to help as the projects grow and evolve and interest rises. Regulatory Agency, Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) planning department does have some level of interest in Africentric guidelines. Parts of its current guidelines for Akoma are at odds with the ANS informed guidelines, thus engagement efforts should include the HRM planning team to understand the process and needs of the community. This will help in order to inform its decisions on current and future Africentric projects.

Group 3:**Keep Involved - Low influence, highly interested people**

This is a key group as they can help the project gain more momentum and community support. Members of this group may not have influential power to make major decisions such as Akoma Board members but their interest in the project serves as a factor that will create project success. Akoma should keep these groups adequately informed, involve them when possible, and communicate with them to ensure that no key issues are emerging. People in this category can be very helpful in supporting you with the details and making their project a long term success. This group also includes Naysayers that are interested in the project because they do not want it to succeed. Involving naysayers or using methods to help them see why the project should succeed is important. Naysayers that can be swayed to Akoma's favor, especially those within the ANS community, utilize Akoma advocates (stakeholders in this group) to help with promotions that will target Naysayers. It's important for people to see their peers embracing a project and understanding their why.

Group 4:**Keep Informed - Low influence, less interested people**

Not everyone needs to be informed or want to be informed. However, everyone should have access to information to know what is happening at Akoma. Monitor and inform the Keep Informed group, but don't disengage them with overly communicating. Consistent communication helps the stakeholders in this group know that something is happening and when they choose, they can be a part of it, or suggest it to someone else more interested.

***Reminder- This is a living matrix which may shift and change as different reasons for engagement are introduced.*

This matrix is important because using the opinions of the key groups helps shape the project to be successful as it eliminates the use of time and resources overly communicating to stakeholders that do not require it. In addition, Akoma key stakeholders with the most weight and influence can help Akoma gain resources, prioritize competing demands for resources or timelines, and clear potential roadblocks.

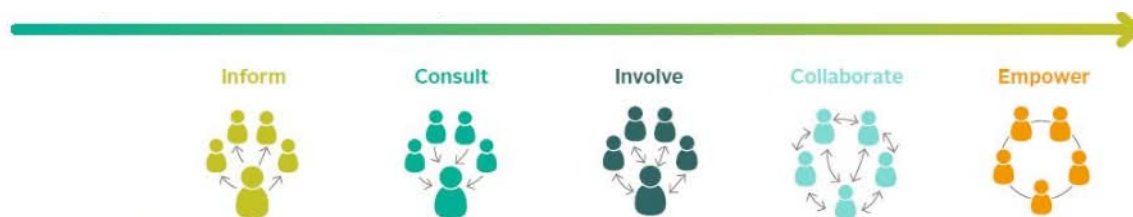
How to use Stakeholder Information

Now that stakeholder groups have been identified, and how they should be engaged, it is important to ensure that representatives of these groups are sought out and included in future engagement activities. The following is recommended for stakeholder representation during the design data collection.

1. The composition of the stakeholders should be like that of the ANS community at large. For example, conclusions on design decisions should not be based on a collection of data from 60% person over 55 years of age and 4% persons under 18 years old. Or the population is made up of families with incomes less than \$30,000, yet participation is had by individuals making more than \$60,000 a year. To do this, use the demographics identified in the background along with the stakeholder matrix to understand how the data collected represents the population and/or that the potential composition of your stakeholders represents the population at large.
2. The process should allow a collective vision of the ANS community to identify and address design guidelines that will meet their needs. Plan and set activities so they are convenient for all persons to attend and be involved. Identify the opportunities and barriers affecting the participation of different stakeholders, particularly that for youth, physically handicapped, single parents, individuals working non-traditional hours, and other groups that may be marginalized, and involve these stakeholders in identifying appropriate methods and approaches to enable their effective participation.
3. Seek and facilitate diverse members of the community to participate and share creative ideas. Consider age, gender, sexuality, ability, and relationship to the neighborhood (and their intersections) in order to better understand ideas for groups typically overlooked.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT



The community has a role in decision making processes that impact them directly or indirectly. Within communities that are usually vulnerable or historically left out of decisions impacting them, Afrocentric form of community engagement requires this key part of the process. “Design, construction, and implementation process should be with community members and is essential to arriving at a plan that aligns with the real needs, capacities, and ideas distinct to the neighborhood and its people.” Co-designing Black Neighborhood Heritage Conservation (BlackSpace, 2019).

To create spaces for diverse involvement in the community process, the OEG uses the Spectrum of Public Participation. The Spectrum was developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) to help clarify the roles of the community in planning or decision-making processes. It identifies five levels of community engagement. From left to right on the Spectrum, influence of the community over decisions increases. Appropriateness of each level depends on the context and goals.

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation Adapted for Akoma Holdings

To address participation using the Africentric approach, each stage of engagement will use varying levels of engagement. These levels will include both Outreach and Engagement opportunities in order to allow community members to participate across a spectrum. Below is an explanation of the levels and what each conveys to the participant.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the community with balanced and unbiased information to help them understand opportunities, alternatives, problems, and solutions.	To receive feedback from the community on inquiries, options, and/or decisions.	To work directly with community members from beginning to end to ensure their concerns and goals are understood and considered.	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision including the development of options and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the community.
PROMISE TO THE COMMUNITY	We will keep you informed.	We will listen to what you have to say.	We will design with you, so your ideas are reflected in the final product.	We will look to you for innovation in developing solutions and incorporate your advice.	We will implement what you decide.

STAGES IN THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The engagement process should be conducted in stages to ensure proper care is taken through out the process to create awareness, solicit feedback and make good decisions and advertise those decisions. This in turn will allow Akoma to monitor, evaluate and record its milestones. The stages for engagement are the following:

01

Set Up

The first step for Akoma is to design an engagement plan and project timeline. Also at this stage, the engagement team should coordinate with local partners and leaders to finalize logistics. Throughout the stages, the engagement plan can be modified to correspond with the current conditions.

RECOMMENDATION FOR SET UP

- Plan should emphasize activities that encourage two way conversations more than informational outreach.
- To ensure proper representation, coordination should include organizations, special interest groups, key populations such as religious communities, disabled people, and other groups with particular needs.
- It is pertinent to diversify the groups that are targeted and the techniques used for outreach in order to reach the greatest number and most representative section of the ANS community.

MATERIALS/ RESOURCES:

- Project timeline:
- Stakeholder Matrix (p. 25)
- Key Messaging
- Engagement Plan Table (Appendix A)
- Barriers to Engagement question list (Appendix A)
- Levels of Engagement Table (p. 30)

STAGES IN THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

02

Outreach

Let people know that the process has begun and set expectations. This stage is also the best time to begin soliciting comments prior to more engaging activities. Solicitation of comments at this stage will allow you to reach stakeholders that are interested in giving you feedback on their own time outside of meetings and groups. The project team should begin reaching out to ALL stakeholders using a low level of engagement (Inform and Consult) to spread awareness of upcoming general events and consult with stakeholders through simple activities.

Any outreach conducted needs to phase in the process needs to be done early (at least two weeks prior to activities) so community members can plan to participate.

As the engagement process is being communicated, trust begins to be established. This step serves as a way to alert the community that “this project affects you and we want you to be a part of it”.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION:

For better representation of the ANS community, go to them. Use strategies found under the inform category under methods in the ‘Toolkit.’

- Build trust with the audience by stating realistic expectations of the process and outcomes, and acknowledge limitations.
- To encourage “planning with” make it known to people who are willing and able to participate that there are diverse opportunities for participating.
- Promote upcoming events three weeks in advance, so people are aware and can spread the word.

STAGES IN THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

- Provide opportunities for people to be able to learn about all that is happening, “catch up”, even if they were not part of earlier phases in the process.
- Update the website and social media with any relevant information.

MATERIALS:

- Communications strategy
- Comment Card (Appendix A)
- Social media tool

03

Co-Design

This stage of the process is a time to create opportunities for dialogue and community visions. It encompasses education, listening, and co-creating. Project team will use different methods of engagement under the Consult, Involve and Collaborate to solicit and record the input from ANS community members.

This will be the heart of the engagement process as it will allow more valuable dialogue and input. Continue to update ALL stakeholders of activities. In activities that encourage Involvement and Collaboration, seek more participation from groups of stakeholders with mid to high interest in the project. In addition, this stage allows room to not only create together, but pass on historical knowledge.

STAGES IN THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Co-Design (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CO-CREATING

- Allow room for knowledge keepers and local storytellers to share within sharing circles so aspects of Akoma's history or other local ANS history is shared and captured in order to inform ideas.
- Explain the scope of work and decision making process.
- Eliminate any barrier by explaining all topics to be discussed and do not use technical jargon. This will help all participants to be comfortable.
- Allow the engagement to be a fun and creative process that celebrates the uniqueness of the different ANS communities and make people want to participate.
- Co-facilitate meetings/activities with local community members and leaders.

MATERIALS:

- Stakeholder Map/ Matrix
- Key Messaging
- Engagement Plan Table (p. 53)
- Engagement toolkit
- Sign in sheet
- Engagement Tips (p. 44)

STAGES IN THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

04

Wrap Up

Illustrating, displaying, and communicating how the process has impacted decision making skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WRAP-UP-

Collect and share feedback throughout the process to assess the success of engagement activities after each engagement. Show how community engagement influenced the outcomes of a project by demonstrating how feedback played a role in the final design.

Inform participants when a decision has been made and of continuing opportunities for engagement on this or similar projects.

RESOURCES:

Key Messaging

Completed Evaluation Forms

Completed comment cards

Collecting and Compiling Data Sheet (p.)

Engagement log (pg. 64)

Engagement report (pg. 65)

Project website (public comments/past events + additional resources) (pg. 63)

KEY MESSAGING

The communications section is meant to help understand the key messaging that should be happening throughout the engagement process. The key messaging aligns with each stage of engagement. There is an overall messaging that should be used to create advocacy for the project and create ownership - this messaging should be sustained throughout the engagement process in addition to specific messaging aligned with individual stages. Notice that stage 1, set up, does not have messaging since that is an internal process.

01

OVERALL MESSAGE

The overall messaging strategy for the planning process is to create community advocacy and ownership. This can be achieved in how we speak, what we say, when and where we say it, and by following through commitments. Messaging should always lead with our focus on community participation.

The following general messaging can be used to discuss the project and design process and will be revised as needed throughout the project.

Specific messaging for phases, events, and tactics will be developed throughout the project.

To ensure the Akoma Village represents our community's collective vision, we are committed to working with our community to plan for our future.

It's our time to make spaces that honor our heritage. Plan with, Design with. As opposed to simply replicating designs of African buildings, the Design Guideline process will engage the community in the process of creating designs that illuminate our ancestry and our culture.

02

OUTREACH

The strategy in the Activate Phase is to provide project information and set the foundation for the Design process, and will focus on more active and organized, or readily available audiences (Including online podcasts and communities). Methods best used for this phase are ones that build awareness which fall under **INFORM** and **CONSULT**.

What makes a community a place to call home? Tell us about the things or features that make you feel at home?

Learn more about Akoma Village and the Africentric Design Guidelines and tell us how to stay connected with you. [Click here](#) or join us in person.

KEY MESSAGING

OUTREACH (CONT.)

02

Messaging will include introductory and educational information on the process, designed to spark interest and invite audiences to think about their vision for Akoma. Any calls to action should direct audiences to learn more on the website,

Save the Date! We will be helping determine design ideas together at the 100 anniversary of the Home. Co-design is XX, XX, 2022.

CO-DESIGN

03

The strategy for Co-design is to begin engagement efforts and seek feedback on the ideas developed. Project team should be intentional in capturing information in diverse communities around Nova Scotia in person and online.

Project team shall be careful to make engagement easy and convenient for the participants. This phase includes activities such as consulting, crowd-sourcing, surveys, and hands-on activities that capture ideas and allow community members to be creative and enjoy the process.

Methods should range from activities found under **CONSULT**, **INVOLVE**, and **COLLABORATE** on the tools methods.

Messaging will share more on the design process and ask for feedback related to big picture issues, opportunities, and challenges facing the community. Any calls to action will direct audiences to engage with us in a variety of ways.

Think about your ideal Akoma Village. What does it look like, and how is it different from your community today? How should it look and feel?

For us, by us! We're excited for you to join the designing of Akoma during our big Design Day through fun and play and much more. Come help us shape the future of Akoma Village.

Calling all ANS members, it's our time now. Come help us design the Akoma Village. Learn more about the Akoma Village and the Africentric Design process. Click or join us in person.

Can't come to the big design event? Grab or request a kit for you and your family/friends to have fun creating your own Akoma Village, having conversation and sharing your thoughts with us.

KEY MESSAGING

04

WRITE UP

The Guidelines Development phase strategy is to analyze community feedback and ideas and share updates and outcomes through a variety of communication channels. This phase is crucial as it continues to strengthen trust as transparency continues to occur. Methods for this phase should use a combination of methods found in **INFORM** and **CONSULT**.

Messaging will focus on sharing the outcomes and outline how community voices were heard and how early ideas are being incorporated into the Plan.

In the Design Guideline Draft phase, the data collected starts to take shape. We're working with our architects to examine and incorporate all that you shared, direction, and other contributions from all of our participants.

Here's what we heard; here's how it is being incorporated into the Design Guidelines; [continue to share updates and outcomes]

We're still listening. Come join the conversation at events, surveys, and more. Join us in person or [click here](#) to learn more about the Akoma Village.

05

WRAP UP

The strategy for this phase includes finalizing the Design Guidelines among the Akoma boards and sharing the co-designed Design Guidelines status through various methods such as community meetings and events. The goal of sharing the status is to gain advocates among the HRM planning department and leadership to approve proposed variances or alternative guidelines. Methods for this phase should use a combination of methods found in **INFORM** and **CONSULT**.

Messaging will focus on outcomes, including how community involvement was incorporated and led to the final vision and Plan.

We are working to finalize the Design Guidelines for Akoma Village, and we still need your involvement. Visit our website and let us know what you think.

Let us know what you think. We're sharing the Design Guidelines for Akoma Village status and want to hear from you.

Learn more about where we are in the process and how to get involved. Call, click or join us in person.

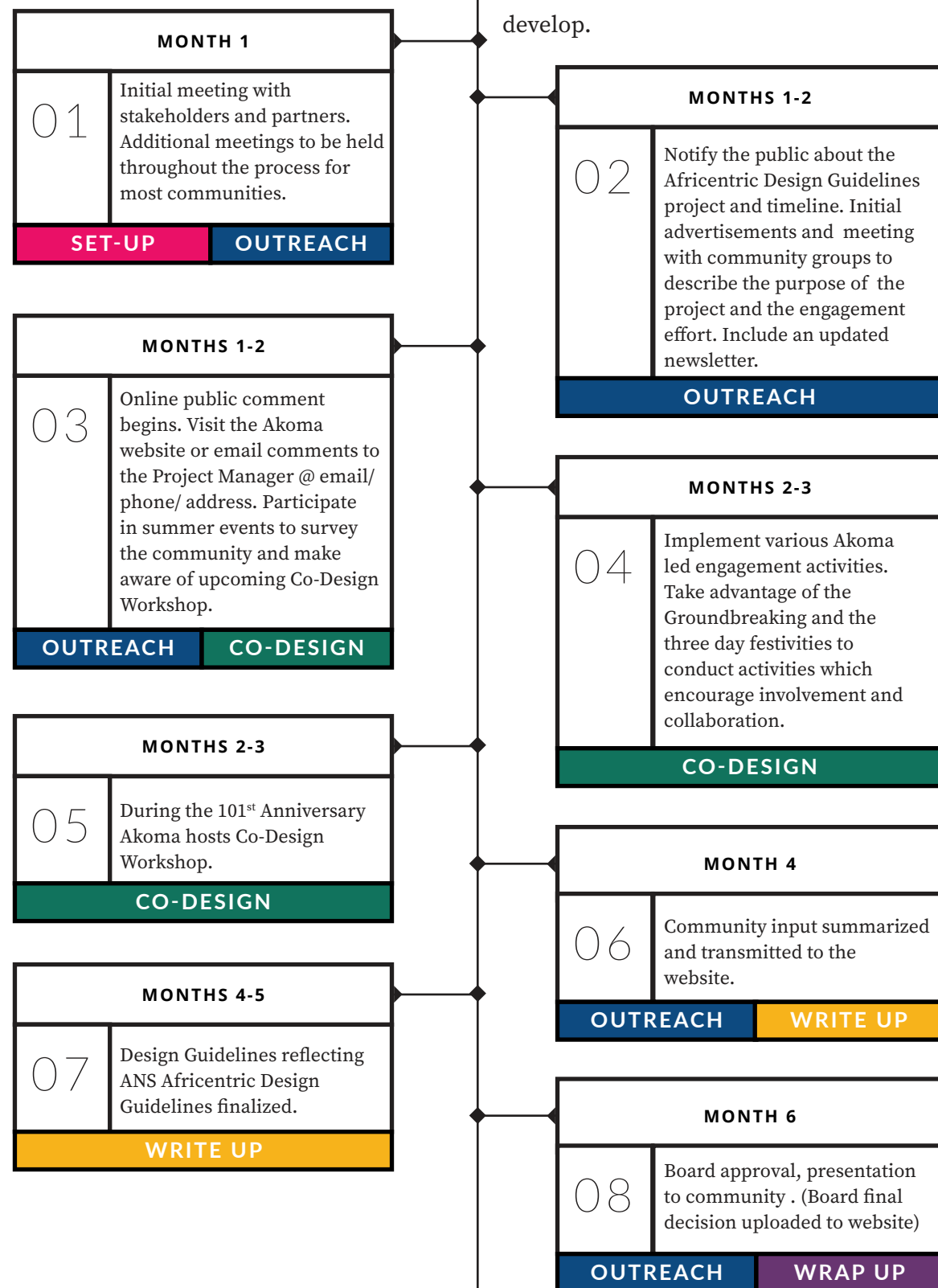
We heard you. Here are the African Nova Scotian Africentric Design Guidelines.

METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

The methods identified here will assist at each level of the engagement process. This list is not exhaustive and modifications may have to occur to adjust to real conditions. It is important to note that the activities selected align with one or more of the guiding principles. It is encouraged that engagement used by Akoma include a blend of activities across the levels of engagement and guiding principles. The types of engagement activities listed in the table below and in the supporting toolkit have been selected to assist Akoma in involving the community in the on-going design process.

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
We Inform You Akoma provides the public with information to assist them in understanding the ideas, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	You Inform Us Contact Use methods to seek feedback on the proposals, analyses and alternatives. Work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that issues and concerns are understood and considered. Involve Allowing consultation to happen through a two way communication that involves the community.	We Inform Each Other Collaborate with the public on some or all aspects of the planning decision-making process, including the identification of issues, development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.		
MARKETS, FAIRS, & EVENTS	SOCIAL MEDIA	POP - UP BRAINSTORMING	ANS PHOTO CONTEST	COMMUNITY
WEBSITE	COMMENT FORMS / BOOKS	TOUR OF AKOMA PROPERTY	ADVISORY BOARD	DESIGN TOGETHER KIT
SMS MESSAGING	ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS	SURVEYS	VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY	DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS
NEWSLETTERS/ FACT SHEETS	INFORMATION KIOSKS	STORYTELLING WORKSHOP	CHILDREN ARCHITECTS	CO- DESIGN WORKSHOP
EMAIL DISTRIBUTION	RESPONSIVE SUMMARIES	GALLERY WALK	KITCHEN TABLE TALKS	
PUBLICITY	PHONE	MEDIA RELEASE	VISUALIZATION ACTIVITIES	
OFFICE HOURS/ COFFEE HOUR				
COMMUNITY MEETINGS				

SAMPLE TIMELINE



MONITORING & EVALUATION

Monitoring & Evaluation

An engagement summary is developed and refined at the end of each engagement phase. Project staff should summarize the information collected, the lessons learned, and evaluate the engagement tools used. The output should be available on Akoma's web page. The input analysis will assist the project team in determining stakeholder ideas and opinions shared. Sample evaluation tools found in Appendix.

Feedback Loop

As part of the engagement plan, the project team will be responsible for gathering and disseminating the public's input to decision makers and back to the public at large. This is a necessary component for a successful project. The team will compile the community's comments throughout the planning process. Comments will be integrated into ongoing work and reported to the Project leader. The project team will brief the Property Committee and Akoma Board as well as the general public through the website, Akoma newsletter and local media outlets.

Community Involvement Evaluation

Evaluation of the community involvement will be completed upon completion of engagement activities. Tools for evaluation should include:

- Comment Cards
- Short questionnaires following events
- Team debriefs forms following meetings and events

METHODS FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

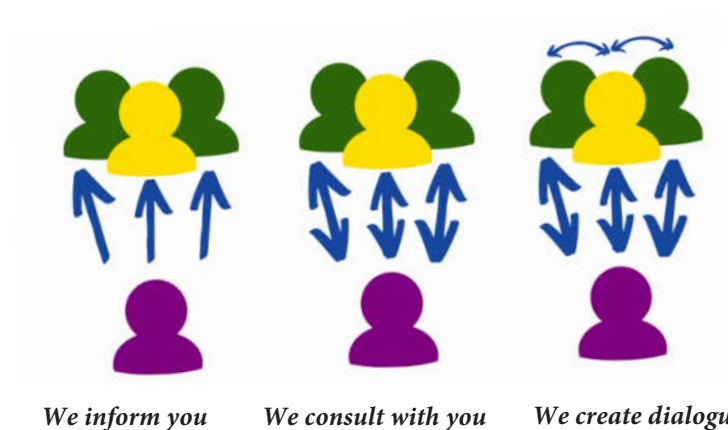
ENGAGEMENT TIPS

Community Contact

For this engagement process, some engagement activities are one-time activities aimed at targeting a specific idea. Yet, there is a need for ongoing engagement about design guidelines. It is imperative to determine at the onset of the project the ways in which Akoma will continue to communicate with participants. This will help with other projects Akoma will present in the future. Using simple tools such as social media platforms requesting feedback and posting records of public input can improve communication with the ANS community and in turn build confidence in the process or trust. By identifying some of these tools, we are increasing the likelihood that the Project Team is perceived to be open and responsive to the ANS community.

Building Positive Dialogue

Since the Akoma Village is gaining more interest, community engagement should be a dialogue. In this two-way conversation, the Project Team and the community members speak and listen so designs are shared and discussed. This is a time to share information, understandings, and opinions. The following figure illustrates three types of communication with the public. Dialogue overtime is the aim. Consider the type of dialogue you need and the appropriate tools for that point in the process (Pittsburgh, 2019).



Reaching Vulnerable Populations

There are usually populations that are hardest to engage. For these groups, a single invite by email will not be sufficient to attract all potential participants. Consider multiple modes of outreach including through individual networks. Some groups who are difficult to reach with traditional communication methods include:

- Victims of the old home
- Youths and the elderly
- People with disabilities
- Families with young children
- People who do not belong to organized groups
- Unemployed people
- Smaller ANS communities that are outside of Halifax region
- People resistant to development plans

I. Logistics of Africentric Community Engagement

Proper logistics is essential to engaging with the community. Regardless of the engagement tools chosen, the following should be addressed.

Facilitator/ Host:

The host usually sets the tone to participation. It is important to consider the relationship or the history the host has in the community, if any. Ensure the host understands their role prior to the engagement. Host/ Facilitator should encourage the participation of all participants. It would be advantageous for the host or co-host to be a professional that is trained in working with individuals with trauma. As the home has a history of trauma, it is important to have staff that can help facilitate such dialogue and include all in the decision-making process including naysayers. Lisa Berglund & Alexandra Kitson reported in their work on Trauma informed planning that the inclusion of decision making helps reduce the feeling of passivity and helplessness (Berglund & Alexandra 2021).

Staffing:

Use individuals/ volunteers to serve by setting up, welcoming and check-in, and meeting facilitation. The team should include a professional that is trained in working with Trauma filled communities.

Venue:

Ensure that the engagement activity is located close to the community in which you are expecting attendance. The Nova Scotian community is dispersed throughout the province. Major engagement activities should be set at locations close to these communities and the same activity may need to be repeated at different locations in order to obtain representation of the community (See 'Engagement Tips' for collecting data). Choose a site that is common ground for the community and considered a safe space.

Accessibility:

Ensure that the location is wheelchair accessible and approved for people with disabilities. Learn if sign language will be necessary. Have printed material in large font; use microphones when possible and make sure all websites & all documents are ADA compliant.

Time:

Activities should be held when the majority of your intended audience will be available. Hold events in coordination of existing activities when you have a specific audience in mind.

Press Coverage:

Prepare press releases to disseminate to local media outlets, especially those listened to, read, or viewed by a significant portion of the ANS community. Prepare your social media strategy (see 'Social Media Tool').

The above is borrowed and modified from the Pittsburgh Department of City Planning.

II. Ways to Share information

During different stages in the process, information will need to be shared to the stakeholders. There are three reasons for information sharing.

1. Awareness: Information is being shared in a manner to make the public aware of the engagement activities or program. These campaigns are used to get people's attention, to make people want to learn more or learn how to get involved.
2. Education or information sessions- These sessions are done to educate the community about a particular topic. It is done in a fashion that is crafted to ensure complex information is well received by its audience.
3. Feedback Loop- Sharing with stakeholders the comments and other data collected and how they have been addressed.

Akoma currently utilizes information sessions to small and large groups such as the sessions held in 2021 by Akoma when informing the public about Akoma's proposed growth. Consider utilizing a variety of methods to share information for all three reasons.

III. Collecting and Compiling Community Input

Africentric engagement is founded on involvement of stakeholders and their input, to collect this information is essential for decisions to be made. Input from the community can be difficult to decipher as the project team decides what information is representative of the ideas of most members.

There are three ways information is collected and used.

1. Individual inquiries- Individuals respond to an in-person questionnaire or online survey or interview in order to use the results to present the view of the respondent.
2. Representative research- Individuals respond to a survey instrument or in a group activities where the results are generalized for a larger population. In these cases, the tool

used should be designed to gather the information from a statistically valid representation of the larger population.

3. Polling- polling or voting is a method used to make decisions based on preference of the majority.

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APPENDIX A

Engagement Plan Table											
Goals/ Outcome		(What is hoped to be achieved?)									
ENGAGEMENT METHOD	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT <i>(Ensure the mix that includes involve, collaborate)</i>	GUIDING PRINCIPLES REALIZED	TARGET AUDIENCE <i>(Stakeholders)</i>	LED BY	COLLABORATORS	QUANTITY TO BE HELD	START & END DATE	MATERIALS	GEOGRAPHY/ LOCATION	RESOURCES	How will you update on feedback and decisions?
Website Updates	Inform/ Consult	Trust	All ANS communities	Assistant Director	None	1	5/1/2020-	Digital media	Global	Website Developer, Akoma Website	
Hands-on meeting	Collaborate	Plan with, Design with	Local ANS community members	Project Team	Local church leaders, ABSW, Local Recreation Centers	2	5/2/2020-5/3/2020	Recycled materials, tape, colorful mediums of various sizes	Four ANS communities	Food: \$300 Flyers: \$150 Childcare, ASL, Therapist	

REFLECTION

Barriers to Engagement Question List

When planning the engagement process, be sure to consider potential barriers to engagement and the potential tools to address those barriers. This is an important step in providing access to community members so they are a part of the solution.

Questions to ask during the planning process:

- Are there technology or literacy skills needed that may be difficult for people with less education or from another generation?
- Do we have a professional that can help navigate community questions that stem from a history of mistrust or neglect?
- Is the event held in an ADA compliant location?
- Are activities held at a variety of times to accommodate people with alternative work schedules?
- Are there alternative activities that would be appropriate for children available for their participation?
- Is childcare an issue for a parent? Should childcare be provided?
- Have you considered how the team will manage power dynamics and differences around race, age, sexuality, gender, and culture during public activities?

Africentric Engagement Log						
Event Name	Date of Event	Date Advertised	Tool	Key Stakeholder	Attendance	Would you repeat? If no why not?

COMMENT CARDS

AFRICENTRIC DESIGN STARDARDS

AKOMA HOLDINGS *Comment Card*

• **Write** or **draw** your ideas here. Then **drop it** in the comment box or **tweet** them to **#XXXXXX** •

• Akoma Holdings, LLC •

• www.akoma.ca •

• info@akoma.ca •

EVENT SUMMARY

Akoma Village Design Standards Event Summary	
Logistics	Stakeholders
Event :	Name of Groups/ Organizations Represented
Location:	1.
Date:	2.
Time:	3.
Prepared By:	4.

1. What were the goals of the engagement activity?

- ☐ 1. Meaningful and Impactful Dialogue:
Improving ANS quality of life, business, and/or environment.
- ☐ 2. Inclusive Representation:
Ensuring the perspective and participation of our diverse groups

- ☐ 3. Access to information:
Information is available to the public in a manner that that allows them to participate in the process.
- ☐ 4. Effective and efficient use of resources:
Being good stewards of Akoma resources.

2. Identify the goals of the engagement achieved?

3. Please describe the engagement methods that were used.

4. What were the the top three themes that arose from the engagement?

5. Additional Comments

TOOLKIT

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Introduction

As noted in the guide, the spectrum of engagement levels allows for stakeholders to participate in a range of effort from minimal participation of merely hearing or reading information to empowerment where stakeholders make final decisions. Alone, each level is not enough to have effective participation of the community. It is encouraged that engagement used by Akoma include a blend of activities across the levels of engagement and aligned with guiding principles

The methods identified here will assist at each level of the engagement process. This list is not exhaustive and modifications may have to occur to adjust to real conditions. It is important to note that the activities selected align with one or more of the guiding principles.

The “toolkit” is a collection of techniques organized by level on the Engagement Spectrum in order to help project implementers to select appropriate methods based on what they are trying to achieve through the engagement. Each tool is accompanied by a description and list of resources needed.

Also included in the toolkit are ready to use tools to begin engaging immediately with the community.

When choosing a “tool”, Akoma should consider location, the audience, and the desired outcomes.



ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

INFORM

Markets, Fairs, and other Events

Host an information stand or session at community events to showcase plans or present designs

Resources:

- Boards with introduction and illustrations on how to participate and ways to engage.
- Fliers to hand out
- Volunteers to present at stands

SMS Messaging

Send mass text messages, voice messages, surveys and more to convey short information.

Resources:

- Mass messaging platforms such as Trumphia

Newsletters/ Fact Sheets

Inform and remind subscribers of relevant events and information in an entertaining and graphically striking document. They can be available electronically on the Akoma Holdings web page as well as a hard copy located at affiliated members locations and public locations such as the libraries and recreation centers. In addition, E-Mail out monthly newsletters about the happenings with Akoma. Ensure the newsletter is brief but meaningful.

Resources:

- List serve for network members
- Website with ways for community to subscribe to newsletter
- Uniform branding of newsletter for a pleasant reading experience

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

- Photos from events
- Project team members to gather photos, quotes, comments, etc. from participants, and write short articles

Website

Update the website with information that helps the community understand the overall project and how they can be involved. It should also include general descriptions of events, photos, comments/quotes from attendees, visions for the future, etc.

Resources:

- Branding for the website for a pleasant reading experience
- Camera to take photos of event
- Project team to gather photos, quotes, comments, and more from participants

Publicity

Use tools like business cards and billboards to broadcast and remind of community events in a fun way.

Resources:

- Business Cards with Akoma's information

Office Hours/ Coffee Hour

Set up shop near stakeholders to offer regular in-person updates and discussions.

Resources:

- Set up a tent/table to sit for a couple hours at frequented places such as the recreation center or libraries.
- Project display or materials for reference and advertising
- Sticky notes, comment cards, pens, paper, and business cards

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Community Meetings

Project team attends meetings held within the communities and civic groups as available and appropriate to provide information and gain feedback. The aim is to meet with diverse groups that represent all members within our community with emphasis in our vulnerable groups.

Resources:

- Community calendar
- Presentation
- Informational resources

CONSULT

Social Media

Use social media platforms to create awareness in the days before an event or at an event. This will attract people to engage or observe what is happening as well as show others what is happening. It was found that Akoma's younger population preferred platforms such as Instagram, whereas the older population utilized Facebook more. Utilize popular local podcasts to give and receive information on the show. .

Resources:

- Increase Network of followers on the diverse social media platforms
- Mobile device with camera and ability to edit photos and text on social media
- Mobile devices to live stream events on Instagram or Facebook

Comment Forms / Books

Allow people, especially those who are less vocal, to provide comments and views individually, and discreetly if needed.

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Resources

- Utilize comment cards, guest books, forms, or emails
- Writing utensil

“One-on-One Meetings”

Meet with stakeholders individually or in small groups to facilitate more natural and informal conversation.

Resources:

- Neutral Meeting location

Information Kiosks

Increase awareness and provide the general public with easy-to-access information. Possibly at Akoma, recreation center, libraries, and churches, small businesses around the province.

Resources:

- Informational Flyers
- Comment Box
- Table
- Display
- Giveaways (optional)

Responsive Summaries

Consolidate feedback into a report and share it on the website and newsletters.

Resources:

- Akoma Website Update
- Comment Cards/ Surveys

Phone

A special phone line is available for public comment. This line can be

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

sent straight to voicemail for recordings .

Resource:

- Free temporary Phone Line such as Google Voice

INVOLVE

Pop - Up Brainstorming

Use an idea comment poster, graffiti board, or chalkboard wall to seek open-ended input and let comments be visible to others. Provide writing material so people can add their ideas to the “notebook”. Write a question that will create dialog such as “What color describes you best and why?; Where should we put benches in your neighborhood? What indoor activity are we missing in our community?

Resources:

- Use an idea comment poster
- graffiti board
- chalkboard wall
- Proper writing tools



Pasco County Neighborhood Notebook (Naturecoaster.com)

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Tour of Akoma Property

Host an open house of the Akoma property for opportunities to understand the ideas of the village and allow visitors to share ideas of design afterwards. For communities far from Akoma Village, do this through the gallery walk. Include a facilitator or co-facilitator (preferably from ANS community) that has experience using trauma informed methods to guide community members as they tell their own stories.

Resources:

- Comment Cards
- Sticky notes for comments

Surveys

Surveys online and located at pop-up booths will be used to gain perspectives of stakeholders.

Resources:

- Hard copies of surveys
- Locations for distribution

Storytelling Workshop

Learn about historical memories directly from residents through firsthand images and lived experiences.

Resources:

- Creative storytelling through various mediums
- Photos

Gallery Walk

Discussion technique allows participants to be actively engaged as they walk throughout the “gallery”. They work together in small groups to share ideas and respond to meaningful questions and images. Include a facilitator or co-facilitator (preferably from ANS community) that

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

has experience using trauma informed methods to guide community members as they tell their own stories.

Resources:

- Chart Paper
- Images
- Documents
- Quotes
- Walls or Display Stands

Media Release

Announcements regarding key meetings, events, and document releases will be distributed through a press release. This will include all Akoma electronic mailing lists of interested community members.

Resources:

- List serve for network members
- Interesting, brief press release

COLLABORATE

Photo Contest

Through pictures, ANS community will illustrate the areas they most enjoy in Nova Scotia. This information will allow decision makers to understand what is pleasing to community members and other stakeholders regarding where they live, work, or play. Winning pictures can be used on our site and/ or marketing material.

Resources:

- Flyer

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

- Social media posts
- Website for announcements

Advisory Board

Advisory Boards are specific Councils which meet on particular topics. Presentations and working sessions will be scheduled to receive input from these Councils. Events will occur during specific council's regularly occurring meetings.

Resources:

- Identification of key ANS community members and technical experts willing and able to volunteer their time and knowledge
- Space to have meetings

Visual Preference Survey

Have participants vote, perhaps electronically, on images to get feedback on visual preferences.

Resources:

- Social media platform/ Website
- Sticky Notes for voting
- Images (electronic and printed)
- Poster board
- Survey platform

Children Architects

With craft material design a prototype of their ideal playground. Process should begin with designing on paper and describing why they designed what they designed. Then students can build their prototype using cardboard, tubes and recyclables.

Resources:

- Paper

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

- Cardboard
- Recyclables
- Art supplies

Kitchen Table Talks

Bring people together in simultaneous rounds of conversation through a cafe or family table setting. Making rounds of conversation at multiple tables. Idea is to mimic family conversations in or near the kitchen table. Utilize the new Akoma cafe to help set the mood for sessions with the surrounding community.

Resource:

- Facilitators/ hosts
- Flip charts, paper, sticky notes, pens, etc
- Prepared questions and directions
- Chairs, tables, tablecloths
- Refreshments

Visualization Activities

Use art to suggest design ideas and preferences on images. This can take the form of Sip and Paint with facilitation of discussion afterwards. Include a facilitator or co-facilitator (preferably from ANS community) that has experience using trauma informed methods to guide community members as they tell their own stories.

Resources:

- Paint, crayons, collage
- Stickers (icons or dots) to display preference
- Paper for art work (no particular size)



Above is a sample of a preference survey used for benches. Participants use the dots to vote on most preferred bench design. Credit: Ahbelab.com

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

EMPOWER

Community Liaison Group

A group of citizens will serve as a representing body of the general public in the first part of engagement. Their primary role will be to serve as initial stakeholders participating in the outreach initiative, becoming educated about Akoma's plans and process, and serve as a sounding board to the engagement activities being proposed, then spread the word within their networks.

Resources:

- Identification of key ANS community members willing and able to volunteer their time and knowledge
- Space to have meetings

Design Together Kit

Provide communities an accessible activity in a kit for them to facilitate design visioning workshops with affinity groups. Consider creating one with

Resources:

- Facilitator Guide
- Akoma Background Summary
- Sample Invitation
- Discussion Questions and Activity
- Post-Meeting Facilitator Form and Instructions
- Meeting-in-a-Box Community Input Form and Instructions
- Meeting Resources to present high-level information about Akoma Village.
- Boxes or folders to materials

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Demonstration Projects

Use temporary installations and tactical urbanism to test ideas or demonstrate potential conditions.

Resources:

- Use boxes, pillows, or any other materials to design ideal spaces.

Co- Design Workshop

Designing with end users / stakeholders for the purpose of data discovery and exploration to guide design decisions. Usually facilitated by design practitioners to guide participants through the design process, and leveraging their expertise.

Resources:

- A venue centrally located near intended audience
- Materials to complete meeting activity (See page for specifics)
- Staff/facilitators to run smaller group discussions
- Refreshments

READY-TO-USE TOOLS

ANS PHOTO CONTEST



Capture what makes the ANS communities special!

Photographers of all ages are encouraged to send those great shots of special places in Nova Scotia that makes them feel at home. Snap pictures of the Province's wonderful architecture, parks and trails, local businesses, neighborhoods, natural features, or anywhere you love to be! Photos will illustrate places that are special in Nova Scotia. Photos submitted may be used by Akoma Holdings, LLC to inform the Akoma Village Africentric Design Guidelines and/or promotional purposes.

Photo entry is open to ANS community members.

Prizes & Recognition: Contest Rules:

Winners will be revealed at the 101 Anniversary of the Home, and then recognized via Instagram and Facebook and the Akoma's website.

Prizes in the form of gift cards will be given out to the First, Second, and Third place photos which will be decided by a random selection committee.

The top three photos will be displayed in the Old Home for three months.

- Capture special places in Nova Scotia! All of the photos submitted must be within Nova Scotia. Any photos which were taken outside of the Province will be disqualified.
- Photos must be submitted with name, location of picture, and best contact number.
- Photographers of all ages and levels are welcome and encouraged to participate! Youth participants must have authorization from a parent/guardian.
- Participants can submit up to five (5) photos, but are only eligible to win on one submission.
- All photo can be submitted via Facebook, Instagram or sent to xxxxxx@xxxxx.com. Submissions should be tagged #XXXXXXX and private message participant's email.
- If photos are taken via a Cell Phone, the photo must be submitted Actual Size. Images with resolution lower than the requested size will not enlarge and print clearly for framing, resulting in disqualification for judging. The preferred photo should be high resolution with a minimum measurement of 2560 x 1980 pixels at 300 DPI and a file size of no less than 3MB.
- Judges will consist of a random selection committee.
- All photos will be accepted as long as it is original work created by the entrant and the photo does not infringe on copyrights, trademarks, moral rights, privacy/publicity of a person or entity, and/or no other party has the rights to the photo.
- Photos which have not been received within the contest period will not be considered.
- Akoma Holdings reserves the right to change any of the rules for the contest as necessary. Rule changes would be announced via the Akoma website page at XXXX.

SURVEY TOOL

The following survey questions are suggestions for community distributed survey to gauge interest and priorities around the design and planning of the Akoma Village.

Questions

1. In your opinion, which outdoor public spaces are the highest priority to create supportive spaces for gathering the ANS community? (Rank in order of importance to you, 1 having the highest priority and 6 the lowest)
 - Lakes
 - Memorial grounds
 - Gardens
 - Plazas/ squares
 - Courtyards (between buildings)
 - Lawn
2. Akoma Village is meant to be a model of how a Black-centered community development can look and feel. Select up to 5 elements that are key to a thriving village atmosphere:
 - Pedestrian Streets
 - Street level shops
 - Single family housing
 - Multi family housing
 - Paved and landscaped outdoor gathering areas
 - Social services (offices)
 - Food market
 - Gardens (food and flowers)
 - Play and recreation areas
 - Transportation options (bus, bicycles, scooters, car parking)
3. If you had \$10,000 to improve your street what would you spend it on? (assign your budget according to your priorities and not based on the cost of elements)
 - \$_____ Trees and planting
 - \$_____ Benches and seating elements
 - \$_____ Sidewalk paving
 - \$_____ Street paving
4. What are the rooms in your home used for (or by whom)? (Excluding kitchen and bathroom)
 - Room 1
 - Room 2
 - Room 3
 - Room 4
 - Room 5
 - Room 6
5. What word best describes the ANS people?

6. Do you own your own business?
 - Yes
 - No
7. If what type of space in your home do you need for your business Does it require office space

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

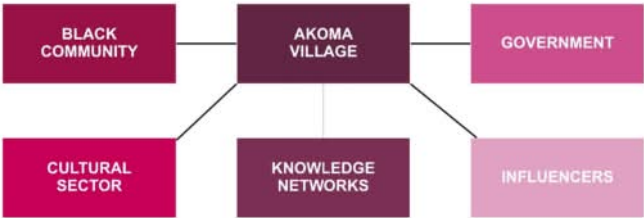
This Social Media Tool is designed to be implemented by people with and without social media management expertise. It is based upon the authors' collective community planning and digital urbanism work experiences. The purpose of the social media tool is to use afri-centric-tailored content to announce outreach and engagement events, provide prompt feedback; attract new and hard to reach audiences; and strategically use a curated list of key stakeholders' social media account handles and hashtags.

Logistics:

- *Place*
 - Virtual platforms: posts pre-posted ahead of time to a Hootsuite or Later.com type vendors
 - Target Platforms:
 - Social media: Instagram, Twitter & Facebook
 - Website: plug-in integrations to social media platforms
- *Branding:*
 - The social media tool's content output supports and reinforces the Akoma branding and style guidelines, i.e. logos, fonts, etc.
- *Call-to-Action:*
 - Social media content aims to have three thematic call-to-actions:
 - Data collection - Provide social media managers with steps on how to launch digital advocacy activities such as a survey campaign, email blast, here's where to upload it onto the Akoma website
 - Marketing community outreach and engagement activities
 - Public education through culturally competent content creation that encourages participation. The content will build awareness beyond informing levels to one that encourages public involvement and consultation.

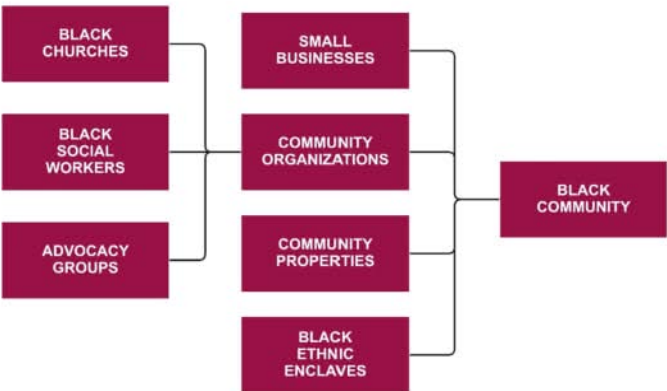
SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Target Audience by Stakeholder Category:



The categories listed here reflect a subsection of the previously shared stakeholder map. In this tool, we break down each of the five external stakeholder groups into their virtual reality constituent parts: social media account handles and the relevant hashtags. The account handles are virtual addresses by which to tag key stakeholders’ into engaging with future Akoma content creation.

1. Black Community



The Black community’s institutions in Nova Scotia are vibrant in person and virtually. In particular, the role that historic Black churches, clergy, social workers and teachers have played in sustaining the ANS and the wider Black diasporic community is key. In order to operationalize trauma-informed and therapeutic planning within the Akoma project, it is essential that we engage key accounts across industries:

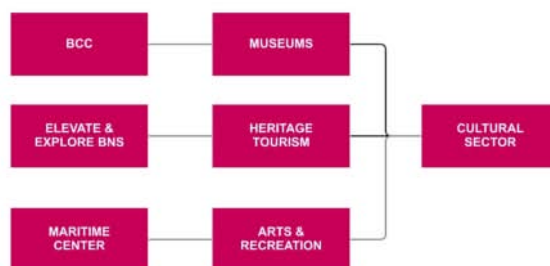
SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

- *General*
 - Instagram accounts: @ANSProud
 - hashtags: #ANSProud #AfricanNovaScotian #ANSNation
 - Website: plug-in integrations to social media platforms
- *Small businesses:*
 - Instagram accounts: @TribeNetwork.ca @TakinBlk @BlkWomenInExcellence @BBI_Atlantic @BIJ_Youth [individual black-owned businesses / BBI members]
 - Twitter: @BlackBusinessNS @BIJ_Youth
 - Facebook: @BlackBusinessNS
 - LinkedIn: @TheTribeNetwork @Black-Business-Initiative
 - hashtags: #TakinBlk #BlkWomenInExcellence #BlackBusinessInitiative #BIJYouth
- *Community organization:*
 - Instagram accounts: @ABSW_NS
 - Facebook: @ABSWOffice
 - hashtags: TBD
- *Community Properties:* (Community land trusts, community gardens, non-profit properties, small businesses, public parks, public library, etc.)
 - Instagram accounts: @hfxpublib, TBD ...
 - hashtags: TBD
- *ANS Towns:*
 - Instagram accounts: @HFXMoments [Halifax Regional Municipality], @CBRMGov [Cape Breton municipality]
 - Twitter: @HFXGov [Halifax Regional Municipality], @CBRMGov [Cape Breton municipality] ...
 - Facebook: @HFXGov [Halifax Regional Municipality], @CBRMGov [Cape Breton municipality] ...
 - hashtags:
 - #BlackNovaScotia #BlackNovaScotian #BlackInNovaScotia

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

- #Africville #BlackInHalifax #BlackInDartmouth
#BlackInCapeBreton...

2. Cultural Sector

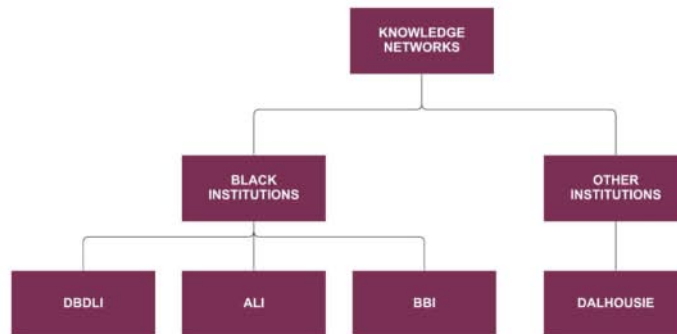


The cultural sector's institutions in Nova Scotia are diverse and active in person and virtually. In particular, the role that the Black Cultural Centre and newer organizations such as Elevate and Explore Black Nova Scotia have played in historic preservation and heritage tourism are key points of partnership. In order to operationalize afri-centric planning within the Akoma project, it is essential that we engage key cultural institutions' accounts:

- Museums
 - Instagram accounts: @BCC_NS @TheAfricvilleMuseum @BlackLoyalistHeritageCentre
 - Twitter: @BCC_NS @AfricvilleHT @BLHSBirchtown
 - Facebook: @BCCNSMuseum @Africville Museum @BlackLoyalistHeritageCentre
 - hashtags: #AfricvilleMuseum #BlackLoyalistHeritageCentre
- Heritage Tourism
 - Instagram account: @ElevateAndExploreBlackNS
 - hashtags: #ElevateAndExploreBlackNS #ExploreBlackNS #VisitBlackNovaScotia #TravelNoire
- Arts & Recreation
 - hashtags: #EastPrestonRecreationCentre ...

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

3. Knowledge Networks



The knowledge networks' in Nova Scotia are world class in person and virtually. In particular, the role that Black educators and educational organizations have played in the intellectual training of Nova Scotia's Black diaspora is formidable. In order to continue to operationalize the insights from the BLAC report through participatory planning, it is essential that we engage key educational and professional development accounts:

- Black Institutions:
 - Accounts:
 - Instagram: @DBDLI @BBI_Atlantic @BIJ_Youth
 - Twitter: @DBDLI @BlackBusinessNS @BIJ_Youth
 - Facebook: @DBDLI @BlackBusinessNS
 - LinkedIn: @DBDLI @Black-Business-Initiative
 - Hashtags: #TakinBlk #BlkWomenInExcellence #BlackBusinessInitiative #BIJYouth accounts:
 - @DBDLI ...
 - hashtags: #DBDLI ...
- Other Institutions
 - Black Student Advising Centre of Dalhousie University
 - Twitter/Facebook/Instagram: @dalBSAC

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

4. Project Ambassadors (Influencers):

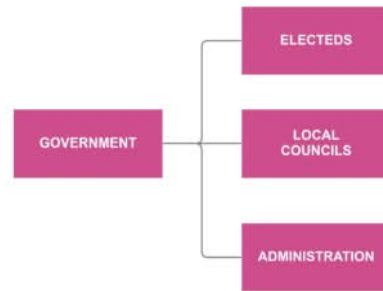


The project ambassadors serve as future Akoma public representatives in person and virtually. In particular, the digital influencers will be key to bridging the gap between digital and in person outreach and engagement to the wider Black community.

- Traditional
- Digital: Social Media Influencers & Marketing Agencies
 - Ambassadors:
 - Ross Simmonds (Foundation Marketing)
 - Nevell Provo & Corvell Beals-Provo (I'm a Business Man)
 - Rajean Willis (Our Stories, Our Experiences)
 - René Boudreau (Elevate & Explore Black NS)
 - TBD...
 - Accounts:
 - Twitter: @TheCoolestCool @FoundationIncCo ...
 - Facebook: @TheCoolestCool @FoundationIncCo ...
 - Instagram: @TheCoolestCool ...
 - LinkedIn: @FoundationMarketing ...
 - hashtags:
 - #marketing #contentmarketing

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

5. Government



- Administration
 - African Canadian Services Division of the Department of Education
 - Accounts:
 - Twitter: @NSEducation
 - Facebook: @NovaScotiaEducation
- Local Council
- Electeds
 - Senator Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard
 - accounts:
 - Instagram: @wandathomasbernard
 - Facebook: @wanda.thomasbernard
 - hashtags #WandaThomasBernard



DESIGN WORKSHOP: PLAN

This Design Workshop plan is designed to be facilitated by people without design expertise. It is based up the “Place It!” model developed by James Rojas and John Kamp to integrate art, creative expression and storytelling into community meetings.

Place

Choose a place that is welcoming and accessible to the community invited to this workshop. Consider location, physical accessibility, thermal and acoustic comfort, and any other criteria the hosts identify for their community.

What are the transportation options to access your site?

What accommodations for physical access needs does your site provide?

What is the vibe of the meeting area? Will your participants feel comfortable there?

Are there walls or vertical surfaces that you can post notes on?

Are there tables and chairs on site or will they need to be brought in?

Hosts

The self-identified workshop facilitators should read through the materials, discuss adaptations to their particular community, and prepare to facilitate the session. Two to three people should work together to host and facilitate the event. The dialogue begins with your planning and continues through the workshop.

What are each of the hosts strengths and how do you complement each other?

What are the groups that each host has a personal connection with?

When will you and your co-hosts be able to meet and plan?

When will you meet to debrief and summarize the outcomes of the workshop?

Supplies

OBJECTS

Collect common and inexpensive objects for participants to use to assemble their visions:

Examples: rocks, wood blocks, sticks, straws, dice, playing cards, corks, small tupperwares, other brightly colored geometric objects (consider children toys and kitchen tools)

PAPER BASES

- Printed Akoma Maps (A1) [one for each table]
- Blank sheets (A3) [one for each participant]

NOTE TAKING

- Big poster sticky sheets or butcher paper.
- Markers (multiple colors)

DESIGN WORKSHOP: PLAN

Invitations

Send out or distribute postcards to community members. This activity box has been prepared for groups of approximately 10 people. Invite accordingly based on anticipated response rate.

Community members who can't come to the workshop can write a message on the postcard and mail it or drop it off (fill in an appropriate mailing address before distribution).

Front:

Image and project title, possibly social media handle/hashtags,

Blank space for DATE, TIME, PLACE, to be filled in by hosts or facilitators

Back:

One third for mailing address and stamp;

Remaining 2/3: A prompt and blank space, "If you cannot attend, we hope you can share some of your reflections with the community. What is a favorite memory of African Nova Scotia?

What makes an ideal ANS community" ... "Write a poem, draw a picture, leave a quote, share a story, as you wish."

Set Up

Prepare a table with beverages and snacks within the capacity of the hosts. Try to have options for the anticipated audience. Regardless of location, the hosts are hosts and should try to create a welcoming atmosphere as one might if having a small group of friends over to one's house.

Set up tables for groups of 3-5 with the map underlays, scratch paper, and pens or pencils. In a central location set up a table for the workshop objects. Use those from the box but feel free to add materials (they should be colorful or tactile, they should not resemble realistic or scaled buildings or landscape elements)

Welcome

- Provide at least 15 minutes at the beginning of the workshop for people to arrive and settle in, have snacks, and catch up with other attendees.
- For a maximum of ten minutes, introduce the project. What is Akoma Holdings, what are they planning, where are they in the planning process, what are short, medium, and long

term goals, etc.

- Summarize Africentric planning principles:
- Frame today's engagement as one of playful, collaborative knowledge production. Imagining together! Don't worry about being "realistic" or solving technical problems (like zoning or drainage, etc)

DESIGN WORKSHOP: PLAN

1st Activity

Introduce yourself to the other people at the table

[10 minutes] Build a favorite childhood memory

- Collect materials from the main table and assemble them on your working sheet/board. These are intentionally not realistic objects so think creatively and loosely about how to represent your memory with the objects at hand.
- Invite people to talk to their neighbors at the table while they work on their personal models. (expect that storytelling will happen here and help build connections between people at the table and spur ideas about desirable places)

Present

- Time permitting have each attendee stand up or speak from their seat. They should hold up their model and describe the memory they built.

- If time is too limited for each attendee to do this, have them share out to their tables simultaneously. Assign a note taker at each table or have a facilitator (quantity permitting) take notes at each table. Then have one or two people from each table share to the whole group.

Record themes

- At the conclusion of each presentation one of the facilitators should offer a brief description of the memory (a long title or short sentence) which the presenter can confirm or revise. This description should then be written down on the note taking sheet.
- After all of the presentations, collectively review the notes and on a fresh sheet of poster paper write down themes, ideas, and activities that emerged from the collection of memories.

2nd Activity

Build your ideal Akoma Village that would serve the African Nova Scotian community/feel like home/serve you/make it feel like your space?

- Working in groups of 4-6 at each table work together with objects from the childhood memory models and additional objects from the materials table to construct an ideal Akoma/ANS community center.
- Place and rearrange objects as your group discusses. Again be loose and playful using objects to create spaces or represent ideas.
- Nudge questions:
What would make you feel safe?
What are some of your desires or needs?
What does a space that centers a thriving ANS community look like?
If you were planning a space for your future family what would it be like?

Present

- A volunteer from each group should present the model and describe what the group designed and why.
- Attendees should take notes of elements that they are excited by in other people's projects on small sticky notes — these can be collected and added to the wall of notes.

Record themes

- One facilitator should take note on poster paper of the key components of each group's model.
- After all groups have reported out, discuss what themes and design ideas emerged or recurred in the models. Write these down on another poster paper sheet.
- Take note or mark ideas that have broad support

DESIGN WORKSHOP: PLAN

Closing

Go around the room and have each attendee share their how they are feeling at the end of the workshop. Depending on time constraints facilitators could invite a single word or leave it open ended for longer reflections.

Inform attendees of next steps (the facilitator write-up, share back to Akoma, any other next steps, and share where attendees can find updates -like the website)

Debrief & Write Up

The hosts should set a time after the workshop to meet, debrief, and write-up a summary of the outcomes of the workshop.

List out the childhood memory models and the emergent themes that the group identified.

Write down key ideas from each group model (you may or may not name the attendees based on feedback during the workshop)

Summarize the recurring themes identified within the group models

Categorize themes and ideas in three columns:

- Challenges
- Opportunities
- Additional miscellaneous ideas

Each facilitator should write their own reflection considering the following:

- Their experience of the event. What were their expectations and what did they observe and experience?
- What was the mood of attendees? Was there consensus or broad enthusiasm behind particular ideas or themes?
- Any issues, tension, or conflicts that arose during discussions that should also be considered in the planning and design process?
- What would you say are the most important things to consider in the design of an ideal Akoma center?

Pop-up Version

- Similar to workshop but have a large map underlay on a folding table and an assortment of the objects from the kit.
- Passer-bys can play with objects to create a momentary assemblage of something they would like to see. Then write a description of their model on a post-it.

Take a photograph of the model and post-it description. Take a photo of the model, post-it, and creator if they are willing.

- Minimum two people working the table. Have materials on background of project or the postcards from the workshop for distribution to collect more responses.

GLOSSARY

Africentricity: “When black people view themselves as centered and central in their own history then they see themselves as agents, actors, and participants rather than as marginals on the periphery of political or economic experience.” - Dr. Molefi Kete Asante

The africentric social work pedagogy and practice pioneered by Black social worker leaders such as Senator Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard informs the trauma-informed urban planning that we recommend as a part of the OEG’s africentric planning approach. In order to operationalize therapeutic planning that is essential to the success of the engagement process; we recommend that Akoma partners with key stakeholders such as the Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW). Black social workers’ subject matter expertise and cultural competency is well served as workshop facilitators and project ambassadors; alongside complementary skill sets alongside community planners and architects.

Digital advocacy: The use of digital media, particularly on social media platforms, to push for public support for a particular policy or cause.

ACRONYMS

ACSD	African Canadian Services Branch
ADG	Africentric Design Guidelines
ANSAIO	African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office
AUBA	African United Baptist Association of Nova Scotia
BBi	Black Business Initiative
BLAC	Black Learners Advisory Committee
NSAACP	Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People
NSHCC	Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children
OEG	Outreach and Engagement Guidelines
UNIA	United Negroa Improvement Authority

AKOMA	2022
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REGENERATING ROOTS	
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