

The participants of the workshop discussed all of these groups thoroughly, in a discussion that gradually focused on (1) companies—they have a double interest in promoting a healthy lifestyle and attracting new staff who might consider Eindhoven as a good place to work; (2) the runners' families: they want to see their runner, and support him or her at a spot where it matters.

5 THEMES

For the city of Eindhoven, the marathon helps to fulfill an intense need for recognition, as it feels itself to be in competition with other cities. As an old industrial city, Eindhoven has not generally been perceived as a vibrant and interesting place to live. But this sense of competition that is so keenly felt by the city council is not shared by the general population, who really value this lively city for what it has, and do not mind that it is a well-kept secret. This is where the friction comes from—the traffic complaints, though grounded in reality, are a symptom of a broader pattern of public disengagement from the marathon. Meanwhile in the broader arena, there is a rich palate of cross-party themes that could help bring the marathon event closer to the needs of the city, merging with existing city concerns of workforce needs, inclusion of an increasingly varied population mix, relating the suburb and the city center, etc. The central theme that emerged from our discussions is that the marathon should be an appropriate fit for Eindhoven, showing the strengths and character of the city—but this can be achieved only through the inclusion of many more parties in the organization of the marathon day.

6 FRAMES

This theme sets us on a road from the current state of affairs (in which there is a marathon in Eindhoven) to creating a new event that truly and uniquely is “the marathon of Eindhoven”—an event that could not take place anywhere else because of the way it reflects and celebrates the character of this city. This means looking at opportunities to foster a sense of pride in what the city has to offer. Shifting the focus away from complaints leads us toward the creation of several frames. One approach to address this problematic situation is to give the marathon of Eindhoven to the people—to see the marathon as a self-propelled party (learning from the queen's birthday celebrations), with neighborhoods encouraged to organize events on that day. This process should occur from the bottom up, with local community organizations bidding for the honor to host part of the course.