

# Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The social and economic fabric of many rural communities has been progressively weakened by a number of regional, national and global changes over the past few decades. Transformations in economic, demographic and spatial organization have had profound impacts on rural communities. On average, rural areas tend to suffer lower per capita incomes and higher poverty, higher dependency and lower labor force participation rates than do urban areas [1,4,9]. In addition, the quantity and quality of many amenities and public services (i.e., fire and police protection; educational, transportation and shopping facilities; welfare activities; health care; water, refuse, and sewage systems; and organized recreational opportunities) frequently are inadequate to meet the needs of rural residents [11].

Across the nation, the desire for rural and small town community and economic development stakeholders to solve local problems and reduce socioeconomic disparities is increasingly recognized by state policymakers, local elected officials and citizens. Moreover, the need to attract and retain sufficient levels of human capital in rural areas to improve the overall quality of life is often a major priority for many communities [2]. In the southern United States, county Extension agents (hereafter referred to as CEAs), particularly those located in nonmetropolitan counties, are increasingly being called upon to provide leadership for community and economic development efforts. However, the capacity of CEAs to work with community leaders and local citizens as they address such critical issues is often hindered by individual- and institutional-level impediments. At the individual-level, many Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H and Youth Development CEAs lack knowledge and experience of applied community and economic development techniques and principles. At the same time, at the institutional-level, most Southern states have too few community development specialists to support the vast number of communities and CEAs requesting assistance with community and economic development programming efforts.

Regardless of subject-matter expertise, CEAs can assist in the community and economic development agenda of rural communities. One way that they can do so is by facilitating a community's local planning process, a process commonly referred to as community-based planning. Community-based planning is a local voluntary planning process that is designed to build, strengthen and support community structures. The overall intent of community-based planning is to develop a comprehensive and well-managed plan that individual and associational actors can utilize to guide local community development initiatives. The process





directly engages community leaders and the broad-based citizenry in an active effort to move their community from today's reality to tomorrow's possibilities. With a basic understanding of community and community development, along with the techniques involved in the process of community-based planning, CEAs can become actively involved at the community level and serve as an influential resource in moving the planning process forward.

## Overview of “Preparing for the Future”

“Preparing for the Future” is written for Extension personnel. This guidebook is a resource that county Extension agents, as well as Extension specialists and staff, can use when called upon by communities to facilitate a community-based planning process.

A primary assumption of “Preparing for the Future” is that a group of individuals from one sector of the community (e.g., economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, local government, educational institutions, churches, service organizations, etc.) have recognized a need for community-based planning, have initiated the effort, and have contacted their local county Extension office for assistance.

In Chapter 2, principles from an interactional theoretical perspective of social organization, which is rooted in the writings of Harold Kaufman [5] and Kenneth Wilkinson [11], are applied to definitional issues surrounding the notions of community and community development. The specific objective of Chapter 2 is to provide a conceptual foundation for operational definitions of community and community development. The chapter, which is grounded in sociological theory and empirical research, elaborates on these proposed working definitions.

Chapter 3 spells out the process of community-based planning. The chapter elaborates on the five common phases involved in the process of community-based planning, along with an important sixth stage. These phases include: (1) initiation, (2) organization of sponsorship, (3) visioning, goal setting and strategy formation, (4) recruitment, (5) implementation and (6) evaluation. The six phases are presented in a linear fashion. However, in reality they are rarely sequenced as such. Oftentimes, after a community-based planning process has begun, facilitators and participants may realize that they need to backtrack and revisit some of the materials and/or tools in the early phases before moving ahead. In other cases, they may feel confident in skipping over some of those materials and/or tools.

A “cookie-cutter” approach to the community-based planning process will not work. To be successful, the process of community-based planning must include creativity and flexibility.

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## Chapter 2

## Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development <sup>[a]</sup>

Community development is a very appealing idea. Time and again, community development has been prescribed as a popular means of improving the social, economic and environmental quality of life for residents of a community. As encouraging as the notion of community development sounds, the practice of community development suffers from a lack of systematic theory and a clear understanding of what a community is and how it develops. In order for community development strategies to be viewed as useful and practical, especially in rural areas, community developers and Cooperative Extension personnel must enhance their understanding of community and the ways by which communities develop in a constantly changing society.

In this chapter, principles from an interactional theoretical perspective of social organization, which is rooted in the writings of Harold Kaufman [5] and Kenneth Wilkinson [11], are articulated and applied to definitional issues surrounding the notions of community and community development. Specifically, this chapter offers a brief explanation of the key concepts and ideas inherent to the interactional approach advocated by Kaufman and Wilkinson and further elaborated on by their students and colleagues. In doing so, a conceptual foundation grounded in sociological theory and empirical research for operational definitions of community and community development is provided. This is a timely task since so much of Cooperative Extension's rhetoric makes reference to community and community development yet fails to provide adequate explanations for the terms.

### Community

Community is an extremely elusive construct. People use the term "community" in a variety of ways. Two of the more common uses of the term refer to those communities known as territory-free and those labeled territory-based. The term "territory-free community" generally is used to describe types of social groupings or networks. Examples include social groupings or networks such as the business community, the farm community, the Hispanic community, the academic community, the prison community, the Baptist community and the Internet community. The other common use of the term, and the one of interest in this guidebook, refers to





geographically-localized settlements or territory-based communities. So, what constitutes a territory-based community? While there is not a universally accepted definition, most sociological definitions emphasize one or more of the following components: shared territory, common life, collective actions and mutual identity.

Our first task, then, is to provide a working definition of community. For purposes of this manual, community is defined as a place-oriented process of interrelated actions through which members of a local population express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life.

This definition, which is grounded in interactional theory [5,11], views social interaction as the substantive element of community. Social interaction is the thread that ties together the four ingredients of community. Social interaction:

- Delineates a geographic area as shared territory,
- Contributes to the wholeness of local life,
- Gives structure and direction to collective actions, and
- Is the source of mutual identity.

From this perspective, community occurs in places and is place-oriented, but the place itself, per se, is not the community. The place serves as the setting in which social interaction occurs. So, where can we find community? Our search for community begins with the local society.

## Local Society

Community, as conceptualized here, is a phenomenon that occurs in a local society. For purposes of this manual, a local society is defined as the area in which a population meets its daily needs and encounters shared problems. At a minimum, there are three features inherent to any local society. They include:

- A geographic dimension (i.e., a locality),
- Human life dimension (i.e., people living there), and
- Relatively complete organization (i.e., institutions and patterns of behavior that cover the broad range of human interests).

Each feature is a necessary but not sufficient condition for community. In other words, all three elements are a prerequisite for community, but having all three does not ensure community. Only where these three elements exist does the potential for community exist.

*Community is defined as a place-oriented process of interrelated actions through which members of a local population express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life.*



To a greater or lesser extent, certain characteristics are manifested in all local societies. These visible features include:

- A physical location with geopolitical units (i.e., places such as villages, hamlets, townships, boroughs, towns and cities),
- A demographic profile,
- A social class structure,
- Social, economic and political institutions, and
- Natural resource endowments.

Each feature varies within and across local societies over time. For example, local societies tend to vary with respect to physical size, the number of geopolitical units they contain and the geographical distance between places. Local societies tend to differ in regard to population size, density and heterogeneity, along with socioeconomic characteristics. They generally vary with respect to the quantity and quality of their respective social and economic institutions and tend to differ with regard to environmental and natural resource-related issues and conditions, such as:

- Land use types (forestland, rangeland and cropland),
- Natural resource types (mineral, energy and water resources), and
- Utilization factors (resource dependency and management, extraction activities).

### Social Fields

Local societies are marked by the presence of several more or less distinct social fields. As suggested by Kaufman [5] and Wilkinson [11], a social field is an unfolding, loosely bounded, constantly changing, interconnected process of social interaction displaying unity through time around an identifiable set of interests. As a process, a social field is characterized by a sequence of actions over time carried on by actors generally working through various associations.



**Actions:** the projects, programs, activities and/or events in which actors and associations are engaged.

**Associations:** the formal organizations and informal groups.

**Actors:** the leaders and other persons participating in associations and actions.



In any given local society there are multiple social fields, some of which are more locality-oriented than others. Social fields that are highly oriented to the locality are more likely than their lesser locality-oriented counterparts to be clearly identified with the locality. Moreover, highly locality-oriented social fields tend to involve local residents as principal actors and/or leaders.

Social fields occur in a variety of arenas. Each field is generally marked to a greater or lesser extent by its own identity, organization, core interactional properties and set of specific and/or institutional interests. Examples of common social fields found in many localities include those pursuing interests in education, local government, environmental protection, faith-based services, economy and recreation (see Figure 1).

*Figure 1. Common Social Fields Found in Localities*



### *Community Field*

Where social fields in various interest areas converge or overlap, the potential to form a community field exists. As noted by Kaufman [5] and Wilkinson [11], the community field is a locality-oriented social field that is related to, yet distinguished from, other activity fields in a local population. Unlike most social fields in a locality which tend to engage in special interests, the community field pursues the interests of the general community. In other words, the interest that guides the community field is an interest in community structure rather than



an interest solely in specific goals, such as economic development, service enhancement or environmental protection.

Like other social fields, the community field consists of actors, associations and phases of action. The central feature that distinguishes the community field from other fields is the generalization of locality-oriented actions across interest lines (Figure 2).

*Figure 2. An Example of a Community Field*



The process of generalization involves actions that:

- Are expressed through the interests of a broad range of actors and associations,
- Are clearly located within a locality,
- Involve a substantial proportion of the local population as participants and/or beneficiaries,
- Are conducted by local actors and associations,
- Are aimed toward changing or maintaining the locality,
- Are carried out in an organized or purposive manner, and
- Have coordination among fields of interest as a major objective.

Such actions contribute to the emergence of the community field in local settlements.

Generalization gives structure to the whole of community as an interactional field by linking and organizing the common interests of the various social fields. By comprising all the actions that



contribute to the whole, the community field interlinks and coordinates the various social fields and harnesses their information, experience, resources and energy for the common good.

## Community Development

As with the term community, various definitions have been prescribed for the concept of community development [3]. The approach to defining community development in this manual is driven by interactional theory [5,11]. Here, community development is defined as a process of building and strengthening the community. Accordingly, community development refers to the creation and maintenance of community as a social characteristic of a local population. From an interactional perspective, community development can be viewed “as a process of developing the community field” [11:87].

As a process, community development involves purposive, positive and structure-oriented actions and exists in the efforts, as well as in the achievements, of people working together to address their shared interests and solve their common problems. Such principles, from an interactional perspective [11], underlie the process of community development. To reiterate:

- Community development is purposive. It is the intentional consequence of people interacting to initiate and maintain community.
- Community development is positive. The purposive intentions of the actors revolve around a shared commitment to improving their community.
- Community development is structure oriented. The purposive and positive actions of actors are direct attempts to establish and/or strengthen the community as an interlinking and coordinating structure of human relationships.
- Community development exists in the efforts of people and not necessarily in goal achievement. Simply stated, community development is purposive action undertaken with positive intentions at improving community structure.

In short, the essence of community development lies not necessarily in the outcome but in the doing – the working together toward a common goal. Trying to purposively alter the structure of the community in a positive manner is enough to qualify as community development [11].





## Development “in” and “of” Community, Task Accomplishment and Structure Building

It is through the community field that comprehensive community development efforts are coordinated and executed. In this context, two important ideas must be addressed in order to understand how communities change and develop. First, we must be able to distinguish between two types of development commonly referred to as development in community and development of community [6,11]. Second, we must be able to differentiate between the two broad spheres of community activity generally known as task accomplishment and structure building [11].



### *Two Types of Development*

#### **Development in Community**

Development in community primarily refers to an approach to bring about improvements, primarily infrastructural enhancements, in the community. Examples include economic growth, modernization, improved service delivery, and business retention, expansion and recruitment. With this type of development, the community tends to be viewed merely as a setting or location in which various improvements occur.

#### **Development of Community**

Development of community is a much broader process than economic development, modernization, improved service delivery and other developments in the community. This type of development consists of establishing, fostering and maintaining processes in the community that encourage communication and cooperation between/among individuals, informal groups and formal organizations. Development of community involves purposive, positive, structure-oriented efforts by people in a locality to articulate and sustain a community field.

### *Two Broad Spheres of Community Activity*

#### **Task Accomplishment**

Task accomplishment refers to activities that move people toward specific goals, which are generally related to a particular project in a specific field of interest (i.e., within a social field).



## Structure Building

Structure building refers to activities that establish and maintain community-level relationships. The most distinctive feature of such activities is the focus on developing and/or enhancing channels of cooperation and communication across interest groups. Individuals, informal groups and formal organizations consciously work to increase the number or reinforce the strength of relationships among the various social fields while reducing and/or circumventing the barriers to cooperation and communication.

Both spheres of activity are typically marked by five stages. In each stage, certain issues or action problems are addressed. Following Wilkinson [10,11], the stages and their corresponding issues are: initiation (issue of awareness); organization of sponsorship (issue of organization); goal setting and strategy formation (issue of decision-making); recruitment (issue of resource mobilization); and implementation (issue of resource application).

### *Common Stages of Task Accomplishment Activities at a Single Social Field Level*

1. **Initiation** involves identifying an issue as a potential focus for group action
2. **Organization of sponsorship** involves identifying an existing structure (i.e., a committee, group, organization) or establishing a new one to deal with the issue
3. **Goal setting and strategy formation** involves setting goals and developing a plan to reach those goals
4. **Recruitment** involves mobilizing resources, such as participants, facilities, finances and organizational legitimacy
5. **Implementation** involves applying resources and employing strategies to deal with the issue

### *Common Stages of Structure Building Activities at a Multiple Social Field Level*

1. **Initiation** involves generating widespread consciousness of an issue among various fields of interest in a community
2. **Organization of sponsorship** involves the formation of multi-interest networks and inter-organizational linkages to coordinate and integrate actions within and across the various social fields

*The essence of community development lies not necessarily in the outcome but in the doing – the working together toward a common goal.*



3. **Goal setting and strategy formation** involves developing short-term and long-range goals and strategies that transcend the special interests of particular social fields
4. **Recruitment** involves encouraging participation, building cohesion, developing new leaders and leadership skills, and coordinating actions
5. **Implementation** involves applying resources and employing strategies to build, strengthen and maintain the structure of the community field

In practice, the stages for both task accomplishment and structure building activities are rarely well sequenced. Task accomplishment activities within a specific social field and structure building activities at a multiple social field level can begin at any stage, frequently backtracking and leaping ahead.

### Summary

Community, as conceptualized in this chapter, is not a given. Instead, community emerges in a local society and persists as long as the local citizens ensure its survival. It follows, then, that community is a variable; it is a matter of degree. Community varies across local societies and within the same local society over time. The community – defined as a place-oriented process of interrelated actions through which local residents express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life – is in a constant state of change as actors and associations, each with their respective actions, move into and out of contact with the process.



As with community, community development is not a given either. It takes purposive, positive, structure-oriented efforts for a community to develop. The process of community development depends in large part on the intentional actions of people working together to try to improve their community. From this perspective, the action itself is the development; or, stated in another way, the development is the action – the working together toward a shared goal, while consciously seeking community as a collective experience.

Both forms of development, development in community and development of community, and both spheres of activity, task accomplishment and structure building, can affect the well-being of a local population. With that said, it is important to recognize that development in community



without development of community and task accomplishment without structure building is likely to produce, at best, transitory results in a community. In many localities, pressing needs exist for job creation, increased incomes, economic growth, modernization, improved service delivery, business retention, expansion and recruitment, and other developments in community. However, solely focusing on such developments and engaging merely in task accomplishment activities ignores the essential contribution that development of community and structure-building activities make to local social, economic and ecological well-being.

As with all forms of social interaction, community development does not always occur harmoniously. Embedded in the process of community development are numerous social, economic, political and environmental issues which can, and frequently do, become manifest and negatively impact success. More often than not, community development involves conflict, confrontation, negotiation among competing interests, marginalization, disfranchisement and/or challenges for leadership.



**Wilkinson's Principles of Community Development [12]**

**Principle 1:** The long-term theme of community development should be to develop the community as a human relationship structure, rather than to develop things in or through the community. Recruitment of participants for a given effort perhaps requires that emphasis be placed on goals and immediate rewards, but without an underlying, or behind-the-scenes, overview and long-range plan or vision, the accomplishments in various areas and at various times will not add up.

**Principle 2:** Community development, as described here, must reflect and express the values and wishes of the local population. Programs of outside bureaucracies sometimes work best in the short run in localities which lack community, but fail to tap sources of support for continuing local sponsorship. Community development in the sense of development of a community as such has seldom been tried by outside agencies. As with public welfare, it seems to be a good idea; it just never has been tried. The key here is selective use of external resources by local citizens.

**Principle 3:** Community development requires a commitment on the part of special interest groups to align their efforts with those of other groups...

**Principle 4:** Community development requires that attention be given continuously to problems and needs in all areas of local life. The old admonition about "one thing at a time and that done well" will not do the job called for here.

**Principle 5:** Sustained community development requires an organizational structure. Development organizations take many forms. Whatever the form, to be effective, a community development organization must be comprehensive, systematic and sensitive to the values of people.

**Principle 6:** Community requires communication. Community is interaction, and interaction is based on communication...A rule-of-thumb way to assess the potential for development of a community is to count the number of breaks or gaps in the local communication structure. Breaks come at points of class separation, of ethnic, political or interest cleavage, and sometimes along family lines...

**Principle 7:** Community development requires a commitment beyond selfish gain, at least by the small number of people in any community who can really make it work. There's nothing wrong with the merchant's interest in industrial development as a means of making his cash register ring. That's the American Way, we are reminded. There's nothing inherently wrong with the link between the Protestant ethic and the rise of capitalism. My point is that something more is needed. That something is a willing, responsible, and continuing commitment to enhance the lives and well-being of others. We call it love.

*Regarding Principle 6: A relatively high number of breaks decreases the potential for community development. A high number of breaks indicates that community leaders and residents are not communicating with each other – there are silos present within the geographic area.*



## Chapter 3

# Community-Based Planning: Connections to Community and Community Development

What is community-based planning? As stated in the introduction, community-based planning is a local voluntary planning process that is designed to build, strengthen and support community structure.

Community-based planning, as the term will be used in this guidebook, involves individual and associational actors from various social fields coming together to develop and implement an interlinking, comprehensive and coordinated plan of action. Upon successful implementation, these linked, coordinated actions will permeate the differentiated special interest fields and through a process of generalization build, strengthen and support the community field. As such, the process of community-based planning can be viewed as one form of community development.

Like other forms of community action, the process of community-based planning typically includes the five common stages of (1) initiation, (2) organization of sponsorship, (3) visioning, goal setting and strategy formation, (4) recruitment and (5) implementation [b]. The remainder of this guidebook addresses these five phases from a community structure-building perspective, along with an important additional phase: evaluation.

The steps involved in carrying out each phase of the community-based planning process are described below. Proposed meeting agendas are provided for Phases 1-4. The proposed agendas are to be used primarily as guides; feel free to add or delete agenda items as necessary. A presentation on “community and community development” (complete with slides to be shared with meeting participants) and several worksheets are included in the appendices.

As stated in the Introduction, the six phases of community-based planning are presented in a linear fashion. In reality, though, they are rarely sequenced as such. While using this guidebook, you may need to backtrack and revisit some of the materials and/or tools in the early phases before moving ahead in the later phases. In other cases, you may feel confident in skipping over some of the materials and/or tools. Successful community-based planning requires creativity and flexibility!





## Phase 1: Initiation

*Structure building activity: generating widespread consciousness of an issue among various fields of interest in a community.*

Community-based planning does not just happen; it requires a kick-start of some sort. In localities where community-based planning is occurring, the beginnings of the process can usually be traced to a small number of people in one particular social field. The process generally starts as a task accomplishment activity. Individuals from one of the special interest groups in the community (e.g., economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, local government, educational institutions, churches, service organizations, etc.) recognize a need for some form of planning at the local level, begin to discuss it as a potential focus for group action, and, in turn, initiate the effort.

As noted in the introduction, a primary assumption of “Preparing for the Future” is that a group of individuals or key leaders in a community have identified a need for planning, have initiated the effort, and have contacted their local county Extension office for guidance and assistance. More specifically, they have contacted YOU, the County Extension Agent. What do you do now?

The first step is to schedule and hold a meeting with the group who initiated the process. You and a representative of the group will communicate and set a date, time and location for the meeting. Proposed meeting agendas are provided to guide you through the Initiation phase.

### Meeting 1: Meeting with Group Who Initiated the Process

The first meeting between you and the group will set the stage for the community-based planning process that is about to be undertaken.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2 hours.

#### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for this meeting should consist of:

- Introductions
- Explanation of your role as a facilitator
- A brief summary of what the group can expect
- Presentation on community and community development
- Assessment of community activeness and community consciousness

*Community-based planning is a local voluntary planning process that is designed to build, strengthen and support community structure.*



- Explanation of community-based planning and how it can be viewed as a form of community development
- Scheduling of second meeting between you and the group

### **Agenda Item 1: Introductions**

More than likely, the individuals at this initial meeting will know each other. Many of the participants will know you, too. However, it is a good idea to introduce yourself and have others do the same.

### **Agenda Item 2: Explanation of Your Role as a Facilitator**

Your role will be that of facilitator. Clarify that role up front. Explain that your role as facilitator is, as the title implies, to facilitate the community-based planning process. Below is a primer on the role of a facilitator:

What is a facilitator?

- Someone who directs the group meeting process
- Someone who provides structure to an organized meeting
- Someone who aids in decision making
- Someone who makes progress easier

What is a facilitator's role?

- Help arrange and conduct a meeting
- Establish and maintain the topic of the meeting
- Redirect the conversation back to the subject matter should the discussion drift away from the primary topic
  - Direct questions back to the meeting participants for discussion rather than answering autonomously
  - Clarify and summarize the points that are made for better understanding
- Remain positive, impartial and unbiased
- Establish and maintain a positive atmosphere in the group
- Encourage involvement from every group member
- Control the pace of the meeting, but do not dominate it
- Give suggestions when coming to conclusions
- Identify and reiterate the main points stated
- Be appreciative for the participants' cooperation





What characteristics should a successful facilitator have?

- Respect
- Confidence
- Organization
- Responsibility
- Professionalism
- Enthusiasm

Tips for facilitators:

- Start the meeting on time
- Clearly state the objectives of the meeting
- Avoid long periods of one-on-one interaction
- Make sure that all meeting attendees have a chance to participate
- Ask for contributions from those who are not participating
- Pay attention to the non-verbal expressions of the meeting attendees
- Be cognizant of your non-verbal expressions
- Be an active listener
- Respect people's rights to have feelings
- Encourage the expression of feelings
- Have a sense of humor
- Respond to comments and manage conflicts in a timely manner
- Stay on task

### **Agenda Item 3: A Brief Summary of What the Group Can Expect**

Explain to the group that they are about to embark on an exciting journey during which they may encounter a number of social, economic, political, technical, legal and managerial issues. The journey will be very time consuming and will require a great deal of self determination and involvement on their part. The community's problems are complex, and the solutions will not be developed and implemented overnight.

### **Agenda Item 4: Presentation on Community and Community Development**

Before defining and explaining the community-based planning process, have the group think about their community and what it means to develop a community.

By now, you have read and understood the material on community and community development contained in Chapter 2. Your current task is to present that information to the group. A copy of the presentation – with speaker notes – is included in Appendix A. The slides (to be copied and shared with participants) are included in Appendix B. Also, if desired,



a PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded from the Southern Rural Development Center's Web site at [http://srdc.msstate.edu/trainings/cbp\\_theodori.ppt](http://srdc.msstate.edu/trainings/cbp_theodori.ppt).

*Discussion Time:* Spend time discussing the concepts of community and community development.

### **Agenda Item 5: Assessment of Community Activeness and Community Consciousness and Presentation of the Matrix**

Prior to beginning the community-based planning process, or any community development-related program for that matter, it is strongly recommended that the levels of two key community attributes – community activeness and community consciousness – be assessed. The Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix [7,8] is a tool that can be used to assess these qualities. The matrix will allow you to quickly assess the levels of activeness and consciousness of the community and gain an overall feeling for the community as viewed from the local residents' perspective.

The concepts of community activeness and community consciousness are defined below, followed by a description of the Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix and an explanation of how to use it.

#### **Community Activeness**

Activeness refers to the degree of interaction at the community level. Community-level interaction can be defined as the behaviors of local residents working together to address and solve specific locale-oriented needs and problems. Community-level interactions include activities such as participating in a community improvement project or working with other members of the community to try and solve local problems. Action at the community level varies widely across communities and within the same community over time.



#### **Community Consciousness**

Consciousness refers to a community's level of awareness of its current social, economic and environmental situations in real time. Consciousness, like activeness, varies across and within communities. When a community is truly conscious, it is fully aware and knowledgeable of its current social, economic and environmental conditions. Moreover, the community understands the history of its people, economy and environment, and it also has a well-defined vision for the future.



### The Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix [7,8]

The Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix is shown in Figure 3. The activeness dimension has been divided into two groups, active and not active. The consciousness concept has also been collapsed into two categories, conscious and not conscious.

Figure 3: The Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix

	Active	Not Active
Conscious	1	2
Not Conscious	4	3

Draw the Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix on a flip chart or simply distribute handouts of the matrix (a copy of is included in Appendix C). Explain what each cell of the matrix represents.

- Cell 1 represents communities that are both conscious and active. Communities of this nature characteristically are comprised of local citizens who are fully aware and knowledgeable of the current social, economic and environmental conditions of their community. The local residents understand their community's history, and they have a well-defined vision of how they want their community to look, feel and operate in the future. At the same time, citizens are actively working together to positively improve their community and purposively accomplish their vision.
- Cell 2 represents communities that are conscious but not active. Communities of this nature characteristically are comprised of local citizens who are fully aware and knowledgeable of the current social, economic and environmental conditions of their community. The local residents understand their community's history, and they have a well-defined vision of how they want their community to look, feel and function in the future. However, citizens are not actively working together to positively improve their community or purposively accomplish their vision.
- Cell 3 represents communities that are not conscious and not active. Communities of this nature characteristically are comprised of local citizens who are not fully aware or knowledgeable of the current social, economic and environmental conditions of their community. The local residents do not understand their community's history, and they do not have a well-defined vision of how they want their community to look, feel and



operate in the future. At the same time, citizens are not actively working together to positively improve or purposively develop their community.

- Cell 4 represents communities that are not conscious but active. Communities of this nature characteristically are comprised of local citizens who are not fully aware or knowledgeable of the current social, economic and environmental conditions of their community. The local residents do not understand their community's history, and they do not have a well-defined vision of how they want their community to look, feel and function in the future. However, citizens are actively working together to positively improve or purposively develop their community. But, due to the lack of a common, well-defined vision, efforts at community development are generally uncoordinated and piecemeal in nature and produce, at best, transitory results in the community.



After explaining the matrix, ask meeting participants to state in which cell they would place their community. Also, ask the individuals to put forward the reason(s) why they chose to place their community in that particular cell.

**N**OTE: Extension faculty who use the Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix will find that cell placement of the community and the reason(s) behind such placement may vary, sometimes widely, amongst individuals. The utilitarian value of the matrix increases with variation in responses. As individuals put forth their justifications as to why the community should be placed in one particular cell as opposed to the others, critical discussion develops about the views and actions of various sectors of the community. And, as practice and research suggests, communication among individuals and groups within a community is a crucial element in the overall process of community development.

*Discussion Time:* Provide discussion time to address any questions/comments.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Explanation of Community-Based Planning and How It Can Be Viewed as One Form of Community Development**

Begin the explanation of community-based planning by revisiting the difference between development in community and development of community and the distinction between task accomplishment and structure building activities.



Do the members of the group fully understand these important distinctions? Reiterate that development in community alone does not necessarily lead to community development. Single-interest programs of locality-oriented action such as economic development may or may not contribute to community development. Without development of community as an explicit goal, economic development, along with other developments in community, can disrupt social well-being. However, development of community (with its associated structure building activities) must not be viewed as an alternative to development in community (with its associated task accomplishment activities). Both types of development and both spheres of activity are important ingredients in a successful community development process.

The process of community-based planning, as it is defined in this guidebook, involves both task accomplishment and structure building activities. With that said, it is important to define what community-based planning is and what it is not.

Community-based planning is a local voluntary planning process that is designed to build, strengthen and support community structure. It involves individual and associational actors from various social fields coming together to develop and implement an interlinking, comprehensive and coordinated plan of action. Upon successful implementation, these linked, coordinated actions will permeate the differentiated special interest fields and through a process of generalization build, strengthen and support the community field. Community-based planning is a process of community action. The primary actors and beneficiaries are local residents (as opposed to extra-local individuals), and the action is public (as opposed to private).

**N**OTE: Locality-oriented action is generally a central theme found in all social fields located in a community. As is all too often the case, though, much locality-oriented action occurs within a community (with much of it occurring under the rubric of community development), but little or no community action. Generally, the locality-oriented actions by individuals and associational actors in the myriad of social fields occur as discrete, piecemeal acts rather than as components of a coordinated community undertaking.

Community-based planning is not an academic exercise or a top down approach to community development. It is not a panacea; it will not solve all of the community's problems.





**N**OTE: Use the Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix to illustrate anticipated outcomes of engaging in the community-based planning process.

Community-based planning can assist a #2 community (a conscious but not active community), a #3 community (a not conscious and not active community), or a #4 community (an active but not conscious community) to work toward becoming a #1 community (an active and conscious community).

Community-based planning can assist a #1 community (an active and conscious community) to maintain a #1 community status.

*Discussion Time:* Provide discussion time to address any questions/comments.

### **Agenda Item 7: Schedule a Second Meeting**

Set a date, time and location for a second meeting. Explain to the group that the next meeting will be a continuation of the first phase of the community-based planning process (i.e., initiation). Explain that initiation at the structure building level (the ultimate level of interest) involves generating widespread consciousness of an issue among the various fields of interest in the community. In the case at hand, the issue is planning – community-based planning to be exact. Explain to the group that in order to generate widespread consciousness of the need for community-based planning among the various fields of interest in the community, they must be cognizant of their community and the various social fields within it.

Indicate that at the second meeting, the group will define community boundaries, define the local society and identify key individuals to invite to join a community-based planning steering committee.

### **Meeting 2: Second Meeting with Group Who Initiated the Process**

The second meeting between you and the group will build upon the ideas presented in the initial meeting.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2 hours.



*Agenda*

In addition to the welcoming remarks, agenda items for this meeting should consist of:

- Providing a brief summary of the first meeting,
- Defining community boundaries,
- Defining the local society,
- Identifying key individuals within the community to invite to join a community-based planning coordinating team, and
- Scheduling of a meeting with prospective participants.

**Agenda Item 1: Providing a Brief Summary of the First Meeting**

The meeting should begin with an overview of the activities of the previous meeting. Address any questions that attendees might have about the initial meeting.

**Agenda Item 2: Defining Community Boundaries**

Communities, unlike geopolitical units (i.e., places such as villages, hamlets, townships, boroughs, towns, cities and counties), are not defined territorially. However, as noted in Chapter 2, the territorial element is an essential part of the definition of community. From an interactional perspective, community occurs in local places and is locality-oriented, but the place itself does not constitute the community. Instead, the community is defined as a natural process of interrelated, ongoing locality-oriented social interactions through which local residents express their shared identity and engage in common interests. Collective actions occur when actors and associations from the differentiated special interest fields in a locality come together and interact on matters concerning the public good. It follows, then, that the beginning point to defining a community's boundaries is the delineation of the locality (i.e., the geographic space) in which the action takes place.

Here, locality refers to the area of physical space where community residents live and more or less interact on a daily basis. The locality provides the territorial setting for the interactional community to emerge. According to Wilkinson [11:27], "The locality is the starting point for analysis because it is the point or locus of empirical convergence of the multiple threads that make up a community; but it is only a starting place."

*Tool: Cognitive Mapping*

Cognitive mapping is a tool that can be used to investigate individuals' spatial definitions of their community. The technique of cognitive mapping has been, and continues to be, used in





geography, cartography and psychology to examine issues such as estimations of distance and directions and perceptions of the size and shape of physical environments. The method has also been used in sociology to explore the meaning of rurality and to examine how urbanites define their neighborhoods.

*Step 1: Draw Individual Maps*

- Distribute colored pens/markers and a blank sheet of paper to each individual. Ask the individuals to draw a map of the area that they think of as their community (i.e., the area of physical space where residents live and more or less interact on a daily basis).
- Ask the individuals to delineate on their maps area boundaries and approximately how far (in miles) they perceive their community to extend.
- Ask the individuals to indicate and label on their map any element of the natural or built environment that they consider an important component in defining their community. Such components might include streets/highways, schools, parks, rivers, service establishments and/or landmarks.
- Finally, ask individuals to identify the neighboring places that are fundamental to the social, political and economic organization of their community.

*Step 2: Share Individual Maps*

- Ask each individual to present his/her map to the larger group.

**N**OTE: It is important that the maps be viewed with the understanding that cognitive mapping does not control for differences among subjects in artistic ability.

*Step 3: Create One “Working” Community Map*

- On flip chart paper, have the group create one large “working” map of their community. The purpose is to create one picture that represents the group’s spatial definition of their community. Save the finished product, as this “working” community map will be revisited in later meetings.

**N**OTE: It is important to remember that group work can be difficult, and consensus is not always possible. Group members may disagree on the community’s boundaries. It will be your role as a facilitator to manage any disagreements that may occur and keep the group focused on the task at hand.



**Agenda Item 3: Defining the Local Society**

As noted in Chapter 2, community is a phenomenon that occurs in a local society. A local society is defined as the area in which a population meets its common daily needs and encounters shared problems. The concept of local society refers to the larger economic, political and sociocultural structure within which the community is nested.

The community must be understood in terms of its placement in this larger structure. Therefore, it is important to delineate the size and scope of the local society in which the community is situated. By doing so, the group will understand where their community fits in “the larger scheme of things.”

*Tool: Goods and Services Survey*

A Goods and Services Survey is one tool that can be used to investigate individuals’ spatial definitions of their local society. A copy is located in Appendix D.

*Step 1: Complete Goods and Services Survey*

- Distribute a copy of the Goods and Services Survey to each individual.
- For each item on the survey, ask individuals to write in the name of the one town or city where the purchases or activities most often occur. If they do not use a particular type of good or service, then have them answer for another member of their household. If no one in their household uses a particular type of good or service, then have them just write “none” and go on to the next item. If they usually purchase a particular good online via the World Wide Web or through a mail order catalog, then have them write “mail” in the space provided.

*Step 2: Analyze the Goods and Services Survey*

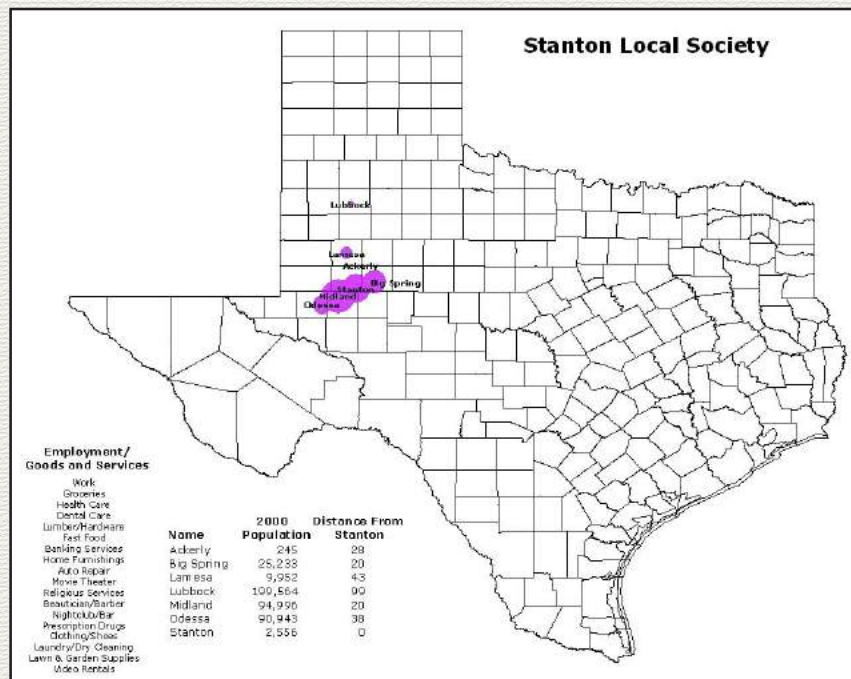
- Simple descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency counts, percentages) can be used to tally the results. For each good or service, count how many times a place is mentioned. Keep a tally on a piece of paper. A distinguishable pattern generally will emerge.
- Highlight on a printed map (e.g., a highway road map) the places that were most frequently mentioned.

Figure 4 presents an example of the local society within which the community of Stanton, Texas, appears. The map was generated using a computer software map making program. Notice the size and scope of Stanton’s local society. It extends from Odessa (approximately 40 miles away) in the west, to Lubbock (approximately 100



miles away) in the north, to Big Spring (approximately 20 miles away) in the east.

*Figure 4: Example of Local Society within which Stanton, Texas, is located*



#### **Agenda Item 4: Identifying Community-Based Planning Steering Committee Members**

An extremely important part of the overall community-based planning process, and one which the initiating group must not take lightly, is to purposely develop a community-based planning steering committee. It is important to seek maximize representation of key individuals representing groups and organizations from the vast number of social fields in the community. The broadest possible participation is encouraged to reflect the dynamic nature of the community.

##### *Tool: Inventory of Social Fields*

Identifying who in the community should be involved in the community-based planning steering committee is an extremely important part of the process. An inventory of the various social fields within a community is the first step in identifying community-based planning steering committee members.

As stated in Chapter 2, all local societies have a number of social fields, each marked to a greater or lesser extent by its own identity, frame of reference, organization, core interactional properties, and set of specific and/or institutional interests. A social field is defined as a dynamic, constantly changing, loosely bounded, interconnected sequence of acts displaying unity through time around an identifiable set of interests. Social fields are arenas of action (i.e.,



projects, programs, activities or events) through which actors (i.e., formal and informal leaders), generally working in various associations (i.e., formal organizations and informal groups), pursue specific interests.

The social fields worksheets in Appendix E will aid the group in identifying community-based planning team members.

*Step 1: Complete Social Fields Worksheets*

- Distribute copies of each social field worksheet to all participants.
- On a flip chart, list the following social fields:
  - o Economic Development
  - o Education
  - o Health Care
  - o Faith Based
  - o Government
  - o Recreation
  - o Housing
  - o Transportation
  - o Social Services
  - o Media
- Ask if there are any other social fields that need to be recognized. If so, write them on the flip chart paper.
- Tape the sheet(s) of flip chart paper to the wall.
- Refer to the list of social fields on the flip chart. For each social field identified on the flip chart, ask them to list on their respective social fields worksheets:
  - o The principal actors (i.e., formal and informal leaders)
  - o The associations (i.e., formal organizations and informal groups)
  - o The major actions (i.e., projects, programs, activities or events) that have been, or are currently being, undertaken
- Ask each individual to read his/her list of actors, associations and actions to the larger group.
- List the actors, associations and major actions on separate sheets of flip chart paper.
- Tape the flip chart papers to the wall.



### *Step 2: Selection of Individuals to Invite*

- Review the lists of actors, associations and major actions.
- From the lists, have the group decide who they will invite to join the community-based planning steering committee.
  - o Explain to the group that they should invite at least one representative from each of the groups or organizations that were identified with a particular social field and individuals from the public, private and nonprofit sectors of the community. The group needs to be inclusive and maximize compositional characteristics (i.e., race, age, gender, socioeconomic status, length of residence, etc.) as much as possible.
  - o Explain to the group that they should not be exclusive or avoid inviting certain individuals because of difference in opinion.

**N**OTE: Practice has shown that there is no magic number of prospective participants who should be invited to join a community-based planning steering committee. The size of the community-based planning steering committee will depend upon a number of factors, including the population of the community, the number of social fields within the community, and the number of groups and organizations within each social field. A more important factor in determining the future success of a community-based planning steering committee is the representativeness of the individuals.

- Determine who will take the responsibility of mailing invitations to the identified individuals. To allow prospective participants to plan ahead, invitations should be mailed at least a month in advance before the scheduled meeting. The letters should be personalized. Do not send a generic or standardized form letter. In addition to stating the location, date and time of the meeting, the letter should contain specific information on the purpose of the meeting and what will be required of the participants. Enclose a flyer highlighting the potential benefits of community-based planning; a sample is shown in Appendix F.
- Each invitation should be followed up with a telephone call or a personal visit. The individual(s) in charge of contacting the prospective participants must anticipate and be prepared to answer any questions regarding responsibilities, time commitments and/or the process of community-based planning.



### Agenda Item 5: Schedule a Meeting with Potential Participants

Set a date, time and location for a meeting with the potential participants. Explain to the group that the next meeting will be a continuation of the first phase of the community-based planning process (i.e., initiation) and the beginning of Phase 2 (organization of sponsorship).

## Phase 2: Organization of Sponsorship

*Structure building activity: the formation of multi-interest networks and inter-organizational linkages to coordinate and integrate actions within and across the various social fields.*

In this phase of the process, a community-based planning steering committee is formed. The steering committee consists of multi-interest, inter-organizational networks from the various social fields in the community. It is in this stage that the steering committee establishes legitimacy as a recognizable community group. The development of a mission statement adds to the group's legitimacy.

A proposed meeting agenda is provided to guide you through the Organization of Sponsorship phase.

### Meeting 3: Forming the Community-Based Planning Steering Committee

The purpose of this meeting will be to further set the stage for the community-based planning process that is about to unfold.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2½ to 3 hours.

As noted above, this meeting is a continuation of the Initiation stage (Phase 1) and the beginning of the Organization of Sponsorship stage (Phase 2). Using the task accomplishment and structure building terminology, the purpose of this meeting is to generate widespread consciousness of the community-based planning process (a Phase 1 structure building activity) among the newly created community-based planning steering committee (a Phase 2 task accomplishment activity), which will be charged with coordinating and integrating future actions within and across the various social fields through the creation of multi-interest networks and inter-organizational linkages (a Phase 2 structure building activity). You may choose to conduct this meeting in one of two following ways:





Option 1: You may choose to conduct this meeting in a manner similar to the first meeting between you and the group who initiated the process. If you choose this option, then you will be responsible for facilitating the entire meeting.

Option 2: You may choose to have the members of the group who initiated the process take the lead (with your assistance, of course) in facilitating the first part of the meeting. If you choose this option, then members of the group who initiated the process will be responsible for summarizing and presenting to the new attendees all the information that was covered in the previous two meetings. You, then, will be responsible for covering the discussion of the makeup of the current community-based planning steering committee and the development of the mission statement.

### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for this meeting should consist of:

- Introductions
- Explanation of role of facilitator
- A brief summary of what the group can expect
- Presentation on community and community development
- Presentation of the Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix
- Explanation of community-based planning and how it can be viewed as a form of community development
- Presentation of community boundaries map
- Presentation of local society map
- Discussion of makeup of current community-based planning steering committee
- Development of a mission statement
- Scheduling of next meeting

### **Agenda Item 1: Introductions**

More than likely, several of the participants at this meeting will know each other. Many of the participants will know you, too. However, as stated before, it is a good idea to introduce yourself and have others do the same.

### **Agenda Item 2: Explanation of Role of Facilitator**

Refer to “Explanation of Your Role as a Facilitator” on pages 19-20.

### **Agenda Item 3: A Brief Summary of What the Group Can Expect**

Refer to “A Brief Summary of What the Group Can Expect” on page 20.



**Agenda Item 4: Presentation on Community and Community Development**

As you did with the original group, you want this expanded group to think about their community and what it is they hope to develop. Give the presentation on community and community development. A copy of the presentation – with speaker notes – is included in Appendix A. The slides (to be copied and shared with participants) are included in Appendix B. Also, if desired, a PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded from the Southern Rural Development Center's Web site at [http://srdc.msstate.edu/publications/cbp\\_theodori.ppt](http://srdc.msstate.edu/publications/cbp_theodori.ppt).

*Discussion Time:* Spend time discussing the concepts of community and community development.

**Agenda Item 5: Assessment of Community Activeness and Community Consciousness**

Use the Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix to assess levels of community activeness and community consciousness from the meeting attendees' perception. Refer to “Assessment of Community Activeness and Community Consciousness” on pages 21-23.

**Agenda Item 6: Explanation of Community-Based Planning and How It Can Be Viewed as One Form of Community Development**

Refer to “Explanation of Community-Based Planning and How It Can Be Viewed as One Form of Community Development” on pages 23-25.

**Agenda Item 7: Presentation of the Community Boundaries Map**

Share the working map of the community with the meeting attendees. Ask the new participants if they agree or disagree with the picture painted by the initiating group. For those who disagree, ask them to make suggestions on how the map could be improved to accurately reflect the boundaries of the community. Discuss these suggestions with the group and work toward consensus on boundaries of the community.

**Agenda Item 8: Presentation of the Local Society Map**

Share the local society map with the meeting attendees. Ask the new participants if they agree or disagree with the picture painted by the initiating group. For those who disagree, ask them to make suggestions on how the map could be improved to accurately reflect the size and scope of the local society. Discuss these suggestions with the group. If the discussion results in widely varying descriptions of the local society, then the Goods and Services Survey (Appendix D) should be administered to the new attendees. Work toward consensus on size and scope of the local society.



### **Agenda Item 9: Discussion of Makeup of Current Community-Based Planning Steering Committee**

Share the list of social fields that was compiled with the meeting attendees. Determine whether or not each identified social field has representation on the steering committee. If one or more social fields are not represented, make a concerted effort to identify individuals who are considered influential in shaping community opinions from the groups and organizations within those social fields. Newly identified persons should be issued an invitation to join the community-based planning steering committee.

### **Agenda Item 10: Development of a Mission Statement**

At this point, a community-based planning steering committee which consists of multi-interest, inter-organizational linkages across the various social fields has been formed. The steering committee must now formulate a mission statement. A mission statement will provide purpose, focus and direction to the coordinated and integrated action which the group intends to achieve.

The mission statement will explain who the steering committee is, what the steering committee will do, how the steering committee will do it, and why the steering committee will do it. The mission statement should be no more than one sentence long, easily understood and able to be recited by memory.

In other words, the one sentence mission statement should provide answers to the following questions:

- Who are we?
- What are we going to do?
- How are we going to do it?
- Why is it important?

The process of developing a mission statement is relatively straightforward. Participants can work alone or in small groups.

- Distribute a copy of the Mission Statement Worksheet found in Appendix G to each individual (or group).
- Ask each individual (or group) to write a sentence that captures the “Who,” “What,” “How,” and “Why” of the steering committee.

**N**OTE: A mission statement is a proclamation about the group of individuals involved in the community-based planning effort. It is not a statement about the community.



By reading this one sentence, an outsider should be able to determine who the group is, what the group will do, how the group will do it, and why it is important that the group does it.

- Ask each individual (or group) to read his/her (or its) statement.
- Have the participants listen for key words or phrases that they like as the statements are read.
- Upon agreement of the group, jot down on a flip chart key words and phrases.
- Tape the flip chart papers to the wall.
- From the various flip charts with the key words and phrases, have the steering committee construct an agreed upon working mission statement.
- Below are two examples of mission statements to share with the community-based planning steering committee.

**Example 1:**

As concerned citizens we wish to build a better environment for ourselves, neighbors, visitors and the generations to come.

**Example 2:**

The mission of the Community Development Program is to support community growth, unity and enhancement by expanding and strengthening community participation to create common goals that generate positive and constructive actions to enhance the quality of life for all residents.

**Agenda Item 11: Scheduling of Next Meeting**

Set a date, time and location for the next meeting. Phase 3 (visioning, goal-setting and strategy formation) will commence at the next meeting.

At the conclusion of this meeting, the community-based planning steering committee should feel confident about their purpose and responsibility. They should have a good sense of the charge and how the community will benefit from a community-based planning process.



## Phase 3: Visioning, Goal Setting and Strategy Formation

*Structure building activity: developing a vision, short-term and long-range goals, and strategies that transcend the special interests of particular social fields.*

In this phase of the process, visioning, goal setting and strategy formation will occur. The procedures of visioning, goal setting and strategy formation are self-evident in both task accomplishment and structure building activities. What distinguishes activities at the structure building level from those at the task accomplishment level is that the vision, short-term and long-range goals, and strategies to reach those goals transcend the special interests of specific social fields.

Prior to engaging in visioning, goal setting and strategy formation, though, issues affecting the community must be identified and prioritized. Identifying and prioritizing the issues confronting the community is an important step in the community-based planning process. The prioritization of issues will be accomplished through a democratic process of voting. Each individual will vote on each issue. The identification and prioritization of issues will serve as the “road map” for the community as it moves onward. Your job will be to facilitate these processes. Proposed meeting agendas are provided to guide you through the Visioning, Goal Setting and Strategy Formation phase.



### Meeting 4: Identifying the Issues

The purpose of this meeting is to identify and prioritize the issues affecting the community. The list of prioritized issues will be the foundation for the visioning, goal setting and strategy formation that will soon occur.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2½ to 3 hours.

#### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for this meeting should consist of:

- Introduction
- Identifying the issues affecting the community
- Voting on the issues
- Scheduling of next meeting



**Agenda Item 1: Introduction**

You may want to begin by reading or paraphrasing the following:

More times than not, Extension faculty and other professionals who work in the area of rural community development will agree with the following statement: “When you’ve seen one rural community, you’ve seen one rural community.” That statement is undeniably true; every community, rural or otherwise, has certain social, economic and/or environmental issues/problems that are unique to that particular community.

However, in reality that statement is only partially true. An appropriate qualification would read: “Every community, rural or otherwise, has certain social, economic and/or environmental issues/problems that are unique to that particular community; however, many communities have certain social, economic and/or environmental issues/problems that are shared by many other communities.”

Most communities do indeed share similar issues and/or concerns with other communities. What makes each community unique, though, is the relative difference in the severity (seriousness) and magnitude (number of residents affected) of its respective issues/concerns.

Your job at this meeting will be to identify the issues affecting your community and prioritize them in regard to their severity and magnitude.

**Agenda Item 2: Identifying the Issues Affecting the Community**

It is now time for meeting attendees to identify the issues affecting their community and to prioritize these issues in regard to their severity and magnitude (as seen through the eyes of the meeting attendees).

- Assemble and welcome meeting attendees (seating arrangements will vary according to the facility and the size of the group).
- Provide each participant with a sheet of paper and a pencil/pen.
- Ask each individual to list on his/her sheet of paper the top five issues that they believe are affecting their community.



- Start on one side of the room and work your way around in an orderly fashion, asking each individual to read his/her issues. Let's say that the first person's list consisted of the following issues, which you transferred to the flip chart:
  1. Water quality
  2. Community appearance
  3. Lack of community involvement
  4. Declining tax base
  5. Lack of affordable housing
- Write each issue on flip chart paper, in large print.
- Explain to participants that they are to cross off any issue on their paper once someone else mentions it.
- Go on to the next person. Ask that individual to read his/her issues.
- Continue until all participants have had a chance to read their list of issues. It may be the case that people near the end may have crossed off all of their issues because others before them had the same ones. That's OK. But, give them the opportunity to say something if they wish to speak.

With the addition of the second individual's issues, the flip chart might now look like the below:

1. Water quality
2. Community appearance
3. Lack of community involvement
4. Declining tax base
5. Lack of affordable housing
6. Discrimination against senior citizens
7. Declining population
8. Job opportunities for youth
9. Lack of community spirit
10. Poor work ethic

### **Agenda Item 3: Voting on the Issues**

Now that the issues affecting the community have been identified, it is time to begin prioritizing the issues. Prioritization does not mean that any issue is more important than



any other issue. All of the issues identified are important issues affecting the community. Instead, prioritization is simply a way to make sense out of the list of issues. The first step in prioritizing the issues is to have meeting attendees vote on the issues. Your job will be to facilitate the voting. The procedure is spelled out below:

- Divide the large group into appropriate size working groups (approximately 8 to 10 individuals per group).
- Ask each group to designate one person as the group's scribe. This individual will be in charge of tallying results for his/her particular group.
- Provide instructions for the scribe of each group:
  - o Across the top of a clean sheet of paper, in three columns, write the category headings "Low Priority (1)," "Medium Priority (2)," and "High Priority (3)."
  - o Number down the left hand side of the paper (start with number 1 and proceed down to the last item "n")

EXAMPLE:

	Low Priority (1)	Medium Priority (2)	High Priority (3)
1			
2			
3			
4			
#			
#			
#			
#			
n			

- Tell individuals that these three categories (low priority, medium priority and high priority) are the ONLY acceptable choices that can be considered when voting.
- In each group, the scribe will ask for a show of hands as to the priority level of the first issue identified.

For example, if the first issue on the flip chart is water quality, the scribe will ask members of his/her group how many believe that water quality is a low priority issue that needs to be addressed. The scribe will then write in the number of people who said that water quality is a low priority. The scribe will do the same for votes for water quality as a medium priority and as a high priority.



The below illustration shows that in a group of 10 people, 2 indicated that water quality was a low priority, 3 indicated that water quality was a medium priority, and 5 indicated that water quality was a high priority.

	Low Priority (1)	Medium Priority (2)	High Priority (3)
1	2	3	5
2			
3			
4			
#			
#			
#			
#			
n			

- Go on to the next item listed on the flip chart

The below illustration shows that in the same group of 10 people, 4 indicated that community appearance (issue/item number 2 listed on the flip chart) was a medium priority, while 6 indicated that community appearance was a high priority. No one thought that community appearance was a low priority.

	Low Priority (1)	Medium Priority (2)	High Priority (3)
1	2	3	5
2	0	4	6
3			
4			
#			
#			
#			
#			
N			

- This process will be continued until the group has voted on all the issues on the flip chart paper.
- Once all the groups have finished voting, collect the sheets. Number each sheet (Group 1 to Group “n”).
- Thank the attendees for their active participation, time and effort.



**Agenda Item 4: Scheduling of Next Meeting**

Set a date, time and location for the next meeting. The next meeting will be a continuation of Phase 3 (visioning, goal setting and strategy formation).

**Prioritizing (or Ranking) the Issues**

Prior to the next meeting, your responsibility will be to tally and rank the results of the voting and make the ranking available to interested parties. The ranking should be done using a computer spreadsheet program.

*How to Tally and Prioritize the Issues:*

*Step 1: Set up a table*

- Label five columns as follows:
  - o Issue
  - o Low Priority (1)
  - o Medium Priority (2)
  - o High Priority (3)
  - o Total
- List each issue that was identified in the Issue Identification Meeting.

As an example, let's use the 10 issues that were listed in the previous example. For purposes of this example, we will assume that these ten issues were the only issues identified at the Issues Identification meeting.

Issue	Low Priority (1)	Medium Priority (2)	High Priority (3)	Total
Water quality				
Community appearance				
Lack of community involvement				
Declining tax base				
Lack of affordable housing				
Discrimination against senior citizens				
Declining population				
Job opportunities for youth				
Lack of community spirit				
Poor work ethic				

*Step 2: Create duplicate copies of the table*

- Create a duplicate copy of the table for each group. You can do this by copying and pasting the original table.
- Label each table with each group's number.



*Step 3: Input results*

- For every item on each group's sheet, input the number of "1's" (low priority), "2's" (medium priority), and "3's" (high priority) responses.

Issues for Group 1	Low Priority (1)	Medium Priority (2)	High Priority (3)	Total
Water quality	2	3	5	
Community appearance	0	4	6	
Lack of community involvement	6	4	0	
Declining tax base	7	1	2	
Lack of affordable housing	1	8	1	
Discrimination against senior citizens	5	2	3	
Declining population	6	2	2	
Job opportunities for youth	2	1	7	
Lack of community spirit	0	5	5	
Poor work ethic	3	2	5	

*Step 4: Combine the separate tables into one large table*

- For each issue on each table, add together the total number of responses.
- Add the number of responses (in their respective categories) for each issue identified.

Issue	Low Priority (1)	Medium Priority (2)	High Priority (3)	Total
Water quality	2	5	11	
Community appearance	5	7	6	
Lack of community involvement	8	8	2	
Declining tax base	8	6	4	
Lack of affordable housing	6	9	3	
Discrimination against senior citizens	9	2	7	
Declining population	8	5	5	
Job opportunities for youth	6	2	10	
Lack of community spirit	0	6	12	
Poor work ethic	6	4	8	

*Step 5: Compute a total score for each item on each group's table*

- Multiply the number of "1's" (low priority responses) by "1," the number of "2's" (medium priority responses) by "2," and the number of "3's" (high priority responses) by "3," AND then sum the products.

For water quality,  $2 \times 1$  (low priority) = 2,  $5 \times 2$  (medium priority) = 10, and  $11 \times 3$  (high priority) = 33;  $2 + 10 + 33 = 45$ .

For community appearance,  $5 \times 1$  (low priority) = 5,  $7 \times 2$  (medium priority) = 14, and  $6 \times 3$  (high priority) = 18;  $5 + 14 + 18 = 37$ .



Issue	Low Priority (1)	Medium Priority (2)	High Priority (3)	Total
Water quality	2	5	11	45
Community appearance	5	7	6	37
Lack of community involvement	8	8	2	30
Declining tax base	8	6	4	32
Lack of affordable housing	6	9	3	33
Discrimination against senior citizens	9	2	7	34
Declining population	8	5	5	33
Job opportunities for youth	6	2	10	40
Lack of community spirit	0	6	12	48
Poor work ethic	6	4	8	38

*Step 6: Delete the low priority, medium priority and high priority columns*

Issue	Total
Water quality	45
Community appearance	37
Lack of community involvement	30
Declining tax base	32
Lack of affordable housing	33
Discrimination against senior citizens	34
Declining population	33
Job opportunities for youth	40
Lack of community spirit	48
Poor work ethic	38

*Step 7: Reorder the list of issues from highest priority to lowest priority*

Issue	Total
Lack of community spirit	48
Water quality	45
Job opportunities for youth	40
Poor work ethic	38
Community appearance	37
Discrimination against senior citizens	34
Lack of affordable housing	33
Declining population	33
Declining tax base	32
Lack of community involvement	30

*Step 8: Add a rank column to the table*

Issue	Total	Rank
Lack of community spirit	48	1
Water quality	45	2
Job opportunities for youth	40	3
Poor work ethic	38	4
Community appearance	37	5
Discrimination against senior citizens	34	6
Lack of affordable housing	33	7
Declining population	33	7
Declining tax base	32	8
Lack of community involvement	30	9



**N**OTE: The issues of lack of affordable housing and declining population both received a score of 33. Therefore, they both received a rank of 7.

*Step 9: Make the table available to members of the community-based planning coordinating team*

- Print the table and make it available to members of the Community-Based Planning Steering Committee.

### **Meeting 5: Reviewing the Issues, Forming Working Committees and Beginning Data Collection**

Shortly after the issues identification meeting, hold a meeting to review the issues and form working committees.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2 hours.

#### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for this meeting should consist of:

- Reviewing the list of issues affecting the community,
- Forming working committees,
- Explaining data collection task, and
- Scheduling of meeting(s) to review data.

#### **Agenda Item 1: Reviewing the List of Issues Affecting the Community**

The first item of business at this meeting is to review the list of issues affecting the community.

- Pass out a copy of the list of issues to all meeting attendees and give them a few minutes to look over the issues.
- Ask if there are questions about any of the issues on the list. If there are questions, refer them back to the group.
- Ask if anyone is aware of any actions currently being taken by any community group or organization to address any of the identified issues. If so, have the individual share his/her knowledge with the group.



- Explain to the group that even though ALL of the items on the list are important issues affecting the community, they will not have the financial, material or human resources to address all of them at once.
- Explain to the group that working committees focused on particular issues will need to be formed.

### **Agenda Item 2: Forming Working Committees**

Working committees are sub-groups of the larger community-based planning steering committee. Each working committee that is formed will be charged with specific responsibilities. Responsibilities will include, but not be limited to:

- Collecting community-level data; developing a vision statement, goals and strategies (a continuation of Phase 3)
- Recruiting additional participants from the community, building cohesion, developing new leaders and leadership skills, and coordinating actions (Phase 4)
- Implementing strategies to build, strengthen and maintain the structure of the community field (Phase 5)
- Evaluating the process by identifying and celebrating specific outputs and outcomes (Phase 6)

The formation of working committees should be accomplished through a process of self-selection (see steps below).

**N**OTE: The number of established working committees is directly related to the size (the number of active participants) of the community-based planning steering committee. Practice has shown that the minimum number of individuals in any one working committee should be 10. Also, it is wise to keep the maximum number of working committees in any community to 4 or 5.

- Ask members to select issues that they have an interest in working on.
- Have members volunteer to serve on desired committees. If someone does not self-select a committee, then it becomes your responsibility as a facilitator to place that individual into a working committee.
- Explain that EACH working committee will be responsible for the items listed above.



**N**OTE: Once the members of the steering committee self-select their working committees, have each working committee appoint a committee chair and co-chair. Explain that these two individuals will be responsible for providing the necessary leadership and maintaining the structure of their committee as they continue on their “community development journey” (throughout the remainder of Phase 4 and into Phases 5 and 6). Experience has shown that, when possible, it is of great benefit to have a member of the group who originally initiated the process serve as either a chair or co-chair of each working committee.

### **Agenda Item 3: Explaining the Data Collection Task**

Knowledge of a community’s past and present social, economic and environmental characteristics is crucial to the overall process of community-based planning. Such information is necessary in order to understand the social, economic and environmental trends of the community. More importantly, such information will serve as benchmarks against which future progress will be measured.

#### *Data Collection*

Explain to the community-based planning steering committee that before they can adequately plan for the future, they must be aware of the community’s past and present situation. To accomplish this task, each working committee must gather, analyze, review and report on a wide array of quantitative and qualitative community-level data that relate to its issue of interest.

Due to certain challenges associated with data collection, have the working committees decide in advance the answers to the following questions:

- What kind or amount of data will be gathered and analyzed?
- Who will collect and present the data?
- Who will manage the database?

Examples of data that might be collected, analyzed and presented by a working committee addressing an issue dealing with the local economy might include economic characteristics of the community such as:

- o Per capita income
- o Average household income
- o Unemployment rate
- o Poverty rate
- o Major businesses/employers in the community
- o Labor force





A working committee addressing an issue dealing with education might collect, analyze and present information on schools such as:

- o Enrollment in private schools
- o Enrollment in public schools
- o Enrollment in local two-year colleges or four-year universities
- o Enrollment in local trade/technical schools
- o Educational attainment of students
- o Graduation rates of students



**N**OTE: Be aware of information overload. Too much data can be as much of a problem as having too little.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Scheduling of Next Meeting(s) to Review Data**

Set a date, time and location for the next meeting(s). At the next meeting(s), the working committees will present the information that they collect.

**N**OTE: Experience has revealed that the working committees need at least one month to adequately complete the data collection task and prepare quality presentations. Schedule future meeting(s) with an appropriate time frame in mind.

#### **Meeting 6: Reviewing the Data**

Shortly after the meeting to review issues, form working committees and begin data collection, hold a meeting (or a series of meetings) to review the collected data.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2 hours (each).

##### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for the meeting(s) should consist of:

- Presenting information on community-level data
- Scheduling of next meeting

#### **Agenda Item 1: Presenting Information on Community-Level Data**

Have the working committees present information on the community-level data that they collected.

**N**OTE: The number of meetings to review community-level data will be dependent upon the amount of information that has been compiled. Again, be aware of information overload. Too much data and too many presentations can be as much of a problem as having too little data and too few presentations.



### **Agenda Item 2: Scheduling of Next Meeting**

Set a date, time and location for the next meeting. At the next meeting, each working committee will engage in the processes of visioning, goal setting and strategy formation.

### **Meeting 7: Developing Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies**

Once the data have been presented, it is now time for each working committee to develop a vision statement, goals and strategies to address their goals. The process of developing a vision statement, goals and strategies is relatively straightforward.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2 hours.

#### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for this meeting should consist of:

- Developing vision statements
- Developing goals
- Developing strategies
- Scheduling of meeting(s) to review vision statements, goals and strategies

### **Agenda Item 1: Developing Vision Statements**

Ask each working committee to develop a vision statement (a worksheet is provided in Appendix H). A vision statement is a shared description of a desired, ideal, future condition of the community. Each working committee's vision statement should reflect the desired, ideal, future condition of the community with respect to the issue it is working on. For example, if a working committee is addressing issues related to community beautification, then that working committee's vision statement must capture the desired, ideal, future essence of a visually appealing community.

### **Difference between a Mission Statement and a Vision Statement**

A mission statement is a proclamation about the group of individuals involved in the community-based planning effort. A vision statement, on the other hand, is a statement about the community. By reading each working committee's vision statement, an outsider should be able to easily understand the vision that each working committee has for the community with respect to the issue at hand.

### **Agenda Item 2: Developing Goals**

Ask each working committee to develop short-term and long-range goals. Goals are statements that describe the desired, ideal, future condition of the community in precise terms. A goal statement is more specific than a vision statement and should include:



- An accomplishment to be achieved
- A measurable outcome
- A specific time frame in which to accomplish the goal

### **Agenda Item 3: Developing Strategies**

Ask each working committee to develop strategies. Strategies are specific programs, projects or efforts that relate directly to achieving the goals. Strategies answer questions associated with “Who?,” “When?,” and “How?”

The “Who” refers to the stakeholders (i.e., key local and extra-local individuals, groups or organizations) who need to become involved to successfully achieve the goals. The committee needs to determine who will carry out the critical steps and who will be responsible for making decisions along the way.

The “When” refers to the date/time by which a proposed goal will be achieved. To meet the proposed target date for goal completion, each step in the strategy plan should be placed within a time frame.

The “How” refers to the resources needed to accomplish the goals. These resources may include human capital, financial assets and time.

**N**OTE: The committees should use this meeting to work on their vision statements, goals and strategies. Explain to the working committees that they may need to meet (as many times as needed) before the next meeting to finish these items.

### **Agenda Item 4: Scheduling of Next Meeting(s)**

Set a date, time and location for the next meeting(s). At the next meeting, each working committee will present its vision statement, goals and strategies to the larger group.

### **Meeting 8: Reviewing Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies**

Once the vision statements, goals and strategies have been formulated, it is now time for each working committee to present its ideas to the larger group.

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 1 to 2 hours.

#### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for this meeting should consist of:



- Presentation and discussion of vision statements, goals and strategies
- Scheduling of a community meeting

### **Agenda Item 1: Presentation and Discussion of Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies**

Have each working committee present its vision statement, goals and strategies to the larger group. Working committees can either write on flip chart paper or present electronically (computer presentation or overhead projector). After each presentation, ask the other committees to provide constructive comments. Continue until all of the working committees feel confident about their vision, goals and strategies.

**N**OTE: The number of meetings to review vision statements, goals and strategies will vary from one community to another. Try to keep meetings from lasting longer than two hours.

### **Agenda Item 2: Scheduling of Community Meeting**

Once all of the working committees feel confident about their visions, goals and strategies, it is time to take the next step and move into Phase 4 (recruitment). Up to this point, only purposely selected and invited individuals have been involved in the process. It is now time to present the process to the community and give every citizen the opportunity to participate.

One way to present the community-based planning process to the general citizenry is to hold a community meeting. The community-based planning steering committee must plan and schedule a community-wide meeting. This meeting must be widely publicized and marketed. All community residents should be invited to attend. Will all community residents attend? No. Is it important that all community residents attend? No. What is important, though, is that an invitation to attend was extended to all community residents. The community-based planning steering committee can personally invite individuals to attend the upcoming community-wide meeting and/or advertise it in the local media (i.e., newspaper, radio and/or television).

**N**OTE: A concerted effort should be made to involve area youth.

## **Phase 4: Recruitment**

*Structure building activity: encouraging participation, building cohesion, developing new leaders and leadership skills, and coordinating actions.*



The time has now come to present the work of the community-based planning steering committee to the larger community and give every citizen the opportunity to participate in the process. By doing so, the procedure then truly becomes a “community-based process.” In this phase of the process, the community-based planning steering committee will engage in recruitment. Structure building actions associated with this stage involve building public support, encouraging broad participation, coordinating activities and fostering leadership skills.

Complete participation in the community-based planning process by all members of the community would be the ideal situation. Realistically, though, total participation will not be achieved.

At this stage in the process, you and the community-based planning steering committee need to schedule a community-wide meeting and bring the public up to speed on the committee’s previous work and planned activities. Your job will be to facilitate this meeting. Proposed meeting agendas are provided to guide you through the Recruitment stage.

### Meeting 9: Community Meeting

*Meeting Time:* Approximately 2 hours.

#### *Agenda*

At a minimum, agenda items for this community-wide meeting should consist of:

- Introductions
- Background on the formation of the community-based planning steering committee
- Presentation of mission statement
- Presentation of working committees’ vision statements, goals and strategies
- Question and answer sessions
- Group reaction and discussion
- Invitation for involvement
- Preparation for Phase 5 (Implementation) and Phase 6 (Evaluation)



**N**OTE: Explain to the community-based planning steering committee that they need not be surprised or discouraged if only a small number of community residents show up for the first community-wide meeting. Initiating a process of change in a community takes time. You and the community-based planning steering committee can only work with the individuals who show up.



### **Agenda Item 1: Introductions**

Introduce yourself. Have members of the community-based planning steering committee introduce themselves.

### **Agenda Item 2: Background on the Formation of the Steering Committee**

A spokesperson for the steering committee should be appointed and be charged with providing background information on its formation. Spend time answering any questions that community residents might have about the formation of the community-based planning steering committee.

### **Agenda Item 3: Presentation of Mission Statement**

Have the steering committee present the mission statement to the participants. Spend time answering any questions that community residents might have about the mission statement.

### **Agenda Item 4: Presentation of Working Committees' Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies**

Have each working committee share its vision statement, goals and strategies. Spend time answering any questions that community residents might have about the working committees' vision statements, goals and strategies to reach those goals.

### **Agenda Item 5: Group Reaction and Discussion**

Community members must be given an opportunity to react to the steering committee's mission statement and each of the working committee's vision statements, goals and strategies.

**N**OTE: Reactions should be solicited from all meeting attendees rather than only a few dominant voices.

If the community residents are in agreement with the steering committee's mission statement and each of the working committee's vision statements, goals and strategies, then an invitation for involvement should be extended (see below). However, if the community residents are in disagreement with the mission statement or any of the vision statements, goals or strategies, then a resolution must be reached.

Further stated, community residents must be given a chance to "shoot holes" in the steering committee's mission statement and/or the working committees' vision statements, goals and strategies. If the community residents agree with what the steering committee is proposing and don't shoot any holes in it, then ask them to join the cause and move on. On the other hand, if the community residents do not agree with the steering committee, then the steering committee needs to take the community residents' comments into consideration and make



needed revisions. In other words, the steering committee needs to go back to the drawing board and fix what is broken.

Regardless of the community residents' level of agreement, the steering committee must be prepared for new ideas and receptive to additional suggestions.

**Agenda Item 6: Invitation for Involvement**

Once the community residents and the steering committee are in agreement, extend an invitation to every individual at the meeting to participate in the community-based planning process. Not all individuals will choose to participate, and that is fine. Work with those who express an interest.

Have meeting attendees self-select the working committee that they wish to join. At this point in the meeting, community residents should visit with the established working committee of their choice. The remainder of the meeting should be dedicated to having members of the newly expanded working committees become acquainted with each other. The committees should review their vision statements, goals and strategies, keeping in mind that strategies may need to be revised. New members may be aware of additional stakeholders and funding sources.

**Agenda Item 7: Prepare for Phase 5 (Implementation) and Phase 6 (Evaluation)**

Up to this point, community members have spent weeks, months, maybe even a year or more, PLANNING. It is now time for ACTION.

Your job as the facilitator has been to keep hold of the reins. As the facilitator, you were responsible for keeping the participants from engaging in actions too early. Now it is time to let loose of the reins and let them run. Your job is to give the community-based planning participants the go ahead on their community-based plan.

Before closing this meeting, though, you must explain Phase 5 (Implementation) and Phase 6 (Evaluation). In addition, you must schedule a meeting to evaluate the initial progress of the working committees.

**Phase 5: Implementation**

*Structure building activity: applying resources and employing strategies to build, strengthen and maintain the structure of the community field.*



The overall mission statement and each working committee's vision statement, goals and strategies provide the material foundation for the community-based plan. Each component of the plan serves as a guide for implementation.

In this phase of the process, it is time to implement the community-based plan. In everyday terms, it is time to put the rubber to the road. Implementation of the community-based plan will depend upon the volitional efforts of the working committees. During implementation, the working committees will execute their strategies. The working committees will seek out and utilize the necessary material, financial and human resources needed in order to execute specific projects and/or programs in an effort to accomplish their goals. The chairs and co-chairs of each working committee must provide the necessary leadership.

There are no specific agenda items in this phase. As indicated above, your job during this stage is to give the working committees the green light. Simply put, it is time for the working committees to begin implementation of their strategies.

Explain to the working committees that they may encounter numerous difficulties and/or setbacks along the way. Any and all difficulties and/or setbacks will be addressed in Phase 6 (Evaluation).

Questions may or may not arise as the working committees implement their strategies. If they do, then address the questions to the best of your ability. If you cannot answer a particular question, then put the committee in touch with someone who might be able to help them.

Finally, wish them luck and provide encouragement!

**N**OTE: The interaction of the committee members is equally as important as whatever results they achieve. Recall that community development is defined as a process of building and strengthening the community. The process of community development involves purposive, positive and structure-oriented actions and exists in the efforts, as well as in the achievements, of people working together to address their shared interests and solve their common problems. Simply stated, community development is purposive action undertaken with positive intentions at improving community structure. Trying to purposively alter the structure of the community in a positive manner is enough to qualify as community development. Therefore, during implementation, task accomplishment geared toward building, strengthening and maintaining the structure of the community field (i.e., structure building), regardless of degree of success, is community development.



## Phase 6: Evaluation

*Structure building activity: identifying and celebrating specific outputs and outcomes of the process.*

In the evaluation phase, specific outputs and outcomes of the process will be identified and celebrated. Outputs generally refer to the tangible results; they are the things that can be seen or counted. Outcomes typically refer to the intangibles; they are more abstract and tend to be difficult to see or count.

Outputs result from task accomplishment activities. Examples may include enhanced physical community infrastructure (e.g., improvements in roads, transportation, water, sewage, lighting, etc.), enhanced appearance of the community through improved community services (e.g., health care, education, social services, parks and recreation, etc.), and an increased number of businesses.

Outcomes result from structure building processes. Examples may include the formation of new informal groups and/or formal organizations (e.g., civic clubs, community development foundations, community councils, regional development associations); enhanced communication and cooperation and new collaborations between/among individuals, informal groups and/or formal organizations; and increased engagement in civic affairs.

### Evaluation Meetings

The evaluation phase begins as soon as the community-based plan is implemented. Three to four months after the implementation phase has commenced, a meeting should be held to evaluate the initial progress of the working committees. At the meeting, updates from each of the committees should be given. Ask each working committee to complete the evaluation worksheet (Appendix I). Answers to the following questions should be sought:

- What outputs (i.e., task accomplishment activities) were accomplished?
- What outcomes (i.e., structure building activities) were accomplished?
- What, if any, barriers or difficulties must be overcome to successfully accomplish this goal?
- How will these barriers or difficulties be overcome?
- Who needs to be involved to overcome these barriers or difficulties?

If a committee has not done anything since the implementation phase began, then that committee must answer “Why not?”

Similar evaluation meetings should be held regularly every three to four months to assess accomplishments and, if necessary, revise strategies.



**Celebrate achievements! Celebrate achievements! Celebrate achievements!** Any and all progress or success stories should be shared with the larger community. This will increase excitement about the process and, hopefully, encourage more participation.

**N**OTE: Community-based planning is a process of social interaction. A process, by definition, is never fully complete or really finished; it consists simply of behavior in progress. Therefore, successful community-based planning is a continuous journey.

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## ENDNOTES

- [a] The two figures (i.e., Figure 1 and Figure 2) and much of the text comprising Chapter 2 were previously published by the author in the scholarly journal *Society and Natural Resources*, volume 18, number 7, pages 661-669. The article is titled "Community and Community Development in Resource-Based Areas: Operational Definitions Rooted in an Interactional Perspective." Copyright 2005, Taylor & Francis, Inc.
- [b] The term "visioning" has been added to Phase 3 of Wilkinson's [10,11] model of community action episodes.

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## Appendix A

### Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development

#### Speaker's Notes



## ***Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development***

*From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodori*

Community development is a very appealing idea. Time and again, community development has been prescribed as a popular means of improving the social, economic, and environmental quality of life for residents of a community. As encouraging as the notion of community development sounds, the *practice* of community development suffers from a lack of systematic theory and a clear understanding of what the community is and how it develops. In order for community development strategies to be viewed as a useful and practical means of improving community well-being, especially in rural areas, we must enhance people's knowledge and understanding of community and the ways in which communities develop and persist in a society characterized by increasing urbanization, globalization, and demographic change.

In this presentation, principles from an interactional theoretical perspective of social organization, which is rooted in the writings of Harold Kaufman (1959) and Kenneth Wilkinson (1991), are applied to definitional issues surrounding the notions of community and community development. Specifically, the objective is to provide a conceptual foundation for operational definitions of community and community development. This is a timely task since so much of our political rhetoric makes reference to "community" and "community development" yet fails to provide adequate explanations for the terms. The following, which is grounded in sociological theory and empirical research, elaborates these proposed working definitions.





What is “a community?” Community is an extremely elusive construct. People use the term community in a variety of ways. Oftentimes individuals use the term community to describe types of social groupings or networks. Examples include phrases such as “the business community,” “the farm community,” “the Hispanic community,” “the academic community,” “the prison community,” “the Baptist community,” and “the Internet community.” These social groupings or networks, along with many others, are often referred to as “territory-free communities.” Another common use of the term, and the one of interest here, focuses on geographically-localized settlements or “territorial-based communities.”

What is a territorial-based community? While there is not a universally accepted definition, most sociological definitions of such communities emphasize one or more of the following components.

These include:

- shared territory;
- common life;
- collective actions; and,
- mutual identity.



## ***Working Definition of Community***

Community: a place-oriented *process* of interrelated actions through which members of a local population express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theobald

Our first task, then, is to provide a working definition of community. For purposes of this presentation, **community** is defined as *a place-oriented process of interrelated actions through which members of a local population express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life.*

This definition views social interaction as the substantive element of community. Social interaction is the thread that ties together the four ingredients of community.

Social interaction:

- delineates an area as shared territory;
- contributes to the wholeness of local life;
- gives structure and direction to collective actions; and,
- is the source of mutual identity.



## ***Elements of a Local Society***

**A geographic dimension**  
*physical space*

**Humanlife dimension**  
*people living there*

**Relatively complete organization**  
*institutions and patterns of behaviors that cover  
the broad range of human interests*

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodore

### **Local Society**

Community, as conceptualized here, is a phenomenon that occurs in a “local society.” For our purposes, a ***local society*** is defined as *the area in which a population meets its daily needs and encounters shared problems*. At a minimum, there are three features inherent to any local society. They include:

- 1) a geographic dimension (i.e., a locality);
- 2) human life dimension (i.e., people living there); and
- 3) relatively complete organization (i.e., institutions and patterns of behavior that cover the broad range of human interests)



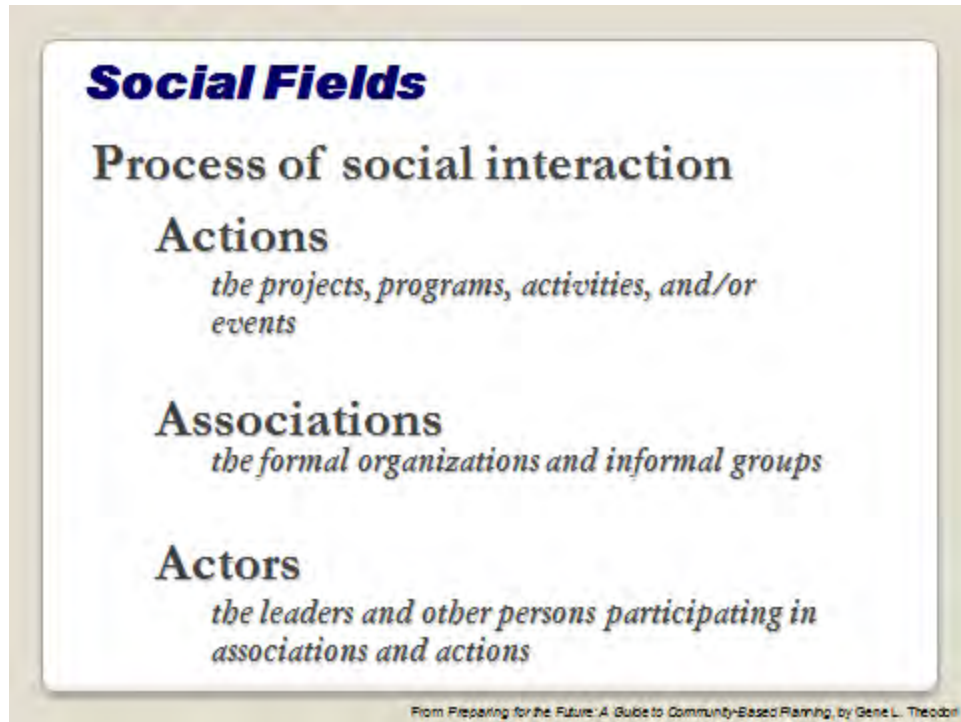
Each feature is *a necessary, but not sufficient condition* for community. In other words, all three elements are a prerequisite for community, but having all three does not ensure community. Only where these three elements exist does the potential exist for community.

To a greater or lesser extent, certain characteristics are manifested in all local societies. These visible features include:

- a physical location with geopolitical units (i.e., places such as villages, hamlets, townships, boroughs, towns, and cities) contained therein;
- a demographic profile;
- a social class structure;
- social and economic institutions; and
- natural resource endowments

Each feature varies within and across local societies over time. For example, local societies tend to vary with respect to physical size, the number of geopolitical units they contain, and the geographical distance between places. Local societies tend to differ in regard to population size, density, and heterogeneity, along with socioeconomic characteristics. And, local societies generally vary with respect to the quantity and quality of their respective social and economic institutions.





### **Social Fields**

Local societies are marked by the presence of several more or less distinct “social fields.” A social field is defined as an unfolding, loosely bounded, constantly changing, interconnected process of social interaction displaying unity through time around an identifiable set of interests. As a process, a social field is characterized by a sequence of actions over time carried on by actors generally working through various associations.

#### *Actions*

- the projects, programs, activities, and/or events in which actors and associations are engaged

#### *Associations*

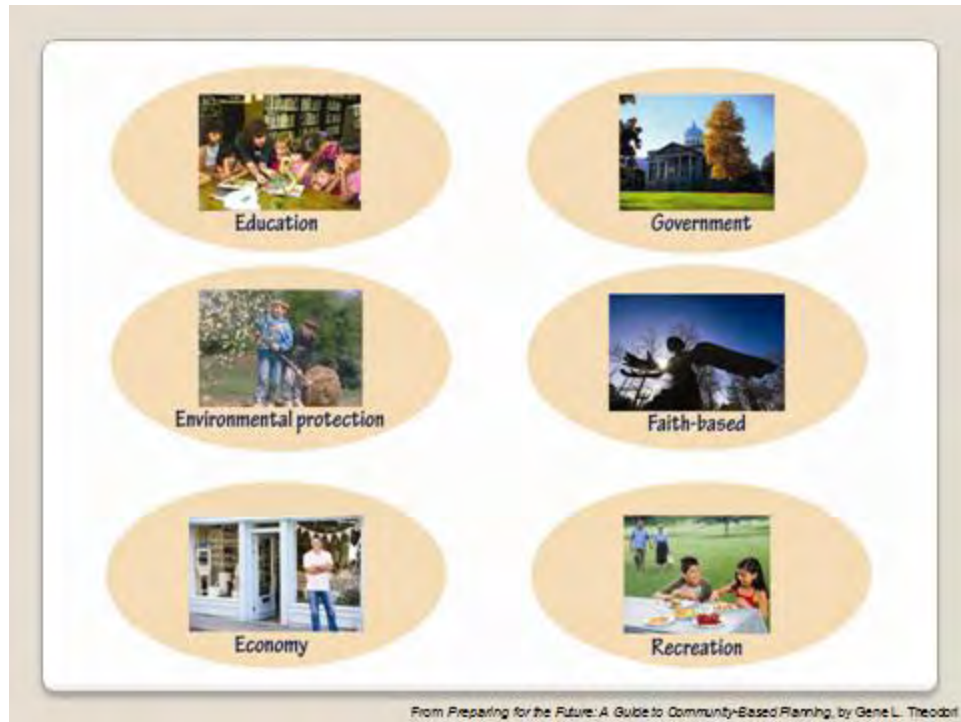
- the formal organizations and informal groups

#### *Actors*

- the leaders and other persons participating in associations and actions

In any given local society there are multiple social fields, some of which are more locality-oriented than others. Social fields that are highly oriented to the locality are more likely than their lesser locality-oriented counterparts to be clearly identified with the locality. Moreover, highly locality-oriented social fields tend to involve local residents as principal actors and/or leaders.

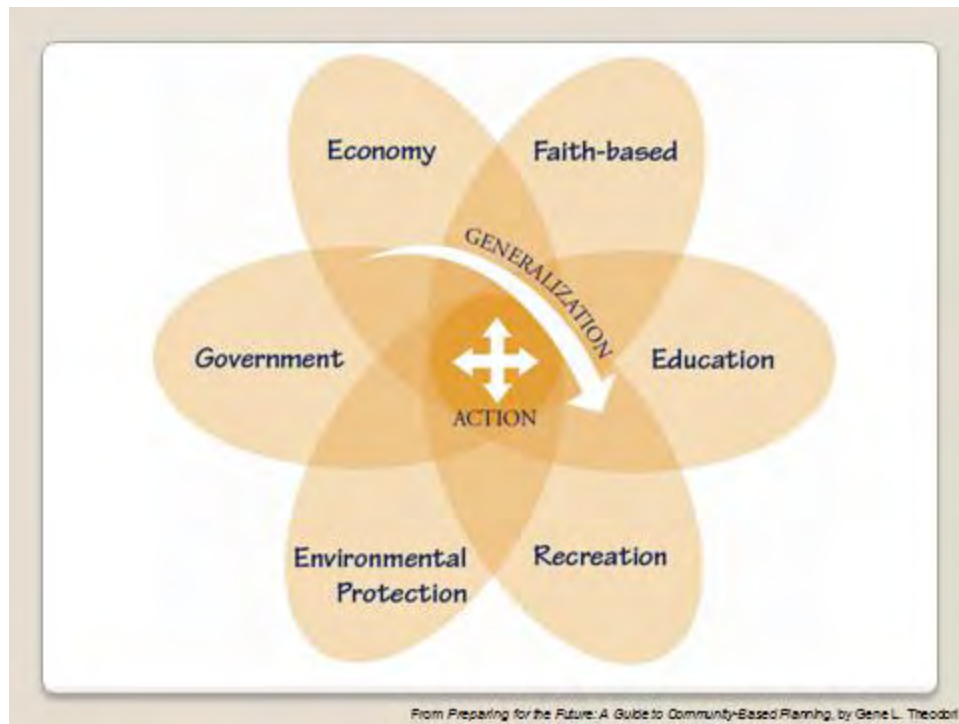




Social fields occur in a variety of arenas. Each field is generally marked to a greater or lesser extent by its own identity, organization, core interactional properties, and set of specific and/or institutional interests. Examples of common social fields found in many localities include those pursuing interests in education, local government, environmental protection, faith-based services, economy, and recreation.

These are just six examples of social fields. Can you name some others?





Where social fields in various interest areas converge or overlap, the potential to form a “community field” exists.

The community field is a locality-oriented social field that is related to, yet distinguished from, other activity fields in a local population. Unlike most social fields in a locality which tend to engage in special interests, the community field pursues the interests of the general community. In other words, the interest that guides the community field is an interest in community structure rather than an interest solely in specific goals, such as economic development, service enhancement, or environmental protection.

Like other social fields, the community field consists of actors, associations, and phases of action. The central feature that distinguishes the community field from other fields is *the generalization of locality-oriented actions across interest lines*.

The process of generalization involves actions that are expressed through the interests of a broad range of actors and associations, are clearly located within a locality, involve a substantial proportion of the local population as participants and/or beneficiaries, are conducted by local actors and associations, are aimed toward changing or maintaining the locality, are carried out in an organized or purposive manner, and have coordination among fields of interest as a major objective. Such actions contribute to the emergence of the community field in local settlements.

Generalization gives structure to the whole of community as an interactional field by linking and organizing the common interests of the various social fields. By comprising all the actions which contribute to the whole, the community field interlinks and coordinates the various social fields and harnesses their information, experience, resources, and energy for the common good.



# **Community Development**

Community development: a *process* of building and strengthening the community.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodore

## **Community Development**

As with the term “community,” a variety of definitions have been prescribed to the concept of “community development.” The approach to defining community development in this process is driven by the interactional theory of Kaufman (1959) and Wilkinson (1991).

For purposes of this presentation, **community development** is defined as *a process of building and strengthening the community*. Accordingly, community development refers to the creation and maintenance of **community** as a social characteristic of a local population. From an interactional perspective, community development can be viewed “as a process of developing the community field” (Wilkinson, 1991: 87).

As a process, community development involves purposive, positive, and structure-oriented actions, and exists in the efforts, as well as in the achievements, of people working together to address their shared interests and solve their common problems.



# **Community Development**

**Purposive**

**Positive**

**Structure oriented**

**Exists in efforts of people**

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodore

Four principles underlie the process of community development (Wilkinson, 1991). They include:

- 1) Community development is ***purposive***.
- 2) Community development is ***positive***.
- 3) Community development is ***structure oriented***.
- 4) Community development exists in the ***efforts*** of people and not necessarily in goal achievement.



## **Community Development**

Community development is *purposive*. It is the intentional consequence of actors engaging in associational actions to initiate and maintain community.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodore

Community development is *purposive*.

- It is the intentional consequence of people interacting to initiate and maintain community.



## **Community Development**

Community development is *positive*. The purposive intentions of the actors revolve around a shared commitment to improving their community.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodore

Community development is *positive*.

- The purposive intentions of the actors revolve around a shared commitment to improving their community.



## **Community Development**

Community development is *structure oriented*. The purposive and positive actions of actors are direct attempts to establish and/or strengthen the community as an interlinking and coordinating structure of human relationships.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodore

Community development is *structure oriented*.

- The purposive and positive actions of actors are direct attempts to establish and/or strengthen the community as an interlinking and coordinating structure of human relationships.



## **Community Development**

Community development exists in the *efforts* of people and not necessarily in goal achievement.

Simply stated, community development is purposive action undertaken with positive intentions at improving community structure.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodore

Community development exists in the *efforts* of people and not necessarily in goal achievement.

- Simply stated, community development is purposive action undertaken with positive intentions at improving community structure.

In short, the essence of community development lies in the doing – the working together toward a common goal – not necessarily in the outcome. Trying to purposively alter the structure of the community in a positive manner is enough to qualify as community development. From this point of view, community development refers to the creation and maintenance of *community* as a social characteristic of a local population.



# **Community Development**

## **Development *in* community**

- Task accomplishment

## **Development *of* community**

- Structure building

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

It is through the community field that comprehensive community development efforts are coordinated and executed. In this context, two important ideas must be addressed in order to understand how communities change and develop. First, we must be able to distinguish between two types of development commonly referred to as “development in community” and “development of community.” Second, we must be able to differentiate between the two broad spheres of community activity generally known as “task accomplishment” and “structure building.”

### ***Development in Community***

Development in community primarily refers to an approach to bring about improvements, primarily infrastructural enhancements, in the community. Examples include economic growth, modernization, and improved service delivery. With this type of development, the community tends to be viewed merely as a setting or location in which various improvements occur.

### ***Development of Community***

Development of community is a much broader process than economic development, modernization, improved service delivery, and other developments in the community. This type of development consists of establishing, fostering, and maintaining processes in the community that encourage communication and cooperation between/among individuals, informal groups, and formal organizations. Development of community involves purposive, positive, structure-oriented efforts by people in a locality to articulate and sustain a “community field.”



### **Task Accomplishment and Structure Building**

Task accomplishment refers to activities that move people toward specific goals, which are generally related to a particular project in a specific field of interest.

Structure building refers to activities that establish and maintain community relationships. The most distinctive feature of such activities is the focus on developing and/or enhancing channels of cooperation and communication across interest groups. Individuals, informal groups, and formal organizations consciously work to increase the number or reinforce the strength of relationships among the various social fields, while reducing and/or circumventing the barriers to cooperation and communication.

Both spheres of activity are typically marked by five stages: (1) initiation; (2) organization of sponsorship; (3) goal setting and strategy formation; (4) recruitment; and (5) implementation.



## **Stages**

1. Initiation
2. Organization of sponsorship
3. Goal setting and strategy formation
4. Recruitment
5. Implementation

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

### ***Common Stages of Task Accomplishment Activities***

- 1) **Initiation**
  - involves identifying an issue as a potential focus for group action
- 2) **Organization of sponsorship**
  - involves identifying an existing structure (i.e., a committee, group, organization) or establishing a new one to deal with the issue
- 3) **Goal setting and strategy formation**
  - involves setting goals, and developing a plan to reach those goals
- 4) **Recruitment**
  - involves mobilizing resources, such as participants, facilities, finances, and organizational legitimacy
- 5) **Implementation**
  - involves applying resources and employing strategies to deal with the issue



### ***Common Stages of Structure Building Activities***

- 1) **Initiation**
  - involves generating widespread consciousness of an issue among various fields of interest in a community
- 2) **Organization of sponsorship**
  - involves the formation of multi-interest networks and inter-organizational linkages to coordinate and integrate actions within and across the various social fields
- 3) **Goal setting and strategy formation**
  - involves developing long-range goals and strategies that transcend the special interests of particular social fields
- 4) **Recruitment**
  - involves building cohesion, encouraging participation, developing new leaders and leadership skills, and coordinating actions
- 5) **Implementation**
  - involves building, strengthening, and maintaining the structure of the community field

In the practice of community development, the stages for both task accomplishment and structure building activities are rarely well sequenced. Task accomplishment and structure building activities can begin at any stage, frequently backtracking and leaping ahead.

As with all forms of social interaction, community development does not always occur harmoniously. Embedded in the process of community development are numerous social, economic, political, and environmental issues which can, and frequently do, become manifest and negatively impact success. More often than not, community development involves conflict, confrontation, negotiation among competing interests, marginalization, disfranchisement, and/or challenges for leadership.





Community, as conceptualized here, is not a given. Instead, community emerges in a local society and persists as long as the local citizens ensure its survival. It follows, then, that community is a variable; it is a matter of degree. Community varies across local societies and within the same local society over time. The community – defined as a place-oriented process of interrelated actions through which local residents express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life – is in a constant state of change as actors and associations, each with their respective actions, move into and out of contact with the process.

As with community, community development is not a given either. It takes purposive, positive, structure-oriented efforts for a community to “develop.” The process of community development depends in large part on the intentional actions of people working together to try to improve their community. From this perspective, the **action** itself **is** the **development**; or, stated in another way, the **development** **is** the **action** – *the working together toward a shared goal, while consciously seeking community as a collective experience.*

Both forms of development – *development in community* and *development of community* – and both spheres of activity – *task accomplishment* and *structure building* – can affect the well-being of a local population. However, it is important to recognize that development in community without development of community and task accomplishment without structure building is likely to produce, at best, transitory results in a community.



## ***Principles of Community Development***

The long-term theme of community development should be to develop the community as a human relationship structure, rather than to develop things in or through the community.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theobald

## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development must reflect and express the values and wishes of the local population.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theobald



## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development requires a commitment on the part of special interest groups to align their efforts with those of other groups.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodore

## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development requires that attention be given continuously to problems and needs in all areas of local life.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodore



## ***Principles of Community Development***

Sustained community development requires  
an organizational structure.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theobald

## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development requires  
communication.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theobald



## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development requires a commitment beyond selfish gain, at least by a small number of people in any community who can really make it work.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodor

## ***Credit for “Principles of Community Development”***

Kenneth P. Wilkinson. 1968. “The Community: Its Structure and Process.” Pp. 86–90 in Eileen Zuber, Steve Nelson, and A.E. Luloff, 1998, *Community: A Biography in Honor of the Life and Work of Ken Wilkinson*. University Park, PA: The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodor



## Appendix B

### Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development

PowerPoint Slides

# APPENDIX



## *Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development*

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodori

## *Community*

Territory-free communities

Territorial-based communities

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodori

## *Working Definition of Community*

**Community:** a place-oriented *process* of interrelated actions through which members of a local population express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life.

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodori

## *Elements of a Local Society*

**A geographic dimension**  
*physical space*

**Humanlife dimension**  
*people living there*

**Relatively complete organization**  
*institutions and patterns of behaviors that cover the broad range of human interests*

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodori

## *Social Fields*

Process of social interaction

### **Actions**

*the projects, programs, activities, and/or events*

### **Associations**

*the formal organizations and informal groups*

### **Actors**

*the leaders and other persons participating in associations and actions*

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodori



Education



Government



Environmental protection



Faith-based



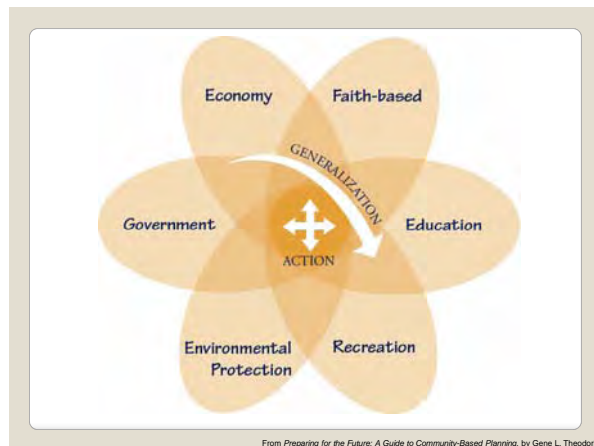
Economy



Recreation

From *Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning*, by Gene L. Theodori





## Community Development

Community development: a *process* of building and strengthening the community.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

## Community Development

Purposive

Positive

Structure oriented

Exists in efforts of people

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## Community Development

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From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

## Community Development

Development *in* community

- Task accomplishment

Development *of* community

- Structure building

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

## Stages

1. Initiation
2. Organization of sponsorship
3. Goal setting and strategy formation
4. Recruitment
5. Implementation

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

Community *is not* a given.

Community *is* a variable.



From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

## Principles of Community Development

The long-term theme of community development should be to develop the community as a human relationship structure, rather than to develop things in or through the community.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor

## Principles of Community Development

Community development must reflect and express the values and wishes of the local population.

From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor



## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development requires a commitment on the part of special interest groups to align their efforts with those of other groups.

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## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development requires that attention be given continuously to problems and needs in all areas of local life.

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## ***Principles of Community Development***

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## ***Principles of Community Development***

Community development requires communication.

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Community development requires a commitment beyond selfish gain, at least by a small number of people in any community who can really make it work.

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From Preparing for the Future: A Guide to Community-Based Planning, by Gene L. Theodor



## The Community Activeness-Consciousness Matrix



*Active*

*Not Active*

*Conscious*

1

2

*Not  
Conscious*

4

3



## Appendix D

### Goods and Services Survey

# APPENDIX



## GOODS AND SERVICES SURVEY

What county do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

What community do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

In what town or city do you **USUALLY** obtain the following types of goods and services? (For each item, please write in the name of the **ONE** town or city where these purchases or activities **MOST OFTEN** occur). **Please note the following:** (1) If you do not use a particular type of good or service, then answer for another member of your household. (2) If no one in your household uses a particular type of good or service, then just write "NONE" and go on to the next item. (3) If you usually purchase any goods on-line via the World Wide Web or through a mail order catalog, please write "MAIL" in the space provided.

a. Groceries	
b. Health care	
c. Dental care	
d. Eye exams	
e. Glasses and/or contact lenses	
f. Lumber and/or hardware supplies	
g. Fast food	
h. Banking services	
i. Major appliances and/or home furnishings	
j. Auto and/or truck parts	



k.	Auto and/or truck repair services	
l.	Movie theater	
m.	Religious services	
n.	Hairstylist or barber	
o.	Nightclub or bar	
p.	Prescription drugs	
q.	Clothing and/or shoes	
r.	Laundry and/or dry cleaning	
s.	Legal services	
t.	Lawn and garden supplies	
u.	Gasoline and/or diesel	
v.	Video rentals (VHS or DVD)	
w.	Children's daycare	
x.	Adult daycare	



## Appendix E

### Social Fields Worksheets



## Social Field Worksheet



**Economy**

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



Education

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



**Environmental protection**

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



**Faith-based**

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



*Government*

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



**Health Care**

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



**Media**

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



**Recreation**

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



**Social Services**

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



Transportation

Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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## Social Field Worksheet



Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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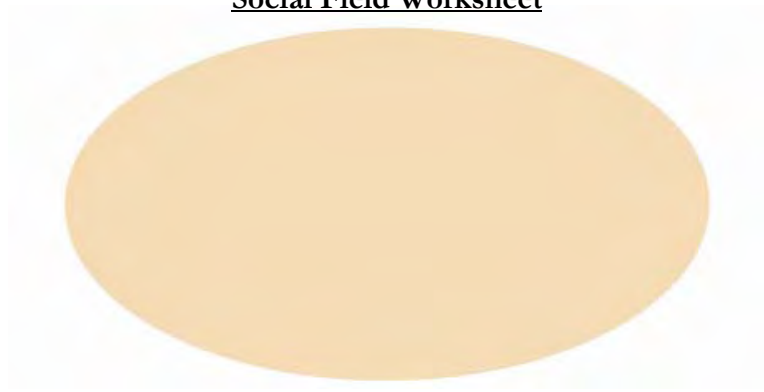
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## Social Field Worksheet



Actors (formal and informal leaders within the social field):

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Associations (formal organizations and informal groups):

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Actions (projects, programs, activities, and events):

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Community-Based Planning Flyer

# Community-Based Planning Can Make a Difference in Our Community



**Community-based planning**, a local comprehensive planning process, is designed to build, strengthen, and support community and economic structures.

**The process** directly engages community leaders and citizens in an initiative to move their community from today's reality to tomorrow's possibilities.

**The goal** of community-based planning is to develop an inclusive plan that individual and associational actors can utilize to guide local community and economic development initiatives.

## How Community-Based Planning Can Improve Our Community

**By engaging in community-based planning, our community will be able to:**

- ✓ Accommodate the present
- ✓ Anticipate change
- ✓ Prepare for the future
- ✓ Maximize community strengths
- ✓ Minimize community weaknesses
- ✓ Secure a sense of community coordination
- ✓ Enhance infrastructure and services
- ✓ Build a sense of community
- ✓ Become more proactive
- ✓ Generate economic growth
- ✓ Expand the leadership base
- ✓ Mobilize local resources to bring about positive change



## Mission Statement Worksheet

# MISSION STATEMENT



Vision Statement, Goals,  
and Strategy Planning Worksheet

# VISION STATEMENT



# GOALS

Today's Scenario	
Future Scenario  (Goal #1)	
Today's Scenario	
Future Scenario  (Goal #2)	
Today's Scenario	
Future Scenario  (Goal #3)	
Today's Scenario	
Future Scenario  (Goal #4)	
Today's Scenario	
Future Scenario  (Goal #5)	

## Strategy Planning Worksheet

**Goal:**

**Today's Date:**

**Target Date for Goal Completion:**

**Critical Steps:**

**Who:** Who will be involved?  
Who is responsible for making  
decisions?

**When:** What is the  
timeframe for this  
step?

**How:** What resources are necessary to  
complete this step?

**Step #1:**

**Step #2:**

**Step #3:**

**Step #4:**



Evaluation Worksheet

## Evaluation Worksheet

Goal:

Today's Date:

Target Date for Goal Completion:

What "outputs" (i.e., task accomplishment activities) were accomplished?

What "outcomes" (i.e., structure building activities) were accomplished?

What, if any, barriers or difficulties must be overcome to successfully accomplish this goal?

How will these barriers or difficulties be overcome?

Who needs to be involved to overcome these barriers or difficulties?



Printable Agendas

# Meeting 1

## Meeting with Group Who Initiated the Process

### Phase 1: Initiation

#### Materials Needed:

- Copies of “Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development --Speaker’s Notes” – Appendix A
- Copies of “Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development PowerPoint Slides” -- Appendix B
- Copies of “The Community Activeness-Consciousness Matrix” -- Appendix C

*Meeting time:*                      *Approximately 2 hours*

Agenda Item 1:	Introductions
Agenda Item 2:	Explanation of Your Role as a Facilitator
Agenda Item 3:	A Brief Summary of What the Group Can Expect
Agenda Item 4:	Presentation on Community and Community Development
Agenda Item 5:	Assessment of Community Activeness and Community Consciousness and Presentation of the Community Activeness–Consciousness Matrix (Appendix C)
Agenda Item 6:	Explanation of Community-Based Planning and How It Can Be Viewed as One Form of Community Development
Agenda Item 7:	Schedule a Second Meeting



# Meeting 2

## Second Meeting with Group Who Initiated the Process

### Phase 1: Initiation

#### Materials Needed:

- Multiple sheets of 8.5x11 paper for all participants
- Colored pencils/pens for all participants
- Flip chart stand, paper and markers
- Masking tape
- Copies of the “Goods and Services Survey” -- Appendix D
- A printed map with place names such as a highway road map
- Copies of the “Social Fields Worksheets” -- Appendix E
- Copies of the “Community Based Planning Flyer” -- Appendix F

*Meeting Time: Approximately 2 hours*

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Agenda Item 1: | A Brief Summary of the First Meeting  |
| Agenda Item 2: | Define Community Boundaries Using Cognitive Mapping   |
| Agenda Item 3: | Define the Local Society Using the Goods and Services Survey (Appendix D)   |
| Agenda Item 4: | Identifying Community-Based Planning Steering Committee Members Using the Inventory of Social Fields (Appendixes E) |
| Agenda Item 5: | Schedule a Meeting with Potential Participants  |

# Meeting 3

## Forming the Community-Based Planning Steering Committee

### Phase 1: Initiation

### Phase 2: Organization of Sponsorship

#### Materials Needed:

- Copies of “Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development – Speaker’s Notes” – Appendix A
- Copies of “Toward an Understanding of Community and Community Development – PowerPoint Slides” – Appendix B
- Copies of “Mission Statement Worksheet” – Appendix G
- Pencils/pens for all participants

*Meeting Time:*                      *Approximately 2½ to 3 hours*

Agenda Item 1:	Introductions
Agenda Item 2:	Explanation of Role of Facilitator
Agenda Item 3:	A Brief Summary of What the Group Can Expect
Agenda Item 4:	Presentation on Community and Community Development
Agenda Item 5:	Assessment of Community Activeness and Community Consciousness
Agenda Item 6:	Explanation of Community-Based Planning and How It Can Be Viewed as One Form of Community Development
Agenda Item 7:	Presentation of the Community Boundaries Map
Agenda Item 8:	Presentation of the Local Society Map
Agenda Item 9:	Discussion of Make-Up of Current Community-Based Planning Steering Committee
Agenda Item 10:	Development of a Mission Statement
Agenda Item 11:	Scheduling of Next Meeting



# Meeting 4

## Identifying the Issues

### Phase 3: Visioning, Goal Setting and Strategy Formation

#### Materials Needed:

- Sheets of 8.5x11 paper for all participants
- Pencils/pens for all participants
- Flip chart stand, paper and markers
- Masking tape

*Meeting Time: Approximately 2½ to 3 hours*

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Agenda Item 1: | Introduction                                   |
| Agenda Item 2: | Identifying the Issues Affecting the Community |
| Agenda Item 3: | Voting on the Issues                           |
| Agenda Item 4: | Scheduling of Next Meeting                     |

# Meeting 5

## Reviewing the Issues, Forming Working Committees and Beginning Data Collection

### Phase 3: Visioning, Goal Setting and Strategy Formation

*Meeting Time: Approximately 2 hours*

Agenda Item 1:           Reviewing the List of Issues Affecting the Community

Agenda Item 2:           Forming Working Committees

Agenda Item 3:           Explaining Data Collection Task

Agenda Item 4:           Scheduling of Next Meeting(s) to Review Data



# Meeting 6

## Reviewing the Data

### Phase 3: Visioning, Goal Setting and Strategy Formation

*Meeting Time:*                      *Approximately 2 hours (each)*

Agenda Item 1:                      Presenting Information on Community-Level Data

Agenda Item 2:                      Scheduling of Next Meeting

# Meeting 7

## Developing Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies

### Phase 3: Visioning, Goal Setting and Strategy Formation

#### Materials Needed:

- Copies of the “Vision Statement Worksheet” — Appendix H
- Pencils/pens for all participants

*Meeting Time:*                      *Approximately 2 hours*

Agenda Item 1:                      Developing Vision Statements

Agenda Item 2:                      Developing Goals

Agenda Item 3:                      Developing Strategies

Agenda Item 4:                      Scheduling of Next Meeting(s)



# Meeting 8

## Reviewing Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies

### Phase 3: Visioning, Goal Setting and Strategy Formation

#### Materials Needed:

- Flip chart stand, paper and markers
- Masking tape
- Computer and LCD projector –OR– Overhead projector

*Meeting Time:*                      *Approximately 1 to 2 hours*

Agenda Item 1:                      Presentation and Discussion of Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies

Agenda Item 2:                      Scheduling of Community Meeting

# Meeting 9

## Community Meeting

### Phase 4: Recruitment

#### Materials Needed:

- Flip chart stand, paper and markers
- Masking tape
- Computer and LCD projector –OR– Overhead projector

*Meeting Time:*                      *Approximately 2 hours*

Agenda Item 1:	Introductions
Agenda Item 2:	Background on the Formation of the Steering Committee
Agenda Item 3:	Presentation of Mission Statement
Agenda Item 4:	Presentation of Working Committees' Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies
Agenda Item 5:	Group Reaction and Discussion
Agenda Item 6:	Invitation for Involvement
Agenda Item 7:	Prepare for Phase 5 (Implementation) and Phase 6 (Evaluation)





The Southern Rural Development Center seeks to strengthen the capacity of the region's 29 land-grant institutions to address critical contemporary rural development issues impacting the well-being of people and communities in the rural South.

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/>

*April 2009*