FORGING THE FUTURE

A Twelve-Week Community Self-Study Guide

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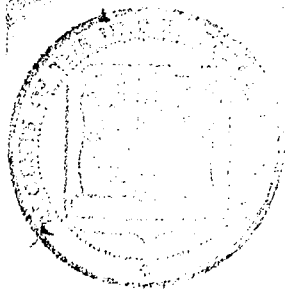"We were making the future," he said, "and hardly any of us
troubled to think what future we were making."
-- H. G. Wells

Forging the Future describes a group study process in community
self-analysis. Study group members meet voluntarily to explore community
needs and interests. Although members represent the community's diverse
backgrounds and interests, their purpose is to jointly evaluate problems
and opportunities present within the community and to act cooperatively to
resolve problems and seize opportunities.

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INTRODUCTION

This study guide is devoted mainly to a discussion of the economic, social, and cultural aspects of life in the communities and neighborhoods of Minnesota. Its purpose is to aid the study committee in identifying gaps between what the community is now and what its residents would like it to become and in designing action plans that will bring about desired changes.

The study guide is divided into nine sections with accompanying activities; it will take approximately 12 weeks to complete. Some communities may be able to move a little faster and some may need to go at a slower pace. In no case, however, should the community take less than 10 nor more than 24 weeks to complete the study. Much of the value of this program will depend on moving consecutively through all nine sections within this timeframe.

The group study process is based on the belief that frank and friendly discussion by the group itself is the best way to ferret out community strengths and weaknesses. Experience has shown that the group should be made up of not fewer than 12 to 15 and not more than 25 to 30 members. Such a group is large enough to encourage discussion and interaction but not so large that discussion can be monopolized. REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS MOST IMPORTANT to insure continuity of discussion, action, and commitment.

It is vitally important that the study group incorporate the perspectives of as many interest groups and viewpoints in the community as possible. Try to obtain representation from the business community, the churches, government, education, industry, health care, farming, and any other groups that are prominent in your community. When asking people to participate in the study group, try to involve those who are committed to the community and are willing to consider new ideas and points of view.

Throughout the 12-week study period, the University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service is available to provide assistance in the use of these materials. In addition, as community needs are identified by the study group, agencies participating in the Minnesota Community Improvement Program can assist in mobilizing the resources available to meet those needs. Those agencies are listed in Appendix J.

The study group must remember that it may not be easy to solve all the problems or seize all the opportunities identified. Many of the problems facing communities and neighborhoods in Minnesota have been building for 50 years or more. Effective programs to deal with these issues are long overdue, but they will take time to develop. Immediate and easy solutions often do not exist. Once organized, however, the community itself has the capacity to solve some problems with local initiatives. In addition, there are existing state and federal resources that can be utilized effectively. There will be occasions, of course, when there is no existing organization or program that could address community needs that have been discovered. Do not be discouraged. An organized and articulate community is a powerful community that often brings about needed change, especially when joined by other communities with similar problems.

FORMAT AND PROCEDURES

This community study program has been designed as a concentrated program that allows the study committee to conduct an extensive review and analysis of community life, agree upon a set of recommendations for action, and then motivate existing institutions (both within and outside the community) to carry forward on those recommendations. A process such as this attempts to strike a balance between study and action--avoiding the frustrations of too much study and not enough action--while also trying to avoid the problems that arise when action is undertaken without a good understanding of the situation or the likely consequences of such action. The structure also seeks to utilize existing community organizations to the greatest extent possible by having the study committee disband at the conclusion of its work, allowing members to return to their respective organizations and motivate those groups to undertake the action recommendations made by the committee.

The format of the study itself attempts to focus the attention and analysis of the group on a broad range of factors affecting the economic, social, and cultural life of the community. Some elements are primarily informational; others are more provocative and are designed to stimulate discussion, thought, and reassessment.

Most sections are followed by a series of questions to consider. Several research problems are included in the study. Several of the sections conclude with a list of recommended readings. Individual group members should review the appropriate section prior to the meetings, jot down their responses to the questions raised, and be prepared to discuss their views on the topic.

We recommend that you follow these steps: Read over the study guide to determine if it meets your needs. Identify the necessary skills and viewpoints that you feel are needed for a thorough study and then recruit and secure study committee members. Remember that diversity is the key to a good committee! The committee will select a chairperson who will preside over the entire 12-week study program. A recorder also should be chosen to take notes, summarize each session, and handle any public relations duties that might arise. A different committee member will serve as a session leader for each of the nine sessions. Each person should read Appendix A before starting the first session. The functions of the group session leaders are outlined in Appendix B. The University of Minnesota and other Minnesota Community Improvement Project sponsoring agencies have materials on group leadership that may be useful. (See Appendix J.)

OVERVIEW OF WHAT THE COMMUNITY SELF-STUDY GROUP WILL DO

First Meeting: Share views on what kind of community we live in and how it might be better. Select researchers to prepare reports on our history and a current social and economic profile of our community.

(Selected study group members write histories
and research reports and prepare a community map.)

Second Meeting: Discuss research reports. Refine our definitions of what our community is like. Explore the current social and economic conditions in our community.

Third Meeting: Discuss the basic principles behind community development. Try to determine some of our community's wants and needs.

(Survey committee members begin designing the community survey.)

Fourth Meeting: Complete the design of a survey seeking the opinions of our fellow residents on community issues.

(Study group members distribute and then collect
the community surveys and tabulate the results.)

Fifth Meeting: Participate in a town hall meeting to help the community identify its most important needs and determine some priorities for action.

Sixth Meeting: Merge the findings of our study group, the community survey, and the town hall meeting into a preliminary list of community needs. Begin to explore strategies and plans for action.

(Selected study group members research information sources
to help address community problems that have been identified.)

Seventh Meeting: Define priority projects and identify the resources needed to execute them.

Eighth Meeting: Define final strategies. Decide what roles individuals and organizations should play in community improvement efforts. Create plans of action.

Ninth Meeting: Assess our preliminary accomplishments and look to the future.

(Study group disbands and members return to other organizations.)

more interesting, and more secure. But let's remember that although this can be fairly serious work, we should also plan to have a good time.

C. How are we going to do it?

Objective, friendly discussion that does not dodge the facts or the real issues will take up much of our time in this group. Part of the group's responsibility, however, will be to decide what objective discussion really is, how to engage in it, and how to sort out the facts and the issues.

Discussion is an exchange process. It has many values, some quite serious, some purely recreational. A good part of the time, it is a process of solving problems. In such cases, problems are stated, issues declared, values formulated, solutions suggested, policies recommended. Discussion is a method of action and of preparing for action.

Cooperative thinking calls for a collective or shared desire to be involved in common purposes and procedures. There is no room in the group for showoffs, individuals who are always right, people who must have their way, or political maneuvering. The idea is to help each other develop plans of action for solving problems and fulfilling wishes and hopes. Good honest constructive criticism is to be encouraged. Insofar as possible, participants should feel free to say what they think and feel without fear of losing face, being put down, or otherwise being embarrassed.

Cooperative research about our community and our region also will be a part of the activities of the group. A leader will be appointed for each research problem, and the results will be presented to the group for discussion and analysis.

D. Who and what are we?

It is difficult to sketch a composite of a "typical" Minnesota community and its inhabitants, but an exploration of certain characteristics can be enlightening.

In 1980 Minnesota had 855 legal cities. They ranged in population from Minneapolis with 370,951 to Funkley with 18. If the population of the legal cities was evenly distributed, each community would have approximately 3,600.

The typical community is made up of 51 percent females and 49 percent males. Most children in the community, 88 percent, live with a married couple. Two percent of the children live with families headed by a single male parent and 10 percent live with families headed by a single female parent. During the past five years, 44 percent of the people in the community moved.

Seventeen percent of the residents of this typical community have four years of college or more, 17 percent have one to three years of

college, 39 percent have graduated from high school, 10 percent have had three or more years of high school, and 17 percent have completed the eighth grade. All in all, the community is much better educated than it was just 10 years ago.

The 1980 census figures placed Minnesota's population at 4,075,970, a seven percent increase over 1970. This compares with an eleven percent increase for the United States. Until 1970 the movement of people within the state followed the national pattern, showing a shift away from farms and small villages toward urban centers. By the mid-1970s well over 65 percent of the population lived in urban areas--a vivid contrast to the pattern of 1920, when more than 55 percent of the population was rural.

In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, another important trend began to emerge. Between 1970 and 1980, Minneapolis and St. Paul saw their population decrease by 13.9 percent, a loss of more than 100,000 residents, while the rural population grew by 5.5 percent.

The 1980 census was the first census since 1940 that did not show a rural population decline in Minnesota. Does this mean we are gaining more farmers? No. The number of people classified as "farm" by the census continues to decline. In fact, according to the 1980 census, there was not a single county in Minnesota where rural farm people outnumbered rural nonfarm. This has never occurred before in the history of Minnesota.

Some communities are currently experiencing rapid growth, which presents serious and unique problems. Communities that are experiencing population decline also have specific problems that are difficult to deal with. Stable communities--those that have neither grown nor declined--also face serious problems. The state demographer for Minnesota, R. Thomas Gillaspy, made the following points in 1983:

> During the 1970s more people moved into Minnesota than moved out for the first time since the 1930s. Minnesota tends to receive people in their thirties, children, and persons over 75, whereas the greatest outmigration occurs among young adults.

> Longevity continued to increase during the 1970s. Life expectancy at birth in 1980 was 79.1 years for women and 72.0 years for men.

> The most rapidly growing areas in Minnesota are in the suburban belt around the Twin Cities and in the north central portion of the state. The slowest growing areas are in a belt of counties in the southern, southwestern, and western parts of the state.

> The average Minnesotan lived in a smaller community in 1980 than in 1970, the first time in the history of the state that this figure has declined.

> Projections of population show a continued growth of over 7 percent during the 1980s, slowing to 5.3 percent during the 1990s.

> Median age (the age at which half the population is older and half younger) is expected to increase from 19.2 years in 1980 to 32.5

years in 1990 and 39.2 years by 2010. This increase in median age reflects the aging of the baby boom generation and expected increases in longevity.

The largest minority racial group in Minnesota in 1980 was black with 53,343 or 1.3 percent of the state's population. The total nonwhite population represents approximately 3.4 percent of the state's people.

According to the 1980 census, the largest single ancestry group in Minnesota is German (17.3 percent) followed by Norwegian (6.6 percent) and Swedish (4 percent). More than half of the population (54.2 percent) listed a single ancestry group.

Educational attainment is increasing and remains above national averages. In 1980, 73 percent of Minnesotans 25 years and older had at least a high school diploma, compared to 47 percent in 1970 and 66 percent nationally in 1980.

During the 1970s, the labor force of Minnesota increased by almost 30 percent, as large numbers of young adults and increasing proportions of women entered the labor force.

During the 1970s, 375,000 Minnesotans, almost 10 percent of the population, had incomes below the poverty line. Only four states had a smaller percentage of population below the poverty line.

The median income of Minnesota families in 1979 was $21,217, fourteenth highest in the nation and third in the north central region behind Illinois and Michigan; 5.6 percent of Minnesota families earned more than $50,000 in 1979.

The following tables, as well as the reference materials listed in the appendixes, will help you gain a better understanding of population changes. What do these population changes mean for Minnesota? What do these changes mean for your community?

Table 1. U.S. and Minnesota population

Year	U.S.	% of 1960	Minnesota	% of 1960	% of U.S. population in Minnesota	Rank in U.S.
1980	226,505,000	126%	4,075,970	119%	1.8%	21
1970	203,302,000	113%	3,806,103	112%	1.9%	19
1960	179,323,000	100%	3,413,864	100%	1.9%	17

Between 1960 and 1980 the population of the United States increased at a faster rate than did the population of Minnesota. But Minnesota led the Upper Midwest in population growth between 1970 and 1980.

Table 2. Population increase, 1970-1980

State	Percent
Minnesota	7.1
Wisconsin	6.5
North Dakota	5.7
Michigan	4.4
South Dakota	3.8
Iowa	3.2

Source: 1980 Census

Table 3. Minnesota population according to U.S. Census, 1900-1980

Year	Total	% of 1900	% urban	% rural	% rural nonfarm	% rural farm
1980	4,075,970	233	66.9	33.1	25.4	7.7
1970	3,806,103	217	66.4	33.6	21.7	12.0
1960	3,413,864	195	62.2	37.8	20.6	17.2
1950	2,982,483	170	54.5	45.5	20.7	24.8
1940	2,792,300	159	49.8	50.2	17.8	32.4
1930	2,563,953	146	49.0	51.0	16.3	34.7
1920	2,387,235	136	44.1	55.9	18.5	37.4
1910	2,075,708	119	41.0	59.0	NM	NM
1900	1,751,394	100	34.1	65.9	NM	NM

NM = not measured

Table 4. The 10 fastest growing cities in Minnesota, 1970-1980

City	County	1980 population	% increase
Ramsey	Anoka	10,093	328
Stacy	Chisago	996	258
Rockford	Hennepin/Wright	2,408	230
Maple Grove	Hennepin	20,525	227
Sartell	Benton/Stearns	3,427	159
Corcoran	Hennepin	4,252	157
Apple Valley	Dakota	21,818	157
East Bethel	Anoka	6,626	156
Andover	Anoka	9,387	140
Elko	Scott	274	138

Table 5. Racial makeup of Minnesota population

Year	White	Black	Native American	All others	Total nonwhite	% non-white
1980	3,935,770	53,344	34,831	52,025	140,200	3.4
1970	3,737,170	34,868	23,128	10,937	68,933	1.8
1960	3,371,603	22,263	15,496	4,502	42,261	1.2
1950	2,953,697	14,022	12,533	2,231	28,786	1.0
1940	2,768,982	9,928	12,528	862	23,318	0.8
1930	2,542,599	9,445	11,077	832	21,354	0.8
1920	2,368,936	8,809	8,761	619	18,189	0.8
1910	2,059,227	7,084	9,053	344	16,481	0.8
1900	1,737,036	4,959	9,182	217	14,358	0.8

Population statistics often lead to a discussion of economics. In 1982 Walter W. Heller, regents professor of economics at the University of Minnesota, said:

> "...it's no longer news that Minnesota is not shielded or sheltered from national recessions. And what's worse, we will probably lag the national recovery: our farm economy, like the nation's, simply can't generate a quick comeback in the face of huge grain surpluses, high debt, and high cost of production. The Iron Range is caught in the grip of domestic recession, tough international competition in steel and autos, and high energy costs—no overnight relief is in sight....and many of our manufacturers will be lagging the nation's recovery as investment lags. True, recovery will help, and a strong recovery would help more—but realism says that Minnesota will come into it's own later, not earlier, in the recovery."

If Minnesota's economy does follow the national economy, in what areas might we see growth? One measure of growth is increased employment. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor, the industries that are most likely to employ the largest number of new workers during the next 10 years include:

1. Health services
2. Business services
3. Legal services
4. Banking and financial services
5. Refrigeration and air conditioning
6. Hotel and lodging
7. Fabricated structural metal
8. Amusement and recreation
9. Nonelectrical machinery
10. Construction machinery

Some of the stable employment industries include:

1. Iron foundries
2. Auto repairs
3. Rubber products
4. Household appliances
5. Apparel
6. Newspapers
7. Paper products
8. Cement and concrete
9. Primary metal products
10. Public utilities

Some of the industries most likely to see major reductions in employment in the near future include:

1. Dairy products
2. Wood products
3. Leather products
4. Sawmills
5. Baker products
6. Nonmetallic minerals
7. Meat products
8. Food products
9. Beverages
10. Plumbing

How many of each of these types of industries do you have in your community?

DISCUSSION

1. **In what ways are this study group and this community similar to or different from the general trends cited in this chapter? In other words, what kind of community is this economically, educationally, socially, and so on?**

   Be prepared to compare the responses you make now to the statistical information that will be made available at the next meeting.

2. **What factors have molded our individual characters and the character of this community?**

   Discuss such factors as history, climate, soils, topography, ethnic heritage, and development of transportation systems. The recorder should tabulate the results.

3. **Why do you live here?**

   Perhaps the most important question to be raised in this group is whether the community or neighborhood way of life can be improved. We will return to this issue repeatedly during our meetings. For now, let's take a preliminary sampling of group opinion. You may want to have each person write their own answers, then share them with the group, and finally come up with a group summary that is acceptable to the group.

4. **Why do you live in this community? Is it from choice? Why? Is it for some other reasons? What are they?**

5. **What kind of place is this community? What would you like it to be?**

   Describe the difference between what it is and what you would like it to be.

6. **What can and should be done about these differences? What can and should we do about it? How?**

   These questions probably cannot be thoroughly answered now, but it may be interesting to compare your answers with what you write 12 weeks from now.

Before adjourning, let's briefly discuss the meaning of the term community. Robert Redfield, in a book entitled <u>The Little Community</u>, describes the community of years gone by as "the unit within which one experiences life as a whole." Such a community had five major characteristics:

1. It was small enough so that everyone knew each other; relationships were extremely personal.
2. It was self-sufficient.
3. It was autonomous; it would stand unto itself.
4. It was homogeneous; just about everyone was alike.
5. It was a unit of society in which sentiments took place in and among people and in which no one stood alone.

7. In what ways does your community fit this definition? In what ways doesn't it fit?

8. Did we enjoy a more complete sense of community in the past than we do today?

9. How is your sense of community different today from what it was 10, 20, 30 years ago?

10. Which of these characteristics would you like to retain or develop? How do we go about doing that?

11. What are some of the advantages of these characteristics?

12. What are some of the disadvantages of these characteristics?

13. Which of these characteristics are we better off without? Why?

RESEARCH PROBLEM I

Prepare brief histories of different elements of your community. Relate the histories to various forces, influences, and changes that have affected the community over the years. For example, what ethnic groups first settled this community, what national or international events caused these ethnic groups to migrate into this region, etc. The following might be prepared: a history of the churches, a history of the schools, a business and economic history, and a description of significant men and women in the community. The study group can select other important historical aspects of the community to record. Reference works on the history of the area probably will be your best resource, but don't overlook the amateur historians in your community. Ask people what they remember about the early days of the area. Prepare a map of your community that shows retail businesses, residential areas, recreational features (parks), educational facilities, etc. Indicate both present and historical features.

The chairperson should appoint researchers, each of whom should prepare one of these histories. The histories should be no longer than three or four pages. The chairperson also should appoint one or two persons to prepare the community map.

RESEARCH PROBLEM II

The chairperson should appoint two or three individuals to prepare a current social and economic profile of the community. This report should analyze trends over the last several years. These individuals can contact the local chamber of commerce or the state Department of Economic Development for current information on the characteristics of the local community. The city or county planning office and the county extension office are sources of information. Data collected during this research should be presented in summarized form (not more than three or four pages) for discussion at the meeting one week from now.

At this time the chairperson also should select a community survey committee consisting of three to five members. It will be the task of this committee to formulate a draft community survey that will be discussed at the meeting two weeks from now. It will also be the responsibility of the committee, with assistance from other study group members, to distribute, collect, tabulate, and report to the town hall meeting on the results of the community survey. Materials and assistance on how to perform these tasks will be made available to the committee by the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service.

Each person on the survey committee should obtain a copy of Surveying Community Attitudes: A Technical and Procedural Manual for Communities. This publication is available from county extension offices.

Other research problems are contained in this 12-week course. They are meant to be of specific interest to the community. Others can be substituted, however, if they seem to be more pertinent. All committee members might want to look ahead to decide which research problem(s) they want to work on.

The chairperson should now select the next session leader, who should prepare himself/herself to lead discussion on Section Two questions, charts, and graphs.

Session is adjourned.

SECTION TWO

OUR COMMUNITY THEN AND NOW

A. Procedures

Chairperson asks recorder to review notes from last week's meeting. (Reading them should take no more than five minutes.) Chairperson asks for additions or corrections to notes. Chairperson introduces session leader for Section Two. Session leader begins discussion.

B. Reports on history of the community

Research reports on the history of the community are presented and discussed at this time. These reports should be presented in summarized form to stimulate discussion. Be sure to spend a few minutes discussing the human side of the community's past. Go around the room and have those who wish to do so describe their heritage and how their family came to live in this area. Tell some stories about life in the early days of the community. Some group members may be direct descendants of the early residents that settled this area. Some people will be more recent arrivals to the community. Why did they decide to move here? You probably will find that you share many common interests in the future of this community.

C. Reports on current economic/social conditions

Life in Minnesota has frequently been a challenge. There have been plagues, droughts, hailstorms, tornadoes, cold, and devastating winters. In the early days, prairie and forest fires scorched the land, insects and plant diseases ruined the crops, and the lack of roads made life difficult.

By sheer force of will, most folks survived; they got things done. In time, towns grew up where people met to trade and buy provisions. Minnesotans eventually turned the state into one of the most productive in the nation. People have always had to deal with challenges to community life—and they have often worked together to resolve them.

Today, there are new problems and opportunities facing us, but by tapping into this heritage and joining hands with our neighbors, we can deal effectively with many of these issues as well.

The report on current social and economic conditions in this community should now be presented. This report should look especially at trends over the last several years and should be presented in summarized form to stimulate discussion.

Maps of the local community should also be displayed and discussed at this time.

DISCUSSION

1. How would you describe this community? Is it experiencing growth, decline, or stability? Why? What have been the causes and impacts of such growth, decline, or stability? What unique problems have been caused? What has been done about these problems?

2. Mechanization, interstate and foreign competition, and other trends in the national and world economy have had a deep impact on many sectors of Minnesota's economy. What has been the effect of these trends on regions that are based on such industries as agriculture, forestry, tourism, and mining? What has been the impact in this region?

3. Experts believe that this nation is now undergoing a revolution that is transforming our industrial society into what has been called a postindustrial society. That revolution is replacing industrial jobs with service jobs, manual labor with robots, blue collar jobs with white and grey collar jobs. Are these trends visible in this community? What impact are these trends likely to have over the next several years?

D. Rural or urban?

The census bureau provides two broad classifications that describe communities based on population. The rural/urban classification includes all communities of greater than 2,500 population in the urban category, with the population of smaller places and the open countryside in the rural category. The metropolitan/nonmetropolitan classification, on the other hand, is used to describe the population of entire counties. Nonmetropolitan counties contain no city or twin cities of 50,000 or more population. Metropolitan counties contain cities with 50,000 or more people.

DISCUSSION

1. Where does this community fit in the above definition? What significance does this definition have, especially in terms of eligibility for federal and state programs?

2. Some communities are separately incorporated as a city, township, county, etc., whereas others are part of a larger jurisdiction (unincorporated city or neighborhood). What significance does this have politically and otherwise?

3. Do you think that the terms rural and urban are as meaningful today as they were 30 years ago?

4. Do you think that it is more meaningful to discuss community from a statistical perspective or from a human perspective? Why?

E. Autonomy

Many of the critical differences among communities may be reflected not in census categories, but in more qualitative aspects of community life. These other characteristics, no less important than census data, can be used to further describe communities. Placing towns and neighborhoods in descriptive categories is always crude—no community can be fairly characterized by a label. But there are some fundamental characteristics not shared by all towns or neighborhoods that help to distinguish types of communities.

Roland Warren suggests that communities can be distinguished based on a measure called community autonomy. He describes cities and neighborhoods on the basis of how much control and impact a community exercises over its own affairs. In terms of the economy, local patterns of power and influence, values and beliefs, and even the social structure, a community could be very autonomous in local affairs, or it could be entirely dominated by external elements. Certainly no community is totally isolated and self-sufficient, but some may be much more dependent on external controls than others.

The terms that can be used to describe these two different community types are:

> Penetrated: These communities must depend on the outside world to provide many fundamental services and decisions. The resulting lack of autonomy makes these communities prone to fluctuations with the ups and downs of the rest of the country.

> Unpenetrated: These communities have maintained a substantial measure of local control. External impact on the dimensions of community life is relatively less than in penetrated communities. The autonomy of these cities and neighborhoods can contribute to internally directed community improvements or, in other circumstances, can enable the rest of the country to leave these towns behind.

DISCUSSION

1. Would you say this community is penetrated or unpenetrated? In what ways?

2. Take a look at the community's governmental, economic, and educational sectors. To what extent are these aspects penetrated or autonomous?

3. Is your community more or less autonomous today than it was 20 years ago? Explain.

4. List some advantages of a penetrated community and an unpenetrated community.

F. Economic functions of communities

Communities also can be classified by their relative role as service centers. In other words, a small community may only have a post office, service station, bar, grocery, church, grain elevator, and an elementary school. A larger community may include all of these elements plus a high school, auto dealerships, chain stores (like Sears, Penneys), and a courthouse. As the size of the community grows, so do the number of services. And the larger the community, the greater is the service area it encompasses.

Communities also may be classified by their dominant activity. Some are predominantly agricultural, others commercial/industrial, educational, or political. Large cities, of course, may serve numerous important and dominant functions.

DISCUSSION

1. How would this community be classified according to its role as a service center? What would you say is this community's dominant activity?

2. How does this community differ from the two nearest neighboring communities? Consider differences in size, wealth, kinds of services, occupations of its citizens, ethnic groups, religious affiliations, etc.

3. How is this community related to the nearest communities in the above ways?

4. What are some of the community's less known economic activities?

G. The life cycle of the community

Communities, like all other forms of life, seem to have a life cycle: they are born, they grow, they mature, and they decline. Unlike other forms of life, however, their period of maturity can be prolonged indefinitely. Many communities decline rapidly and disappear. Some manage to hang on, their hold on life getting weaker and weaker. Perhaps you know of communities like this. If not, you might want to look at Kingsdale, Minnesota, and discuss the reasons that it died.

Communities change for many reasons. The location of natural resources and the demand for those resources over time may cause certain communities to undergo periods of boom and bust. New highways have caused some communities to grow and others to decline. Some communities grow because of their strategic location as metropolitan service centers; others decline because they fall into the "sphere of influence" of such metro centers. Can you name some? If not, you may want to look at Andover, Minnesota, in the 1920s and then today.

Communities maintain vital avenues of exchange with other communities. Their people buy and sell, visit, go to church or school, attend cultural functions, and so on, in each other's communities. It may be that this interdependence between neighboring communities contributes to the growth of "regional communities"--communities composed of two or more communities and their open neighborhoods, through which interchanges occur at various levels.

DISCUSSION

1. What has caused changes in this community during the past?

2. Are these changes due to natural conditions or to new methods of production and technology?

3. Have these changes been induced by other technological developments such as transportation, communication, and household amenities?

4. Are some of these changes due to cultural reasons or to differences in human attitudes and beliefs?

5. What factors do we need to understand better in order to anticipate or control future changes? Might we some day become a boom town? How can we prepare for that, or forestall it, or at least manage it? Is this community in decline? What can we do to revitalize it? Is this community stable in population? What kinds of problems does long-term stability cause? How can they be dealt with?

H. Working with change

We have noted that communities experience almost constant change. Some are becoming more closely and harmoniously related--more "integrated." Others are in the process of disintegration and may eventually disappear. Some communities are simply absorbed in the expansion of urban areas. Neighborly relations sometimes are replaced by other networks, and the functions that the smaller community performed are taken over by larger institutions and agencies.

DISCUSSION

1. Are we, as a group, satisfied with the direction in which this community is evolving? Why or why not?

2. What is there about these changes that we consider good or bad?

3. What social, economic, or other environmental forces are making us more or less of a community than we want to be? How much control over these forces can we regain if we work together to do so?

I. Integrating community components

Some sociologists believe that many communities of today are "fractured" communities broken into functional units in which people are more concerned with one single area--education, government, recreation, business, agriculture, industry--than they are with the total community.

Portrayed graphically, the community may begin to look like this:
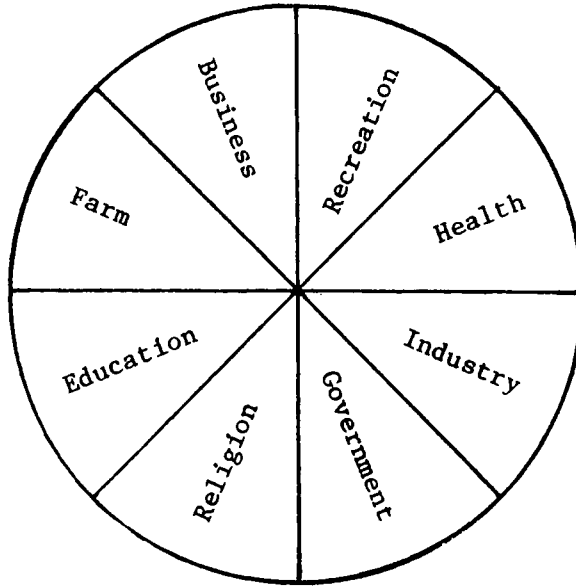
The beginnings of a vertical community in which aspects of the community come to relate more closely to various organizations and affiliations on the regional, state, and national levels than to the community itself may follow. In time, as the communication between these aspects in the vertical system becomes stronger, what goes on outside the community may begin to influence the community. And the people who live in the community may begin to obtain their values, skills, and opinions from this vertical system as well.

The classic fractured community would look like this:
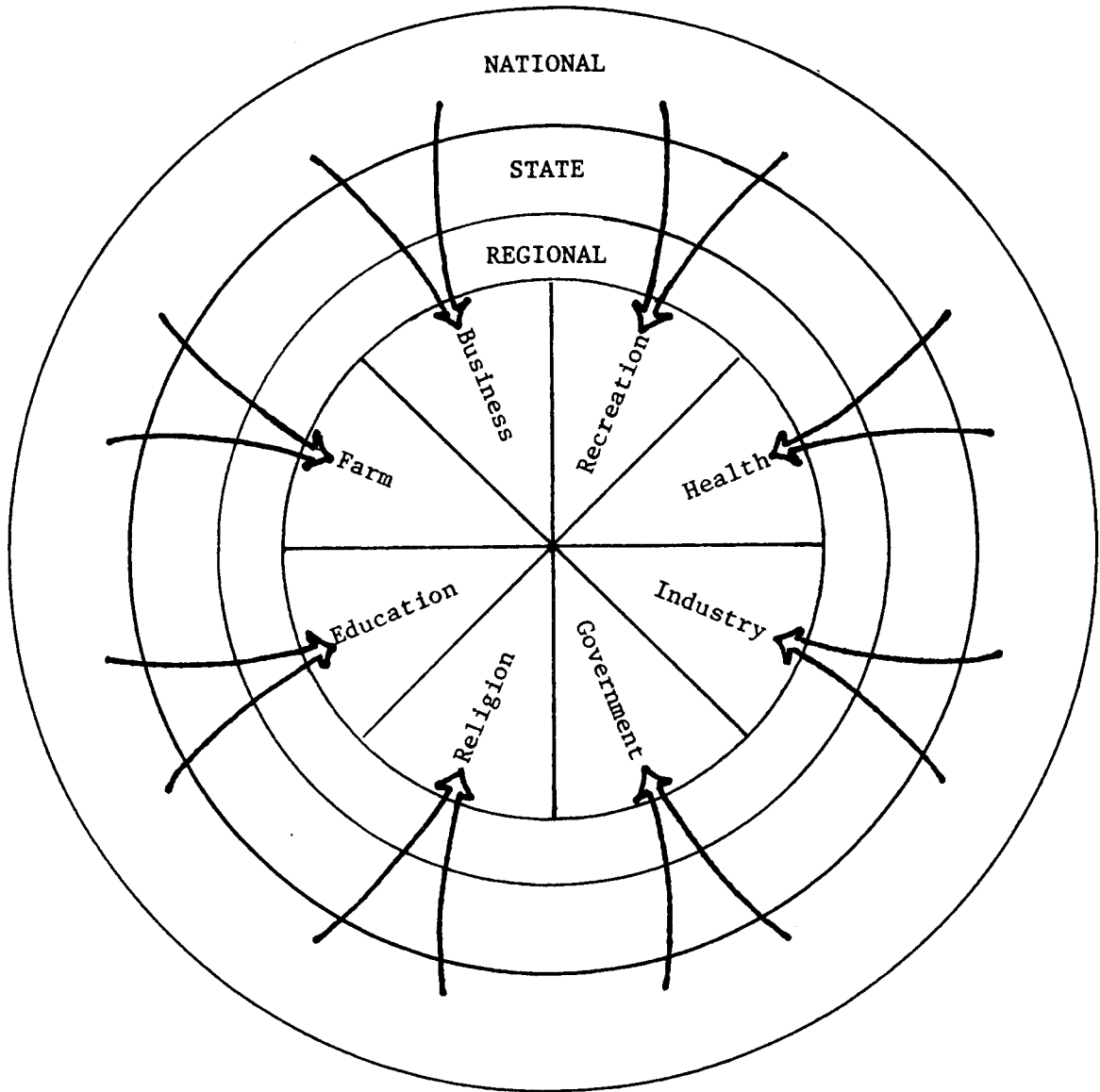
DISCUSSION

1. Do these descriptions of the fractured community make sense to
   you? Do you think that people often fail to communicate with
   one another because they don't have as much in common with their
   neighbors as they once did?

2. Look away from the sector of your community in which you work. Do you relate more closely to other people in the same professional circles or to people from occupations that are different from yours? What are the implications of these relationships?

3. How fragmented are our lives in this community? Is this a problem for us? Why or why not?

4. Can we creatively adapt this community and our involvement in it to circumstances as they exist today and bring about a level of community development and interaction that is more satisfying for a greater number of people? How would you suggest this be done? This issue will be the focus of our discussion at the next session.

Session is adjourned.

Section Three

SECTION THREE

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

A. Procedures

Chairperson calls meeting to order. Recorder reads last week's notes. Notes are discussed briefly. Session leader takes over.

B. Current trends and the future

In the preceding sections we discussed several trends and conditions that are now affecting the United States in general and Minnesota in particular. Because of these trends it is likely that at least some members of this community have come to accept change as inevitable, always bad, and something we can't do much about. This community study, and the activity that will result from it, is intended to show that change can be positive and that we can (indeed must) mold the future into what we want it to be. This section marks the beginning of that effort.

DISCUSSION

1. **Do you think that most residents of this community are optimistic about the future? Why do you think they feel that way? If you think they are pessimistic, why do you think they feel that way? What are people in your community interested in?**

C. Working together

If as a group we have determined that this community is worth maintaining and improving and have decided that our efforts in that regard could make a difference, it is imperative that each one of us make a personal commitment to that end and begin to work together toward it. We must begin to work together to improve the quality of life in this community.

Why is this commitment to community necessary? Richard Posten, in a book entitled Action, Now!, has responded to that question as follows:

"Unless there is a continued exercise of civic responsibility by the people themselves in the places where they live, no democratic society can exist. No matter what actions we may take at the upper reaches of our national life—administrative, legislative, or judicial—it is here, at the local level, that democracy must work and have meaning if it is to work and have meaning anywhere. No

institution or bureaucracy, no national organization or association private or public, political or religious, professional or academic, can substitute for the qualities of local initiative and civic performance that are needed to make democracy a living method of human society. Democracy cannot be set in motion or made real through the actions superimposed from above. It cannot be manufactured and projected nationally in the form of mass movements. It can come only from within, from the people in their local communities."

DISCUSSION

1. **Do you agree with the statement by Posten? Why or why not?**

2. **Is it fair to say that in some ways the failure of people to participate actively in civic affairs in this community and other levels of government has led to some of the problems we are currently facing at the local, state, and national levels? Do we together have the courage, dedication, and desire to face these problems squarely?**

D. Adapting to change

Remember that there are dangers in no action--communities have been known to die. This is frightening but true. When vital economic supports collapse, for example, perhaps it is better for the community to die. But only the people of the community can determine when to give up.

Far worse, a community may die even when there is a good reason for its continued existence. This simply means that the people in the community lost their vision and failed to take action to solve problems.

A community dies when its people fail to recognize problems or when they lose interest in setting goals to adapt to change. A community dies when its people recognize problems but refuse to take any action, choosing instead to live in the past and to be satisfied thinking about how things might have been.

E. Community development

As we move toward making this community a better place in which to live, we will often run across the term community development. There are many definitions of this term, but Richard Posten has some thought-provoking ideas. He says that:

"Community development is the democratic process of community
self-discovery and problem solving organized to deal comprehensively
with the community life, recognizing that all of these functions are
interrelated and are integral parts of the whole. The ultimate goal
is to evolve, through cooperative study, planning, and action, an
increasingly higher level of civic performance and a physical and
social environment best suited to the maximum growth of all the
community's residents--as individuals, as productive members of their
society, as a self-determined civic body."

Community development, then, is simply the process of local residents
with common interests using their own initiative and abilities--and
marshalling public and private resources--to solve local problems in order
to make their communities better places in which to live and work.

F. The role of the study committee

We now can begin to discuss what lies ahead and exactly how this
group can become engaged in an effort to improve the community.

From this point forward, the role of our study group will be that of
a nucleus of citizens concerned and committed to improving life in this
community. This group will be the seed from which a better life for
ourselves and our community will grow.

We will devote the next several weeks to this task. Next week, in
conjunction with the community survey committee, we will spend some time
designing a survey that will seek the opinions of our fellow residents on
community issues. During the following two weeks we will distribute,
collect, and tabulate the results of the community survey. The following
week we will share the results of that survey with the entire community at
a town hall meeting. At this meeting some priorities for action also will
be established. In the subsequent four weeks our group will define
specific strategies for solving the priority problems established at the
town hall meeting and begin to mobilize the appropriate resources. The
final session will assess our preliminary accomplishments and look to the
future. Then the community study group will disband and its members will
return to other community organizations. By this point we hope the study
group will have generated enough commitment to sustain these organizations
through to the completion of the projects that have been started. The
study group may be reestablished periodically to examine the community and
establish priorities for action.

G. Community development--some basic principles

To accomplish the task that lies before us, an awareness of some
fundamental principles of community development is required.

Involvement

The first principle is that people must be at the base of all community activity; they are the ones who must decide what they want and need, they determine the action necessary to get it, they gather the necessary resources, and they work together to achieve agreed upon goals. This activity cannot be done by any one person or organization. The broader and more widespread the involvement of people, the more successful the community development efforts will be.

Scale

This principle requires that we relate our projects to the available supply of people, money, and materials. For example, building a jet-age airport or a university may be beyond the scale of our community resource base, but improving the downtown business sector may not be.

Keep in mind, however, that something could be done about an airport or a college or a university. We could simply enlarge the scale. We could enlist more people and acquire more materials. We could join the citizens of surrounding communities who have a common interest in an airport or a college or a university. This would expand our "community" and expand our resources. The larger community could pool its resources for building the airport or college or university.

Successful community development activities are based on the principle of scale. Local residents will be able to work within the framework of existing scale or to enlarge the scale to achieve their goals. They should never be afraid of thinking big—of accepting challenges that make a difference.

Impact

Community development participants also must recognize and understand the principle of impact. Impact includes all the effects and implications of a development activity.

Some good ideas and worthwhile projects lead to worse problems than the ones they were intended to solve. Here is an example: A community could work to locate a manufacturing plant in the area to help solve its unemployment problem. But the location of the plant could create major pollution control problems, and these problems could be more difficult to solve than the unemployment problem.

Employing the impact principle enables community leaders to avoid creating worse problems with otherwise worthwhile projects. This community could have restricted its search for industry, for example, to manufacturing plants that did not bring environmental problems with them. And it still could have solved its unemployment problem.

Access

Communities also must have access to knowledge, money, materials, and services if they are going to be successful in their development efforts.

For example, a town wanted to invite new industries to locate nearby to insure new jobs for the future. Several companies came to see the site, but everyone turned the town down. Why? Because the only area available for industrial expansion had no access to natural gaslines for the power needed to run those industries. The town did not have a way of extending existing lines or of providing new services to its industrial areas. So the idea died before it got off the drawing board.

Just as you might need to have access to a bank for a loan on your next car, communities need to have access to many things to make a go of real development--they need community facilities and services, money, and people, for example.

You need to keep an open mind about solutions to the needs that you discover in your community. It is very important to be flexible. For example, do not say your community wants buses to transport the poor to health services. Rather, say that your community wants to make health services more available to the poor.

Now you can look at a variety of solutions:

- neighborhood health clinics,
- a mobile health service van,
- relocating health service personnel to a building adjacent to welfare/assistance headquarters so the poor only need to come to one location.

As another example, do not say your community needs so many new fire stations. Instead, say that your community needs to reduce the number of structural fires (or the property damage lost from structural fires). You may not be able to find a way to finance a new fire station, but maybe you can:

- upgrade or increase the amount of equipment,
- add more fire hydrants,
- secure more personnel,
- design service response areas to reduce travel time to fire locations,
- map out an education campaign for fire prevention,
- participate in the development of a 911 telephone emergency system so fires can be reported more quickly,
- develop stricter building code regulations,
- strengthen your code enforcement program.

DISCUSSION

1. Discuss and give illustrations of involvement, scale, impact, and access as they relate to your community and to potential improvement projects.

2. Discuss the kinds of leadership that will be required to execute a successful community improvement program. What are the characteristics of a leader in the community? Do you see a need for the same leaders to be involved in all or most community projects and activities? Do you think this is good or bad?

3. Can leadership coexist with the need to involve as many people as possible in community affairs? What special kind of leadership skills are required in that case?

H. Our community's strengths and weaknesses

      Before we adjourn for the evening and in anticipation of our development next week of a community survey, let's take a preliminary reading of the feelings of this group about the community's wants and needs. What follows is a general list of possible areas of concern. Please use the following key to rate each item on the list.

Grading Key:

Superior	4
Good	3
Fair	2
Poor	1

Grade

PEOPLE BUILDING

Education (Consider adequacy and availability to all.)
    Grade school   _____
    High school   _____
    Vocational training facilities and instructors   _____
    Continuing adult education   _____

Health services
    Availability of doctors, nurses, medical
        facilities   _____
    Health counseling services for those who need
        instruction and assistance   _____

Cultural satisfaction
    Availability of books and library services   _____
    Action by civic groups and clubs to meet community
        cultural needs   (Consider hobbies, music,
        art, plays, athletic programs, youth and
        adult social programs.)   _____

Outreach to the disadvantaged
    Extent to which community needs are met   _____

Leadership
    Degree to which your community leaders strive
        actively to make your community a better
        place in which to live and work   _____

                          TOTAL   _____

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Housing
    (Consider all sectors of your community in terms
        of living conditions--crowding, sanitation,
        upkeep and appearance, availability and costs.)_____

Transportation
    Adequacy of streets, roads, railroads, and public
        transportation service   _____

Utilities
    Adequacy of service and relative cost of:
        Electricity and telephone   _____
        Gas   _____
        Water   _____
        Sewer   _____

Public services
    Police service, fire prevention and control   _____
    Trash and garbage removal   _____
    Meeting places   _____
    Hospitals and emergency ambulances   _____

                          TOTAL   _____

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

Conservation
    Cleanliness of lakes, streams, ponds, forests,
        and shorelines in your community area   _____
    Community antipollution ordinances to insure
        clean air, land, and water   _____
    Protection of forests, water, and wildlife
        resources in your community by:
                Fire control programs   _____
                Flood prevention and drainage   _____
                Erosion and sediment control   _____

                          3-7

Recreation
  Degree to which private lands and waters in your
      community are serving needs: fishing,
      swimming, skiing, hiking, hunting,
      camping, etc.   _____
  Use of public lands in your community to
      contribute to its beauty and its recreational
      needs   _____

Community initiatives
  Development of a group or committee to determine
      community environmental improvement needs
      and priorities   _____

  Creative projects—starting forests, development
      of water resources, beautification of
      existing assets   _____

  Good planning for community growth and expansion   _____

                          TOTAL   _____

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Jobs
  Grade in terms of:
      Economic activity
      Financial opportunity   _____
  Availability of part-time jobs   _____
  Job-finding assistance   _____

Business and industry
  Quality and variety of stores and services in
      your community   _____
  Attitude of your community with respect to
      seeking out and encouraging new industry   _____
  Community investment in civic improvement   _____

Credit
  Adequacy of credit sources   _____
  Contribution to community growth by banking and
      lending institutions   _____

Natural resources
  Use of natural resources—soils, forests, water,
      shorelines, weather, mountains, wildlife,
      etc.—to contribute to the community economy   _____

                          TOTAL   _____

Now add your scores in each of the four areas and mark your score on the large chart below. The first illustration is a sample to show you how to use the chart. Let's say your scores were 20 for People Building, 29 for Community Facilities, 15 for Environmental Improvement, and 33 for Economic Development. You would then mark your chart like this:

	10	17	25	33	40
	Poor	Fair	Good	Superior
People Building	████████			
Community Facilities	██████████████			
Environmental Improvement	███			
Economic Development	█████████████			

Plot your community grades on the chart below.

	10	17	25	33	40
	Poor	Fair	Good	Superior
People Building				
Community Facilities				
Environmental Improvement				
Economic Development				

After you have marked your chart, you can easily see where you have rated your community. The lower areas will give you some indication of where you might begin to determine the needs of your community.

You may wish to get several opinions and exchange views. If you and others agree on areas of change, you have begun the rural development process. Remember, general agreement among the community, or consensus, is preferable as the basis upon which development decisions are to be made. We need a consensus of our people about community problems. To gain a consensus, we may need to expand the group. We need to ask more people to grade the community. Next week we will begin that process.

Session is adjourned.

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Training for Rural Development. The Southern Rural Development Center: Mississippi State University, 1978

Tweeter, Luther, and George L. Brinkman. Micropolitan Development. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1976

Warren, Roland S. Community Action and Community Development. Rand McNally, Chicago, 1963

WHAT DO THE REST OF THE PEOPLE THINK?

A Community Survey

A. Procedures

Chairperson asks recorder to review notes from last week's meeting and to make any additions or corrections to notes. The spokesperson for the community survey committee takes over.

B. Purpose of a community survey

Two weeks ago at the close of our discussion on Section Two, a community survey committee was appointed. The task assigned to this committee was to formulate a draft community survey for discussion at this meeting. This session will be devoted to the finalization of that community survey. The survey will have two main purposes:

1. to sample the feelings of our fellow residents on the strength and weaknesses of this community, and
2. to broaden the level of community participation and interest in preparation for action to identify and address community needs.

C. Community survey resource materials

The materials that follow should provide the group with a general understanding of the community survey process. Take a moment now to review and discuss these materials.

D. Committee report

The community survey committee should now present its recommendations concerning the community survey. Be sure to discuss all aspects of the survey, including the questions themselves, the geographic limits of the survey, and publicity. The recorder should coordinate publicity for the community survey project.

E. Jobs to do and individual assignments

Once agreement has been reached on the survey itself, a plan for distribution, collection, and tabulation of surveys should be formulated. Specific task assignments should be made. Publicity about

the survey should begin as soon as possible following this meeting, if it has not already occurred. The town hall meeting also should be scheduled at this time. It should occur not less than two weeks nor more than six weeks from tonight.

Two individuals should be selected at this time to lead the town hall meeting. The first will be responsible for the general conduct of the meeting and the second for leading the nominal group process. These people should look ahead to the Section Five materials and meet with both the general chairperson and the survey committee as needed before session five.

COMMUNITY ATTITUDE SELF-SURVEY*
by Jose E. Herrera
New Mexico State University, 1978

The community self-survey is most useful for the lay citizen who is interested in a practical self-help approach in identifying community issues and problems. The term community survey refers to the process of obtaining public opinion or attitudes through a printed questionnaire.

What a Community Attitude Self-Survey Is

1. Community decisions should be based on what people actually think, rather than on what someone thinks they think.
2. The survey can help determine the relative importance of the various issues or problems facing the community.
3. The self-survey requires the participation of a considerable number of people; their early involvement can help stimulate interest among other volunteers.
4. The results are more readily accepted because they are not the work of "outsiders who don't understand that this community is different."
5. The self-survey, combined with a community development effort, can create a climate in which community improvements can be initiated and supported by the people.

When to Conduct a Survey

Once a community development group has been organized, the question of how many local people are actually concerned about the issues facing the community will sooner or later emerge. At this point, the group might consider the possibility of using the community attitude self-survey. The survey becomes one phase of a long-range community development effort involving many individual citizens and perhaps dozens of organizations.

Planning and Conducting the Survey

1. ### Geographic Limits

   Should this be a townwide or countywide survey? A large population to be surveyed may require a sampling technique. In small cities and towns, mass distribution may be in order, depending on how much help is available.

2. ### Designing the Questionnaire

   A standardized form is likely to contain much irrelevant material and also be inadequate for a particular community.

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* Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

If local citizens design their own questionnaire, they will need to do some careful planning. Avoid leading questions, questions on which the public is likely to be poorly informed, trying to cover too much in the survey, and raising false hopes about projects that have little likelihood of being launched or completed. A questionnaire that takes more than 20 minutes to complete runs the risk of being returned inaccurate, incomplete, or both.

A frequent practice is to begin the questionnaire with a section asking for ideas from respondents on the following questions: What has been done in this community during the last five years that citizens can take pride in? What organizations or individuals do you think were responsible for these accomplishments? What are the most pressing problems in this community at the present time? To whom would you look for leadership in tackling these problems?

Through this procedure the stage is set for additional questions and reactions on specific aspects of community life. The names of individuals and groups can be useful to other committees for followup study and action.

The survey committee also faces the difficult task of deciding how much of the questionnaire should call for simple answers (yes-no, multiple choice, rating scale, or number system) for faster and easier tabulation, and how much should call for essay answers. The latter, although more difficult to tabulate, is considered much more productive because the respondent must think about his/her answer and write it.

3. Publicity

Under no circumstances should such a survey be attempted without wide publicity. It is public business and the public should be fully informed. Good publicity can make the difference between success and dismal failure.

4. Distribution and Collection

Experience has shown that the percentage of return of completed questionnaires is in direct proportion to the personal contact made during distribution and collection. Forms sent through the mail have a very low percentage of return. By far the best results are obtained with volunteers who personally distribute and collect the questionnaire.

5. Tabulation

Unless several thousand questionnaire forms are involved, there are many advantages to local tabulation by volunteer workers. First, the survey remains a community project. Second,

it involves more volunteers who then become potential supporters
for future community activities. Third, there is less delay in
getting results publicized and interpreted for the community.
Fourth, besides learning more about their community, volunteers
may make new friends in the process.

6. Interpreting and Reporting Results

After the results have been interpreted and thoroughly
discussed, the group might decide that a formal report is
appropriate. This can be done through the newspaper or with a
separate publication for wide circulation. One traditional method
of disseminating this information is with a mass meeting.

Followup

Some continuity should be built into the community survey. Obviously,
there will be areas requiring study and investigation. Ideally citizens
would volunteer for this committee work. Many will have a personal stake
in the action ahead and will want to pursue their committee's
recommendations to insure that appropriate action is eventually taken.

Session is adjourned.

SECTION FIVE

A TOWN HALL MEETING

Survey Report and Discussion

A. Procedures

All residents of the community are invited to participate in a town hall meeting. This meeting is to present the results of the community survey to the community and to obtain the opinions and ideas of the meeting participants as to the most important community needs.

Prior arrangements, under the leadership of the chairperson for this meeting, should have been made for an <u>adequate room, refreshments, and materials</u>. Necessary materials will include pencils or pens, markers, large newsprint sheets, and an easel or blackboard. Additional information on arrangements can be found in the community guide that follows.

B. Survey results presented

The chairperson opens the meeting, introduces the members of the community study group, provides some background information on the work of the group, and introduces the chairperson of the community survey committee to present and discuss the survey results.

C. Nominal group process

The session chairperson or designee leads the group through a nominal group process, using the directions contained in the community guide that follows.

D. Adjournment

Adjournment should not be later than two and a half hours after the meeting begins.
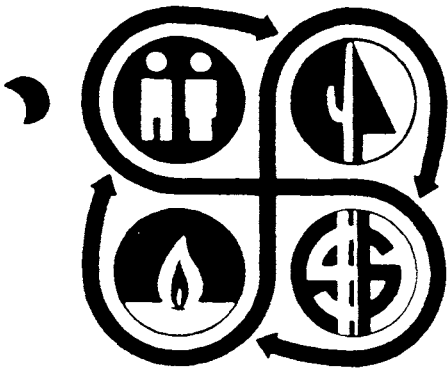
THE NOMINAL GROUP PROCESS:

A Proven Method for Obtaining Citizen Response at Meetings and Hearings

A MEETING IS LIKE A MELODY!

The trick is getting through it without a sour note! How many times have you attended or conducted a group meeting or public hearing for the simple and honest purpose of obtaining people's views on an important matter, only to watch it get out of hand and turn into a frustrating and fruitless gripe session? What a colossal waste of time and energy! What a disappointment!

There is a way to avoid such failures and to conduct an orderly, open, fact-finding or goal-setting session. It is called the Nominal Group Process. It takes about two hours and seven basic steps (less for small groups). It is a proven technique devised by management experts to obtain effective individual participation to identify needs, goals, and priorities.

Nominal Group Process maximizes the creativity and active input of each participant, and produces more and higher quality suggestions than ordinary group discussion or "brainstorming." It also prohibits any single speaker or topic from dominating the meeting.

PREPARATION

The meeting should be held in a comfortable room, large enough to hold the expected number of participants in such a manner that tables seating 5-8 persons can be placed adequately apart for independent group activity. There should be one Group Leader/Recorder assigned to each table, and an overall Coordinator for the meeting. The following supplies are also needed for each table: one large pad of newsprint, four or five 5x8 cards *per person*, a broad felt tip marking pen, masking tape, pencils and an easel with a board (handy, but not essential).

INTRODUCTION

The Coordinator requests from the assembly complete cooperation and commitment to the seriousness of the task at hand. It should be made very clear whether the meeting is *problem-oriented*, or *solution-oriented*, and that it is designed strictly for the purpose of identifying needs or goals and priorities. Each group should be assigned an identification number or letter.

STEP 1: Nominal group activity (10 minutes)

The Coordinator states the task in brief, precise terms, and writes it on a blackboard or large sheet of paper for all in the room to see.

(Experience suggests that the correct wording of the problem, question, or task is crucial to obtain the focused response desired of participants. Before the meeting, the organizers or program staff should determine precisely what kind of information is to be requested of the participants.)

Group leaders distribute the 5x8 cards to the persons at their tables. Each participant is asked to write suggestions and ideas regarding the task in short words or phrases. Remind everyone that there are no *right* or *wrong* answers. Individuals must work in silence and alone. Be strict about it — in a nice way, of course!

STEP 2: Round-robin listing of ideas (20 minutes)

Within each of the small groups, proceed around the table with each person in turn briefly stating one idea. No discussion other than clarification is permitted.

The Recorder then lists these ideas by number on the large pad of newsprint, taking care not to summarize, categorize or restate the individual

statements. (Continue the process until *all* ideas have been expressed.)

STEP 3:   Individual group discussion (30 minutes)

Each group discusses the ideas listed on the pads, clarifying, lobbying and defending the different statements. Avoid discussion *among* groups.

STEP 4:   First vote (10 minutes)

On new 5x8 cards, each person writes **FIRST VOTE** in the upper right hand corner and his group identification in the upper left. Then, using the numbers assigned to the statements (STEP 2), everyone ranks the items listed on the large sheets. Individuals must work in silence!

(Prior to the meeting, the organizers or program staff should determine how many items will be required for ranking: no fewer than three, no more than ten is recommended.)

In order to establish *group priorities*, scores for the individually ranked items should be tallied by the Group Leader. (This is a good time for a 5-10 minute COFFEE BREAK!) If you wish to identify the five highest priority items, give a score of 5 to each individual's top priority item, 4 to his second priority, etc. Record these scores beside items listed on the large sheets and then total them, for each item. Highest overall score is considered the item of highest priority, the second highest score, second priority, etc.

STEP 5:   Group discussion of first vote (20 minutes)

Group Leaders combine the results of the small groups into a master list on the large sheets of paper for all in the room to see. (Each item on the master list should be assigned its own reference number and total score. Duplicate statements from different groups have their scores added together.)

Each group is then asked to discuss *independently* the items on the master list. Group Leaders are responsible for obtaining clarifica-

tion on any of the items for members of their groups. Open discussion *among* groups should be discouraged.

STEP 6:   Final group vote (10 minutes)

On a new 5x8 card, each group member writes **FINAL VOTE** in the upper right hand corner and his group identification in the upper left. Everyone then makes a *final* ranking of the priorities, in an effort to eliminate some of the items and allow for changes in personal views. All must write in silence and independently.

STEP 7:   Wrap up (20 minutes)

The final group rankings are tallied by the Group Leaders and combined into a final master list of priorities in a procedure similar to STEP 5. Each priority is clarified by the Coordinator so that everyone understands what has been decided by the total assembly. The Coordinator again tells everyone why the information was obtained, and offers praise for what has been accomplished at the meeting. Group Leaders collect all materials including the 5x8 cards. Thank the participants and adjourn the meeting.

(Note: In a meeting of 10 people or less, where all are in one group, the Nominal Group Process becomes much simpler, since the need for Group Leaders, a master list and Steps 5 and 6 are eliminated.)

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About the author . . . This material was prepared from references by Edward A. Parmee, a community development specialist.

October 1976

PEOPLE   ENVIRONMENT   SERVICES   ECONOMY

GOAL SETTING

A. Procedures

Chairperson calls the meeting to order. Recorder reads last week's notes. Additions and corrections to notes are made. Session leader takes over.

B. Reviewing town meeting results

The chairperson of the community survey committee should at this time distribute a list of community needs as ranked at the town hall meeting. Spend some time (roughly 30 minutes) talking about this list. How does it compare with the grading of the community done by this group prior to the town hall meeting? If there are significant differences, what might be some of the reasons? How should this group respond to these differences? In other words, do we accept the findings of the study group, the community survey, or the town hall meeting? What are the implications of each?

Discuss for a few moments the content of each statement of community needs. Do we all perceive the problems in essentially the same way? If not, try to achieve a shared definition of the issues. In the end, you should come up with a preliminary list of community needs that appear to need attention. Write these items down on newsprint paper and save them for future reference. This list, and the priorities attached to it, may change over the next few weeks as we examine resources, strategies, and alternatives. Nevertheless, the preliminary list is an important starting point. For help on goal setting see Appendix C.

C. Strategy development

Now that we have achieved some level of consensus on a preliminary listing of community needs, we need to take a broad look at strategies, alternatives, and plans for action. Please keep in mind as we move through these materials that there is no single right way to work at community betterment. Different actions and different methods can be used to produce desired results, and the choice among these different methods will depend upon circumstances, conditions, and resources within the community.

D. Brainstorming

As a first step toward establishing an action strategy, let's list as many solutions to the community's priority problems or issues as we can think of. List these solutions on a blackboard or newsprint so that

everyone can see them and do not, at this point, do any evaluation. (This is called brainstorming.)

Examine each problem or issue in turn. You may wish to record the proposed solutions in the space provided at the end of this section. If at some point the community's perception of issues changes, new issues emerge, or issues are resolved, the process can be recycled back to this point and new action strategies can be defined.

Once the group has listed all the potential solutions that come to mind, the process of analyzing them can begin. First take a preliminary sampling of group opinion on the merits of the solutions proposed. Ask such questions as: Does the idea seem feasible? Are resources available? Can we obtain such resources? How? What are the positive and negative impacts likely to be? Who pays? Who benefits?

It may also be valuable to find out how others have tackled similar problems. Check the communities around you or within your state to see if they have recently dealt with a problem or opportunity similar to the one confronting you. You can learn a great deal from other people's successes and failures. You can find out new ways to approach old problems. You can see how much different programs cost, how long they took to achieve, and how successful they were.

E. Information sources

There are many other sources of information to assist you in analyzing proposed solutions to community problems. Among these are: professional organizations, universities, government agencies, and local residents and organizations.

1. Professional organizations

Professional organizations like the National Association of Counties, the Minnesota Association of Counties, and the League of Minnesota Cities keep tabs on programs at the community level and can serve as excellent sources of information and assistance. People resources can often be the key to tapping the expertise available in professional associations. Who in your community belongs to a professional organization with expertise in areas of interest to this community? Seek out their assistance. The list of key contact people included in Appendix D can also be of considerable help in finding professional organizations with information and expertise to share.

Finally, do not overlook the resources available in your local public library. Besides the general information available there, you may find that the journals of professional associations contain information of interest to your community.

2. Colleges and universities

    Research and information at universities also can provide
help for evaluating proposed projects and solutions to community
problems. Information is available on a myriad of topics from
new applications of solar energy to how to work with people in
voluntary groups and from how to rid a stream of weeds to what
to do with a community's garbage.

    Both the Agricultural Extension Service and the
Agricultural Experiment Station at land-grant universities can
steer you to experts, publications, and good advice--and would
be happy to do so. Community colleges, vocational technical
institutes, and public and private colleges and universities
also have excellent libraries, as well as the potential for
faculty and student assistance for community projects.

3. Government agencies

    a. Federal

        The variety and amount of information available
    from the federal government is truly unbelievable.
    For example:

            - There is a special clearing house on Criminal
              Justice Architecture to help you design a local
              jail or remodel a courtroom.
            - There are booklets on successful housing
              projects and transportation systems for the
              elderly.
            - There are educational guides on what types of
              play activities help develop physical
              coordination in handicapped children.
            - There are copies of grant applications and
              grant evaluation reports on all phases of
              community planning, including economic base
              studies, housing, recreation, water and sewer,
              and land use.
            - There are booklets on what type of job
              opportunity programs are serving migrants or
              welfare mothers.
            - There may be a technical assistance program
              available whereby a specialist will visit your
              community to help your group with a particular
              problem.

        The U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington,
    D.C., sells many government documents and reports.
    Write to ask for publication lists on topics of
    interest to you. Many publications are free.

        Some public libraries and university libraries
    are federal repositories for government documents.
    Check the publications on hand--also use these

resources to direct you to government offices that may
have additional information. The U.S. Government
Manual is a good source of information to begin your
search.

Sometimes the key to locating federal government
resources is to find someone to do the locating for
you--someone who knows the system. The list of
contact people in Appendix D can be of considerable
help in determining how these resources can be located
and applied.

b.   State

Minnesota state agencies also have information
available. Again, direct your inquiry to the
appropriate state department or to a member of your
legislative delegation. A book called Minnesota: A
Guidebook to State Agency Services should be
particularly helpful in identifying the assistance
available from state government. Local and metro area
telephone directories also may be helpful in
identifying sources of information. Give enough
information so that the person responding can
intelligently sort through available information to
find those resources most appropriate for your
situation.

At the state or substate level, planning agencies
composed of various units of local government are
engaged in areawide planning and development. They
also have a staff of specialists to aid the
communities that they serve. To find out more about
these agencies, contact the Agricultural Extension
Service or one of the key contact people listed in
Appendix D.

Finally, the various agencies participating in
the Minnesota Community Improvement Project can
provide information to help you evaluate solutions to
community problems or refer you to other potential
sources of information. (See Appendix J.)

c.   Local

Local governments are also important sources of
information and possible solutions to community
problems. For instance, local ordinances often cover
a broad range of topics, from animal control to
zoning, that may apply to existing community problems.
The ordinance itself, or more effective enforcement of
that ordinance, may be an appropriate solution to the
problem under consideration.

Local officials are often the best source of
information on previous local efforts to deal with the

same problem. They may also know about initiatives
that have been taken in other communities to deal with
similar problems. And they may be able to refer you
to officials in neighboring communities or to staff
people at various associations of local government
like the National Association of Counties, the
Association of Township Officials, the League of
Municipalities, and the Association of Small Cities.

4. Local residents and organizations

Finally, don't overlook the experts all around you. Your
local library is an outstanding source of information.
Officials of the school system and leaders of local churches may
have experiences or knowledge that might apply to the problem
under discussion. Long-time residents of the community also
hold valuable insights into what solutions may work in this
situation.

F. Sharing the job

Once you have scanned through this list of possible sources of
information, the group should together begin to match them up against the
community problems and possible solutions that you've listed previously.
Make some assignments among members of the group to seek out information
from these sources and, during the next week, try to come up with some
additional ideas that may help address the community problems identified.
Make a list of the information and possible solutions uncovered in the
space provided at the end of this section. Next week we will continue to
refine this proposed list of solutions and begin to identify resources for
implementation.

Session is adjourned.

PRELIMINARY LISTING OF COMMUNITY NEEDS

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

INFORMATION RESOURCES

Indicate the names of study committee members who will investigate each source and report back next week.

1.

2.

3.

4.

HOW TO LOCATE RESOURCES

A. Procedures

Chairperson calls meeting to order. Recorder reads last week's notes. Additions and corrections to notes are made. Session leader takes over.

B. Resources

Once the information needed to set priorities for community improvement projects has been acquired, where does one look for the resources needed to execute the projects? Money is usually the first resource that a community development group considers when examining the feasibility of a project. Generally the search focuses on new money. If new money is not found, the development activity may be dropped. Money is a resource that has the sole purpose of purchasing other resources. It can buy land, building supplies, and equipment and it can pay people to do necessary work.

But land, building supplies, equipment, and people's time can be voluntary, and they can be bartered as well as purchased. For this reason, three approaches to finding resources for project implementation are discussed below: adapting resources within the community, using persons within the community as resources, and securing money. Do not allow the absence of money to overly restrict the group's creativity in finding solutions to community issues.

C. Relating improvement projects to your community

Turn to the back of this section. There you will find several sheets entitled Relating Improvement Projects to Your Community. These sheets should be completed, at least in preliminary form, by the group during the course of the discussions tonight. Fill out a sheet for each priority project as identified by the group.

D. Adapting resources within the community

Materials and money currently exist within your community. They may be available to the public through government or through the private sector. Take a look at the existing resources in your community. Then scan over the list of community needs and ask how

existing community resources can be used to help solve these problems. Insert the group response in the worksheet at the back of this section as it relates to each project.

E. Using the talents of persons within the community

Using the services, talents, contacts, and abilities of persons in the community can be a great resource for community improvement. Look for ways to secure these resources through low cost cooperative arrangements or through donations. For example:

- Would a local architect donate the design plans for a new park?
- Would the garden club or a youth group volunteer to secure the plans and do the labor for a park?
- Would a graduate student at a university write her/his dissertation on bringing new industry into your community?
- Can you recover usable building materials from a condemned building for a home repair program?
- Would a tax advantage encourage a local company to donate money or materials needed for a park?

One source of equipment and materials at low cost is the surplus property program of the federal government. Local government people can steer you to the nearest office of the General Services Administration, which sells surplus property.

Complete questions 2 through 4 of the worksheet for each project under consideration.

F. Securing money

1. Private donations

    Private individuals are one source of funds for community betterment efforts.

    You may also want to consider a general fund drive in support of community improvement projects. Jot down all your ideas for soliciting private donations under item 5 of the worksheet.

    Identify individuals in your community who may have a special interest in either the community in general or the special project that the community may pursue. How should the interest and involvement of these individuals be secured?

2. Loans

    Loans are also a source of funds for community betterment. Banks and other public and private institutions

have money that they are willing to lend to others because
they want those funds to produce a return for them. Local
banks, especially if they have been involved in the planning
of community development efforts, may agree to lend money to
revenue-generating community projects.

Insurance companies, pension funds, and investment
funds—like banks—also make money by lending their funds to
individuals or businesses. Finally, the state and federal
government administer some loan programs at low interest
rates.

Are loan funds an appropriate part of the community
project under review? If so, how would they be mobilized and
applied? Jot down your ideas under item 7 of the worksheet.

3.   Taxes, charges, bonds

Local (or state) governments can raise money through
taxation, service charges, or bonds.

The municipal service district tax is one way to secure
funds. Under this concept persons in a defined geographical
area decide they want certain additional services not
available to other local citizens. They agree to pay for
these additional services by paying a special annual tax.
For instance, a group of residents living on the same street
may want street lights. They ask the local or state
government to have them classified as a municipal service
district and agree to pay a tax to receive this special
municipal service. Sometimes a nonincorporated area wants a
variety of municipal services: extra police protection,
animal control enforcement, garbage collection. Again, they
take the steps necessary to become a municipal service
district and agree to pay for the requested services by way
of an extra tax. The financing of a public bus system may
also be accomplished in the same way when a group of small
towns join together to establish a transportation district
that agrees to pay special taxes for this service.

Local government can also sell services, as some towns
do when they operate their own water system or when they
charge for garbage or trash collection. Selling services
simply means that the community agrees that consumers of
particular services are charged a user fee for those
services. An example would be to charge $2 a week for
garbage pickup at local residences. Another example is to
charge a user fee at the tennis courts to finance
improvements on the rest of the park.

Local (or state) governments can also raise money for
development activities by going into debt. They can issue
general obligation bonds—simply borrowing the full faith and
credit of the community. Your city clerk will be familiar
with this procedure. In the case of revenue bonds, the

government borrows the money and promises to repay it with revenues to be collected from a particular source. For example, a state may issue revenue bonds to a community to create a "face-lift" for a downtown area with the pledge that the merchants will repay the loan from a percentage of their sales.

Do any of these mechanisms seem applicable to the project under consideration by this group? If so, record your ideas under item 6 of the worksheet.

4. Grants

What are they? Federal and state grants have become an important source of community funding. Two basic types of grant programs are operated by state and federal governments.

The first method is to establish a pot of funds that can be used only to meet very specific needs. These are called categorical grants; in effect, they specify what kind of projects are favored. Grants are awarded on the basis of pre-established criteria and guidelines. A local community that files a grant application competes with all other applications in that category.

Remember in applying for categorical grants that only a few applicants win and a lot lose. Also, it is not unusual for politics to play a part in who gets the money. So don't get discouraged if your grant is not approved the first time.

The second grant method, called an entitlement program, specifies that certain applicants, because of such factors as population, number of low income people, amount of unemployment or incidence of serious crime, are entitled to a grant award. Certain block grant programs and revenue sharing programs are processed this way.

Under the entitlement method, a community will receive notification that it is entitled to a specified amount of money from the program to use for projects within a general problem area such as community development or criminal justice. To obtain these funds, the local community must still submit an acceptable grant application. But the local community can decide exactly which eligible projects should be funded within their jurisdictions. As long as a project meets the published lists of do's and don'ts, it can be funded.

Revenue sharing refers to money collected by the federal government and then shared (using a formula based on taxes plus individual income) on a lump sum basis with city and county government throughout the United States. The city or county government can spend it on any local project except those in education.

Where can they be found? Almost all federal grants are summarized in a book called The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. This catalog tells where to write to get copies of grant application forms, instructions on filling out the forms, and more information about the program. This information can also be used to establish contact with--and seek help from--the agency that administers the program.

Most of the information contained in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance has been computerized. This project is called the Federal Assistance Program Retrieval System, or FAPRS. FAPRS allows for a search of more than 600 federal programs and provides a printout of those program numbers and titles that fit the particular category of assistance you select.

FAPRS is programmed to print out only information on available grant programs that fit a specific need you are trying to meet. The University of Minnesota operates and maintains this service. All you need to do is contact your county agent to make a request.

How does one apply? Once you know which federal/state grant programs you wish to apply for--and once you have obtained all the applicable information--you will be ready to mobilize local resources to develop a grant application. Make sure you have all the necessary information:

- application form,
- instructions for completing the forms,
- copies of the federal register that lists the regulations and procedures for the program.

If possible try to get a copy of a grant that has already been funded so you will have some idea of what the finished product will look like. If you have followed all of the steps noted above, you should have most of the information you need to begin writing the grant application.

Could any of the community projects now under review be financed through grant resources? If so, how do you plan to identify and mobilize such assistance? Record your responses under item 7 of the worksheet.

G. Priority project evaluation

Try to complete worksheets for all the priority projects selected by the group for consideration. If you are unable to complete this task entirely tonight, plan to wrap it up early in next week's session. Next week we will finalize strategies, assign tasks, and begin to mobilize the community for action.

Session is adjourned.

RELATING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Please fill out a sheet like this one for each project you are considering.

1. What are some of the materials (facilities, equipment, etc.) that are now in your community that can be adapted to serve your community improvement project?

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    _____

2. List the necessary skills needed to carry out this program. Who are some of the possible persons who have these needed skills?

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3. What methods should you use to secure donations of the time, talent, and contributions you need to implement your project?

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Is the federal government's surplus equipment program applicable to this project? If so, how do you plan to tap the program?

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What private individuals might donate money or other resources to your community improvement project? How should you approach them?

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Might a municipal service district, tax, or service charge be used to finance your project?

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Do you plan to use grants, loans, or other financial assistance to implement this community improvement project? If so, how do you plan to identify and mobilize such assistance?

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8. If this project is fully completed, what would be some of the likely consequences? List both positive and negative consequences.

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9. Do the positive consequences outweigh the negative consequences? What factors have brought you to that conclusion?

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10. How does this project relate to the principles of comunity development: involvement, scale, impact, and access?

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3. What methods should you use to secure donations of the time, talent, and contributions you need to implement your project?

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4. Is the federal government's surplus equipment program applicable to this project? If so, how do you plan to tap the program?

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5. What private individuals might donate money or other resources to your community improvement project? How should you approach them?

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6. Might a municipal service district, tax, or service charge be used to finance your project?

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7. Do you plan to use grants, loans, or other financial assistance to implement this community improvement project? If so, how do you plan to identify and mobilize such assistance?

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SECTION EIGHT

DEVELOPING STRATEGIES, ASSIGNING TASKS, AND MOBILIZING FOR ACTION

A. Procedures

Chairperson calls meeting to order. Recorder reads last week's notes. Notes are discussed briefly. Session leader takes over.

B. Goals

Up to this point we have established some preliminary goals and have examined available resources that relate to those goals. Now we are ready to finalize our strategies, assign tasks, and mobilize for action. As you go through this section, refer to the worksheets on Relating Improvement Projects to Your Community that were completed last week and the Task Assignment Sheet included in this section. A worksheet and task assignment sheet should be filled out for each project the group decides to pursue.

C. Assigning tasks

This section is intended to get you thinking about the skills and resources needed. Involve individuals and organizations in community improvement efforts and decide what roles they should play. Once again, there are no easy answers that apply to all communities. You must reflect upon your community and upon the individuals and organizations that exist there as you begin to think about who should be a part of the projects you have identified.

One unit to think about is government. Local government (municipal, town, and county) especially has the potential to play a major, positive role, not only in the success of particular community projects, but also in encouraging greater participation in local affairs. Also examine the potential role of state and federal units of government in your development efforts.

Other governmental or quasi governmental agencies may also have appropriate roles to play. Take a look at the school board, hospital board, the housing and redevelopment authority, and the industrial development commission. Business organizations, such as the chamber of commerce, may also be appropriate instigators of community improvement activities. Service groups might also be a good place to start. Also think about the farm organizations, the various women's groups, and the church organizations that should be involved.

Any one of these groups (and perhaps others) can be actively involved. The key is to be open, comprehensive, and inclusive. Look across the base of the community and encompass issues and concerns that

are reflective of the entire locality. Once you have taken that comprehensive look, begin to work toward a more inclusive framework. Try to involve others in ways that are outside the roles they currently play in the community.

Also concentrate on trying to make the process sustaining. You may find that some people become involved only superficially, and that at the first setback they lose interest. Work hard to develop a nucleus of community people who will stick to it and see the job through. (As we have indicated before, those who have participated throughout this study period are prime candidates for this nucleus group, but there are others.)

DISCUSSION

1. **Draw up a roster of all the groups and organizations that exist in and serve this community. Also determine the major tasks to be performed in the community improvement projects under discussion. At least in a preliminary way, select the agency or group that has the greatest potential for performing each particular task. Through your discussions this evening, refine this list into a task assignment sheet for each project.**

D. **Bringing about change**

During the last several weeks this group has examined the critical issues facing this community, established preliminary goals, assessed available resources, and generated ideas for action strategies. It is now absolutely essential that you gain the involvement of other groups and organizations in the finalization and execution of the action strategies. As you do this, try to avoid acquiring a too personal stake in the work of this study group. Be prepared to respond positively to constructive criticisms and don't fall into the trap of defending your ideas just because they are yours. On the other hand, if you are truly convinced that certain fundamental principles contained in the action plan are in the best interests of the community as a whole, be prepared to defend them.

Also keep in mind that, in order to bring the community together around some concrete plan of action, three basic approaches are available: general agreement, persuasion, and contest. Elements of these approaches can be combined as the situation warrants.

1. General agreement

This approach to problem-solving means that most of the community has already agreed upon a specific need for development and upon the priorities for the projects involved. Ideally, your group has been successful in bringing the community to this point through new releases and the town hall meeting.

General agreement simply means that the members of a community have a common interest and common concern for a problem and that there is an agreed upon solution to the problem.

The role of the self-study group in this type of situation is not so much that of proposing change as it is helping the community develop a plan and beginning to work on the issues to be solved.

This is not to say that the community will not have a few differences of opinion. But if differences do exist, they are only minor and probably can be easily resolved.

If your community happens to be at this stage, you are a fortunate group. You do not have to worry about persuasion. But since it is not always possible to find such basic agreement among participants, it may be necessary to consider other approaches.

2. Persuasion

The persuasive approach can be used where there is a lack of agreement as to whether there is an issue or problem, or when the issue or problem is recognized but there is a general lack of agreement as to how it should be resolved. In this type of situation, the group involved in community betterment efforts attempts to persuade the community that an issue or problem exists, or to persuade the community that the group's ideas or solutions to the problem are good and workable.

Persuasion can be accomplished in several ways. Often it requires a combination of efforts in order to change community opinion:

- undertaking educational campaigns, public relations and informative programs, public endorsements, and similar "sales" techniques.
    Example: newspaper coverage of the community development need, public speeches by group members, flyers, advertisements.
- educating key individuals and groups for support or endorsement.
    Example: visit your mayor, alderman, state representative; explain your views to the news manager of your local TV or radio station; present your case to civic clubs and ask for their backing.
- offering various kinds of inducements or rewards, including recognition to key individuals and groups for their support.
    Example: make a contest of a cleanup campaign, with a prize for the most improved property; offer a reward to youth groups for their cooperation in cleaning up recreation areas.

The objective in using the persuasive approach is to gain general agreement about an issue or problem and the recommended solution to it.

3.   Contest

Sometimes differences about issues or courses of action cannot be resolved. Then you are left with the contest alternative.

The role of those who support the findings and recommendations of the study group in this situation becomes that of a contestant. They pursue community-wide goals in opposition to some other members of the community.

The issue might be resolved in several different ways including:

- confrontation and contest within established procedures, as through the courts or through legislative action,
- attempts to change the distribution of power within the community that controls the decision on the issue, as through legal demonstrations, sit-ins, or strikes.

Regardless of which approach is chosen, it is important to have answers to as many questions as possible before you make your approach for support. Think of all the questions the public might ask and then obtain the answers so you can be as informed and responsive as possible.

Research the answers and then set up your meetings or begin contacting individuals to gain support. Making the facts available to the public is an important part of community development. Although the method of providing this information to the public will vary from community to community and from project to project, there are certain principles of sound public communication that should be followed:

1.   Public communication must be coordinated with the fact-finding effort. No discussion meetings, news reports, or other public communication activities should begin until the facts are available.
2.   Citizens organizations—civic clubs, school and church groups, business and farm groups, and similar organizations—should be used to reach large numbers of people easily.
3.   The news media, which influence public opinion, should be recognized as a useful resource in a public communications campaign.
4.   Public discussion groups should be used as a means of communication because such discussions can reach the individuals within the group and not just the group itself.

E. A plan of action

Once some consensus has been achieved on the projects to be undertaken and the strategies to be used, all that remains is to begin work and coordinate the activities. Be certain that, as part of the plan of action, there are not only tasks to perform (these can be stated as goals), but also a timetable for completion. Worksheets to help keep planning and execution up to date follow.

It is a good idea to encourage those responsible for a project task to have action teams of two or three persons. Each action team must have a clear, concise assignment and be able to carry it out.

Very seldom does a plan go forward just as originally designed and thought out. Often the plan must be adjusted as various steps are completed. Someone must keep close tabs on the action and modify the plan from time to time.

You should also maintain a central control and reporting system. This is important because certain teams may not or cannot carry through on their assignments. New problems needing action teams may surface as the project moves along. Therefore, a central control and reporting team must direct efforts toward the goal.

Many community projects decided upon with enthusiasm are never completed. People in groups interested in carrying out the decision fail to understand the process or the procedures critical to the success of the project. Can you think of projects started in your community that were never completed? If so can you list the reasons why the project was never completed? How can such problems be avoided in this case?

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Researchers who have studied these "failures" and successes point out that community improvements are made in and by the community. After all, community resources of time, energy, materials, and money are involved and the community will only support those projects that it favors, thoroughly understands, and defines as good for the community. After the action begins, people should say that it's "our project." And when it's finished, they should say "we did it."

TASK ASSIGNMENT SHEET

TASK	ACTION TEAM	ASSIGNMENT	TIME TO BE COMPLETED

TASK ASSIGNMENT SHEET

TASK	ACTION TEAM	ASSIGNMENT	TIME TO BE COMPLETED

TASK ASSIGNMENT SHEET

TASK	ACTION TEAM	ASSIGNMENT	TIME TO BE COMPLETED

F. Techniques of evaluation

All that remains is to carry the agreed upon projects through to completion and then evaluate the results. In evaluating the results, communities should avoid jumping to conclusions and should try to make several observations to determine the attitudes of the community. Sometimes, rather than examining the results objectively, individuals and groups see what they hope to find.

Several evaluation techniques can be used. Here are three that have been found successful in other community betterment projects:

1. Notes and worksheets

   The most readily available source of information is from the participants in the community betterment process. By the end of the process, however, this may be the most biased source of information. This would be particularly true if the participants had, in their opinion, experienced a smashing success or a dismal failure. Keeping good notes and saving all worksheets will help you to remain objective during the evaluation process.

2. Outside observations

   A second useful technique is to ask members of the community (such as a newspaper editor or an outstanding community leader) to give you the benefit of their observations and thoughts about the conduct and results of the community betterment project.

3. Conduct a poll

   A third technique (usually useful for determining views on whether or not the efforts of the group were beneficial) is to poll several persons in the community. Regardless of which technique is chosen, there is one basic question to be answered by the evaluation: Is the community any better off?

   All community betterment projects should be for the purpose of making the community a better place in which to live. Consider the effect of the project not in terms of bricks and mortar but in terms of how it helped to bring about a better way of life.

   In answering the question of whether the community is any better off, consider the following points:

   Ourselves -- Did you and your group grow as individuals? Did you gain an awareness of community problems and the dynamic forces at work to help the community solve its problems? Did you and your group develop an understanding of how to solve community problems and how to look for problem-solving resources?

The group as a working unit -- Did everyone carry his share of the work? Did each person learn to lead, to follow, to pull side by side? Did the group learn to work with other groups, both those supporting and those opposing its plans?

The community improvement process -- Did you take each step in turn? Did you skip steps and have to come back or find other ways to overcome the problem? Do you better understand what communities are and how they operate?

The community -- Is it a better place in which to live because of your actions? Are people more cooperative, more concerned, more involved because of the actions you and your group initiated?

If the people of your community have developed a desire to involve themselves in the affairs of community development, it is fair to say that your efforts have been successful.

G. Evaluate for future results

We often think of evaluation only as a looking back experience. But this should not be the case. It is impossible to complete a community improvement project and not in the process acquire a storehouse of knowledge about the community and its future ability to solve problems. The question is, what is to become of this valuable information? What will this study group do with it? What will you, as a member of this group, do? How will you use your new knowledge of the community improvement process?

At the very least, the members owe it to themselves and to others to share the unfinished, unsolved things they would like to see improved in their communities.

If this group or any other group decides to forge ahead on a new series of projects, they have but to turn to page 1 and begin again. The second time around is always more relaxing and more enjoyable, but it is just as exciting.

Session is adjourned.

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SECTION NINE

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

A. Procedures

    Chairperson calls meeting to order. Recorder reads last week's
notes. Notes are discussed briefly. The group chairperson may wish to
lead this meeting. Recorder takes notes as usual.

B. The future

    The future of Minnesota is partly in our hands and partly subject
to conditions over which we have little or no control. World and
national economic trends that affect Minnesota's economy are largely
beyond our control. Demands for our exports are subject to market
conditions far beyond our borders.

    Most farmers must sell their produce at prices set by others. And
they have little to say about what prices they will pay for the farm
implements they buy. The price of many things we buy is largely a
matter of take it or leave it.

    On the other hand, many things that determine our future are
somewhat under our control, or at least the extent to which things
impact on our lives can be controlled. The weather is a good example.
Minnesotans have always lived under the threat of drought, hail storms,
blizzards, and flooding. But if we recognize the fact that drought and
other extreme weather conditions are part of the normal cycle of
Minnesota weather, we can plan for it, adjust our work and way of life
to it, and thus keep the situation in hand even if drought does come.

    If we recognize the fact that the price of gasoline or television
sets may go up or down without much reference to our wishes, we can
plan our activities in such a way that such fluctuations do not control
our lives so much as they otherwise would. By recognizing our
limitations we can in measure be free of them. But not entirely. This
does not mean that acquiescence is always a virtue. In many cases
resistance to these limitations, especially if they are manmade, is the
best line of action. We can spend the balance of this session on this
very theme.

Discussion

1. List other examples of conditions that affect Minnesota and
   Minnesotans but over which we have had little control
   historically (consider export/import policies, market
   conditions, government regulations and policies, etc.)

2. Which of these conditions are now more amenable to modification and change?

3. How might each modification and change be accomplished?

C. Planning ahead

Most modern people don't want just a haphazard future; they want some measure of control over it. Individuals may achieve this end by working, saving, budgeting, and planning ahead. Group planning does much to make possible those things that as individuals we cannot hope to control. Group planning is really not appreciably different from individual planning. It means that people who have the same problem get together, identify that problem, examine its causes, consider various methods for its solution, work together for its solution, and periodically survey the results with an eye toward improvements. Planning, either by the group or by the individual, is simply problem-solving. As someone put it, it is organized foresight plus collective hindsight.

Discussion

1. How do people in this community feel about planning?

2. Do they have an adequate understanding about what collective planning might do to/for them? Do they have a realistic notion of what planning processes entail?

3. How can our study come to a better understanding about getting this kind of process going and improving it as it goes?

4. In what respect has our group already been engaged in this sort of process? What we are really getting at here is that in many respects the future rests with us, individually and collectively, and if we act accordingly, we could effect change, make the future different, win a measure of control over it. The key to change and control rests in our recognition of our responsibilities as citizens.

D. Other alternatives

It would be a mistake to close this discussion without reminding ourselves that Minnesotans must not look for a planned future along only one road. If we think of planning as problem-solving, then we must be prepared to use methods that the problem may require. The planning must follow the dictates of the problem. Some problems are purely local in scope, resources, methods; some are areawide; some encompass the entire state; and some include the region or a group of states. Our planning methods must not be insulated from the requirements of the problem or the resources for dealing with it.

If state machinery is too limited either in range or in resources to deal with a set of problems, then we must seek the advice and aid of a group of states. And if our own community has problems that transcend its own boundaries, we must levy upon the resources of the area or the state. No problem is insoluble if it is stated correctly. Many problems are unsolved because, even though correctly defined, they are blocked by shortsighted and often selfish interests or motives. All too often our planning measures are not big enough for our problems. Yet they must not become too big for them. Planning for Minnesota's future must be a grassroots partnership formed by Minnesotans.

E. Accomplishments

It will become evident as we look back over this study guide that we have been concerned with the issues of how to enrich and stabilize community life. We don't claim to have found all the answers, but we have at least tried to recognize the problem and to suggest some of the ways whereby a better state of affairs can be brought about.

In our suggestions we called for a greater degree of economic and political decentralization, greater involvement by more people in the decision-making process of their community, economic diversification, an integration of the productive and enjoyment aspects of community life, and the need for an organic and on-going planning apparatus within the community.

Discussion

1. **Are these and other suggestions made through this study process relevant to our needs?**

2. **How might they help us to realize future community goals?**

3. Which others might also be appropriate?

4. List your suggestions as to the key parts of the community development process.

F. Optimism

    During this study process we have made certain statements and assumptions about neighborhood and small town life. Although mindful of the many problems on the contemporary scene, we have tried to project an optimistic perspective about the future viability of community life. We think certain trends justify this outlook.

    Another basic assumption we made was that our communities will continue to inspire our democratic values, as they always have, and that these democratic institutions are best preserved and given expression in the nation's neighborhoods and small towns.

    Also implicit in all these weeks of discussions has been the belief that the good life is a whole life in which all the normal functions of living--the biological, the economic, the social, the intellectual, the appreciative and spiritual--are coordinated with each other and in which all have opportunity for expression. We have assumed further that human beings, as organic creatures with diversified functions and interests, are of more value than property or class or institutional organizations such as the state, the corporation, and so on. We believe that the enrichment of human life in this sense is the most important of all things. And this means, of course, not merely the life of one person or another, but an equal opportunity, so far as possible, for all.

Discussion

1. Perhaps not all of us are in agreement with the above statements and assumptions. If not, now is the time to make clear how and why. Perhaps these statements and assumptions may seem to conflict with the religious point of view, or with freedom of enterprise, or with economic efficiency, or with party loyalty, or with other valued things. We should not hesitate to question them.

G. Working together

The message we have tried to convey through these weeks together is this: If you think your community is important and that the values your community represents ought to be preserved, YOU ARE NOT ALONE. Many are interested and in time the efforts you put forth will rekindle the fires of civic responsibility. Help build a balanced community where everyone's point of view is taken into account, where the weak spots are firmed up and the strengths of the community are utilized. The movement has started. Tap into it. Involve your neighbors. Get something started in your community and keep it moving forward.

H. Commencement

The group should spend the remainder of this session compiling all of its minutes, reports, and findings into a final report. This report may be presented to the city or other community groups. It may also be used as part of the Minnesota Community Improvement Project competition.

At this point the community self-study group formally disbands. Congratulate one another on individual contributions, group achievements, and the improvements in community life that you have helped to bring about.

You have now completed the first step in forging the future of your community. Congratulations on a job well done!

Session is adjourned.

APPENDIX A

HOW TO HAVE A GOOD DISCUSSION

People who participate in group discussions can often benefit from a few suggestions that help to modify some behavior and encourage helpful contributions from everyone in the group. These points may be helpful to you:

1. Everyone in the group is important.

2. The group needs to hear and discuss different points of view. When you have an idea, speak up. Your remarks will stimulate others to share their ideas, too.

3. It is okay to disagree. Not everyone will be in complete agreement on every issue, and that's okay. You can disagree with someone on an issue and still respect that individual as a person.

4. Help your group leader. When the discussion is fuzzy, you can help keep the discussion on track by restating the issue as you understand it.

5. Listen thoughtfully to others. The hardest part of any discussion is to concentrate on what is being said and not to jump ahead to what you are going to say next. What other people have to say is important. Put your effort into listening carefully and save your judgments until after the group discussion is over.

6. Address your remarks to everyone. If you speak to only one person at a time, some people may feel left out. Always keep the discussion open to the entire group.

7. Keep your comments brief. One minute is usually enough time to share your thoughts with the group. If you find yourself talking nonstop for more than two minutes, you are probably talking too much.

8. If you don't understand what is being discussed, say so. It's okay to ask for clarification, elaboration, information, or re-statement. If you don't understand what's going on, chances are that some of the other people don't understand either. Take the time to help them and yourself understand the issues.

9. Practice these techniques. The more you use them and the more informal and friendly the group, the better the discussion. You may from time to time want to refer back to the first eight points.

1

A GUIDE FOR SESSION LEADERS

1. **Before the meeting**

   A. Check with resource people. Make sure they know what is expected. Are handouts ready?

   B. Check to make sure arrangements are in order--light, heat, ventilation, general comfort, etc.

   C. Welcome people when they arrive.

2. **At the meeting**

   A. Start on time.

   B. See that folks know each other--self-introduction with one short extra bit of information (size of family, place of work, hobbies, etc.) can help in making people more comfortable.

   C. Try to call on people by first name.

   D. Indicate the subject, agenda, and time limit for this session.

   E. Explain how the subject will be handled and indicate when any breaks will occur and when the session will end.

   F. Follow the session guide.

   G. Remember that any questions that arise can always be turned back to the entire group to see how they would like it handled.

   H. Summarize the session.

   I. Give information on the next session.

   J. Adjourn on time.

   K. Thank the people for participating.

COMMUNITY GUIDE
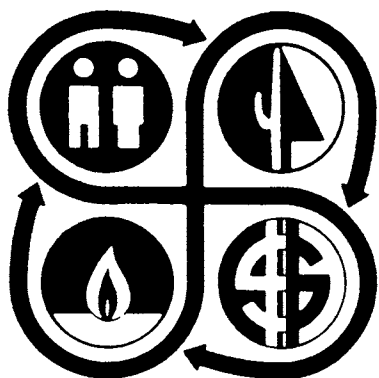
How to Motivate People in Groups:

DOUGLAS DUNN
Community Development Specialist

MOTIVATION SERIES

CLEARLY DEFINE AND COMMUNICATE YOUR GOALS

KEY 3

How do you motivate a group? How do you get commitment and follow-through? This is the fourth in a series of ten Community Guides on how to increase participation/motivation within volunteer groups. Specific techniques are provided to aid the reader in developing skills which will increase his or her effectiveness in groups.

You motivate people by selling ideas, programs and results—not membership. People must perceive a reason for becoming involved. A clear statement of your group goals and objectives provides the basis on which people can judge the merits of your group and its proposed activities relative to their own needs and interests. Casey Stengal once said, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll wind up somewhere else." Many organizations are just like that. They lack a clear sense of group purpose. As a result, they wander in their efforts, with limited accomplishment. On the other hand, a group with a set of goals and objectives which are clearly understood and mutually accepted by its membership has an achieving force that is almost irresistable. At your next meeting, ask each person present to indicate on a card what he or she sees as the goals or purpose of the group. Compare the responses. Is the group united or fragmented in its sense of direction? Do they quote vague generalities or are they specific in what they wish to accomplish? Are they frank and honest, or do they quote vague ideals?

In developing goals or an annual work program, keep the following in mind:

• A GROUP EXISTS *ONLY* TO SATISFY THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF ITS MEMBERS. These individual needs and concerns are converted into group priorities through the GROUP PROCESS of setting goals. The resulting program of work should clearly indicate to members how and when their individual interests will be met, and what will be expected of them in return.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
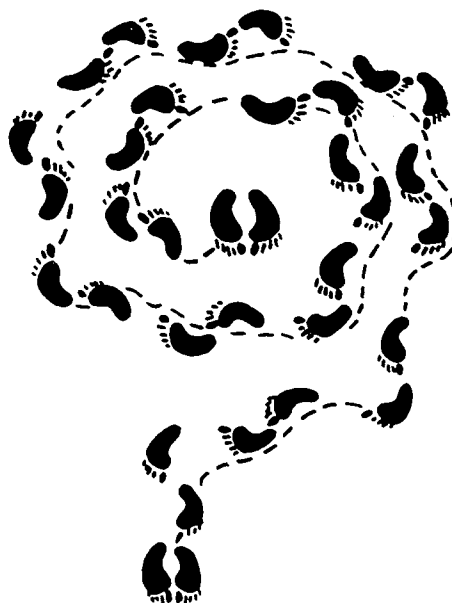
- PEOPLE ARE NOT AS WILLING TO DO THE LEGWORK IF THEY ARE NOT ALSO INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING. Research shows that people are more committed to decisions they have helped make themselves. Members work hardest for those group goals they have set for themelves. Goals which have been imposed on the group by its leadership or some outside influence are less actively supported. Group goals are meaningful only when developed and "owned" by the members themselves.

PEOPLE ARE NOT AS WILLING TO DO THE LEG WORK...

- CLEARLY DEFINE THE JOB TO BE DONE AND WHEN IT WILL BE FINISHED. Few people will volunteer for an indefinite task for an indefinite period of time. "Serving on the Beautification Committee is almost a life-time sentence," commented one community volunteer. "No wonder nobody wants to serve." People are happiest when working toward objectives that make sense to them and are within their reach.

- HOW? There is no single best way to set goals. It can involve simply asking all members to write on a card what they would like to see the group accomplish during the coming year, and then comparing the responses. Or a more sophisticated approach can be used, such as the "nominal group process" (explained in Extension bulletin Q55). You will be amazed how much you'll accomplish in a short period of time with the "nominal group process." Or you might consider a membership survey or a goal setting forum. Use a blackboard or easel to list the goals as they are developed. Extension Community Development Specialists can help you develop a planning/goal setting process tailored to your group's needs and circumstances; make use of them.

- SET THE STAGE. Let everyone know beforehand what to expect from your goal setting exercise. Clearly indicate to them what will be done, how it will be done, and why it is being done. Allow participants time to prepare, to clarify in their own minds what they would like to see the group accomplish. DON'T BRING THEM IN COLD.

- KEEP YOUR GOALS SIMPLE AND SPECIFIC. Make them meaningful to the group. BE REALISTIC. Your work program should spell out well-defined tasks you can expect to accomplish during the coming year. START WHERE YOU ARE. The work program should spell out how you expect to get from where you are now to where you would like to be.

- SET PRIORITIES. Goal setting is meaningless unless priorities are set. By setting priorities, a group concentrates its limited time and resources on those actions which are most important to it. Without priorities, a group tends to undertake too much. Members tend to go in many different directions rather than pulling together, and frustration soon results. End your goal setting session by taking a vote. Which goal should be the first priority? Which should be second? Etc. Then set the group's annual budget to reflect these priorities.

- Once you have adopted them, KEEP YOUR GOALS BEFORE THE GROUP. Provide each member with a copy of your work program. Then formally review the work program at least quarterly. Indicate what progress has been made, and what remains to be done. Keep your

goals continually before the group. If you don't the group will be easily distracted by other activities.

• EVALUATE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS. Give members the chance to evaluate the group and its accomplishments in an open, constructive manner. Don't leave evaluation to the grapevine. Evaluation can be an effective motivational tool if members are encouraged to be frank and honest in assessing group activities and their impact. If you feel members are not adequately supporting your group activities, find out why. Don't fall for the easy scapegoat of "they're apathetic."

• UPDATE YOUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AT LEAST ANNUALLY. When a group's objectives fail to keep up with the changing needs and interests of its members, they drop out or become spiritless and "apathetic."

If your group lacks enthusiasm, it most likely is due to either:

1. THE LACK OF A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING AMONG MEMBERS AS TO WHAT THE PURPOSE/GOALS OF THE GROUP ARE. In other words, you haven't done any planning or goal setting.

<u>OR</u>

2. THE GROUP'S GOALS ARE NOT SEEN AS PERSONALLY IMPORTANT TO MANY OF THE MEMBERS. In other words, the members weren't really involved in the planning and goal setting.

<u>OR</u>

3. MEMBERS FAIL TO SEE HOW MANY OF THE GROUP'S ACTIVITIES REALLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE AGREED UPON GOALS. In other words, your goals are not being followed. Groups often get so carried away with "activities" that they lose track of *WHY* they are doing them.

In conclusion, goal setting can bring new life to your club or organization. One club reports, "Our group was gradually losing membership. So we set aside a special meeting and asked all members to bring a sheet of paper on which they had written what they would like to accomplish through the group. We then spent that meeting discussing, in turn, what each had written. Some mutual interests evolved, and these were adopted as our group goals for the coming year. That exercise has resulted in a complete turn-around in our club. We've moved from the deadest group in town to one of the most active."

Goal setting should be an interesting, enjoyable and motivating experience. It should be an annual exercise the officers and members look forward to. If it's not, you're doing it wrong. If past attempts at goal setting have turned into academic, boring, time-consuming bull sessions, you need help. If goal setting does not save you time and money and get more accomplished within your group, then you are not doing it right. Get help. Make use of Extension's Community Development Specialists.

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PEOPLE   ENVIRONMENT   SERVICES   ECONOMY

CD78/4

APPENDIX D

SELECTED CONTACT PERSONS
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Community economic development: Gordon Rose, Extension Economist

Forestry: Melvin Baughman, Extension Specialist-Forestry & Program Leader-
    Renewable Resources

Minnesota Community Improvement Project: Lois Mann, Extension
    Specialist-Community and Natural Resource Development

Minnesota Community Improvement Project: Gordon Stobb, Area Extension
    Agent-Community and Natural Resource Development

Public policy issues: Carole Yoho, Extension Specialist-Public Policy

Rural sociology: Randy Cantrell, Extension Rural Sociologist

Small business development: Buddy Crewdson, Extension Economist-Business
    Development

Taxes: Arley Waldo, Extension Economist-Public Policy

Tourism: Lawrence Simonson, Extension Specialist-Tourist Services

Transportation: Jerry Fruin, Extension Specialist-Marketing/
    Transportation

Zoning: Bob Snyder, Extension Land Economist

These persons and other specialists can be contacted through your local
county extension office.

APPENDIX E

RESOURCES FOR BACKGROUND

References to various reading materials will be made during the course of this 12-week study process. It may prove advantageous to the group if each week's session leader also lists two or three relevant books or magazine articles that could add regional or local perspectives to the week's topic.

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Bly, Carol. _Letters from the Country._

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Hines, Fred K., David L. Brown, and John M. Zimmer. _Social and Economic Characteristics of the Population in Metro Counties, 1970._ Washington, D.C., March 1975

Johansen, Harley E., and Glen V. Fuguitt. _The Changing Rural Village in America: Demographic and Economic Trends Since 1950._ Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing Co., 1984

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Lanegran, David. _Urban Dynamics in Saint Paul: A Study of Neighborhood and Center City Interaction._ St. Paul: Old Town Restorations, 1977

Lotspeich, Margaret L., and John E. Lakemeyer. _How to Gather Data about Your Neighborhood._ Chicago: ASPO, 1978

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APPENDIX F

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Olsenius, Richard. Minnesota Travel Companion/A Unique Guide to the History Along Minnesota Highways: Bluestem Productions, Wayzata, MN 55391, 1982

Minnesota Guidebook to State Agency Services 1982-1983. edited by Robin PanLener: Office of the State Register, 408 St. Peter St., Suite 415, St. Paul, MN 55102

Minnesota Pocket Data Book, 1983-1984: Blue Sky Marketing, Inc., 2935 Humboldt Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN 55411

Minnesota Population Changes, 1970-1980. CURA Publication 82-7. Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, 311 Walter Library, 117 Pleasant St. SE, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, November 1982

These references are available at many libraries. Librarians often can suggest additional books and articles that would be of interest to the self-study committee. Historical societies are also excellent sources of information.

RESOURCES ABOUT COMMUNITY

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Gustafson, Neil C., and Mark E. Cowan. Population Mobility in the Upper Midwest: Trends, Prospects and Policies. Minneapolis, 1976

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APPENDIX H

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Population Estimates for Minnesota Counties. St. Paul, Minnesota: Office of State Demographer, State Planning Office, 1979

"U.S. Government Books Catalog." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office

RESOURCES FOR FUND RAISING

Catalog of Federal Domestic
Assistance
    Superintendent of Documents
    U.S. Government Printing Office
    Washington, D.C. 20402

FAPRS
    Gordon Rose
    Agricultural Extension Service
    130 Classroom Office Building
    University of Minnesota
    St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

The Rich Get Richer and the Poor
Write Proposals
(Nancy Mitiguy, 1978)
    Cooperative Extension Service
    University of Massachusetts
    Amherst, Massachusetts 01003

U. S. Government Manual
    Superintendent of Documents
    U.S. Government Printing Office
    Washington, D.C. 20402

Guide to Minnesota Foundations and
Corporate Giving Programs
(Minnesota Council on Foundations)
    University of Minnesota Press
    Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414

The Grassroots Fundraising Book
(Joan Flanagan)
    Swallow Press
    P.O. Box 988
    Hicksville, West Virginia 18802

Foundation Grants Index
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    7th Avenue
    New York, New York 10019

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    7th Avenue
    New York, New York 10019

Register of Corporations,
Directors, and Executives
    Standard and Poor's
    345 Hudson Street
    New York, New York 10007

Who's Who in America
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    Chicago, Illinois 61611

County and City Data Book
    Superintendent of Documents
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MINNESOTA COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AGENCIES

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Federated Garden Clubs of Minnesota, Inc.
Goodwill Industries
Izaak Walton League
Landscape Architecture Program, University of Minnesota
League of Minnesota Cities
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Minnesota Community Education Association
Minnesota Chapter, American Society of Landscape Architects
Minnesota Federated Women's Clubs
Minnesota Office of Volunteer Services
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
The Minnesota Project
Minnesota Society of the American Institute of Architects
Office of Local Government, Minnesota State Planning Agency
School of Architecture, University of Minnesota
Sierra Club, North Star Chapter