

# ***“Vitalizing Communities”***

## ***Building on Assets and Mobilizing for Collective Action***

### ***Facilitator Guide***

**John C. Allen, Ph. D.  
Sam M. Cordes, Ph. D.  
Jeff G. Hart, M. Ed.**

**Illustrations arranged by Jill S. Walahoski**

**Created for  
The Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI)  
Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
April, 2004**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI) would like to acknowledge the people who contributed their time and expertise in the development of this document. The content and philosophy of this document and the *Community Guide* is credited to a combination of sources including: the document authors; staff professionals within the University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, including the Center for Rural Community Revitalization & Development, UNL Cooperative Extension, and Agricultural Economics; Don W. Macke and the Nebraska Rural Development Commission; and the work of John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight of the Asset-based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

A special thanks is extended to the following individuals who reviewed and provided suggestions for this Work In Progress: Sandy Hatter, Denny Berens, Connie Hancock, Anita Hall, Dewey Teel and Don Macke.

Special acknowledgment is given to John L. McKnight for his valued contributions and personal consultations. Thank you John for taking the time to talk with us!

## FUNDING OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document and related materials are supported with funds from the UNL Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI), UNL Cooperative Extension, and UNL Agricultural Economics. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the document funding sources.

## PERMISSION TO REPRINT ADDITIONAL COPIES

If appropriately credited, material in this document may be reproduced without permission. Additional copies of this guide may be obtained (while available) from:

Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI)  
58 Filley Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Lincoln, NE 68583-0947  
TEL: 402-472-1772  
Toll Free: 800-328-2851  
FAX: 402-472-0688  
Web Site: <<http://cari.unl.edu/facilitatorguide.pdf>>



Additional information can also be found at the “Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI)” web site listed above.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. Introduction	2
A. Background	2
B. Purpose	2
II. Facilitator/Trainer Guidelines	3
A. Role of the Facilitator/Trainer	3
B. Community Sessions: Delivery and Presentation	3
C. Sequence and Array: Presentation and Order Suggestions	4
III. Community Sessions: Considerations and Suggested Agendas	5
A. Introductions and Ice-breakers	5
B. Session Agendas	5
C. Session Evaluations	10
D. Key Points for Consideration and/or Discussion	10
IV. Handout and Presentation Materials	13
• Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI)	14
• Key Document Terms	15
• Traditional and Alternative Paths	16
• Process Summary Illustration - Part 1	17
• Process Summary Illustration - Part 2	18
• Community Questions Checklist	18
• Local “Table” of People	20
• Asset Inventories	21
• Building Relationships	22
• Community Assets Map	23
• Community Business Linkage Map	24
• Community Economic Linkage Map	25
• Shared Vision and Commitment to Action	26
• Mobilizing the Community	27
• Timeline Options for the Approach	28
• Community Celebration	29

# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. Background

The Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI) is thrilled that you are willing to help and wants to assist you in the vitalization of communities. CARI works with communities, building on local community assets, to help meet their objectives, whether they emphasize growth, sustainable development or some other aspect of community life. CARI believes that communities can be vitalized. CARI has been in existence since 2000 and continues to expand in its effort to assist rural communities.

## B. Purpose

This *Facilitator/Training Guide* serves as a supplement to the *Community Guide*. Neither guide is meant to be a substitute for the other. The *Community Guide* is to be used by community individuals, community associations, community institutions, and other community groups interested in vitalizing their community, building on community assets, and mobilizing the community to move forward, making sustainable change for a successful community, now and in the future.

This *Facilitator/Training Guide* provides training and guidance for those who are involved in facilitating and/or leading community sessions through the approach presented in the *Community Guide*. It is therefore imperative that you, as a facilitator and/or leader, know and understand all that is presented in the *Community Guide*.

As with any “guide”, this document provides information and guidance in an organized, structured and systematic way. We make no apologies for that, but we also worry that it may unintentionally stifle creativity and innovation. Additionally, each community is unique - with its own unique history, culture and local flavor. Communities that use this guide should view it as a launching pad, but after the launch a local guidance system takes over. Some communities may have good reason to skip certain steps or to reorder the sequence of steps in this guide. This type of flexibility is not only possible, it is expected!

Section II in this guide provides information necessary for facilitating community groups.

Section III provides supplemental information and suggestions related to facilitating community sessions. It provides suggestions for session agendas, depending on the amount of time has committed to the process.

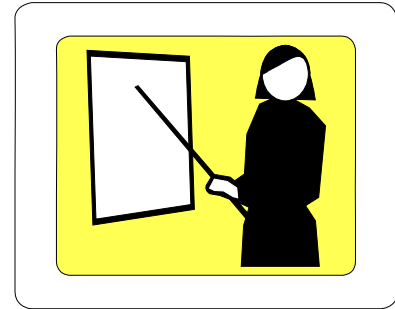
Section IV is a series of single pages summarize the components of the approach as presented in the *Community Guide*. These pages may be used by yourself as a summary of the approach; they can be used as handouts for community individuals and groups during a session; or they can be used as visual aids during community presentation sessions. You will find these pages follow the sequential order as presented in the *Community Guide*.

**You must become knowledgeable of the content included the *Community Guide* and this *Facilitator/Training Guide*.** Knowing these guides will help you build relationships with people while assisting them in revitalizing their communities, building on assets, and mobilizing them for collective action.

## II. FACILITATOR/TRAINER GUIDELINES

### A. Role of the Facilitator

According to Webster's Dictionary (1989), "to facilitate" means "to make easier". A facilitator will be able to make community sessions easier by offering suggestions and providing guidance in understanding the approach as presented in the *Community Guide*. A good facilitator can mediate community by occupying a middle position. It is important to consider all opinions and points of view at the community level. If community members feel they are being heard, they will most often continue to be involved.



The following is a list of characteristics which may produce positive and productive results while facilitating community sessions:

- **Accepts all individuals**, without judgment;
- **Listens** for interesting points of view and allows those views to be discussed;
- **Presents ideas** and opinions as just that, opinions;
- **Listens carefully**, trying not to interrupt;
- **Allows everyone** to express themselves and communicate with each other;
- **Monitors participation** so that individuals neither monopolize conversation nor sit back and say nothing;
- **Emphasizes** that each community can be their own best resource, allowing all community members to participate and communicate.

### B. Community Sessions: Delivery and Presentation

Remember that a facilitator should "facilitate." Don't teach, instruct or lecture. In the beginning, the facilitator may present ideas and offer suggestions. As community members begin to communicate and interact, the role of the facilitator in the planning session becomes secondary. **The facilitator should then assume a role of monitoring the activities of the group and should intervene only when necessary to keep the group on task or when asked to provide suggestions.**

## Delivery and Presentation Considerations

- Designate another individual to **record** the discussion and activities which take place during the planning session;
- Whenever possible, use **visual aids** such as handouts, transparencies, flip charts, dry erase boards, computer displays, and/or appropriate short films or videos (consider the print size for audience viewing);
- Post or handout a proposed **agenda** for each session; agendas usually change as the session progresses, but they provide a beginning focus and point of departure;
- **Avoid "telling"** community groups what can be done; **ask** them what can be done and encourage them to make decisions;
- Always present materials and options as a matter of **choice**; express to community members they **don't "have to" do anything**, it's their choice to **do what they "want to" do**.

## C. Sequence and Array: Presentation Order Suggestions

The approach components for identifying and mobilizing community assets may be presented in a suggested sequence. Keep in mind these components may be viewed in an array, meaning that a community may begin to develop or establish some components before others. Some components may have been addressed and/or completed during a “previous community effort” (or process.) The important point to remember is that all components need to be addressed and completed to have a complete, inclusive process. Having a completed process, strategy or plan does not commit to doing things in a given order. As a facilitator, you can make suggestions to help keep the community on track, however, you must also allow for flexibility in making decisions. Just as every community is different, each community will most likely develop its own sequence and/or array for community vitalization.

Two sample “timeline options” are outlined in Section IV of this guide.

### **III. COMMUNITY SESSIONS: CONSIDERATIONS & SUGGESTED AGENDAS**

#### **A. Introductions and Ice-Breakers**

It is important to begin with introductions. Community members present at a community session may not know each other. Remember the “strangers in the community?” Depending on the time available and the number of people present, those present could address any of the following:

- 1) Who are you? (Name, family, geographic home, heritage, ethnicity, etc.)
- 2) Who do you represent? (Self, family, community group, organization, etc.)
- 3) Tell something about yourself that no one else in the room knows.
- 4) Why are you here?
- 5) What are your expected outcomes from this session?

As these introductions and ice-breakers take place, it would be helpful to document some of the information on a flip chart, marker board or other visual aid visible to the audience. Recording such information gives the audience a visual picture of what is said, and it sets a precedent for the recording information. Remember some people are auditory learners (listeners), while other people are more visual learners (learn by visualizing). Remember both types of learners during your presentations.

#### **B. Session Agendas**

The following four pages provide sample agendas for community sessions. Each community is unique and may progress at a different rate with any one approach or process. These agendas are only suggestions. Agenda #1 is suggested for an "Introduction and Orientation session." This may be used when the approach is introduced to a community, or it may be used when presenting the approach to a few individuals or a small of community representatives.

Agenda #2 is suggested for an "initial planning session." This session should be at least three hours in length to achieve adequate discussion, gain an understanding of the approach, and begin action towards implementation. This session may be five or six hours if the community group identifies their own strategies for asset identification and the development of asset inventories.

Agenda #3 assumes that a local “Table” of people is already in place and some inventorying has begun. This session should take most of one day. The Table (or local community group) should identify actions that have a timeline. Leadership for each action/task must be identified and the approach for vitalizing the community can continue.

**"Vitalizing Communities"**  
**INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION SESSION**  
Agenda #1 (1-2 hours)

- I. Welcome and Introductions (5-10 min.)
  - A. Purpose
  - B. Expected Outcomes
  
- II. Introduction of Vitalizing Communities (5-10 min.)
  - A. Center for Rural Community Revitalization & Development Role
  - B. Community Questions: Assurance, Readiness, & Commitment
  
- III. Process Overview (5-15 min.)
  - A. Process Components
    - 1. Getting Started: A Local "Table" of People
    - 2. Community Asset Identification and Inventories
    - 3. Community Vision & Mobilization: A Plan of Action
  
- IV. Need for a Process: Is This Worth It? (15-30 min.)
  - A. Does our community have/need an inventory of assets?
  - B. Are previous efforts working?
  - C. Do previous efforts need to be updated or revised?
  
- V. Pre-Planning - Introduction of the Process (20-40 min.)
  - A. Getting Started: A Local "Table" of People
    - 1. Purpose - Building relationships
    - 2. Who needs to be involved?
    - 3. Who will be involved?
  - B. Community Asset Identification and Inventories
    - 1. Identify the community's geographic boundaries
    - 2. Identify Individuals, Associations, Institutions and Local Businesses and Industries
    - 3. Develop a method/instrument for collecting asset information
    - 4. Compile information into asset inventories
  - C. Community Vision & Mobilization: A Plan of Action
    - 1. Community Vision and Commitment
    - 2. Community Involvement and Mobilization
    - 3. Timeline and Evaluation Activities
  
- VI. Review of Session Accomplishments (5 min.)
  
- VII. What Happens Next? (5-10 min.)
  - A. Agenda? - Next immediate action(s)
  - B. Who? - Commitment to the process
  - C. When? - Timeline

"Vitalizing Communities"  
**INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION SESSION**  
Agenda #1, for Facilitators (1-2 hours)

- I. Welcome and Introductions (5-10 min.)
  - A. Purpose (introductions, person who called meeting give brief statement)
  - B. Expected Outcomes (ask each individual what they expect, could be part of their introduction)
  
- II. Introduction of Vitalizing Communities (5-10 min.) (identify a recorder for the group, someone to take complete and accurate notes, flip chart work and recorder notes will be compiled to summarize the session's activities)
  - A. Center for Rural Community Revitalization & Development Role (Community Guide, pg 1)
  - B. Community Questions: Assurance, Readiness, & Commitment (Community Guide, pp 1-2. Only present these questions; do not answer them at this time.)
  
- III. Planning Approach Overview (5-15 min.)
  - A. Approach Components (refer to the approach summary, briefly explain all components of the process)
    1. Getting Started: A Local "Table" of People
    2. Community Asset Identification and Inventories
    3. Community Vision & Mobilization: A Plan of Action
  
- IV. Need For A Process: Is This Worth It? (15-30 min.) (this should be a group effort, record everything on a flip chart using colored markers to identify categories of discussion, number each page for future reference, encourage discussion and input from all, keep it moving, the idea is to just get ideas on paper, no debates, that will come later)
  - A. Does our community have/need an inventory of assets?
  - B. Are previous efforts working?
  - C. Do previous efforts need to be updated or revised?

(At this point, it is important to revisit the "Community Questions." Survey the group and record their overall responses. If the community shows genuine interest, proceed with "Pre-Planning" as follows.)
  
- V. Pre-Planning (20-40 min.) (most often you will only be doing part A below during a community introduction session; a process timetable of how and when to proceed is an important task to complete before this session ends.)
  - A. Getting Started: A Local "Table" of People
    1. Purpose (possible discussion of Community Vision)
    2. Who needs to be involved?
    3. Who will be involved? (Do not adjourn the session until some decisions are made here. Proceed with B. and C. below as time allows.)
  - B. Community Asset Identification and Inventories
    1. Identify the community's geographic boundaries
    2. Discuss identification of individuals, associations, institutions and local businesses & industries
    3. Discuss a method/instrument for collecting asset information
    4. Discuss how information will be compiled into asset inventories
  - C. Community Vision & Mobilization: A Plan of Action
    1. Community Vision and Commitment
    2. Community Involvement and Mobilization
    3. Timeline and Evaluation Activities
  
- VI. Review of Session Accomplishments (5 min.)
  
- VII. What Happens Next? (5-10 min.) (Don't let them leave without putting the following in writing!)
  - A. Agenda? - Next immediate action(s)
  - B. Who? - Commitment to the process
  - C. When? - Timeline

**"Vitalizing Communities"**  
**INITIAL PLANNING SESSION**  
Agenda #2 (3-4 hours)

- I. Introduction: Individual Introductions/Expectations (20-30 min.)
  
- II. Vitalizing Communities: Approach Overview (15-20 min.)
  - A. Getting Started: An Organized Local “Table” of People
  - B. Community Asset Identification and Inventories
  - C. Community Vision & Mobilization: A Plan of Action
  
- BREAK (Optional)* (5-10 min.)
  
- III. Community Questions: General Group Discussion (30-45 min.)
  - A. Has our community identified its assets? Is there a need to do so?
  - B. Do current/past efforts need revision/updating/coordination?
  - C. Does an organized local “table” of people currently exist?
  - D. Who is involved? Who needs to be involved? Who will be involved?
  - E. Where do we go from here? How do we begin/continue?
  
- BREAK* (10-15 min.)
  
- IV. WORKING LUNCH: Discussion Groups (30 min.)  
Discuss: Local Table of People, Asset Identification and  
Community Vision (refer to agenda item V below)
  
- V. Table, Asset & Vision Identification: Group Activity (30-45 min.)
  - A. Identify 5 characteristics of your Local “Table” of People;  
Which individuals will be a part of your local Table?
  - B. Discuss the assets of your community:
    - 1. List at least 5 characteristics which describe your community;
    - 2. List at least 5 positive individual assets within your group.
    - 3. List at least 5 associations in your community.
    - 4. List at least 5 institutions in your community.
    - 5. List at least 5 businesses in your community.
    - 6. List at least 5 natural or physical resources in your community.
  - C. Draft a Community Vision; include the name of your Local “Table” of  
People.
  
- BREAK (Optional)* (10 min.)
  
- VI. Group Reports, Each group give a 5 min. summary (15-30 min.)
  
- VII. What Happens Next? (10-15 min.)
  - A. What? - Immediate and extended actions
  - B. Who? - Table representative and other individuals
  - C. When? - Date, time and place

"Vitalizing Communities"  
**ACTION SOLUTION PLANNING SESSION**  
Agenda #3 (6 hours)

- I. Introduction: Individual Introductions and Expectations (20 min.)
- II. Update and Review (40 min.)
  - A. Community Efforts - update of previous efforts as assets
  - B. Local "Table" of People - identify membership and organization
  - C. Asset Inventories and Mapping - review expected results
- BREAK* (15 min.)
- III. Community Asset Identification and Inventories (Large Group Discussion) (60 min.)
  - A. Identify Community - geographics and demographics
  - B. Identify Community Assets:
    - 1. Individuals
    - 2. Associations
    - 3. Institutions
    - 4. Businesses
- WORKING LUNCH: Small Groups Identify Natural and Physical Space Resources* (45 min.)
- BREAK* (15 min.)
- IV. Community Vision, Asset Mapping & Mobilization: A Plan of Action (small groups) (90 min.)
  - A. Identify Community Vision and Commitment
  - B. Map Individual, Association and Institution Assets
  - C. Map Business Assets and Community Economic Flow
  - D. Identify Areas to Maintain and Opportunities for Growth
  - E. Identify a Plan of Action to Mobilize the Community
  - F. Identify how you will Evaluate your actions and activities
- BREAK* (15 min.)
- V. Celebrate Your Accomplishments: Groups Report (5 min. each) (30 min.)
- VI. What Happens Next? (30 min.)
  - A. What? - Immediate and extended actions
  - B. Who? - Table representatives and other individuals
  - C. When? - Date, time and place

Use these outlines as a framework for the community vitalization approach. The approach components found in the Community Guide should be referred to as the planning process begins and continues. Flexibility is important. Keep in mind long range planning in order to complete the comprehensive approach; but, also allow for short range immediate action planning so that the community group can have an early success.

### **C. Session Evaluations**

It is important to receive input and feedback concerning the community sessions. If the approach is for communities, facilitators need to hear from community participants to determine if the approach is acceptable and understandable. A participant survey/evaluation which includes constructive criticism provides excellent feedback for the facilitator. The following are recommended as questions to be included in a participant evaluation.

1. As a result of this session, do you now feel you have a better understanding of what needs to be done to vitalize your community?
2. Did the session keep your attention: all the time, most of the time, occasionally, or not at all?
3. What did you find most helpful about this session?
4. What did you find least helpful about this session?
5. Was the facilitator's presentation clear and easy to understand?
6. Comments and constructive criticism concerning the approach components.
5. Comments and constructive criticism concerning the facilitator's presentation.

More questions may be added, however, keep in mind the amount of time and thought it may take to complete such an evaluation after sitting through a community session. Be sure to keep these evaluations and compile the information for future reference.

### **D. Key Points for Consideration and/or Discussion**

There are some key points which may need to be discussed or at least considered as the community moves through this process/approach. Discussions may take place at community meetings, “table” meetings, or other appropriate times and places. Following are key points identified for the component areas. (REMEMBER: It is your job, as a facilitator, to decide if and when these key points need to be addressed.)

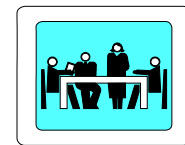
## **Community Questions**

- Community questions should require honest answers from community members.
- Community answers indicate community assurance, readiness and commitment.
- Community questions and answers can set the direction for solution strategies.



## **“Table” of People**

- The Table should have 7-30 diverse, action oriented community residents, who provide leadership for community work.
- The Table should promote “relationships” between strangers, finders & developers.
- The Table should encourage community bonding and connectedness, establishing a friendly alliance built on community strengths and assets.



## **Asset Identification**

- Identifying community assets is about discovering “community treasures” and displaying community character.
- Community assets can be identified by reviewing community resource lists, documents and publications.
- Asset identification strategies should identify community-wide capacity areas.



## **Economic Linkages and Business Asset Identification**

- The economic linkages outline the financial conditions of the community.
- The local business linkages should show the type of businesses and their hiring and purchasing practices.
- Both the ability and decision of community residents to purchase locally have an overall effect on the community.



## **Vision and Commitment**

- A vision should provide insight, inspiration and revelation as to what community people “want.”
- The community should commit to convening a local “table”, identifying assets, moving from planning to action, and providing for sustainability.



## **Community Mobilization**

- Mobilization is about moving forward and making positive change by energizing and activating community strengths and assets.
- When mobilizing, communities should identify areas to maintain as well as opportunities for growth.
- Mobilization is about engaging individuals, associations, institutions and businesses to improve the capacity of a community to provide for itself.

## **Evaluation**

- Evaluation is necessary for the review and appraisal of community actions.
- Monitoring and tracking activities is needed to evaluate the approach.
- Determining the community impact, “What difference did it make”, is most important for evaluating the overall results, either intended or unintended.



## **IV. HANDOUT AND PRESENTATION MATERIALS**

The following pages are a series of “one-pagers” which summarize information presented in the Community Guide. These “one-pagers” are to be used as handouts at community meetings, reminders for facilitators, visual aids or for any other appropriate situation which may call for summarizing process/approach components. A list of these materials is given below.

- The Center for Rural Community Revitalization and Development
- Key Document Terms
- Traditional and Alternative Paths
- Process Summary Illustrations
- Community Questions Checklist
- Local “Table” of People
- Asset Inventories
- Building Relationships
- Community Assets Map
- Community Business Linkages Map
- Community Economic Linkages Map
- Shared Vision and Commitment to Action
- Mobilizing the Community
- Timeline Options for the Approach
- Community Celebration

# **The Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI)**

## **Institute of Agricultural & Natural Resources University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

**Purpose:** With a focus on strengthening Nebraska communities, the University of Nebraska's Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI) educates and assists people and communities in rural areas in a manner that contributes to quality of life.

This document, "Vitalizing Communities: Building on Assets and Mobilizing for Collective Action," is one tool utilized by CARI to provide assistance to people and communities in rural areas of Nebraska.

CARI works with communities, building on local community assets, to help meet their objectives, whether they emphasize growth, sustainable development or some other aspect of community life.

**Staff:** The staff of CARI is an interdisciplinary team of talented professionals strongly committed to the CARI's Mission.

**Contributing Partners:** UNL Institute for Agricultural and Natural Resources, UNL Cooperative Extension/4-H, UNL Agricultural Economics, and the Nebraska Rural Development Commission.

## KEY DOCUMENT TERMS

<u>Community</u>	- neighborhood, town, city, county, regions, area, tribe, culture, ethnic or faith-based group of people as identified by its members; a community of “good character” is caring, kind, trusting, fair, responsible and displays good citizenship.
<u>Asset</u>	- “community treasures”; the positive strengths, qualities, merits, benefits, virtues, commodities & character imbedded in a community;
<u>Skill</u>	- the gift an individual has gained through experience, education and/or knowledge which is passed on to other individuals.
<u>Asset Inventory</u>	- a method for gathering information about the gifts and talents of a community’s individual, associations and institutions.
<u>Asset Map</u>	- a visual path displaying a community’s positive capacities & assets.
<u>Individual</u>	- person belonging to a community, group of relatives or other people who has capabilities, abilities and gifts.
<u>Association</u>	- a formal or informal group of community people working together, often as volunteers, to generate collective action.
<u>Institution</u>	- a formalized and structured organization that does not typically rely on voluntary commitment of the individuals involved.
<u>The Economy</u>	- the flow of resources and transactions occurring as good and services which are produced and consumed.
<u>“Table” of people</u>	- made up of community individuals and representatives of community associations, institutions and businesses, forming the foundation for community work.
<u>Relationship</u>	- a bond that is formed through identifying, connecting and establishing a friendly alliance built on trust, strengths and assets.
<u>Mobilize</u>	- to move the community forward by energizing and activating community strengths and assets.
<u>Vision</u>	- the positive image of what the community “wants” to be; providing insight, inspiration & revelation to help move the community forward.
<u>Evaluation</u>	- a review and appraisal of community activities, completed by the community, providing a measurement for community success.

## TRADITIONAL & ALTERNATIVE PATHS

### Traditional Path/Approach #1

Based on: Needs  
Goal: Institutional Change  
Conversation: Problems & Concerns  
Change Agent: Power  
View of Individual: Consumer, Client

#### Needs based on Community Problems:

Unemployment, gangs, truancy, broken families, housing shortage, crime, child abuse, illiteracy, welfare, lead poisoning, dropouts, etc.

### Alternative Path/Approach #2

Based on: Assets  
Goal: Building Communities  
Conversation: Gifts and Dreams  
Change Agent: Relationships  
View of Individual: Producer, Owner

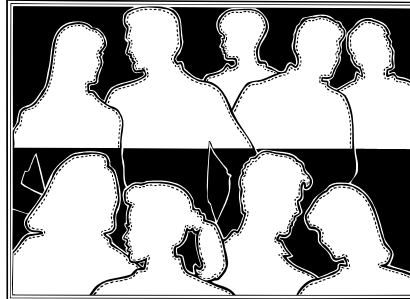
#### Assets based on Community "Treasures":

Youth, elderly, artists, churches, schools, businesses, parks, libraries, cultural groups, community colleges, clubs, hospitals, farms, ranches, etc.

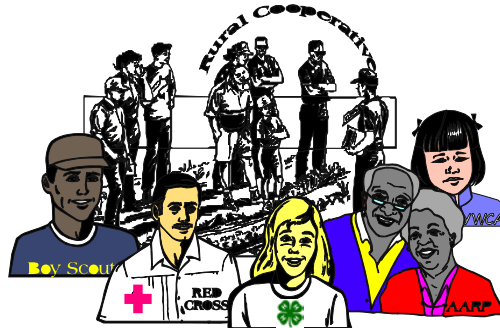
# PROCESS SUMMARY ILLUSTRATION - Part 1

## *“Building on Community Assets”*

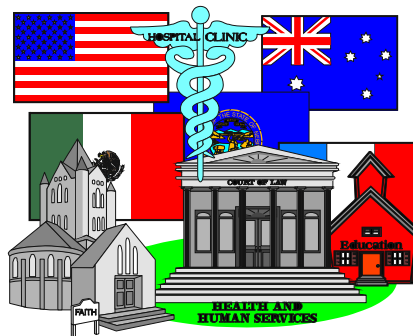
- **Individual Assets**



- **Associational Assets**



- **Institutional Assets**



- **Local Business Assets**



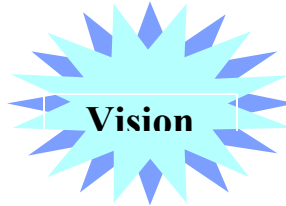
# PROCESS SUMMARY ILLUSTRATION – Part 2

## *“Mobilizing For Collective Action”*

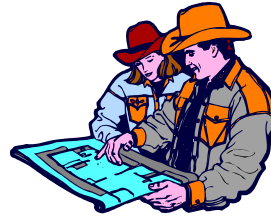
- Local “Table of People



- A Shared Community Vision



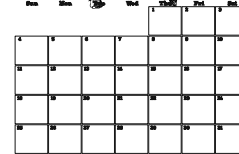
- Planning For Action



- Mobilizing For Action



- Time Line



- Evaluation



- Celebration



## COMMUNITY QUESTIONS CHECKLIST

- Can the community *organize* itself to move forward?
- Is the community *ready* to move forward with this approach?
- Is the community *committed* to change?

If the community is not sure that it can meet the above criteria, interested community members should ask and answer the following questions.

- How is the community organized?
- Who are the organized groups/individuals in the community?
- Are all members of the community aware of this vitalization effort?
- Who is ready to move forward, to vitalize community strengths?
- Is the community ready for change?
- Who will assume the leadership to make changes?
- Will there be opposition to this effort?
- When will the process/approach begin?



By answering these questions, community members can decide if they are ready to move forward, *vitalizing community strengths, building on community assets and mobilizing for collective action.*

## LOCAL “TABLE” OF PEOPLE

The local “Table” can consist of 7 to 30 diverse individuals. The following is a checklist of potential individuals who might represent the community as members of the local “Table” of people. The list is comprehensive, but not necessarily inclusive.

- Parents
- Youth
- Health Care People
- Office People
- Construction People
- Maintenance People
- Food Service People
- Child Care People
- Transportation People
- Repair People
- Sales People
- Musicians
- Artists
- Farm People
- Ranch People
- Agricultural Organization People
- Cultural Group Representatives
- Church Representatives
- School Representatives
- Community College Representatives
- Bank Savings and Loan People
- Parks People
- Library People
- Cooperative Extension Representatives
- Business Organization People
- Service Association People
- Financial Institution Representatives
- Civic Event Coordinators
- Youth Group Representatives
- Charitable Group Representatives
- City Government Representatives
- County Government Representatives
- Tribal Government Representatives
- Law Enforcement People
- Manufacturing Representatives
- Retail Business People
- Media People
- Legal System Representatives
- People with Disabilities
- Public Housing Representatives
- Welfare Service People
- Employment Service Representatives

# ASSET INVENTORIES

## 5 TOOLS FOR DISCOVERING COMMUNITY CAPACITIES

There are five basic tools involved in identifying a community's capacities through the creation of asset inventories. These five basic tools are as follows:

- Tool 1:** Create a Community-wide *Individual Skills/Assets Inventory*
- Tool 2:** Create a Community-wide *Associational Assets Inventory*
- Tool 3:** Create a Community-wide *Institutional Assets Inventory*
- Tool 4:** Create a Community-wide *Economic Linkages & Business Assets Inventory*
- Tool 5:** Create a Community-wide *Previous Efforts As Assets Inventory*

These are “tools” which can be utilized to discover assets in each community capacity area.

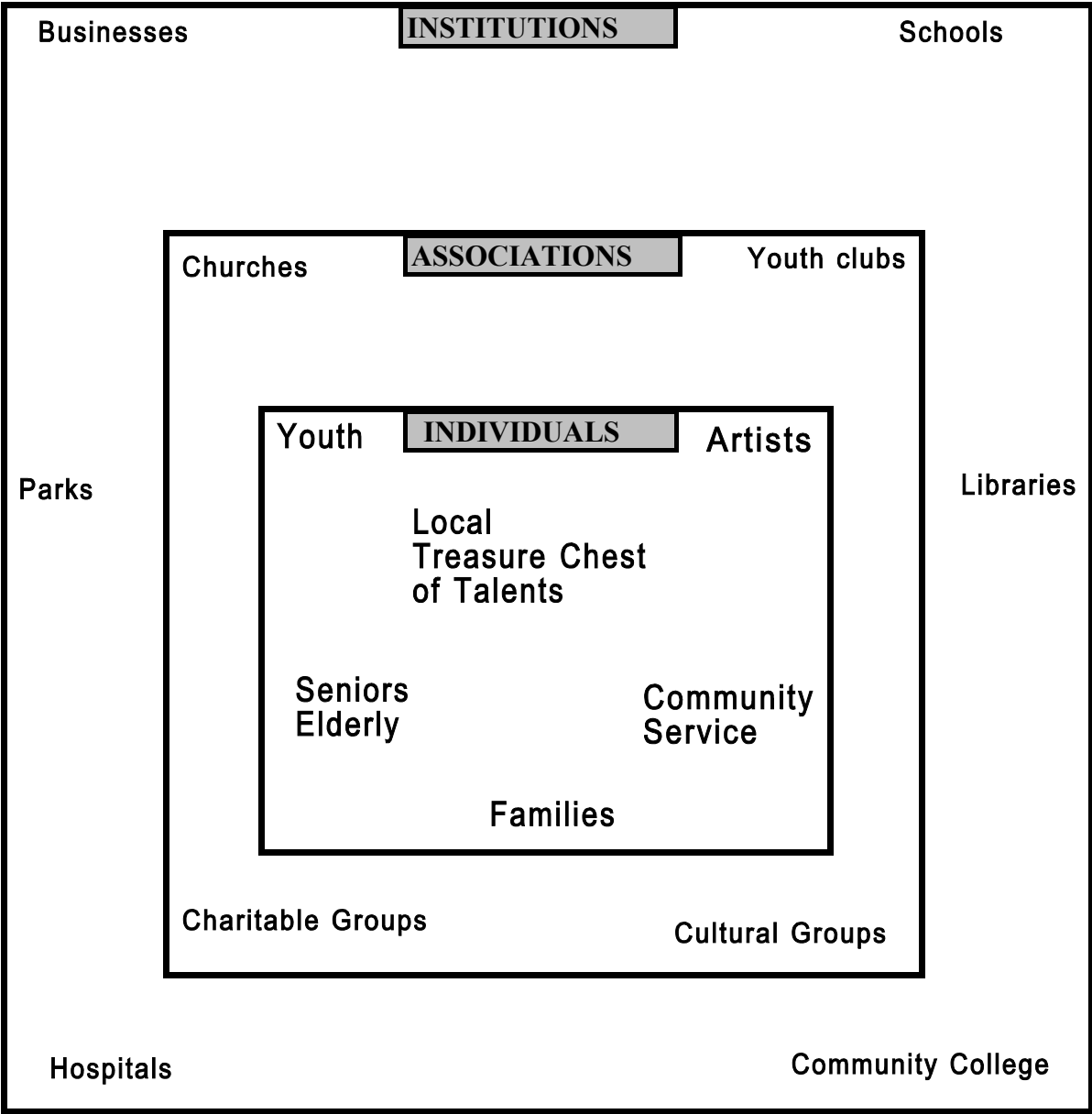
# **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

## **KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

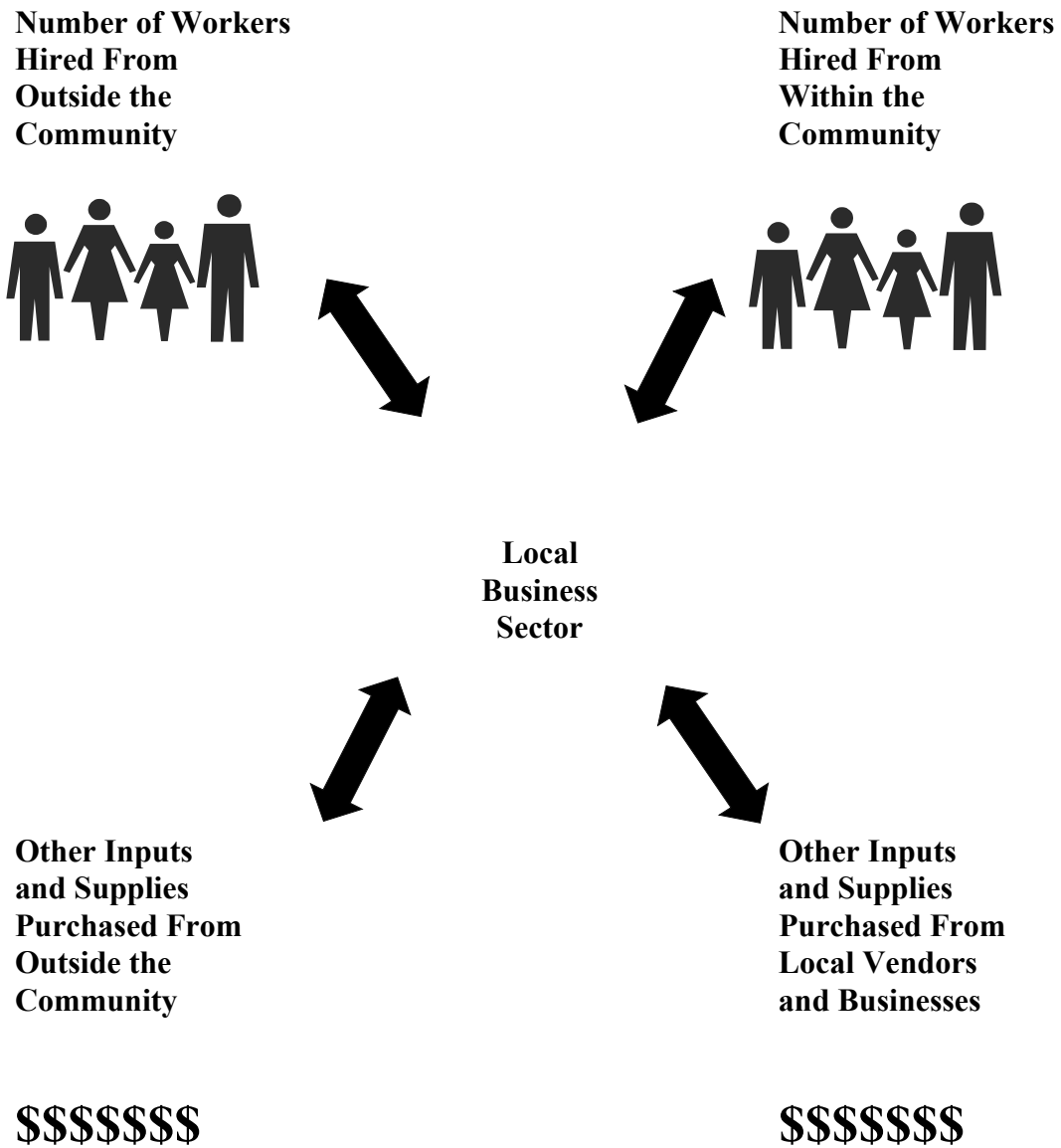
- **Building strong relationships among community individuals, associations, institutions and businesses is an important step when venturing down the path of community building.**
- **Who are the strangers in the community? Quiet, reserved and unrecognized people are often overlooked as community assets.**
- **A community which locates and mobilizes the gifts and contributions of strangers in its midst is a community which welcomes the contributions of all its members.**
- **Who are the finders and developers in the community? These are the leaders of the community.**
- **Finders have a positive vision and can “find” assets in the community needed to mobilize and move the community forward.**
- **Developers lead the community development effort, mobilizing the capacity identified by the finders.**
- **Finding the capacity identifiers and community development leaders are crucial steps to the path of community building.**

# COMMUNITY ASSETS MAP

When asset inventories are completed, the assets can be “mapped” to show asset areas and/or groups. The following example is a map of asset areas for individuals, associations and institutions. Names of businesses, schools, youth groups, etc. could be listed on large community asset maps; or there may be several maps with many lists.



# COMMUNITY BUSINESS LINKAGE MAP



# **COMMUNITY ECONOMIC LINKAGE MAP**

**Local Business Sector**



**Good and Services  
Purchased by  
Local Individuals,  
Associations and  
Institutions**



**Businesses Outside the Community**

## SHARED VISION & COMMITMENT TO ACTION

### Community Questions Related to VISION:

- Who are “we”, the people in this community? Can we identify ourselves?
- What are the things that “we” value the most? What are our beliefs?
- What do “we” want our community to look like in 5, 10 or 20 years from now? What is our VISION?
- What is our purpose/role in this approach of Asset Building?



These are simple but compelling questions which challenge the community building process. Without community identity, a set of values and beliefs, and a shared vision, the work of vitalizing and building the community is very difficult to sustain.

### COMMITMENTS TO ACTION:

- **Commitment 1:** *Commit to identifying community assets.*
- **Commitment 2:** *Commit to convening and expanding a “Table” of people.*
- **Commitment 3:** *Commit to move from planning to action.*
- **Commitment 4:** *Commit to collective action activities for community sustainability.*

An approach of community-based vitalization provides the vehicle for defining and developing a shared community vision. A plan of collective action based on community assets can help to move toward making the vision a reality.

## **MOBILIZING THE COMMUNITY**

### **A TIMELINE OF STEPS TO CONSIDER**

- **Complete the strategies in mapping community assets. Tools 1-5**
- **When the asset and inventories and maps have been completed, identify leadership for each area to maintain and for each growth opportunity. Tool 6**
- **Mobilize the capacities of local individuals. Invite and involve all individuals (consider gender, ethnicity, age, etc.)**
- **Mobilized local associations. Encourage collaborative efforts to generate collective action.**
- **Mobilize local non-economic institutions such as hospitals, police stations, churches, schools, parks, libraries, etc.**
- **Mobilize the capacities of local business. Map their economic linkages.**
- **Mobilize consumer expenditures by raising awareness of consumers to “buy locally”.**
- **Develop a local capital formation vehicle to finance business start-ups and business development.**
- **Complete a gaps analysis.**
- **Mobilize outside resources to cover the gaps.**
- **Evaluation of community vitalization is key.**
  - 1) **Record the type of activity, who is responsible, when the activity took place, and what happened that made a difference. Tool 7**
  - 2) **Review and publicly display this Evaluation of Community Actions Inventory on a regular basis.**

# TIMELINE OPTIONS FOR THE APPROACH

## Timeline Option A:

Time	Activity
Day 1	Invite facilitator to give presentation.
Week 1	Community members decide whether or not to utilize the approach.
Month 1	Community organizes a local “Table” people.
Month 1	Community is made aware of the approach and the local Table is identified.
Month 2	Asset groups are identified and inventories are developed.
Month 3	Asset inventories are mapped and publicized.
Month 3	Economic linkages of local business and community purchases are mapped and publicized.
Month 4	The community affirms its vision and commitment.
Month 4	The community identifies areas to maintain and areas for growth.
Mo. 4-12	An action plan is developed & mobilized, identifying leadership responsible for all areas.
Mo. 4-12	An evaluation tool is developed and utilized.
Mo. 4-12	Celebration takes place throughout the entire vitalization approach.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Timeline Option B:

Time	Activity
Day 1	Community members are aware of the approach and have identified an existing “Table”.
Week 1	The local Table meets and consults with a facilitator to discuss a timeline.
Month 1	Previous efforts are compiled and asset inventories are updated.
Month 2	Asset Inventories are mapped and publicized.
Month 2	Economic linkage maps are updated and publicized.
Month 2	The community re-affirms its vision and commitment, and identifies areas to maintain and new areas for growth.
Month 3	An existing action plan is modified to emphasize change built on community assets, identifying existing and new leadership responsible for all areas.
Month 4	A community celebration takes place as a “kick-off” to mobilize.
Mo. 4-12	An evaluation tool is utilized to record community actions and activities.
Mo. 4-12	Celebration takes place throughout the entire vitalization approach.

# COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

☺ Celebrate Similarities and Differences of Individuals ☺☺☺☺☺☺

☺ Celebrate Community Willingness to Move Forward

☺ Celebrate the Community's Assets and Asset Mapping

☺ Celebrate Community Vision and the Plan of Action

☺ Celebrate Community Relationships

☺ Celebrate Community Successes

☺ Community Celebrations:

- Have Fun! ☺ ☺
- Involve individuals, families, associations, institutions and businesses!
- Celebrate on a large scale, community-wide!
- Have spontaneous celebrations, recognizing a small amount of individual success!



- Celebrate: County Fairs, Youth Festivals, Senior Festivals, Family Festivals, Business Grand Openings, Recognition of Community Citizenship, Cultural Fairs and Events, Health Fairs, Community Dances, Soup Suppers, Fish Fries, and other community-wide activities that bring people together.

☺ Do celebrate community success. It is important for the overall health of a community, and, it can “make a difference!”

**Notes:**