

PEOPLE FIRST

-a community Self-Help planning manual

edited by LINDA F. DUNCAN for
The Edmonton Social Planning Council

"...A local voluntary resource group was formed to produce a community plan and to foster a community participation process. The process was very much a departure from the traditional planning models especially in that it was designed to remove the old style approach of the "professional planning for the people" and instead successfully substituted a philosophy of "every-man a planner". In the 1970's, there was a number of successful projects: 2 year community-oriented experimental pre-school programme; a joint effort with the city to integrate as sensitively as possible a freeway through the community.

There were several enduring results from all these activities. First, the Inglewood community was creating a new shared interest in its future. Second, it was learning to work effectively with resource and government. Third, it began to understand a whole range of political, psychological and economic issues - the meaning and necessity for persistence, the value of strategy, the need for a plan, the cost factors involved in projects, the commitments required, when to fight, when to apply pressure, and when to compromise. Fourth, it proved to itself and to others that community people with intimate local knowledge can contribute to the resolution of planning problems, that citizens possess a very close identity to their community because of deep, emotional commitment. All that was required was a process whereby this commitment could be harnessed as positive and creative energy for the community."

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United Way
A Member Agency

art direction & graphic design: Monty Cooper

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	
Preface	1
Introduction	3
 <u>PART ONE: PEOPLE</u>	
Chapter I <u>Getting Started</u>	7
A. Recruiting Membership	7
B. Methods of Recruiting	8
C. Putting the Media to Work for You	11
Chapter II <u>Organizing and Maintaining Your Group</u>	14
A. Leadership	14
B. Group Structure	15
C. Delegation of Responsibility	15
D. Meetings	17
E. Working with People	19
Chapter III <u>Developing a Communication System</u>	21
A. Workshop	22
B. Tabloid	23
C. Community Self-Survey	24
Chapter IV <u>Finding Direction: Defining Purpose, Goals and Objectives</u>	28
A. Purpose	29
B. Goals	29
C. Objectives	29
D. Action Plans	29
Chapter V <u>Roles</u>	32
A. Your Community and the Community Planning Group	32
B. Your Community and the Professional Planner.....	33
C. Your Community and Other Communities	34
Chapter VI <u>The Process of Planning</u>	36
 <u>PART TWO: INFORMATION</u>	
Chapter I <u>Why Gather Information?</u>	41

Chapter II	<u>Types of Information You Need</u>	42
	A. The Matrix	42
	B. History	43
	C. Economic Base	43
Chapter III	<u>How do You Start to Collect Information?</u>	45
Chapter IV	<u>Planning Tools</u>	47
	A. Plans	47
	B. Laws - Statutes, By-Laws, Regulations, Resolutions	47
	C. Maps	49
	D. Photographs	51
	E. Graphics	52
Chapter V	<u>Population</u>	53
	A. Sources	53
	B. Obtaining and Using Canada Census Data	55
	C. Historical Change	56
	D. Age-Sex Profile	56
	E. Family/Household/Marital Status	58
	F. Household Makeup	59
	G. Employment/Income/Education	59
	H. Ethnicity	61
	I. Mobility	62
	J. Projections	62
Chapter VI	<u>Land Use</u>	64
	A. Sources of Information	64
	B. Existing Land Use	65
	C. Calculation of Density	68
	D. Land Use Summary	69
	E. Land Ownership and Land Value	70
	F. Legal Uses of Land	71
	G. Proposed or Intended Land Uses	72
Chapter VII	<u>Housing</u>	74
	A. Information Sources	74
	B. Identification of Need	76
	C. Physical Factors	77
	D. Planning to Meet the Need	80
	E. Frequently Arising Issues to Resolve	80
	F. Innovative Housing and Development Concepts ...	82
Chapter VIII	<u>Transportation</u>	88
	A. Information Sources	88
	B. Solving Neighborhood Transportation Problems ...	90
	C. City-Wide Transportation Questions	97
	D. Self-Help Transportation Alternatives	99

Chapter IX	<u>Community Recreation</u>	103
	A. Identification of Recreational Needs: Programming	103
	B. Alternative Solutions to Your Recreation Needs ..	104
	C. Implementing Solutions: Some Planning Ideas for Open Space	107
Chapter X	<u>Community Services</u>	116
	A. Checklist of Community Services	116
	B. Sources of Information and Assistance	116
	C. The Process	117
Chapter XI	<u>Economics</u>	120
Chapter XII	<u>Utilities</u>	123
	A. Water	123
	B. Sewer	124
	C. Lighting	124

PART THREE: MONEY

	Introduction	127
Chapter I	<u>How to Survive Without Money</u>	127
	A. Donations of Time and Skill	127
	B. Donations of Equipment and Materials	128
	C. Donations of Space	129
Chapter II	<u>How to Get Money</u>	130
	A. Soliciting Donations	130
	B. Pledge Groups	132
	C. Special Fund Raising Events	133
	D. Grants: Private Foundations and Government	134
Chapter III	<u>Where to Get Money</u>	136
	A. Municipal Funds	136
	B. Provincial Funds	137
	C. Federal Funds	137

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Community Surveys
Appendix B	Transportation Concerns
Appendix C	Resources

Bibliography

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<u>Planning and Conception:</u>	Sue Arrison Lucille Cormier L. Ross McPhee	Peter Boothroyd Mary Louise Marino
---------------------------------	--	---------------------------------------

<u>Research and Writing:</u>	Mary Louise Marino Brenda Sims Helen Dundass Trevor Axworthy Greg Teal Alex Taylor Greg Neelin Colette Meunier Lucille Cormier	Sue Arrison Selby Saluke Bruce Stratton Ken Arcuri Nora Corbett Mike Burns Betty Farrell Gerry Wright
------------------------------	--	--

<u>Final Editing:</u>	L. Ross McPhee Lori McMullen	Peter Boothroyd
-----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------

<u>Typing and Production:</u>	Rose French Jane Stewart Ellie Cromie	Sharon Borschyk Robin Everall Carol Althouse
-------------------------------	---	--

<u>Art Direction, Graphic Design and Layout:</u>	Monty Cooper
--	--------------

<u>Art Contributions:</u>	Selby Saluke Steve Beinicke Michael Fisher	Paul Hodgson Barbara Hartman Terry Kolomeychuk
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Thank you to my friends and family whose interest and faith in my ability to make this book happen never faltered.

Linda Duncan

PREFACE

The Citizen-Planner's Cookbook or The Joy of Planning

I'll start the potatoes at 6:00, then while they're boiling, I can prepare a salad... wonder what greens are in the fridge... lettuce, sprouts, hmmm...this time I'll try tomatoes instead...better stock up on the garbanzo beans...

We all plan for a good part of every day. We plan meals, kitchen supplies, travel routes, parties, holidays, etc. We are all planners, and usually amazingly good at it. Amazing that we can plan our household environments so well but that sometimes we think our responsibility, or our ability, stops there.

What if more people thought that they could, that they should, get involved in planning their community environments? It could be as much fun, as satisfying, and as dignifying as planning meals.

This book is offered to people who are starting to think about taking an active interest in the plans for their community. It presents some ideas on how community planning might proceed and some information which could be useful for a citizen planner. It is based on the assumption that anyone who can plan his or her personal life can plan a community, but it also recognizes two realities. First, community planning is a social activity involving many people with different ideas, values, kinds of knowledge, interests to guard and spare-time energies. Second, your community is part of the larger city and therefore the needs, and directions, of other communities have to be taken into account; thus there have arisen city-level bureaucracies which sometimes work for your

particular community, and sometimes against it. These two facts -- that a community is internally complex and is part of a larger complex city -- mean that a citizen planner may have to learn new things about planning.

Virtually every citizen has the potential to be a good community planner, just as everyone has the potential to be a good cook. But a good cook has to learn the principles of cooking through information and experience; a good community planner will seek to learn from the knowledge and experiences of others and to try out ideas himself in practice.

This book is not just oriented to fighting City Hall or developers. A good cookbook does not simply tell a short-order chef how to prepare dishes in response to demands from a certain type of customer; a good cookbook tells you how to create a meal -- an enjoyable, satisfying, sustaining meal where every ingredient is carefully, but creatively, matched and every dish is selected to complement the preceeding. What this book attempts to do is set forth some principles for creating enjoyable, satisfying, sustaining communities. Only people confined in institutions have no control over their meals. Surely, the city should be more than an institution.

It's a changing world, and all our communities are going to change -- the people will change, the buildings will change, the transportation system will change, our heating systems will probably change. The question is: Who is going to decide how they change? We hope it will be all of us.

- Peter Boothroyd

INTRODUCTION

Living in Canadian urban centres today has become a particularly frustrating time for people striving to have some effect in determining their own physical, social and economic environment. Because most decisions about the future of our urban environment are made by a political and professional minority, cities are beginning to express the social attitudes and value system of this minority. The ordinary person is left with the role of reacting to an environment which has already been decided for him. In many cases, this leads to a situation of confrontation and disillusionment.

It seems evident, therefore, that there is a need for people living within an urban setting to be given the opportunity to take an active role in planning their communities in order that they can develop an environment harmonious to their social patterns and values. Providing individuals with the skills and knowledge for this form of participation not only allows for the growth and development of the individual citizen but may, in time, lead to development of urban centres in Canada which more sensitively express the true values and ideals of those living within them.

Our research found no one book or manual which dealt with both the community perspective on planning and direction on how to plan. That is our intention. This manual does not pretend to present entirely original ideas. Its purpose is to combine and convey the concepts developed by numerous people working in the field and to make those available to communities in a more concise form.

We were faced with having to edit down a potential encyclopedia of community participation and planning information. As a result, where ideas are only touched on, we have included further source material by way of an annotated bibliography, and an appendix of references and contacts.

This manual is directed to those people already awakened to the fact that planning may be a more productive solution than storming city hall. But planning will serve the community's ends only if it is both initiated and controlled by the community itself.

Planning is not something which should be reserved for specially trained people. It is a process which the majority of us participate in most of our lives. The concept of planning on a community-wide scale simply means we focus our sights beyond our immediate home, apartment, or yard.

While it is not suggested that only communities should plan or that planning should only happen at the local level, it is important to recognize and support the role of neighbourhood groups in the development and decision-making process. The residents of these neighbourhoods represent a valuable first hand source of knowledge and ability yet untapped. The ideas presented are meant to serve as tools to build this information base.

The majority of examples and experiences on which the manual is based are drawn from the authors' personal experience working with Edmonton communities. But outside sources of information tell us that the Edmonton experience is shared by other urban and rural Alberta

and Canadian communities. The common line is the belief in the possibility of the continued life of the community.

Community self-planning can provide a vehicle for the exchange of common concerns, needs and wants held by neighbourhood people. It is one method for investigating, considering and implementing solutions. This planning or assessment process is of equal value to older communities facing severe redevelopment and newer undeveloped communities lacking certain amenities.

While every community can benefit from its own planning, no two communities are likely to experience the same process. For this reason, the authors took great pains to avoid saying that any one solution is the right one, or any one method of planning is the only way. Every planning experience will be unique. No two communities face identical situations nor will they choose the same solutions.

But there are basic tools which are vital to any community planning process. We have identified these as PEOPLE, INFORMATION and MONEY.

For a community planning process, people are the mainstay. If you want to make something happen, you must involve people. You will have to learn how to get them interested in getting involved and how to help them to participate. If you want those people affected by a plan to support it, it will be helpful to have them informed and involved in the plan preparation. Then everyone helps to make your ideas work because it is making what they want to have happen, happen.

To make changes in your community you are also going to need information about your area, the people who live, work and play in it, their needs and concerns, how people travel to and from or through your area, where they live and how they live. You will need information about alternatives and how to put them into effect. Information about what other communities are doing can also be enlightening.

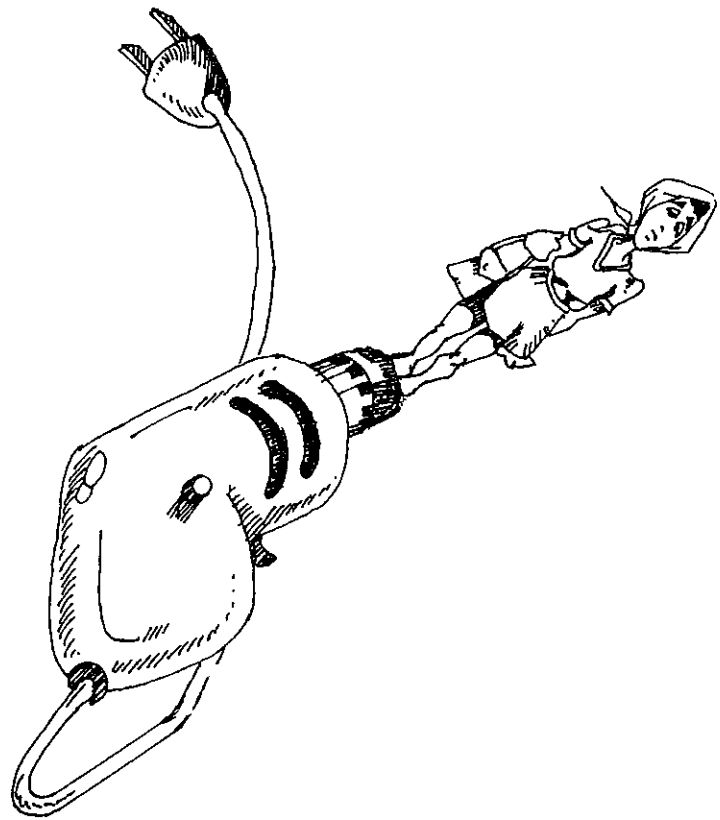
We hope through this book to share with you some ideas on working with

people and finding and using planning information. As for money, hopefully the information, assistance and examples of what other communities have done with their own resources provided here will help you begin to realize much can be done without it. Community participation and self-help will enable you to avoid high planning costs.

By assuming part of the responsibility for the future of your community and doing it yourself, you can begin to create the environment you prefer to live in. Start looking inward to the hidden resources in your own neighbourhood just waiting to be asked to do their part. Money can help though, and we hope to provide some ideas on where and how to obtain it. But don't sit around waiting for vast sums of money you may not need. Start planning!

All it takes is you.

Linda Duncan



Part One: PEOPLE

I. GETTING STARTED

As people become more determined that a good environment begins at home, (the) sense of neighborhood increases, which makes local relationships correspondingly more important. In this way a neighborhood is defined by the residents, not the planners, and is expressed in the political action taken by the residents.

Randolf Hester Jr.
Neighborhood Space

In Edmonton the majority of people who have become involved in improving or preserving their communities live in the older, inner-city areas. These are the communities facing constant redevelopment pressures. Older neighbourhoods of the city core are being rapidly replaced by high density residential development, commercial ventures, and transportation through-routes for suburban dwellers.

Most individual citizens and groups have become involved in a community planning process for one of the following reasons:

- their neighbourhood is in need of total upgrading and qualified as a Federal N.I.P. (Neighbourhood Improvement Program) area, receiving funds from three levels of government;
- their neighbourhood is facing a number of redevelopment pressures and a community plan is seen as one way to deal with the problems in a comprehensive manner.

You may have chosen to look into the possibilities of planning for some totally different motive. Whatever your

reason, if you intend to plan for your community effectively, you are going to need people.

There are many advantages to involving community residents at every possible step. They can help collect information, develop ideas, assist with the leg-work and, in the final stages, lend support to implementing your plans and ideas.

Whether or not you are assisted by a professional planner, your group will probably have to assume responsibility for recruiting and involving members of the community. If your core working group attempts to short-cut the process by assuming the needs of your area and planning on their behalf in isolation from all diverse interests, you may face serious problems. You could defeat your own plans by creating a divided community. You could lose what credibility you have to those both inside and outside the area.

Achieving community participation is not an easy one-shot effort. It is a time consuming and often frustrating job. But it pays off.



A. RECRUITING MEMBERSHIP

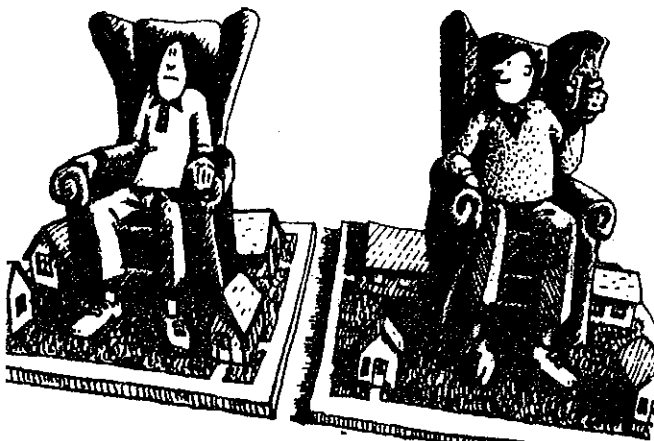
If your group has assumed the role of initiating and facilitating a community planning process, you will need to develop and maintain a dedicated con-

tributing membership. Whether you plan to develop a park system or alternative housing program, it makes sense to attempt to involve all types of people who will be affected, e.g. the elderly, the young, single parents, ethnic groups, church congregations, school parents and local business people.

Membership should be recruited from all locations within your community. Some community planning groups, notably Riverdale, have appointed block captains for each block in the district to whom residents can come with their ideas and concerns. These in turn are passed on to the core planning group for consideration.

You may also find it beneficial to recruit members for their particular skills. Not everyone wants to become involved in doing the same sorts of things or will feel comfortable or confident speaking out at meetings, but hidden talents and people power do exist.

When you ask people to become involved, be specific. State you need so many people to help telephone, or to type information, or to carry out library research or to draw maps. You may even find in your community a resident lawyer, planner, architect or experienced volunteer coordinator who is willing to donate some time and expertise.



"block captains"

B. METHODS OF RECRUITING

The process of recruiting members is something like a sales campaign. You have to sell your product. You have to make your group and its activities appealing to get people out to your meetings. This is often difficult as your projects do not always have "box office appeal".

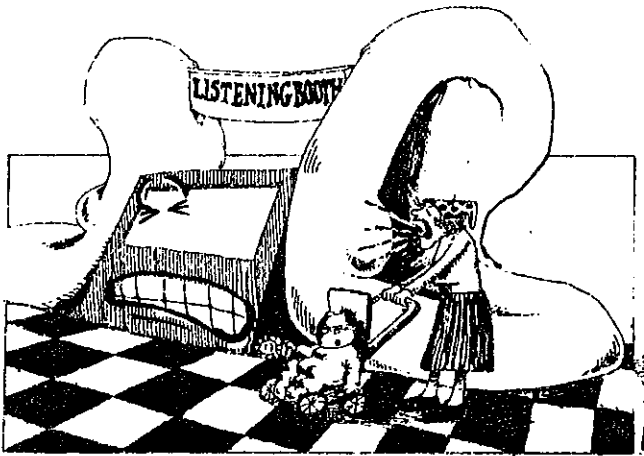
A number of methods do exist to help you attract new membership. Leslie Bella in her unpublished book Up the Grass Roots prioritized several methods in descending order of effectiveness:

- Door to door canvassing, where residents are approached by neighbours who discuss the purpose of the group and leave written material;
- Phone invitations from one neighbour to another;
- Publicity through a local or special interest group that meets regularly (e.g., announcement in church on Sunday);
- A newsletter sent to those on a mailing list of some agency (e.g., parents of school children, or members of community league);
- A flyer distributed door to door, with no ringing of door bells;
- A community newspaper with established credibility (that people read and do not mistake for an advertising flyer);
- A city-wide newspaper, radio or TV station.

Edmonton community experience appears to support as fact that personal contact or at least word-of-mouth communication is the most effective way to entice people to meetings or to become involved in a neighbourhood project.

You may want to try more innovative methods to suit your particular community. Consider the following.

1) Listening Stations at Local Shopping Centres



These stations can be useful data banks where you can not only spread the word about your group but gather information on people's ideas and concerns about the neighbourhood. Establish a regular spot in an area of heavy pedestrian traffic and make a point of having your booth constantly (or as often as possible) manned by members of your community group. Once people know where to go, they will more likely come forward with questions and ideas.

2) Coffee Parties, Pot Luck Suppers

Like listening stations, coffee parties are an excellent way of recruiting members as well as finding out people's concerns and ideas for the community. Coffee parties have been particularly successful in reaching people in the Oliver area where there are many high-rises. The community group asked either the caretaker or someone living within a highrise to host a coffee party. As a result, not only did people become involved in the community but they had an excuse to meet their neighbours for the first time.

Parkdale community sponsored an ethnic community supper at which residents shared their favorite recipes and local concerns.

3) Theatre Performances in the Community

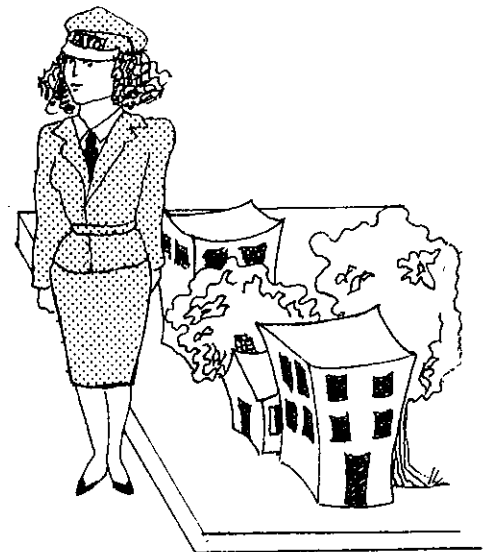
Through the cooperative efforts of the Edmonton Social Planning Council, University of Alberta, Drama Department, and Montrose community, a troupe of professional actors was hired to dramatize the issues and concerns of people in the Montrose area. Performances were held in the community hall, shopping centre, churches and homes of local residents. Audiences consisted of community members, aldermen and city planners.

Whether you decide to use professional or local talent, dramatizations can be effective for informing residents and outsiders about your concerns.

Films of the Montrose production can be borrowed from the Edmonton Social Planning Council.

4) Neighbourhood Aids

Norwood recently tested out its own method of contacting new members in the community. A resident on each block ("neighbourhood aid") is responsible for welcoming new members to the block and providing information about available services in the area. This person also assumes responsibility for updating residents about local concerns and projects and how they can become involved. The "neighbourhood aid" also transmits



information back to the community group. In this way, Norwood hopes to assist those community members who are concerned about an issue and wish to become involved. The project is a cooperative effort of several community-based groups and agencies.

5) Neighbourhood Tours

It may have been a while since most of your neighbours have taken a close look at their surroundings. Walking tours or car trips around various points of interest may act as an incentive for added membership. It also serves to illustrate the on-going process of development and the need for long-term goals. The stops along the way can include buildings scheduled for demolition, possible historic sites, vacant lots that could be park space or highrises cutting out sunshine from the street. All this can be made quite enjoyable as a Sunday afternoon family outing ending in a picnic or barbeque.

6) Exhibits

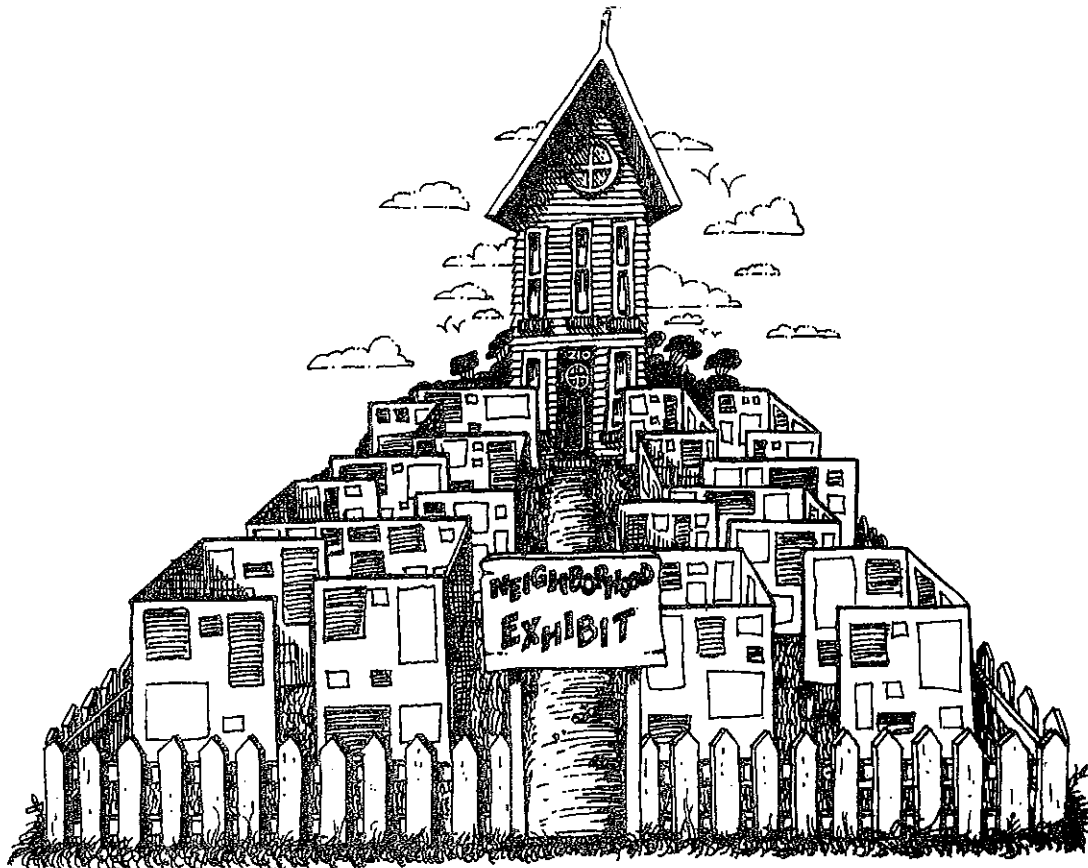
Along the same theme as a tour, an exhibit of maps, pictures, slides and/or a video tape of the community can be put on display along with other information of interest to residents. Again, as in the tour, the exhibit can be part of a community social gathering where people can meet each other and share ideas.

For example, in the Oliver community, pictures, maps, slides and city plans for the area and a video tape of the community were exhibited as part of two community social picnics held in the area. More than 200 people attending these picnics viewed the displays and took part in the fun and entertainment.

For assistance in preparing photographic or video tape presentations, rental of equipment and developing facilities, contact Communitas, Inc.

7) Films

You may also want to consider bringing people out to view a film which



illustrates the situation your community is experiencing. A number of excellent films exist which are great catalysts for a follow-up discussion. The following recommended films are available on loan free of charge from the National Film Board to take out or view in their facilities:

"VTR - St. Jacques"

(a film about the effectiveness of video-tape)

"The Specialists at Memorial Discuss the Fogo Films"

(a film about the use of film)

"Little Burgundy"

(a film about expropriation in Montreal)

"Flowers on a One-Way Street"

(a film about Yorkville, a rehabilitated area of Toronto)

"Chairs for Lovers"

(a film in which Vancouverites learn about planning).

"Some People Have to Suffer"

(a film about a British Columbia community attempting to preserve and improve their area)

For other films of interest or recent releases, check with the National Film Board. See Appendix D.

Further relevant films are listed in the publication Organize for Action, a compilation of films by John Beeston, Dalhousie University, 1974 (available from Rutherford Library, University of Alberta). Communitas Inc. and The Legal Resource Centre have a library of films and video-tapes and listings of other available material.

C. PUTTING THE MEDIA TO WORK FOR YOU

Throughout your planning process, you can use the media -- television, radio, newspapers, local newsletters and publications -- to recruit members. From regular meeting announcements to

coverage of current community issues, effective use of the media can lead to increased support and participation within the community. It can also alert other communities and decision makers about your concerns.

1) Community and Area Newsletters

Community planning groups in such areas as Garneau, Oliver and McKernan regularly place notices of meetings in their Community League newsletters which circulate to the total community. Feature articles or letters also appear recounting recent problems or activities. If you don't have a community newsletter, consider starting one.

Other regular newsletters such as the Area 13 Newsletter, Kingsway Garden News, or the Londonderry Colloquium also print community announcements and have a much wider circulation. Find out their printing deadlines.

You may decide to print and deliver your own flyers for special events. Communitas or the Edmonton Social Planning Council can provide expertise and assistance in preparation.

2) Direct Press Coverage

Another useful tactic to build membership is to facilitate direct news coverage of a critical event. But how do you lure the television cameras to your street? Consider the following:

- Staging an Event

By staging an event which includes a sense of drama or crisis you can often attract the media. But don't forget to give advance notice and make sure your "event" happens early enough to make the news broadcast. It helps to build media contacts who can be called on short notice.

An effective example of successful use of this technique occurred when several Garneau residents refused to move out of the way of bulldozers which were razing a block of housing. You will likely have to space your events however, to avoid losing credibility.

- Press Releases

A press release accompanied by a brief or other information can often interest the media in doing a news item about your cause. Make sure you mail it to all media at the same time. (For contacts and addresses, see Appendix.) It is important to follow up by calling to see if they have received it, read it and will do something about it. TV stations and newspapers receive numerous press releases daily and yours could get lost in the shuffle.

1. Use a controversial headline over your story, or one that mentions some person or place already in the news.
2. In your first paragraph, include the five W's, "who", "what", "when", "where" and "why". The paragraph should be short; you can use the rest of the press release to elaborate.
3. Keep all your sentences short and avoid long words. Do not use more than one three syllable word per sentence.
4. Date your press release with release time.
5. Put the name of your group at the top, and the name and phone number of the contact person(s) for further details at the bottom.

Leslie Bella, "Up the Grass Roots"

- Press Conference

If you want more coverage than what is included in your press release, you can set a date for a meeting with the media and include an announcement of time, date and place on your press release. This should also be followed up by telephone contact.

Again, try to have your press coverage happen early enough in the day to allow reporters to prepare their stories for the evening broadcast or paper. Have an organized, prepared

presentation ready and people available to respond to questions. Refreshments have been known to attract the media.

The content of a press conference should be newsworthy. For example, you may be proposing an alternative to the MacKinnon Ravine Freeway.

3) Community Service Announcements

Most newspapers, television stations and radio stations provide free announcements of community events. Each has its own deadline so be sure to enquire and get your announcements in early.

It helps if you make it straight forward and brief, and answer the five questions of who, what, where, why and when. If possible, your announcement should be typed, double or triple spaced with wide margins.

4) Neighbourhood Section, Edmonton Journal

Every day in the Neighbourhood Section of the Edmonton Journal there are reports of community events. Each day focuses on a particular area of the City:

Monday	-	West
Tuesday	-	Northeast
Wednesday	-	Southwest
Thursday	-	Central
Friday	-	Southeast

A reporter is assigned to each of these geographical areas and is eager to be kept up to date about current activities.

The section also prints announcements of future events, such as:

CALDER Action Committee will hold its annual meeting Monday at 7:30 p.m. at St. Edmund School, 11712 - 130th Ave. Calder MLA Tom Chambers will discuss transportation in the area. Rezoning and parks plans also will be discussed. Residents planning spring repairs through the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) will hear the plan explained by program officer Alan Besecker.

5) Other Channels

Don't restrict yourself to news broadcasts. You can let your community in on what's happening by other, more in depth methods.

- Letters to the Editor

Several communities have already developed on-going letter exchanges in the Edmonton Journal and other publications stating their viewpoint about pressing issues. More elaborate explanations of your position may likewise be composed by one of your group and submitted for publication as "Reader's Comment".

- Talk Shows

Talk shows on radio and television are effective communication channels. If you are unaware of the various shows and their audiences give the stations a call. Some concerned groups, such as

URGE (Urban Reform Group of Edmonton), have started their own programs to discuss community concerns.

- Special Features

Media can often be persuaded to prepare or assist in the preparation of special feature items. For instance, two of the television stations prepared special programs based on the Montrose concerns and depicting their dramatic presentations.

- Community Programming; Cable Television

The local cable television companies encourage communities to produce their own features or regular programs. You can become involved in all aspects of programming from production and direction to camera work. These stations are more than happy to give you assistance and direction in using their facilities to get your message across.



Using the Media

II. ORGANIZING and MAINTAINING YOUR GROUP

People organize when individually they do not have enough power or influence to solve their problems and because finally they become fed up with outsiders always controlling their lives.

Donald R. Keating
The Power to Make it Happen

Careful consideration should be given to how you organize to carry out your objectives. Sometimes it helps to know the options that are available to not only obtain results, but also to help community members share in the task.

Generally, there are two kinds of groups: task oriented--get the job done at all cost; maintenance oriented--keep people in the group happy and involved.

You will likely want to develop a group which maintains a balance between the two, helping fellow community members to feel comfortable and useful but also trying your best to complete your planning tasks. The following ideas may assist you to actively continue your planning process and also avoid having your group collapse at a critical point.

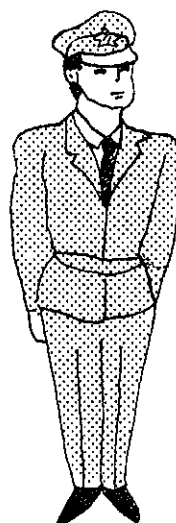
You should consider asking yourselves the following kinds of questions:

- What kind of leadership do you need and who should you select for that role?
- How formal do you want your group to be?
- How should you delegate responsibilities?

A. LEADERSHIP

It is important to select your leaders or spokespersons carefully as they will be determining how the group functions. They will also often be your contact with outside groups and authorities. If possible, it is usually a good idea to delay election or appointment of your leaders or officers until the members of your group have a chance to become acquainted and observe each other's weaknesses and strengths. In the interim, you could have rotating chairpersons, recorders and so forth to allow everyone the chance to test their abilities.

You may, in selecting your chairperson, president or spokesperson, want to look for the following abilities or characteristics:



- ability to help set group goals and objectives
- skilled strategist
- group skills
- previous board or organizational experience
- diplomacy
- speaking experience
- good listener

The leadership positions of your group should change fairly often to avoid dead wood, elitism within the ranks, and to give all members an opportunity to develop leadership skills and confidence. It is also, however, a good idea to re-elect some members of your executive or leadership body to ensure continuity.

B. GROUP STRUCTURE

Depending on your own circumstances or preferences, your group may operate within a loose, informal structure or a more formal one. There are advantages and disadvantages to both. An informal structure allows for flexibility and continuous change of roles and directions. A formal structure allows leaders to be more easily identified and often provides added credibility in the eyes of outsiders.

If your group will be managing large sums of money or applying for financial support, it would be advisable to draft a formal constitution setting out your purpose, goals and objectives, group structures and individual member's responsibilities. Do keep in mind, though, that unnecessary formalities can kill the initiative of a group.

If you decide to formalize your structure, you may decide it worthwhile to become legally incorporated. Most community groups who do so normally incorporate as a society, or a non-profit corporation. Both are registered at the Companies Branch, Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Basically, the difference between a society and a non-profit corporation is that the former allows for an open membership while the latter restricts its membership to those actively involved or employed in the task. For further clarification and assistance in becoming incorporated, you

could call the Companies Branch, the Legal Resource Centre or the Edmonton Social Planning Council.

Advantages of legal incorporation include the right to apply for charitable status with the Federal Revenue Office. Also, liability becomes, in most cases, limited to the assets of the group rather than individual members.

But remember, not all tasks require a complex, legally constituted body to succeed. You will have to judge your own situation and make a decision.

REMEMBER, HOW YOU STRUCTURE YOUR GROUP DEPENDS ON WHY YOU HAVE BECOME A GROUP.

A valuable resource to assist you in developing and organizing your community group is a series of films on a well known American community organizer, Saul Alinsky, available on loan through the National Film Board:

- People and Power
- Deciding to Organize
- A Continuing Responsibility
- Building and Organization

Whether or not you agree with the content of the films, they can serve as catalysts for further discussion on the best alternatives for your particular circumstances. Films also serve as a focal point and drawing card to bring people out to your meetings.

C. DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

When delegating responsibilities to members of the community, consideration should be given to their particular interests and skills. Members who feel they are contributing a particular expertise in a way they feel comfortable about

will usually do a much better job than those who feel they are being forced or assigned to complete the task. It is worth taking some time to find out what willing resources are within your group or community at large and open the invitation to them. Responsibility can be delegated to:

- individuals
- committees, permanent (standing) or temporary (ad hoc)
- task forces

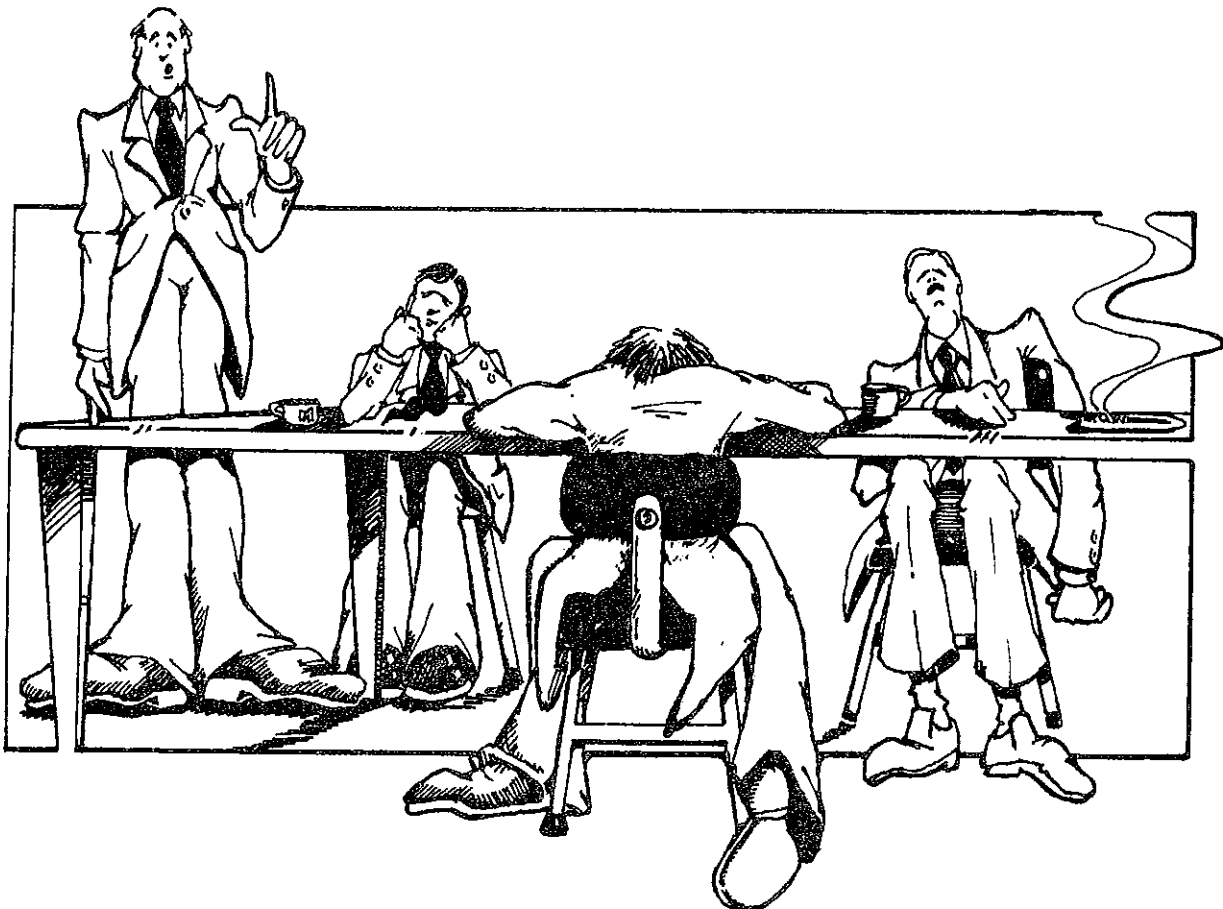
The value of committees or task forces is that they divide the workload, develop and utilize expertise, permit decision-making between meetings of the group as a whole and facilitate learning and satisfaction for members. With task forces you often pull in additional expertise and manpower from outside the existing group members, most commonly for a short-term specific purpose.

Where individuals, committee or task force members are delegated responsibility, the degree of authority to make

decisions without the total group should be clarified. Following is the potential range of authority.

- Limited Advisor
the committee investigates and reports;
the group makes the decisions.
- Active Advisor
the committee investigates and suggests action;
the group will probably take the committee's suggestions.
- Limited Agent
the committee can take action with the group's consent.
- Active Agent
the committee takes action;
the group can later ratify the action taken. (Ratify means "to approve and sanction formally".)

For examples and further clarification you could refer to "Boards 'n Staff 'n All That Stuff", available from the Day Care Branch, Edmonton Social Services or the Edmonton Social Planning Council.



When a task is assigned, both the community group and person(s) delegated the authority should be clear on how it is to be carried out.

Groat Estates, a community group which was successful in developing a community plan, is an example of a well-organized group. Not only did they have strong vocal leadership but they knew how to delegate responsibilities and tasks to a number of working committees. They appointed committees to gather information on particular subjects such as housing, transportation, history of area, parks and recreation. As well, a "bush fire" committee was in charge of dealing with current issues facing the community, such as proposed highrise developments.

Thus, they were able to continue to handle on-going problems without disbanding their planning process or overworking individual members.

Many Edmonton community groups are beginning to realize that the smooth functioning of their organization is directly related to how effective they are in carrying out their goals. Where members of a group are unclear as to who is supposed to be doing what, everyone sits around waiting for someone else to act. One method that has been successful in identifying this confusion and setting groups on the road to more effective action is the board/staff workshop or board/membership workshop. For information on how to carry out such a process you could contact the Edmonton Social Planning Council who have facilitated a number of these workshops.

D. MEETINGS

Knowing how to organize and run meetings is an essential skill needed to sustain a group through a planning process. Meetings, at the best of times, can be confusing or boring to people who attend. A meeting that lacks pur-

pose and organization is disastrous. Persons attending such a meeting are not likely to come to another. On the other hand, a successful, well-planned meeting which attempts to include everyone can encourage people to become involved and remain involved.

1) Planning Your Meetings

However obvious it may seem, make sure you identify and explain the purpose of your meeting. Too often this is not considered. In "Up the Grass Roots", Leslie Bella lists a number of possible reasons for holding a meeting:

- to meet old friends
- to meet new people
- to conduct business efficiently
- to plan or make decisions
- to receive information
- the rally--to display strength and support
- the protest--to show strength and unanimous support.

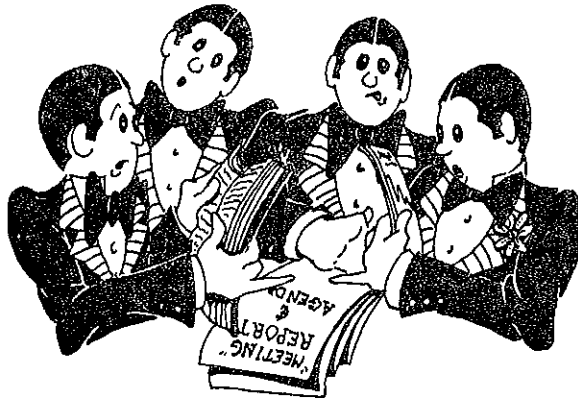
Your meeting can be designed to accommodate any or all of the above purposes. What you hope to achieve is an important consideration in planning your agenda and invitation list.

The next task is to develop an agenda. When organizing a meeting, it is handy to have a checklist of items you should consider when preparing for it.

It is generally a good idea to briefly go over the agenda at the beginning of a meeting and ask for variations or additions. What you want to avoid is people attempting to sidetrack your purpose with their own hidden or undisclosed agendas. So get people's ideas and concerns into the open at the beginning to avoid later conflicts.

2) Running Your Meetings

How you conduct your meetings is as important as the content of your meetings. As stated earlier, the agenda should be jointly approved and everyone



should be made aware of it by reading it aloud, displaying it on the wall, or providing written copies. How formally you wish to conduct your meetings is up to you and likely will vary with the nature of the meeting.

Factors important to the success of a meeting are countless--ranging from the ability of the chairperson to a seating plan. Keep in mind the point made earlier about the purpose of the meeting. Everything should focus on that consideration. For example, if the purpose of your meeting is to discover the housing concerns of community members and you expect a large turn out, it would be wise to meet in a room large enough to divide into small discussion groups. It would also help to have people ready to lead the discussion in those small groups and another to record the input.

It is up to you to determine whether you want to follow parliamentary procedure. It is our experience that overly strict adherence to these rules can be deadly. However, these rules can be helpful as a general guideline for the making and passing of motions, determining a quorum and limiting endless debate. Explanatory materials on meeting procedure and rules can be obtained from the Edmonton Social Planning Council.

Various community groups have also found it beneficial, particularly in small gatherings, to use some technique for introduction of those present. This breaks the ice and makes newcomers feel more comfortable about contributing to the discussion.

3) Recording Meetings

Keeping a record of what happens at your meetings is important for future reference and self-protection. During your planning process you may often want to refer back to decisions made by the group or statements made by a guest speaker or visiting official. Where the exact wordings of proceedings are critical (such as meetings with city planners or aldermen discussing your proposals) you may find a tape recorder useful or arrange for verbatim minutes. If you use the latter method, it is a good idea to forward copies to relevant people and, in some cases, obtain their written approval of the content.

For the majority of your meetings, you will probably find a brief record sufficient. Minutes should be adopted by group members at the next meeting.

Not only can minutes serve as a handy reference and safeguard, but copies mailed or delivered to group members or the total community can serve to keep people informed. Basically, your minutes should include the following:

- kind of meeting
- name of group
- date and location
- names of attendants
- approval or disapproval of minutes from last meeting
- main points of discussion including conflicting opinions
- motions
- time of adjournment

4) Evaluation of Meetings

It is sometimes important to have the meetings you organize evaluated either by those who attend or someone appointed for that task. The evaluation can tell you what you did right as well as wrong. Hopefully, this information will help you learn how to organize a better meeting next time.

There are numerous methods of evaluation. You can set aside some time at the end of the meeting for feedback from participants or, if you appointed a particular person to do the evaluation, he or she can report impressions to the participants for discussion. A private report can be made to the organizers as well, perhaps at a later date. You can also use a prepared evaluation form in addition to, or instead of, one of the other methods. Following this section is a sample evaluation form.

While evaluation is usually reserved for large or public meetings, it can also be very valuable for assessing the effectiveness of your own community or core group process and procedures.

E. WORKING WITH PEOPLE

Remember, people are one of your most powerful tools. Learning how to work with different types of people is a necessary skill and one which can only be developed through experience and over a period of time. No two people will share the same needs and wants, and, as a member of the Groat Estate Community Planning Group put it -- "you have to find out each person's 'hook' ". It is her view that you cannot expect every community member to be interested in getting involved in the same way. What you must do is discover that person's particular skill or area of interest ('hook') and put it to use effectively.

It is also important to run your meetings and your activities on a personal level. Every participant is an individual. A community planning group tends to be action or task oriented and participants can easily be bulldozed. By attempting to be sensitive about the needs of the people in the group you will be less likely to alienate them or leave them behind. In the long run, you will be prolonging the life of the group and ensuring a backup support group.

Sample Evaluation Form

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOLLOWING?	<u>Very Poor</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Av.</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Very Good</u>
1) Physical arrangement of the workshop	1	2	3	4	5
2) Social atmosphere	1	2	3	4	5
3) Information and material provided (information kit, maps, resource table)	1	2	3	4	5
4) Process used in your small group	1	2	3	4	5
5) Resource people available	1	2	3	4	5
6) General productiveness of the workshop	1	2	3	4	5

1. DO YOU FEEL YOU WERE PROPERLY ORIENTED
TO THE WORKSHOP PROCESS? YES _____ NO _____
 2. DID YOU HAVE FULL OPPORTUNITY TO
PARTICIPATE IN GROUP SESSIONS? YES _____ NO _____
 3. HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THE SIZE OF
YOUR GROUP? TOO BIG _____ TOO SMALL _____ JUST
RIGHT _____
 4. HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION
OF THE RESOURCE PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP? TOO MUCH _____ TOO
LITTLE _____ JUST
RIGHT _____
 5. DID YOU FIND THE GUEST SPEAKERS'
PRESENTATIONS VALUABLE? YES _____ NO _____
- DID YOU FIND TODAY'S SESSIONS, ON
A WHOLE, INTERESTING? YES _____ NO _____

PLEASE COMMENT

1. Do you feel you gained anything from this workshop? (i.e., awareness
of resources, new ideas, facts). If so, please elaborate.
2. What do you feel were the strong points of the workshop? Weak points?
3. Do you have any suggestions for improving future workshops?
4. Would you like to see another workshop similar to this? If so,
would you be willing to participate in the planning of this workshop?

III. DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

"Furthermore, citizen participation doesn't imply simply more people attending more meetings. It means the involvement of more people in dialogue. We have to learn about how to achieve this. Communication is not a one-way process: to achieve dialogue, government must build into its own structure channels for the citizen to react and express opinions; the mass media and Cable TV must think about 2-way circuits; colleges, schools and voluntary organizations that want to be community oriented must learn more fully how to relate to their communities."

James A. Draper

Introduction

Citizen Participation: Canada

If, in your planning process, you hope to encourage participation from as many people as possible, you will find it necessary to develop a communication link between the community, your core planning group and, where relevant, the professional planner. You will need ways of collecting information about expressed needs and concerns of individuals and you will need ways of feeding this information back to the total community. Once you have investigated solutions, community reaction to and community selection of alternatives must occur.

A community organization which does not attempt to facilitate participation and a two-way communication system between itself and the rest of the community is not representing the neighbourhood's interests but rather its own.

This approach can be dangerous to successful community planning. It will often result in dissention and disputes within the community, not a healthy climate for community planning to take place. Although getting information out to the community and pulling information in from the community is a time and energy consuming job, it should be done at least at key points in the planning process.

There are numerous methods for enabling this information flow, many of which were discussed under the topic of recruiting membership. Listening stations, coffee parties, theatre events, neighbourhood displays, community tours, video-tape and block captains can be useful tools not only for obtaining initial interest in your planning activities, but also as vehicles for on-going information exchange. For example, block captains can assume whatever role you mutually decide is beneficial, ranging from responsibility for distribution of newsletters to holding regular block meetings for updating of current activities and concerns. Riverdale community found the latter system extremely valuable in the development of their plan.

There are other techniques which can prove effective as communication links. We have chosen to provide some information on three methods found to be successful in Edmonton:

- i) WORKSHOPS
- ii) Tabloids
- iii) Community Self-Surveys

A. WORKSHOP

A technique which can provide significant input from the residents of the neighbourhood is the use of community workshops. In 1978 the Community of Oliver Group (COG) decided to run workshops in four different quadrants in the area to ensure input from a maximum number of people throughout the neighbourhood. It proved an excellent first-hand way for the community organization to understand the various concerns of the residents.

What is a Workshop?

A workshop is a short-term (one morning, one day, weekend) meeting of individuals who are prepared to work (think, discuss, decide) toward the solution of a problem or accomplishment of a certain task. In a workshop session, the task to be accomplished by the participants is outlined very clearly by the chairperson. Participants then break into small, manageable discussion groups (8 to 10 maximum) under the guidance of a group leader. The group leader is not there to become directly involved in the discussion but rather to ensure all members have an opportunity to contribute towards accomplishing the task at hand.

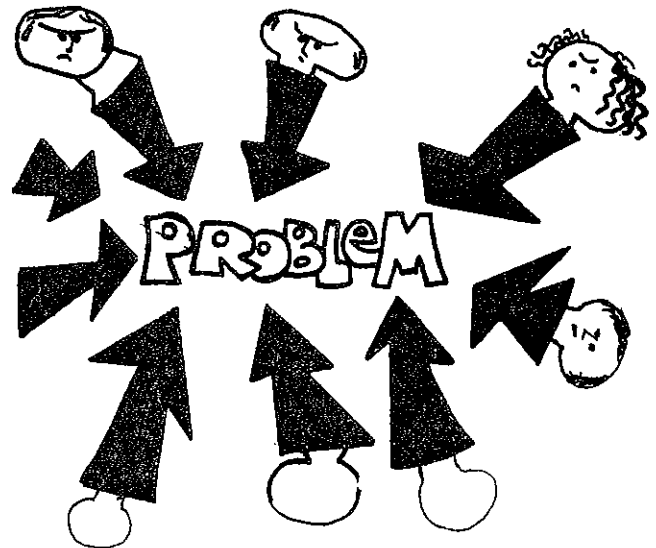
Two important factors characterize a workshop. Firstly, participants must be prepared to work. That means they can't sit around and let others do the thinking, discussing and deciding. Each workshop participant is expected to do exactly what the word "participant" implies: participate. The input of every person is crucial.

One way of ensuring success in this area is by providing ample explanatory material to each participant before the workshop. Depending on the workshop theme, this written material (often referred to as an "information package") could include anything from historical

background to statistics. A well thought-out and well-documented information package distributed a week or two before the workshop can save precious time by preparing participants for the task and allowing more time for actual discussion.

You might consider trying a more innovative way of distributing preparatory information other than written material. A Calgary community group utilized a local cable television station. Cable stations in most areas openly encourage this type of program. Your material could be presented by one or more group members supported by maps, slides, films and graphic presentations. Other community groups have found it useful to finish off the presentation with an open-line discussion and answer time slot for clarification and viewer comments. This can also help to develop more personal contact. The program could be publicized by flyer, community newsletter and other media sources.

Secondly, a workshop is centered around a specific problem or task to be accomplished. Therefore, as an organizer of a workshop you must make sure you have clearly defined the problem or tasks. For example, in Oliver, the purpose of the workshops was to find out the concerns and needs of the residents for the preparation of a total community plan. At each workshop, the



participants were assigned the following tasks.

- identify their concerns
- prioritize their concerns
- propose recommendations to deal with the concerns.

Make sure, as well, that you allot enough time for small working groups to be able to discuss and deal with the task at hand. Depending on the subject, it is recommended that at least 45 minutes or more be provided for group working sessions to allow everyone a chance to have a say.

Organizing a workshop is much the same as organizing a meeting. Again, it is handy to use a checklist of things you will need for the workshop. The aids you will need, such as pencils, paper, flipcharts, blackboards, projectors, screen, tape recorder, will depend on the mechanisms you will be using within the workshop. Remember that a variety of formats including a panel, guest speaker, or a slide presentation, could be used at different times throughout the session to present new information and redirect group tasks.

If you wish assistance in planning and organizing a workshop, consult with local resource people such as the Edmonton Social Planning Council, other communities, or your Edmonton Social Services Community Worker.

Helpful written materials to consult if you are planning a workshop include:

- "Improving the Results of Workshops,
Leonard Nadler
PART I Planning Workshops
PART II Conducting Workshops
PART III Linkage, Evaluation and
Follow-up
- "Workshop Planning Guide",
Tony Macelli
- "Workshops, Planning, Conducting,
Evaluating", Larry Nolan Davis
and Earl McCallon.

These publications are available through the Preventive Social Services Branch, Alberta Social Services and Community Health.

B. TABLOID

As the planning process progresses, it becomes increasingly important that information flows out to the community in such a manner as to ensure the presented message:

- reaches all residents
- is both accurate and understandable
- is both suitable and interesting.

This is why neighbourhoods that are carrying out a planning process often will make full use of a tabloid form of newspaper to present ideas and information to the community. For example, the Strathcona Historical Society have sent out to residents special tabloid newspapers filled with pictures and extensive information on the Old Strathcona area. These are not only interesting and helpful, but considered keepsakes by many people who received them.

The Community of Oliver Group also prepared a tabloid presenting information and thought-provoking ideas for Oliver residents prior to their workshop.



Advantages of a Tabloid Newspaper

The advantages of a tabloid newspaper to relay information to the community are numerous:

- The tabloid allows for an interesting format which can include pictures and cartoons to illustrate your message.
- The tabloid can include a questionnaire or notice of a community planning workshop which will encourage response from the recipient.
- Distributing information through a tabloid newspaper ensures (if mailed) that every household in the neighbourhood will receive the information.
- A tabloid newspaper is not likely to be mistaken as an advertising flyer and therefore will probably be read.
- Written material such as the tabloid provides the opportunity for residents to absorb and understand at their own pace the information being presented to them.

C. COMMUNITY SELF-SURVEY

"Fact-finding is not something that only highly trained specialists can do. It is frequently done with confidence and a fair degree of skill by the citizens of the community. When the citizens, themselves, do all the work, it is called a self-study.



The kind of self-study that goes directly to the people to find out what they think, feel and do, we shall refer to as a self-survey. The self-survey relies on the ability of local people to size up problems, decide on the information needed, develop meaningful questions and then go to the people for the answers."

Larson, Vernon W., Key to Community:
The Self-Survey in Saskatchewan
Communities

Whether a community organization is involved with a single issue or whether it is involved in comprehensive planning for the neighbourhood, it is important to know and be able to articulate community concerns. As described earlier, there are many ways of gathering concerns of residents within your neighbourhood. However, your group may decide a more formal, systematic investigation about people's attitudes towards the community is necessary. In this case you should turn to some form of community self-survey.

There are any number of issues that are potential subjects of a community survey. Feelings about neighbourhood preservation, zoning and land use, recreational space and facilities, health, education and social services are a few.

If the purpose of your group is to engage in comprehensive community planning, then you may want the survey to cover a number of issues affecting your community. In any case, to achieve wide community participation in the survey, and to be able to use the results in planning for the community, you must be clear on the purposes and objectives of the survey. The community group must be well organized to conduct a successful survey.

To avoid confusion and to encourage response, it is advisable to make certain community residents understand from the outset that the survey is being sponsored by their community organization.

1) Preparing a Questionnaire

The purpose and design of the survey questionnaire should be decided upon at a meeting which has been widely publicized and to which representatives of various interest groups in the community have been invited. After choosing the issues to be covered in the survey, you may want to divide tasks among sub-committees. For example, one sub-committee could be responsible for designing the questionnaire, one for publicity, one for distribution and collection, and one for analyzing the data and preparing and presenting a report.

Hints for Preparing Questions

Questions should:

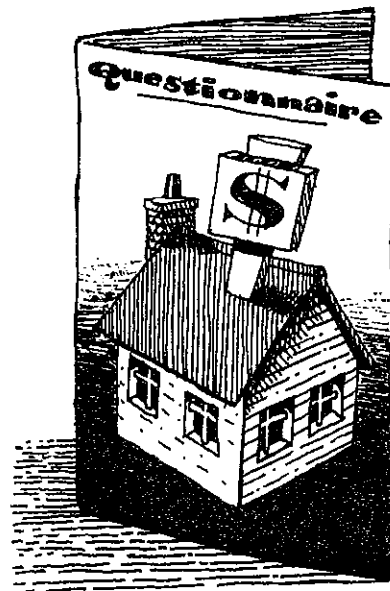
- 1) Be simple, clearly stated, and easy to answer;
- 2) Contain only one major idea;
- 3) Be as short as possible and still communicate the idea;
- 4) Not be stated in such a way that a particular answer is implied by the question.

Ordering Questions

- 1) The first few items should be easy to answer, attention getting, and non-controversial;
- 2) Questions pertaining to the same subject matter should be grouped together to avoid jumping from one train of thought to another;
- 3) Questions involving more thought and/or asking for more personal information should be located in the middle or toward the end of a questionnaire;
- 4) Questions which use the same form or style of questioning (such as those requiring "yes", "no", or "don't know" answers should be grouped together as much as possible.

Baumel, Hobbs, Powers
The Community Survey - Its Use in
Development and Action Programs

Included in the Appendix are portions of the Groat Estate Residents



Association and Garneau Community Planning Committee questionnaires.

They provide examples of both the form and content of questions that can be asked in a community self-survey.

2) Pre-Testing the Questionnaire

In addition, the questionnaire should be pre-tested. People involved in the survey who were not engaged in the design of the questionnaire could fill it out and then offer comments and criticisms. After revision, the questionnaire should be in a form suitable for distribution. It is also important to select a sample--what groups and how many people do you want to answer the questionnaire? As Baumel, et al state, "the number of households to be included in the sample depends on the number of households in the area, the desired precision of the results, and the objectives of the study". You must also consider such practical factors as the number of people who have volunteered to distribute the survey and your time limit.

3) Publicity

To achieve maximum cooperation and response, it is important to publicize the survey prior to distribution of the questionnaires. People must be made to feel that their input is important and the information is going to be used by the whole community for their mutual benefit. The community could be informed of the coming survey through special meetings, a community newsletter, letters sent to each household, or via block captains.

4) Conducting the Survey

There are any number of ways of distributing and collecting a questionnaire including mailing, including a pre-addressed, stamped envelope for response, printing in your newsletter, handing them out at the local food market or shopping centre. It is important to be aware that more people respond when the questionnaire is delivered personally.



Guidelines for Questionnaire Distribution

Explain the reason for the survey and identify the originating groups and organizations to the respondent.

Stress the anonymity of the respondent. Assure the householder that his/her answers can in no way be traced to him/her specifically.

It is desirable to agree on a time when the completed questionnaire will be picked up, but it is even better to complete it, if possible, then and there. There should be a minimum of one day and a maximum of three days between the time a questionnaire is left with a family and the time it will be picked up. Even after explanation, a few people will probably refuse to fill out a questionnaire. In this event, make an attempt to insure that the individual fully understands the intent and purposes of the survey as well as the assurance of his anonymity as a respondent. If he still refuses, thank the person for his/her time and leave. Pressure and arguing could do more harm than good in this situation.

Explain carefully to each respondent how to complete the questionnaire. The interviewer may go through a few questions to insure that the method of response is understood. However, be careful not to express your own opinions about any of the questions.

Baumel, Hobbs, Powers
The Community Survey - Its Use in Development and Action Programs

5) Tabulation, Summary and Interpretation of Results

After collecting the questionnaires, the next steps are tabulating, summarizing and interpreting the data. If you have received outside assistance on earlier stages of the survey, for example from the Department of Sociology at the University or the Research Assistants Program at Grant MacEwan College, they may help you in tabulating and interpreting the results. When the Groat Estate Residents' Association did a survey, they had the results computerized at the University and their planner drafted a report based on the survey.

In any case, a brief report should be written which states why the survey was done and how successful it was. It should include a summary of the results of the survey and an interpretation of the findings.

6) Presentation and Distribution of Results

Remember that you do a survey not just to collect information but as a guide to action. The report should be widely distributed and presented at a community meeting. After being presented, the report can be discussed or debated. Then there should be a discussion of strategy. Initial dialogue may focus on what the community may need to meet the concerns identified by the survey. In other words, the survey of community concerns can be a bridge between arousing people's initial interest and setting the stage for comprehensive planning.

Again, the benefits of a community survey are many faceted. Not only are you going to have information available about how people in your community think, but those who distribute the survey can begin to develop a rapport with other members of their community and initiate a dialogue about what is happening and what should happen. People are much more likely to get involved as a result of a personal contact and feeling of purpose. Those who participated in distributing the survey may develop a deeper understanding of who lives within the neighbourhood and what perspective their neighbours have about their environment. The community looks a little different from each individual's front window.

In summation then, the whole process of communication is a two-way system. You require input from the community in order to discover the variety and commonality of needs. You then feed this information back to the residents so they can be prioritizing needs and determining the goals, objectives and strategies they wish to develop to meet those needs. After identifying alternative strategies for achieving its goals, the community can make decisions on the course of action it wishes to follow.

Hopefully this chapter has shown you some methods which can facilitate the communication process. Remember that you can use a number of these methods simultaneously if you are interested in achieving the maximum results.

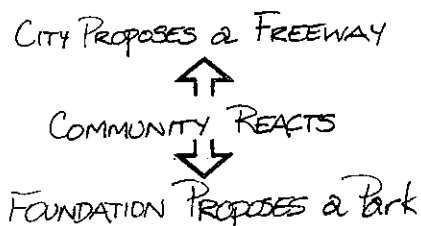
IV. FINDING DIRECTION: Defining Purpose, Goals and Objectives

Essentially, planning consists of stating needs, looking at solutions and taking action. Creative planning differs from simple reaction in that community action is no longer haphazard or brought about in response to outside factors. In choosing to enter a planning process the community is moving away from outside-directed action and response. It is beginning to respond to the needs and concerns felt and articulated by people in the community itself.

In the reaction process it is some force outside the community which is identifying needs and determining the solutions. The community's role is merely to react to ideas and proposals of the outside force. You lobby for or against someone else's plans.

In the planning process the community takes a look at itself and comes up with needs, concerns and solutions. The community then approaches outside forces, where necessary, with its plans and proposals for action. You lobby for support of your plans.

THE COMMUNITY REACTION PROCESS



THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS



While these diagrams present an over simplified version of the two processes, they do represent the essential differences in how the community will operate. In reality, most communities who choose to become involved in planning as opposed to reacting will likely not be able to avoid the latter entirely. In other sections, ideas are shared in how to bring people together and to collect information about their needs and concerns. This section provides assistance in transforming those expressed needs and concerns into guided direction for action.

An example may provide clarification. Several people express the need for more parkland. This provides little direction for specific action. Further discussion and clarification among community residents indicates that, while the neighbourhood has several large open fields for active sports, no appropriate space exists for just sitting, reading or enjoying nature. The community has identified the specific need and can now investigate ways to meet that need.

There is no one correct way to articulate needs or to seek solutions. The following is one process groups have found helpful. You can adopt it or adapt it or reject it. In this process, you take the raw information collected about people's concerns and needs and define the following in sequential order so you can develop your plan of action:

- Purpose
- Goals
- Objectives
- Strategies or Action Plans

A. PURPOSE

Purpose is a broad general statement which reflects a defined need. For example, if your need is to have a safe, healthy environment for your children, a statement of purpose would then be to provide a safe environment for our children. The statement reflects your need.

B. GOALS

Goals are narrower in scope than the purpose and appropriately derived from the purpose. Goals are established as targets for fulfilling purpose and must be attainable and reasonable. Referring again to the previous example, one of the goals (as there would probably be several) towards providing a safe environment might be to develop a block parent program.

C. OBJECTIVES

Objectives are steps to achieving goals. They must be both measurable (that is did it happen as planned) and possible to achieve. Objectives should be carried out in the order of priority to achieve your goal. If your goal is to develop a block parent program, your objectives might be the following:

1. To meet with police and members of the community by January 30.
2. To develop a volunteer training program by February 28.

3. To recruit volunteers for block parents by February 28.
4. To train volunteers by March 30.
5. To inform and educate children about block parent program by March 30.

As you can see from the example, a date should be set for completion of each objective based on the proposed deadline for your goal, people available to help and a reasonable time allowed for completion of each task.

D. STRATEGIES OR ACTION PLANS

Strategies are the specific details of how you are going to carry out your objectives. They will deal with the following kinds of questions:

- Who will do it?
- How will it be done?
- What will it cost and where will the funds come from?
- What materials and supplies are needed?
- Who will make sure it happens?

Again, using the sample objective "to recruit volunteers for block parents by February 28" you may come up with an action plan resembling the examples at the end of this section.

The developing of purpose, goals, objectives and eventual implementation of your strategies or action plan is not a one-shot task. As you successfully implement some of your ideas and achieve some goals you may find it necessary to remake your outline plan to ensure you stay on track. If you have succeeded in achieving one of your goals or objectives, it may no longer be necessary to direct energy towards that end.

The needs and concerns of the community members change over time and should be constantly monitored to see if your action plans are still directed toward the wishes of the community. Along the way, you may even discover that some of your goals or objectives are in conflict, necessitating a reassessment.

You may reach the conclusion that your original purpose is totally off base or not broad enough to encompass the overall aims of the group. Outside forces continue to affect the state of your community. A sudden development boom in your area may create new concerns for residents which must be examined.

The following example might clarify potential problems which require you to reassess the group's direction. You discover that your goal to have active games parks in the area conflicts with your goal to preserve the existing single family houses in the area. The situation may be that there is no existing parcel of empty land large enough for "active" parks. You are then forced to either demolish housing to accommodate a park of that size or else be without an "active games" park in order to preserve the housing. Because of this implication the community may end up re-evaluating and re-establishing the goals, objectives or strategies. For example, passive parks may be developed on small parcels of land if preserving houses becomes the community's most important priority. If parkland is the priority, the community may then look into the purchasing of a deteriorated block of housing in order to

develop the park.

Needless to say, many alternatives and their implications would have to be considered before your community made these re-adjustments. This example serves to illustrate to you that in planning is a continuous cycle of:

- developing purpose, goals, objectives, strategies
- implementing those strategies
- assessing the implications, and
- re-adjusting the purpose, goals, objectives and strategies.

How carefully you define your purpose, goals or objectives depends on the circumstances of each case. You will likely put more time into defining the "raison d'etre" of your community group than you will into individual short term projects. What is important to keep in mind is that you will further your cause more effectively if your daily activities are tied to your long term goal. One way of guaranteeing that happens is to examine why you are doing what you are doing before you do it. In other words, by defining the purpose, goals and objectives of your group and its activities you are helping the community to find direction.

STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

What	Who	Cost	Materials	Responsible
To collect names of all families in area.	Recruiting Committee		Voters List	Chairperson of Recruiting Committee
To send out preliminary letters to all families.	Recruiting Committee	\$10 postage (community group funds)	paper, typewriter, copying facilities	Chairperson of Recruiting Committee
To phone each family to ask for volunteers	Recruiting Committee		telephones	Chairperson of Recruiting Committee
To record names and phone numbers of all willing volunteers.	Recruiting Committee		forms	Chairperson of Recruiting Committee
To provide list of volunteers to Training Committee by February 28.	Recruiting Committee		paper	Chairperson of Recruiting Committee

THE TOTAL ACTION DEFINING PROCESS

Purpose	Goals	Objectives	Strategies
(Overall statement responds to need)	(Achievable Targets)	(Steps to Achieve Goal. Must be measurable and possible to achieve.)	(Action Plan. Specifics on how to implement objectives.)
1. To make our community a more interesting place in which to live.	One goal may be: to provide a mixture of housing accommodations which can cater to different lifestyles & incomes.	One example of an objective may be to: provide low income housing for senior citizens, families & singles by 1979.	One example of strategy may be that the Community Group apply to CMHC to set up a non-profit housing co-op.
2. To improve the aesthetic and environmental quality of the neighborhood.	One goal may be: to provide more passive parks in the neighborhood.	Examples of objectives may be: 1) to develop pocket parks in available spaces in the area by 1979. 2) to clean up garbage throughout the neighborhood by October 15.	Related to objective 1 some strategies may be: 1) for Parks Committee to investigate sites for parks. 2) for Community Group to buy or lease land for parks. 3) for Parks Committee to recruit volunteers for work brigade to landscape park and plant trees.

V. ROLES

"Does this imply that every planner would have to be a paragon of compassion, objectivity and firmness? It does. It also means that it is impossible for planning to be completely trouble free. There just are not enough saints to go around."

Harry Lash paraphrasing
Jim Wilson,
Planning In A Human Way

"At present, challenging public decisions could be viewed as a form of Kaftian baseball. Citizen groups are always the visiting team in their own home town."

Linda Christiansen-Ruffman
Barry Stuart
"Actors and Processes in Citizen Participatory Strategies:
Negative Aspects of Reliance
on Professionals"

Once you understand the basic principles of the community planning process--a continuous identification of needs and concerns, definition of direction and taking action--then understanding the proper roles for various parties becomes increasingly clear. By watching the experiences of Edmonton communities who have begun to move from a totally reactive role to one of creative planning, a number of conflict situations have been known to arise between the following:

- the community and the planning group
- the community and the professional planner
- the community and other communities.

Potential conflict situations can be avoided or minimized if you work out a clear definition and distinction of roles for each party and continuously monitor and evaluate their effectiveness. The following suggestions may help you to keep on track and hopefully avoid unnecessary hostilities.

A. YOUR COMMUNITY AND THE COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP

The most important point to keep in mind here is the reason for the existence of a core planning group--to help initiate and facilitate the planning process for the entire community. Make sure your



The Community Planning Group

community group does not fall into the role of making all the decisions on behalf of the entire community. Your planning and coordinating group should maintain constant contact with other community members if only because their support will eventually be necessary to implement the planning goals and objectives. Logically, it follows that people are more likely to involve themselves in action if they helped to determine the reason for the action. They will then have a vested interest.

Where your planning group assumes the role of planning for the community, you then force the remainder of people in the community back into the reactive role. A small core group of people from within the neighbourhood has no more right or potential for success in identifying community concerns than an outside-appointed planner or planning group. Assumptions of a self-proclaimed planning role by one small group can result in any of the following:

- loss of credibility for the community and planning group
- dissention within the community
- formation of opposing groups within the community
- failure to implement the plan because of lack of support.

Concerns and needs representative of everyone in the area can only be properly articulated by the total community. Any other method is both unrepresentative and unsubstantiated. Should you find it necessary to obtain outside support for implementation of an action plan, you will hold far greater credibility if you can show how your entire community decided on this action. The community will also be there behind you lending their support.

Remember, the role of your community planning group, be it a board, committee or ad hoc collection of concerned people, is not to plan. Its role is to do the leg-work for carrying out the process, to assist the community to reach a consensus on what they want, and to help make it happen.

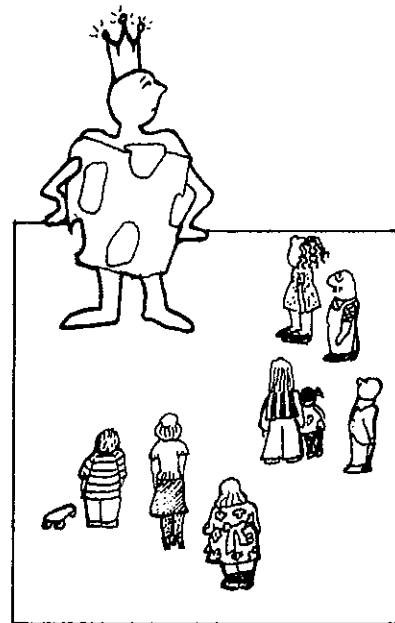
B. YOUR COMMUNITY AND THE PROFESSIONAL PLANNER

"Planners are different things to different people: visionaries, magicians, omniscient experts; villains, stupid bureaucrats, lackeys of the capitalistic system. In reality we are people, human beings, and as such sometimes act like visionaries, sometimes like stupid bureaucrats."

Harry Lash

Planning In A Human Way

You may be assisted in the formation of your plans by the appointment of a city planner or the selection of your own. In both situations, it is important at the onset to clarify the responsibilities and authorities of both the planner and your community. It is your choice if you decide to allow someone else to determine your needs and to come up with the solutions; but don't be fooled into believing you are engaged in a community planning process. If you want to be involved in the decision-making, then the following suggestions may help you to utilize the professional planner and adapt that person to your process.



The Professional Planner

In community planning, the role of the professional planner is that of a technical advisor and, if properly skilled, as a group facilitator. The planner's role is not to develop a plan for you but to help your assigned planner, because his/her experience and expertise can be useful in any of the following capacities:

- assisting you in facilitating a process to find out what the rest of the community wants or needs
- assisting you in obtaining and analyzing information and data about the community
- advising you on various planning alternatives
- advising you on the implications of various alternatives
- advising you of the implication of your community's goals on the city's overall goals and vice versa.

In essence, the planner's role is to provide assistance and advice. The community makes the ultimate decisions. Remember, if you assume a role of reacting to your planner's concept of the community's needs and your planner's analysis of the appropriate courses of actions, you are not planner, the planner is.

Keeping this in mind, remember that it is good practice to keep channels of communication open to the professional planner if you have one. Ideally, the planner should have an office based in the community where any and all can drop in and seek advice and information. However, if this is not possible, make sure you keep your planner advised of what is happening on a regular basis. The following suggestions could prove beneficial:

- Define roles from the very start and continually reassess and evaluate their effectiveness
- Set up weekly briefing and information-exchange meetings
- Record minutes of community meetings and send copies to the planner

- Invite him/her to special community meetings or socials
- Request him/her to send you documentation of other meetings they have attending concerning your community.

It is to your advantage to establish good rapport and communication with the professional planner. He/she can be an asset to your planning process if used properly.

C. YOUR COMMUNITY AND OTHER COMMUNITIES

"Modern life is confused by the growing imbalance between the works of man and the works of nature. Yesterday a neighbour was someone who lived next door; today technology has obliterated old boundaries and our lives overlap and impinge in myriad ways. Thousands of men who affect the way we live will always remain strangers. An aircraft overhead or an act of air or water pollution miles away can impair an environment that thousands must share. If we are to formulate an appropriate land conscience, we must redefine the meaning of 'neighbour' and find new bonds of loyalty to the land."

Stewart L. Udall
The Quiet Crisis

Because what you do in your own area is bound to have a direct or indirect effect on other areas, particularly those in close proximity, there is always the possibility of conflict. When you reach the stage of implementing some of your solutions, you will want as much support as you can muster. It makes sense, then, to consider the impact of your plans and proposals on other communities and to work towards an action plan that will be mutually beneficial. This is an idyllic situation but nonetheless worth working toward.

Don't let outside forces destroy your plans by the tactic of "divide and conquer". This technique is too often in



Communities in Conflict

evidence. Take, for example, the issue of the closing of Keillor Road. Rather than considering the total transportation problems and potential solutions for a large area, the city chose to call public hearings on this one road. Communities began squabbling among each other on the pros and cons of the closing. Were those same communities instead to join forces and exchange ideas, each community could draw from the others for support and come up with a plan beneficial to all those affected.

Where you plan alternative traffic routes, don't be so naive as to think the

neighbouring area will sit back quietly and allow the traffic to be re-routed down its streets. Make a point of getting together at frequent intervals during your planning process to check out possible points of conflict. Try to avoid any situation that necessitates winners and losers.

Once you become aware of and begin to take responsibility for the way your community interacts with all the participants in your planning process, you will be well on the way to achieving your long-term goals.

VI. THE PROCESS OF PLANNING

"The plan is the sum of what you have decided to do, at any given point in time."

Gerard Farry quoted by Harry Lash
in Planning in A Human Way

Essentially what Gerard Farry is telling us is that you can never arrive at a concise, narrow definition of planning. Neither can you at any given point in time stop and proclaim "now we are finished; here is our community plan". Planning is a process. It is not an end product.

You need only look at your own community and total city to understand this concept of planning. As an example take the Community of Oliver which has been attempting, through a recently formed community based planning group, to find a way to preserve the older character of the area. Just when the group thinks it has considered all the potential destructive impacts and come up with alternative strategies, an external agent, City Council, re-opens a transportation scheme which could tear the community plan apart.

If the community group viewed their plan as static and inflexible, they would likely come to the conclusion they had failed. The group may even pack it in. But, where the plan is seen as whatever solution seems most appropriate given the circumstances, then the community simply re-assesses the situation and develops a new strategy. Thus, the reason for the first part of the book; maintain an ongoing active community planning group. There is no predetermined date of completing of "the plan"

and disbanding of the group. The group must be maintained in order to constantly reassess the situation.

THE PROCESS

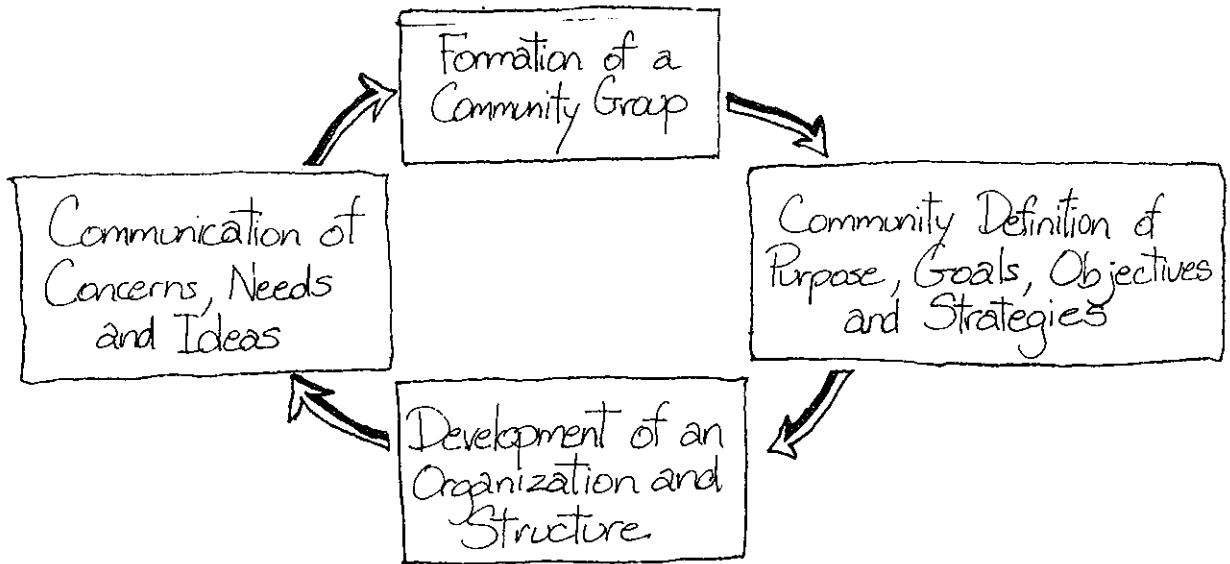
There are some who also believe no two communities can or will plan in the same way. There is no defined, step-by-step process to follow. While we agree that the planning experience of every community will be unique, we suggest there are a number of components which are essential to achieve the most beneficial results for members of the community and which every community will eventually deal with.

Once into your own planning process, you are likely to become aware of two major centres of activity:

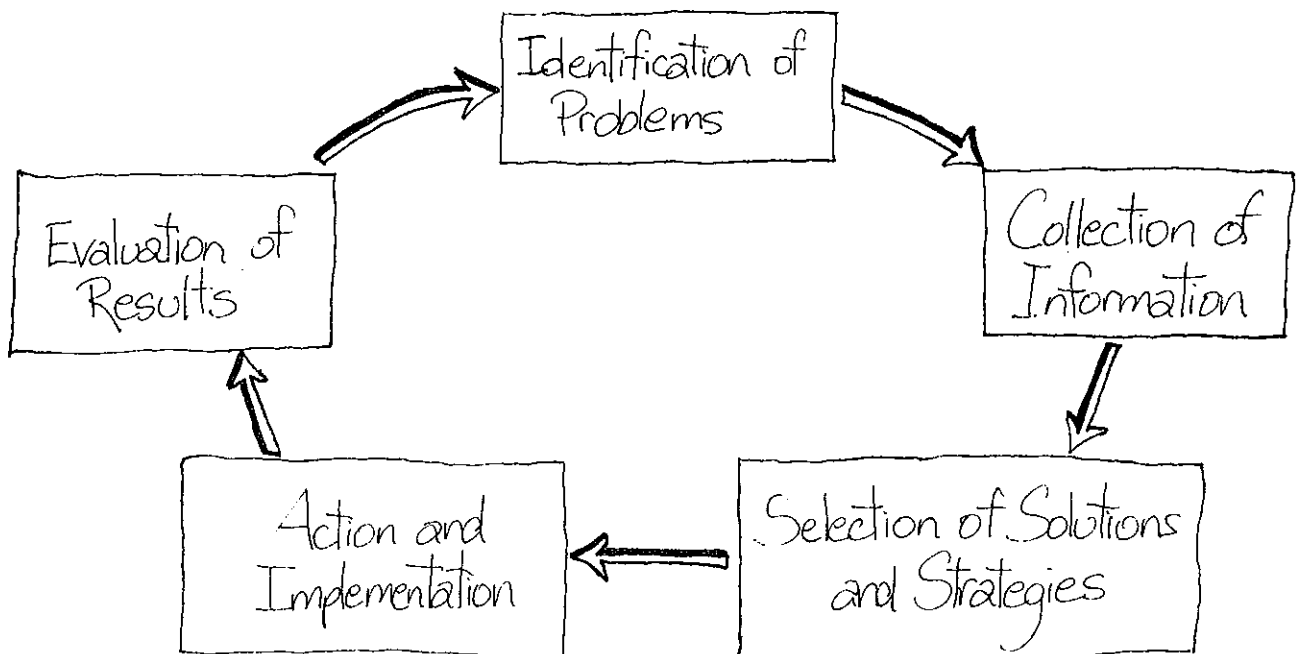
- encouraging and enabling community involvement
- identifying problems, collecting information and implementing solutions.

The first activity is necessary for the maintenance of your planning group. The second is task or action oriented. You will likely want to maintain a balance between performing tasks and keeping people involved. If you hope to implement any of your plans both must remain priorities.

Maintenance of the Community Planning Group



Task Oriented Action



Within these two priorities are a series of activities, including the following:

- Formation of a community planning group.
- Definition of the group's purpose, goals and objectives (*raison d'être*).
- Development of organization and structure.
- Development of a community communication network.
- Gathering of information about the community, its people, their concerns, and alternative solutions.
- Selection of alternatives and development of strategies.
- Implementation of strategies or taking action.
- Evaluation.

Planning activities are both interconnected and ongoing. Information about the community must be constantly updated. Strategies must be continually reassessed on the basis of new information collected and the outcome of action taken. The structure of the group must change to enable new tasks to be carried out. The community must be kept informed so that it can be called upon to support action plans. The community must be continuously consulted while selecting alternatives to be sure the support exists to implement them.

This perception of community planning as being cyclical and continuous in nature is supported and documented in a number of worthwhile publications, some of which are mentioned in the bibliography. All are worthwhile references for a better understanding of the nature of planning.

While there are no hard and fast steps it can help to keep certain principles in mind if you are aiming for a worthwhile, productive community planning process. These principles or guidelines are set forth in the preceding and forthcoming chapters of the book. Briefly, you will be most effective if your alternatives are drawn from well researched, objective information and your action plans are based on the direction provided by the total community. You will increase your chances of implementing planning ideas if your core planning group has maintained open channels of communication with the community they are supposed to be working for.