BEHAVIOURS AND ACTIONS

OF COMMUNITIES

THAT DISPLAY

VIBRANCE, RESILIENCE AND

SUSTAINABILITY

- SOME USEFUL CHECKLISTS

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Seven Pillars Of A
<u>Healthy Community</u>

(According to the Coalition for Healthier Cities and Communities)

- Practices ongoing dialogue
- Generates leadership
- Shapes its future
- Embraces diversity
- Knows itself
- Connects people and resources
- Creates a sense of community

(Outcome of the
1999 Healthy Community Agenda Campaign, USA)

"WHAT DOES A HEALTHY COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE?"
(According to Bruce Adams of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change)

HEALTHY	UNHEALTHY
optimism	cynicism
focus on unification	focus on division
"We're in this together"	"Not in my backyard"
solving problems	solution wars
reconciliation	hold grudges
consensus building	polarization
broad public interests	narrow interests
interdependence	parochialism
collaboration	confrontation
win-win solutions	win-lose solutions
tolerance and respect	mean-spiritedness
trust	questioning motives
patience	frustration
politics of substance	politics of personality
empowered citizens	apathetic citizens
diversity	exclusion
citizenship	selfishness
challenge ideas	challenge people
problem solvers	blockers and blamers
individual responsibility	me-first
listening	attacking
healers	dividers
community discussions	zinger one-liners
focus on future	redebate the past
sharing power	hoarding power
renewal	gridlock
"We can do it"	"Nothing works

HEALTHY COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES
(According to the Coalition for Healthier Cities and Communities (USA)

A broad definition of "health"

Health is not the absence of disease. Health is defined broadly to include the full range of quality of life issues. It recognizes that most of what creates health is lifestyle and behaviour related. Other major factors are genetic endowment and the socia-economic, cultural and physical environment. Health is a by-product of a wide array of choices and factors - not simply the result of a medical care intervention.

A broad definition of "community"

By using as broad a definition as possible of what makes up a community, individuals and partnerships can address their shared issues n the most fruitful way possible. Communities can be based on faith, perspective, land and profession, as well as being determined by geographic limes.

Shared vision from community values

A community's vision is the story of its desired future. To be powerful and inspiring, a community's vision should reflect the core values of its diverse members. A vision is not just a statement on the wall - it is a living expression of shared accountability to priorities.

Address quality of life for everyone

Healthy communities strive to ensure that the basic emotional, physical and spiritual needs of everyone on the community are attended to.

Diverse citizen participation and widespread community ownership

In healthy communities, all people take advice and ongoing responsibility for themselves, their families, their property and their community. A leader's work is to find common ground among participants so that everyone is empowered to take direct action for health and influence community directions.

Focus on "systems change"

This is about changing the way people live and work together. It is about how community services are delivered, how information is shared, how local government operates, and how business is conducted. It's about resource allocation and decision making, not just 'nice' projects.

Build capacity using local assets and resources

This means starting from existing community strengths and successes and then investing in the enhancement of a community's "civic infrastructure". By developing an infrastructure that encourages health, fewer resources will need to be spent on "back end" services that attempt to fix the problems resulting from a weak infrastructure.

Benchmark and measure progress and outcomes

Healthy communities use performance measures and community indicators to help expand the flow of information and accountability to all citizens, as well as to reveal whether residents are heading toward or away from their stated goals. Timely, accurate information is vital to sustaining long-term community improvement.

(Reference: Norris, T., Howell, L., (1999) Health People in Healthy Communities: a dialogue guide. Chicago: Coalition for Healthier Cities and Communities.

"TWENTY CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL
(According to Heartland Center for Leadership Development, Lincoln, Nebraska, USA)

1. Evidence of community pride.
2. Emphasis on quality in business and community life.
3. Willingness to invest in the future.
4. Participatory approach to community decision making.
5. Cooperative community spirit
6. Realistic appraisal of future opportunities.
7. Awareness of competitive positioning.
8. Knowledge of the physical environment.
9. Active economic development program.
10. Deliberate transition of power to a younger generation of leaders.
11. Acceptance of women in leadership roles.
12. Strong belief in and support for education.
13. Problem-solving approach to providing health care.
14. Strong multi-generational family orientation.
15. Strong presence of traditional institutions that are integral to community life.
16. Attention to sound and well maintained infrastructure.
17. Careful use of fiscal resources.
18. Sophisticated use of information resources.
19. Willingness to seek help from the outside.
20. Conviction that, in the long run, you have to do it yourself.

EIGHT OUTCOMES OF COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING
(According to the Rural Economic Policy Program of the Aspen Institute, USA)

Outcome 1: Expanding, diverse, inclusive citizen participation

Description: In a community where capacity is being built, an ever increasing number of people participate in all types of activities and decisions. These folks include all the different parts of the community and also represent its diversity.

Outcome 2: Expanding leadership base

Description: Community leaders that bring new people into decision making are building community capacity. But the chance to get skills and to practice and learn leadership are also important parts of the leadership base.

Outcome 3: Strengthened individual skills

Description: A community that uses all kinds of resources to create opportunities for individual skill development is building community capacity in an important way. As individuals develop new skills and expertise, the level of volunteer service is raised.

Outcome 4: Widely shared understanding vision

Description: Creating a vision of the best community future is an important part of planning. But in community capacity building, the emphasis is on how widely that vision is shared. Getting to agreement on that vision is a process that builds community capacity.

Outcome 5: Strategic community agenda

Description: When clubs and organisations consider changes that might come in the future and plan together, the result is a strategic community agenda. Having a response to the future already thought through communitywide is one way to understand and manage change.

Outcome 6: Consistent, tangible progress toward goals

Description: A community with capacity turns plans into results. Whether it's using benchmarks to gauge progress or setting milestones to mark accomplishments, the momentum and bias for action come through as a community gets things done.

Outcome 7: More effective community organisation and institutions

Description: All types of civic clubs and traditional institutions - such as churches, schools and newspapers - are the mainstay of community capacity building. If clubs and institutions are run well and efficiently, the community will be stronger.

Outcome 8: Better resource utilization by the community

Description: Ideally, the community should select and use resources in the same way a smart consumer will make a purchase. Communities that balance local self-reliance with the use of outside resources can face the future with confidence.

(Reference: Rural Economic Policy Program, The Aspen Institute (1996), Measuring Community Capacity Building, Washington DC, The Aspen Institute, p11)

Checklist 6

PORTRAIT OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
(According to the Centre for Community Enterprise in Canada)

The Centre for Community Enterprise has defined a resilient community as "one that takes intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its residents and institutions to respond to, and influence the course of social and economic change".

It has developed a portrait of such a community with the following 23 characteristics:

Characteristic 1:   Leadership is diversified and representative
Characteristic 2:   Community leadership is visionary
Characteristic 3:   Community members are involved
Characteristic 4:   Community feels a sense of pride
Characteristic 5:   People feel optimistic about the future
Characteristic 6:   Spirit of mutual assistance and cooperation
Characteristic 7:   People feel a sense of attachment
Characteristic 8:   Community is self-reliant
Characteristic 9:   Belief in and support for education
Characteristic 10: Key community economic development functions are served
Characteristic 11: Organizations have developed partnerships
Characteristic 12: Employment is diversified Characteristic 13:
Major employers are locally owned Characteristic 14: A strategy
for increasing local ownership Characteristic 15: Openness to
alternative economic activity Characteristic 16: Community looks
outside itself for resources Characteristic 17: Community is aware
of its competitive position
Characteristic 18: Community has a community economic development plan
Characteristic 19: Citizens are involved in community vision and goals
Characteristic 20: On-going action towards community economic development
                          goals
Characteristic 21: Regular evaluation of progress
Characteristic 22: Organisations use the community economic development
                          plan to guide their actions
Characteristic 23: A development approach encompasses all population
                          segments

(Reference: Centre for Community Enterprise (1999), the Community Resilience Manual: A Resource for Rural Recovery and Renewal, Port Alberni, British Columbia: Centre for Community Enterprise)

"CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNITIES"
(According to the Oklahoma Community Institute, USA)

Effective communities are communities which:

- educate the community in the community's business;
- view challenges as opportunities instead of seeing themselves as victims;
- are open to diversity of citizen involvement and perspectives;
- create opportunities for open, respectful community dialogues;
- have leaders who listen more than they talk;
- are willing to share decision making:
- understand the concept of teamwork;
- aggressively work toward collaborative problem solving and consensus building;
- seek win/win solutions to issues and problems;

(Reference: Oklahoma Community Institute (1998), Characteristics of Effective Communities Information Sheet, Shawnee, Oklahoma: Oklahoma Community Institute)

Checklist 8

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES
(According to the Strengthening Communities Unit, NSW Premier's Department)

1.   The community takes an integrated approach to creating a sustainable future.

2.   The community maximises the use of its limited time and resources in areas that will yield the greatest strategic benefits.

3.   The community develops plans that merge social and economic goals and build local capacity.

4.   The community is able to mobilise sectors of the community around priorities.

5.   The community is able to focus its energies on mobilising internal assets while leveraging outside resources to achieve its goals.

6.   The community has established a critical mass of cooperating organisations through which locally based initiatives are implemented and evaluated.

7.   The community has strong, inclusive and visionary leadership.

8.   The community promotes the well being of all its members by encouraging participation, consultation and involvement in community life.

9.   The community values investment in education, training and lifelong learning.

10.   The community has access to positive and accurate information with which it can evaluate its progress in achieving its goals.

<u>Explanations and Indicators</u>

1.   The community takes an integrated approach to creating a sustainable future.

Explanation:

'In sustainable communities people believe that the future of the community is in their hands. They seek out and use productively the expertise, resources, skills and finances available to the community to address the issues and problems that are important to its citizens. They recognise the risks associated with relying on a single large employer, and emphasise economic diversification by supporting employment in smaller companies and actively promoting local ownership.

Sustainable communities demonstrate an openness to alternative development approaches and are aware of their competitive position in the broader economy. They co-operate with other communities where appropriate, combining resources to address a common goal. They

are aware of the external factors (economic, environmental, political and social), that will influence their longer-term viability and respond proactively to these factors'.

Indicators:

- The degree to which people believe there is an on-going structured dialogue between economic development and social service providers.
- The degree to which people perceive that the community plan addresses the needs of marginalised people in the community.
- Number of organisations and groups in the community that address the economic interests of low-income people.
- Niche markets have been identified in the community that take advantage of the community strengths.
- The degree to which there is a perception in the community that economic development is being realised.

2.   The community maximises the use of its limited time and resources in areas that will yield the greatest strategic benefits.

Explanation:

'In sustainable communities local resources and skills are balanced with external information and resources to address local gaps and achieve local goals. Communities invest in the process of developing a common vision and strategic plan that maximises the allocation of resources to gain the greatest community impact. Such communities use information and connections to access outside resources'.

Indicators:

- Analysis of local labour market.
- % of total working population employed in top 5 private sector employer companies.
- Degree to which people perceive that the community is open to alternative forms of economic diversification.
- The amount of economic leakage out of the community has been identified and analysed.
- Number of economic development initiatives pursued in the last twelve months.

3.   The community develops plans that merge social and economic goals and build local capacity.

Explanation:

'Sustainable communities are those that take a long term, comprehensive approach to building active public participation in the development and implementation of community plans. This approach increases the knowledge of individuals and organisations and their capacity for strategic decision making and activities within the community. The connection between education, unemployment, poverty and the economic stability of the community is understood and integrated into strengthening the economic and social well being of all aspects of their community'.

Indicators:

- Public input into decisions has been actively sought and encouraged.
- Degree to which people perceive that public input has influenced major decisions in the community.
- Number of community generated solutions to local problems.
- Number of local celebrations in the last year.
- Relative level of optimism expressed by community members.

4.   The community is able to mobilise sectors of the community around priorities.

Explanation:

'Sustainable communities demonstrate that visible results generate optimism and a sense of self-reliance. They focus on both short and long term goals and objectives. Implementation in these communities is co-ordinated and there is support for the organisations or groups involved. People feel a sense of pride in their community and demonstrate this through the energy and commitment they give to events and community projects. They have a sense that the future of the community is bright and that there is great potential to develop and change'.

Indicators:

- Number of benevolent events supported during the last year.
- Level of volunteering in the community.
- Number of complaints to council/newspaper relating to litter, vandalism, graffiti etc.
- Community response to emergency events.
- The existence of contingency plans for local industries.

5.   The community is able to focus its energies on mobilising internal assets while leveraging outside resources to achieve its goals.

Explanation:

'In sustainable communities, community leaders are able to provide focus and opportunity for organising and mobilising internal resources to access external support and expertise to help achieve local goals. In times of crisis, emergency or opportunity, the sustainable community is able to resolve divisions and conflicts and mobilise united efforts through active participation and processes in which the community has confidence'.

Indicators:

- Degree to which people believe the community is able to respond to local emergencies/events.
- Degree to which people perceive that outside resources have been accessed in order to address gaps or achieve goals.
- Degree to which community organisations have accessed outside resources in the past twelve months.
- Degree to which businesses have accessed outside resources in the past twelve months.

- Degree to which government resources have been directed to the community to achieve its goals.

6. The community has established a critical mass of cooperating organisations through which locally based initiatives are implemented and evaluated.

Explanation:

'Sustainable communities recognise the importance of a range of strong organisations in the community to support and encourage local initiatives and provide a full range of services. In these organisations, there is recognition that conflict is costly. Collaborative working relationships result in efficient use of limited resources and more effective and creative effort towards accomplishing common goals'.

Indicators:

- Existence of professional organisations within the community.
- Existence of mechanisms for cooperation between organisations.
- Degree to which people perceive there are good working relationships between organisations.
- Number and quality of relationships.
- Degree to which people believe that conflict between organisations is well managed.

7. The community has strong, inclusive and visionary leadership.

Explanation:

'In sustainable communities local leadership represents all citizens in the community - taking into account the needs, aspirations and values of all people in the community in a fair and balanced way. Leaders understand the importance of sharing the responsibility and power. They use techniques that ensure community initiatives have the support of community members - minimising the potential for and the negative consequences of conflict. They encourage participation from all segments of the community and use this input as a guide for their decisions. Community decisions are therefore more reflective of the wide variety of views and opinions of those who live there'.

Indicators:

- Breakdown of formal and informal leaders by gender, age and culture and compared to representation in the community.
- Degree to which people perceive formal leadership to be diversified and representative of the population.
- Degree to which informal leadership is representative of the community.
- Degree to which people perceive that the community has been successful in involving all sections of the community in decision making.
- Degree to which people perceive that formal, elected leadership understands the issues that affect the community and works to find consensus on these issues.

8. The community promotes the well being of all its members by encouraging participation, consultation and involvement in community life.

Explanation:

'People make an effort in sustainable communities to work together and support each other in times of difficulty. There is a spirit of mutual assistance of cooperation. Local issues and problems are owned by the community, and people take it upon themselves to do something about them. People perceive that they have a sense of attachment to their community and are therefore ready to invest their time, energy and money in improving the community'.

Indicators:

- Meetings are advertised, open to the public and well attended.
- Number of participants attending community meetings.
- Number of mechanisms/opportunities for public input into community planning.
- Degree to which people perceive that the public is involved in the creation and implementation of community goals.
- Number of volunteers who participate in groups/committees etc, that are implementing initiatives in the community.

9.   The community values investment in education, training and lifelong learning.

Explanation:

'In sustainable communities education at all levels is valued and supported. There is strong investment in education from pre-school years to adult education. Community learning and participation in organisations such as Landcare, SES, Volunteer Fire Brigade, community bands and choirs is encouraged. Adults are provided with a range of services to support lifelong learning, career changes and skills upgrading. Education is used to strengthen the degree of local control over social and economic activities and resources, and these resources are used to improve all aspects of community life'.

Indicators:

- % of population by education level.
- High school retention rate.
- Number of enrolments in adult and community education programs.
- Number of new skills training programs developed in response to local need in the last 12 months.
- Level of support from business for employment and training programs.

10.   The community has access to positive and accurate information with which it can evaluate its progress in achieving its goals.

Explanation:

'In sustainable communities, people are able to gain access to the information they need to make informed decisions about the community's future. This information is able to be shared by the community, to examine options, possibilities and future strategies and to evaluate the effectiveness of local initiatives. Local leaders ensure that this information is available in a range of formats, easily accessible, is positive, accurate and reflects the views of all sections of the community'.

Indicators:

- Degree to which people perceive they have access to the information they need to make decisions.
- Degree to which the community believes the local media reporting is accurate and positive in its reporting of community events and issues.
- The degree to which the local newspaper is regarded as an integral part of the community.
- The use of technologies to provide community access to information on important issues.
- The extent to which industry trends and forecasts are understood within the community.

(Reference: Strengthening Community Unit, (2000) NSW Premier's Department, Sustainable Rural Communities Handbook, Sydney, p21-29)

Checklist 9

STRENGTHENING THE SIX PRICIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
(According to the Northwest Policy Center of the University of Washington, USA)

The following six principles were developed through extensive research to explore the concepts of sustainability and innovative local initiatives, and to help communities think more holisticly about the relationship between economy, environment and community well being.

1.   FOSTER COMMITMENT TO PLACE

Actions that strengthen the reasons why residents feel strong affinity to their community, eg, festivals and other activities that celebrate the uniqueness of a community and its landscape, provision of employment, training and affordable housing to enable people to stay: events that promoted discussion and actions about shared vision and long term orientation etc.

Indicators checklist:

a.   There are historic celebrations, festivals, fairs and community projects that build a sense of commitment to the community and its landscape.

b.   Forums exist where diverse members of the community can come together to develop a common vision, resolve conflicts and advance mutual goals.

c.   Living-wage jobs are available for members of the community within a reasonable distance from home.

d.   Education and training is available locally that provides residents with skills they need to gain, keep or create living-wage jobs.

e.   Adequate affordable housing is available for the more economically vulnerable members of the community.

f.   Residents, including businesses and landowners are committed to the well-being of the community, its residents and the environment that sustains them.

2.   PROMOTE VITALITY

Actions that promote a state of dynamic, healthy progress and change that can be sustained over time, eg, initiatives that encourage community participation, strong support for local businesses, business innovations, a healthy eco system etc.

Indicators checklist:

a.   Residents purchase goods and services within the community whenever possible.

b.   Local businesses are innovative, keeping pace with changing market demands and technologies, ensuring their continued vitality.

c.	Businesses 'add value' locally to renewable natural resources (fish, timber, farm products etc) to increase the local economic benefits from sustainable harvest levels.

d.	The natural systems (lakes, rivers, forests, prairies, farm lands etc) that enrich the community are ecologically healthy.

e.	Citizens from all segments of the community are welcomed and encouraged to participate in organizations and activities that help to strengthen the community and make it a better place to live.

## 3.	BUILD RESILIENCE

Actions that strengthen the ability of communities to cope with change, and withstand and recover from crises, eg, economic diversification, local ownership, biological diversity, strong local networking etc.

	Indicators checklist:

a.	There is sufficient diversity in the local economy to help it weather downturns in individual businesses or economic sectors.

b.	Natural resource management practices maintain and promote native biological diversity, helping to maintain economic and ecological productivity over the long-term.

c.	Local organizations have the capacity to help the community define and advance its economic, social and environmental goals. Capacity includes effective leadership, broadened community involvement and access to information and financial resources.

d.	There is adequate infrastructure (water, sewer, transportation, telecommunications) to protect public health and the environment and to support desired social and economic development.

e.	There are adequate social support networks - both formal and informal - that help members of the community during times of need.

## 4.	ACT AS STEWARDS

Actions that nourish the natural environment to improve its health and productivity, thus providing long term benefits for current and future generations, eg, maintaining healthy ecosystems, waste management etc.

	Indicators checklist:

a.	Water quality and quantity are adequate to meet the needs of human consumption, industry, recreation and fish and other wildlife.

b.	The air is clean to breathe.

c.   Homes and businesses practice energy conservation to reduce the economic costs and environmental impacts of energy production.

d.   Productive natural resource lands (including farm, forest and range lands) are protected from development to ensure continued economic and environmental benefits for future generations.

e.   Critical wildlife habitats and other environmentally sensitive lands (including wetlands, riparian areas and habitat for rare or threatened or endangered species) have been identified, protected and where necessary restored.

f.   Community members (both residences and businesses) are taking steps to reduce, reuse and recycle solid wastes.

g.   There are opportunities for dialogue between citizens and owners or managers of natural resource lands whose management has significant ecological, economic and social consequences for the community.

5.   FORGE CONNECTIONS

Actions that encourage collaborative planning and action, and networking among residents, organisations, businesses and communities.

        Indicators checklist:

a.   The community is involved in regional, watershed or ecosystem-based initiatives where such efforts are useful in addressing concerns that cross multiple jurisdictions.

b.   The community has built positive relationships with outside agencies and organizations that allow it to gain access to information and technical and financial assistance.

c.   Local businesses are aware and take advantage of markets beyond the community, and of outside sources of marketing assistance, technical assistance and financing.

d.   Businesses work together when it is in their self interest to do so.

e.   Schools, hospitals and other local public organisations cooperate with one another to improve their services, create new programs or acquire needed infrastructure for the community.

6.   PROMOTE EQUITY

Actions that promote fairness among people within a community: between the community and the environment it inhabits; between the community and other communities; and between the present generation and future generations. Equal access to and opportunity to participate in community decision making processes is fundamental.

Indicators checklist:

a.   Each resident has similar access to and opportunity to participate in community decision making processes.

b.   Social, economic and political burdens and benefits are equitably distributed among all members of the community.

c.   Activities within the community do not impose unfair burdens on people in other communities within the region, state, country and other parts of the world.

d.   Community activities and decisions consider, and seek not to jeopardize the well-being of future generations.

e.   The community practices equity in relationships to the environment by respecting other forms of life and passing on a healthy environmental legacy to the future.

(Reference: Bauen et al (1996), Sustainable Community Checklist, Seattle: Northwest Policy Center, University of Washington)

Checklist 10

TWENTY CLUES TO CREATING AND MAINTAINING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

(According to the Centre for Small Town Development, York, Western Australia, and part of the IDEAS organisation)

1. A group of **passionate local people** who are committed to spending the time, energy and other resources it will take to make positive local change a reality.
2. A **Positive Community Mind set** that focuses on optimism, belief, expectation, hope and 'talks up the community.'
3. A **'Can Do' self reliant spirit** - the belief that one's economic and social destiny lies in the community's hands.
4. A **Shared community vision** of the future, coupled with widespread resident participation and support.
5. A willingness to seek **smarter ways, experiment, make changes to make that vision a reality, take risks and invest in the future**.
6. **Opportunity obsession** - that never ending search for new and appropriate ideas, development options and possibilities and being a smart consumer of outside resources.
7. Recognition **of healthy and sustainable community behaviours** such as inclusive community participation, consensus decision making, win-win solutions, collaboration and stewardship of resources.
8. Presence of **local leadership/champions** committed to local development efforts, and the continual development and renewal of leadership.
9. A focus on **youth development** and their active participation in the community.
10. Enthusiastic acceptance and promotion of **women** in leadership roles.
11. The recruitment, involvement and recognition of **volunteers** is given constant attention.
12. Evidence of **community pride and confidence** in terms of physical presentation and local investment.
13. Recognition of the importance of **local business vitality** through actions of appreciation and support.
14. A **practical development agenda** which includes bite size and medium to long term initiatives, and continuously evolves through consultation and participatory planning processes.
15. **A local based focus and structure** responsible for facilitation, coordination and management of local economic and social development.
16. The identification and promotion of a **clear and unique marketable identity**.
17. **Forging of partnerships** with neighbouring communities for collaborative action and peer learning.
18. Strong belief in, and support for **local education opportunities**.
19. Presence of a **positive local newspaper**, matched by the ability of local people to utilise all forms of the media effectively.
20. **A local government council** which provides leadership and vision, and is viewed as a 'facilitator' rather than 'regulator'.

(Reference: Centre for Small Town Development (1997), 20 Clues to Creating and Maintaining a Vibrant Community. An IDEAS information sheet,York: IDEAS

Checklist 11

FIVE KEY INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS IN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMMENT
(According to the Municipal Association of Victoria)

1.   Belief and Expectation

Portrays community attitudes and behaviour such as:

➢ a conviction that the community needs to take its own action, rather than 'waiting for the cavalry', to come;
➢ the existence of a 'can do' spirit;
➢ a commitment to quality and excellence in business and community life;
➢ a willingness to commit local dollars and resources; and
➢ strong community pride.

2.   Collaboration

This is illustrated by:

➢ a strong sense of identity as a community or a distinct territorial area;
➢ a participatory approach to community decision making;
➢ cooperation between the public, private an community sectors;
➢ mechanisms to maintain local interest and involvement beyond the first rush of enthusiasm;
➢ an ability to positively harness and manage community conflict, and
➢ the integration of economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives.

3.   Local Leadership

This can be judged by the existence of:

➢ the presence of a core of local leaders committed in terms of time, priority and belief in the notion of local economic development and possessing the appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes to manage change;
➢ an on-going process of identifying, recruiting and skilling local leadership;
➢ the encouragement and acceptance of women in leadership roles; and
➢ the involvement of young people.

4. Strategic Planning and Action

Important dimensions in this include:

- the active encouragement of a culture of community problem solving;
- the establishment of an appropriate locally based organisation to manage and facilitate development efforts;
- the use of a strategic planning process involving development strategies and an action plan;
- the research and prioritisation of the range of development options;
- a realistic appraisal of the feasibility of potential opportunities;
- the continued identification of resources;
- the on-going promotion of the development strategy to residents, and
- the evaluation and adjustment of the action plan on a regular basis.

5. Opportunism

This involves a combination of:

- continued alertness to new opportunities;
- awareness of resources and how they can be exploited;
- the marketing of one's community as a vibrant and 'can do' entity; and
- an ability to respond quickly and positively to new opportunities

(Reference: Municipal Association of Victoria (1994) Survival and Revival in Rural Communities. Melbourne, Municipal Association of Victoria)

Checklist 12

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES
(According to Cornelia Flora and Jan Flora of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute)

1. Acceptance of Controversy
    Successful communities are willing to 'agree to disagree' and bring problems into the open for discussion.

2. Ability to Depersonalise Politics
    In small communities, where people know each other, people sometimes have difficulty separating person and professional matters. To be successful, a community must focus on policies, no people, and must stick to the matter at hand.

3. Surplus Income to Invest
    A successful community will set aside some funds for progress and not use everything on basic necessities.

4. Willingness to Take Risks
    Communities must be willing to take risks in investing money. A willingness to invest private capital locally can strengthen community efforts.

5. Ability to Define Community More Broadly
    A successful community will reach outside itself to the surrounding communities, the region, the state and even the world. Communities must realise they are part of the global community and that partnership within the region and the state can provide benefits locally.

6. Network Ability
    Because small communities lack resources for all they need to do, they must reach out to surrounding communities and to other levels of government for cooperative ventures.

7. Emphasis on Academics
    Academic excellence and the support of outstanding teachers and educational programs are critical for rural areas.

8. Flexible, Dispersed Leadership
    Leaders must think of the future and include all parts of the community in their deliberations. They must welcome new people and ideas, even if the ideas are not used. To be truly successful, many people in the community must participate in governing.

(Reference: Cornelia Flora and Jan Flora (1994), Virginia Polytechnic Institute; Blacksburg, Virginia)

Checklist 13

COMMUNITY VIBRANCE CONTINUUM
(According to the Centre for Small Town Development, York, Australia)

HEALTHY VIBRANT COMMUNITY	STAGNANT DYING COMMUNITY
VISUALS	
growing population	static or declining population
attractive mainstreet healthy business district	deteriorating infrastructure empty shops
presence of young people	aging population low level of youth participation
ATTITUDES	
open to change	change resistance
'future in our hands'	'dependence on outside cavalry'
'can do'	victim mentality positive
mindset	negativity, cynicism community
pride and attachment	locals talk down community
openness to new and alternative thinking	low tolerance for controversy and alternative thinking
ECONOMICS	
willingness to invest locally	'want someone else to pay the bills'
diversity of employment	limited range of jobs
diversified economic base	dependence on a single employer/industry
strong local ownership	strong outside ownership of resources and activities
strong local development vehicle/agenda	no or weak local development vehicle/agenda

CIVIC PARTNERSHIP

diversified leadership base	'same faces do everything'
leadership renewal	limited leadership renewal
collaboration	confrontation
'win win'	'win lose'
consensus decision making	polarisation
inclusion	exclusion
newcomers welcomed and involved	no effort to welcome or involve newcomers
youth ideas and participation strongly valued	young people are not a priority
regular opportunities for community dialogue, feedback, idea generation	limited community forum opportunities
lifelong learning and relevant skill development opportunities	poor education and training options