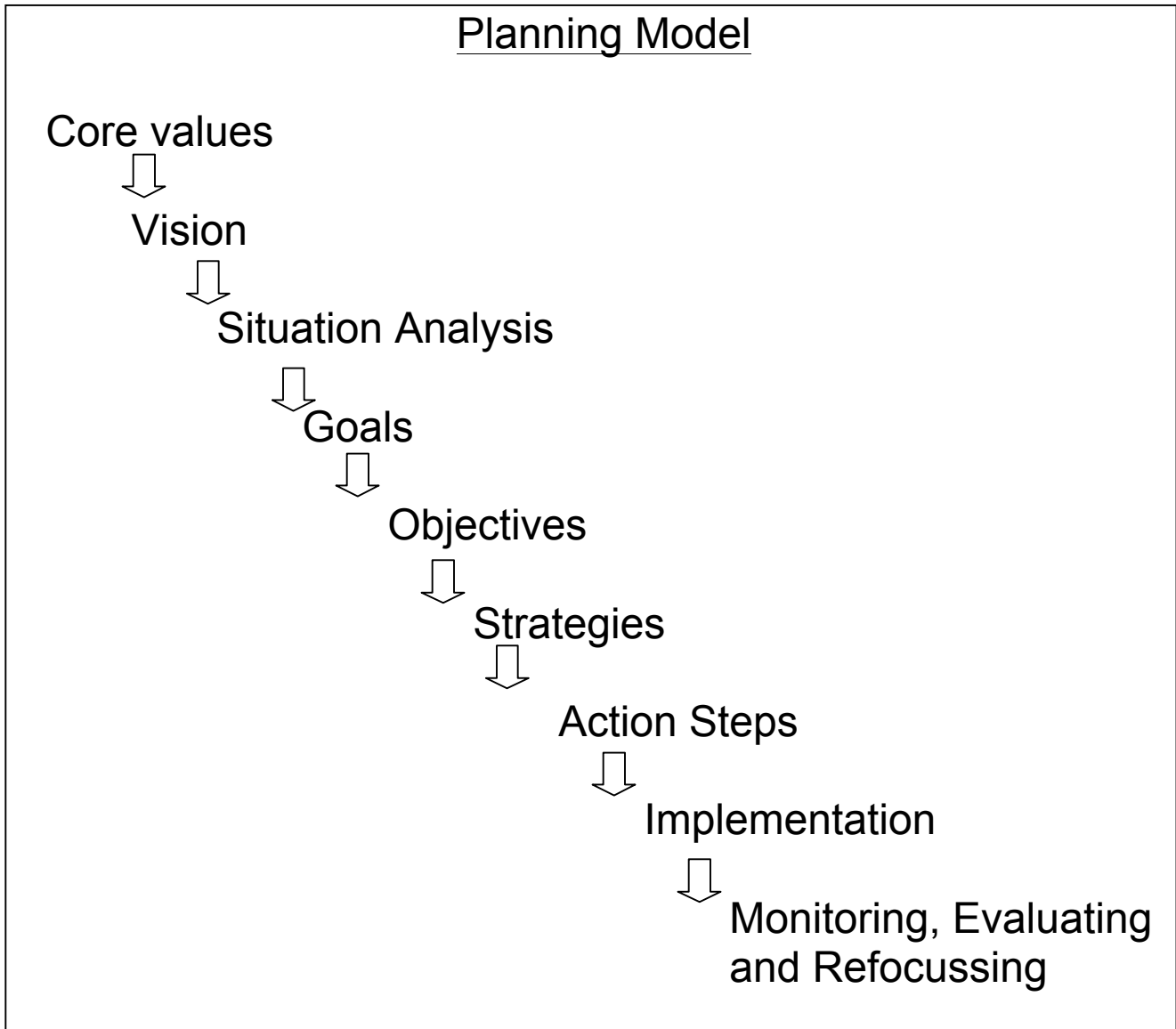


CREATING A COMMUNITY ROAD MAP TO ACHIEVE ITS PREFERRED FUTURE



(based on work of the Oklahoma Community Institute)

'The best way to predict the future is to create it'
(Paul Drucker)

I CORE VALUES

The fundamental, moral and ethical beliefs that we share as a group. They describe what a community considers to be important. They serve to:

- define the boundaries for our conduct
- act as driving forces for our plans and actions
- represent the culture that we desire to live in
- bond and unify the community through the plan

Core values should:

- summarise the beliefs and desires of the community
- be demonstrated visibly
- be complementary
- foster trust and teamwork
- transcend generations and endure over time
- make you feel good when you read or state them!

Examples

- *We value the diversity of our community*
- *Our future is built on the assets of its people*
- *We each have a stake and a role in the future of our community*
- *We encourage and recognise innovation and excellence*
- *We seek to balance economic vitality with environmental health and community wellbeing*
- *We seek broad based community participation*
- *We believe in access to facilities and resources for everyone*
- *We seek employment opportunities for all*

II VISION

A Vision is a clear and vivid image of what you want your community to look like. It is a vivid description of what you want your community to be, without its current barriers, unconfined by your past and tied to what you value.

A Vision Statement puts the community's vision into words. A quality Vision Statement is clear, desirable and inspirational to the majority of the community's residents. A Vision Statement should:

- describe the future in terms of quality of life indicators that you feel are important

- build on your community's values
- be written in such a way as to create a picture that you can see, feel, touch and mentally experience
- be bold, audacious and yet realistic
- be written in the present tense, as though it has already been achieved
- create a mental picture that will inspire people from across the spectrum of diversity

Examples of Vision Statements:

- *"To be an excellent city in which to live, work and raise a family"*
(Napier, New Zealand)
- *"To nurture local leadership, teamwork, positive vision and initiative to improve community resources and facilities for all community residents, and to work cooperatively with determination and hard work to ensure that existing and new rural based businesses, tourism and agriculture are modern and productive and will have a thriving and sustainable long term future within Hyden's small, but vibrant and forward looking community"*
(Hyden, WA)
- *"Maungaturoto – an appealing place to live, work and visit, which has heart, purpose and prosperity. A 'Real New Zealand Town'."*
(Maugaturoto, New Zealand)

'Few if any forces in human affairs are as powerful as shared vision'
(Peter Serge)

III **SITUATION ANALYSIS**

Situation Analysis is an objective look at your community. As a diagnostic tool it looks at information that is critical to you achieving your vision.

Situation Analysis should:

- provide a pictures of where the community stands today by looking internally and externally
- provide the data needed to plan the movement towards your vision
- provides information on the gap between current reality and the vision created
- identify critical issues

- give a baseline for measuring improvement

Possible techniques to undertake Situation Analysis include:

- an analysis of the assets of the individuals, the community and the organisations that exist in the community (Asset Mapping);
- an analysis of the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, problems and threats (SWOP/T);
- a look at the state of the community's education, employment and other data about the health of the community (Community Profile);
- investigation into activities that are specific to a community, and the unique data that is required for planning (Localised Research).

'The future ain't what it used to be'
(Anon)

IV GOALS

Goals are broad statements of intent that direct our efforts towards accomplishing our Vision in alignment with our Core Values.

Goals are our start at closing the gap between where we are today (Situation Analysis) and our Vision Statement. They are the first step, the foundation, the starting point in our journey toward our Vision.

Goals will show us 3-5 critical areas where our efforts and resources should be focused in order to achieve our vision. They identify the areas of focus that will be clarified with our Objectives, Strategies and Action Steps. By starting with Goals, it minimises the chance of special interest projects popping into our plan. Goals begin a trail of logic that explains to everyone how our actions are leading us closer to our Vision.

Goals:

- should build on strengths or eliminate or minimise a weakness
- should represent a desirable position across the cultural diversity
- should define an 'end state', eg:
 - To be a great place to start a business.
 - To have the lowest unemployment rate in the state.
 - Unsurpassed quality in our services.
 - To be recognised nationally for the quality of business life.
 - To be known as a safe and caring community.
- should not be time bound
- should not direct resources

V OBJECTIVES

Objectives are statements describing **what** must be done and **when** it will be done as you work toward accomplishing your goals.

Objectives are:

- measurable
- consistent with the Core Values
- incremental steps towards the accomplishment of a goal
- built on existing strengths

Objectives:

- manage or minimise weakness
- take advantage of assets
- do not deploy resources or describe how the Objective will be accomplished

Examples of objectives:

- *Add 100 new jobs per year for the next 5 years*
- *Drop unemployment to 4% by January 2002*
- *Reduce school drop out rate to 5% by 2002*
- *To have a base of 100 people trained in leadership skills by the end of 2002*

VI STRATEGIES

Strategies describe **how** you will deploy your resources to accomplish your Objectives.

Objectives state **what** must be done to accomplish your Goals and **when** it will be completed. Strategies explain **how** you will do it. Together, Objectives and Strategies explain what you will do, when you will do it and how it will be done.

Strategies:

- usually require a long term commitment
- add clarity to the objectives
- identify your greatest opportunities by focussing resources on them
- assign, allocate, redirect, and or leverage resources
- may require you to abandon an old program and begin a new one
- build on strengths

- are based on creative thinking and the best options
- are based on realistic assessment of the resources available
- may require a break with tradition
- are broad in nature

Examples of Strategies:

- *Instigate a Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Program to assess what is stopping local businesses from doing better.*
- *Create a team to implement a program to reduce unemployment based on research of what other communities have done.*
- *Conduct a leak detection program to find out what and why people are buying outside our economy.*
- *Establish a mentor program between community leadership and at risk students.*
- *Establish a campaign to explain the value of tourism.*

VII ACTION STEPS

Action steps are individual tasks that we undertake to accomplish our Strategies. They define the task, who will be responsible, when it will be accomplished and what resources are required.

Action steps serve to:

- provide clarity to our road map
- sequence our work towards our desired future
- allow stakeholders to see where they can assist
- provide a monitoring trail
- provide an opportunity for recognition

Action steps:

- define a specific task or block of tasks
- are tied to a completion date
- define who is responsible
- are sequenced
- are complimentary with actions from other Strategies
- define deployment of resources

'Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs'
(Henry Ford)

VIII **IMPLEMENTATION**

*"Experience has taught me that there is one chief reason why some people succeed and others fail. The difference is not one of knowing, but of doing. The successful man is not so superior in ability as in action. So far as success can be reduced to a formula, it consists of this:
doing what you know you should do."
(Roger Babson)*

*"The door to success is always marked 'PUSH'"
(American proverb)*

IX **MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REFOCUSING**

This stage involves:

- establishing evaluation criteria (key success criteria)
- creating feedback mechanisms
- adjusting the action plans on an ongoing basis
- maintaining interest and support
- providing mechanisms for ongoing input and contributions

Potential benefits of a community road map

- Better understanding of the community;
- Realistic base for making decisions regarding the future;
- Enhancing community consensus;
- Improved community collaboration, cooperation and coordination;
- Strengthened community competitive advantage;
- Provision of short and long term action plans;
- Focuses community efforts on key issues
- Stimulates interest and involves residents in their future;
- Identifies and involves new leaders, and
- Encourages strategic and forward planning.

Potential Pitfalls of a community road map

- Can be used to avoid action;
- Raises unreal expectations;
- Produces reports that stay on shelves;
- Creates impossible wish lists without any priorities
- Lacks organisation to implement;
- Lacks adequate evaluation;
- Planning by the few for the many; and
- Fails to excite and maintain community interest and involvement.

Conclusion:

'Plans are nothing, planning is everything'
(Dwight Eisenhower)

*"The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present,
but a place that is created first in mind, next in will, then in activity.
The future is not some place we are going to, but a place we are creating.
The paths are not to be discovered but made,
and the activity of making the future changes both the maker and the destination"*
(John Shaar)