

Work In Progress

“Vitalizing Communities”

Building on Assets and Mobilizing for Collective Action



Community Guide

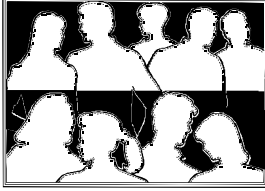
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The Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI)
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln
1999

Building on Community Assets

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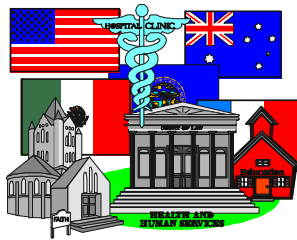
Individual Assets



! Associational Assets



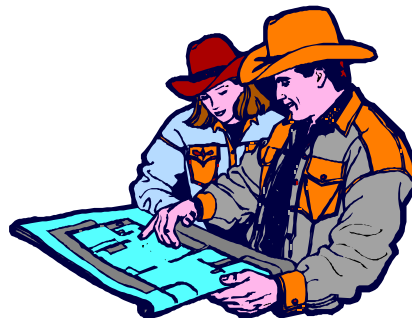
! Institutional Assets



! Local Business Assets



! Previous Efforts



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

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ASSETS

INTRODUCTION:

Who Are We and What Are We About?

A. The Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI)

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

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

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

Staff: The staff of CARI are an interdisciplinary team of talented professionals strongly committed to CARI's mission.

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

B. Use of This Document

A community should use this document as a "guide" to build their community from the inside out, utilizing existing community assets. This approach will occur over a period of time. The period of time will vary from community to community, depending upon the depth of community readiness, commitment and time available for community members to do the work.

As with any "guide", this document provides information and guidance in an organized, structured and systematic way. We make no apologies for that, but we also worry that it may unintentionally stifle creativity and innovation. Additionally, each community is unique - with its own unique history, culture and local flavor. Communities that use this guide should view it as a launching pad, but after the launch a local guidance system takes over. Some communities may have good reason to skip certain steps or to

reorder the sequence of steps in this guide. This type of flexibility is not only possible, it is expected!

Holistic vs. Specific Issues - Given limited resources, some communities may want to use this approach for mapping issues of interests.

This community guide document is organized into four sections and an appendix of tools for implementation.

- ! Section I, "Overview - Getting Started", gives a summary of the asset-based approach, provides information as to what is needed to utilize this approach, and gives the community direction to decide whether or not to proceed with this approach.
- ! Section II, "Tools 1-5", describes the steps necessary to develop and complete an array of community asset inventories, and provides examples for each asset area.
- ! Section III, "Community Vision and Mobilization", describes a plan of action for moving the community towards its vision of vitalization based upon the community's assets (asset inventories.)
- ! Section IV, "Celebration", emphasizes the importance of celebrating community successes and provides examples of what and how to celebrate.
- ! Appendix A, "Inventory and Action Tools", provides a set of suggested "tools" to be utilized by the community when implementing this approach.

C. Key Document Terms

The following terms are used often throughout this document. A brief interpretation is given for each term according to its use in this document.

Community - neighborhood, town, city, county, regions, area, tribe, culture, ethnic or faith-based group of people as identified by its members; a community of "good character" is caring, kind, trusting, fair, responsible and displays good citizenship.

Asset - "community treasures"; the positive strengths, qualities, merits, benefits, virtues, commodities and character imbedded in a community;

Skill - the gift an individual has gained through experience, education and/or knowledge which is passed on to other individuals.

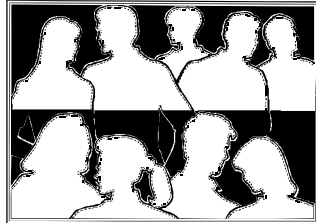
Asset Inventory - a method for gathering information about the gifts and talents of a community's individual, associations and institutions.

<u>Asset Map</u>	- a visual path that displays a community's positive capacities and assets.
<u>Individual</u>	- person belonging to a community, group of relatives or other people who has capabilities, abilities and gifts.
<u>Association</u>	- a formal or informal group of community people working together often as volunteers to generate collective action. (Examples: 4-H, Scouts, YMCA/YWCA, United Way, Red Cross, neighborhood association, county fair...)
<u>Institution</u>	- a formalized and structured organization that does not typically rely on voluntary commitment of the individuals involved. (Examples: school, church, government agency, hospital, law enforcement, city council...)
<u>Economic</u>	- representing monetary conditions of a community and its people.
<u>"Table" of people</u>	- made up of community individuals and representatives of community associations, institutions and businesses, forming the foundation for community work.
<u>Relationship</u>	- a bond that is formed through identifying, connecting and establishing a friendly alliance built on trust, strengths and assets.
<u>Mobilize</u>	- to move the community forward by energizing and activating community strengths and assets.
<u>Vision</u>	- the positive image of what the community "wants" to be; providing insight, inspiration and revelation to help move the community forward.
<u>Evaluation</u>	- a review and appraisal of community activities, completed by the community, providing a measurement for community success.

D. Process/Approach Summary

“Building on Community Assets”

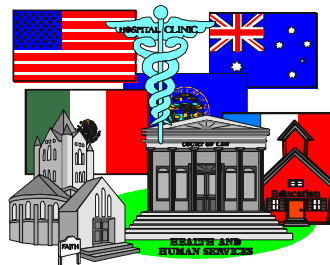
! Individual Assets



! Associational Assets



! Institutional Assets



! Local Business Assets



“Mobilizing For Collective Action”

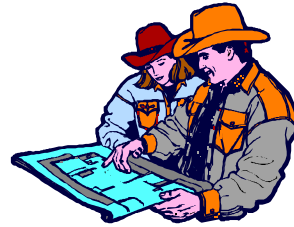
! Local “Table of People



! A Shared Community Vision



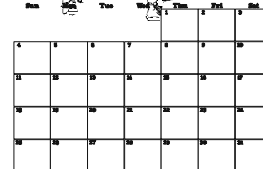
! Planning For Action



! Mobilizing For Action



! Time Line



! Evaluation



! Celebration



ASSETS

I. OVERVIEW - GETTING STARTED

A. Two Paths/Views/Approaches

Asset mapping is a philosophy pioneered by John P. Kretzman and John L. McKnight in their book, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*, (Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, 1993) The authors identify two different paths for supporting communities. The first path focuses on a community's needs, deficiencies, and problems. The second path is quite different in that it begins with a clear commitment to discovering a community's capacities and assets.

Traditional Path 1

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

Needs based on Community Problems:

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

Alternative Path 2

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

Assets based on Community "Treasures":

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

Our approach, "Vitalizing Communities: Building on Assets and Mobilizing for Collective Action", or the Alternative Path, focuses on the positive assets the community's individuals, associations, institutions, and economy. Focusing on community problems conveys negative images of the community and residents begin to accept these images as the only guide to the reality of their lives. Focusing on positive asset components will help build the community, giving residents hope and a positive vision for themselves.

NOTE: *Most of this community guide publication is devoted to how community assets can be inventoried.*

B. Community Questions: Organization, Readiness and Commitment

CAUTION: *The approach of inventorying community assets is of little value if the community is not organized and ready for action.*

Specifically, the approach presented in the document assumes the following:

- ! The community can *organize* itself to move forward with the approach,
- ! The community is *ready* to move forward with this approach, and
- ! The community is *committed* to change once assets have been inventoried.

If the community is not sure that it meets these criteria, interested community members should ask and answer the following questions.

Community Questions:

- ! How is the community organized?
- ! Who are the organized groups/individuals in the community?
- ! Are all members of the community aware of this revitalization effort?
- ! Who is ready to move forward, revitalizing community strengths?
- ! Is the community ready for change?
- ! Will there be opposition to this effort? If so, can it be managed or overcome?
- ! Who will assume the leadership, as a support base, to make changes?
- ! When will the process begin?

A final and very important question has to do with the scope of this effort. Specifically, this guide is written from the standpoint of a holistic approach to community mobilization and development. We feel this is the ideal approach, but it also takes considerable resources to inventory assets across all dimensions of community life. If such a comprehensive undertaking is not possible, the community may understandably need to focus on a particular sector or dimension of community life, or on inventorying the assets most likely to be available for a pressing issue. Examples could include health care, transportation or workforce development.

By answering these questions, a community can determine if it is ready to commit and move forward, *vitalizing community strengths, building on community assets, and mobilizing for collective action.*

C. Asset-Based Community Development

Every community can identify things it does not have (needs), and things it does have (assets). A strong community is built upon identifying, and then mobilizing, its assets. This development work starts with a “treasure hunt.”



This treasure hunt will show the community it has assets in individuals and families,

local associations, local institutions of non-profits and government, and local business assets. Additionally, every community has natural resources of space and physical resources. Recognizing these assets exist, the community asks the question, “What do we, the community, have?”

A community has many assets, including individuals, associations, institutions and local businesses. Building a stronger community is about bringing these various assets into relationship with one another. When assets are connected, their capacities can be enhanced. Fundamentally, community building is about relationships among people. Mobilizing assets for collective action requires organizing relationships within a community.

D. Local “Table” of People

A local group of people is needed to organize the community asset inventory approach, and to provide leadership for follow-up and sustainability as the community moves forward implementing change. The following four organization questions must be answered by a community group to “mobilize” the asset approach.



- 1) What do we want to do? (Vision and purpose)
- 2) What do we have to do it with? (Assets)
- 3) Who or what can get it done? (Individuals, associations, institutions, businesses)
- 4) How do we get them to do it? (Relationships, community mobilizing)

The best vehicle for answering these questions and for doing the work is a local “Table” of *individuals* from the community and representatives from community *associations* and *institutions* who, together, organize the community so it is better connected to mobilize and contribute assets. This local “Table” of people forms the foundation for community work. The members of the “Table” are committed to the same vision and purpose and create a vehicle to carry forward the work. Local residents, associations, schools and churches are the inner circle of decision makers. Local businesses, local government, local non-profits, and outside resources are part of a second circle of supporters.

The local “Table” can consist of 7 to 30 diverse individuals, representing the community geographically and demographically. Other individuals could be included in special task groups, provide leadership for specific activities, or help with other community mobilization activities.

The following is a checklist of individuals who might represent the community as members of the local “Table” of people. The list is comprehensive, but not necessarily inclusive.

Local “Table” of People Potential Members Checklist ✓

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

E. Asset Inventory Strategies

Community Capacity as Community Capital

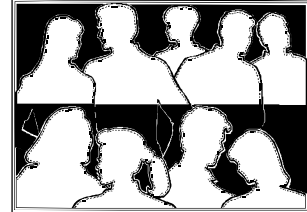
“Capacity (Asset) Inventories” are a way to gather information about the gifts and talents of *individuals, associations and institutions*, and about resources, wealth and dollars generated by *the local economy and business assets*. These community gifts, talents and dollars generated can also be thought of as “community capital.” According to Cornelia Butler Flora and Jan L. Flora, “Rural Communities, Legacy and Change” (1992), the term “capital” is often used to mean money - for example, the money needed to start a new business. Flora goes on to say, “Money is not always capital, nor is capital simply money. Capital can be defined as resources capable of producing other resources. We often think

of capital goods, land, or financial capital. Human capital is a type of community capital that refers to the knowledge, skills and talents brought to any activity by people.”

Strategies for identifying “community capital” can be identified in the form of capacity/asset inventory. This document will identify the following types of asset inventories.

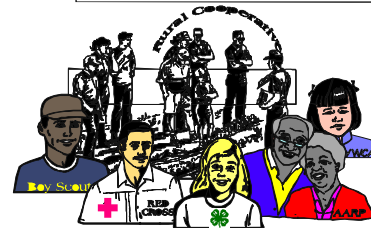
1. Individual Assets Inventory

Every person has many gifts such as skills, civic interests, artistic abilities, teaching skills, and enterprise experience and ability. The key to capacity/asset inventories is remembering it is about individuals and relationships, not data.



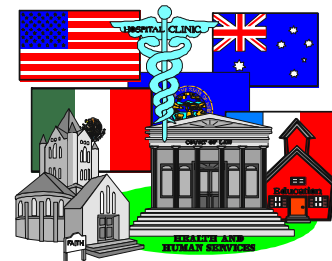
2. Association Assets Inventory

Associations are groups of citizens working together to generate collective action. They can be formal and informal. Examples of associations are United Way, Boy/Girl Scouts, 4-H, AARP, Chamber of Commerce, and Rural Grange.



3. Institutional Assets Inventory

Institutions are a formalized and structured organization that does not typically rely on voluntary commitment of the individuals involved. Examples of institutions are schools, churches, hospitals, and government agencies.



4. Local Economic Linkages and Business Assets

Strong economic linkages within the local economy are an important asset for the community. For example, if businesses buy all their supplies and hire all their employees from within the local community, then the local linkages are strong and this is an asset for the community. Similarly, if individuals, associations and institutions consistently patronize local vendors for their needs, then this aspect of the community economic linkage is strong, and should be thought of as an important asset for the community. Conversely, if these linkages are weak, they can be changed and strengthened. Inventorying the strength and weaknesses of these linkages and finding “missed opportunities” is an important aspect of community building.

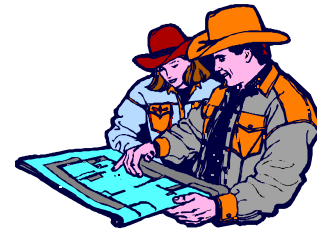


Businesses can be interviewed about local purchasing, local hiring, local banking, local youth training, local volunteer efforts by staff, and local investment. Dollars generated by local business activities can be assets contributing to the local economy. A local business assets inventory provides information about the business economy of a community.

5. Previous Efforts Assets Inventory

Many communities have participated in previous community processes which may have included: community planning, economic development, program and service development, community visioning and other community involvement activities.

The asset inventory areas listed above are described in more detail in Section II, "Asset Identification & Inventories", in this document.



F. Building Relationships When Identifying Assets

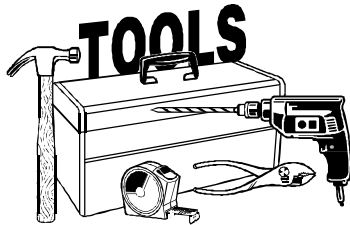
Building strong relationships among community individuals, associations, institutions and businesses is an important step when venturing down the path of community building. It is important to identify community "finders", "developers", and the "strangers within."

Who are the strangers in the community? Young people, older residents, quiet, reserved and unrecognized people are often overlooked as community assets. A community which locates and mobilizes the gifts and contributions of strangers in its midst is a community which welcomes the contributions of all its members.

Who are the finders and developers in the community? These are the leaders of the community. Finders have a positive vision and can "find" assets in the community needed to mobilize and move the community forward. Developers lead the community development effort, mobilizing the capacity identified by the finders. Finding the capacity finders and community development leaders is a crucial step on the path of community building.

Once assets are identified (inventoried) and mapped, the key is to then mobilize these assets. Community building is finally about relationships, relationships, and more relationships!! Gifts and assets must be identified, connected, and contributed. Asset-based community development is simply a call to remember what we already know about care and democracy. Real health, prosperity, and well being comes through people and relationships.

II. ASSET IDENTIFICATION & INVENTORIES: TOOLS 1-5



As previously stated, “Capacity Inventories” are a way to gather information about the gifts and talents of *individuals*, *associations* and *institutions*, and about dollars generated by *local business assets*. There are tools to use in identifying a community’s capacities through the creation of asset inventories. Five of these tools are discussed in this section and are identified as follows:

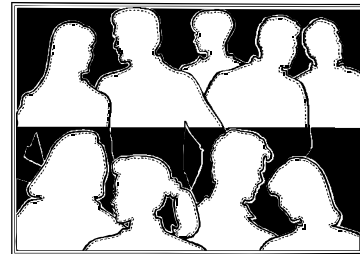
- Tool 1: Individual Assets Inventory**
- Tool 2: Associational Assets Inventory**
- Tool 3: Institutional Assets Inventory**
- Tool 4: Economic Linkages and Business Assets Inventory**
- Tool 5: Previous Efforts Inventory**

There are sample 🖱️ “tools” which can be utilized to discover assets in community capacity areas. These tools are located in the Appendices of this document. The following sections provide a description of these five asset inventory areas and provide information in utilizing the Asset Inventory Tools located in the Appendices.

Tool 1: Create a Community-wide Individual Skills/Assets Inventory

Every person has many gifts such as skills, civic interests, artistic abilities, teaching skills, and enterprise experience and ability. Gifts that are not given are not gifts. A strong development organization identifies gifts and provides a vehicle for them to be given. The Local Table of People should ask:

- ! What are the gifts of our individuals?
- ! Where do we plug them into our community?



Capacity/asset inventories of individuals have been used in many ways. One important use is for economic purposes to create new enterprises, to connect skilled residents to employers, for new employment, and to identify market gaps through consumer spending data. Capacity/asset inventories can also be used for community building purposes to create an “individual skills bank”, to institute a “learning exchange”, to connect residents to local associations for care and mutual aid, and to mobilize cultural

and artistic skills. The key to capacity/asset inventories is remembering it is **about people and relationships, not data**. The primary result is that people are more connected for any purpose. Inventories are basically used in two ways: a) for a personal connection, and b) for a pool of talent to address an issue.

Three steps are needed to inventory the skills/assets of community residents.

- 1) First, develop a list of skills (similar to Tools 1A and 1B located in the Appendices). Students or other volunteers can hand deliver and pick up the inventory forms throughout the community.
- 2) Second, translate the skills and map the inventory of assets.
- 3) Third, publicize the inventory map of assets.

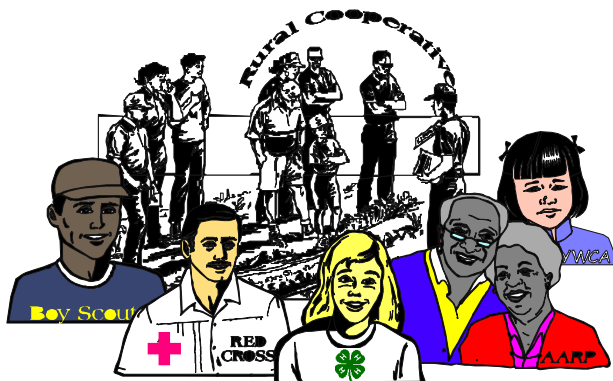
The goal is to make connections among people, and to develop a local “treasure chest” for community and economic development. Ask the question, “What do we have to make our the economy of our community strong?” This “treasure chest” of identified individual skills/assets can provide a base for the development of community gifts and talents. Although the list may not be inclusive, it provides a starting point for identifying individual assets in the community.

☞ Tool 1A in the Appendices provides an example of this Individual Skills/Assets Inventory.

Individuals in a community are often involved in organized activities with community associations and/or institutions. It is important to also have an inventory of the skills and assets of individuals involved in these activities.

☞ Tool 1B in the Appendices provides a sample Individual Community Skills/Assets Inventory.

Tool 2: Create a Community-wide Associational Assets Inventory



Associations are groups of citizens working together as a collective action. They can be formal or informal. Associations include business organizations such as the local chamber of commerce; charitable groups and drives such as United Way; youth groups such as 4-H and Scouts; and civic events such as art fairs and 4th of July celebrations.

Associations offer a great power of organized relationships that can be mobilized for action. Associations include voluntary organizations of people in every community

where people come together as to act on issues. They are characterized by consensus, care, and citizen's power. Unfortunately, associations are usually not fully recognized as resources/assets to community building.

Utilize newspapers, directories, and other printed sources while identifying local associations and association representatives. Associations can also be discovered through personal (individual) interviews and/or telephone surveys. The Local Table of People should ask each association:

- ! What do you do now?
- ! What do you do that helps people other than members of your organization?
- ! What are you willing to do that you are not doing?

Associations can have a much larger role in community building. The local "Table" of people asks itself, "Where do we plug this association asset in to vision and purpose?"

Three steps are needed to inventory the assets of community associations.

- 1) Develop an instrument to collect information about the names of the community associations, their missions, contact individuals, and resources.
- 2) Compile this information and map the inventory of assets.
- 3) Publicize the inventory map of assets.

👉 Tool 2 in the Appendices provides a sample of this Organizational Asset Inventory.

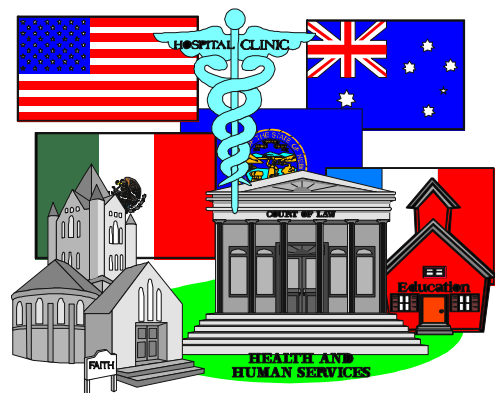
Tool 3: Create a Community-wide Institutional Assets Inventory

Institutions are a formalized and structured organization that does not typically rely on voluntary commitment of the individuals involved. Traditional community institutions might include schools, churches, hospitals, clinics, county government, law enforcement, fire and rescue, human service agencies, etc.

Institutions have a much larger possibility. For example, hospitals offer a community much outside of helping sick people get well. Institutions think more like fortresses than community treasure chests. Non-profits or government can be interviewed about local hiring, local purchasing, training local people (especially youth), local investment, local control of the institution, and leveraging outside resources.

The key question to ask institutions is:

- ! "How can your institution become more community serving?"



Three steps are necessary to inventory the assets of community institutions.

- 1) Develop an instrument to collect information about the community institutions, their purpose, contact individuals, and resources.
- 2) Compile this information and map the inventory of assets.
- 3) Publicize the inventory map of assets.

☞ Tool 3 in the Appendices provides a sample of this Institutional Asset Inventory.

Tool 4: Create Economic Linkages and Business Assets Inventories

Local businesses are assets. For example, banks are a source of local investment capital. More generally, businesses provide a variety of goods and services to local residents; they provide jobs; they pay taxes; and they often have linkages to the larger regional and national economies.



These businesses also have “backward linkages” throughout the local economy. The hiring of local residents and the purchasing of non-labor supplies and inputs from other local vendors and businesses, creates additional economic activity.

Just as it is important where local businesses hire their workers and purchase their other supplies and inputs, it is also important where community residents, local associations and institutions purchase their goods and services. If they choose to shop and spend their dollars outside the local community, a significant amount of “economic linkage” and related job creation has been lost.

It is important to inventory these assets: local businesses, including their hiring and purchasing patterns; and the spending patterns of local residents, associations and institutions.

Developing a Local Business Assets Inventory involves the following steps:


- 1) Develop an instrument to collect information about local businesses, their type of business, contact person.
- 2) Compile this information and map the inventory of assets.
- 3) Publicize the inventory map of assets.

☞ Tool 4A in the Appendices provides a sample of this Local Business Linkages Inventory.

Developing a Local Business Linkages Inventory involves the following steps:


- 1) Develop a survey instrument for gathering local business information.

- 2) Identify the business sectors of your local economy by type of business. Ask the questions: Do businesses tend to hire local residents? Why or why not? Do businesses tend to purchase other non-labor supplies and inputs locally? Why or why not?
- 3) Identify the data source of this economic information (for easy updating of information.)

 Tool 4B in the Appendices provides a sample of this Local Business Linkages Inventory.

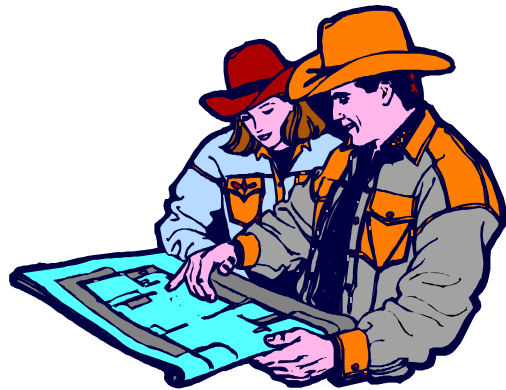
Developing an Economic Linkage Inventory for individuals, associations and institutions involves the following steps:

- 1) Develop a survey instrument for gathering purchasing information from community residents, associations and institutions.
- 2) Develop a list of the type of goods purchased by local individuals, associations and institutions.
- 3) Ask what percentage of goods and services are purchased locally and what percentage of goods and services are purchased outside the community.

 Tool 4C in the Appendices provides a sample of this Community Purchasing Economic Flow Inventory.


Tool 5: Create a Community-wide Previous Efforts Assets Inventory

Most communities have participated in previous community processes or activities which may have included: community planning, economic development, program and service development, community visioning and other community involvement activities. The results of these experiences are important assets because of the information collected and the experiences shared by community individuals. When this collected information and these experiences are documented, they will provide an important component when mapping community assets.




Three steps are needed to inventory the assets of previous community efforts.

- 1) Develop an instrument to collect information about previous community planning, community development, and other community-wide involvement efforts and projects .
- 2) Compile this information and map the inventory of assets.
- 3) Publicize the inventory map of assets.

 Tool 5 in the Appendices provides a sample tool for identifying the assets of previous community efforts and activities.

Mapping Assets

As previously stated, the first step for inventorying assets is to collect information about the designated asset areas. This process will produce many lists of assets in various areas. When these lists of assets are gathered, it will be helpful to compile these list by different groups such as youth groups, schools, artists, businesses, etc. A variety of community assets maps can be made. Assets maps may include the “local institution” groups discovered, lists of local individual talents and skills, and/or the flow of economic dollars to and from the community. Asset maps can also integrate, for example, the areas of individuals, associations, and institutions, all on one map to give a big picture of the areas of assets in the community.

 Examples of a Community Assets Map, a Community Business Linkages Map and a Community Economic Linkage Map are illustrated in the Appendices of this document.

III. COMMUNITY VISION & MOBILIZATION: A PLAN OF ACTION

A. A Shared Community Vision and A Commitment To Action Planning

Community Questions:

1. Who are “we”, the people in the community?
Can we identify ourselves?
2. What are the things that “we” value the most?
What are our beliefs?
3. What do “we” want our community to look like
in 5, 10 or 20 years from now?




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

A process of community-based planning provides the vehicle for defining and developing a shared community vision. A plan of action based on community assets will give direction to making the vision a reality. To be successful, a community must be committed to a process. That process or approach involves the following commitments.

- Commitment 1: *Commit to identifying community assets.*
Avoid the temptation to begin with a traditional “needs survey”. Begin and follow through with asset identification. Asset commitment will provide much promise and positive potential.
- Commitment 2: *Commit to convening and expanding a “Table” of people.*
A community’s building process and results will be limited if the Table is limited. An expanded community planning table would include many diverse participants usually not recognized as community leaders.
- Commitment 3: *Commit to move from planning to action.*
A planning process is often completed and “left on the shelf.” A community’s process must be thought as “in the present”, something that will happen, beginning today and in the future.
- Commitment 4: *Commit to action activities for community sustainability.*
Action activities are “things that really happen”, not just plans written on paper. Community people doing community things, on a continuing basis, will help to provide sustainability.

B. Involving the Whole Community: Identifying Areas to Maintain & Areas for Growth, Tool 6

When the local Table of Community People has been established, and when the community assets have been mapped, conduct a community meeting. Present the asset maps and inventories. Identify leadership for each area to maintain and for each growth opportunity.

 Tool 6 in the Appendices provides a sample tool for identifying community and economic development opportunities.

C. Mobilizing To Build A Stronger Community

A strong community is one in which both the economic and social or non-economic dimensions of the community are strong and thriving.

A strong local economy is one where local people are working, where local people own businesses, where local people purchase from local stores, where local people and businesses invest in the community, and where dollars and energy re-circulate within the connections among the people in the community. The following are considerations for the “Table” of local people when serving as a *Local Development Partnership*. These considerations may be viewed as a timeline of activities needed in order to mobilize the community.



Considerations for Mobilizing the Community:

- ! Complete the five areas of mapping community assets.
- ! Mobilize the capacities of local individuals. Invite all community individuals and involve as many as possible in the process or approach.
- ! Mobilized local associations. Encourage collaborative efforts to generate collective action. Utilize volunteers effectively and efficiently, with purpose and intended outcomes that make a difference.
- ! Mobilize local non-economic institutions such as hospitals, police stations, churches, schools, parks, libraries, etc. These institutions can agree to be part of the local economy with local hiring, purchasing, job training, encouraging new local businesses to develop as vendors, skills training in the community, local banking and investments, developing credits unions, developing physical resources, and attracting external resources and investment.

- ! Mobilize the capacities of local business. When local business assets and their activities have been mapped, they can be connected to community economy in terms of local hiring, local purchasing, training youth, local banking, local volunteer involvement, market development, and business growth.

- ! Mobilize consumer expenditures. Discover *what* people buy, *where* they buy it, and *why*. The purpose of this information is to develop strategies for re-circulating and multiplying the local impact of consumer spending. Mobilizing consumer capacity means connecting local buyers and sellers, developing new businesses and new products in existing businesses, as well as raising the awareness to “buy locally”.

- ! Develop a local capital formation vehicle. This is a locally resident-controlled way to finance business start-ups and business development. Examples would be: micro-loans, REAP, a community foundation, etc.

- ! Complete a gaps analysis. One stage of asset based planning is a gap analysis. A gap analysis examines the assets available locally and the optimum assets necessary to ensure successful development. External resources may often fill that void. State, federal and philanthropic organizations are often places that have resources to fill gaps in local community endeavors.

- ! Mobilize outside resources. In the traditional approach to community development, attention is usually focused on trying to attract grants, businesses, jobs and other resources into the community. These are often important and desirable strategies, but it is important they be considered at the proper time and within the proper context. In general, considering outside resources should come as the last step in the approach. Only when a community has inventoried and mobilized its own resources, should it turn to the outside to consider filling “the gap”. At that point in time, it will have a much clearer picture of where it is going, exactly what “gaps” exist, and how it can access outside resources without becoming dependent upon such resources and without being considered a “charity case”.


These action steps for mobilizing the community are somewhat limited to the economic domain. It is important for communities to also invest in creating and mobilizing action steps in the non-economic areas of community development.

D. Evaluation - Community Action & Activities Inventory, Tool 7

Just as it is important to develop inventories of assets, it is also important to keep inventories of activities about the community moving forward as it builds on its assets. This traditionally has been called “tracking” or “monitoring” of a community project. Community action, vitalizing a community’s individual, associational, institutional, economic linkages and business assets, can be recorded using the following steps:



- 1) Record the type of activity, who is responsible, when the activity took place, and what happened that made a difference.
- 2) Review and publically display this Evaluation of Community Actions Inventory on a regular basis.

 Tool 7 in the Appendices provides a sample tool for a Community Action Activities Inventory.

E. Timeline Options for the Approach

When the community decides to move forward, a timeline should be developed for the approach. It is necessary to identify an estimated time when each task will begin and end. The actual time it takes to go through the approach depends on how often the local “Table” of people can meet and the initiative of the community. A simple timeline can be developed by the local “Table” of people if they are familiar with the approach summary, the asset inventory strategies, and the considerations for mobilizing the community. A timeline should have a list of tasks/activities with projected beginning and ending dates for each task/activity.

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

The following timeline options can be used as indicated or modified to meet the specific needs of the community. The sequential order **can be modified** if necessary. It is recommended, however, that a community not skip any steps completely if they want to maximize the greatest impact of effective change for the community.

Timeline Option A:

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

Timeline Option B:

Day 1	Community members are aware of the approach and have identified an existing community group to act at the local "Table" to begin moving forward.
Week 1	The local Table meets and consults with a facilitator to discuss a timeline.
Month 1	Previous efforts have provided much information. This information is compiled and asset inventories are updated with current information from the identified community asset groups.
Month 2	Asset Inventories are mapped and publicized.
Month 2	Economic flow maps are updated with current information from local businesses and community families. These maps are also publicized.
Month 2	The community re-affirms its vision and commitment, and identifies areas to maintain and new areas for growth.
Month 3	An existing action plan is modified to emphasize change built on community assets, identifying existing and new leadership responsible for all areas.
Month 4	A community celebration takes place as a "kick-off" to mobilize community individuals, associations, institutions and businesses towards new areas of growth.
Months 4-12	An evaluation tool is utilized to record activities as the community maintains many of its assets and expands assets in other areas creating positive growth and change.
Months 4-12	Celebration takes place throughout the entire revitalization approach.

If a timeline is followed during the approach set forth in this document, a community will have a greater chance of being successful in implementing change through "*vitalizing their community, building on assets and mobilizing for collective action.*"

ASSETS

IV. COMMUNITY CELEBRATION 😊

Celebrating the Similarities and Differences of Individuals

The diversity of individuals in a community is an asset itself. Different people have different ideas and different approaches. Exploring differences often uncovers similarities among different individuals. These similarities and differences can increase community awareness of the variety of assets and solutions available to meet the community's needs. Celebrate similarities and differences!

Celebrating the Community Willingness to Move Forward

Change is often difficult for many people. Change is sometimes viewed as fear of the unknown. When a community bonds together to create and face change, the strength in numbers helps to overcome any fear of change. When a community is willing to move forward, making changes build on its own assets, this is a good move. Celebrate the community willingness to move forward!

Celebrating Relationships

When the community comes together to create change, discovering similarities and differences among its individuals, relationships are cultivated and new discoveries are made about each other. These new discoveries and relationships are what helps to bond a community together during times of change. Celebrate new and sustained relationships throughout the community!

Celebrating the Community's Assets and the Display of Asset Maps

Many individuals and communities have typically and historically followed the traditional path discussing problems and concerns. An emphasis on assets, gifts, and community treasures may be a new and different approach. Celebrate community assets as they are discovered and/or re-discovered! Proudly display community assets and celebrate their visibility!

Celebrating a Community Vision and Plan of Action

A community vision is more than a dream. A vision can be very real and seen as happening not only the future, but in the present as well. A plan of action, when activated or mobilized, can move this vision to current reality. Celebrate community vision and plan of action, now, and in the future!

Celebrating Community Success

Emphasizing and enhancing the positive can often, by its own action, eliminate the negative. All positive action should be viewed as success, no matter how great or small. A new business in the community, providing local access of goods for families, is a success. A smile on a face and a “good morning” greeting is a success. Recognize and celebrate all community successes!

Community Celebrations

Community celebrations should be fun and involve individuals, families, associations, institutions and businesses. Community celebrations can be on a large scale and involve much planning, or, community celebrations can be spontaneous, recognizing a small amount of individual success.

Examples of Community Celebrations:



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

Celebrating the community moving forward to make change, no matter how large or small the celebration, can be a catalyst to add momentum toward reaching the community vision. Do celebrate community success. It is important for the overall health of a community, and, it can “make a difference!”



V. APPENDICES

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APPENDIX "A" - Inventory and Action Tools 1-7



Individual Skills/Assets Inventory ✓ Inventory Tool 1A

Name _____ Phone _____ Date _____

Health

- Caring for the Elderly
- Caring for the Mentally Ill
- Caring for the Sick
- Caring for Disabled People
- EMT or Emergency First Aid
- Nursing Experience
- Nutrition
- Exercise

Office

- Typing (wpm____)
- Taking Phone Messages
- Writing Business Letters
- Receiving Phone Orders
- Operating Switchboard
- Bookkeeping
- Computer Information Entry
- Computer Word Processing
- Other _____

Child Care

- Infant Care (0-1 yr)
- Child Care (1-6 yrs)
- Adolescent Care (7-13 yrs)
- Taking Kids on Field Trips
- Pre-school Care

Construction & Repair

- Painting
- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Carpentry
- Brick and Masonry
- Wall Papering
- Furniture Repairs
- Locksmith or Lock Repairs
- Building Garages
- Dry-walling and Taping
- Cabinetmaking
- Welding and Soldering
- Concrete Work
- Heating & Cooling Systems
- Flooring & Carpeting
- Roofing
- Other _____

Maintenance

- Floor Cleaning/Refinishing
- Carpet Cleaning
- Household Cleaning
- Lawn Mowing and Yard-work
- Gardening
- Tree & Shrubbery Care

Food

- Catering
- Preparing for Many People
- Serving to Many People
- Operating Commercial Equip
- Baking
- Meat Cutting & Preparation
- Bartending

Transportation

- Driving a Car
- Driving a Van
- Driving a Bus
- Driving a Tractor-Trailer
- Driving a Commercial Truck
- Operating Farm Equipment
- Driving Emergency Vehicles

Supervision

- Writing Reports
- Filling Out Forms
- Working with a Budget
- Recording of Activities
- Writing Proposals or Grants
- Planning Projects
- Supervising Projects
- Other _____

Individual Skills Inventory ✓ Tool 1A (page 2)

Equipment & Machinery

- Radio, TV, VCR Repair
- Small Appliance Repair
- Auto/Van Repair
- Truck/Bus Repair
- Farm Equipment Repair
- Operating a Forklift
- Household Equipment Repair
- Washer & Dryer Repair
- Operating a Crane
- Small Engine Repair
- Jewelry & Watch Repair
- Other _____

Sales

- Cash Register Operation
- Selling Products Wholesale
- Selling Products Retail
- Selling Services
- Phone Sales or Service
- Other _____

Priority Skills

1. What three skills do you think you do best?

a) _____ b) _____ c) _____

2. Which of all your skills are good enough that other people would hire you to do them?

a) _____ b) _____ c) _____

3. Which skills would you most like to teach?

a) _____ b) _____ c) _____

4. Which skills would you most like to learn?

a) _____ b) _____ c) _____

Arts

- Drawing or Painting
- Singing
- Playing an Instrument
- Dancing
- Acting
- Other _____

Security

- Guarding Property
- Armed Guard
- Crowd Control
- Alarms & Security Systems
- Firefighting
- Law Enforcement
- Other _____

Personal Care

- Sewing
- Knitting or Crocheting
- Hair Cutting & Styling
- Massage Therapy
- Other _____

Other

- Furniture/Equipment Moving
- Sports Organizing/Coaching
- Recreation Supervision
- Community Surveys
- Committee Organizing
- Committee Chairperson
- Meeting Facilitator
- Foreign Language _____
- Local Community Historian
- Cultural Historian
- Real Estate Appraiser
- _____

Individual Community Skills/Assets Inventory ✓ Inventory Tool 1B



Name _____

Phone _____

Date _____

For Individuals: Have you ever organized or participated in any of the following community activities? If yes, place a check mark in the box provided.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-H clubs
<input type="checkbox"/> Boy Scouts / Girl Scouts
<input type="checkbox"/> Church Fund-raiser
<input type="checkbox"/> Bingo
<input type="checkbox"/> School-Parent Associations
<input type="checkbox"/> Sports Teams
<input type="checkbox"/> Camp Trips for Youth
<input type="checkbox"/> Field Trips
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Community Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Political Campaigns
<input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood/Block Clubs
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Yard/Rummage Sales
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Gardens
<input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Associations
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation Clubs
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts Organizations
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Clubs or Organizations |
|--|--|

Look at this list again. Which of these activities would you be willing to participate in as part of Building Your Community? List the top three and any others.

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- Others: _____

Community & Economic Development Opportunities ✓

Action Tool 6

Community _____ Date _____ Page ___ of ___

A community commits to action activities, identifying leadership for each area to maintain and for each area of growth opportunities.

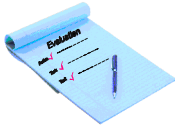
Areas to Maintain

Leadership Responsible

Growth Opportunities

Leadership Responsible

Examples
Areas to Maintain:
Growth Opportunities:



Community Action Activities Inventory
Evaluation of Success ✓
Action Tool 7

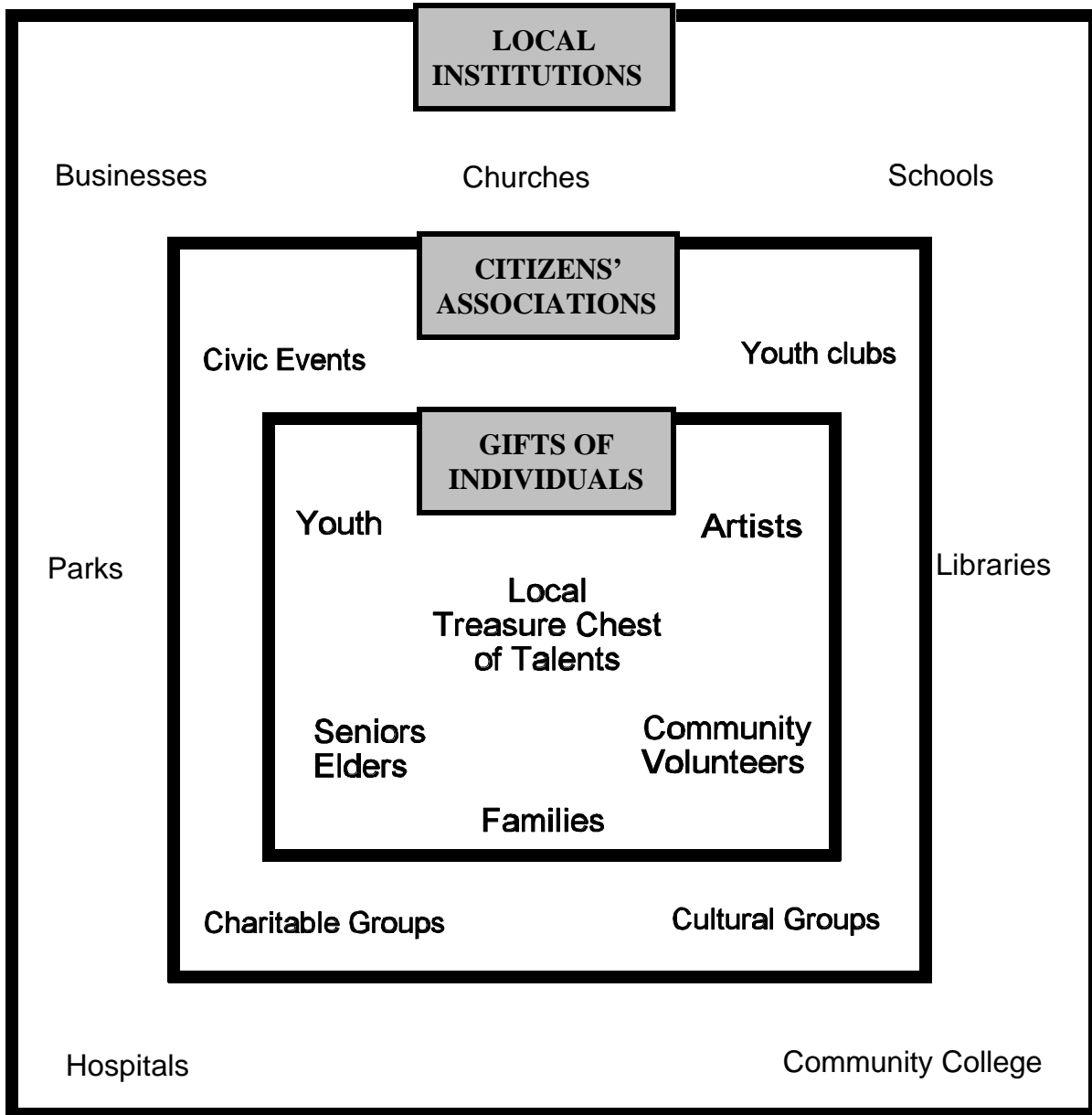
Community _____ **Date** _____ **Page** ____ **of** ____

Type of Activity	Who Was Responsible	When It Took Place	Difference Made
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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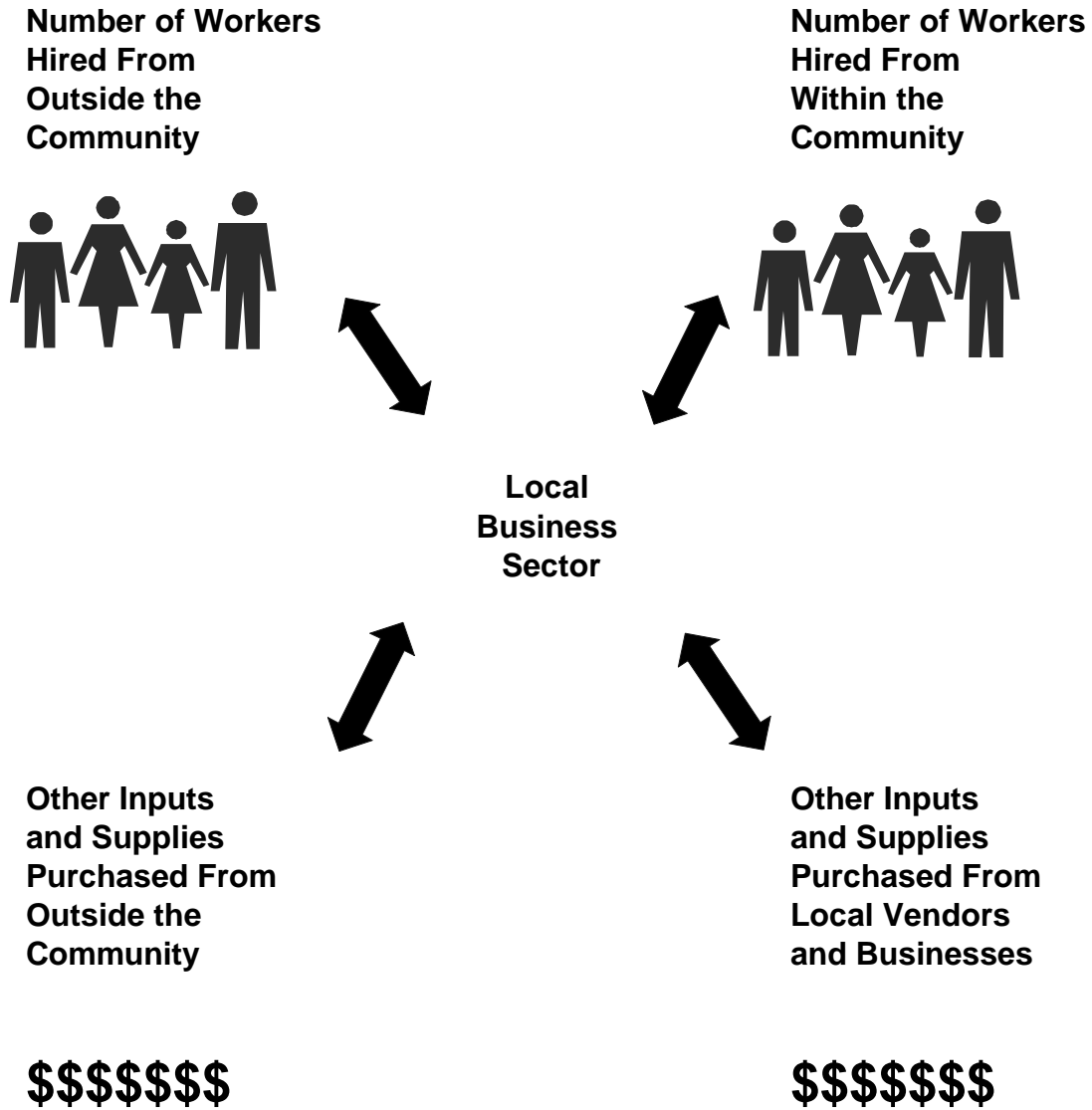
Examples

“Community Assets Map”

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



“Community Business Linkage Map”



“Community Economic Linkage Map”

Local Business Sector



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



Businesses Outside the Community

APPENDIX “B” - REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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Resources and Notes:

ASSETS