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## A Pathway to Sustainability

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# A PATHWAY



# To SUSTAINABILITY

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INSTITUTE OF PORTLAND METROPOLITAN STUDIES

SEPTEMBER 1995

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# INTRODUCTION

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September 12, 1995

In late 1992, the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies was contacted by the City of Sherwood, Oregon. Briefly, the city was growing rapidly, doubling its population within a span of a few years, and elected officials, city staff, and residents were concerned about the future. Would Sherwood continue to be the kind of community that its citizens desired, or would it become a place that no one would recognize? Above all, how could the city take action to ensure that the growth being experienced in Sherwood would yield the community citizens said they wanted?

To help the city explore these questions, the Institute worked with the Mayor, Walt Hitchcock, and the City Manager, Jim Rapp, to pursue funding for a project that would apply the principles of sustainable development to the choices faced by the community. Through a generous grant from the Northwest Area Foundation of St. Paul, Minnesota, the Institute was able to hire Pat Scruggs to implement the Sherwood Sustainability Forum, a community-based roundtable charged with incorporating the principles of sustainable in a vision for greater Sherwood.

In the past year, the community has developed a vision for a sustainable Sherwood and devised a series of projects to act on that vision. Over the past few months, we've shared the results of that project with interested communities throughout our region, and that has led to requests for more information about what they did and how it was done. This publication, "A Pathway to Sustainability", is our way of responding to those requests and sharing what we have learned. We present it not as the path, but as one set of experiences that can help communities organize their own pathways in the years ahead.

A project like this could not have been possible without the contributions of many people and organizations. Again, the Northwest Area Foundation has granted the funds to support this project and make this product possible. Pat Scruggs, assisted by PSU graduate student Doug Strickler, did a terrific job of managing the project and representing the Institute. Mayor Walt Hitchcock and City Manager Jim Rapp provided the initial vision that brought us all together. However, our most profound appreciation is extended to the citizens of greater Sherwood who participated in this project. It's their community and ultimately their product. As C.E.S. Wood said, "Good citizens are the riches of a city." The citizens of Sherwood have certainly proven him right!

Ethan Seltzer  
Director  
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# WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY?

What is your vision of a livable community? What community values are critical for preserving the quality of life for our children? Do the communities we live in reflect these images?

Today, we recognize the link between **economic development**, the **environment**, and our **quality of life**. We realize that governing these issues separately can be costly, and may result in unwanted consequences. Managing them efficiently and effectively will require plans and policies that link issues, and look at their long-term impacts -- in other words to be **sustainable**.

Sustainable development (also called sustainability) is a **framework** for weaving together this tapestry of issues. Over the last decade, the term has been defined in many ways. Perhaps the most widely quoted definition comes from the UN Commission on Environment and Development:

*"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*

## Sustainable Development Principles

Our economy, environment, and quality of life are **interrelated** and must be **integrated** in decisions and policies.

There are limits to the **carrying capacity** of natural resources, and we must work more **efficiently** to maintain their ability to replenish themselves.

Costs and benefits of decisions must be **equitable** among all populations and between generations.

A Sustainable Community Strategy is a strategic plan that is enhanced by the inclusion of straight-forward, yet very powerful, principles of sustainable development. By integrating these issues in planning and decision-making, communities can identify limits that affect their livability. This can help to more effectively manage both the economy and environment, and to increase future choices for a community.

## Sustainable Community Components

**Economic Vitality** that promotes a variety of family-wage jobs and economic activity within the community.

**Environmental Integrity** that fosters efficient use of resources and protects the quality and diversity of environmental systems on which the community depends.

**Sense of Community** that encourages inclusive citizen participation, and respect for heritage and culture.

This workbook is meant to provide basic information and options for developing a strategy within your own community. Since economic, environmental, social, and political aspects differ from town to town, there is no magic wand for developing a sustainable community effort. There are, however, common processes which have been used by communities across the country that can provide a foundation for local efforts.

## THE SUSTAINABLE SHERWOOD PROJECT

Throughout this workbook you will find highlights from the Sustainable Sherwood Project, outlining how one community applied principles of sustainability to their region.

In the summer of 1994, the greater Sherwood area embarked on a Sustainable Community Strategy. Faced with unprecedented growth, this community just inside the Portland metropolitan urban growth boundary set out to develop a strategy that would maintain and enhance the livability or sustainability of their community. The project was sponsored by the City of Sherwood and was managed by the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies at Portland State University. The project was funded primarily by the Northwest Area Foundation of St. Paul, Minnesota, with in-kind contribution from the City and the Institute.

The project established a community roundtable of approximately 30 diverse people representing new and established businesses, residents, and community groups, along with government officials and educators. The project extended beyond the city limits to include the greater Sherwood area which was defined by the postal code and school district boundaries. The roundtable developed a sustainable Sherwood vision and created action plans that would translate the vision into near-term community activities.

The Strategy was more than just a vision of the future. It helped to establish an on-going citizen involvement process to address community concerns. As one roundtable member commented, *"I have lived in this small community for almost twenty years, and have been active in a variety of community activities. Yet, this process brought together people I would not otherwise have met, and has shown me that we have many more common concerns than differences. I feel much more hopeful about the ability to address our community problems."*

The Sherwood project sought public awareness and involvement through articles in the local newspaper and City Hall newsletter, partnership meetings with community organizations, and displays at a major community event. In addition, a questionnaire seeking input on the draft strategy, and then a Citizen Guide summarizing the final strategy summary was sent to each household in the postal code.

Although the strategy has only recently been completed, and its implementation is just underway, the initial results are promising. Sustainability activities are being designed for the schools; City Council has adopted a majority of the roundtable's recommendation in their new work plan, and a community non-profit is being formed to continue the efforts of the roundtable, and to implement and track activities of the Strategy. The success of the Sustainable Sherwood Strategy will in part depend on follow through by government, business, and individuals to implement projects. The Strategy was just the beginning -- a catalyst for change, the groundwork that will allow other activities to develop. *"Going into the project, I didn't have a lot of optimism that it would cause earth-shaking changes,"* said one roundtable member, *"but it has certainly been a good first step and worthwhile."*





## Starting a Sustainable Community Strategy

This chapter provides basic information on how to design a sustainable community project.

- ◆ Identifying leadership and community support
- ◆ Determining the design
- ◆ Obtaining resources
- ◆ Defining public involvement needs

Working through these steps should help to establish a concise framework for your project. This framework will allow sponsors to communicate needs and objectives, and to obtain the resources required to complete the project.

## Identifying Leadership and Community Support

A successful sustainability strategy seeks a broad base of support from community leaders. While most projects tend to be sponsored by local government officials, business and civic leaders can also play pivotal roles. Who sponsors a sustainable community project may vary from town to town, depending on the needs of the community and the political climate. Yet, it is critical to obtain **initial leadership commitment**, and to continue to build community support throughout the process.

It can be important to remember that leaders are not just the elected officials of the town. They are long-time residents and business owners whose opinions are valued by the community, active civic volunteers who are involved in numerous community affairs, teachers who often go the extra mile, or recent residents who want to establish roots in their new area.

Recruiting community leaders requires a personal appeal from the sponsors. While a letter is often the first contact, a follow up phone call or one-on-one meeting is recommended. People who are asked to volunteer their time need to know that the project is important to the city, and their involvement is both respected and needed.

## Determining the Design

A sustainable strategy can be used by local communities to introduce long-term and comprehensive elements into either new community initiatives or existing planning processes. While there may be no single design for all

### *Sherwood Highlights*

*The Sustainable Sherwood Project was sponsored by the City of Sherwood. Both the Mayor and City Manager were key in initiating the project and working with the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies at Portland State University to design and manage the process.*

*The objective of the Project was simple: "to refine, expand, and institutionalize its Heritage Strategy (a strategy which includes environmental, economic, historic, and community elements) as well as be complementary to the City's objectives of informed citizen involvement and commitment to balanced growth."*

*In addition, the project sought to evaluate ways that principles of sustainable development can be applied for more efficient use of resources, to complement state and regional planning goals, to ensure long-term health of the economy and natural resource base, and to build partnerships that can effectively address community concerns identified by the project.*

## Sherwood Highlights

*The initial design for the Sustainable Sherwood Strategy was developed by the project management team and sponsors. It was then reviewed and enhanced by the community roundtable. It included the following design steps:*

*\* An assessment of community information and trends completed by the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, and reviewed by the community roundtable.*

*\* A review of how other communities have adopted sustainability principles into local planning and decision-making.*

*\* The definition of key terms such as sustainable, Sherwood, and vision.*

*\* The creation of a community vision using sustainability principles as a framework.*

*\* The development of actions plans through the establishment of four subcommittees.*

*\* A three-step public review of the Strategy.*

communities, there is a framework by which a community can develop a process that reflects their needs. This framework is based on a strategic planning process, yet incorporates sustainability concepts throughout.

The design of a sustainable community strategy should be clear in its **objectives, timeframe, and support**, yet flexible in allowing citizens to determine its long-term vision and priorities. An effective design should:

- ◆ Assist the community--government, businesses, and civic groups--to identify trends that have a positive and negative effect on the area;
- ◆ Build community partnerships and establish a shared vision among residents, and
- ◆ Complement existing planning efforts and other community programs.

The design of the strategy is often completed in two steps:

*The basic design*, developed by the sponsors, establishes the **objective, timeframe, and resource requirements**. It is used to obtain financial and project management resources, and to build community support and participation. The basic design should answer fundamental questions about the projects such as:

- ◆ What do we hope to achieve by completing a long-term community strategy?
- ◆ How can the application of sustainability principles benefit the project?
- ◆ How can the process add value or complement other planning efforts and community programs?

*The detailed design* is created by a core working group that includes the project management team and the sponsors. It expands the basic design to include:

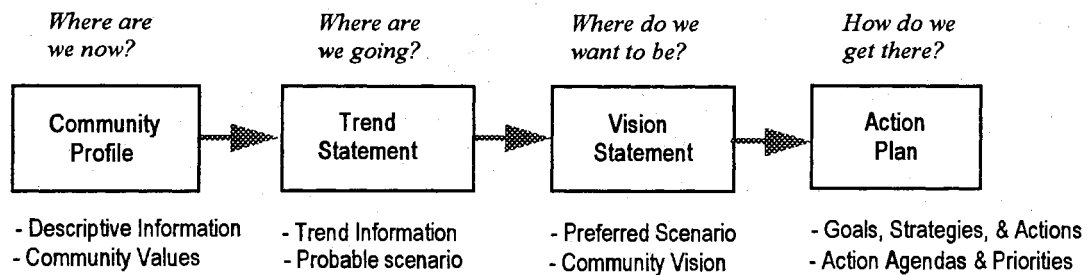
- ◆ Major steps of the project
- ◆ The purpose, activities, and outcome of each step.
- ◆ Identification of community interests to be involved in the project.
- ◆ Design of a community outreach strategy.

A Sustainable Community Strategy can be conducted in less than one year. The success of the strategy, however, will increase if there is additional time and resources allocated for follow up and implementation of several pilot projects.

## Enhancing a Proven Model.

*A Sustainable Community Strategy can be designed based on proven visioning or strategic planning models such as the Oregon Visioning Model, used by dozen of communities around the state. Below is a summary of the basic steps used in the Oregon Visioning Model. For each step, it describes the driving question as indicated above each box, the planning activity for each step as listed in each box, and the products shown below each box.*

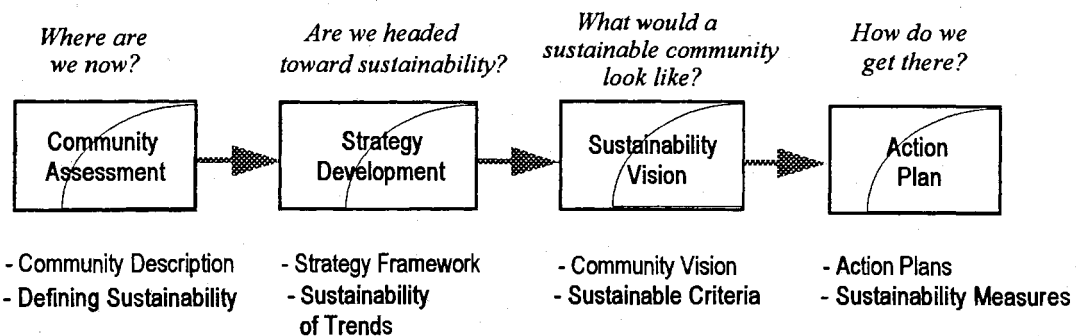
### Oregon Visioning Model



*(Taken from "A Guide to Community Visioning," Oregon Visions Project, 1993)*

**Adding a Sustainability Lens to the Model.** *By incorporating sustainability principles in each step, a conventional visioning process can be enhanced to create a sustainable community strategy. Adding a sustainability filter to the process can provide a common theme or direction for the community. These steps include educating citizens on the concepts of sustainability, defining sustainable development in terms relevant to the community, assessing the sustainability of community trends, developing sustainability criteria for visions and action plans, and finally, establishing sustainability measures or indicators to track the progress of the community.*

### Sustainable Community Strategy



*\* Public review is incorporated into each step*

## Sustainability Lens

*Key resources such as project managers and facilitators have a direct impact on the design and direction of the project. Therefore, it is important that they understand sustainable development concepts. Their knowledge and application of sustainability principles should be a primary consideration and part of the selection criteria for resources.*

### **Questions to consider:**

*Does the resource have a good working knowledge of sustainability concepts?*

*What experience does the resource have in applying sustainability principles to the community level?*

*Does the resource integrate issues of the economy, environment, and community in their work?*

## Helpful Hints

Keep it simple - be focused and clear about the objectives and outcomes.

Make it flexible - changes will most likely happen as the project unfolds.

Schedule adequate time - do not rush the process, especially public involvement activities.

Use graphics to clarify ideas - a picture is worth a thousand words.

Don't tie it to a political agenda or a single elected official.

## Obtaining Resources

Completing a sustainable community strategy will require various resources or skills to effectively manage the project. Since a wide array of community interests are involved in the process, those who manage it should be viewed as neutral or unbiased. This often means looking outside the community or to organizations and institutions that specialize in community planning or citizen participation.

### Recommended Resources

- ◆ **Project Management** -- primary contact, assists with design, manages schedules and budgets, coordinates outreach and other resources.
- ◆ **Facilitation** -- keeps public meetings and work groups focused and on track, and helps to ensure participation from all interests.
- ◆ **Graphic Design** -- translates written visions and actions into graphic representations that can be effectively used to communicate ideas to the broader public.

Funding for the project can be obtained from a variety of public and private sources such as:

- ◆ In-kind or financial contributions from local businesses and organizations.
- ◆ Grants from public programs or private non-profit foundations.
- ◆ Local government budgets for planning and community development projects.

## Involving Citizens

A key requirement for sustainable community projects is broad-based community participation. The process is designed to pull citizens together, build effective partnerships, and develop a stronger sense of community.

Since different interests respond to different communication methods, it is important that the citizen involvement element of your strategy include a range of outreach techniques. To determine citizen involvement needs, it may be helpful to examine the project by its major design steps. Using the objectives of each step, various citizen involvement options can be evaluated and an effective plan can be developed.

**Examples of objectives and option to consider:**

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Citizen Involvement Options</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Raise awareness about the project</li> <li>* Keep public informed about the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Newspapers and other local media</li> <li>* Participation in community events</li> <li>* Presentations to community organizations</li> <li>* Special events</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Identify public issues and values</li> <li>* Develop a long-term vision for the community</li> <li>* Develop action plans or projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Roundtables or focus groups</li> <li>* Public meetings, coffees, etc.</li> <li>* Surveys</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Obtain public input on strategies</li> <li>* Gain support for actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Public meetings, coffees, or special events</li> <li>* Surveys</li> <li>* Participation in community events</li> <li>* Presentations to community organizations</li> </ul>

**Helpful Hints:**

Raise Community Awareness before the process begins by using local media, community newsletters, and public events or festivals to explain the strategy's objectives and benefits, and to encourage participation.

Promote Community Ownership by including all major interests throughout the various steps of the process.

**Sherwood Highlights**

*The Sherwood project established a roundtable to develop its Sustainable Sherwood Strategy. The roundtable consisted of approximately 30 people representing business, civic, development, education, environmental, and government interests. Members varied from life-long residents, to those living in the community for only a few years. Since most people defined Sherwood as an area greater than the city limits, the postal code and school district boundaries were used to broaden participation.*

*The roundtable members were selected through two methods. First, invitations were sent to officers of community organizations and business associations requesting a representative. Second, public announcements for citizens at large were advertised in the local newspaper and City Hall newsletter.*

*The project management team from IMS assisted the roundtable by facilitating meetings and work groups, and providing background materials and administrative support. "Using an outside organization was extremely helpful," stated one roundtable member, "the consistent leadership kept us focused, and they brought a in a broader scope and showed how Sherwood fits into the bigger picture."*

## Add Some Fun!

*Roundtables that bring together diverse people, also bring baggage or preconceived notions of each other. To lighten the load and the mood of early meetings, the Sherwood Roundtable did some simple but fun things to get to know one another.*

*First, instead of computer printed name plates, each person was given a box of crayons and colored markers and then asked to draw their own name plate. On one side they wrote the name or nickname that the community might call them (for example the Library Lady). The other side they drew pictures or listed words that represented the skills or quality they brought to the table and what they wanted others to know about them. The results were colorful cards, lots of laughter, and a better understanding of each other.*

*The Sherwood roundtable also gave out a "Pollyanna Award" developed by one of the members. It was spontaneous, and anyone could nominate or receive the award. It became a valued trademark of the process.*

## Developing a Roundtable

The most popular method of developing a sustainability strategy is through the use of a community **roundtable**. A roundtable is described as a forum representing **diverse community interests** and that uses consensus processes to develop a common framework. The key to an effective roundtable is both **inclusion** and **manageability**. It must include the majority of interests as to be supported by the community, yet it must also be a size that is manageable. Most roundtables tend to be between 20 and 30 people. Additional interests are often brought into a roundtable's subcommittees or focus groups during various stages of the processes.

A roundtable operates using a **consensus** processes. A consensus process is "one in which all those who have a stake in the outcome aim to reach agreement on actions and outcomes that resolve or advance issues related to environmental, social, and economic sustainability." (Canadian Round Tables on Environment and Economy). A consensus process can encourage innovative solutions and partnerships by bringing a diversity of knowledge to the table.

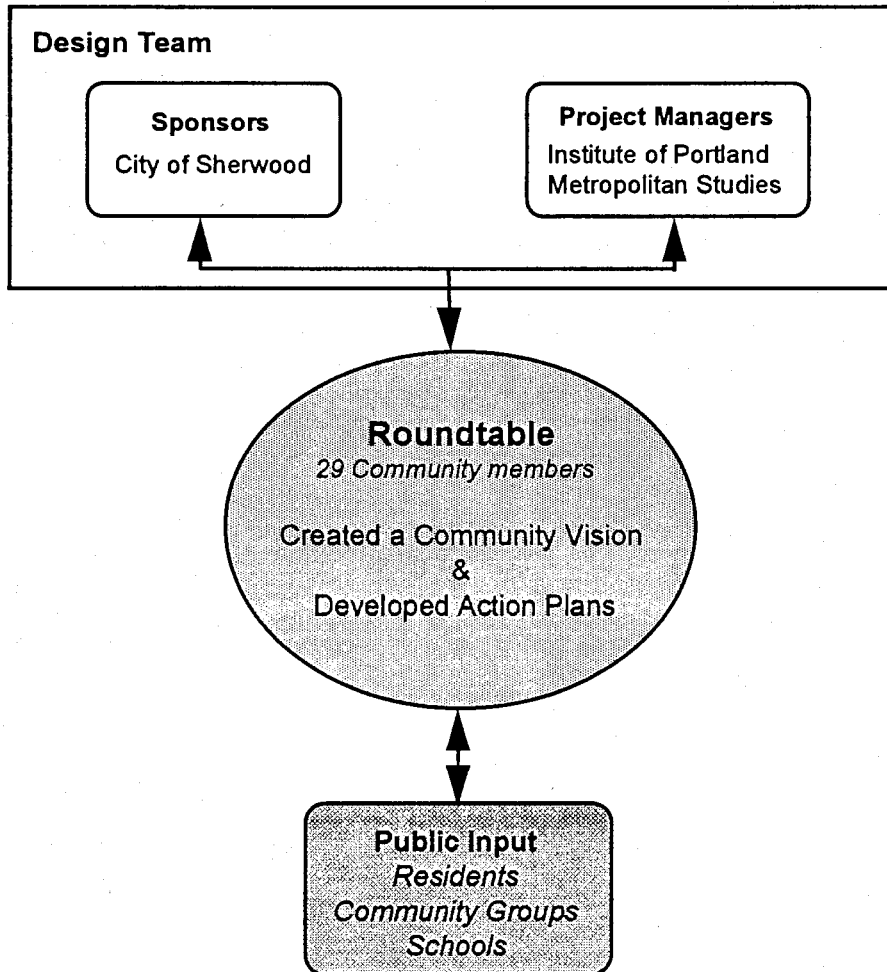
Consensus does not necessarily mean that each member agrees to every word or every step, but on the whole every member agrees to the total package. Because there are no "winners and losers", consensus is an effective tool to seek the highest level of common agreement while promoting respect and trust for other opinions.

Consensus will differ for each community. Roundtables and consensus processes will work best when participants:

- ◆ Know what is expected of them.
- ◆ Have equal standing where no individual or interest has more influence over decisions.
- ◆ Help to design the elements of the strategy and decision-making process used to reach agreement.

**Helpful Hints:** Add some fun to your roundtable. Create exercises that fosters openness and respect. Invest in team-building early.

## Sustainable Sherwood Project Organizational Diagram



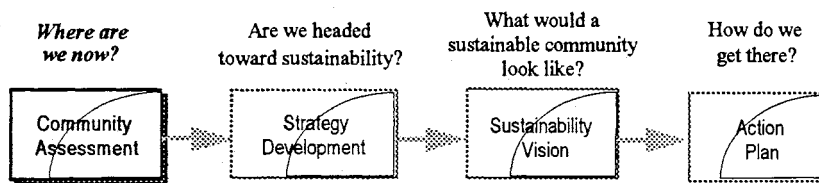




This chapter is dedicated to the first two steps of a sustainable community strategy: the community assessment and the strategy framework. The objective of these steps is to understand the current state of the community and the trends affecting it by:

- ◆ Describing the community
  - descriptive information and trends
  - community values
- ◆ Defining sustainability
- ◆ Assessing the sustainability of community trends
- ◆ Developing a framework for the Strategy

These steps are accomplished through a community involvement process, usually a roundtable or focus group which represents diverse interests. The results are often reviewed with the member's constituents and with the general public before the final steps of the strategy are developed.



## Describing the Community

The first step is to identify the characteristics of the community and surrounding area. This information includes demographic, economic, environmental, housing, transportation, education, and institutional data. The data should help to answer questions that define the community and can be used to evaluate the community's strengths and weaknesses.

- Who are we?**
- Where do we live and what do we do?**
- What keeps our community healthy?**
- What affects our quality of life?**

The source of this data most often government agencies, universities, and libraries. An increasing amount of information, such as census and demographic data, is available electronically on the Internet.

### Sherwood Highlights

*The first few months, the project management team at the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies developed a "Foundation Report." The report contained three components for the community assessment phase:*

- *Baseline data on Sherwood including population, housing, demographics, income, employment, commute times, education levels, and air and water quality.*

- *Information on the definitions and theory of sustainable development.*

- *A summary of nine other sustainable community efforts.*

*This information was given to each roundtable member in the early stages of the process. The roundtable decided as a group not to have a formal presentation on the information, but rather to read it individually. In retrospect, a meeting dedicated to these three pieces of information would have been more beneficial.*

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

<i>Who are we?</i>	<b>Demographic/Social Indicators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Population trends: growth rate and number</li> <li>- Age and ethnicity distribution</li> <li>- Tenure (length of time in location)</li> <li>- Education level</li> </ul>
<i>Where do we live and what do we do?</i>	<b>Economic Indicators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Income levels</li> <li>- Employment - type and percentage</li> <li>- Housing - affordability and new housing starts</li> </ul>
<i>What keeps our community healthy?</i>	<b>Environmental Indicators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water quality and reliability of source</li> <li>- Air quality</li> <li>- Amount of green and open spaces</li> <li>- Diversity of wildlife and habitat</li> </ul>
<i>What affects the quality of life?</i>	<b>Livability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Land use patterns</li> <li>- Jobs/housing ratio</li> <li>- Commute time</li> </ul>

## COMMUNITY VALUES

Along with identifying community information and trends, the project should establish the values of people who live and work in the area. Values help to identify what is important, where people agree and differ, and what they think are critical characteristics to maintain or improve. Because many common values are identified in this step, it helps to build respect and break down barriers among people participating in the process.

Using a brainstorming session, community values can be determined through questions such as:

**What do you value most about the community?**

**What characteristics do you most want to maintain?**

**What characteristics do you most want to improve?**

**Helpful Hint:** Remember that brainstorming is an activity that merely lists a participant's response. There are no right or wrong answers – it treats each response equally, and does not allow discussions or disputes.

## Defining Sustainability

To conclude the community assessment, the process should define sustainable development or sustainability in terms of the community.

**What is meant by the term "sustainable"?**

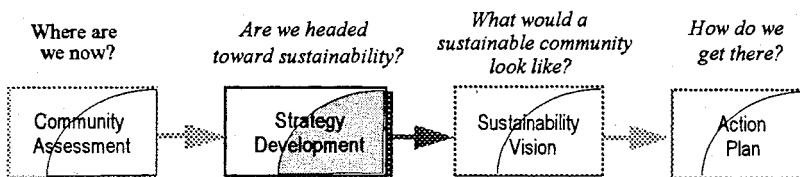
**How would you define a sustainable community?**

Once basic information on sustainability is provided, the question becomes

**What defines our community as sustainable?**

Brainstorming this question will provide a variety of sustainability aspects that can then be grouped into major components, and developed into a sustainable community vision statement.

*🔗* **Sustainability Lens:** Because the concept of the sustainability is relatively new, few people are familiar with the background and theory behind the term. It is highly recommended that an overview of sustainability be presented to the community group by someone with significant knowledge about the subject. Supplemental background material, especially on how other communities have applied this concept, provides additional value. (*organizations who can provide this information are listed in Chapter 4*)



## Developing Sustainable Community Goals

Establishing the framework for the strategy includes developing a set of sustainable community goals. These goals are general in nature (more specific criteria is developed for the action plans). The objective is to develop three or four overarching principles which serve to guide the direction of the strategy by answering the question:

**How do we know if our community is on the path toward sustainable development?**

### Sherwood Highlights

*The Sherwood Roundtable defined the term "sustainable" then applied that description to a sustainable vision statement for the community.*

*Using a brainstorming process, members of the roundtable defined sustainable as "ways to maintain community health (economic, environmental, and social) for the long-term, and provide opportunities for future generations." Terms included:*

- Livability
- Ecological Diversity
- Efficiency
- Inclusiveness
- Stability
- Balance between people and nature
- Long-term benefits over short-term gains
- Continuity
- Accessibility
- Community spirit
- Ensure future needs
- Opportunities

*These terms were then combined into a vision statement which read: "A sustainable Sherwood is a healthy and livable community that fosters long-term goals to maintain a strong sense of community, to encourage a stable and diverse economy, and to promote biological diversity and wise use of its natural resources."*

## Sustainability Lens

*Assessing trends means not only looking at the direction of the trends, but questioning their long-term impact.*

*For example, housing starts may be increasing at a significant rate. Past measures would say that this trend is good. But if this trend would continue for a prolonged period of time, what effect would it have on the community? While it may provide an increase in the number of homes and growth in economic activity while they are being built, it might also increase housing prices, congestion, and taxes. In the long-term would it be sustainable? Or would a more gradual growth better sustain the community's livability?*

Once a sustainability is defined for the community, goals can be developed that will serve as a filter to assess the sustainability of the vision and action plans. The goals should include basic aspects of sustainability -- social, economic, environmental, and governance issues -- and be limited in number (no more than six).

**Example: Our Community will be more sustainable if it is**

- ◆ A community that promotes public participation, volunteerism, and a sense of community.
- ◆ A community that provides a variety of economic activity that supports family-wage jobs and increases community wealth without negatively impacting certain populations or the environment.
- ◆ A community that stays within the carrying capacity of its environment and encourages efficient use of its resources.
- ◆ A community with public policies and decision-making processes that
  - 1) integrates economic, environmental, and social concerns;
  - 2) equitably distributes their costs, and
  - 3) considers the impacts on its future generations.

### ASSESSING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY TRENDS

The next step in the development of the Strategy, is to assess community trends. Trends identified in the first phase would be evaluated based on the definition of community sustainability developed by the group. Since opinions will vary as the degree of sustainability, it is best to use general categories in rating these trends. The results of this evaluation can be used to focus and prioritize activities.

**Is this trend moving toward or away from sustainability, or neither (a neutral position)?**

### Developing a Strategy Framework

The final step in this chapter takes the output from the previous steps to develop a framework for a Sustainable Community Strategy.

**A summary of community values**

**A sustainable community definition**

**A sustainability assessment of community trends**

The community group or roundtable must reach consensus on this framework since it will become the foundation for the remaining steps. Agreement on this framework also shows participants that diverse community interests can share common values upon which partnership can be built. This framework can be shared with the constituents of roundtable members, or reviewed by the general public or selected organizations.

should include graphics or maps representing the main themes of the vision and actions. A more detailed report can be useful to organizations with primary responsibility for implementation.

**Follow-through**

The greatest criticism of a visioning process or sustainability strategy is the lack of successful follow-through. Implementation is usually not a result of a poor vision or strategy, but the commitment by leaders and individuals involved in the process to see it through. When all is said and done, the success of a sustainable community strategy will rely on the ability to act on its ideas.

<i>Reasons for weak follow through</i>	<i>Action to improve follow through</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Action plans fail to involve key stakeholders</li> <li>* Actions are too broad or vague.</li> <li>* Community does not have resources to implement projects</li> <li>* Initial leadership commitment failed to include implementation of projects.</li> <li>* Lack of public awareness and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Include follow through in the design: assure adequate resources to implement one or two pilots.</li> <li>* Develop actions that have realistic timeframe and measurable goals.</li> <li>* Include those who have a stake in the process.</li> <li>* Obtain long-term commitment from leadership that goes beyond just the vision.</li> <li>* Raise public awareness of the strategy - celebrate its completion, track its progress.</li> </ul>

**Summary**

Developing a sustainable community strategy can meet multiple objectives. It can serve as a strategic framework for land use and development plans, it can help to build relationships by establishing a public participation process for all interests, and it can provide a shared sense of community and commitment to future generations.

The strategy should be seen as the catalyst for dialogue, partnerships, and action. It is not the end of the road -- it is merely a map for the journey.

**Sherwood Highlights**

*The Sustainable Sherwood Strategy appears to have made an impact on the community. Already new partnerships have been formed as a direct result of the process, three of the top seven actions are being implemented, the City Council has adopted over 75% of the roundtable's recommendations, and the public is aware of and in support of the strategy.*

*Three months after the final strategy was completed, a small random survey was sent to the greater Sherwood area to measure the effectiveness of the public outreach and work of the roundtable. Over 25 percent responded. Of those responding almost 70% were aware of the Sustainable Sherwood Strategy and the roundtable; over 50% had read the summary, and almost 80% were in support of the sustainability actions and principles which guided the work of the strategy.*

*The new community non-profit, the Citizens Action Network (CAN), which formed to continue the roundtable's work, along with City staff will be key players in the strategy's success.*

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY  
SUBCOMMITTEE WORKSHEET**

**Subcommittee:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Recommendation:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Description:*

*Why is this recommendation needed? What issue(s) of the vision does it address?*

*How does the recommendation make the community more sustainable?*

*What existing plans or policies can be used?*

*What new plans or policies are needed to fill gaps?*



**How will this recommendation be implemented? What are the action steps and measures needed?**

<u>Steps/Activities</u>	<u>Partners</u>	<u>Funding Sources</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li></ul>		

*How will the results/outcomes be measured? What are the benchmarks or indicators for this activity?*

*Other notes:*



**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY  
ACTION PLAN CRITERIA**

Here's a few things you might want to consider as your subcommittee chooses projects to recommend. The checklist is derived from the basic principles of sustainable development.

1) Can the activity continue into future generations without having a negative or costly impact on the environment, economy, or community?	Yes No N/A
2) Does the activity currently stay within, and will continue to stay within, the carrying capacity of the resources it uses?	Yes No N/A
3) Does the activity promote efficient use of resources and capital?	Yes No N/A
4) Does the activity consider the "full cost" of its action -- the economic, environmental and social costs?	Yes No N/A
5) Is the activity equitable in its distribution of costs and benefits to all sectors of the community?	Yes No N/A
6) Does the activity promote community values of inclusiveness and accessibility?	Yes No N/A
7) Is the activity flexible? Can it be easily updated when needs change or new information is available?	Yes No N/A
8) Can the outcomes be measured?	Yes No N/A
9) Is it fun?	Yes No N/A



The following resources specialize or have dedicated programs for sustainable development. They provide research, training, publications, technical assistance, and other services to communities and regions.

### Northwest Organizations

**Dorothy P. Craig & Associates**  
2129 Bethel Street NE  
Olympia WA 98506  
*phone* (360) 754-7842  
*contact* Dorothy Craig, President

**Ecotrust**  
1200 NW Front Ave, Suite 470  
Portland, OR 97209  
*phone* (503) 227-6225  
*fax* (503) 222-1515  
*contact* Erin Kellogg

**Environmental Partnerships for Oregon Communities**  
Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality  
2020 SW 4th Ave Suite 400  
Portland, OR 97201  
*phone* (503)229-5588  
*fax* (503)229-6945  
*contact* Pete Dalke, Coordinator

**The Institute for Portland Metropolitan Studies**  
School of Urban and Public Affairs  
PO Box 751  
Portland, OR 97207-0751  
*phone* (503) 725-5170  
*fax* (503) 725-5199  
*contact* Ethan Seltzer, Director

**Institute for a Sustainable Environment**  
University of Oregon  
Hendericks Hall  
Eugene, OR 97403  
*phone* (503) 346-3895  
*fax* (503) 346-2040  
*contact* John Baldwin, Director

**Northwest Earth Institute/The Oregon Natural Step Network**  
931 SW Morrison St. #532  
Portland, OR 97205  
*phone* (503) 227-2807  
*contact* Dick Roy, Director

**Northwest Policy Center**  
University of Washington  
Box 353060  
Seattle, WA 98195-3060  
*phone* (206) 543-7900  
*fax* (206) 543-1096  
*contact* David Harrison or Kirk Johnson

**Northwest Small Cities Services**  
4569 Purdue Ave NE  
Seattle WA 98105  
*phone* (206) 524-7482  
*fax* (206) 524-8043  
*contact* Jack Collins

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NORTHWEST ORGANIZATIONS (con't)

**Scruggs & Associates**  
0426 SW Dakota Street  
Portland OR 97201  
*phone* (503) 246-6148  
*fax* (503) 452-8030  
*contact* Patricia Scruggs, President

**Sustainable Northwest**  
1200 NW Front Ave, Suite 280  
Portland OR 97209  
*phone* (503) 221-6911  
*fax* (503) 221-2927  
*contact* Martin Goebel, Executive Director

**Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods**  
PO Box 12735  
Portland OR 97212  
*phone* (503) 284-7868

**USEPA Region 10**  
1200 6th Ave  
Seattle WA 98101  
*phone* (206) 553-1200  
*fax* (206) 533-1775  
*contact* Jim Wertz, Environmental Sustainability Program

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National Organizations

**Center for Living Democracy**  
RR #1 Black Fox Road  
Brattleboro, VT 05301  
*phone* (802) 254-1234  
*fax* (802) 254-1227  
*contact* Francis Moore Lappé &  
Paul Martin DuBois

**Center for Policy Alternatives**  
1875 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 710  
Washington DC 20009  
*phone* (202) 387-6030  
*fax* (202) 986-2539

**Citizens Network for Sustainable Development**  
PO Box 316  
Bolinas, CA 94924  
*phone* (415) 868-9720  
*fax* (415) 868-2230  
*e-mail* citizensnet@igc.org

**Community Sustainability Resource Institute**  
PO Box 11343  
Takoma Park, MD 20913  
*phone* (301) 588-7227  
*fax* (301) 587-7691

**Concern, Inc.**  
1794 Columbia NW  
Washington DC 20009  
*phone* (202) 328-8160  
*fax* (202) 387-3378  
*contact* Susan Boyd

**Consortium for Regional Sustainability**  
Tufts University  
474 Boston Ave  
Medford MA 02155  
*phone* (617) 628-5000 x 2075  
*fax* (617) 627-3884  
*contact* Elizabeth Kline

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## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (con't)

### The Context Institute

P.O. Box 11740  
Bainbridge Island WA 98110  
*phone* (206) 842-0216  
*fax* (206) 842-5208  
*e-mail* incontext@igc.org

### Institute of Local Self-Reliance

2425 18th Street NW  
Washington DC 20009  
*phone* (202) 232-4108  
*fax* (202) 332-0463  
*contact* David Morris

### International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives

8th Floor, East Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street  
Toronto Ont. M5H 2N2 Canada  
*phone* (416) 392-1462  
*fax* (416) 392-1478  
*e-mail* iclei@web.apc.org

### International Institute for Sustainable Development

161 Portage Ave. East, 6th Floor  
Winnipeg MN R3B 0Y4 Canada  
*phone* (204) 958-7700  
*fax* (204) 958-7710  
*e-mail* iisd@web.apc.org

### President's Council on Sustainable Development

730 Jackson Place NW  
Washington DC 20503  
*phone* (202) 408-5296  
*fax* (202) 408-6839  
*contact* Angela Park, Sustainable Communities

### Rocky Mountain Institute

Economic Renewal Program  
1739 Snowmass Creek Road  
Snowmass CO 81654-9199  
*phone* (303) 927-3851  
*fax* (303) 927-4178  
*e-mail* rmlonas@rmi.org  
*contact* Michael Kinsley

### Redefining Progress

One Kearny Str. 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94108  
*phone* (415) 781-1191  
*fax* (415) 781-1198  
*contact* Alan AtKisson, Director

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## Visioning Programs

Oregon Visions Project  
c/o John Anderson  
McKeever Morris, Inc.  
722 SW 2nd Ave, Suite 400  
Portland OR 97204  
*phone* (503) 228-7352

### A Guide to Community Visioning

Steve Ames, Editor  
Steve Ames Planning  
325 SE 14th Ave.  
Portland OR 97214  
*phone* (503) 235-3000

## Sustainable Community Examples

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Across the country, sustainable development programs that are making a difference in rural, urban, and suburban communities. Listed below are samples of such efforts.

**Applegate Partnership**  
1340 Missouri Flat Road  
Grants Pass, OR 97527  
*phone* (503) 846-6917  
*contact* Jack Shipley

*A rural Oregon initiative that sought to bring diverse interests together in order to address the concerns of resource or timber dependent communities in Southern Oregon.*

**Chattanooga, Tennessee**  
Chattanooga Venture  
506 Broad Street  
Chattanooga TN 37402  
*phone* (615) 267-8687

*Used as a model by the President's Council on Sustainable Development, Chattanooga's Vision & Revision 2000 project is now over 10 years old. With the involvement of over 1700 residents, the project has propelled over 200 programs which has created almost 1400 new jobs, plus an additional 7000 temporary positions, serving over 1M people. The initial private foundation investment has been leveraged from under \$5M to over \$700M in less than a decade.*

**Kansas City, Missouri**  
FOCUS Kansas City  
KC Planning & Development Department  
15th Floor City Hall  
414 East 12th Street  
Kansas City MO 64106-2795  
*phone* (816) 274-1841

*A visioning process which developed a matrix of seven "Linkage Themes" and five "Community Building Blocks" that together comprise a potential framework for establishing goals. Linkage Themes include the role of the market, technological change, environment, personal well-being, diversity, investment, and governance. Community Building Blocks consist of jobs, resource and capital, institutions and culture, knowledge and education, and neighborhoods and people.*

**Olympia, Washington**  
Sustainable Community Roundtable  
2129 Bethel Street NE  
Olympia WA 98506  
*phone* (360) 754-7842  
*contact* Dorothy Craig

*In 1991, the City of Olympia initiated a Sustainable Community Roundtable to create a network of ideas and projects leading to a sustainable South Puget Sound. The Roundtable has fostered changes within City government and in the community in general. Built on past visioning projects, the project developed the State of the Community Report – a document which identifies principles of sustainability and directions of key indicators, and suggests targets and "steps in the right direction."*

**Richmond and Wayne County, Indiana**  
SURE, Inc. of Richmond  
204 South 16th Street  
Richmond, Indiana 47374  
*phone* (317) 962-0384  
*contact* Lynn Johnstone

*SURE Project began in 1989 as a city/county effort that included private, governmental, and nonprofit groups. The objective was to ensure ecological balance while enhancing local economic prosperity. Four issues were the initial focus – education, local economy, neighborhoods, and water quality. Actions plans included the establishment of a farmers market, protection of greenways, energy conservation programs, and manufacturing and design of products from secondary resources.*



Sarasota, Florida  
2020 Foresight  
c/o Jean Meadows  
Cooperative Extension Service  
2900 Ringling Blvd  
Sarasota FL 34237  
phone (813) 951-4240

*The Sarasota Initiative was started in 1990 as a three-year visioning project called "2020 Foresight." The project focused on seven themes land use, mobility and communications, ecology, neighborhoods, community, agriculture/aquaculture, and economics. It developed action plans which addressed issues such as new and re-development of neighborhoods, water consumption, automobile use, waste, greenways and parks, and ecological health.*

Seattle, Washington  
Sustainable Seattle  
c/o Metro YMCA  
909 4th Ave  
Seattle WA 98104  
phone (206) 382-5013  
contact Richard Conklin

*Started in 1991 as a result of a sustainability conference, Sustainable Seattle is known nationally as a model for Sustainability Indicators. In addition to the indicators, the initiative operates three additional projects: Community Outreach, Policy, and Marketing and Communication. They are living proof that an effective effort can come from committed volunteers.*

Sherwood, Oregon  
Sustainable Sherwood Project  
Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies  
PO Box 751  
Portland OR 97207-0751  
phone (503) 725-5170  
contact Ethan Seltzer or Pat Scruggs

*The Sustainable Sherwood Project addressed the issues facing small but rapidly growing communities on the edge of larger metropolitan areas. The project focused on four areas: business, community, youth and education, environment and open spaces, and infrastructure and transportation. Sixteen actions were recommended in these four areas with several underway. An on-going community non-profit was formed to carry out the recommendations.*

Southern California  
So. California Council on Environment and  
Development (SCCED)  
1341 Ocean Avenue #253  
Santa Monica CA 90401  
phone (310) 455-1603  
contact Kathleen Gildred

*SCCED is an prime example of how a highly populated metropolitan area can address issues of sustainability. The project has held multiple regionwide workshops and focus groups to prioritize issues and develop actions plans to address urban problems. They have strong participation from area business and industry, as well as governments and nonprofits.*

Willapa Bay, Washington  
Willapa Alliance  
PO Box 278  
South Bend, WA 98586  
phone (360) 875-5195  
contact Dan'l Markham

*This project uses the watershed as its boundaries to focus on ecological and economic health. It uses a conservation-based development process to address an economy that is primarily fishing, forestry, and tourism. A practical example of how a community can maintain a high standard of living and a viable ecological base, this project focuses on building and financing sustainable businesses.*



*Each generation writes its  
autobiography in the  
cities it creates*

L. Mumford

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