



Minnesota
Design
Team

Work- book

Table of Contents

| | | |
|-----------|--|----|
| 3 | Minnesota Design Team Mission Statement | |
| 4 | Your Community and the Minnesota Design Team | |
| | Your Community's Shared Vision | 4 |
| | Your Community's Roots | 7 |
| | What is a Minnesota Design Team Visit? | 7 |
| | Is It a Good Time to Apply for a Design Team Visit? | 8 |
| | Getting Community Support for a Design Team Visit | 9 |
| | Making a Commitment. | 10 |
| 13 | Application for a Community Visit | |
| 21 | Preparing for the Visit | |
| | Your Community Has Been Accepted for a Minnesota Design Team Visit — Now What? . . . | 21 |
| | A Typical Timeline: The Visit isn't the First Deadline | 22 |
| | What the Design Team Does | 23 |
| | What the Community and the Design Team Do Together | 23 |
| | Your "People Infrastructure" — Making Participation Broad and Deep | 24 |
| | The Nuts and Bolts of Getting Ready | 30 |
| | Understanding Your Community | 34 |
| | Community Action Research — The Four Environments. | 41 |
| | Written Survey. | 42 |
| | Photo Survey. | 44 |
| 45 | The Weekend Visit | |
| | The Weekend Visit is the Culmination of All Your Hard Work | 45 |
| | Typical Weekend Schedule | 47 |
| | For the Weekend | 48 |
| | Thursday Evening — Arrival. | 53 |
| | Friday Morning — Community Presentations. | 54 |
| | Friday Noon — Lunch. | 56 |
| | Friday Afternoon — Community Tour | 56 |
| | Friday Late Afternoon — Team Meeting. | 57 |
| | Friday Evening — Community Potluck Dinner | 58 |
| | Friday Evening — Town Meeting. | 58 |
| | Friday Night — Social Gathering. | 59 |
| | Saturday Morning/Afternoon — Team Work Session. | 60 |
| | Saturday Evening — Community Gathering and Design Team Presentation. | 61 |
| | Saturday Night — Social Gathering | 62 |
| 67 | Making It Happen After the Visit | |
| | Organizing Your Implementation Plan | 68 |
| | Evaluating Your Community's Implementation Plan | 73 |
| | The Design Team Visits Again | 75 |
| 76 | Appendix | |
| | Minnesota Design Team Communities. | 76 |
| | Hiring Professionals to Help Your Community | 78 |
| | Preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Work Your Community Wants To Do. | 80 |

The Minnesota Design Team Workbook is the
product of many hands. Those who
contributed their
experience and expertise are:

Myles Alexander
Paul Baltzersen
Bob Claybaugh
James R. Dean
Judie Erickson
Joe Esker
Mike Lamb
Richard McLaughlin
Arthur Mehrhoff
Peter Musty
Lucy Thompson
Judith Van Dyne
Janet Whitmore

Photos

James R. Dean

Editor

Penelope Simison

Graphic Design

Rubin Cordaro Design

We gratefully thank the following

contributors to the
Workbook project.

American Institute of Architects Minnesota
American Planning Association, Minnesota Chapter
American Society of Landscape Architects, Minnesota Chapter
Otto Bremer Foundation
College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, University of Minnesota
Minnesota Design Team Steering Committee



The
Minnesota
Design
Team **Mission
Statement**

The mission of the Minnesota Design Team is to use design and community development principles to help Minnesota communities, particularly those in rural areas, develop and act upon a shared vision of their future.

The Minnesota Design Team has three objectives when it works with communities —

We want to increase awareness of the benefits of quality design in the development of communities. As architects, landscape architects and allied professionals, we use planning and design concepts to illustrate each community's unique vision.

We want to preserve each community's identity. With images and words, we construct a sustainable vision with existing assets, including people and institutions, buildings, and the natural environment.

The Minnesota Design Team is committed to participatory democracy and grass-roots initiative. We hope to inspire community-based development through a positive experience of bringing together people to better understand their community, one another and the future.

Your Community and the Minnesota Design Team

Your Community's Shared Vision

Look at your community today.

Now, imagine what you want it to look like in 5 years, 10 years or 20 years. What do you see?

Maybe you see a new community center for your teenagers...or trails connecting your parks...or restoration of the 1900s bank building on Main Street. Some of your neighbors probably have the same ideas you do. Others have different ideas — perhaps a new industrial park on the edge of town or a spruced-up downtown business street.

Now, imagine that there's a way to bring all these ideas together into one shared vision for your community.

The Minnesota Design Team process is a way of bringing people together to generate ideas to improve their community and create a sustainable future. It is also a way to develop a process for turning many of those ideas into reality.

The process of creating a shared vision begins with a community that wants to make the most of its physical and environmental elements. Creating a shared vision also happens when a community realizes that no one person or group of people can know the best course of action. So, the community sets out to involve as many people as possible, gathering together the ideas of all segments of the community.

A Design Team visit is a way to crystallize these ideas and to energize the community. The Design Team is a volunteer group of architects, landscape architects, urban designers, planners and others with expertise in community development. During an intense weekend visit, the community shares its history, current problems, opportunities and dreams for the future. The Design Team combines this information with its knowledge of design and community development and gives back to the community a series of design concepts and drawings—a pictorial representation of the community's shared vision. This is the Design Team process.

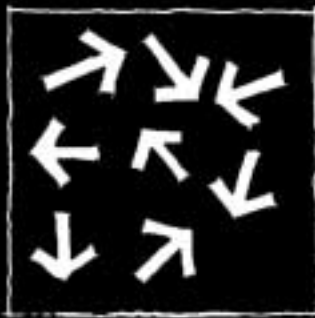
Since 1983, the Design Team has visited more than 80 communities, helping them as they evolve their shared visions. Shared visions are unique to each community. In many ways, though, the process produces similar results. More people become involved in the community—sometimes many, but always a few new people willing to take more responsibility for the community's future. Most importantly, Design Team communities have a better

idea of what their residents envision for the future. And because it's a shared vision, Design Team communities have a better chance of turning their visions into reality.



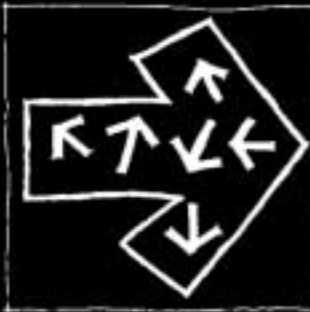
Concept: A Shared Vision

No Vision



- Groups move in various directions
- No plan or coordination

Imposed Vision



- Plan w/out community involvement
- Lots of energy expended
- No forward movement

Shared Vision



- Community planning
- All groups acting in concert
- Forward movement
- Plans become reality

Your Community's Roots

Every family has a cherished heirloom. A piece of silver, still meticulously polished each year for the holidays, generation after generation. A wooden spoon, darkened and nicked after stirring so many cakes and mashed potatoes. A favorite hoe your great-grandfather used to prepare the garden for spring planting.

There are probably heirlooms in your community, built decades ago. The turn-of-the century bank building with decorative cornices and windows. The old storefront that, before the age of the automobile, housed the general store. The massive oak or maple near the baseball field at the park.

Each community has a unique character that evolved during its development, and historic buildings are an important part of that character. Historic buildings in your community should be treated as more than artifacts. They are usable resources that should be maintained as viable parts of the community. It is important to preserve and protect these buildings because they are an anchor to that sense of place that identifies your community and provides a connection between the community and the people living there. Our past tells us where we have been and will help see where we are going. If we destroy our past, how do we know who or where we are?

Your historic buildings are your community's roots and they, too, will influence your shared vision. It was Winston Churchill, the British statesman, who observed: "We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."



What is a Minnesota Design Team Visit?

In 19th Century France, students at the Ecole de Beaux Arts received design problems for their final exam. Students worked feverishly, trying to create the best solutions possible within a limited time. On the day the drawings were due, the school would send a "charrette" (French for cart) through the streets where the students lived. Students would work until the last minute and then throw their drawings into the charrette. The most desperate would hop on the charrette with their drawings and continue working until the driver reached the school.

Modern-day designers now use the term "charrette" to refer to an intensive, fast-paced design session bound by tight deadlines.

The Design Team visit is a "charrette," a combination of community knowledge and professional expertise. This combination is the Design Team process. The Design Team was created to help Minnesota communities improve the physical and environmental design of their communities so that they are more visually and functionally appealing to residents, businesses and visitors.

Each community is assigned its own “Design Team,” composed of 12–20 design and community development professionals selected to meet the needs of that community. The Design Team, created in 1983, is composed of volunteers who believe in the community-based design process, are interested in the health and development of Minnesota communities and welcome the opportunity to work with their colleagues. Team members arrive Thursday evening and spend Friday rapidly learning everything they can about the community. The team meets on Saturday morning to discuss what they’ve learned and to start putting ideas on paper. Their deadline for finishing the drawings is early Saturday evening, when the drawings will be the featured attraction at a town meeting. By that time, a typical team will have created 10 to 20 drawings that represent the Design Team’s interpretation of the community’s shared vision.

The drawings that illustrate this workbook are reproductions of some of the drawings created on Design Team visits.

A Design Team visit can be a catalyst to energize a community to begin projects or address issues that may have been dormant. Through the drawings, community members can see how ideas could become reality.

Although the Design Team visit provides a focal point for the process, the pre-visit preparation and the post-visit implementation are equally important, if not more so, than the visit, if the community is to be successful.



Is It a Good Time to Apply for a Design Team Visit?

To decide if your community would benefit from a Design Team visit, you first have to understand what the Design Team can, and cannot, accomplish in your community. You also have to understand the commitment a visit requires from your community. Then, as a community, you can decide whether you have the desire and the resources to make a successful visit happen.

The focus and expertise of the Design Team is design of the built and natural environment—buildings and land. So, to benefit from a visit, your community should have physical and environmental issues you want addressed.

Because design affects, and is affected by, other community issues, a Design Team includes not only architects, landscape architects and urban designers, but also planners and community development experts. The Design Team does not tackle design projects in isolation. It considers how they work with each other and how they relate to the entire community. Don’t expect the Design Team to create a “new look” for the whole community. Instead, the Design Team uses its expertise and experience to suggest ways to build on the existing character, as well as the historic roots, of your community.

Moreover, the Design Team drawings presented to the community at the end of the visit, on Saturday evening, are concepts and ideas reflecting your vision. **The Design Team drawings are not a comprehensive plan and are not construction blueprints.**

Lastly, to be most effective, a Design Team visit should be part of a process that includes broad-based community support and involvement. The Design Team application process requires communities to demonstrate broad-based community support and involvement. A successful visit cannot happen without these elements. Ideally, broad-based community support and involvement begins prior to completing the application and extends through the implementation period after the visit. The visit itself becomes an opportunity to draw in even more people. The weekend visit is not the end, but the beginning, of a community process to make your shared vision a reality and to sustain all the elements that make your community unique.

Getting Community Support for a Design Team Visit

Before agreeing to visit a community, the Design Team requires letters from the community that demonstrate both an understanding of the Design Team process and support for the visit.

The letters should be written by a broad range of people from throughout the community. Since the Design Team process requires broad-based community participation, obtaining letters to include in the application will be a good opportunity to reach as many people as possible. The first step is to decide who you want to reach. You will want support from the formal power structure within your community — the mayor and city council members. Support from other constituencies is just as important. Your target list of supporters might include:

- Mayor and city council
- Planning commissioners
- Park commissioners
- Economic development board members
- City administrator
- City planner and engineer
- Community service organizations (Jaycees, Kiwanis, Lions, volunteer firefighters)
- Chamber of Commerce (or other businesses organization) and individual businesses
- Historical Society and other special interest clubs
- Senior citizens
- School representatives (principals, teachers and school board members)
- Students and young people
- Faith community
- People who live outside the community but who feel a part of it (for example, farmers and other agricultural people from the surrounding countryside)
- People who don't generally involve themselves in community activities

This is what the Design Team is looking for when reviewing the letters in the application: Each letter must be written by the individual signing it (no form letters). Each letter cannot simply state that the person signing it supports the visit. Rather, the person writing the letter should show an understanding that the visit is a collaboration between the community and the Design Team. And, each letter should indicate what kind of commitment the person signing it will make to the success of the visit, including time, funding and/or help in implementing ideas and concepts developed during the visit.

Many of those who write letters for the application will want to help prepare for the weekend visit, either by being part of the community's coordinating committee or one of the working committees.

Suggestions on how to get people in your community involved, and to discover their hopes and ideas, are in "Make participation deep and broad," in *Preparing for the Visit*.



Making a Commitment

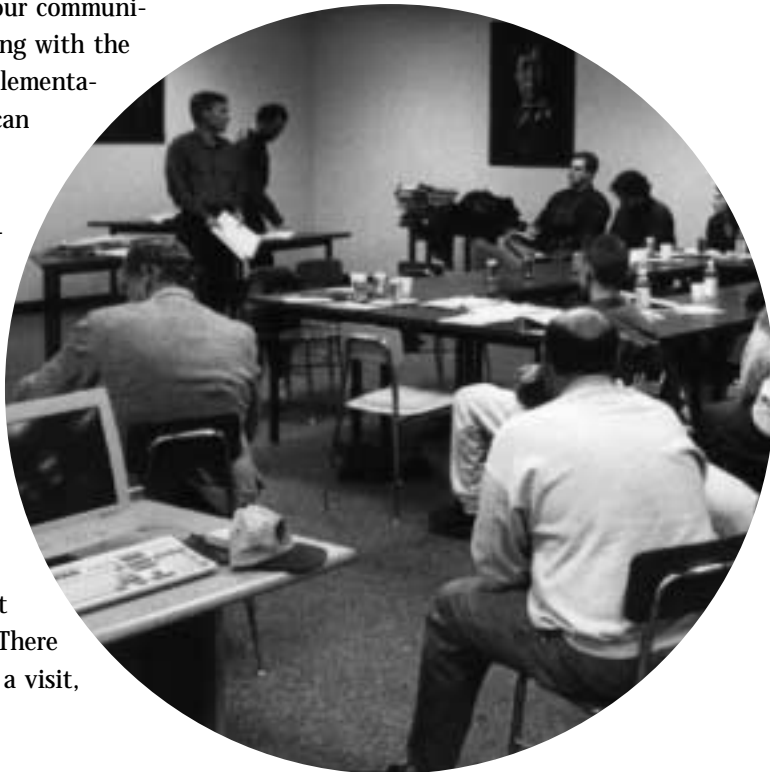
A Minnesota Design Team visit is a long-term commitment for a community. The process takes at least a year. (see Timeline on p. 22) It begins with preparing the application and extends through the following stages — the review of the application, the screening visit to your community, preparing for the weekend visit and, then, implementing the ideas and concepts from the visit. It requires many hours and many hands. To be most effective, the Design Team visit must be part of a long-term commitment by the community to community-based design and development.

The Workbook is designed to help your community do the Design Team process, beginning with the application and extending into the implementation period. It outlines the steps that can guide your community in planning and implementing a successful visit and in organizing for a successful implementation period. **It is strongly urged that you go through the entire workbook before you begin to prepare the application. By the time you read and absorb the entire workbook, you will be ready to apply for and prepare for a Design Team visit.**

Financially, the commitment for a visit is the Minnesota Design Team fee, plus the costs to host the weekend visit (such as food, supplies and publicity). There are many potential sources for funding a visit, including:

- Foundation grants
- City funds
- Community organizations
- Local businesses

You should consider raising money for a visit from a variety of sources. Your ability to raise these funds may be a good indication of your community's level of commitment.



Concept: Community Collaboration

Paynesville

HAVE A PARTY WHEN YOU ARRIVE...

Celebrate Paynesville's accomplishments with the entire community... and if it's going to be a great party, invite the community's Design Team back.

MERGING TRAFFIC...

Be ready to seek out our fellow in people with new or different ideas... the only way to avoid accidents.

WATCH SPEED LIMITS...

Especially around future... it doesn't matter how fast you go as long as you get there eventually.

BUMPS AHEAD...

This process is not easy, but you can get through it if you try.

DON'T FOLLOW DEAD ENDS... KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS...

Don't try to do something that isn't right for Paynesville.

IF YOU GET LOST, GO BACK...

It's better to go back to the beginning and start over than to lose sight of Paynesville's vision... even if you keep getting lost!

PLAN YOUR JOURNEY...

You will never get there if you don't know where you are going.

IT MAY SEEM LIKE A SHORT TRIP... BUT IT TAKES A LONG TIME TO GET THERE...

The best is going Paynesville ideas that can not be accomplished overnight.

PIT STOPS...

There won't always be time or space to the nearest future. If all people take a break, and all that good with all services and infrastructure replacement.

AVOID ROADBLOCKS... KNOW HOW TO GET AROUND THEM...

Even when the people and the Paynesville vision can help you get past the obstacles.

A MASTER PLAN...

A road map to Paynesville's future... Good Luck!

Application ^{for a} Community Visit

Application Process

1. The application process is fully explained in the Minnesota Design Team Workbook. It is very important that the Workbook is read prior to completion of this application. For further information or assistance in completing the application, communities should contact W. Arthur Mehrhoff (Design Team Community Relations) or the chair of the Design Team Steering Committee, at 612/338-6763.

2. The fee for a Design Team visit is included the cover letter accompanying this workbook.

3. Written applications are due January 15 for Fall visits and August 15 for Spring visits.

4. Complete application (including letters of support) will be reviewed within four weeks of the submittal deadline. Reviewers may contact key people in the community with detailed questions concerning the application.

5. A community screening visit will be arranged for communities with applications that have been reviewed favorably. Representatives of the Design Team Steering Committee will visit the community for a short community meeting and very brief tour of the area. They will describe the screening visit process once the application proceeds to that point.

6. Final recommendations for acceptance are made to the Design Team Steering Committee. Applications are either accepted, accepted conditionally or not accepted. Final review by the Steering Committee will occur within three months of the application deadline.

7. The Design team will notify applicants within one week of the Steering Committee decision. If the community's application is accepted, a contract will be mailed with instructions for proceeding from that point. If an application is accepted conditionally, the applicant will be notified of the conditions required for acceptance. If an application is not accepted, the applicant will be contacted and the reasons explained and suggestions made for re-submittal of the application, if desired by the community.

8. Upon receipt of a signed contract and one-half of the visit fee, the search for team co-leaders will begin. The balance of the visit fee is due one week prior to the visit.

9. Completed applications should be mailed to:

Minnesota Design Team
Attn: Judith Van Dyne
275 Market Street, Suite 54
Minneapolis, MN 55405

Application Checklist:

- _____ Completed application
- _____ Letters of support
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Map of community

Community Information and Contact Persons

This application is best completed by a representative group from the community. Different individuals may need to respond to certain questions. Some questions may benefit from broad-based discussions before a final response is made.

Name of Community:

Location of Community (county, region, etc. On a map, indicate the approximate location of the community):

Population:

Distance to the Twin Cities (miles and hours):

Contact Persons (3 required):

Public Official

Name

Phone

Affiliation

Design Team role

Mailing address

Representative of Community Organization

Name

Phone

Affiliation

Design Team role

Mailing address

Other Contact

Name

Phone

Affiliation

Design Team role

Mailing address

Name and phone number of the application committee chair persons:

Resources

This page may be completed by the City Clerk, Planner and/or Planning and Zoning Board member(s), either individually or as a group.

Maps (please list those available):

| Title | Area Mapped and Context | Date | Scale | Size | Reproducible |
|-------|----------------------------|------|-------|------|--------------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Other Resources: What other resources are available which can be information for the Design Team? Potential topics would include economics, land use, business and retail studies, demographic reports and history. Written or graphic formats are most useful and the information should be as current as possible.

| Title and Format | Context | Date |
|------------------|---------|------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

What is the name and phone number of the persons who responded to the questions on this page?

Photographs: Please include up to 12 photographs of your community, focusing on issues that the Design Team would be asked to address during a visit. Include a map of the community with these issue areas highlighted.

Short Answer Questions

Please respond to each question listed below. Attach separate sheets of papers with your responses.

1. How did your community hear about the Minnesota Design Team?
2. What do you think a Minnesota Design Team visit can do for your community at this time?
3. List and briefly describe the three most important problems for your community today.
4. List and briefly describe the three best opportunities for your community today.
5. List and briefly describe the three most important problems you believe your community will face 10 years from now.
6. What do residents want the community and surrounding area to look like 10 years from now?
7. Describe projects the Design Team will be asked to address during a visit (buildings, landscapes, streetscapes, planning). How do these projects relate to the Design Team process and your community's vision?
8. How do you plan to involve members of your community in the Design Team visit?
9. How do you plan to publicize and review the results of a Design Team visit?
10. What group will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of ideas generated during the Design Team visit? What experience do they have for this task and what is their understanding of your community's vision?
11. What are your first and second choices for a Design Team visit? Remember the visit begins on a Thursday evening and ends Saturday evening, although some Design Team members may choose to stay in the community with their host families until Sunday morning. (It is important not to have any conflicts at the time of the visit, such as major community or school events.) Why did you select these dates?

Letters of Support

Letters of Support are very important to the Design Team application. It is important that each letter writer demonstrates an understanding of the Design Team's purpose, the application and visit processes, and expected results from the Design Team visit. Each writer should have an understanding of your community's vision and discuss their understanding and commitment to it. Form letters will not be accepted. The Design Team Workbook is a resource for people organizing the application effort (see *Preparing for the Visit*).

The letters need to indicate support for the Design Team effort from all parts of the community (representatives of all ages, socioeconomic status, professions, levels of civic commitment, etc.) In addition to a general understanding of the Design Team, each writer should explain the type of support they will bring to the weekend visit and, very importantly, to the long-term implementation after the weekend visit.

It is suggested that letters from the following people be secured and included as a part of this application:

- An elected person—for example, the mayor or city council president
- A municipal staff person—for example, the city clerk, administrator or planner
- A representative number of leaders of civic and service associations—for example, Lions, Rotary, churches, historical society, etc.
- Representatives from business and economic development associations—for example, the Chamber of Commerce, downtown business association, industrial development association, etc.
- Representatives from the local school district—for example, administrators and teachers, etc.
- Additional letters of support from other sources may also be included—for example, students (especially teenagers), retired citizens of the community, farmers and other who may not live in the community but use it for shopping and other service needs, etc.

Visit Sponsors and Support

On this page, list all the sponsors and supporters of the Design Team effort. Include all persons and organizations who will provide monetary or in-kind contributions. Include persons and organizations who will be involved in preparing for the visit. Also include brief descriptions of potential publicity from volunteers and support from the local media.

[illegible]

Preparing for the Visit

Your Community Has Been Accepted for a Minnesota Design Team Visit—Now What?

The weekend visit is about six months away. The next six months will be very busy as preparations for the visit moves forward along several paths at the same time. Understandably, communities focus a lot of their energies in planning for facilities, host families, community presentations, the bus tour and the like. It's important to remember, however, that a successful visit is a catalyst for implementing ideas, projects and your shared vision once the weekend is over.

Preparing for the visit is a two-pronged process—logistics of the visit and community participation.

A note on how to use the Workbook: This workbook is intended to be a guide to the Design Team process and the weekend visit, with sections on all aspects, beginning with the application for a community visit and extending into the implementation period following the visit. The focus is both logistics and community involvement. It is designed to be interactive, with, for example, spaces for notes and check-off boxes for important tasks.

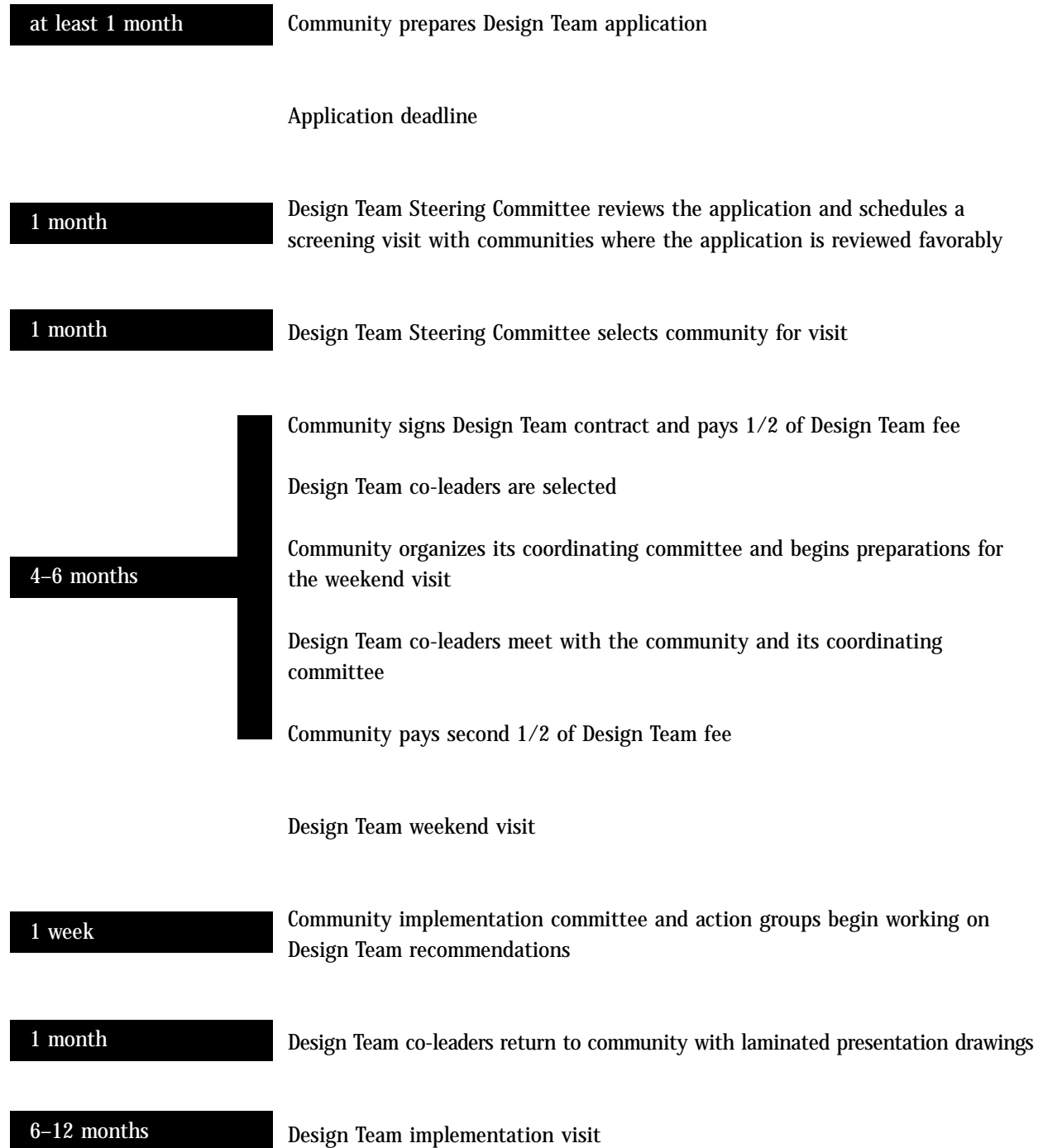
This section outlines the committees your community will need to prepare for the weekend. Those committees will be closely involved in the details for each event described in *The Weekend Visit*.

This section also includes suggestions for encouraging community involvement and for building community infrastructure. Just as the public works infrastructure—roads, sewers and water mains, for example—is critical for a community, so is “people infrastructure.” The goal of community participation is to make sure that everyone in your community has information about the visit and, more importantly, that everyone feels welcome to participate. The success of the Design Team process depends on involvement of people from all segments of the community. People who contribute to the decision-making process are far more likely to support the decisions made in a community and to help make them happen.

Once a community has been chosen for a visit, the community and the Minnesota Design Team become part of the same team, working in parallel to ensure a successful visit.



A Typical Timeline: The Visit Isn't the First Deadline



What the Design Team Does

After making a commitment to visit your community, the Minnesota Design Team begins developing a team. The emphasis of the team will be community improvement through design. It also will include an exploration of a broad range of other community development issues.

First, co-leaders are chosen. Co-leaders have experience with the Design Team process, with assembling and directing a diverse group of team members and with working with communities planning for a visit. Once chosen, the co-leaders become your resource as you prepare for the visit.

After meeting with you to gain an understanding of your community, the co-leaders begin assembling a team for the visit. Depending on the needs of your community, your team may include, in addition to architects and landscape architects, professionals from such fields as land use planning, transportation planning, economic development, historic preservation and tourism.

What the Community and the Design Team Do Together

During the approximately three months prior to the visit, the Design Team co-leaders will visit your community, to become acquainted with your coordinating committee and other volunteers to finalize plans for the weekend.

One purpose of these meetings is to clarify the issues and areas of your community that you would like to be a focus of the Design Team visit. This information will provide strong guidance to your Design Team. However, it's important to realize the Design Team makes no commitment to limit itself to these issues or to make recommendations on all these issues. The final decision on the issues of the visit will be based on community input Design Team members receive during the visit.

Also, the Design Team co-leaders will want to see the areas of the community you want studied, as well as the location of the facilities you plan to use during the visit.



Your “People Infrastructure”— Making Participation Broad and Deep

People are the infrastructure of your community. They will want to participate in many different ways and on many different levels.

First, you will need people to plan and help with all the myriad details of the weekend (see *The Nuts and Bolts of Getting Ready*, beginning on p. 30).

You also will need to know what people are thinking and what they care about, so that your community can forge its shared vision. This section includes suggestions for town meetings or brainstorming sessions to help you gather that information. The people who come to your town meetings will be a diverse volunteer pool and will be able to help with “word of mouth” publicity. Lastly, you will need support for implementing the recommendations and ideas that come out of the visit during the weeks and months (and often years) after the visit. If people are involved in the weekend visit, they are more likely to stay involved afterward.

You should consider inviting a wide range of people to join your committees and to come to your town meetings prior to the visit. They could include:

- Elected officials (mayor and city council members)
- Appointed officials (planning, park and economic development commissioners)
- City staff (administrator, planner and engineer)
- Members of the faith community and service organizations
- Business people
- Farmers and others who live outside the community but who identify with it
- Students
- Senior citizens
- School people (teachers and school board members)
- Members of special interest clubs (for example, local historical society or parks/trails group)

Two kinds of town meetings. A town meeting accomplishes two objectives—more people will become involved in planning for the visit and more people will support your implementation efforts.

There are, generally, two ways to organize a town meeting and two ways to run it. It can be an open invitation to gather input from people who are outside the formal decision-making process. Or, you can invite people from every constituent group in the community.

In either case, the town meeting can be a *brainstorming session* or a *focused discussion*. Your community probably will want to have at least one of either, or both, as you think about what you want to tell the Design Team during your presentations on Friday morning and during the bus tour on Friday afternoon.

Suggestions for a brainstorming session:

Don’t have an agenda or a preconceived idea about the discussion. Simply getting people to come may be a significant accomplishment.

Don’t have too much structure, a leader or many rules. The goal is to get everyone talking on the same level.

At the first meeting, determine who is represented and who is missing and discuss ways to encourage participation.

Plan to meet regularly for a set time period (such as every other week for two or three months).

Suggestions for a focused discussion:

One objective of a town meeting prior to the Design Team visit is to help clarify the community’s primary issues. The purpose is to get ideas out, not to come to a consensus, so ideas should not be evaluated or compared against one another.

Preparation—

1. Develop a list of open-ended questions (not “yes” or “no” questions) to encourage people to look into the future and identify what they would like to see in your community. Examples of questions that have worked in the past:

- *Name three things you like about your community.*
- *Name three things you would like to have changed.*
- *What would you like your community to look like in 20 years?*

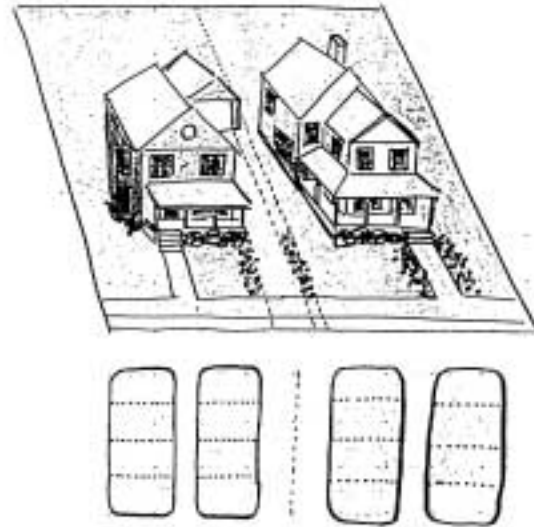
Concept: Developing a Residential Neighborhood

Spring Valley



SUBURBAN HOUSING

- EACH SUBDIVISION ISOLATED
- HOUSES PRETEND THEY ARE ALONE
- HIGH SERVICE & MAINTENANCE COSTS
- CUL-DE-SACS CONCENTRATE TRAFFIC
- MUST USE CAR FOR DAILY ERRANDS

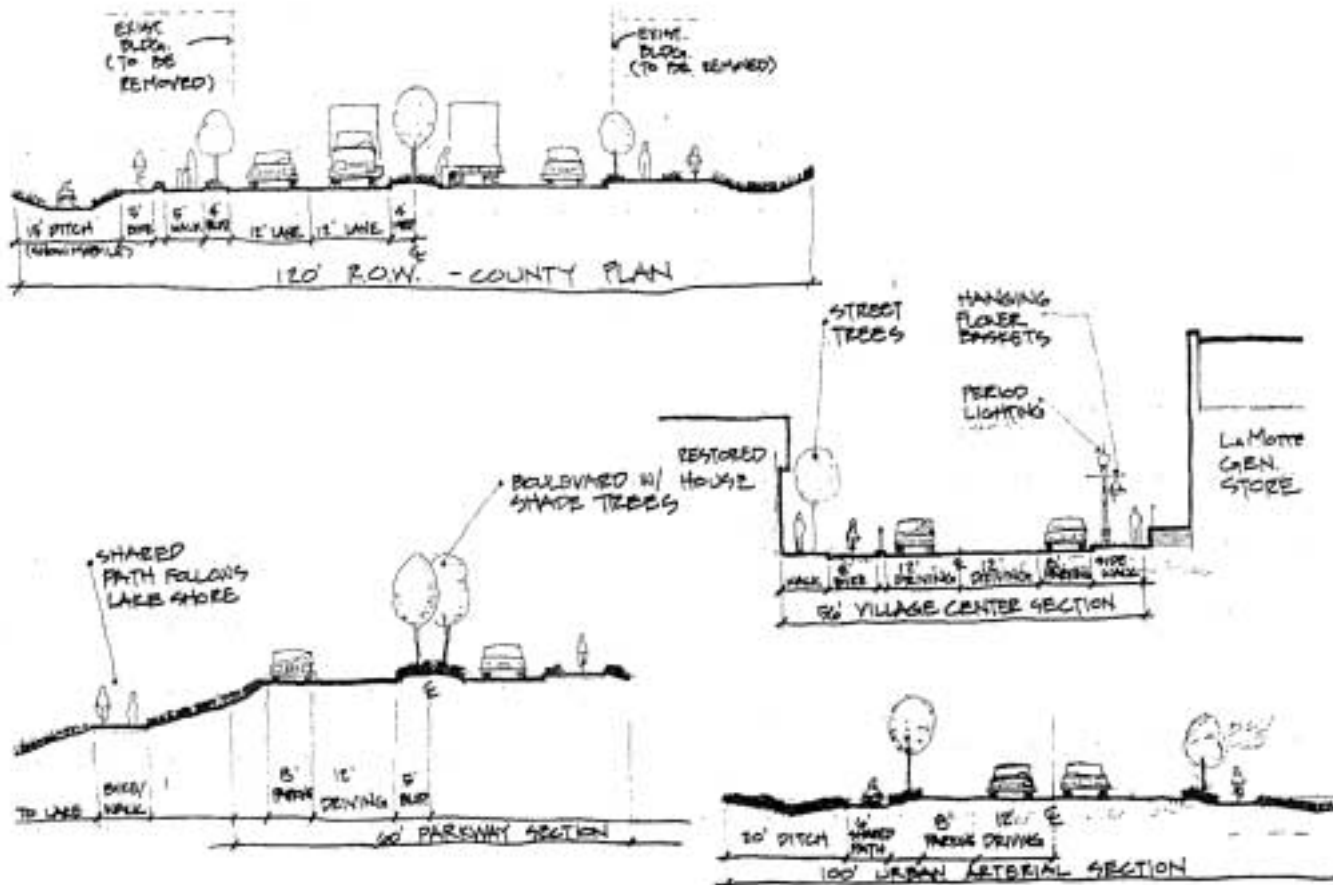


TRADITIONAL SMALL TOWN HOUSING

- CONNECTED NETWORK OF STREETS
- HOUSES WORK TOGETHER TO FORM A STREET
- EFFICIENT USE OF SERVICES
- STREETS DISPERSE TRAFFIC
- EASY WALKING/BIKING ACCESS TO SCHOOLS, PARKS, SHOPS

Concept: Highways Through the Community

Centerville



2. Choose a moderator who is perceived as a neutral figure. The moderator begins and leads the discussion, keeps it moving and focused. The moderator encourages input from all participants.

3. Choose an assistant, who will take notes and support the moderator.

4. Choose a comfortable location that facilitates group discussion. If possible, sit in a circle or similar arrangement where everyone can see each other.



Moderator—

1. Generate a relaxed atmosphere; talk freely and comfortably with people before the meeting.
2. Create an open environment; try to encourage everyone to speak.
3. Know the questions and agenda.
4. Be free from distractions and other business; be alert.

Beginning the discussion—

1. Welcome everyone and thank them for coming. Acknowledge their care and interest. (If there are late-comers, greet them and invite them to join the group.)
2. Have everyone briefly introduce themselves to the group (i.e., their name, where they live, how long, etc.)
3. Provide a general outline of the discussion, but do not reveal any specific questions.
4. Begin asking questions. Ask each person to respond to the first question to encourage full participation.

Guiding the discussion—

1. To generate more responses or to clarify a response:
 - Make eye contact.
 - Pause for five seconds.
 - Ask “give me an example” or “would (not could) you please say more about that?” or “is there anything else?”
 - Rephrase the question.
 - Make sure any follow-up questions you ask are open-ended.

2. To curtail someone who is speaking too long:
 - Thank the person speaking and say you want to hear from other people too.
 - Make eye contact with other people in the group.
 - Ask other people by name what they are thinking (but avoid making anyone feel “on the spot”).

3. Because the primary focus of the Design Team visit will be on physical and environmental issues, try to encourage thinking visually early on and maintain it. Some examples of questions that encourage visual thinking:

- When you think about that, what do you see when you close your eyes?
- What about (idea) catches your mind’s eye?
- What are they doing? Where is that?

4. Try gently to steer the discussion to physical and environmental issues. Thus, there will less focus on people, activities and concepts and more focus on places, objects and images.

5. Use value-neutral responses:

- Say “O.K.,” “Yes,” or “Uh-huh,” not “Good,” or “Right.”
- Give eye contact or turn your body toward someone to encourage response; do the opposite to discourage response.
- Don’t nod your head; it affirms or negates the response.

The Nuts and Bolts of Getting Ready

- ☐ **Form a coordinating committee.** Getting ready for the visit involves lots of people working together on many tasks. One committee should coordinate all these efforts. It is strongly suggested that you have at least two chairs of the coordinating committee. The coordinating committee also should organize the work in building and sustaining broad-based community support and involvement. Lastly, it is strongly suggested that some people on the coordinating committee be part of the implementation committee.
- ☐ **Form working committees.** Generally, working committees should be organized around the events and the schedule of the visit. Some committees will be larger than others, depending on the tasks involved. The objective is to get as many people as possible involved in the process (including, for example, high school students and people who don't live in the community but are part of it, such as farmers in the surrounding countryside). Dividing up the tasks according to the skills and knowledge of people in your community will ensure that a small group of people will not be burdened with all the work. Besides sharing the workload, this provides for additional participation.

The Weekend Visit describes the events of the visit. Much of the work of these committees will focus on the details in each section of that chapter. The Design Team co-leaders are your resource as you organize all of these events.

This is a list of working committees you will likely need. You may think of others as you prepare for the visit.

1. Community Action Research — the Four Environments. The *Community Action Research* is on p. 41 of the Workbook. It may be best to identify “captains” who will be responsible for the four topics in the *Community Action Research* — supervising the research, data gathering, production and final presentation. Many of the topics in the *Community Action Research* may evolve into community presentations on Friday morning.

2. Written survey. The one-page written survey (p. 42) can be inserted into the water bill, printed in the newspaper, sent home with school children or hand delivered during a community event, such as church services or a summer festival. You will need to distribute and collect the survey forms and tally the results.

3. Photo survey. Design Team co-leaders will furnish disposable cameras and guidelines for doing the photo survey (p. 44). Generally, residents are asked to photograph favorite places, places they don't like and places where there are opportunities for community projects. The cameras and visual surveys should be distributed on a rotating basis to residents. The community then must return the cameras and the visual surveys to one of the co-leaders approximately three weeks prior to the visit so that the film can be developed.

4. Community presentations. This is when you describe your community to the Design Team.

5. Community tour. This is a walking and driving tour of the community.

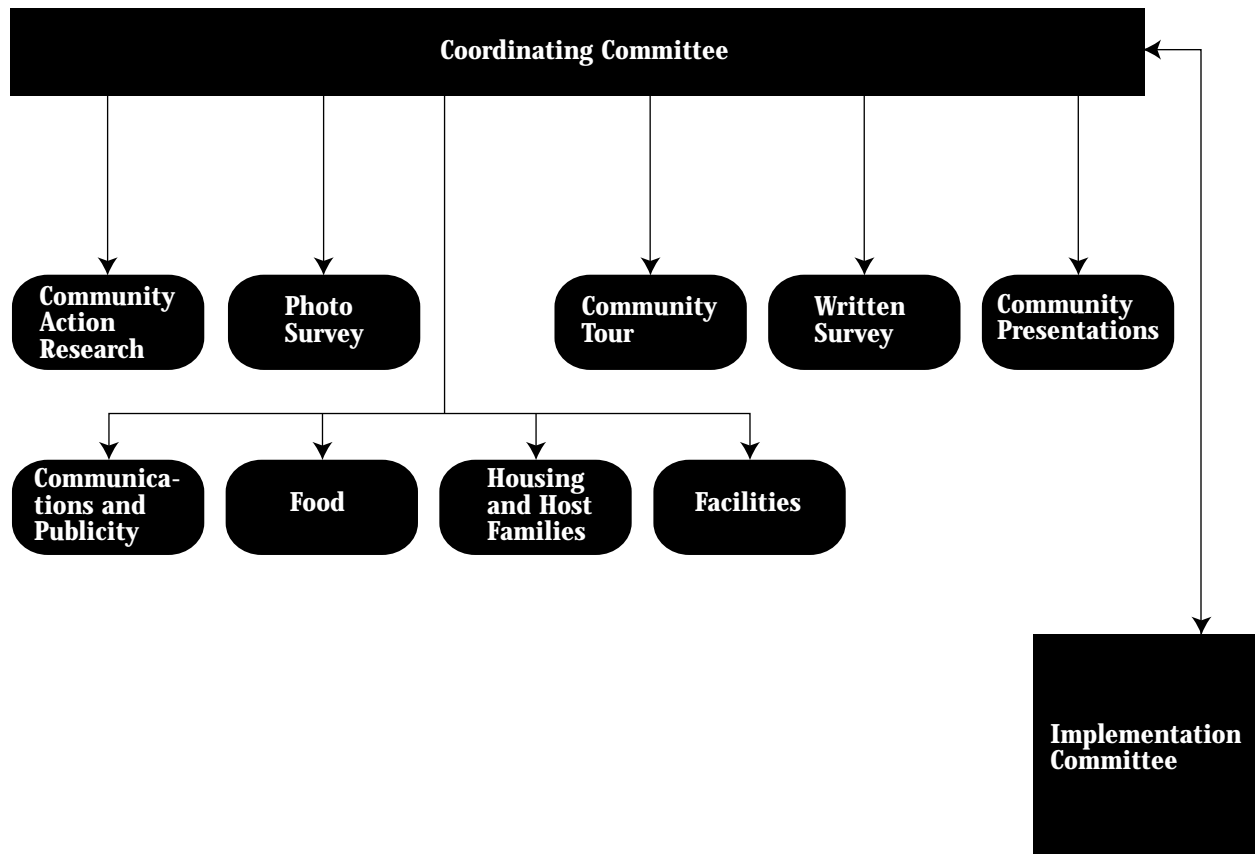
6. Facilities and work spaces for the team.

7. Housing and host families. The community should anticipate hosting approximately 15–20 team members from Thursday night to Saturday night (or, sometimes, Sunday morning). **Keep in mind this number will fluctuate prior to the visit, so remain flexible and allow for last minute contingencies.** Several weeks prior to the visit, the Design Team co-leaders will give the community coordinators a profile on each team member. The profiles serve two purposes — they introduce the team member to the host family and they alert the community and the host family to such issues as food preferences and allergies.

8. Food. Copies of the team member profiles should also be distributed to the food committee. (The food committee needs to be aware that many team members are vegetarians, for example, or do not eat certain foods.)

9. Communications and publicity

10. Implementation.



☐ **Pay half of the Design Team fee and sign the contract.**

Once the Design Team Steering Committee decides to schedule a visit in your community, you will receive a contract. Once it is signed and returned, with **one-half of the fee**, Design Team co-leaders will begin working with you.

The second half of the fee must be paid the week prior to the visit.

☐ **Getting the word out.** Publicizing the Design Team visit, beginning with your application, will broaden community participation and help ensure implementation of the Design Team recommendations after the visit. These are basic points about the visit that you might want to communicate:

- The purpose of the Minnesota Design Team
- Why your community wants a Design Team visit
- What projects the Design Team might study during the visit
- How the community must work with the Design Team to ensure the success of the visit
- Why it is important to think about how your community will grow and change
- Details of the visit — the dates of the visit, the times and locations of community events (the town meetings on Friday and Saturday evenings)

Design Team communities have used some of the following to encourage participation:

A Design Team visit newsletter. A newsletter sent to residents periodically during the three or four months prior to the visit heightens interest and helps residents understand the visit.

Press Releases. Send press releases about the Design Team visit to your local newspaper. You may wish to send them to local businesses and community groups as well, particularly those with newsletters. Always list a contact name and number in case the recipient wants additional information. The press releases could cover the basic points listed above.

Newspaper coverage. Local reporters should be encouraged to cover the events during the visit, particularly the town meetings on Friday and Saturday evenings. In one community, the Design Team application was published in the local newspaper and people were invited to suggest community issues and to come to town meetings.

Local radio and television stations, as well as cable access stations. Ask local radio and television stations to broadcast public service announcements about the visit and encourage them to cover the visit. Put together a program for your cable access station, where it could be repeated to gain a wide exposure.

Web site. If your community has a web site, create a link to the “Design Team visit,” or create a separate web site for the visit. The web site can be an interactive tool to attract the attention of more people, get them involved and get their reactions to the Design Team recommendations.

Posters. Display posters in places where there is a lot of foot or vehicular traffic, such as a market or gas station.

Fliers. A simple information sheet about the Design Team visit can be easily reproduced. Fliers can be distributed door-to-door, at schools, in church bulletins or inserted in utility bills. You also could mail

the flier to local community groups and ask to speak to their members about the visit.

Schedule. Mail a schedule of events to each home. Invite each resident to these events, especially the Friday evening town meeting and the Saturday evening presentation.

Students. To attract the interest of younger students, some communities have held poster or poetry contests, with students expressing what they think their community will look like in 10 or 20 years. For older students, teachers may want to incorporate the Design Team visit into their curricula. Making presentations about the Design Team to student organizations may interest students in participating during the weekend visit. In some communities, a high school student has been part of the Design Team, participating in all the events of the weekend, including the Saturday team work session.

“Word of mouth.” Never underestimate the power of a personal invitation. Everyone on your coordinating committee and your working committees should use every opportunity to encourage their friends and neighbors to participate in the Design Team visit. This is particularly important in ensuring that as many people as possible come to the Friday night town meeting and the Saturday evening presentation.

Presentations. Visit every organization in the community to make sure their members understand the Design Team process and feel welcome to participate. These groups also can be valuable sources of volunteers.

Informational meetings. Some communities use town meetings or potluck dinners to explain about the Design Team and to generate ideas for community improvement.

- ☐ **Community research.** A successful visit depends the community understanding itself — its history, its strengths and opportunities, its concerns — and conveying that information to the Design Team while you prepare for the visit and during the visit itself.

During a typical Design Team visit, there are four ways that happens:

- *Community Action Research*, commonly called the Four Environments (on p. 41)
- The SWOT analysis (on p. 34)
- A written survey (on p. 42)
- A photo survey (disposable cameras will be supplied by the Design Team co-leaders) (on p. 44)

- ☐ **Gather maps and documents about your community.** The Design Team will need copies of a base map, or a map of the entire city that shows streets and highways. Other kinds of maps that will be helpful are those of building footprints, zoning and planning maps, and topo maps. Special areas of concern (your downtown, for example) may need to be enlarged. Aerial photos are also helpful. The maps should show significant geological natural features and identify man-made features by their local, and official, names. (For example, if Highway 8 is known by everyone in your community as “Creek Road,” the Design Team needs to be know this.)



Any documents — comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances, special studies or projects, lists of historic structures, population or economic data — that are completed or underway should be gathered together for the Design Team to review during the visit.

Don't leave this task to the last minute; it's sometimes difficult to find maps that show the areas you want studied.

- ☐ **Arrange for child care for community participants.** Often only one parent can help prepare for the visit or participate in the weekend's events if childcare is not available. This is a good way to enlist the help of teenagers in the community.

Understanding Your Community

For the Design Team visit to be successful, both the community and the Design Team members need to understand the issues you face. So, the Design Team is asking you to do four exercises.

The first one is call SWOT — short for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. Knowing and acknowledging your community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is the first step towards crafting and, then, implementing a shared vision. This exercise can be particularly helpful as you choose issues that you want the Design Team to focus on and as you organize your community presentations and the community tour. Virtually everyone preparing for the visit can participate in the SWOT exercise — for example, members of your coordinating committee, community members who come to your town meetings, members of your working committees.

The second exercise is the Community Action Research, or the Four Environments. This, too, will help you understand how your community evolved and what issues your community faces now.

The third and fourth exercises — the written survey and the photo survey — are done during the weeks immediately prior to the visit.

The results of all four exercises will become part of all the information you share with the Design Team during the visit, and will be used by the Design Team to craft its recommendations.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

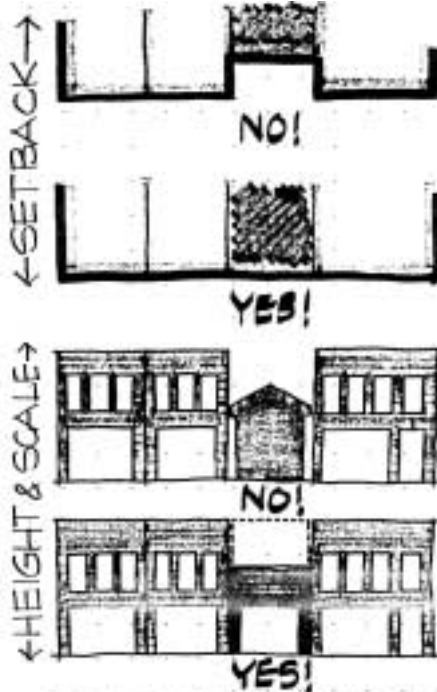
Threats

Concept: Buildings Become Part of the Community

Saint Peter

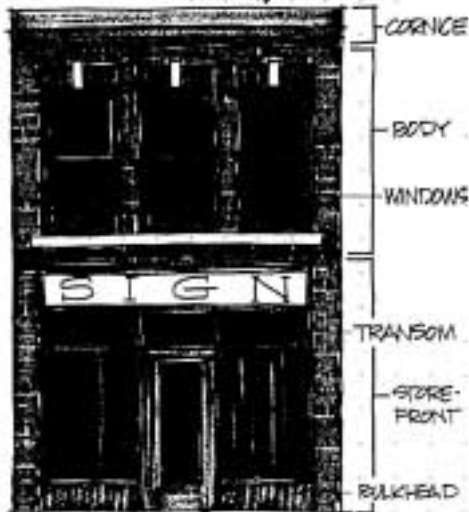
DESIGN REVIEW: NEW INFILL

- Should have same setback as historic buildings
- Should be compatible with the historic buildings -
 - + in scale
 - + in height
 - + in massing
 - + materials



DESIGN REVIEW: EXISTING BUILDINGS

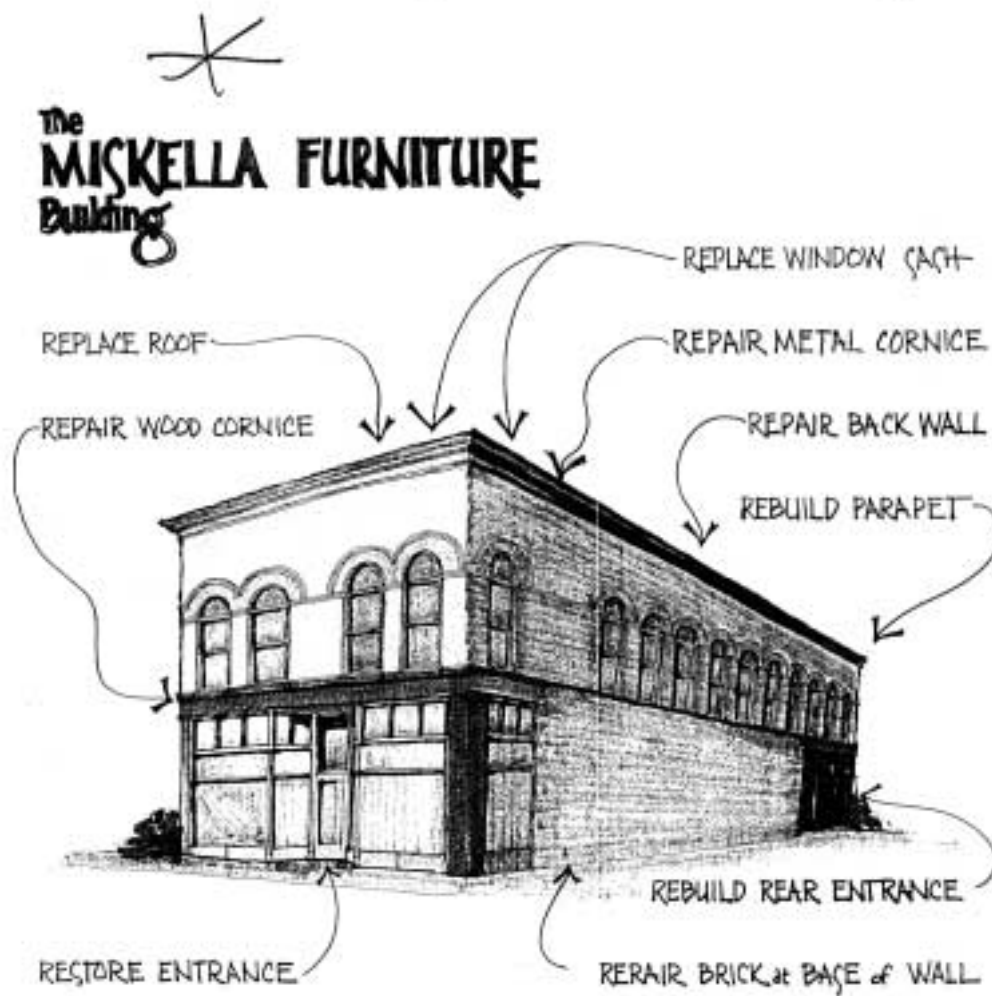
- Should respect the basic components of historic commercial bldgs.:
 - + cornice - "cap" of the building
 - + body - compatible windows
 - + storefront - large, open expanse of glass



Concept: Using Historic Buildings

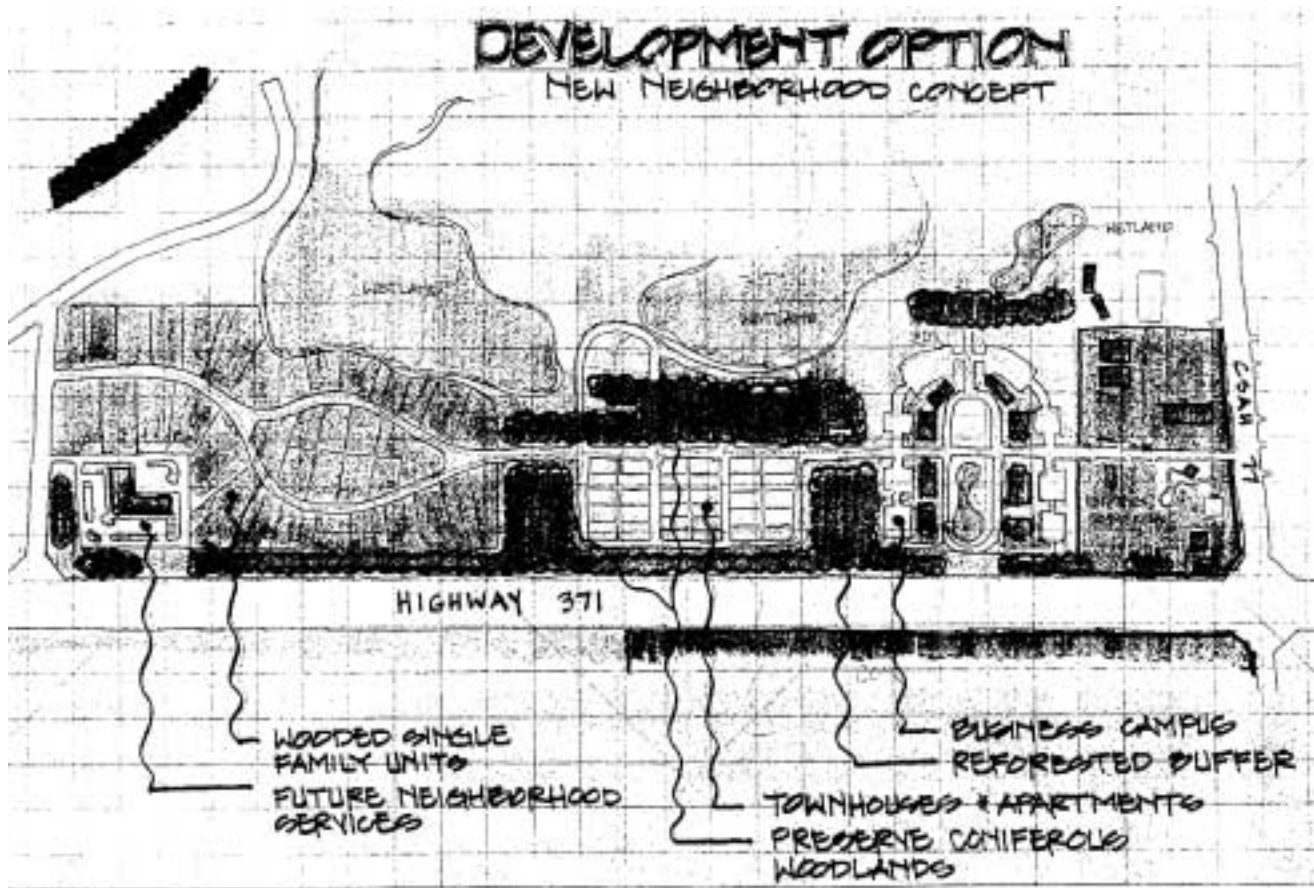
Cass Lake

RECYCLE HISTORIC BUILDINGS



Concept: A Mixed Use Neighborhood

Nisswa



Community Action Research — The Four Environments

Self-awareness is crucial to the future health and vitality of your community. *Community Action Research* — also called the *Four Environments* — asks you to become more aware of the forces shaping your community. Knowing and understanding these forces will add depth to the Design Team visit, as well as provide you with information to make important design and planning decisions in the future. The *Four Environments* is research for action.

Your research on the *Four Environments* should be assembled into a working document for team members prior to the visit, ideally in time for the team's pre-visit meeting. And, of course, it should be available to members of the community, at your city hall or library. It might also be excellent material for your community's website.

The purpose of these questions is to (1) to provide an assessment needed for effective community design; (2) help your community develop its capacity to understand itself more fully and to act upon that understanding.

A. The Natural Environment

1. What *geological forces* have shaped your region?
2. What *hydrological forces* have shaped your region?
3. Characterize the *topography* of your region.
4. What characterizes the *wildlife* of your area?
5. Identify and describe local *wetland* areas.
6. How would you characterize your *climate*?
7. Identify and describe the main types of *vegetation* in your region.
8. Identify and describe the major *pollution problems* in your area.
9. What are the *major land uses* in your community?
10. Identify and describe *major local environmental organizations*.

B. The Social Environment

1. How has your *population* changed over the past three censuses?
2. How many *males and females* are in each age bracket?
3. What is the *household composition* of your community?
4. What are the main *ethnic and racial groups* in your community?
5. What is the *education level* in your community?
6. Describe the *income levels* in your community.

7. What are the *major religious denominations* in your community?
8. Characterize the *housing stock* of your community.
9. What *types of housing* are inadequate?
10. Identify and describe the *major community service organizations*.

C. The Economic Environment

1. What is the *trade area* of your community?
2. What is the *industry mix* of your community?
3. Who are the *major local employers* in your community?
4. Identify and describe the *major transportation facilities* in your region.
5. Identify and describe the *major public utilities* in your community.
6. What is the *employment rate* in your community?
7. Summarize your *most recent shopper survey*.
8. Describe the *labor force* in your community.
9. What *business incentives* does your community offer?
10. Identify and describe *local economic development organizations*.

D. The Cultural Environment

1. Describe the *key events* in your community's history.
2. What *key individuals* have shaped your community?
3. Identify and describe interesting *local customs and traditions*.
4. Describe popular community *folklore and legends*.
5. What are the *major community festivals*?
6. Describe any *local historic districts*.
7. Identify and describe *local historic buildings*.
8. Identify the *best views* of and from your community.
9. Identify the *special places* of your community.
10. Identify and describe *local cultural organizations*.

Written Survey

A written survey is one way of gauging broad community opinion. It can provide an important “snapshot” of a community at a certain time.

This survey was based upon research done by The Heartland Center for Leadership Development on what makes a community successful. Using this survey helps a Design Team community measure how it compares to this model of successful communities and can also be used over time to measure progress toward these important community goals.

Instructions: Please rate your community in terms of each of the following indicators by circling the correct response, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 the highest.

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Evidence of pride in the community. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Emphasis on quality in business and community life. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Willingness to invest in the future. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Broad community participation in community decision-making. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | A cooperative community spirit. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | A realistic awareness of future opportunities |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Awareness of the community's competitive position. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Careful knowledge of the natural environment. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | An active economic development program. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | A deliberate transition of power to a younger generation of leaders. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strong acceptance of women in leadership roles. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strong belief in and support for education. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | A problem-solving approach to providing health care. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | A strong multi-generational family orientation. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strong presence of traditional institutions in the life of the community. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Attention to a sound and well-maintained physical infrastructure. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Careful use of community financial resources. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Sophisticated use of information resources and networks. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Willingness to seek help from outside sources. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Belief that, in the long run, you have to do it yourself. |

* Adapted with permission from “20 clues to rural community survival” by The Heartland Center for Leadership Development, Lincoln, Nebraska.

After the surveys have been returned, the results can be tabulated. One way of doing this is putting the results into a matrix, similar to the following examples:

For each survey issue:

| Survey Issue | Count of #1 | Count of #2 | Count of #3 | Count of #4 | Count of #5 | Total Responses |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

| % Responses #1 | % Responses #2 | % Responses #3 | % Responses #4 | % Responses #5 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

| Survey Issue | Low 1-2 | Middle 3 | High 4-5 |
|--------------|---------|----------|----------|
| | | | |
| | | | |

Photo Survey

The photo survey is a way of identifying important visual qualities of a community. It is also a way of understanding how the visual qualities of a place affect how people think or feel about a community.

You will receive *three disposable cameras* to record your visual preferences about three key community categories (the cameras will be marked for you):

- What is best about your community (favorite place or building)
- What are places that represent the least favorite image of your community
- What is significant about your community or what are the opportunities for creating unique places

Assemble a list of people in the community (preferably a broad range of ages and occupations) to take photographs. Each person should photograph up to three images corresponding to the topic for that camera. To be sure that the cameras circulate throughout the community, you may find it helpful if the camera is returned to the photo survey coordinator after each person is finished.

Be sure to return the cameras to one of the Design Team co-leaders undeveloped. The Design Team will develop the film.

The Weekend Visit

The Weekend Visit is the Culmination of All Your Hard Work

This chapter describes each event and activity during the visit, which begins Thursday evening, when the Design Team arrives in your community, and ends after the Design Team presentation Saturday evening. Each section in this chapter includes the following:

- What happens during the event or activity.
- Why we do this activity and why we do it this way.
- What kind of facility is needed — size, location and amenities.
- People from the community who need to be involved.
- Equipment and supplies that are needed.
- Food.
- Lastly, a section for you to make notes as you prepare for this event or activity.



Typical Weekend Schedule

The schedule is a guide as your community plans for the Design Team visit. Nearly everything can be adjusted to meet the needs of your community, although certain events need to happen at certain times in order for the visit to proceed to an orderly conclusion.

Thursday, 7 – 9 p.m.

This is the host family reception, when the Design Team arrives in your community and team members meet their host families.

Friday

8:30 a.m.

Team meeting

9 a.m. – noon

Community presentations

Noon

Lunch with community

1:30 p.m.

Bus/walking tour

4 p.m.

Team meeting to prepare for Town Meeting

6 p.m.

Community potluck supper

7 p.m.

Town Meeting

Saturday

8:30 a.m.

Team meeting and work session

Noon

(lunch as we work)

4:30 p.m.

Meeting of Design Team presenters

5:30 p.m.

(dinner as we work)

6:30 p.m.

Pin-up of Design Team presentation

7 p.m.

Design Team presentation to community

Sunday Morning.

Some Design Team members may return home following the presentation on Saturday evening, while some may choose to return on Sunday morning. This often depends on the distance of your community from the Twin Cities metropolitan area, where most team members live.

For the Weekend

Weekend coordinators.

It's best to have at least two coordinators who can, if necessary, work in shifts. They are needed to provide logistical support to the Design Team and to be the liaison between the Design Team and community volunteers. They may or may not be the same people who have chaired your community's coordinating committee, but they should be working closely with the committee.

Weekend coordinators should be available to answer questions from community members and volunteers (such as "When was I supposed to bring lunch to the Team?" or "Am I signed up to work the registration table on Friday or Saturday?").

Other weekend coordinators should be available to assist the Design Team. These people should know the community and the sites used during the visit — particularly the Saturday work session site — very, very well. Their responsibilities will range from answering local history and geography questions, to finding a first aid kit, to knowing where to get photos developed in a hour or less.

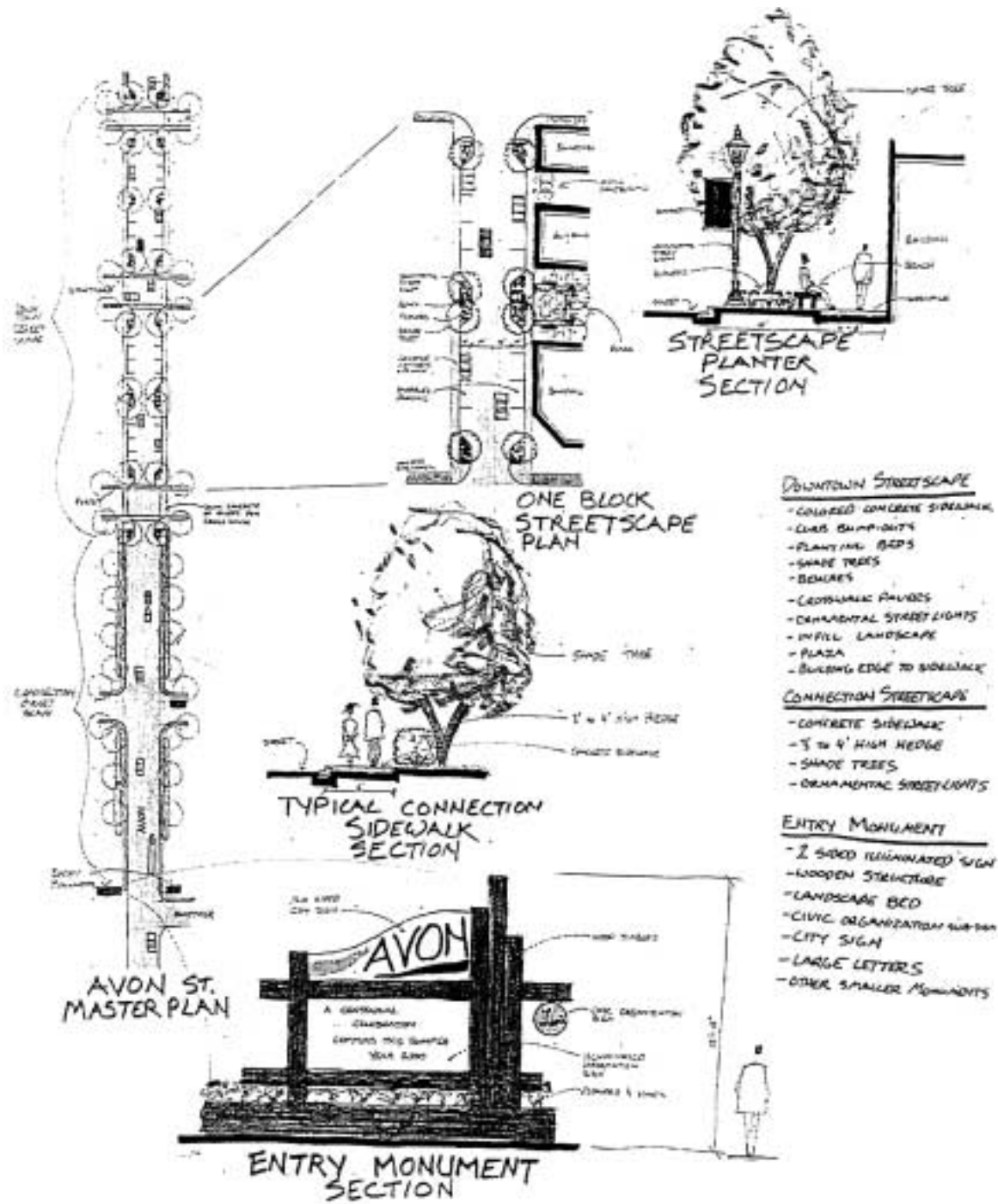
Documenting the visit.

To document the visit, and for publicity purposes after the visit, most communities have a photographer at all major events. Keeping a record of the visit on video camera will enable you to show it on your local cable station. You may also consider putting a record of the visit on your community's web site or creating a web site of the visit.



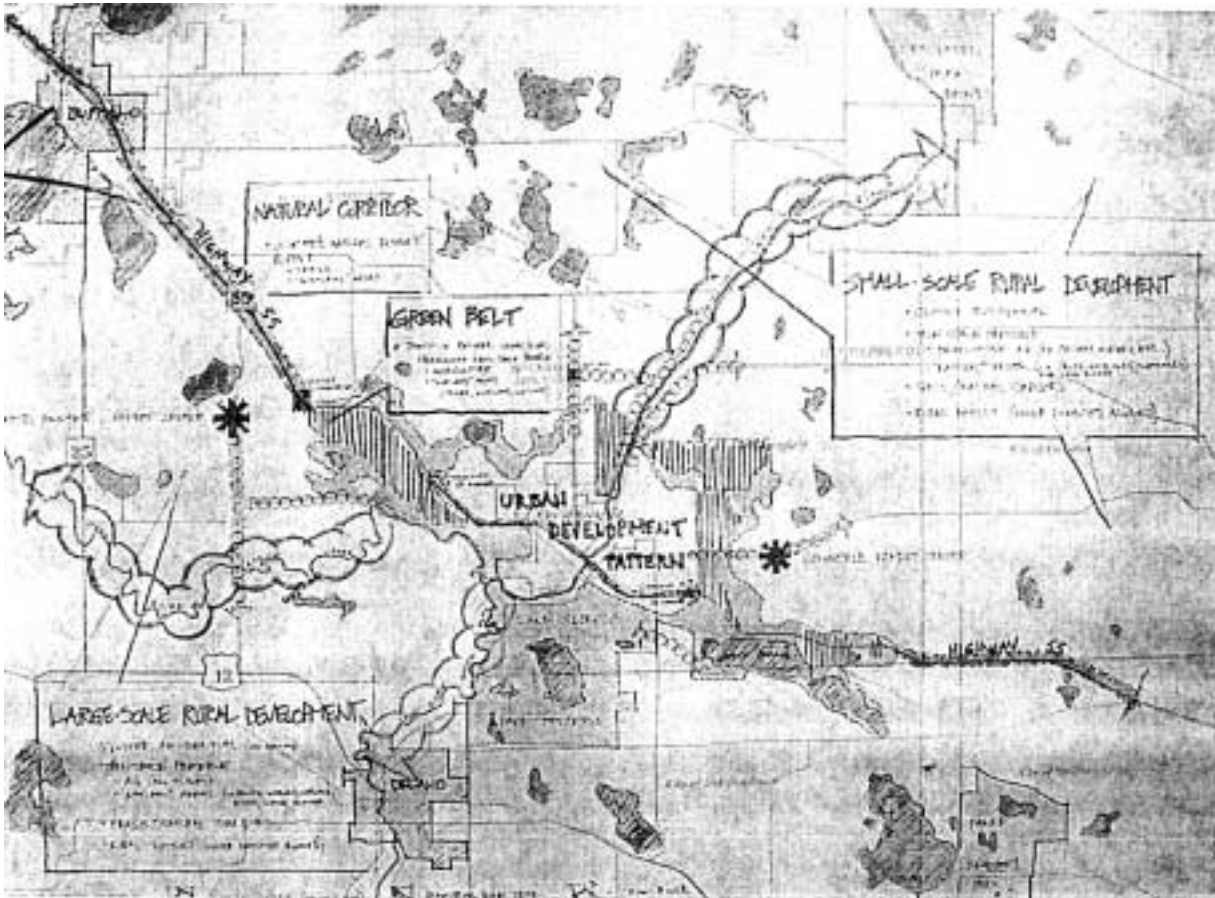
Concept: Downtown is a Gateway

Avon



Concept: Community and Rural Countryside

Rockford



Thursday Evening — Arrival

What happens

Team members arrive in the community, not always at the same time. Many communities have a casual reception where team members meet and visit informally with their host families.

Why

Host families are important one-to-one links between the community and the Design Team, so, whenever possible, it's preferable to have host families who are interested participants in the Design Team process, rather than those who are merely offering a place to stay. Many communities have discovered “hosting” a good opportunity to involve community members who want to participate in the visit but may be uncomfortable in more visible roles. Try to recruit a broad range of families — young and old, long-time residents and newcomers, rural and town. Host families provide Design Team members with a place to stay on Thursday, Friday and sometimes Saturday nights, provide breakfast, and may also offer other services, such as transportation.

Team member profiles: Several weeks prior to the visit, the Design Team co-leaders will give the community a profile on each team member. The profiles serve two purposes — they introduce the team member to the host family and they alert the community and the host family to such issues as food preferences (such as vegetarian meals) and allergies.

Facility

A central location where team members will meet their host families, such as the city hall or a community center. It should comfortably hold 10–20 Design Team members and people from the community. You may choose to plan the arrival reception in a special community landmark that Design Team members might not otherwise see.

People from the community

Host families, members of the community's coordinating committee, local officials, volunteers who will be involved in the visit and interested community members.

Equipment and supplies

This is an opportunity to provide Design Team members packets of information for the weekend. The packets could include the following:

- A schedule of weekend events, with locations.
- A list of host families, with addresses and phone numbers, and team members staying with each host family.
- News articles about the Design Team visit (one or two is sufficient).
- Schedule of Friday morning presentations and names of presenters, with time allotments.
- Handouts on the key points of the Friday morning presentations (handouts serve two purposes — they often help presenters organize their thoughts and they help team members take notes).
- Information the community has gathered in working on the “Four Environments” and the written survey (the “Four Environments” is in this workbook; tallies of the written survey should be given to Design Team co-leaders about three weeks prior to the visit).
- A couple of maps (11” x 17”) of the community. The map should show the route of the Friday afternoon community tour and the locations of the sites on the tour.

Food

You may wish to provide snacks and beverages.

Your notes

Friday Morning — Community Presentations

What happens

This is the time to tell the Design Team about your community. The morning is divided into community presentations that could include most, if not all, of the following:

- Information about your community — demographics, economy (including both commerce and industry), natural features, cultural features, geography and history. Some of the information you unearthed in preparing the Four Environments (on p. 41) may become presentation topics or details about your presentation topics.
- The issues you have included in your SWOT analysis (on p. 34) may become presentation topics. In many communities, the issues in a SWOT analysis are those that prompted the application for a Design Team visit.

Who typically makes presentations? Your community and its issues will dictate who should make presentations. You should try to have representatives from throughout the community. You'll want to include community leaders, of course, but also "ordinary" citizens, who often provide good insights into the special character of your community. Students, including those in the upper elementary, middle school or high school years, also provide valuable insights. If there is a community issue that involves other government agencies (such as the county highway department, for example), then representatives from these agencies should also make presentations, since it is important for the Design Team to understand as many of the factors influencing your community's future as possible.

The issues facing your community are the focus of the Friday morning presentations. Factual information should be used to make the issues understandable. It's important that each person making a presentation describe the strengths, weakness and opportunities connected to the issue being described.

How many presentations should there be? In most communities, there have been from six to 10 presentations. The number of presentations, as well as the

length of each presentation, depends on the issues in the community and the complexity of those issues. Even though some presentations will be longer than others, they still need to be succinct and to the point. There also should be time for questions-and-answers.

Why

The presentations help Design Team members quickly understand the community, present concerns, dominant issues and future plans. The presentations should convey the "personality" of the community, as well as provide factual information. In the words of one team member: "The Design Team comes into a community and, theoretically, steps onto a moving train. The Friday morning session gives the team a quick introduction to the community — where the 'train' has been and where it seems to be headed."

Facility

A meeting room with good acoustics and lighting that comfortably holds 30 to 50 people. The room arrangement should encourage rapport between team and community members. A possible arrangement: tables in a large square or horseshoe, with the speaker's stand at one end. Having the team and community people around one table facilitates team and community interaction and is convenient for note-taking and coffee-drinking. This kind of arrangement enables Design Team members to ask questions easily.

People from the community

Individuals who will be making presentations, the community's coordinating committee, other volunteers, elected officials and residents.

Assign a timekeeper to keep each speaker to his or her time limit.

Equipment and supplies

Your meeting room and your presenters will determine your equipment needs, which may include a speaker's stand, microphone, easel and flip chart (and felt pens in a variety of colors), overhead pro-

[illegible]

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Friday Noon — Lunch

What happens

Friday lunch is sandwiched between the morning presentations and the afternoon bus tour.

Why

Lunch serves a couple of purposes:

- Time for team members and community residents to talk with one another in an informal setting, so that team members can understand the community better.
- Time for a focused discussion, sometimes with slides. Typical topics can include the community's history or particular situations in your community, such as business in a tourist town, senior citizens or students, preservation in a town with many historic buildings.

On many previous visits, some team members have gone to the local school to eat lunch with students.

Facility

It's okay to take the team to a local restaurant. Non-restaurant settings can be church basements, community centers and senior citizen centers. If the weather is appropriate, a picnic with box lunches can provide a relaxing environment.

People from the community

You will need people to prepare and serve the meal and people to share the meal with team members. In some communities, the presenters have joined the team for lunch, allowing for additional follow-up questions.

Food

Virtually any type of food is fine, as long as it can be served and eaten in about one hour.

Your notes

Friday Afternoon — Community Tour

What happens

People from the community take team members on a tour to acquaint them with important sites and characteristics of the town. This usually includes a bus tour of the larger community and, often, a walking tour of the downtown area.

Possible tour sites include historic buildings, "main street," existing and potential parks, other public places, natural resources, residential neighborhoods and major highways that do not run through the downtown area. Stops during the tour should include sites that were topics of the community presentations on Friday morning.

Why

The community tour is another way to help Design Team members understand the community. It's important to see the community firsthand, particularly the sites that exemplify present concerns, dominant issues and future plans.

Also, the tour can be a good opportunity for casual interaction between team members and residents.

Equipment and supplies

A bus (possibly a school bus). It's important that the team member packets distributed Thursday evening include a lap-size map of the community (11" by 17") depicting the route of the tour and sites along the route. There should be a portable speaker system on the bus so that everyone can hear what is being said.

People from the community

A driver, as well as a tour guide who knows the area. It's helpful to have additional community members along to answer questions.

Food

In some communities, coffee breaks with local residents are arranged at a mid-point in the tour.

Friday Late Afternoon — Team Meeting

Your notes

[illegible]

What happens

Team members meet as a group, without people from the community, to discuss what they heard and saw on Friday, as well as their impressions of the community. They also plan Friday evening's town meeting.

Facility

The room needs to be large enough to hold the team comfortably. This often takes place at the same facility used for the Saturday team work session.

People from the community

After the team meeting, someone to type an outline for the town meeting and to make copies.

Equipment and supplies

An easel and a flip chart, or a large wall space where a large sheet of paper can be attached to the wall with masking tape.

Food

Coffee and/or cold beverages will be appreciated.

Your notes

[illegible]

Friday Evening — Community Potluck Dinner

What happens

A community potluck dinner.

Why

This is a way of building “people infrastructure.” It will attract people to the town meeting and involve people who might not otherwise become involved.

Facility

In the same building, but not necessarily the same space, as the town meeting. This allows people to move easily from one event to the other and eliminates clean-up delays if both were in the same room.

People from the community

The goal is to have many people from the community as possible, particularly from all segments of the community. A very vigorous and extensive publicity effort is needed to accomplish this. Your publicity effort could include distributing fliers door-to-door or at community events. Also, you could ask that each person on your working committees invite another half-dozen people.

Equipment and supplies

A welcoming table for community members, with sign-in sheets, at the front entrance.

Food

It's a potluck.

Your notes

Friday Evening — Town Meeting

What happens

This is when people from throughout the community tell each other and the Design Team their thoughts. To facilitate participation, community members gather in small groups of 6–10 people, led by one or two Design Team members. Each group is asked the same questions, which were prepared during the Friday afternoon team meeting. To encourage forthright participation, each person writes down his/her responses on note cards. The cards are then collected, traded with those at another table and read anonymously before the group. During the discussion, the comments are tabulated on large sheets of paper. At the end of the discussion, the sheets are posted on the walls for community members to review and, with “sticky dots,” identify the issues they think are most important so that the Design Team can better identify the community's priorities.

Why

The Design Team wants, and needs, to hear from people throughout the community about their concerns and hopes for the future. The town meeting is an opportunity to get input from as many people from all segments in the community as possible. Input from the town meeting is added to the information gathered during the community presentations and the tour so that the Design Team can craft recommendations to the community.

Facility

A large space that can accommodate the numbers of community members who are expected. The room should be set up with tables and chairs for small group discussions of 6–10 people each. A separate discussion will be held at each table, so the tables should be spread apart. The acoustics should be good enough so that it doesn't become too noisy. Wall space next to each table is desirable, so that large sheets of paper, on which community responses are written, can be taped up. The building should be one where everyone from the community feels welcome. In the past, communities have used community centers, school cafeterias and church basements.

Friday Night — Social Gathering

People from the community

One or two people at the registration table, to gather names on the sign-in sheets. Someone to welcome everyone from the community, to thank them at the end of the meeting and to invite them to the Design Team presentation on Saturday evening.

Equipment and supplies

A registration table with name tags and pens. A public address system is helpful.

Food

Optional, particularly after the potluck dinner. You may want beverages and snacks available.

Your notes

[illegible]

What happens

Team members socialize with people from the community and their host families.

Why

This can be a relaxing way for team members to understand the community better and to become acquainted with residents.

Facility

A local restaurant or tavern.

Your notes

[illegible]

Saturday Morning/Afternoon — Team Work Session

What happens

Team members gather Saturday morning and discuss their understanding of the community — gleaned from all of Friday's events — and rank the issues according to their importance to the community. Then, team members, based on their areas of expertise, decide which issues to address and how. Around noon, they begin producing drawings for their presentation to the community on Saturday evening.

Why

The presentation drawings are the result of the collaboration between the community — its concerns, hopes, issues and its vision — and the professional expertise of the team members. The presentation drawings include recommendations, ideas and concepts the community can use to turn the vision into projects. The presentation drawings also become a vehicle for the community to continue to develop its "people infrastructure" so that it can materialize its vision.

Facility

The ideal facility will have a large, flexible work space where several rooms are available, where numerous tables and chairs can be set up in a variety of arrangements and where there is sufficient wall space for hanging large sheets of paper. Possible work spaces include city hall council chambers (without theater seats), multi-purpose rooms in community centers or schools, school cafeterias and unused store fronts.

Initially, the team will need a large table space for the whole team (approximately 12–20 people) adjacent to a fairly large expanse of wall space, so that we can tape up the small group sheets from Friday's town meeting and long strips of paper for our Saturday morning meeting.

Throughout the remainder of the day, four to eight smaller teams each will need a work area.

Convenient restrooms, good lighting, reasonable temperature control and ventilation are very important, as team members will be working in the space, almost non-stop, for about 10 hours. Avoid buildings where the heating/cooling/ventilation systems are shut down during the weekend.

At least one smaller room or corridor where the lights can be turned off and where slides can be projected onto a smooth wall space is also needed.

Ideally, the work space is in the same building — but not the same room — as the presentation. The work space is likely to become rather messy as the team works on the presentation drawings during the day. Some team members may need to work on drawings right up to the time of the presentation. Lastly, the team needs to be able to take drawings to the presentation space as they are finished.

People from the community

It is during the team work session on Saturday that your weekend coordinators become very important. People should be available at all times to run errands, retrieve special resource materials and answer questions. A word processor should be available to transcribe the results from Friday evening's town meeting (possibly a list of 10 pages or more) and to type and copy the agenda for the presentation. Also, people will need to prepare and bring in food for team members throughout the day.

Equipment and supplies

- Several tables large enough to accommodate sheets of paper measuring 36" by 42," plus one chair per team member. The team needs to be able to move the tables and chairs around within a large room or move them to smaller adjoining rooms.
- A couple of slide projectors.
- Overhead projector.
- Opaque projector (if available).
- Access to a copy machine (one that enlarges, if possible).
- Access to computer, scanner & printer.

Saturday Evening — Community Gathering/Design Team Presentation

Food

Two meals — lunch and dinner — should be brought to the facility where the team is working. Both lunch and dinner should be easy-to-eat, as team members will stop working only briefly to eat.

Dinner time is usually more rushed than lunch, as team members are hurrying to finish the presentation. If you have a community wide dinner prior to the presentation, do not expect all the team members to be able to attend.

Beverages, bottled water and light, healthy snacks should be available throughout the day.

Your notes

What happens

Everyone in the community is invited as the Design Team presents and explains the drawings, which represent its ideas for tackling the design, planning and development issues suggested by the community.

A question-and-answer session follows the presentation, which should lead into a discussion on how the community will implement the recommendations. The drawings are left on the wall so community members can study them more closely and talk with team members informally about them.

Communities should have sign-up sheets or sign-up cards at the meeting, so residents can immediately indicate their interest in working on a particular project.

Since the presentation drawings are the only tangible product of the visit, the presentation should be videotaped.

Why

The presentation drawings are the marriage of the community — your shared vision, your issues and concerns and the information you gave the Design Team — and Design Team expertise. They are the “road map” to use as you implement your vision. Some of the recommendations in presentation drawings will include ideas for projects — a trail system, using an historic building, connecting a newer neighborhood with the older downtown area. There will also be ideas for building the people infrastructure in your community, so as to make the projects happen.

Facility

A large meeting space with good acoustics and sight lines that will allow as many people as possible to see and hear the presentation easily. The space must have a well-lit surface on which approximately 20 large drawings (about 30” x 40”) can be taped. Seating for 100 to 200 people should be provided as close as possible to the drawings. As with the Friday night meeting, the building should be perceived as a neutral location and should be accessible to everyone. If the community plans a potluck dinner or other event prior to the presentation, it should be in the same building but preferably not in the same space as the presentation. Typical meeting spaces include a school gymnasium or a community room.

Saturday Night — Social Gathering

People from the community

A few people should be on hand to help team members mount the presentation drawings on the wall, to help with sign-in sheets at the registration table and to hand out outlines of the presentation. Also, people are needed to sign up community members who want to work on specific projects that are depicted on the presentation drawings. A video camera operator and a sound system operator also are needed.

Equipment and supplies

- A good portable microphone system with a hand-held, or clip-on, microphone and a long cord.
- A video camera.
- Name tags and pens.
- Sign-up sheets or sign-up cards.

Food

You may want beverages and snacks available.

Your notes

What happens

Informal socializing.

Why

Everyone in the community who has worked on the visit and team member will welcome a time to unwind and to talk about the visit.

Facility

A local restaurant or tavern.

People from the community

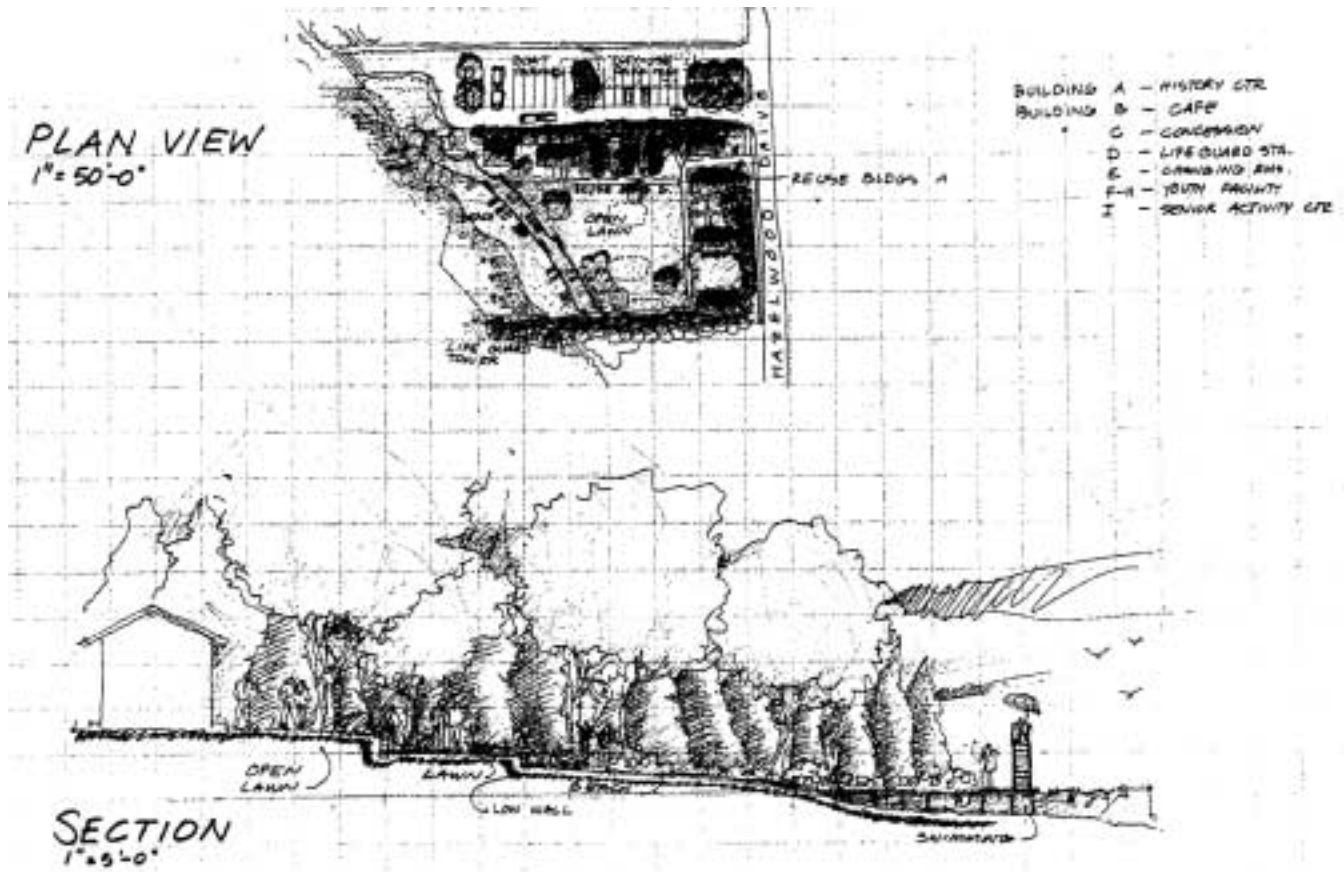
Coordinating committee members, members of all your working committees, host families, presenters, volunteers and residents from the community — and team members.

Your notes



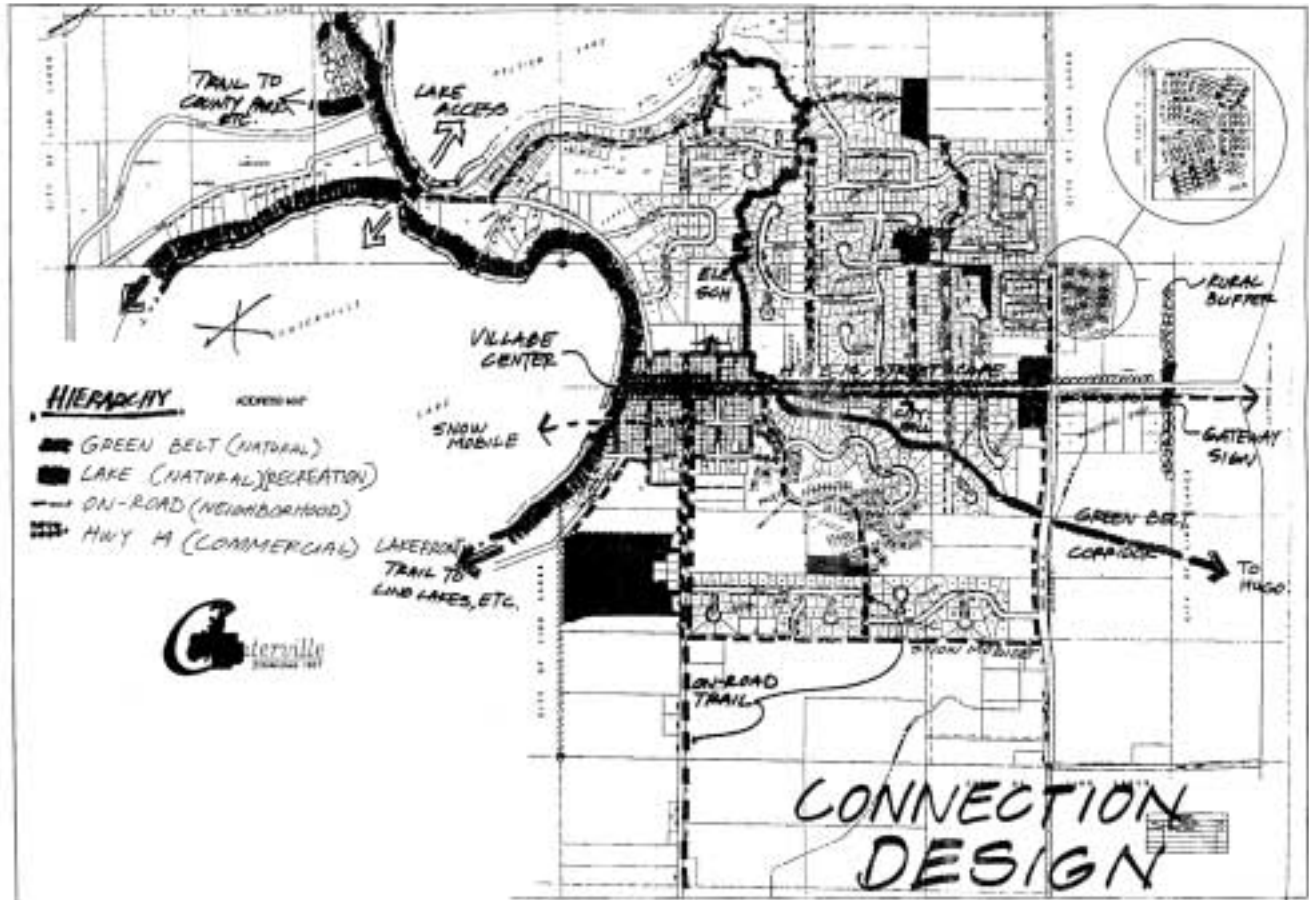
Concept: The Public Realm

Nisswa



Concept: Trails Connect the Community

Centerville



Making It Happen

After the Visit

It's the week following the Design Team visit. The community is excited and ideas are fresh in everyone's minds. People want something to happen. How do you capture that enthusiasm and transform it into action?

To begin to move closer to your shared vision, your community should meet within a week after the visit and review the Design Team recommendations, perhaps by watching the video of Saturday evening's presentation.

Watching the video of the Design Team presentation is the second step toward implementing your community's shared vision. The first step happened prior to the visit, when you asked people to be part of an implementation committee. The implementation committee should include both people involved since the beginning and those who became interested later, as time for the visit approached or during the visit itself.

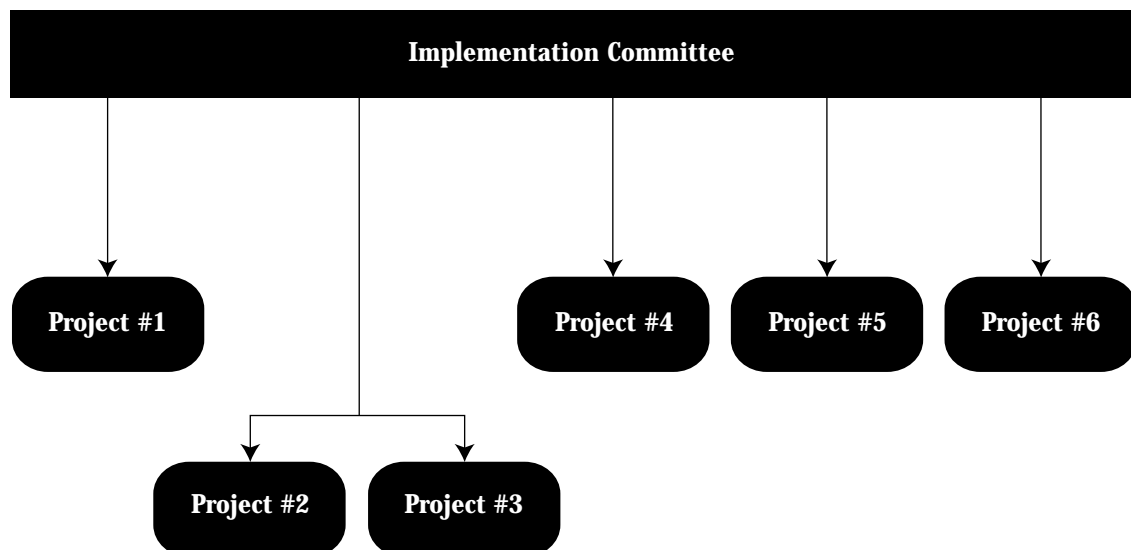
Approximately a month following the visit, the Design Team co-leaders will return with the presentation drawings, laminated so they can be used in the years to come, as well as slides and copies of the drawings. This is a good time to talk about any questions your community has about the presentation drawings and about your community's implementation plan.



Organizing Your Implementation Plan

Implementation is the hardest part of the Design Team process, because it means sustaining interest and energy during the weeks and months (and sometimes years) as you make your shared vision a reality. It's important to remember, though, that a successful visit means success in implementation.

- ☐ **The plan for implementation.** A Design Team visit is exhilarating. It can also be exhausting. To take advantage of the enthusiasm without overburdening tired minds and bodies, have an implementation plan in place prior to the weekend visit.
- ☐ **The people for implementation.** To prepare for the visit, you had a coordinating committee and working committees. You should consider a similar scheme for implementation — an implementation committee and action groups. The action groups are formed around the projects recommended by the Design Team on Saturday evening and projects that your community has decided to implement.



Your implementation committee was organized at the time you began preparing for the visit and included many people who were working to get ready for the visit.

Now is the time to include new people — those who were not part of the planning the last six months but who became interested during the visit itself. At the end of the Design Team presentation on Saturday evening, you encouraged community resi-

dents to express their interest in one, or more, of the projects depicted on the drawings. Don't let that interest evaporate. These people will be your action groups.

Decide prior to the visit who will call people and who will lead the action groups while they are in their early stages.

The action groups should set goals and priorities for the projects they will be working on.

Each time you begin a new project or a new phase of implementation is a good time to involve new people in the action groups.

The implementation committee will want to keep in close contact with each action group to coordinate efforts between the groups. In addition, the implementation committee could help the action groups focus on the shared vision established for the entire community during the weekend visit. The shared vision should remain the yardstick for measuring whether new projects are appropriate and what priority they should be given.

Strong leaders. Although broad-based community involvement is essential, so is individual leadership — at least two or three people who believe in the process and have the ability to motivate and involve other community people without taking too much control. The leaders should be facilitators, helping other volunteers make decisions and implement projects, as well as coordinators, so that volunteers know what is happening in other action groups.

Immediate action. Many Design Team communities choose a visible, short-term project to kick-off the implementation process. It gives your community a sense of accomplishment and helps sustain enthusiasm. The Design Team presentation likely will include suggestions for short-term projects, as well as a ranking of mid-term and long-term projects that will take longer to implement.

Keeping the visit visible. Take every opportunity to remind your community of the shared vision they created.

- Display the drawings in prominent places — for example, city hall, a bank, a school, a church or the community center at the park.
- Put the drawings on your community's web site, or on the web site created for the weekend visit. The web site could be interactive, so that people could comment on the projects, particularly as they are finished or reach important milestones.

- Publish the Design Team recommendations in your local newspaper or in your newsletter. Identify the action groups and their short term, mid-term and long-term objectives for implementing the recommendations. Include the phone number of at least one person on each action group so that new people can become involved.
- Continue to have town meetings, two or three times a year, to renew the energy from the visit and to welcome new people into the process.
- Talk about the drawings and the projects your community is planning wherever people in your community gather — for example, civic organizations, classrooms, senior citizen groups, church groups.
- Each time a project is finished, or reaches a critical step, plan a community celebration.

The video. Edit the video of the visit for publicity and educational use during the coming months and years. In particular, the video will help community members remember the context and the rationale behind the presentation drawings. It could be shown in a number of different situations, including community organizations, classrooms and the cable access station.

Finding and using resources. Finding the funds and the skills needed to do a project can be a challenge, but successful Design Team communities have found ways to do just that.

Begin by identifying the resources in your community and asking them for help.

There are also resources from throughout the state; they will be listed on the Design Team website — www.minnesotadesignteam.org. The list of resources on the website will be updated periodically.

The kinds of resources are:

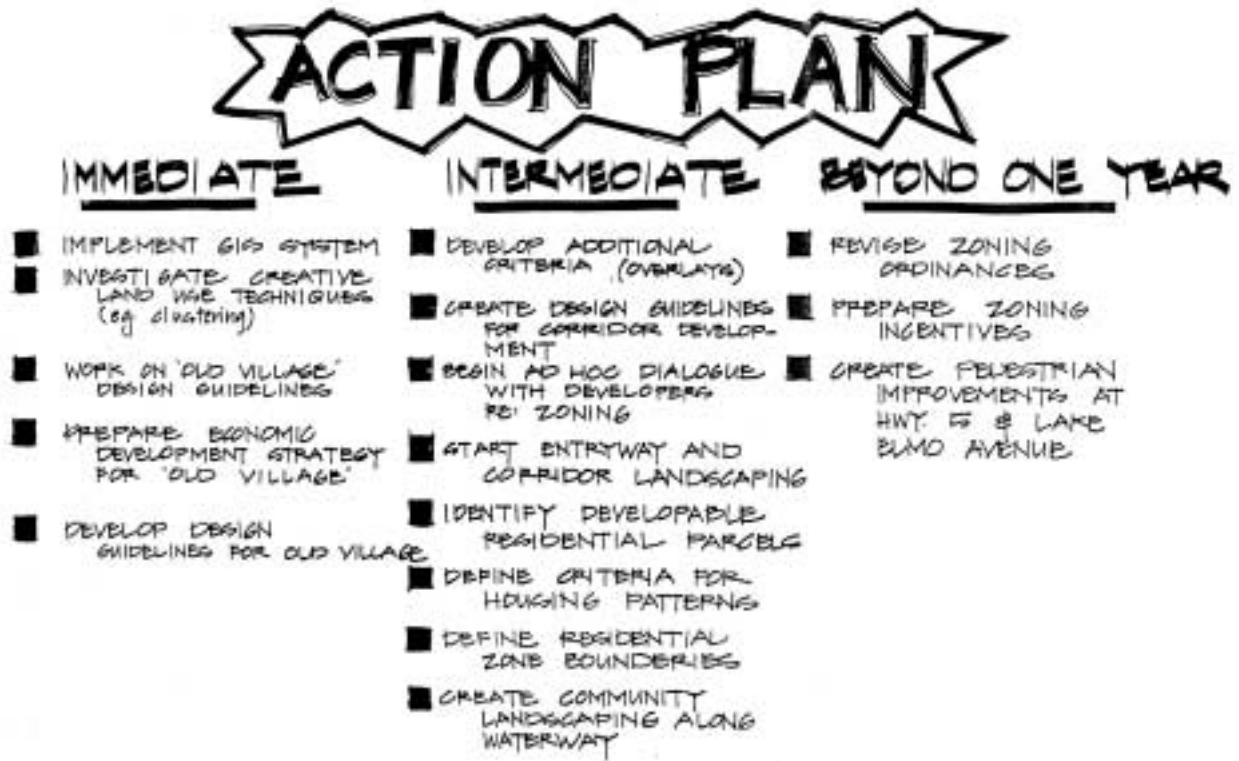
- Knowledge resources, such as economic development specialists, horticulturalists or tourism specialists.
- Skill resources, such as grant writers, carpenters or artists.
- Material resources, such as lumber companies or printers.
- Design or planning assistance, such as architects, landscape architects and urban designers. Since the Design Team drawings are not final designs or construction blueprints, you will need help turning them into working plans (see the Appendix for information on hiring professionals).
- Funding. Many communities find fund raising the most challenging part of implementation. There are, however, many non-profit organizations exist that provide funding for communities.

Your notes

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Concept: Implementing the Shared Vision

Lake Elmo



Evaluating Your Community's Implementation Plan

These questions are intended to help your community determine how your implementation efforts are proceeding. Many components of a successful implementation plan are included — building and sustaining your “people infrastructure,” keeping in touch with all segments in the community and obtaining resources to help you with projects and programs.

1. What new projects or programs have resulted from the shared vision created during the Minnesota Design Team visit?

Your notes

2. What people have taken an active role in carrying out the shared vision? How do you recruit new volunteers?

Your notes

3. How have existing organizations helped realize the shared vision?

Your notes

4. What new organizations or networks have grown out of effort to achieve your shared vision?

Your notes

5. What outside resources (i.e., political representatives, Extension Services, consultants, etc.) have you used to achieve your shared vision?

Your notes

6. What fund-raising or grant applications have you done to achieve your shared vision?

Your notes

9. How have you acknowledged and celebrated outstanding efforts to achieve the shared vision?

Your notes

7. How have you communicated the shared vision and your implementation efforts to others in the community?

Your notes

10. What additional resources or assistance do you feel you need to achieve your shared vision?

Your notes

8. What means of communication have you created to inform people about your efforts?

Your notes

The Design Team Visits Again

The Design Team's implementation visit — approximately 6–12 months following the weekend visit — is typically a Saturday morning when several team members return to your community to meet with action groups and others interested in nurturing the momentum and enthusiasm generated by the weekend visit.

The implementation visit is an opportunity for the Design Team to answer questions about the presentation drawings and the projects that came from them, to offer additional insight on community participation, to act as a sounding board for community efforts or ideas that have arisen since the weekend visit and to refer the community to other resources.

Preparing for a successful implementation visit includes:

- Select a comfortable meeting room where the presentation drawings can be displayed. The drawings should be easily visible to everyone in the room.
- Prepare an outline of your community's accomplishments since the original visit. The outline can serve as the beginning of an agenda for the community's presentation during the implementation visit.
- Arrange a tour of project sites.
- Arrange for refreshments (and overnight accommodations, if necessary).
- Have each action group prepare a short presentation about its progress. The community's presentation (about an 1 1/2 hour total) could describe your progress towards reaching your shared vision, including projects, activities, problems (such as burnout and lack of resources). During the briefing, Design Team members will listen and take notes. Depending on the issues presented by the community, team members will identify strengths and trouble spots, offering ideas and suggestions about the projects and the process the community has undertaken since the original visit. The implementation visit concludes with discussion and decisions on the next steps to take.

Your notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Appendix

Minnesota Design Team Communities

| City/County | Population | Visit Date |
|-------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Afton/Washington | 2645 | May 1994 |
| Aitkin/Aitkin | 1770 | September 1988 |
| Alexandria/Douglas | 7900 | April 1992 |
| Arlington/Sibley | 1820 | May 1991 |
| Atwater/Kandiyohi | 1128 | June 1984 |
| Avon/Stearns | 1033 | September 1996 |
| Barrett/Grant | 360 | May 1995 |
| Battle Lake/Ottertail | 708 | August 1989 |
| Becker/Sherburne | 1000 | February 1992 |
| Benson/Swift | 3300 | Fall 1991 |
| Biwabik/St. Louis | 1428 | October 1984 |
| Blue Earth/Faribault | 4132 | June 1989 |
| Braham/Isanti & Kanabec | 1015 | June 1986 |
| Breckenridge/Wilkin | 3750 | April 1991 |
| Caledonia/Houston | 2846 | May 1993 |
| Cass Lake/Cass | 923 | September 1997 |
| Center City/Chisago | 502 | April 1996 |
| Centerville/Anoka | 2400 | September 1998 |
| Chandler & Lake Wilson/Murray | 300 & 317 | October 1992 |
| Chisholm/St. Louis | 5930 | September 1986 |
| Clarissa/Todd | 663 | November 1988 |
| Clearwater/Wright | 692 | April 1994 |
| Coleraine/Itasca | 1116 | September 1987 |
| Columbia Heights/Anoka | 18,910 | April 1998 |
| Crookston/Polk | 8628 | May 1989 |
| Dassel/Meeker | 1066 | October 1983 |
| Delano/Wright | 2480 | May 1983 |
| Dodge Center/Dodge | 2105 | April 1997 |
| Elk River/Sherburne | 6785 | October 1986 |
| Embarrass/St. Louis | 828 | May 1988 |
| Fosston/Polk | 1599 | April 1985 |
| Grand Marais/Cook | 1289 | October 1988 |
| Grand Rapids/Itasca | 7934 | September 1985 |
| Grand Rapids/Itasca | 8250 | June 1995 |
| Greenbush/Roseau | 817 | April 1989 |

| City/County | Population | Visit Date |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Hallock/Kittson | 1404 | April 1989 |
| Harmony/Fillmore | 1113 | November 1989 |
| Houston/Houston | 1013 | October 1995 |
| Keewatin/Itasca | 1443 | August 1988 |
| Kenyon/Goodhue | 1529 | April 1987 |
| Kimball/Meeker | 685 | April 1999 |
| Lake Elmo/Washington | 6000 | September 1995 |
| Lewiston/Winona | 1298 | September 1993 |
| Lindstrom/Chisago | 2721 | April 1998 |
| Little Falls/Morrison | 7178 | May 1991 |
| Melrose/Stearns | 2409 | May 1986 |
| Metrodome, Minneapolis/Hennepin | | August 1986 |
| Nisswa/Crow Wing | 1500 | October 1999 |
| Norwood—Young America/Carver | 2981 | April 2000 |
| Payne—Arcade, Saint Paul/Ramsey | | May 1984 |
| Paynesville/Stearns | 2201 | September 1990 |
| Perham/Ottertail | 2075 | October 1992 |
| Pillager/Cass | 306 | May 1997 |
| Pine City/Pine | 2489 | June 1987 |
| Pine Island/Goodhue & Olmsted | 1986 | May 1985 |
| Preston/Fillmore | 1530 | April 1996 |
| Prior Lake/Scott | 9926 | February 1984 |
| Red Lake Falls/Red Lake | 1732 | September 1987 |
| Redwood Falls/Redwood | 5210 | April 1985 |
| Rockford/Wright | 3252 | September 200 |
| Rushford/Fillmore | 1478 | May 1987 |
| Sandstone/Pine | 1594 | October 1990 |
| Silver Bay/Lake | 2917 | October 1985 |
| South Saint Paul/Dakota | 21,235 | November 1987 |
| Spring Valley/Fillmore | 2489 | September 1997 |
| Steele County | | September 1998 |
| St Peter/Nicollet | 9788 | April 1999 |
| St. Joseph/Stearns | 3325 | April 1995 |
| Taylor Falls/Chisago | 623 | March 1990 |
| Two Harbors/Lake | 3651 | Fall 1996 |
| Wabasha/Wabasha | 2372 | October 1987 |
| Wadena/Wadena & Ottertail | 4699 | April 1990 |
| Washburn, WI/Bayfield | 2285 | October 1993 |
| Watertown/Carver | 1818 | February 1988 |
| Wauban/Mahnomen | 390 | Fall 1991 |
| Waverly/Wright | 600 | April 1994 |
| West Broadway, Minneapolis/Hennepin | | June 1990 |
| Winona/Winona | 25,075 | October 1985 |

Hiring Professionals to Help Your Community

When your community decides to undertake projects requiring more time, coordination or expertise than your volunteers can supply, you will need to hire professional help.

Although budget concerns make some communities hesitant to hire professionals, in the end, you will be best served by finding the necessary resources to ensure the project is undertaken thoughtfully by professionals who have expertise in the specific skill areas necessary for your project.

The following descriptions can help you decide what type of professionals will be most appropriate for your community's project. Some project might require more than one professional (see Multi-Disciplinary Team, below). Then, in the section following this one, is a description of how to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP).

Note: The state of Minnesota requires that architects, landscape architects and engineers be registered to perform the services described below. Their registration signifies they have met standards (through training, experience and knowledge) that protect the health, safety and welfare of the public and they have the skills necessary to perform their service professionally and in the best interest of their clients.

Architect: Architects design buildings and shape interior spaces for people's activities; they also perform other services related to these duties. Examples of their work include: designing new buildings; designing renovations of existing buildings; designing single-family and multi-family housing; assisting in the selection of sites for new community facilities; developing cost projections for building projects; designing interior spaces of buildings; directing the restoration of historic buildings or districts; working with other designers to create streetscapes; preparing studies for new development within a community; and designing special community features, such as clock towers, entry markers, park pavilions and band shells.

Landscape Architect: Landscape architects shape our land and exterior spaces. Their work includes preserving, planning, designing and managing land to blend the qualities of nature with the needs of people. When you walk out your front door or leave your place of work, you are entering the realm of the landscape architect. Their work includes the following: designing parks, playgrounds and other recreational areas, such as trails, golf courses, zoos and marinas; planning for large public-land or open-space projects, such as regional or national parks, or the siting of highway or utility corridors; designing your front or back yard; planning subdivisions, neighborhoods and business/industrial parks; reclaiming land that has been mined, logged or otherwise disturbed; selecting appropriate sites for activities and new facilities; developing pedestrian and vehicle circulation systems; creating designs for planting; designing streetscapes; and designing landscape improvements for community entryways.

Planner: Planners help communities develop and evaluate proposals and policies that affect their growth and development and prepare plans that accurately reflect how a community wants to develop. Examples of projects include: preparing a feasibility study for the redevelopment of a downtown district; evaluating community housing costs and opportunities; preparing community park and recreational plans; identifying and recommending appropriate community zoning districts and categories; studying community transportation and circulation systems; identifying and evaluating community services (such as solid waste disposal); and planning for the growth of larger regions, such as counties.

Urban Designer: Urban designers prepare design guidelines and qualities for community districts, buildings and open spaces based on their understanding of the characteristics and forces that impact communities. Examples of projects include: developing a long-term vision for a neighborhood, district or community; establishing architectural and landscape guidelines to maintain or reinforce a community's character; and working with architects,

landscape architects and other design professionals to develop an understanding of a community's major service systems.

Civil Engineer: Civil engineers deal with the technical and functional aspects of a community's infrastructure, including roads and water, sanitary, storm sewer and drainage systems. As your community grows or undertakes more complex projects, you will need to involve engineers to ensure they can be built safely and to the best benefit of the community.

Community Development Specialist: Community development specialists can be an asset when planning for your community's future. Examples of the work they perform include: preparing needs assessment surveys; writing grant proposals; facilitating and coordinating efforts of various groups working on community improvement; identifying necessary resources not available in the community; developing programs for greater community participation; and acting as a contact person for individuals, groups or businesses interested in relocating to your community.

Graphic Designer: Graphic designers can work with your community to help communicate important messages to residents and visitors. Traditionally, they work with printed materials, such as magazines, newspapers or brochures. They create logos, symbols and other images to communicate ideas or messages. Graphic designers also design signs, architectural graphics and other elements that can make your community more visually appealing.

Artist: Works of art, created by community or outside artists, can help you celebrate your community's culture and heritage through sculptures, paintings or other artistic media. Within a community, an artist's work is often incorporated into other projects as a special feature or focal element.

Multi-Disciplinary Team: No one professional can adequately deal with the many issues present in such large projects as streetscapes; new community buildings; large park, waterfront or redevelopment projects; and master or comprehensive community plans. In those situations, a team of design professionals that can address the many and important aspects of a community's project should be assembled.



Preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Work Your Community Wants To Do

A Request for Proposals (RFP) is one way of hiring professionals to help with your community's projects.

There are two basic parts to a Request for Proposals — what you need to tell professionals about your community and your project and what you want them to tell you about what services they will perform.

Information about your community and your project:

1. The name of your community and the name, address, phone number and e-mail address of the person who is the contact for the RFP.
2. A brief description of the community.
3. A description of your project. This includes more than simply a description of the project itself. What is the context of the project? This includes the location and physical surroundings of the project area. It could also include other projects, both existing and planned for the future, which could impact the immediate project.
4. What are the reasons for undertaking the project? What does the community want to achieve with the project?
5. What are the essential tasks the professionals must perform? This is the scope of services.
6. What is the deadline for submitted proposals? How many copies of the proposal must be submitted?
7. What are the deadlines for doing the work on your project? Are the deadlines related to other key dates in your community?
8. Are there budget limits for the work professionals will do?

In their proposals, professionals should describe the work they will do on your project, including the following:

1. The services they will perform.
2. The names and qualifications of the professionals who will be working on your project. This should include a list of other projects that are similar to your project.
3. The products they will produce for the community.
4. The proposed budget, including budgets for professional expenses and reimbursable expenses.