Community Capacity

Identifying what you need - (hopefully) before you start.
What is “Community” Capacity?
Community Capacity

- Activities, resources and assets that increase a community’s ability to achieve its mission or projects and sustain them over time.
Community Development Capacity

- **Element One: Experience with Strategic Planning.** A common vision for the future backed by a plan to achieve the vision is a powerful instrument, especially if it is understood and supported by the citizenry. Past experience with creating and implementing such a plan is important.

- **Element Two: Project and Issue Advocacy.** A plan for the future quickly becomes irrelevant if the successful and repetitive implementation of projects and the addressing of issues do not support it.

- **Element Three: Active, Effective Organization.** It takes an organization focused on the implementation of the strategic plan to consistently advocate for priority projects and issues.

- **Element Four: Capable, Professional Staffing.** Community development is a profession, and it is essential that capable people be in the right positions for a community.

- **Element Five: Dedicated Community.** While professional staff people are essential, they need the support and active involvement of the citizenry to be effective.

- **Element Six: The Right Attitude.** Communities have a collective attitude about their future. This attitude can either support or hinder community development capacity.

- **Element Seven: Community Advocacy.** Project and issue proponents must keep in mind that their agenda is a subset of the overall direction of the community.
Element One: Experience with Strategic Planning

Factor: History of Strategic Planning Activity
Factor: Community’s Acceptance of Strategic Plan
Factor: Professional Development of Plan
Factor: Use of the Plan
Factor: Plan Updating
Element Two: Project and Issue Advocacy

Factor: Identification of Specific Community Development Priorities
Factor: Identification of Regional Strategic Issues
Factor: Large Scale Project Advocacy
Factor: Coordinating Project with State and Local Processes
Element Three:
Active, Effective Organization

Factor: Organizational Connectedness
Factor: Organizational Stability
Factor: Organizational Focus on Business of Community
Factor: Frequency and Effectiveness of Meetings
Factor: Organizational Board Training
Element Four: Capable, Professional Staffing

Factor: Skill Level of Staff Person
Factor: Administrative Support Staff
Factor: Staff Focused on Organizational Objectives (not fund-raising)
Factor: Staff Training
Element Five: Dedicated Community

Factor: Opportunities for Service
Factor: Celebration of Volunteerism
Element Six: The Right Attitude

Factor: Proactive vs Reactive Community
Factor: Viewing the Glass: Is it half-full?
Element Seven: Community Advocacy

Factor: Community Commitment to Strategic Direction

Factor: Subordination of Projects to Community
Continue to ask:

“What’s our ability to get this done?”

“Who are our volunteers, professionals, staff?”

“What are our resources for volunteers, staff, training, projects, etc?”

“Who are the experts that can assist us?”
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