

BUILDING PROSPERITY FOR ALL

Community Conversations for Action and Change: Organizer and Moderator Guide



A guide for public dialogue and action

RESOURCES

What is Included in This Handbook?

- Organizing Tips
- Community Conversations Guide
- Handouts and Resources

RESOURCES

Getting Our Help

If you have questions, we hope you will call us. We also hope you will let us know how you are using this guide in your community.

Everyday Democracy:
1.860.928.2616 or info@everyday-democracy.org.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Building Prosperity for All is for people in rural communities and small towns who are working to move from poverty to prosperity. This resource was designed to benefit communities that participated in dialogue-to-change programs using the guide, *Thriving Communities: Working Together to Move From Poverty to Prosperity for All*. However, no prior experience with *Thriving Communities* is necessary to get involved.

Building Prosperity for All includes three guides:

This guide, *Community Conversations for Action and Change: Organizer and Moderator Guide*, provides advice for organizing the conversations, and a guide for the event host and small-group dialogue facilitators to use throughout the discussion sessions. The guide will help your community organize effective gatherings to:

- celebrate the progress you have made;
- talk about the challenges you are facing;
- learn what other communities are doing;
- and, work together to create plans to move to action.

The second guide, *Community Conversations for Action and Change: Participant's Guide*, is a series of handouts for dialogue participants to use throughout the discussion sessions. Download the English or Spanish guide.

The third guide, *A Regional Meeting for Action and Change*, is an optional agenda for communities that want to reach out to neighboring communities and regional or statewide groups to identify ways to work together to continue to make progress. Download the guide.

Writers: Susan McCormack and Janée Woods Weber
Research Assistance: Sarah Eisele-Dyrli and Malana Rogers-Bursen
Contributing Editors: Molly Holme Barrett and Karyn Vogel
Translator: VPE Public Relations
Layout and Design: OmniStudio
Production: Carrie Boron



We want to thank the Northwest Area Foundation for helping shape the ideas reflected in this guide, and for providing financial support for its production. Visit www.nwaf.org to learn more about the foundation's support to organizations striving to reduce poverty and build sustainable prosperity.

© 2011 by The Paul J. Aicher Foundation

Permissions Policy: Photocopying this guide for the purpose of organizing large-scale dialogue-to-change programs is permitted. Reproducing any portions of this guide for other purposes requires our written permission.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Dialogue-to-Change Process.....5

ORGANIZING TIPS FOR COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Organizing Tips6

Checklist for the Sessions8

DISCUSSION SESSIONS (MODERATOR/FACILITATOR GUIDE)

Session 1: Celebrating Our Success.....10

Session 2: Understanding Our Challenges and Exploring Opportunities14

Session 3: Moving to Action20

Session 4: Planning for Change.....23

RESOURCES

Appendix A: Participant Handouts

Handout 1: People, Places, Policies, and Things25

Handout 2: Evaluating Our Progress27

Handout 3: Views and Approaches to Change.....29

Handout 4: Action Road Map.....33

Handout 5: Sample Action Road Map.....36

Handout 6: Next Steps42

Appendix B: How to Make an Information Sheet44

Appendix C: How to Create a Resource Sheet.....45

Appendix D: 10 Steps for Successful Action Teams48

Facilitation Tips.....49

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES52

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS52

ABOUT EVERYDAY DEMOCRACY53



INTRODUCTION

We all want to live in communities where we have a chance to thrive. Every community has assets that can help people succeed. And all communities face challenges. People often mention poverty when they talk about what holds their community back. When some of us live in poverty, our whole community is affected.

In fact, the strength of our nation and the health of our democracy are tied to this idea: All people must have opportunities to create a better life for themselves, for their families, and for their communities.

When we come together to find ways to help our community thrive, we can also find ways to change the systems that create poverty and other inequities. This is hard work and it takes time, but we know of many places where changes are beginning to take place.

Four ideas are at the heart of the progress that is being made.

- *Everyone is entitled to a dignified life.*
- *Everyone in the community should have access to opportunities that can help them thrive.*

- *Everyone in the community should have a voice about how to create a better life for all. This includes people from all backgrounds, experiences, and education levels.*
- *People and organizations can make a real difference when they are united by a common goal to make the community work for everyone. They can help each other, and they can change long-standing systems (such as education and health care) that are intended to work well for all, but sometimes keep some people down.*

Over time, we can create positive, lasting changes by drawing on the **people, places, policies, and things** in our communities that make us strong. We can tap into the skills of all members of the community. We can make the most of our natural resources. We can turn to community institutions for support and, if necessary, we can change their policies and practices.

We hope this guide will help the people in your community find ways to work together to create a place where everyone can thrive.

Thinking About Poverty and Prosperity

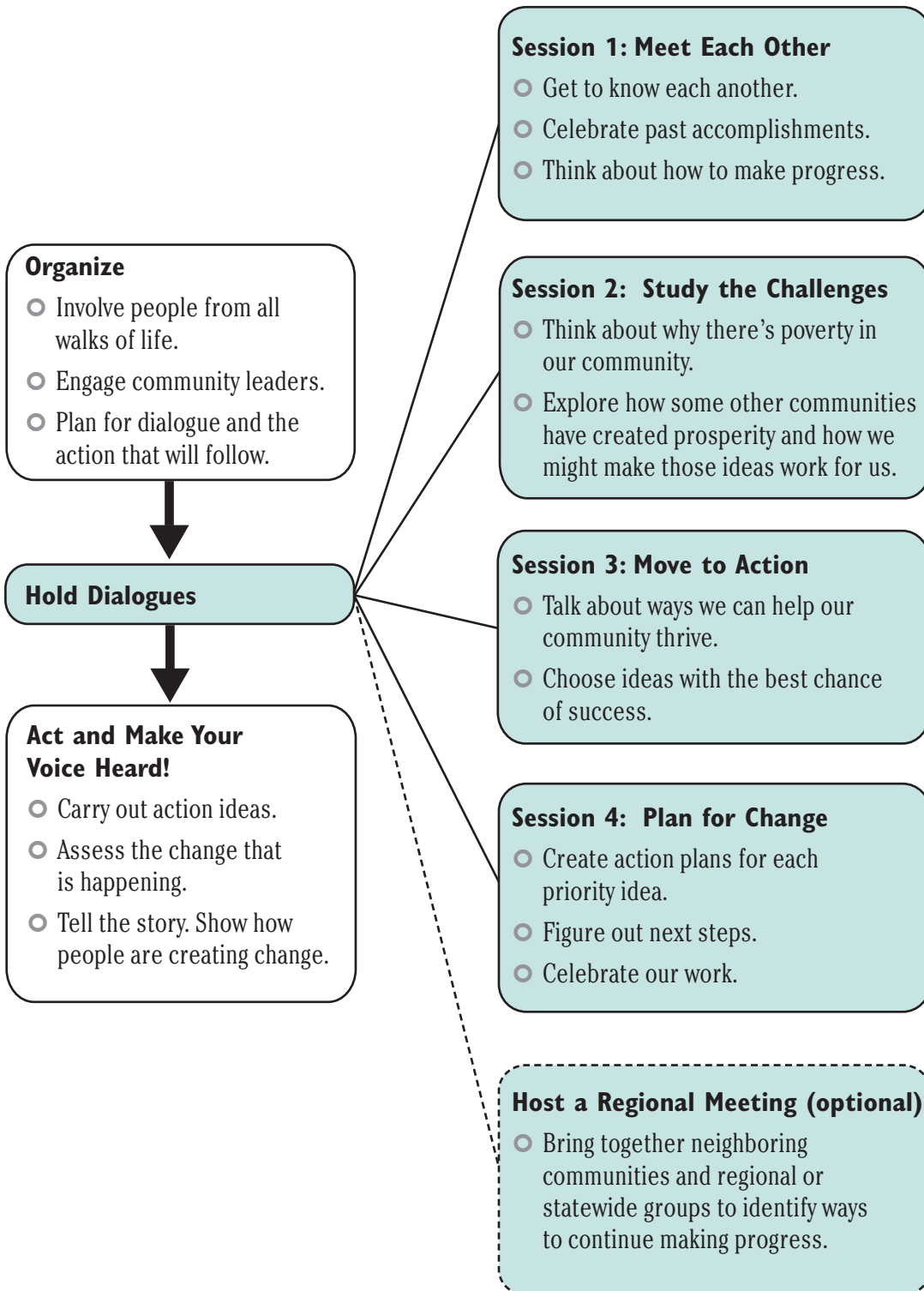
Concepts like poverty and prosperity can mean different things to different people. For some people, poverty means not having enough money. But there are other ways to define poverty:

- Not having a chance to find work.
- Not having a good education.
- Being cut off from your culture or faith community.
- Not having a strong network of friends and family.

Poverty can also mean that some people don't have a chance to thrive because policies have been put into place that keeps them from reaching their full potential.

Prosperity can also mean many different things. It can mean having a good job, a house, enough money to make ends meet, plus a little extra to set aside. Prosperity can mean living in a place with laws and policies that give everyone a fair chance to succeed. Prosperity can also mean having many friends or being in a position to give to others. It can mean having a strong cultural heritage, feeling content with your life, living in a beautiful landscape, or living in a place where people help each other.

OVERVIEW OF THE DIALOGUE-TO-CHANGE PROCESS





RESOURCES

For More Organizing Advice...

For detailed advice about how to organize a successful dialogue-to-change program, please see both *Organizing Rural & Reservation Communities for Dialogue and Change* or *Organizing Community Wide Dialogue for Action and Change*. You can download a free copy of these guides at www.everyday-democracy.org, or call

Everyday Democracy
at 1.860.928.2616.

ORGANIZING TIPS FOR COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

It takes careful planning to organize community conversations that lead to effective action and community change.

Experience has shown that bringing together a diverse group of people is the **MOST IMPORTANT** thing you can do to ensure a successful program and meaningful outcomes. You will need to find ways to involve many different kinds of people. Invite people of different ages, backgrounds, and racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Include people who look at the issue from different points of view. Schedule meetings at times and locations that are convenient for everyone. Provide transportation and childcare, if needed.

These tips will help you get started.

1. Build a strong, diverse steering group to organize the process.

- The steering group should mirror the makeup of the community.
- Participation of key community leaders brings credibility and resources to the program. Ask the mayor, the chief of police, school principals, and faith leaders to get on board.
- Include young people.

The steering group will help plan the rest of the steps listed below.

2. Develop communications and outreach plans.

- Build a “buzz” in the community. Spread the word through casual conversations with people you see.

- Make simple written materials, like a brochure or flier, that outline the program’s goals.
- Talk about your hopes for the program.
- Plan to reach out to people in many different ways. For example, start a Facebook page. Put up fliers in public places (libraries, Laundromats, community bulletin boards, etc.). Make announcements during faith services, and ask people to invite their family members to participate. Write a press release for the local paper.
- Develop a “story bank” with stories that feature individuals and actions that have made a difference in a community.

3. Recruit and train a host and facilitators.

Building Prosperity for All combines large- and small-group discussions. You will need a talented host and skilled facilitators to lead people through this process.

- Recruit an experienced person to serve as the host for all of the sessions. This person should be good at leading a large group of people through a variety of activities. This person should be a good listener and comfortable working with many different kinds of people.
- Recruit a diverse group of facilitators to help with small-group discussions. Facilitators should reflect the community’s racial, ethnic, religious, political, and socio-economic diversity.



RESOURCES

For More About Training Facilitators...

For detailed training advice and agendas, call Everyday Democracy at 1.860.928.2616, or download a free copy of *A Guide for Training Public Dialogue Facilitators* at www.everyday-democracy.org

- If your community participated in the *Thriving Communities* dialogue, invite people who facilitated those conversations to facilitate.

- As part of the training, have the host and facilitators participate in the *Building Prosperity for All* sessions to help them become familiar with the discussion materials and the guide.

4. Recruit participants from all parts of the community.

- Reach out to people from all walks of life, income levels, ages, races and ethnicities, religions, political views, etc. Inviting everyone to the table will give your program credibility. Meet with faith-based groups, Rotary clubs, and other existing community groups to present the project and recruit participants.
- If your community participated in the *Thriving Communities* dialogues, invite the people who took part. And be sure to invite new people.
- Invite people from businesses and nonprofit organizations that are working on similar projects or have similar goals.
- Use many methods to invite people. Follow up invitations with a phone call or face-to-face visit. Personal invitations are the most effective.

5. Arrange logistics.

- Make participation easy and fun. Provide childcare, refreshments, and transportation.

- Choose meeting sites that are already gathering places, such as community centers, senior centers, libraries, etc.
- Make sure materials such as handouts, markers, and newsprint are available.
- Plan ahead for the setup of the room. Ideally, the room should be set up with circles of chairs or round tables that each seat eight people. There should also be space on the walls to hang newsprint and a small table for the moderator.

The Roles of the Host and Facilitators

- The **host** is the person who leads the entire group through each session of the dialogue process, gives directions on how the sessions will take place, and lets people know when to break out into the small groups that will be led by facilitators. The host also keeps track of time and moderates any report-outs from the small groups. There is one host. The host is a lot like an emcee or master of ceremonies.
- A **facilitator** is the person who is responsible for guiding a small group through the activities and discussion questions in each session. The facilitator makes sure that everyone has a chance to participate. There are one or two facilitators for each small group.



Tips for Preparing a Presentation

- The presentation should be brief (10-15 minutes).
- If your community created a community plan, share it with the group.
- Describe the issues your community was trying to address.
- Include examples of projects or policies in the community that resulted from previous efforts. (For example, previous *Thriving Communities* participants established youth councils, recycling projects, free school breakfast programs, and a community garden that provides fresh produce for a local nursing home. Other communities provided leadership classes or gave funding for residents to become trained in income tax preparation.)
- Describe the impact of the project on the community (what worked well, what was challenging, what was a surprise).

If possible, use video, pictures, music and/or art to make your presentation interesting.

CHECKLIST FOR THE SESSIONS

Planning ahead will ensure that the sessions run smoothly. Below, you will find a checklist for the steering group and a checklist for the host.

Checklist for the Steering Group

Prepare the presentation for Session 1, Part 3.

Write a short presentation for the host or a member of the organizing committee to deliver at the beginning Session 1, Part 3. This presentation will highlight the community's accomplishments following the *Thriving Communities* dialogues or highlight other efforts to help the community move toward prosperity. It will also set the stage for the remaining discussions. For ideas, refer to the information in the Tips box to the left.

Prepare an Information Sheet for Session 2, Part 2.

Work with your committee to put together a brief fact sheet about poverty in your community or region. (See **Appendix B: How to Make an Information Sheet** on page 44.)

Prepare a Resource Handout for Session 4, Part 3.

Work with your committee to put together a brief list of local, regional, and state resources for participants to use when they plan for action. (See Appendix C: **How to Create a Resource Sheet** on page 45.)

Assemble materials.

- Copies of *Community Conversations for Action and Change: Participant's Guide*
- Large paper (flip chart paper) an easel and/or computer with projector and screen
- Markers
- Name tags
- Sign-in sheets to keep track of who attends
- Sticky dots
- Audiovisual equipment (if needed) for Session 1



Checklist for the Host

WELCOME & SESSION 1:

- Throughout the sessions, people will be talking in both large and small groups. Make sure there are copies of the handouts for each participant. (See ***Checklist for the Steering Group*** on page 8.)
- Make sure the presentation for Part 3 has been prepared ahead of time. (See ***Checklist for the Steering Group*** on page 8.)
- Label flip chart paper or computer documents ahead of time with these headings:
 - Guidelines
 - Top projects
 - New ideas
- Devise a system so that participants are divided up into diverse groups for the small-group dialogues.
- There are many ways to accomplish this. Here are a few suggestions.
 - Put color codes or numbers on name tags, and as people walk into the session, hand them a name tag and invite them to sit at the table with the same color or number. Mix the name tags up so groups of people walking in together sit at different tables.
 - Collect information about who is coming, and assign people to diverse groups ahead of time.

SESSION 2:

- Review the local information sheet before the session and choose key points to present to the group. (The steering group will prepare this information ahead of time. (See ***Checklist for the Steering Group*** on page 8.)
- Distribute copies of the local information sheet to participants.
- Post the flip chart pages (or project the computer documents) created in Session 1:
 - Guidelines
 - Top projects
 - New ideas

SESSION 3:

- Post the flip chart pages (or project the computer documents) created during Sessions 1 & 2.
- Make sure there are plenty of sticky dots at each table.

SESSION 4:

- Post the flip chart pages (or project the computer documents) created during the earlier sessions.
- Distribute the Resources Handout created by the steering group. (See ***Checklist for the Steering Group*** on page 8.)

Tips for Creating Diverse Groups

The outcomes will be better if participants are in diverse discussion groups. Diverse groups lead to more interesting dialogues, and better action ideas. Each small group should include men and women, people with different perspectives, people of different ages, and people from all of the area's racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.



SESSION 1

Celebrating our Success (2 hours)

This purpose of this session is to set the stage so we can work well together. We will look back and celebrate our success. We will talk about how our past work has affected our community and begin to think about what else we can do to help our community thrive.

PART 1: LARGE GROUP

Welcome and Agreements

(20 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Welcome participants. (5 minutes)

- Thank everyone for coming.

Provide an overview of Building Prosperity for All. (5 minutes)

Suggested talking points:

- Many of us took part in a round of conversations called *Thriving Communities*. While talking and working together, we found some ways to tackle poverty. We also came up with ideas for making our community a place where everyone could thrive.
- This new guide, *Building Prosperity for All*, is designed to help us build on what we've started. We can use it to work together to figure out what else we can do to help our community.
- We want to make sure that some of our ideas will result in change that lasts.

- During this round of conversations we will...
 - Get to know each other and celebrate our successes. (Session 1)
 - Learn more about our challenges and opportunities. (Session 2)
 - Do a brainstorm and choose our best action ideas. (Session 3)
 - Make plans to bring our ideas to life. (Session 4)
- During each session we will spend some time working together in a large group—and some time talking in small groups. Each small group will have a facilitator to help us have productive conversations.

Review agreements. (5 minutes)

Suggested talking points:

- Agreements will help our discussions work well. Here are some examples. If we think something is missing, we can add our own ideas.
- Here are some agreements that have worked well for other groups.
 - Each person gets a chance to talk.
 - One person talks at a time. Don't cut people off.
 - Speak for yourself. Everyone is an expert on their own life experience.
 - Assume best intentions when other people are speaking.



- It's OK to disagree. If you feel hurt, say so, and say why.
 - Listen harder when you disagree.
 - Stick to the issue. Challenge ideas, not people.
 - If you talk about people who are not here, don't say their names.
 - Honor confidentiality. Some of what we talk about will be very personal. We will not tell these stories to other people, unless we all say it is OK.
 - Help the facilitator keep things on track.
- Is there anything missing that you would like to add?

Explain the goals of this session (Session 1). (5 minutes)

- Get to know each other.
- Celebrate past accomplishments.
- Think about what else we can do to make progress.

Invite people to begin to get to know each other by talking with others in their small group.

PART 2: SMALL GROUPS

Getting to Know Each Other

(40 minutes total)

Instructions for Small-group Facilitators

Beginning the Discussion

Suggested talking points:

- Say your name and where you grew up. Talk about where you live now.
- If you took part in the first round of *Thriving Communities* dialogues, share a few highlights from your experience. If this is the first time you have joined a dialogue, talk about why you decided to come.
- What are your hopes for these conversations?

PART 3: LARGE GROUP

Celebrate Successes

(20 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Now we're going to hear about what happened after the *Thriving Communities* conversations. We may also learn about other efforts to make life better in our community.

Introduce the presenter(s), OR deliver the presentation. (10 minutes)

- Following the presentation ask the people who were involved in these projects to stand. Thank them for their hard work.



Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

Tips For the Presenter

- Be sure to see Tips for Preparing a Presentation on page 8.
- Refer participants to **Handout 1** in their guide.

Introduce “People, Places, Policies, and Things.” (10 minutes)

Suggested talking points:

- Many people believe that to be successful over time, communities need to be strong in four areas: **People, Places, Policies, and Things**. Here are a few examples of people, places, policies, and things in a thriving community.



PEOPLE

- Everyone is included in community affairs.
- People of all ages, income and education levels, political and religious beliefs, and racial and ethnic groups have a say in decisions that affect them and the community.
- The heritage and culture of everyone in the community is valued and celebrated.
- Everyone has access to basic services, such as health care and education.



PLACES

- Everyone has a sense of what is special or unique about the built or natural landscape in the community.
- The environment is healthy.
- The landscape and natural resources benefit the economy and the community.



POLICIES

- Local laws in the community are fair and protect everyone.
- Institutions treat everyone fairly. For example, there are workplace rules, such as sick leave policies and promotion policies, and school policies, such as dress codes and discipline, which are fair and consistent for everyone.
- There are financial and economic policies that help people get ahead, such as fair lending practices and access to credit.



THINGS

- There are successful private organizations such as businesses, banks, non-profits, and community groups.
- There are strong public systems such as public schools and higher education institutions, park systems, libraries, police, and community health clinics.
- There is needed infrastructure such as housing, roads, and cell phone access.

As we talk together, please keep our community’s People, Places, Policies, and Things in mind. This will help us come up with good ideas for the future.

Introduce the next activity.

- Next you will talk in your small groups about what our community has been working on.



PART 4: SMALL GROUPS

What Have We Done So Far?

(40 minutes total)

Instructions for Small-group Facilitators

Discuss Efforts to Make Life Better in Our Community

Suggested talking points: (30 minutes)

1. We heard earlier about some of the specific efforts in our community to make things better. Take a minute to make a list of these projects on **Handout 2**. Once you've listed the projects, jot down your thoughts about how each project has made a difference for the community.
2. Do you know about other projects in our community? Briefly describe them to the group and add them to your handout.

3. What projects do you think have made the most difference?
4. Did the projects support all of the people in our community? Who received support and how? Did anyone get left behind?
5. How have the projects on the list made a difference for the community's **People, Places, Policies, and Things**? Where have we been especially successful? What gaps need to be addressed?

Once you have recorded the group's main ideas on flip chart paper, ask the group: (10 minutes)

1. Does this list reflect our group's top priorities?
2. Is there anything missing that should be added?

Tips for Facilitators: Part 4

- Refer to **Appendix A, Handout 2** on pages 27-28.
- Make two lists on flip chart paper. Label one **Top Projects**. Label the other **New Ideas**.

PART 5: LARGE GROUP

Closing (10 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Invite reports from small groups.

- Ask groups to share their top projects as well as new ideas.

Thank people for participating in Session 1, and explain what will happen during Session 2.

Remind participants of the time, date, and location of the next meeting.

Tips for the Host: Part 5

- List all projects on flip chart paper (one labeled **Top Projects** and one labeled **New Ideas**), and post them where everyone can see them.
- Tell the group they will review these ideas when its time to decide what actions our community should take to continue to make progress.



Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

Tips for the Host: Part 1

- Review the **Information Sheet** ahead of time (See **Appendix B** for instructions on page 44).
- Distribute copies of the **Information Sheet** to participants.
- Write key points from the local **Information Sheet** on flip chart paper, or project key points from a computer.

SESSION 2

Understanding Our Challenges & Exploring Opportunities (2 hours and 30 minutes)

The purpose of this session is to help us talk about some of the reasons we have poverty in our community. This is not always easy to talk about, but it will help us make good decisions about our future. This session will also give us a chance to hear about ways other communities have created prosperity and to think about how those kinds of ideas might work here.

PART 1: LARGE GROUP

Introduction (30 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Explain the goals of this session.
(5 minutes)

- Talk about why poverty exists in our community.
- Hear about things other communities have done to build prosperity. This will help us think of good ideas for our community.

Quickly review the agreements from Session 1. (5 minutes)

Present highlights of the local Information Sheet. (5 minutes)

Invite people to turn to their neighbor to talk about the facts they just heard.
(15 minutes)

- What stands out for you when you look at this information about our community?

Introduce the next activity.

- Next you will talk in your small groups about why poverty exists here and also learn about things other communities are doing to build prosperity.
- As we continue our discussion, keep in mind the information we just discussed about our community.

PART 2: SMALL GROUPS

Why is There Poverty Here?

(60 minutes total)

Instructions for Small-group Facilitators

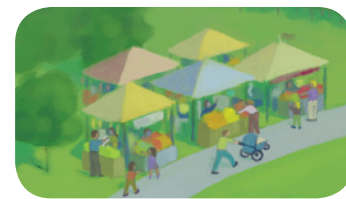
Introduce the activity.

Later in our discussion we will talk about solutions. But for us to make the best decisions about what to do next, it will help to know why poverty is a problem here.

Beginning the Discussion

Suggested talking points: (15 minutes)

1. All communities have strengths and challenges. What are some good things about living here? What is hard about living here?
2. Turn to your neighbor and describe a time when you or someone close to you struggled to make ends meet. What was it like? How did others react?



3. In our community, what does it look like when people are struggling to get by? What does it look like when people are doing well?

Invite a few people to share with the whole group what they just discussed.

Discussing Views about Poverty

We are going to talk about some different views about why there is poverty. If you participated in the *Thriving Communities* discussion, you may remember talking about these.

Invite everyone to look at Handout 3 in the guide.

Invite volunteers to take turns reading all the views aloud before beginning the discussion. (5 minutes)

VIEW #1

Some people say:
Bad things can happen.

People can get sick or hurt. Health insurance, even when people can get it, doesn't cover all the costs. And medical bills can push a person or a family into poverty. What if you lose your job or get divorced? Or what if there's a disaster, like a tornado or hurricane? When things like this happen, it is hard to make ends meet.

VIEW #2

Some people say:
Poor education.

Some schools don't teach students the skills they need to get a job and keep it. Students dropout or fail. Then they get lost in poverty.

VIEW #3

Some people say:
Low wages.

Some jobs don't pay enough. People work hard. Many hold two or more jobs. But they can't make enough to cover costs. And they can't be sure that their jobs will last. Many women get paid less than men doing the same job, but they still have to support families. Lots of people who work are still in poverty.

VIEW #4

Some people say: **Racism.**

Some people and structures in our society have kept people down because of their skin color and ethnic group. People of color are more likely to be in poverty. And for people of color, it can be even harder to get out of poverty. Banks, bosses, and real estate agents may treat people of color unfairly. And there are structures and unwritten rules that make it more likely they will be poor.

VIEW #5

Some people say: **No jobs.**

In some places there just aren't enough jobs, and so many people fall into poverty. There may not be housing, shops, or cell phone service. That means they can't attract new businesses. And some businesses move out and take jobs with them.



VIEW #6

Some people say:
Greed and selfishness.

In some places, a few powerful people control what happens in the community. They just look out for themselves, and take care of their friends with jobs and favors. This keeps everyone else down and hurts community spirit. People stop helping each other.

VIEW #7

Some people say:
Cut off from culture.

Poverty and other problems come when communities lose their connection to cultural values. Many people try to stay connected to their past. But it is hard when society tries to rob them of their culture.

VIEW #8

Some people say:
Bad public policy.

Some public policies are unfair to certain groups of people. As a result, those people are more likely to live in poverty. Sometimes, government plans that seem like good ideas don't work well, or have bad side effects. There are also policies that can keep people from trying to stand on their own. Some policies, like welfare, just let people "work the system."

VIEW #9

Some people say:
Not being responsible.

Some people just don't try. They don't look hard enough for jobs, or refuse to work. And they don't make the most of resources, like job training. They drop out of school. They turn to drugs, gambling, alcohol, or crime.

VIEW #10

Some people say:
Economic inequality.

We don't like to admit it, but our country is divided into classes. Not everyone has the same amount of money, land, or resources. Some people live in poverty. Others are rich and have success just because they were born into wealth. And then there are those in the middle. Rigid class structures make us think that we cannot do anything about poverty.

VIEW #11

Some people say:
Lack of support.

People need more than money to succeed. They need job training, a car or bus line, child care, or moral support. Some seniors may need help with everyday things like getting food or moving around. Some need help to get over addictions or depression. Without support from family, friends, and the community, it is hard to get out of poverty.



Discussing the Views

Suggested talking points: (40 minutes)

1. Which views are closest to your own (you may agree with more than one)? Why?
2. Which view would you like to add?
3. Think about a view you don't agree with. Why would someone agree with that view? Try to come up with reasons to support that view.
4. Do some of these views surprise you? Why?
5. If you participated in the *Thriving Communities* discussion, have your views changed since then? If so, why?
6. Think about projects we are already working on (we talked about these during Session 1). How do these projects help address the challenges we've been discussing?
7. What are the key themes that are coming up during this discussion?

PART 3: SMALL GROUPS

Ways to Reduce Poverty and Build Prosperity
(45 minutes total)

Instructions for Small-group Facilitators

Introduce the next activity.

Now we are going to talk about what we can do to continue to build prosperity and reduce poverty. The following examples show many ways to make progress. As we look at these, let's think about our own successes and how we can build on them. These examples may also spark new ideas.

Invite volunteers from the group to read the examples aloud. (15 minutes)

WAYS TO REDUCE POVERTY AND BUILD PROSPERITY

Approach #1 Empower People.



- In one community, people join together in small “circles of support” to help individual families and connect them with the rest of the community as they work to get out of poverty.
- One town asks youth to serve on the board of education. Another town has a “youth council.” This way, young people help make the decisions that affect them.
- A community organization pairs groups of six to ten Latino families with low income to work together to build homes for themselves and their neighbors.

Tip for the Facilitators: Part 3

- Keep track of new action ideas, and add them to the **New Ideas** list.



Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

- One school works hard to welcome new families of all different cultures. For example, the principal goes door to door to invite them to community meetings.
- One group started a program that helps people buy and repair their own cars.

Approach #2 Improve **Places**.



- Some communities start land trusts. The community buys land and then leases it back to community members at affordable rates, so they can have access to affordable housing.
- One town got more people to visit the area. They got word out about how good the hunting was in the region so people would travel there.
- Another town arranged for local artists to show their work in empty spaces in downtown buildings. These temporary art galleries gave residents and visitors a reason to come to town and provided an opportunity for local artists to sell their work.
- Some communities start farmers markets. These markets provide an opportunity for people to buy and sell local food and crafts, and create a place where community members gather on a regular basis.
- One community raised money to build a bike path and walking trails. These are used by residents and also attract visitors to the area.

Approach #3 Create **Policies**.



- In many places, people get together to write letters and make phone calls to elected officials. They want new policies and ideas.
- In some places, people call on officials to provide equal funding for schools in wealthy and poor neighborhoods.
- One business has a policy that allows employees in need to apply for small loans to help with emergencies or unexpected expenses. The small-loan program has had a dramatic effect on employee success.
- Some towns work together to keep banks and payday lenders from engaging in “predatory lending” where they charge extra high fees and interest rates to people with low incomes who need to borrow money.
- A group in one town worked with a local hospital where no one on staff could speak Spanish. The hospital hired Spanish-speaking staff to help Latino patients and made it a policy to have translators available at all times.

Approach #4 Develop **Things**.



- One town is working to make sure that bus routes go where the workers live.
- Farmers from many towns banded together to start an “incubator kitchen” where they could process and store food to sell to regional markets.



- A new health care center helps people who don't have insurance. They help those who can't speak English. They teach people how to get support and even provide food.
- A local organization works with regional and state officials to help build infrastructure for high speed Internet and cell phone service.
- Some towns establish community foundations that raise money and then distribute it to residents for things like education scholarships and small-business loans.

Discussing the Examples

Suggested talking points: (30 minutes)

1. What stands out for you?
2. Which of these examples gives you hope? Which do you think could work here?
3. Think about some of the people or groups in our community that sometimes get left behind. Which of these ideas could help all of the people in our community?
4. Did any of these examples make you think of new ideas that might work well here?

PART 4: LARGE GROUP

Closing (15 minutes total)

**Instructions for
Large-group Host**

Invite a representative from each group to share the highlights from their discussion.

Closing remarks

Suggested talking points:

- Remind people of what has happened during the first two sessions.
- During the final gathering we will...
 - Keep looking for ways to help our community become a place where everyone can thrive.
 - Brainstorm and prioritize our best action ideas.
 - Create a plan for bringing our ideas to life.
- In between sessions please...
 - Spend some time thinking and talking with friends and neighbors. See what others think about how to build on current efforts. Bring any other ideas we should consider.
 - Think about actions that will help individual community members now, and actions that will help our community thrive in the long run.

Thank everyone for coming, and remind them of the time, date, and location of the next meeting.

Tip for the Host: Part 4

- As participants discuss highlights, add any new action ideas to the **New Ideas** list.



Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

Tips for the Host: Part 4—Narrowing Down the List

- It is important to narrow the list of ideas to a manageable number. For example, if you have 40 participants, you may want to narrow the list to four ideas and divide participants into four groups of 10 to work on each idea.
- Post all the ideas around the room.
- After people vote, list the results on flip chart paper or computer labeled **Our Top Choices**.

SESSION 3 Moving to Action (2 hours)

The purpose of this session is to review our ideas from earlier sessions and come up with new ideas to help our community become a place where everyone can thrive. Then, we will choose our top ideas to work on.

PART 1: LARGE GROUP

Welcome (10 minutes total)

*Instructions for
Large-group Host*

Explain session goals.

- Everyone will think of action ideas.
- We will choose the ideas we think are most important to work on, and have the best chance of success.

*Review highlights from the first
two sessions.*

- Remind people of the action ideas from Sessions 1 and 2.
- Refer to the lists of **Top Projects** and **New Ideas**.

*Invite people to work in their small
groups.*

PART 2: SMALL GROUPS

Opening Discussion (20 minutes total)

*Instructions for
Small-group Facilitators*

Suggested talking points:

1. What have you noticed or thought about since our last meeting?
2. Was there anything that you heard during the first two sessions that made you feel hopeful about the future of our community?

PART 3: SMALL GROUPS

Create Action Ideas

(45 minutes total)

*Instructions for
Small-group Facilitators*

Introduce the next activity.

- We are going to create a list of action ideas, then choose our best ones.

Brainstorming Action Ideas

Suggested talking points: (25 minutes)

1. Please spend a few minutes jotting down ideas that will help the community reduce poverty and build prosperity.



2. Please feel free to include ideas we've already talked about. Refer to the flip chart paper from Sessions 1 and 2 labeled **Top Projects** and **New Ideas**. Try to think of ideas that:

- Address the issues we've been talking about.
- Can help all of the people in our community, including people or groups who are sometimes left behind.
- Will build on the people, places, policies, and things we already have here.

3. Please review your list and choose your top two or three ideas to share with the group.

4. Let's go around the circle and each share one idea at a time until all the ideas have been shared. If you have an idea that has already been shared by someone else, there is no need to repeat it.

Prioritizing Action Ideas

As we decide on our best ideas, it will help to keep the following in mind. What ideas...

- ☐ really address the issues we've been discussing?
- ☐ will be effective?
- ☐ will bring about lasting change?
- ☐ are doable?

Suggested talking points: (20 minutes)

1. What ideas seem important or promising?
2. What is a concern you have about each idea?
3. What is something positive about each idea?

Invite group members to go up to the flip chart paper and put dots or marks by their top two or three ideas.

Ask for a volunteer to report the top ideas to the large group.

Tips for Facilitators: Part 3—Prioritizing Action Ideas

- ☐ Once everybody has indicated top ideas on the flip chart paper, count up the dots by each idea and circle the three or four ideas that have the most votes.



PART 4: LARGE GROUP

Report Back and Prioritize

Actions (30 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Invite each group to share its top action ideas. (15 minutes)

- Discuss the ideas on the list one at a time.
- Open up the discussion to the whole group. Ask questions like:
 - Are there any ideas you are really excited about?
 - Which ideas are workable?
 - Which ideas will have a big impact?
 - Will this idea help all members of our community, especially those people who might have been left behind because of past policies and history? Who might be left out?

Narrow the list of ideas. (15 minutes)

- Ask people to vote for their two top choices on the list, using sticky dots or a marker.
- Identify the ideas with the most dots or check marks.
- Record the top four or five action ideas on a fresh piece of flip chart paper.

PART 5: LARGE GROUP

Closing (15 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Invite people to spend a few minutes talking to their neighbor.

Suggested talking points:

- We've been talking about lots of things we can do to help our community. What is one idea that you are especially interested in working on?
- What is one thing you could do on your own to help?

Closing comments.

Suggested talking points:

- Our hard work has prepared us for the final session (Session 4). During this session, we will work together to make plans to bring our top action ideas to life.
- Invite everyone to sign their name next to the action team they want to work with during the final session.

Thank everyone for coming, and remind them of the time, date, and location of the next meeting.



SESSION 4

Planning for Change (2 hours)

Purpose of this session is to make plans to bring our action ideas to life. We will hear about each team's plans, and we will celebrate our work together.

PART 1: LARGE GROUP

Introduction (15 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Introduce session goals.

- Create an action plan for each of our priority ideas.
- Figure out our next steps.
- Celebrate our work.

Remind participants that this is the final session. Ask people to spend a minute reflecting on their experience participating in these conversations.

- Talk with your neighbor about what stands out for you about this experience so far.

Invite a few people to share their comments with the whole group.

PART 2: LARGE GROUP

Preparing to Bring Our Action Ideas to Life (15 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Review the Action Road Map worksheet (See *Action Road Map worksheet* on page 33).

- This activity will prepare us to bring our action ideas to life.
- I will walk through all the steps in the worksheet to give you an idea about how a road map works.
- You will have a chance in your small groups to look at a **Sample Action Road Map** (See *Appendix A, Handout 5* on page 36).

Ask the group:

- What else can we do to make sure we have a good plan?
- What questions do you have about making a roadmap?

Explain that each team will create its own Action Road Map.

Review the list of our top choices from Session 3.

Assign locations in the room where teams will meet to do their work.

Tips for Host: Part 2

- Refer small-group facilitators to the **Resource Sheet** prepared by the organizing committee (See **Appendix C** for details).



PART 3: SMALL GROUPS

Action Planning (50 minutes total)

Instructions for Small-group Facilitators

Introduce the activity.

We are going to create a plan for our action ideas. It's OK if we don't complete our plan today. In some cases we may need more information. We will complete as much of our work as possible.

Suggested talking points:

1. Please spend about **40 minutes** working together to fill out the **Action Road Map** (See *Handout 4*). Refer to the *Sample Action Road Map* (See *Handout 5*) for ideas.
2. After the **Action Road Map** is finished, please spend about **10 minutes** completing the **Next Steps** handout (See *Appendix A: Handout 6* on page 42).
3. While you are working, think about whether there are community, regional, or state issues that might affect your **Action Road Map** or **Next Steps**.

PART 4: LARGE GROUP

Reporting Out From Each Team (20 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Invite each action team to give a brief report about their plan for action. Each report should include:

- Description and purpose of the action.
- Community assets that can help with the action.
- Resources needed to complete the action.
- Regional issues that need to be addressed.
- Next steps.

PART 5: LARGE GROUP

Closing (20 minutes total)

Instructions for Large-group Host

Thank the participants for their good work.

Tell people how the organizers will keep them up to date about next steps.

Ask the group to talk to the person sitting next to them for a few minutes.

- What themes did you notice throughout these conversations?
- What are you most hopeful about?
- What do you want to remember about this experience?

Invite a few people to share their comments with the whole group.

Thank everyone for coming!



APPENDIX A

HANDOUT 1 (SESSION 1)

People, Places, Policies, and Things ^[1, 2]

Many people believe that to be successful over time, communities need to be strong in four areas: **People, Places, Policies, and Things**. Here are a few examples of people, places, policies, and things in a thriving community.



People

- Everyone is included in community affairs.
- People of all ages, income and education levels, political and religious beliefs, and racial and ethnic groups have a say in decisions that affect them and the community.
- The heritage and culture of everyone in the community is valued and celebrated.
- Everyone has access to basic services (such as health care and education).



Places

- Everyone has a sense of what is special or unique about the built or natural landscape in the community.
- The environment is healthy.
- The landscape and natural resources benefit the economy and the community.



Policies

- Local laws in the community are fair and protect everyone.
- Institutions treat everyone fairly. For example, there are workplace rules (such as sick leave policies and promotion policies) and school policies (such as dress codes and discipline) that are fair and consistent for all people.
- There are financial and economic policies that help people get ahead (such as fair-lending practices and access to credit).



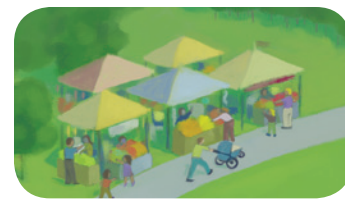
Things

- There are successful private organizations such as businesses, banks, non-profits, and community groups.
- There are strong public systems such as public schools and higher education institutions, park systems, libraries, police and community health clinics.
- There is needed infrastructure such as housing, roads, and cell phone access.

As we talk together, please keep our community's People, Places, Policies, and Things in mind. This will help us come up with good ideas for the future.

[1] Al Nygard. (2008). Native Triple Bottom Line: The Art of the Native View. Retrieved from www.alnygardconsulting.com.

[2] Cornelia Flora & Jan Flora. (2008). Community Capitals Framework. Retrieved from <http://www.soc.iastate.edu/staff/cflora/ncrcrd/capitals.html>.



HANDOUT 2 (SESSION 1)

Worksheet: Evaluating Our Progress

Instructions:

Look at the worksheet on the next page.

1. In the “Project/Action” spaces on the worksheet, write down the names of the projects that were described during the presentation.
2. Add projects that weren’t mentioned during the presentation.
3. Next, jot down your thoughts about the impact of the project.
4. If you aren’t sure of the impact, just leave the column blank and move to the next one.















Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

Worksheet: Evaluating Our Progress

Project/Action #1:	Describe the impact of this program on our community.
 People	
 Places	
 Policies	
 Things	
Project/Action #2:	Describe the impact of this program on our community.
 People	
 Places	
 Policies	
 Things	
Project/Action #3:	Describe the impact of this program on our community.
 People	
 Places	
 Policies	
 Things	



WHY IS THERE POVERTY? HANDOUT 3 (SESSION 2)

Here are some different views about why there is poverty. If you participated in the *Thriving Communities* discussion, you may remember talking about these.

View #1

Some people say:

Bad things can happen.

People can get sick or hurt. Health insurance, even when people can get it, doesn't cover all the costs. And medical bills can push a person or a family into poverty. What if you lose your job or get divorced? Or what if there's a disaster, like a tornado or hurricane? When things like this happen, it is hard to make ends meet.

View #2

Some people say:

Poor education.

Some schools don't teach students the skills they need to get a job and keep it. Students drop out or fail. Then they get lost in poverty.

View #3

Some people say:

Low wages.

Some jobs don't pay enough. People work hard. Many hold two or more jobs. But they can't make enough to cover costs. And they can't be sure that their jobs will last. Many women get paid less than men doing the same job, but they still have to support families. Lots of people who work are still in poverty.

View #4

Some people say:

Racism.

Some people and structures in our society have kept people down because of their skin color and ethnic group. People of color are more likely to be in poverty. And for people of color, it can be even harder to get out of poverty. Banks, bosses, and real estate agents may treat people of color unfairly. And there are structures and unwritten rules that make it more likely they will be poor.

View #5

Some people say:

No jobs.

In some places there just aren't enough jobs, and so many people fall into poverty. There may not be housing, shops, or cell phone service. That means they can't attract new businesses. And some businesses move out and take jobs with them.

View #6

Some people say:

Greed and selfishness.

In some places, a few powerful people control what happens in the community. They just look out for themselves, and take care of their friends with jobs and favors. This keeps everyone else down and hurts community spirit. People stop helping each other.



View #7

Some people say:
Cut off from culture.

Poverty and other problems come when communities lose their connection to cultural values. Many people try to stay connected to their past. But it is hard when society tries to rob them of their culture.

View #8

Some people say:
Bad public policy.

Some public policies can keep people from trying to stand on their own. Some policies, like welfare, just let people “work the system.” There are also policies that are unfair to certain groups of people. As a result, those people are more likely to live in poverty. Sometimes, government plans that seem like good ideas don’t work well, or have bad side effects.

View #9

Some people say:
Not being responsible.

Some people just don’t try. They don’t look hard enough for jobs, or refuse to work. And they don’t make the most of resources, like job training. They drop out of school. They turn to drugs, gambling, alcohol, or crime.

View # 10

Some people say:
Economic inequality.

We don’t like to admit it, but our country is divided into classes. Not everyone has the same amount of money, land, or resources. Some people live in poverty. Others are rich and have success just because they were born into wealth. And then there are those in the middle. Rigid class structures make us think that we cannot do anything about poverty.

View # 11

Some people say:
Lack of support.

People need more than money to succeed. They need job training, a car or bus line, child care, or moral support. Some seniors may need help with everyday things like getting food or moving around. Some need help to get over addictions or depression. Without support from family, friends, and the community, it is hard to get out of poverty.



WAYS TO REDUCE POVERTY & BUILD PROSPERITY



APPROACH #1

Empower **People**.

- In one community, people join together in small “circles of support” to help individual families and connect them with the rest of the community as they work to get out of poverty.
- One town asks youth to serve on the board of education. Another town has a “youth council.” This way, young people help make the decisions that affect them.
- A community organization pairs groups of six to ten Latino families with low income to work together to build homes for themselves and their neighbors.
- One school works hard to welcome new families of all different cultures. For example, the principal goes door-to-door to invite them to community meetings.
- One group started a program that helps people buy and repair their own cars.



APPROACH #2

Improve **Places**.

- Some communities start land trusts. The community buys land and then leases it back to community members at affordable rates, so they can have access to affordable housing.
- One town got more people to visit their area. They got word out about how good the hunting was in the region so people would travel there.
- Another town arranged for local artists to show their work in empty spaces in downtown buildings. These temporary art galleries gave residents and visitors a reason to come to town and provided an opportunity for local artists to sell their work.
- Some communities start farmers markets. These markets provide an opportunity for people to buy and sell local food and crafts, and create a place where community members gather on a regular basis.
- One community raised money to build a bike path and walking trails. These are



Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action



used by residents and also attract visitors to the area.

APPROACH #3

Create Policies.

- In many places, people get together to write letters and make phone calls to elected officials. They want new policies and ideas.
- In some places, people call on officials to provide equal funding for schools in wealthy and poor neighborhoods.
- One business has a policy that allows employees in need to apply for small loans to help with emergencies or unexpected expenses. The small loan program has had a dramatic effect on employee success.
- Some towns work together to keep banks and payday lenders from engaging in “predatory lending” where they charge extra high fees and interest rates to people with low incomes who need to borrow money.
- A group in one town worked with a local hospital where no one on staff could speak Spanish. The hospital hired Spanish-speaking staff to help Latino patients and made it a policy to have translators available at all times.



APPROACH #4

Develop Things.

- One town is working to make sure that bus routes go where the workers live.
- Farmers from many towns banded together to start an “incubator kitchen” where they could process and store food to sell to regional markets.
- A new health care center helps people who don’t have insurance. They help those who can’t speak English. They teach people how to get support and even provide food.
- A local organization works with regional and state officials to help build infrastructure for high speed internet and cell phone service.
- Some towns establish community foundations that raise money and then distribute it to residents for things like education scholarships and small business loans.



HANDOUT 4 (SESSION 4)

Worksheet: Action Road Map

Step One: State the challenge.

What is going on in the community that we want to address?

Step Two: Create an action statement.

What is our goal?

Step Three: Consider the potential impacts of the action.





Think about how our project will impact our community. Who or what in our community will be better off? Will anyone be negatively impacted? What do we think will happen when our project is a success?

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Step Four: Think about assets, resources, and policies.

Think about the assets in our community that we can tap into to support our project. What does the community already have that can help our action idea come to life? Are there policies in place that could help support our action? Who are the people who get things done? Think of all kinds of leaders from all parts of the community. Also, keep in mind the different kinds of assets that community members can bring to the table.

1. What **assets** does our community have?



Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

2. What **resources** do we need to work on our action idea? What policies or community practices might we need to tap into or change for this action to work?

Step Five: Strategize.

1. Make a list of what we need to do in order to start our project.
2. How can we make sure our action project will help everyone in our community: young people and seniors, newcomers and long-time residents, and people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds?

Step Six: Identify participants.

We need to figure out our audience. Who will want to know that we are planning _____? Some things to consider:

1. Who are we targeting?
2. Where do they live?
3. What tools are we going to use for getting the word out?



Step Seven: Measure the impact of our action.

1. Short-term impacts

After three-to-six months, we should start to see some ways that our project is making a difference in our community.

2. Long-term impacts

After one-to-five years, we can see some changes that our project has made in our community.



Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

HANDOUT 5 (SESSION 4)

Sample Action Road Map

This **Action Road Map** will help us walk through the steps we need to take to carry out our plan for action. We will think about the people, places, and things in our community that can help us reach our goals. And we will think about how this action will affect them.

Let's imagine that we were part of a dialogue where we talked about how hard it is for some people in our community to get fresh fruits and vegetables. We also talked about people who grow fruits and vegetables and don't have a place to sell them. So, we created an action team to start a farmers market. Now, we need to come up with a plan.

Creating a Farmers Market

Step One: State the challenge.

What is going on in the community that we want to address? Consider how the issue affects all of the different people in our community.

- *Some people in our community don't have access to affordable, nutritious food.*
- *Our community needs a place where it's easy for people to buy or sell fresh fruits and vegetables.*

Step Two: Create an action statement.

What is our goal?

- *Our goal is to set up a farmers market, in a central location, where people can buy or sell locally grown produce and other goods.*

Step Three: Consider the potential impact of the action.

Think about how the farmers market will impact our community. Who or what will be better off? Will anyone be negatively impacted? What are we expecting to happen when our farmers market is a success?







Impact #1	<i>Community members and visitors won't have to travel far to buy locally grown foods. People who sell things at the market will make money. Over time, many people will eat healthier food.</i>
Impact #2	<i>If the food is too expensive, it may prevent some community members from shopping at the market.</i>
Impact #3	<i>The farmers market will be a source of community pride. The market will attract visitors to the community. The lot where the market is located will be improved and will increase in value.</i>
Impact #4	<i>Community members may be able to use food stamps at the farmers market.</i>
Impact #5	<i>The local economy will improve because community members spend more of their money at the farmers market. New businesses may start up.</i>

Step Four: Think about assets, resources, and policies.

Think about the assets in our community that we can tap into to support our farmers market. What does our community already have that can help this action idea come to life? Are there policies in place that could help support our action? Who are the people who can get things done? Think of all kinds of leaders from all parts of the community. Also, keep in mind the different kinds of assets that community members can bring to the table.

1. What **assets** does our community have?

	<i>Farmers, artists, other people who have things to sell.</i>
	<i>Open space, farmland, back yards, school playgrounds, empty building lots, parking lots, public parks.</i>
	<i>A local government official who can help us get needed permits.</i>
	<i>A community foundation or state agency that offers grants for local projects.</i>







Session 1:
Meet Each Other

Session 2:
Study the Challenges

Session 3:
Find Solutions

Session 4:
Plan for Action

2. What **resources** do we need to work on our action idea? What policies or community practices might we need to tap into or change for this action to work?

	<i>People to help plan the market, get permits, and money. Volunteers and/or paid staff to work at the farmers market.</i>
	<i>A space for the market that is easy to get to.</i>
	<i>May need to change a regulation or obtain a permit to allow an outdoor market.</i>
	<i>Money, time, food, and goods to sell, retail equipment (like scales and food containers), permits and licenses.</i>

Step Five: Strategize.

1. Make a list of what we need to do in order to start our farmer's market.

- ☐ *Form a planning committee.*
- ☐ *Find out if anyone else is working on this idea.*
- ☐ *Look for sites for the farmers market.*
- ☐ *Raise money for publicity and to hire a market manager.*
- ☐ *Order supplies.*
- ☐ *Get permits and licenses.*
- ☐ *Make rules for the market.*
- ☐ *Sign up vendors.*
- ☐ *Spread the word (publicity).*

2. How can we make sure the market will help everyone in our community: young people and seniors, newcomers and long-time residents, and people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds?

- ☐ *Make sure the members of the planning committee come from every part of the community.*
- ☐ *Talk to people from different parts of the community. Find out what date, time, and location would work best for them. Ask what products they would like to find at the market.*
- ☐ *Make sure that policies and regulations allow vendors at the market to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (sometimes called SNAP or "food stamps").*



Step Six: Identify participants.

We need to figure out our audience. Who will want to know that we are planning to start a farmers market? Some things to consider:

1. Who are we targeting?

- ☐ *Any community member who wants to be involved*
- ☐ *People who know lots of people*
- ☐ *Town officials who can help with permits*
- ☐ *Decision-makers who affect or influence local or regional policy*
- ☐ *People who may be affected by this, but are often left behind and don't have a voice*

2. Where do they live?

- ☐ *In every part of our community*

3. What tools are we going to use for getting the word out?





- ☐ *One-to-one conversations with people*
- ☐ *Email, phone, Facebook, fliers, newspaper, public access media, announcements at local clubs, faith institutions, and schools, social service agencies, early childhood centers.*



Step Seven: Measure the impact of our action.

1. Short-term impacts





After three-to-six months, we should start to see some ways that the farmers market is making a difference in our community.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New relationships and networks develop when people work together at the farmers market. 2. People have easy access to more fresh fruits and vegetables. 3. People eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. 4. Local farmers and artists earn more money.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A piece of land is reclaimed. It will be developed into a space for the farmers market. 2. The location of the farmers market increases in value. 3. The farmers market is a popular place where community members like to spend time.
	<p>Permits are granted for people to sell their goods and for the farmers market to be located on public property.</p>
	<p>Booths are built for vendors.</p>



2. Long-term impacts

After one-to-five years, we can see some changes the farmers market has made in our com-

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People eat better because they have access to fresh fruits and vegetables. 2. Personal incomes rise because people can make a profit at the market.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More farmland is used for organic farming. This improves the farmland and the retail value of the food grown there. 2. The farmers market is a lively, welcoming place where all kinds of people like to gather.
	<p>Legislation is amended to allow people to use food stamps at the farmers market.</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The farmers market is becoming a “community institution.” It’s an organization where gardeners, farmers, artisans, and other vendors can make a profit. They can work together for their own good and for the community. 2. A permanent building houses the farmers market.



HANDOUT 6 (SESSION 4)

Worksheet: Next Steps

The worksheet below will help you get organized and plan your next steps. The sheet on the next page will help you collect contact information from people in your group who want to help. Ask for a volunteer from the group to be in charge of planning the next meeting. Have that volunteer collect the contact information and send it to everyone in the group. If possible, before you leave today, pick a date when you will meet. If there are other people who should be invited to be part of this group, make plans to invite them.

Action Team: Overall goal _____

Steps to Achieve the Goal What needs to happen?	Person Responsible Who will be responsible for this step?	Goal Date When do you plan to complete this step?	Completion Date When did you actually complete this step?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			

Member who will plan next meeting: _____

Date of next meeting: _____



CONTACT INFORMATION

Action Team Members	Phone	Email	Address
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			



APPENDIX B

How to Make an Information Sheet

Many dialogue-to-change programs develop “information sheets” to use along with their discussion guides. An information sheet should provide objective information about how the issue is playing out in your community. It can cover a range of information—from general to specific.

Get a few people together to think about what kind of information should be in your fact sheet. Be sure this group is diverse and represents many points of view.

Keep the information simple, clear, easy-to-understand, and brief. Provide enough facts to frame the discussion. But don’t overwhelm people. Be sure the information is balanced and objective, and relates directly to the issue. Don’t use too many words. Simple graphics—such as pie charts or bar graphs—are a good way to get complex information across. Always say where you got the information. Try to include more than just economic data.

It is easy to find economic data. It is harder to find information that tells the real story. Poverty can be about more than money. There are other resources that people need. Some of this will take detective work in the community. Don’t be discouraged if it is hard to find some of the information. Just try to create a very broad picture. The U.S. Census Bureau has good profiles of many communities, all the way down to zip code in many cases: factfinder.census.gov.

Here are a few other sites on the Internet that can provide statistical information on poverty and prosperity building opportunities in communities.

- *Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Facts: www.bea.gov/regional/bearfacts*
- *Profiles of U.S. cities and towns, including local poverty details: www.city-data.com*
- *DataPlace (Fannie Mae Foundation): www.dataplace.org*
- *Indian Health Service: www.ihs.gov*
- *National Center for Education Statistics “The Condition of Education:” <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe>*
- *U.S. Census Bureau. Every state has a federally funded data center to help in finding state specific information. A list of them is here: www.census.gov/sdc/www*
- *Corporation for Enterprise Development: <http://cfed.org>*

Topics you might want to include:

- Demographics
- Employment
- Economic conditions
- Children
- Adults/Family
- Cultural issues



APPENDIX C

How to Create a Resource Sheet

A resource sheet can provide information about local, state, and regional groups that can help your community implement your action ideas.

Get a few people together to think about what kinds of resources should be included. Be sure this group is diverse and represents many points of view. Identify specific groups, organizations, or institutions to include in your resource sheet. Keep in mind local, regional, and state groups.

Include contact information from each organization (i.e., the name of a contact person, phone number, website, e-mail, or mailing address). You may also want to include a brief description of what each organization does (one or two sentences).

Things you may want to include in a resource sheet:

- Local, regional, and statewide nonprofit organizations
- Local clubs
- Regional planning groups
- Universities (especially university extension services)
- Government agencies that focus on economic development, access to health care, transportation, education, affordable housing, business development, etc.
- Local, regional, and state government officials



SAMPLE RESOURCE SHEET

Napoleon, North Dakota

This is a sample to use as a guide for creating a resource sheet for your community.

Local, Regional, and Statewide Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit Funding: North Dakota Community Foundation. Provides grants to nonprofit organizations with limited access to funding. 309 N Mandan Street, Suite 2, P.O. Box 387, Bismarck, ND 58502-0387, Phone: 701-222-8349, <http://ndcf.net/>

Housing: Beyond Shelter. Develops affordable housing in North Dakota. P.O. Box 310, Fargo, ND 58107-0310, Phone: 701-293-6262, <http://www.beyondshelterinc.com>

Technology/Business: Center for Technology and Business. Partners with individuals, businesses, communities, local, county and state agencies, jobs development authorities and nonprofit organizations to provide simplified technology curriculum, training and services that improve lives in North Dakota. 3333 E. Broadway Ave., Suite 1219, Bismarck ND 58501, Phone: 701-223-0707, <http://www.trainingnd.com/>

Health Care: Community Health Care Association of the Dakotas. Operates community health centers that provide high-quality primary and preventive health care regardless of insurance coverage or financial status. 1003 East Interstate Avenue, Suite 1, Bismarck, ND 58503, Phone: 701-221-9824, <http://www.communityhealthcare.net/>

Community Development: North Dakota Resource and Development Corporation. Encourages and improves the capability of local volunteers and civic leaders to plan and carry out projects that address conservation and community development needs across the state. 916 East Interstate Ave., Suite 2, Bismarck, ND 58503, Phone: 701-250-4222, ext.5.

Farms: Farm Rescue. Provides planting and harvesting assistance to farm families that have experienced a major illness, injury or natural disaster. P.O. Box 1100, Jamestown, ND 58402-1100. Phone: 701-252-2017.

Legal: Legal Services of North Dakota. Provides legal advice, education and representation to people with low income, including disadvantaged elderly in areas of civil law. 20-1st St. SW, Suite 201, P.O. Box 1666, Minot, ND 58702, Phone 800-634-5263 (for those under 60) or 866-621-9886 (for those over 60), <http://www.legalassist.org>

Families and Children: Community Action Program. Provides programs and services for individuals with low income in Logan County, including child care and Head Start, emergency services, financial counseling, etc. P.O. Box 507, Jamestown, ND 58401, Phone: 800-726-8179, <http://www.capnd.org/>

Natural Resources and Water: North Dakota Natural Resources Trust. Provides education and assistance about how to benefit from the land while also conserving natural resources. 1605 E. Capitol Avenue, Suite 101, Bismarck, ND 58501-2102, Phone: 701-223-8501, <http://www.ndnrt.com>



Local Clubs:

(Include a phone number or email for the club leader.)

- Napoleon Business Association
- Logan County 4-H
- Napoleon Future Leaders
- Napoleon American Legion
- Napoleon Lions Club
- Napoleon Golden Age Club

Regional Planning Groups:

- North Dakota Economic Security and Prosperity Alliance. 1003 E. Interstate Avenue, Suite 7, Bismarck, ND 58503, Phone: 701-224-0588, www.agree.org

Universities and University Extension Services (within a 2-hour radius):

- Bismarck State College, Bismarck, ND
- United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck, ND
- University of Mary, Bismarck, ND
- North Dakota State University Extension Service

Public Schools:

- Napoleon Elementary School
- South Central Perry Special

Faith Institutions and Organizations:

- Catholic Charities North Dakota. Provides support and assistance to families with children. 5201 Bishops Blvd., Suite B, Fargo, ND 58104, Phone: 800-450-4457, <http://www.catholiccharitiesnd.org/>
- Lutheran Social Services of ND. In Logan County, provides disaster relief services, a food bank, and services to families, seniors, and at-risk youth. <http://www.lssnd.org>

Government Agencies:

- Natural Resource Conservation, 701-754-2234
- Transportation Department, 701-754-2901
- U.S. Consolidated Farm Services Agency, 701-754-2251
- Logan County Economic Development Coordinator, 701-754-2000
- Health Department, 701-754-2756

Local, Regional, and State Government Officials:

(We recommend including names, email addresses, mailing addresses, and phone numbers.)

Local:

- Town Mayor
- City Council Members

State Officials:

- Governor Jack Dalrymple
- Lieutenant Governor Drew Wrigley
- Treasurer Kelly L. Schmidt
- Attorney General Wayne K. Stenehjem
- Secretary of State Alvin A. 'Al' Jaeger
- Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring
- Labor Commissioner Tony Weiler
- Public Service Commissioner Tony Clark
- Representatives and senators in the State Legislature

Additional Community Assets:

- The Napoleon Park
- Beaver Lake State Park
- Napoleon Public Swimming Pool
- Napoleon Basketball/Softball Complex



APPENDIX D

10 Steps for Successful Action Teams

Here is a step-by-step process to help action teams get their job done.

1. Get to know each other.

- a. Bonding/ team-building

2. Establish group norms.

- a. How will decisions get made?
 - i. Will we use ground rules?
 - ii. How often and when will we meet?

3. Clarify tasks.

- a. Prioritize action ideas, with an eye toward “do-ability” and importance.
- b. Sort by short-term and long-term.
- c. Identify any “easy wins.”

4. Research the tasks.

- a. Who else is working on this?
 - i. How have other communities or groups approached this?
 - ii. Are there other people in the community who should be in this conversation?
 - iii. What resources (people, access, money, information) do we need to help us?
 - iv. What barriers do we need to address?

5. Develop a plan.

- a. Identify all tasks that need to be accomplished.
 - i. Identify necessary resources.
 - ii. Assign responsibilities and timetable for each task in the plan.

6. Implement the plan—make it happen!

7. Document your efforts.

- a. Record your progress as you go.

8. Assess progress.

- a. What worked? What didn't?
- b. What could we do differently?

9. Tell the story.

- a. Share your successes and challenges with other action groups and the broader community.

10. Look ahead.

- a. What's next? Where do we go from here?



FACILITATION TIPS*

Reflecting and Clarifying—feeding back or restating an idea or thought to make it clearer.

- “Let me see if I’m hearing you correctly....”
- “What I believe you are saying is....”

Summarizing—briefly stating the main thoughts.

- “It sounds to me as if we have been talking about a few major themes....”

Shifting Focus—moving from one speaker or topic to another.

- “Thank you, John. Do you have anything to add, Jane?”
- “We’ve been focusing on views 1 and 2. Does anyone have strong feelings about the other views?”

Asking Probing or Follow-Up

Questions—using questions to help people explore disagreements, understand multiple perspectives, and uncover common ground.

- “What are the key points here?”
- “What would someone with a different point of view say?”

Managing Conflict—helping conflict and disagreement to be productive.

- “Let’s refer to our ground rules.”
- “What seems to be at the heart of this issue?”
- “What do others think?”

Using Silence—allowing time and space for reflection by pausing between comments.

Using Non-Verbal Signals (Body Language)—recognizing and understanding how people communicate without using words.

- “What signals am I sending with my body?”
- “What signals am I reading from others?”
- “How do I signal encouragement?”
- “How do I invite others to participate?”

A Neutral Facilitator...

- Explains her/his role.
- Sets a relaxed and welcoming tone.
- Introduces him/herself, but does not share personal opinions or push an agenda.
- Does not take sides.
- Makes everyone feel that their opinions are valid and welcome.
- Does not use her/his personal experiences to make a point or to get people talking.
- Uses probing questions to deepen the discussion.
- Brings up issues that participants have not mentioned.
- Reminds participants of comments they shared in earlier sessions.

Key Facilitation Skills

- Reflecting & Clarifying
- Summarizing
- Shifting Focus
- Asking Probing or Follow-Up Questions
- Managing Conflict
- Using Silence
- Using Non-Verbal Signals (Body Language)

The most important thing to remember is that the facilitator should not share personal views and stories, or try to push an agenda. The facilitator’s job is to serve the group and help people have a productive conversation.

*These tips are extracted from Chapter 5 of *A Guide for Training Public Dialogue Facilitators* produced by Everyday Democracy. Download a free copy of this guide at www.everyday-democracy.org



Exploring different points of view about an issue is one of the hallmarks of this approach to dialogue. These viewpoints reflect some of the ways that different kinds of people think and talk about a public concern.

This method allows participants to deliberate about different ways to create change. Looking at different “approaches” helps people understand the complexity of an issue and the trade-offs that are often necessary to make progress. As the group develops a sense of what might work in their situation, they are more likely to come up with action ideas and strategies that make sense.

Facilitating Viewpoints and Approaches

How to Facilitate

- Write the topic sentence for all the views/approaches on a flip chart, to use as a quick reference.
- Help people understand they are not choosing a “winner” but rather exploring a range of ideas.
- Give people time to look over the information.
- Ask participants to choose one view to discuss. They can agree or disagree with it.
- Ask for a volunteer to read the view or approach aloud.
- Touch on all of the views/approaches, and help people see the connections.
- Summarize the discussion by noting areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Help people think about how this issue plays out in their own lives and in their community.

Helpful Questions

- Which views are closest to your own? Why?
- Think about a view you don’t agree with. Why would someone support that view?
- Which views conflict with each other?
- What views would you add?
- Which approaches appeal to you and why?
- What approaches would work best in our community? Which wouldn’t?
- How would this approach help us make progress?

Helping the Group Do Its Work

- Keep track of who has spoken, and who hasn’t.
- Consider splitting up into smaller groups occasionally. This will help people feel more at ease.
- Enter the discussion only when necessary. When the conversation is going well, the facilitator isn’t saying much.
- Don’t allow the group to turn to you for the answers.
- Resist the urge to speak after each comment or answer every question. Let participants respond directly to each other.
- Once in a while, ask participants to sum up important points.
- People sometimes need time to think before they respond. Don’t be afraid of silence! Try counting silently to ten before you rephrase the question. This will give people time to collect their thoughts.
- Try to involve everyone; don’t let anyone take over the conversation.
- Remember that this is not a debate, with winners and losers. If participants forget this, don’t hesitate to ask the group to help re-establish the discussion ground rules.
- Don’t allow the group to get stuck on a personal experience or anecdote.
- Keep careful track of time.



Helping the Group Look at Different Points of View

- Good discussion materials present a wide range of views. Look at the pros and cons of each viewpoint. Or, ask participants to consider a point of view that hasn't come up in the discussion.
- Ask participants to think about how their own values affect their opinions.
- Help participants see the things they have in common.

Asking Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions can't be answered with a quick "yes" or "no." Open-ended questions can help people look for connections between different ideas.

General Questions

- What seems to be the key point here?
- Do you agree with that? Why?
- What do other people think of this idea?
- What would be a strong case against what you just said?
- What experiences have you had with this?
- Could you help us understand the reasons behind your opinion?
- What do you think is really going on here? Why is that important?
- How might others see this issue?
- Do you think others in the group see this the way you do? Why?
- How does this make you feel?

Questions to Use When There is Disagreement

- What do you think he is saying?
- What bothers you most about this?
- What is at the heart of the disagreement?
- How does this make you feel?
- What experiences or beliefs might lead a person to support that point of view?
- What do you think is really important to people who hold that opinion?
- What is blocking the discussion?
- What don't you agree with?
- What do you find most convincing about that point of view?
- What is it about that position that you just cannot live with?
- Could you say more about what you think?
- What makes this topic hard?
- What have we missed that we need to talk about?

Questions to Use When People are Feeling Discouraged

- How does that make you feel?
- What gives you hope?
- How can we make progress on these problems? What haven't we considered yet?

Closing Questions

- What are the key points of agreement and disagreement in today's session?
- What have you heard today that has made you think, or has touched you in some way?

A **dialogue facilitator** does not need to be an expert on the topic being discussed. But the facilitator should be well prepared for the discussion. This means the facilitator...

- Understands the goals of the community change effort.
- Is familiar with the discussion materials.
- Thinks ahead of time about how the discussion might go.
- Has questions in mind to help the group consider the subject.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

You can view or download free copies of the following resources at www.everyday-democracy.org.

- *Organizing Community-wide Dialogue for Action and Change*
- *A Guide for Training Public Dialogue Facilitators*
- *Organizing in Rural and Reservation Communities*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our **reviewers** whose thoughtful feedback shaped our work on this guide.

- *Lynette Flage*, Community Leadership Specialist
North Dakota State University Extension Service
- *Ruth Freeman*, Families Financial Resource Program Specialist
Iowa State University Extension Service
- *Kari Fruechte*, Community Development Associate
South Dakota State University Cooperative Extension Service
- *Doreen Hauser-Lindstrom*, Community Vitality Specialist
Washington State University Extension Service
- *Monica Herrera*, Horizons Program Director
University of Minnesota Extension
- *Marcia Kinsey*
Public Works: The Demos Center for the Public Sector
- *Al Nygard*
Al Nygard Consulting
- *Jerry Uribe*, Senior Program Officer
Northwest Area Foundation
- *Elizabeth Webb*, Community Development Associate
Montana State University Extension

A special thank you to *Lynette Flage*, *Doreen Hauser-Lindstrom*, and *Krisan LeHew* who facilitated field tests of the guide in Northport, Wash., and Rolla, N.D.

For Everyday Democracy, the following people were important concept advisors throughout the creation of this guide: Carolyn Abdullah, Sally Campbell, Martha McCoy, Valeriano Ramos, Jr., Patrick Scully, Gwendolyn Poindexter Whiting, and Barbara Yasui.

ABOUT EVERYDAY DEMOCRACY

Created in 1989 by The Paul J. Aicher Foundation, Everyday Democracy has worked with more than 600 communities across the United States on many different public issues. We provide advice and training, and then use what we learn to benefit other communities. Our innovative tools and processes have proved to be effective in furthering the efforts of people who are organizing dialogue that leads to change where they live.



Ideas & Tools for Community Change

Everyday Democracy

111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1403

East Hartford, CT 06108

Telephone: 860-928-2616

Fax: 860-928-3713

E-mail: info@everyday-democracy.org

Web site: www.everyday-democracy.org