

Community Action Groups

The following worksheet has been created to guide you through the process of building Community Action Groups.

- **What:** Community Action Groups
- **Why:** To mobilize community stakeholders to implement the community and economic development process described in the book
- **Who:** Elected officials, community & economic development leaders, concerned citizens
- **Where:** In-Person, Online, Asynchronous

Step 1: Identify Leaders

We encourage the key leaders who are spearheading this initiative (the steering committee) to collaborate and brainstorm this initial list together and solicit volunteers. Please list any potential candidates who could serve on this action group.

Elected Officials	Community & Economic Development Leaders	Concerned Citizens	Other

Step 2: Define Initial Topics or Issues

Identify current community issues and concerns that are important to improving your community. Also include some of the key steps and topics discussed in the succeeding chapters in the book such as defining and measuring community prosperity, visioning, and community assessment.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

These issues and topics will evolve as the process of community and economic development continues in the community.

Step 3: Identify, Refine & Invite

Once you have your preliminary list of issues and factors that you believe are most relevant to community improvement, review the list of potential action group members, identify who would contribute the most to the various topic groups, but also allow participants to pick the group(s) that they prefer to work on and can contribute the most to. Keep in mind that diversity of opinion, listening skills and good interpersonal dynamics are important for the success of the action groups. Finally, solicit the members of the action groups allowing volunteers to select the group they want to work in (or suggest a new group), but steering some members toward groups for which they have obvious expertise. Keep in mind that some individuals will volunteer to participate while others will have to be recruited.

Remember that the purpose of the initial action groups is to generate interest and participation in the community and economic development process and initially identify key topics or issues for the community. These topics or issues will likely change somewhat after the visioning and community assessment phases of the community development process are completed.

TIPS:

- How you do this will depend in part on your role or position in the community and your peer group.
- Like a book club, start discussion groups in person or virtual - synchronous (e.g. Zoom) or asynchronous (blogs, etc.). Consider starting a website for comments.