



DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES THAT WORK

Building Success: an appreciative approach workbook

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Disconnect:
neighbourhoods and
development

2
It's All About
Participation

3
What's Happening Here?
A situation analysis
workbook

4
Tried, Tested and
(mostly) True:
traditional methods that
(sometimes) work

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An Appreciative
Approach

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Building Success:
an appreciative
approach workbook



CHANGES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
Development Processes that Work

Changes in the Neighbourhood: Development Processes that Work

booklet 6

Building Success: an appreciative approach workbook

booklets in this series:

- 1 Disconnect: neighbourhoods and development
- 2 It's All About Participation
- 3 What's Happening Here? a situation analysis workbook
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***Changes in the Neighbourhood* is available in bound (binder) sets, or multiple copies of individual booklets, from:**

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These booklets are also available as pdf files at:

www.mycommunityinformation.com/housing

About This Series

Changes in the Neighbourhood: development processes that work is a series of booklets designed to assist organizations and communities struggling with development issues. Its focus is on redevelopment – changes that are proposed for existing neighbourhoods in our cities and towns. We define development broadly to mean any significant change in the structure or use of buildings or areas within a neighbourhood. So a social service agency introducing a half way house and a real estate developer proposing an upscale condo are both engaged in ‘development proposals,’ even though the former may not involve any physical change in buildings. We seek to engage citizen leaders, developers, planning officials and others.

This series was created as part of the Housing Research Action Project in Red Deer, AB, Canada. As such, its primary focus was on addressing how organizations can develop affordable housing in Red Deer. The project found, however, that effective public participation processes are broadly applicable to many scenarios and many communities.

In many ways, these booklets seek to bring together the learning that has taken place in property development, with its focus on lands and buildings, and community development, with its focus on people and relationships.

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An Appreciative Approach Workbook

The following set of questions can be useful in planning an appreciative approach to your development scenario. Used in combination with the booklet 5, An Appreciative Approach, and booklet 3, What's Happening Here? a situation analysis workbook, they will guide your project in a positive and collaborative direction.

These workbook questions, however, do not constitute an 'Appreciative Inquiry,' and you are cautioned not to assume that answering the questions will produce the desired results. Each Appreciative Inquiry is unique, and is best undertaken in consultation with an experienced AI practitioner. We encourage you to consult the sources listed at the end of booklet 6 An Appreciative Approach for a more in-depth understanding of Appreciative Inquiry.

We have structured the following Workbook as a series of questions and open-ended exercises, in the belief that the best route to knowledge and wisdom is asking good questions.

Pre-Planning

In the Situation Analysis Workbook you identified the stakeholders in your project.

Questions:

1. Describe the stakeholders' level of commitment to a genuinely participative process. Rate them as "high", "medium", or "low".

Planning an “Appreciative” Public Participation Process

Assuming that the critical “decision making authorities” are committed to a genuinely participative public consultation process, (i.e. the “Promise to the Public” is at least at the “collaborate” level - see booklet 2 page 7), you can design an effective appreciative consultation using the framework of the 5D Appreciative Inquiry process.

Step 1: Define

This stage defines the intent of the Appreciative Inquiry process; it identifies who will “guide” the process, and determines how the inquiry process will proceed. The following questions will assist with these tasks.

1. What is the intent of the public participation process? What “Promise to the Public” has been made?
2. Whose participation is essential in designing the appreciative process?
3. What are the “topics” of the inquiry? What are the “decision making” parameters of the process? (i.e. To what extent can the proposed development be modified through the consultative process? Can the consultation process go so far as to “kill” the proposed development?)
4. What questions do we need to ask in order to learn what we want to know? Who will we ask? Who will do the asking? When? Where? How?

Step 2: Discover

This stage discovers the best of “what is”, through conducting and documenting the appreciative interviews and identifying common themes. The questions that will be asked during a discover process will have been determined in the “Define” stage. The questions used will depend upon the community/developer dynamics in play for a given situation, and upon the level of public participation being sought.

If the initial relationship between the developer and the “community” is quite adversarial, then the “intent” of the process (as determined in the “Define” stage), may be to improve that relationship and enable the two groups to work together constructively. In this case, questions such as the following might be asked:

Define

the intent

- Identify core team
- Clarify topic of inquiry
- Develop interview protocol

Discover

the best of what is

- Conduct appreciative interviews
- Capture & share stories experiences & opportunities
 - Build Empathy



CHANGES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Development Processes that Work

1. What are the best experiences our community has ever had working with this developer? (or *any* developer?)
2. What circumstances led to these positive experiences?
3. What did the developer do that contributed to the positive working relationship?
4. What did the community people do?
5. What lessons can be learned from this example that might be applied to the current situation?
6. How can we apply these lessons and foster a more positive and constructive working relationship in our present circumstances?
7. What kinds of “confidence building measures” could be offered by all parties to the discussions that would serve as gestures of their commitment towards developing positive, collaborative working relationships?

If a good working relationship already exists between the developer and the community, and the community is being involved at the very beginning of a proposed “change to the neighbourhood”, then a completely different set of questions might be asked. The kinds of questions will also be a function of the type of public participation process that is in place.

If the type of development (or re-development) that will be proposed for a certain piece of property is truly open to community input, the Discover process may involve looking at positive neighbourhood values, and use these to help provide a context for making decisions. As was indicated in booklet 2, it is very important that developers be clear about the extent of public participation that is being sought. Otherwise, a consultation process that starts well can deteriorate into acrimony if the community feels that its power to influence the situation turns out to be much less than initially promised.



Assuming that the development options are truly open to discussion and community influence, here are some questions that might be asked of neighbourhood residents in an appreciative public consultation process:

1. How long have you lived in this neighbourhood?
2. What are some of the best things about living here?
3. What have been some high points of your life in this community? What made these experiences special?
4. For you, what characteristics of the neighbourhood make the most important contribution to the quality of life here?
5. As the neighbourhood changes over time, what are its most important features that should be carried forward into the future to maintain or even improve the quality of life?

If the developer has the power to “make the final decision” about how his/her property will be developed, but is willing to seriously consider community wishes in making that decision, then he/she must be clear about the boundaries of the community’s influence. Even within this limited form of participation, questions such as these could be used to gain meaningful input:

1. When the “x” property is developed, what kinds of uses would you most prefer, given what you already value about your community?
2. If the development options on the table are less than your “most preferred uses”, what factors must be considered in order for you to accept the options being considered?
3. What would it take for you to embrace such options?

Whatever questions are being used, the goal in the Discover stage is to reveal and record individuals’ perceptions of the “best of what is”. That could involve examples of “best working relationships” with those who would introduce changes into the neighbourhood, or “best features” of a neighbourhood that contribute to a good quality of life. From the many individual stories, common themes are identified that illustrate the best of “what is”.



Dream
what might be

- Use stories as basis to envision and design statements of the future - vision mission, purpose

Step 3: Dream

The Dream stage builds upon the Discover stage by imagining the best of “what could be”: a situation in which the neighbourhood (or working relationship with a developer) is at its best in all of the themes identified. Participants may use music drama, art sculpture or other artistic forms to create a compelling image of their neighbourhood in the future, or of a working relationship with developers that is at its very best.

For example, a group that has already conducted one-on-one appreciative interviews will then identify common themes from the stories that emerged. Each small group in a workshop might pick one theme, then build a poster, map or other visual to illustrate their theme - using magazines, scissors, glue, markers - whatever arts and crafts materials you can supply. This visualization often opens people up to new possibilities.

Once they have this *image* of the best of what could be, they put this into words by developing “provocative propositions”, statements that create a bridge between the best of “what is”, and “what could be”. Good provocative propositions are powerful and energizing, and provide goal framework that can shapes the design of “what will be”. (See booklet 5, page 13 for guidelines in writing good provocative propositions.)

Write several statements that capture the vision of the future that led to the creation of your image of “what could be”.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Design
co-construct what will be

- Channel rediscovered energies
- Build action plans in support of new environment and opportunities

4. Design

In the Design stage, participants work to determine “what will be”, by discovering innovative ways to bring about the closest possible approximation (under the circumstances) of the image of “what could be” that they developed in the Dream stage. It is at this stage in a development scenario, that collaboration and cooperation may face their biggest challenges in the



effort to balance the rights and wishes of all parties. While communities have their hopes and wishes for their neighbourhoods, developers also have legal rights (within the context of zoning regulations) to develop or re-develop the properties they own.

Developers also realize, however, that there is great value in obtaining community endorsement, or at least consent, for any zoning changes they may propose to local governments. It is therefore in their own self-interest to try to bring the neighbourhood “on side” with the changes they want to make.

The answers to these questions may help bridge the gulf between developers and “neighbourhoods” when there are significant differences in the priorities of the two groups.

1. What are the identified community priorities for the development of this property?
2. How will this development address these priorities? How can it be modified to better fit with community priorities?
3. What concerns have community people identified about any proposed development? How can these concerns be relieved? What indicators will be used to show that community concerns have been meaningfully addressed?
4. When will the developer seek a zoning change or development permit?
5. Who will be responsible for maintaining constructive communications throughout the development process? Who will speak for the community? Who, on the developer’s team, will be responsible for hearing and responding to community issues once a zoning change has been granted or a development permit has been issued?

Within the Design stage, there may be provision for an ongoing relationship with “the developer.” For example, if the development that has occurred is a “half-way” house or group home, the Design stage may specify a procedure for mediating conflicts between the community and the development. In these types of scenarios, questions such as the following might be asked.

1. If conflicts arise, who will speak for the community? Who will speak for the development?



2. How will conflicts be addressed in the first instance? If this initial process does not bring about a resolution of the situation, what happens next?

Deliver
the dreamed reality

- Replicate process
- Build process into "the way work is done"
- Launch and monitor action plans

5. Deliver

In the Deliver stage the developer and community people implement the commitments they made to each other during the design stage. What will actually happen in this stage will be a function of the type of development that has been built. For example, if the development is a half-way house or group home as in the situation described above, there will likely have been protocols put in place in the Design stage for handling any conflicts that may arise.

While the Deliver stage will vary with every development scenario, the strong bonds and common vision created in earlier stages will have lead to groups and individuals who are comfortable working together. The creation of a positive action plan should be second nature to these new working groups by the thime they get to the Deliver stage.



Help Us Improve Future Editions of these Guidebooks

Changes in the Neighbourhood is being printed "on demand" when copies are ordered. We will be revising the booklets regularly.

To make the booklets most effective for future readers, please send us your comments, corrections and suggestions.

Booklet#	Page	Comment/Suggestion
_____	_____	_____ _____ _____
_____	_____	_____ _____ _____
_____	_____	_____ _____ _____

Feel free to attach further notes or marked-up pages from the guidebooks.

Please briefly describe your use of these booklets - what project, workshop, or situation are you working on/participating in?

Your Contact Information *(optional)*

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