

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

STRATEGIC PLANNING

FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

By

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The preparation of this workbook was funded under Grant 92-1-TA-DC-002 to the National Association of Community Action Agencies by the Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents, however, do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Health and Human Services and should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government unless so granted.

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STRATEGIC PLANNING

STRATEGIC (stre te jik) adj.,
of or having to do with strategy.

PLAN (plan) n. v., planned, planning,
-n. a way of making or doing
something that has been worked
out beforehand.

FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

The National Association of Community Action Agencies

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The authors wish to thank Dr. Michael O. Ayers of Sangamon State University for his assistance in the preparation of this material.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Looking at the business section of a newspaper today will likely engender serious skepticism about planning. Often you read of literal cases of the "best-laid plans" going awry. International enterprises teeter on the brink of bankruptcy; multi-billion-dollar projects reel from staggering cost overruns; governments hack away at social programs in attempts to lighten monstrous debt loads. Obviously, no one ever planned to get into such situations. In fact, they planned to do just the reverse. Any yet, somehow, these planning efforts fail.

If the immense informational and intellectual resources of modern corporations and governments produce plans that are so far off the mark, how can smaller organizations plan for the future? What are the chances of a plan being followed? Given the limited financial resources of community action agencies, how in the world can we hope to plan to survive and thrive while serving the poor of America? Good planning does not trust to luck or the passage of time to deliver the desired outcomes. It actively strives to make things happen by doing the right thing at the right time. Successful strategic planning combines shared goals, shared history, and shared vision of the future to create a plan based upon sound financial realities.

We live in such dynamic times that all the assumptions on which plans are based may be suddenly rendered null and void. It might be argued that a good plan should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate any eventuality, but as the old adage says, "you can't think of everything." Many long-standing CAA personnel remember the day of the Nixon administration telegram ordering CAA's to close. How could we plan for that?

It is reasonable to assume that most formal strategic plans actually do meet their goals, albeit with some inevitable hitches. You never hear of all the routine occasions when everything goes according to plan or when an agency reaches one of its strategic goals. Instead, planning is associated in the public mind with spectacular debacles. Misleading as that may be, there is much to be learned from the grand follies of planning by anyone thinking of taking it up a lesser scale.

The most common cause of plans going wrong is simple wishful thinking. The authors have experiences of viewing plans that are dreams; plans that didn't lay the groundwork for strategic planning. In other words, what the wishful strategic plans often portray is a map of places without roads, bridges and towns connecting the places depicted in the dream plan. Without a detailed map, the plan of places is largely meaningless. Even worse, compatible facts and figures are unconsciously chosen to attest to the feasibility of the enterprise. Plans cannot be a serious matter if we spend time on the highly unlikely, or if they only embody one person's idea of the future. For example, you might know the type of house you would build if you won the lottery. It would not be prudent, however, to hire an architect to design your dream house until you had the lottery loot in hand.

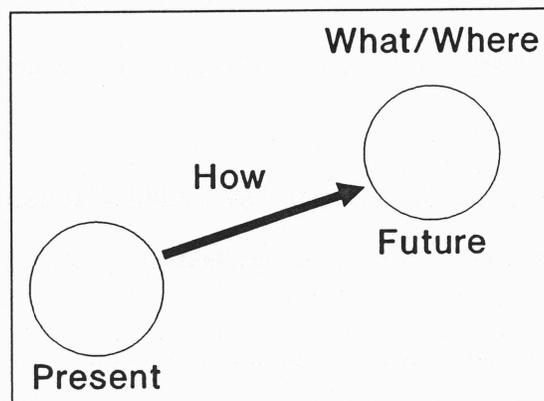
Introduction

When all members, publics and constituents of CAA's share their goals, visions, and history; and when these things are based on sound financial realities, a strategic plan can be a helpful tool to guide agencies to meet the future.

II. WHAT IS PLANNING?

In the simplest sense, a **plan** is anything that involves selecting a course of action for the future. Planning is perhaps the most important function that managers provide. Before managers can perform any other function, they must have plans that offer purpose, direction, and goals.

A plan allows you to see where you are, where you'd like to be in the future and how to get there. The diagram below illustrates the planning process.



Planning is the function that answers four basic questions: (Schuler 142)

1. **Where are we now?** This question is concerned with assessing the present situation and forecasting how the situation may change in the future. By answering this question, you can accurately judge both the past and future needs of your agency.
2. **Where do we want to be?** Answers to this question involve determining the desired objectives in terms of the present and the future. Answers should be collected from all members of the agency's constituencies.
3. **What is the difference between where we are now and where we want to be?** This question encourages quantification of what the agency presently has vs. what is envisioned for the future.
4. **How can we get there from here?** This question requires an outline of actions and a careful analysis of future implications of present decisions.

While considering the past and present, strategic planning looks heavily to the future to

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determine the direction an organization or its units should be taking.

Shared Goals

Let's begin by setting our goal(s). A good place to start is a thorough review of the agency's origins. Why did the agency come into being? What was the view of our founders? Is that view compatible with 1994 and beyond? What if we achieved the altruistic, optimistic goals as stated when organized; would we still have validity? We must ask many such difficult questions. If your agency has a mission or goal statement, a thorough examination of it may answer many of these questions. It is best to thoroughly examine your mission statement BEFORE as the first step of your planning process. Appendix 1 details the national history of community action agencies and may help you put your mission in a larger perspective.

As you look to evaluate your goals and mission for your strategic plan, keep these ten criteria in mind:

Ten Criteria to Evaluate Your Mission Statement

1. The mission statement is clear and understandable to all personnel, including clients and general public.
2. The mission statement is brief enough for most people to keep it in mind.
3. The mission statement clearly specifies what business the agency is in; serving the poor. This includes a clear statement about:
 - a. "What" customer or client needs the organization is attempting to fill, not what products or services are offered;
 - b. "Who" the organization's primary customers or clients are; and
 - c. "How" the organization plans to go about its business, that is, what its primary technologies are.
4. The mission statement should have a primary focus on a single **strategic** thrust.
5. The mission statement should reflect the distinctive competence of the agency.
6. The mission statement should be broad enough to allow flexibility in implementation but not so broad as to permit a lack of focus.
7. The mission statement should serve as a template and be the means by which managers and others in the organization can make decisions.

8. The mission statement must reflect the values, beliefs and philosophy of operations of the organization and reflect the organizational culture.
9. The mission statement should reflect attainable goals.
10. The mission statement should be worded so as to serve as an energy focus and rallying point for the organization.

Agencies must form a consensus of the needs of the community and set realistic goals for its role in community service. Appendix 2 contains a questionnaire that may help your agency solicit community opinions. According to Peter F. Drucker, "...the toughest task of the nonprofit executive is to get all constituencies to agree on what the long term goals of the institution are. Building around the long term is the only way to integrate all interests." (Drucker 110)

All constituencies, both leaders and followers of CAAs, must have shared goals; this element is vital and distinguishes leadership from authoritarianism or coercion. "Leaders succeed when they embody and express, for better or for worse, values rooted in the social character of group, class, or nation." (Maccoby)

J. M. Burns in his classic book on leadership says,

"...as leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations -- the wants and the needs, the aspirations and expectations -- of both leaders and followers. And the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act on their own and their followers' values and motivations."

The community action executive must look to all of the agency's constituencies; including the client base, to create goals from which to plan.

A solid goal statement is vital not only in establishing a solid base upon which to plan but critical in development of board support. Traditionally, a board is responsible for sharing vision and direction for an agency. Strategic planning requires strategic thinking. Organizational strategic thinking must include the board, since their vision is critical to the future of the CAA. In fact, insuring organizational strategic success involves a partnership of all parties concerned with reaching the goals of the organization, from the leaders, managers, workers to the clients.

The active participation of the board is crucial in the strategic process. The most successful outcome is likely to result from an informed partnership of the board, key administrators, staff and clients. One group cannot form a strategic vision and inspire the organization to realize it without the active cooperation of all affected constituencies.

What Is Planning?

(Ingram 83). In fact, a vision should be created by all members of the agency. Such a vision is stronger and more likely to succeed than one that is not inclusive.

Shared History

As we ask our constituency to review, update, and perhaps alter our goal(s) we must look to our past to chart our future. Ken Burns of PBS Civil War fame says:

"...I think our future lies behind us...We Americans tend to ignore our past. Perhaps we fear having one, and burn it behind us like rocket fuel, always looking forward. The consequences are not just ignorance, or stupidity, or even repeating. It represents the deepest kind of inattention, and it becomes a tear or gap in who we are."

Looking at the history of community action can provide a good understanding of why certain things were done when, and in the way they were. It also provides a good sense of which activities, programs, strategies and actions worked best to meet the needs of the poor. Social, political and economic changes which have occurred world- and nation-wide during the past decade make present and future circumstances much different from those of the past. Because of the differences, looking ahead and planning for the future of community action cannot be done effectively by relying solely on solutions to problems and ideas which worked in the past, and for that matter, continue to work in the present (See Appendix 1 for a concise history of CAA's). However, having a firm idea of the agency's successes and failures will help create a practical, workable strategic plan.

For example, funding is most diversified since the founding of CAA's almost 30 years ago. CAA's receive dramatically less money from the Department of Health and Human Services than in the days when the Office of Economic Opportunity existed. CAA's are much more dependent on state funding, which has seen at least a tenfold increase. Community-based funding, United Way, county, township, and municipal contributions to our total budget alter the lexicon dramatically.

It is crucial to the success of the strategic plan to base it on realistic funding goals. Although predicting funding is risky and uncertain, all successful plans are based on reachable, articulated funding expectations.

"At the same time, poverty and its associated pathologies have increased, and CBOs are faced with daunting problems like homelessness and AIDS, which exacerbate the usual difficulties of teen pregnancy, the need for job development, etc. Many agencies with strong community ties feel the need to address these emerging and deepening problems, and are stretching themselves too thin, burning out, and operating in a crisis management mode. Small

CAAs need to reconsider how much they can tackle with their existing resources, whether to merge or collaborate with other agencies, how to carve out their own 'turf' in their communities. Larger multi-service agencies need to determine whether to integrate their services, specialize, form collaborations with government agencies or peers in other communities, take a stronger stand on advocacy and policy issues that affect their future resources." (Rosenthal 1)

For community action agencies, the following are historic realities any current planning process must address among others:

- Decrease in traditional government support;
- Demographic changes, i.e., and increase in the number of youth and older Americans, growth in the Hispanic population;
- Increase in costs to CAAs for goods and services;
- Redefinition of client needs;
- Unemployment shifts;
- Professionalization/licensure requirements;
- Growth in Head Start without other service area growth (for some);
- Increased opportunity in home health care and public health fields.

Because the future is different in many of these areas, the planning needs of agencies are themselves different and more important than ever before. Agency administrators and staffs need to think in more strategic terms about their future. For planning to be an effective foundation and guide for achieving the agency's survival and growth, the process must provide clear connections between the agency's financial circumstances and program/operating needs. In short, the board of directors and the agency staff are being driven to become more active in monitoring and projecting client needs, agency budgets and agency programs. In addition, those responsible for the agency's operations must constantly be thinking of and seeking new and better sources of financial support or means of operation.

Finally, to begin, we must seek a consensus in the search for and adoption of a common goal. Second, we must review our history as a movement (See Appendix 1) for our agency. With our history clear and our goals established we are free to develop and write a strategic plan.

III. PLANNING: A START

Previously we discussed the need for planning and the potential of planning. Let's look at strategic planning as a process. Remember, we will need a road map of places connected by roads and bridges. It is a considerable help if an agency has a methodical process to follow. (See appendix 5 for suggestions on organizing the planning process.)

WHAT STRATEGIC PLANNING DOES

- examines the forces which have shaped the organization's past and present;
- analyzes the organization's strengths and weaknesses;
- decides upon the organization's developmental directions;
- determines likely financial capabilities today and for the next three years;
- explores greater financial development potential;
- analyzes and prioritizes human resources to follow new directions;
- establishes goals consistent with those directions; and
- determines and implements strategies for achieving the goals.

Strategic planning anticipates that the agency will likely be different in the future while long-range planning generally assumes existing operations and conditions which affect those operations will continue in the future as they have existed in the past. Long-range planning might be viewed as stagnant planning.

Strategic planning provides a forum for questioning existing operations, i.e., the agency's mission, its program offerings, its program delivery, its funding sources, and examining their potential effectiveness in meeting needs of the agency over the coming three to five years while long-range planning generally focuses on the efficiency with which current operations might be run in the coming years.

Strategic planning does not honor the status quo and is not stagnant. Further, the process is not an annual operation plan, rather a dramatic and activist process of internal and external review. The successful entrepreneurs of the 1990's have proven success with strategic planning.

To place strategic planning in the proper perspective consider that "Strategic planning, like many policy processes, had its origins in military history. In the context of military decision-making, the concept implies a comprehensive preparedness sufficient to meet any and all eventualities; strategic planning also implies a synoptic and long-range vision as compared with tactical judgments involving short-range action commitments." (Sutherland 427)

Strategic planning can best be described as a process of developing a vision for the future, charting a course believed to be wise and adjusting that course of direction as more detailed information and experience is obtained.

WHY PLAN AT ALL?

Most objective research has shown vision, planning, goal-setting, and common understanding among organizational constituencies greatly improves organizational performance and efficiency. Further, among the public, private and nonprofit sector organizations, those with clearly written plans outperform their counterparts. Often, the day-to-day management difficulties and challenges of community action executives leaves little time to **focus**.

Strategic planning provides **focus**.

"With today's pressures, the executives and boards of nonprofits sometimes feel less like 'shakers and movers' and more like 'the shaken and the moved.' Strategic planning can help an organization influence and control its world rather than simply respond to it. Some funders and regulators require organizations to have a long-range plan as a condition of funding. A strategic plan can be a good communication or marketing tool with such groups. If, however, you are developing a plan only to meet someone else's needs, don't waste more time with your planning than is absolutely necessary. Strategic planning has become a natural way of doing business for many organizations. They routinely chart and update their long- and short-term course, take action, monitor progress, then adjust action and plans based on changing conditions. Planning becomes a familiar framework for carrying out a number of managerial responsibilities." (Barry 14)

Strategic planning does, however, have some limitations. The process can be costly in time and money which might be better allocated elsewhere. Some community action executives are so experienced and such gifted leaders with a methodical management style, the process may simply duplicate a "natural thinking" already in place. Finally, a poor plan can be counterproductive, discouraging vision and initiative. The result can be disillusionment, cynicism and feelings of powerlessness for those who must work under such a plan. If your plan is a dream, as discussed previously, drop the idea. **Good plans only work with good implementation.** And finally, good plans should encourage both inspiration and vision by those who use it. Albert Einstein once wrote,

"I believe in intuition and inspiration...at times I feel certain that I am right while not knowing the reason. ...Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution." (Barry 14)

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By now you should have an understanding of the strategic planning process. You should know your agency's history and goals and be prepared as an organization to invest in community action strategic planning. You should be convinced that it is better to be "proactive" toward your organization's future needs rather than "reactive."

You need not abandon your current operational plan nor should you forget today in search of the "great tomorrow." If integrated properly your strategic plan becomes complementary to your current management attributes. As you look to the future you must not forget the present moment. For example, if your accounting staff is so involved in projecting revenue for 1998 they forget to cut payroll checks, we assure you community action strategic planning will become an albatross, not a panacea.

Some will comment, as a long-standing community action executive from Ohio said recently, "Where the hell are the good old days?" A review of Appendix 1 and an analysis of your history will show the good old days were not all that good. We must view tomorrow not filled with obstacles, but rather with challenges, and with every challenge we have new opportunities to expand the horizon of hope for the disadvantaged served by community action.

As one community action executive has been heard to say, "Sometimes we must change or die." Strategic planning lets the agency control its course of action when changes occur.

Another effective technique is to think of your planning group as a **SWOT TEAM!** Community action strategic planning must include an examination of internal and external **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.** The SWOT Team can view the status of the agency and your current operational plan in a broad context. The more detailed information that can be compiled about current and future clients and the agency's ability to address the clients the better. Begin to look at your budget in terms of SWOT. We urge you to **STOP** reading. Put this manual down and think about SWOT, limiting your thoughts to your budget alone. If you view your budget for just a few minutes in terms of SWOT, you will begin to realize the great potential community action strategic planning has for your agency.

OTHER PLANNING METHODS

If your agency has unique needs or management styles preclude use of the above noted planning method, four additional methods are offered for consideration.

Program Evaluation and Review Technique

PERT (Program Evaluation and Review Technique) received wide acclaim as a technique applied to the Polaris missile program by the Pentagon. PERT was developed from a planning

philosophy known as critical path analysis. The basic ideas involved in this refined programming technique are:

1. All steps and their necessary sequences are placed on a diagram so that the total network is explicitly set forth.
2. The estimated time required to complete each step after the preceding step has been finished is recorded.
3. Then by adding the required times for each step in any necessary sequence -- or path -- the path having the longest time can be identified. This the critical path.
4. If desired, the difference between the total required times of the critical path and other paths can also be computed. Such differences are slack times or margins in which delays would not hold up the final completion.

Having identified the critical path, management can focus on reducing the time for certain steps in this path or watching closely for any delays. Management knows from slack time data where high pressure to meet estimated process times may be unwarranted.

With careful thought, the network of steps and sequences can usually be assembled with reasonable reliability -- at least for programs dealing with physical products. The time estimates prove to be less reliable, however, especially for unique or one-time activities. To deal with this uncertainty regarding time, a manager obtains three estimates from persons who will be doing the work: optimistic, most likely, and pessimistic. Then a weighted average of these three elapsed-time estimates is used.

In critical path analyses of complex programs, such as Polaris, computations are sufficiently involved to make use of a computer very helpful. In simpler programming situations, such as building construction, a computer is by no means essential. (Newman 522)

The major problem with PERT is the complexities of such detail, difficult assimilation of data following such detail and failure to adapt to an ever-changing environment. After filling legal pad upon legal pad you may have such quantities of data all vested in the process you are too exhausted to implement the resultant plan. Further, a computer is not required but would be of enormous assistance if one followed PERT.

If a strategic plan is methodically developed this way, efficient time-estimates to achieve goals would be articulated in the plan.

Coordinative or Tactical Planning

At the middle, or coordinating, level of management, planning directs and implements strategic thinking by coordinating the work of different organizational units. Planning at this

Planning: A Start

level, sometimes called **coordinative planning**, or tactical planning, involves determining how certain areas of an organization will deploy resources to reach objectives by following the policies and strategies that have been established.

A major characteristic of tactical planning is the coordination of the most important functions of the organization in the service of the strategic plans. In other words, coordinative, or tactical, planning might be viewed as subordinate to strategic planning; that the coordination efforts do not so much create the plan as structure it.

Detailed tactical plans are usually made for such major functional areas as manufacturing, marketing, personnel, research and development, finance, and capital expenditures. (Huse 144)

MBO (Management By Objectives)

Management by Objectives was popularized by Peter Drucker. It is an entire management system with potentially far-reaching effects on organizational control, efficiency, and production, as well as the structure of administrative responsibility, authority and decision-making, self-management and worker satisfaction, and overall problem-solving capabilities. Its important elements are: specifically stated objectives; establishment of feasibility; short time frame (usually not more than one year); measurability of progress and results; definitive resource allocations for operational necessities, tracking, and evaluation; and reassessment and replanning of the organizations objectives. MBO is viewed with some indifference or even hostility by many who see it as an example of procedure and technique being substituted for clear thinking and sound decisions. Loss of vision and imagination are often cited as drawbacks to the use of this style of planning.

Without elaborating we wish to suggest that adherence to principles of Management by Objectives necessarily entails the distortion or neglect of other facets of organizational behavior critical to the overall effectiveness of the nonprofit organization in achieving the purposes for which it was created. (Sutherland 144-145). By adhering so strictly to this set of objectives, executives may lose the overall focus of the organization.

Delphi Planning

Perhaps the most unusual planning process to be discussed is Delphi:

"Delphi is a method of eliciting expert opinion through the use of successive questionnaires administered to individual panelists, who are selected on the basis of their perceived expert knowledge or opinion." (Lauffer 134)

Panel members are asked to respond anonymously to a number of statements, perhaps to evaluate the statements' accuracy, likelihood, desirability, or cost. Their responses may also include statements of their own or reasons for their assessment. Appendixes 3 and 4 offer a format for two types of questionnaires.

The Delphi method is generally considered to be fast, inexpensive and easy to administer. This is not always the case, however, as respondents who have been participants in a poorly designed Delphi process are likely to point out. There are generally two types of Delphi questionnaires: those that attempt to predict the likelihood that some event or process is likely to occur; and those which are oriented toward an assessment of the best or most feasible policy directions.

Although the use of external experts can, at times, be of assistance, no "outsider" can possibly know what staff, board and clients know. Further, the Delphi method of planning renders results like love; it's in the eye of the beholder. If you plan to use this method, it is imperative that the questionnaire NOT have any bias. Although Delphi has had limited acceptance in military planning, it leaves much to be desired on the local community action level.

As noted earlier, a distinction is sometimes made in planning literature between long-range planning, which focuses on what an organization intends to look like at the end of a given period of time, and strategic planning, which focuses on the action plan for how the organization will get there. Strategic planning is also distinguished from another kind of planning - operational or short-range planning. Operational planning is what many nonprofit organizations do when they develop yearly objectives, program plans, and budgets. Operational or short-range plans focus on a shorter time period than long-range strategic plans - for example, one year instead of five. Operational plans show in specific terms how, in the coming year, an organization will move toward the future described in its strategic plan.

The above are but a few types of planning methods available to the reader. As community action professionals strategic planning is the method of choice. We do not assert any single method to be wholly adequate or other methods without merit. Rather, we present proven concepts that should prove useful in our never-ending mission of eliminating the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty.

MAKING PLANNING A PRIORITY

To establish a successful community action strategic plan commitment, everyone, both the "serving" and the "served," in the agency must endorse and trust in the process. The board of directors, executive director and program directors must be clear and unequivocal in support of the effort. The plan must be of the highest priority and should be viewed as valuable if not indispensable as a tool of operation of your agency.

To make clear the commitment of the entire organization and to communicate its importance regular briefings should become commonplace at all staff and board meetings. The board must also adopt a plan of action that might well include a published resolution of support for the plan. Articulate the resolution to all employees and news media. Dr. Michael Ayers offers the following plan outline:

Planning: A Start

1. a brief statement of the reason(s) why you want to implement strategic planning;
2. a description of how the planning process will be organized, directed and overseen by top management;
3. a description of how the agency staff and others will be included in the planning process;
4. the general time-frame in which the process will operate--one year, two years, etc. (The specific calendar to be followed should be worked out by whatever committee, group or task force is created by the board to oversee the process.);
5. a set of expected outcomes of the process; and
6. a preliminary budget to facilitate the planning process. (Ayers 8)

We would like to suggest publication of a monthly "Community Action Strategic Plan Review." This is simply a one page review of progress update using the established calendar (see 4 above). Remember you have asked and perhaps required everyone to believe in the process. Investment in a costly (in time and money) process means the right to expect accountability. You want everyone to "buy into the process." Through staff and board meetings and the Community Action Strategic Plan Review people will feel part of, as opposed to a victim-of, the process. Communication is critical to insure full support of this critical endeavor. Remember, the very people you are updating are also those you may be counting on to execute the plan.

If the process is to be successful, everyone, from outreach worker to bus driver, from cook to client, must recognize the importance of the process and realize the potential direct and tangible benefit to them. As a shareholder of a given corporation expects results from the investment, so too all members of the agency must see the results of their investment. Time and talent are precious investments for people who are often overworked and almost always underpaid.

Failure to achieve an acceptable level of interest among the staff, board, clients or public can result in disaster. Not only will people feel outside the circle or sphere of influence, they become disenfranchised. A disenfranchised individual or groups of individuals can lead to a meaningless plan. Further, the process can be fun. It need not be an obligatory trip to the dentist. The process can be painless, result in growth and bring people together in ways not often available in complex institutions such as community action agencies. One of the best unintended side effects of strategic planning is to create a sense of camaraderie and cohesiveness among all those involved in the process.

THE PLANNING GROUP

Without question the legal obligation for planning and all policy matters rests with the board of directors. This reality does not limit or exclude participation from the community action strategic plan, rather the board must play a vital and central visionary role in a successful process. Because the board must consider a vast array of issues the strategic plan cannot and should not preoccupy the entire focus of the board. The board will be best served by appointing a "planning group" that is a task force with considerable focus. By appointing such a group, the board will be involved, receive reports and, of course, retain final authority over approval of the plan itself.

The authors have found a planning group of no less than six nor more than twelve to be optimum in size. The size of your agency should not dictate a smaller or larger planning group. We suggest the group should include:

- Executive director
- Two senior board members
- One junior board member
- Two program directors or senior administrators
- One support staff person
- Two present clients
- One former client
- One or two disaffected outside professionals

The chairperson need not be the board president or executive director, however, the chair should have the following characteristics:

- Understand board intentions for the process;
- Familiarity with agency operations;
- Understand the community action strategic planning process;
- Have good managerial skills;
- Be organized and methodical in thought, word and deed;
- Have the respect of all constituencies.

A third party facilitator may prove useful as well as a recorder who does not participate in the process. The recorder should be a person with the time to keep track of all data collected and able to record and report accurately any/all findings. The third party facilitator might be a paid consultant. A \$3 million agency might expect to pay a facilitator in the range of \$15,000-

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\$25,000. The facilitator should be a disinterested third party if at all possible. Further s/he must be able to form a consensus and have a real commitment not only to the product but to the process as well.

As the planning group defines its role and establishes a work plan it will prove useful to establish study groups (or subcommittees) of two or three people. The study groups can then gather the rather considerable data needed and begin to study the data collected. The study groups can assemble the data in usable bits and pieces so the facilitator can speed the total group process.

Should you decide you need help as a group in understanding strategic planning you might seek the counsel of a bank and/or large corporation. You might also seek a loaned executive as your facilitator. The National Association of Community Action Agencies has a listing of professionals that can assist as facilitators and/or outside counsel. Some will serve at little or low cost.

In the final analysis, the Board must select planning group members who:

- are committed to the success of the process;
- are sensitive to the goals of the agency;
- are able to communicate and work well in small study groups and within the entire planning group;
- are creative thinkers, people of vision and people who seek excellence in pursuit of a goal;
- are willing to accept the challenge of strategic thinking and group process;
- are willing to compromise for the common good yet present compelling arguments on issues of personal importance.

To insure a broad-based opportunity for input into the process the entire planning group should host public meetings with clients, open discussion group meetings with staff and at least one formal public hearing. This will allow any/all interested parties to become involved without expanding the planning group beyond a reasonable and workable number. Everyone interested in expressing an opinion should be welcome to do so.

In addition, formally requesting input from all major funding sources is strongly recommended. Your state CSBG agency should be among those invited to provide input. The purpose of such involvement is two-fold. First, to ascertain the directions deemed important by your funders, and second, to be able to show your desire and efforts to work cooperatively.

Appendix 2 from the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce suggests a format for asking members or constituents about services provided by your organization. Gathering this

information may help you assess the current usefulness of your programs and give you an idea of future directions for your agency.

With funding sources use a simple questionnaire with several open-ended questions. The questionnaire should be addressed to the senior executive, and perhaps directed to your grant manager. The cover letter should be sent from the planning group and returned to the chair to assure uncensored return to the group. Your questions must be designed to fit the need of your specific agency but might include inquiry in areas of past performance, areas of expected need, current areas of need and general open-ended questions of mission and direction.

All feedback should be considered in total, not one response compared to another. Rather, look at the data of all sources of funding and determine trends, common themes and similarity. Discount areas only one respondent feels important and attempt to build a "picture" with different pieces forming a common view.

In other words, if three sources indicate concern over, let's say, accounting accuracy, then you have a common view and can develop a picture of your needs based on three views of the same picture. If only one source views this area with concern, then it may not warrant inclusion in the plan.

IV. PROCESS IMPLEMENTATION

Many tasks are needed to insure the success of your community action strategic plan process and might include:

- Review of agency history, i.e., founding documents, IRS status, incorporation and relevant dates, people and places;
- Gathering information on current and perhaps past operations, i.e., policy manuals and procedures;
- Assessment of past, present and future goals;
- Identification of strategic issues or challenges;
- Review goals for the future based upon the historic past of your agency;
- Establishing various strategies, activities and plans to address your goals and agency mission;
- Adopt a clear goal (mission) statement;
- Budget preparation for each year of the plan with contingency evaluation criteria;
- Establish an on-going input vehicle to allow all parties on-going opportunities for comment.

Let's examine some of the above in an attempt to understand more fully what is needed to accomplish each task outlined.

History - By using both verbal and written resources you should be able to assemble a rather impressive historic account of your community action agency. Perhaps if viewed like a scrapbook this task will not only be valuable but also fun. Remember, a serious process can also be enjoyable. Include copies of relevant documents, state and federal laws, past and present legal documents, annual reports, press coverage, fiscal reports, audits and the like.

Current Operations - Compile all recent policies (personnel, purchasing, etc.) demographic data on service area, maps of service area with numbers of clients and distances between service centers, evaluations (third party and self) as well as budgets. If available, use a personal computer to graphically organize this data into a cohesive picture.

Remember, keep all the material generated at one location. Your planning group recorder should be the custodian of all data. Prepare an inventory and listing of all data collected. This will allow for prompt and easy access. Not every document will need review but all should be maintained. Don't be alarmed when some important material cannot be located. This institutional misfiling is unfortunately ever present. Make note in your inventory of any missing material. If located later, place among your inventory. Include past reports to the board, minutes and staff reports to funding sources.

ROLES: BOARD, STAFF, CLIENTS, OTHERS

The board of directors is involved throughout the process; they approve the effort at the outset and approve the plan when it is completed. The planning group should make a deliberate effort to meet, on at least one occasion, with the board in a formal session of at least two hours. Be sure most board members are present. This meeting could be in a retreat format and organized to obtain the board's perspectives on the agency's mission, use of resources, and pattern of services.

Don't be surprised if several board members appear apprehensive, even fearful. The board member who is often present but lacks genuine understanding of the planning process may be afraid to further embarrass him/herself. With explanations, perhaps by other board members, the reluctant member can be encouraged to participate.

In Bryson's book, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, Chapter 4 discusses retreats of four hours to three days! Realistically, unless your board is very unique, two to four hours will be about all they will sit for. If you have a facilitator, s/he will be very useful in maximizing the full potential of your time together.

After consulting with the board, the planning group could begin to gather information and perspectives from the agency staff. As noted earlier, this can be done through meetings, interviews with key staff persons or questionnaires. Meetings are the most effective means because they provide a forum in which discussions can occur to "work on" issues, feelings, perspectives and facts about the agency. Such meetings should be moderated and facilitated by a group member or your facilitator.

It will be important to take notes during the meeting to record the thoughts and contributions of the various staff members. Any such notes, however, should only be used by the planning group. Staff members might be unwilling to share their thoughts on the weaknesses of the organization if they feel that the information might be recorded or fed back to the agency management and used for purposes other than planning. No matter how difficult, the management staff should not attend this meeting and confidentiality must be expected. This is not always a reality as we well know. Staff should be encouraged to speak openly and without fear of retaliation if the comments are not complementary or positive. However, the facilitator must work to assure that the meetings are generally kept on a positive and constructive path and are not allowed to become simple forums for staff complaints.

Process Implementation

Clients participation in a retreat or even a meeting may be difficult to obtain. Agencies should not seek input solely from the "happy" clients or the "problem" clients. Your process can be easily directed off course if you are not extremely careful. Careful random selection of clients is imperative. Appendix 2 is a sample client questionnaire for use in community action strategic planning. Appendix 3 is included as an illustration of a more detailed type of questionnaire/survey.

Any written correspondence (good or bad) from clients over a two to three year period could be included in your data collection on client input. If you have a Head Start program, you may wish a meeting with the Parent Advisory Council. Other programs may have their own group of leaders who should be invited to participate in the process.

Other information regarding the effectiveness and possible future directions of the agency can be obtained from the staffs of state agencies with whom the agency works. Since the agency periodically provides reports on the operation of the various state and federally funded programs and services to state agency grant managers and other state employees, these state agency personnel become a good potential source for information and perspective.

The staffs of the area planning agencies, local economic development councils or organizations and the state might also be helpful in identifying any planned or potential development projects which will enhance the future economic health of the service area. The planning group should encourage the use of any and all information sources to assist in gaining a good sense of the agency's past, current and possible future operations. The data and information should be obtained by using a variety of information-gathering tools.

Finally, the United Way and other professional human service agencies that work in your service area can and should be consulted. We suggest you survey them using Appendix 4 as a model.

INFORMATION ANALYSIS

Now what to do with all this material! First, don't despair. The end is at hand. Think of baking a cake the old fashioned way. You mix so many ingredients and it looks, well, not so great until you bake the cake. It's time to mix the ingredients of our plan in preparation for the end result. Ayers suggests you arrange all your material as follows:

Internal Considerations

- agency organizational arrangements focusing on management effectiveness;
- agency fiscal resources, their allocation and uses;
- agency program offerings, their efficiency and scope; and
- agency staffing patterns, their relationship to program needs and demands.

External Considerations

- **client demographics**, their current and future configuration;
- **funding sources**, their current and projected adequacy in meeting the agency needs for serving clients adequately;
- **community support**, focusing on general acceptance and recognition of the agency's value to its service area;
- **legislative affairs**, focusing on pending changes in government support for agency efforts to serve the disadvantaged; and
- **economic and social conditions**, focusing on trends and changes in the area's economic and social circumstances.

You might also wish to organize your data on a function basis, looking at activities required rather than the relationship to your agency. Consider:

- **management**, organizational arrangements and management effectiveness in accomplishing the agency's mission and goals;
- **fiscal matters**, past, current and future funding sources and resource allocation patterns in relationship to current and projected need;
- **program/service offerings**, effectiveness of past, present and future program and service provisions in relationship to the current and projected client needs and changing economic and social circumstances; and
- **contingencies**, using several "what if" scenarios.

An approach to categorize the information on a **constituent group** basis may also be helpful. The constituent groups could be **the agency, the clients and the community**; the community being split to include the agency's service area as a community and the various levels of government.

As the planning group begins to formulate the report through analysis of the various factors, forces and conditions, highlighting the history of the agency may help you make connection from the past and present to the future. As you draw nearer to the present enhance your discussion and connect it to your past. Again, think of it as a road map showing where you are, where you've been and where you plan to go in the future. For example: a paragraph for 1964 and perhaps a page for 1992 and 1993. You will want to reaffirm whenever possible your efforts to address the agency goals within all three time-lines.

As you prepare your historic review it might prove useful to once again turn to Appendix 1. As we have highlighted the national history you may wish to find a local parallel for illustration purposes. Remember all of your analysis should be done to focus how effectively the agency has accomplished its mission and goals. This effort will show a "focus continuum"

Process Implementation

in serving the client population. Further, outside sources will be better equipped to assess your overall direction.

RETURN TO SWOT

Evaluation and community action strategic planning must look to your **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats**. View your strengths as challenges to offset any weaknesses. Peter Drucker and most management theorists and practitioners agree organizations must take into full account both weaknesses and threats, yet view each as potential opportunities for growth. As you prepare your SWOT analysis consider:

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>STRENGTHS</u>	<u>WEAKNESSES</u>	<u>OPPORTUNITIES</u>	<u>THREATS</u>
A. People				
B. Programs				
C. Organization				
D. Facilities/ Locality				
E. Support				

Add to the listing categories unique to your community action agency. List each category on its own pages and perhaps use legal (8-1/2 X 14) paper horizontally. Think of each category as it relates to:

- Mission/Goals
- Demographics
- Economic Conditions
- Social Environment
- Entire Community Needs

As you review each category look with considerable detail. For people look at staff, board, volunteers, clients. Do your board members attend meetings, work for the common good, serve on committees? Are policies voted on and forgotten? Does your budget serve as a guiding principal in your service plan?

The analysis should also assess the executive director as an agency strength or weakness. The planning group should be mindful that it is not their role to evaluate the executive director. That function remains a responsibility of the board of directors. As the planning group conducts its retreats with the board of directors, however, it can gain the board's assessment of whether

or not the current executive director provides a strength to the agency or a weakness. A similar sense can be gained in meetings with agency staff or others on this matter.

The planning group should also be mindful that the strength or weakness to the agency of a particular executive director may be driven by board policy or management style. In other words, an executive director may, in fact, be a weakness because the position itself is given no real authority within the management structure of the organization.

Review under the people category all the people affected by your community action agency. Do volunteers play a role and, in fact, is it a strength or a weakness? What about staff? If time allows a review of each position should be analyzed. Is the position still valuable, can some jobs be merged and do you need to create new positions for the future? The people category will be time consuming, but vital.

Of the five categories we provided; people, programs, organizations, facilities/locality and support each could again be assigned to a subcommittee of the planning group for detailed study. This will allow all to be involved at the end, yet allow for specialization.

You will likely want to look critically at your funding sources. Include projections, legislative activity and work by the National Community Action Foundation and your state or regional association. Also, how helpful are your associations in your work? Look at state and regional associations, National Community Action Foundation, National Association of Community Action Agencies, and others of importance to your agency. All are part of the support structure of your community action agency.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

You must rank the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats based on the value of each category and each condition and the potential of your agency. In other words, if you need a new service facility, how valuable is that compared to a centralized computer system or other areas you feel important? Define your strategic issues.

James Bryson defines a strategic issue as a "fundamental policy choice affecting an organization's mandates, mission, values, product or service level and mix, clients or users, cost, financing, organization, or management." (Bryson 139) As a result of SWOT analysis and other information and input from those consulted and involved, a number of trends, problems and options affecting the future of the agency should already be identified. They require deliberation as to whether they will be the policy options for the future.

Bryson suggests that this step in the strategic planning process is valuable but difficult because each of the identified issues involves differences of opinion or conflict. When prioritizing the list of issues you've compiled, many factors must be weighed and considered. Bryson presents seven considerations: (Bryson 139-140)

Process Implementation

- what will be done;
- why it will be done;
- how it will be done;
- when it will be done;
- where it will be done;
- who will do it; and
- who will be advantaged or disadvantaged by it.

Undertaking this issue identification process can produce valuable insight into the agency's mission and its existing or needed goals.

Several management leaders generally agree with the above considerations. "In developing the agency's goals for the strategic plan, those involved should draw heavily upon the SWOT and strategic issues analysis discussed earlier. For example, if one of the important trends identified during the analysis phase indicated that infant mortality within the service area was high and either remaining at that level or increasing, the agency could identify this as a strategic issue to pursue. If adopted, the issue can be transformed into the goal statement above. The adopted goal, then, becomes a strategy for addressing the issue discovered in the analysis and also to accomplish the stated mission of the agency.

After the goals are prioritized and while preparing them for recommendation to the board, a review of existing program and service offerings should be conducted. The priority assigned to the agency's goals should be reflected in the level and mix of program and service offerings. If the match between goal and program priority is not high, either the goal should be reconsidered or the resources allocated to the program or service adjusted accordingly." (Ayers 32-33)

FINANCIAL REALITIES

As you prepare your final analysis of your data you will likely find greater need than money. Your client members of your planning group will likely become concerned and perhaps agitated. Don't despair. Each area of need that remains unaddressed remains an opportunity for future strategic plans. You must also consider your operational plan and budget for the current year. This area and personnel are perhaps the most challenging to address.

All information regarding funding sources, their adequacy or inadequacy, and their potential should be reviewed at this time. The prioritized goals, programs and services should be estimated to show the cost of each and to identify the sources of funding available or needed. It is also appropriate to review any capital budget needs for new facilities or major renovations. As is the case with the operational budget, both the estimated costs and revenues required must be identified.

In addition to the above financial realities you must report the projected expenditure requirements and funding requirements and potential for the next three to five years. Because

these reports concern the future, the detail need not be great. The reports should, however, indicate how the proposed spending and funding patterns will accomplish the strategic goals and mission of the agency.

As stated early in this material, don't hire an architect for your dream house unless the dream is a likely reality. We have often seen and in one case had to live with a plan that was fiscally unrealistic; where revenue didn't materialize to meet four of five stated strategic goals. A dream is a dream, but reality pays the mortgage!

V. YOUR DRAFT PLAN

In general, the entire strategic planning process may take your organization up to a year. Much of this time will be spent gathering information and focusing your plan. The actual writing of the plan may take as few as three drafts or as many as 6 or 7, depending on the style of your planning group.

We strongly suggest that your planning group agree on a format for your plan before someone attempts a first draft. We also encourage you to agree early on a rough outline of what the plan might look like because planning group members may have very different images of what a strategic plan is.

The critical issues addressed in your plan should influence the format of the plan. For example, if one of the major issues facing your organization is whether to erect a new building, you will probably have a section in your plan that addresses facilities. If your facilities are not a major issue, you will not need such a section.

After you have reached a relatively agreed upon format, one person will need to volunteer to begin the drafting process in concert with the planning group recorder. It is quite common for new critical issues to emerge as the first draft of your plan is being developed or reviewed. For example, your financial strategies may not look sound when you attempt to develop three-year budgets. Don't be overly concerned if your first draft is not perfect. The draft will be improved and revised through the review process.

The following is but one possible outline.

- A. Mission Statement/Goals
- B. Strategic Issues
- C. Objectives to Address Issues
- D. Programs and Services to Address Objectives
- E. Policy and Procedure Changes
- F. Facilities to Accomplish Goals
- G. Financial Capabilities to Meet Objectives

When your plan is near its final form, we also suggest you ask:

Where is there risk in this plan? Do you want to live with this level of risk or should you do something to reduce the risk? Are your goals too high or not high enough?

Remember, all successful entrepreneurs have one element in common, the ability to ascertain and undertake risk. Your task is to develop a plan that is both sound and implementable and one that people will understand and can carry out. Remember that you will

never have a perfect plan. Your organization will change continually as will conditions in the world around you. As you act on your plan you will get new information which may require adjustments in your vision of the future or in your plan for getting there.

The final drafting meeting is second in importance only to your first meeting when you establish the ground rules. The planning group should plan at least a three hour final drafting meeting. We encourage you to have refreshments and get to work. All areas of disagreement should be worked out by consensus if possible. If not possible, use a voting procedure. Again, your plan may not be perfect, but it will be your organization's plan to meet the future.

The plan should be presented to the board at a regularly scheduled meeting of the board. The review and approval of the plan should include open discussion and approval. If it is such that all of the elements of the proposed plan cannot be adequately reviewed in one meeting of the board, the board may wish to call a second meeting or postpone final action until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The buck stops here. The board of directors will need adequate time to read the final draft prior to the meeting. When the board meets, they can and should be deliberate. The future of community action depends upon them. The very health and well being of many disadvantaged, elderly and physically challenged individuals rests in the hands of your agency's vision. To plan for the future is an important step in securing the future.

VI. WHEN THE PLAN IS ADOPTED

When the plan is adopted the real work is about to begin!

A common misconception is: When your strategic plan is adopted, your planning is complete. A better view is: When your plan is adopted, a new phase of planning has begun. Remember that implementing the plan, monitoring progress, making mid-course corrections and updating your plan are all part of the strategic planning process. Make sure that the directions and strategies in your strategic plan are incorporated into the coming year's objectives and budget. Then act. A good plan needs good implementation. Review progress toward the plan at six- or twelve-month intervals.

Using the steps outlined in this manual you should have developed a picture of where you want your community action agency to be at some future time and outlined the best path to reach that destination. You will take action based upon your community action strategic plan, then adjust your plan with experience.

Remember that strategic planning is not an end in itself, but a tool to better accomplish your organization's mission. We hope that those you serve will be the ultimate beneficiaries of your planning.

**Accept the challenges so that you may feel
the exhilaration of victory....George S. Patton**

APPENDIX 1

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

The following is a concise history of community action agencies in America. By reviewing the national history of CAA's, you may find some insight on how your agency's history and mission meshes with the national history.

The role of your agency in the historical process is a strategic question and must be clearly understood prior to undertaking a serious planning process. Further, as noted previously, we cannot possibly plan systematically for the future without a definite understanding of our past.

Community action agencies exist in large part as a result of research conducted by the Ford Foundation which, in the 1950s, was examining new ways to address urban renewal and new approaches to social problems of cities. At this time in American history, poverty was seen as a black urban phenomenon. Rural and white urban poverty was seldom recognized. Demographic data of the 1950s showed a growing inequality between black and white Americans. In 1940, black unemployment was 20% higher than that of whites. By 1953, the relative rate had risen to 71% and, between 1953-1963, the average differentials continued to rise to 112%. The rate of economic growth of America during the period 1950-1955 as indicated by the rate of change in the Gross National Product averaged 4.7%, but between 1955-1959 the rate declined to 2.3% leaving America in a sluggish economic state.

Seeking ways to show communities how to address the question of employment inequality, the Ford Foundation created The Grey Area Projects, supervised by the Public Affairs Programs of the Foundation. The Grey Area Projects take their name from the zone of deteriorating real estate in many American cities, later in history to be referred to as inner city communities. Between 1957-1960, the Ford Foundation established several grant programs in some 40 cities throughout the United States.

The work of the Foundation gained the attention of Attorney General Robert Kennedy who, along with the entire Kennedy family, had a long-standing interest in the problems of youth and poverty. The Foundation presented considerable evidence linking juvenile delinquency to the poverty conditions found in grey areas. As a result of the data presented by the Foundation and other leading authorities, the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime was established by executive order, May 11, 1961.

The birth of community action occurred after a several-year gestation period.

". . .by the end of 1964, there were seventeen community action agencies in being. The organization of these projects was

...the ... of ...

CONCLUSION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank ...

variously contrived, but they nearly all sought to establish, as their controlling authority, a workable coalition of government and non-government, official and unofficial representation. According to the balance of local power, this coalition might be all-inclusive and amorphous, or closely knit, but only Los Angeles attempted to keep authority wholly within the hands of government." (Marris and Rein 24)

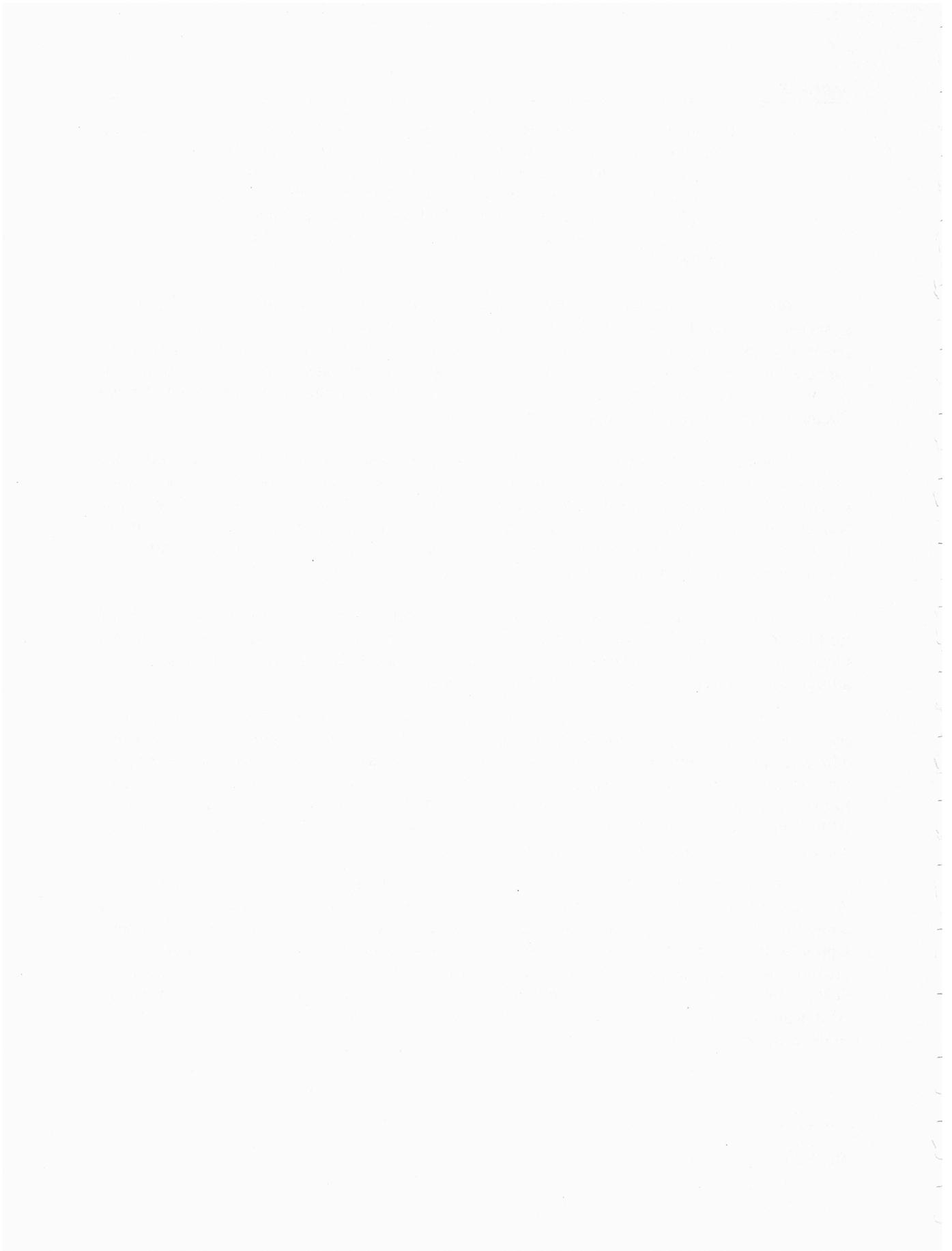
First, there were six grey area projects, known later as the first community action agencies, initiated chiefly by the Ford Foundation, though four also received grants from the President's Committee, and most had some other funds. They were: The Oakland Inter Agency Project; Community Progress Incorporated, New Haven; Action for Boston Community Development; Philadelphia Council for Community Advancement; United Planning Organization, Washington; North Carolina Fund.

The above organizations provided a model on which to build a national program. President Lyndon B. Johnson went on to declare the "war on poverty," not unlike David Lloyd George who requested of the British Parliament funds to wage "warfare against poverty." The war on poverty of which the Economic Opportunity Act was the centerpiece was a direct result of the joint effort of the third sector (The Ford Foundation) and the government sector (The President's Commission on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime).

President Johnson, in his January 4, 1964, budget request to Congress asked for \$500 million for the financing of the "war on poverty," through enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The appropriations request included \$50 million for development and administration of local community action programs (CAPs).

In the months between the proposal by President Johnson in January and final passage by Congress in August, considerable debate ensued both in Congress and within the administration. Several programmatic and administrative concerns received consideration by the various parties involved. On March 16, 1964, President Johnson sent a "Message on Poverty" to the Congress of the United States. In part, he said "There are millions of Americans - one-fifth of our people - who have not shared in the abundance which has been granted to most of us, and on whom the gates of opportunity have been closed."

On August 20, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act. In signing the bill, he declared that the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act was a commitment of a "great nation...to eradicate poverty among its people." The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-452) had several provisions: first and foremost, the creation of the Office of Economic Opportunity and operational authorization for three years (1965-1967). The Act also provided funding for the first year. The Act was to ensure all Americans with opportunities for work, for education and training, and "...for a chance to live in decency and dignity." (Sobel 17)



By the end of January 1966, more than nine hundred grants had been made for the establishment or planning of Community Action Programs in some one thousand counties. All of the fifty largest cities in the country had CAPs.

CAP and OEO were often criticized on both the political left for being too conservative and nonadversarial and, on the right, for being too extreme. As a result, the antipoverty effort received considerable public exposure.

Following the urban riots of the late 1960s, the antipoverty programs again became a target of both praise and criticism. Mayor Harold M. Tollefson of Tacoma, Washington, then president of the National League of Cities, said, "We are disturbed at recent charges" that the antipoverty program "has been responsible for stirring up (racial) unrest (and violence)."

The goal of affording economic opportunity, fair employment practices, and equal treatment to the poor, the original objective of grey area projects, was questioned. Within the academic community, the antipoverty effort received mixed reviews.

Consistently throughout the early years of community action, the conflict of political ideology was debated from the Halls of Congress to the homes of America. The strong support in Congress and President Johnson's personal commitment to community action resulted in continued federal funding. On March 14, 1967, President Johnson submitted plans to continue the antipoverty program. His plan was called a "strategy against poverty."

In early December 1967, both the House and Senate authorized \$1.98 billion for 1968, some \$80 million less than President Johnson's request and \$2.18 billion for FFY'69. The bill altered the administration of Community Action Programs (CAPs) to give some control to local public officials. Heretofore, the CAPs generally were administered by private, nonprofit organizations and seldom units of governments.

Richard M. Nixon took office as President of the United States on January 20, 1969. Less than one month later, he delivered a special message to Congress on poverty, February 19, 1969. Nixon wasted no time as he proposed shifting the Head Start Program to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) and the Job Corps to the Department of Labor (DOL). The Foster Grandparents program and the Comprehensive Health Centers would likewise be transferred to HEW.

On March 13 and 27, 1969, President Nixon disclosed a detailed reorganization plan cutting spending, consolidating services, and shifting program responsibility away from the federal government. President Nixon lauded the National Alliance of Businessmen on March 15, 1969, for its work in finding jobs for the hard-core unemployed. In a brief talk at the second annual meeting of the alliance, a non-partisan group organized during the Johnson Administration, Nixon told the group that its program had "the complete, unqualified support of this Administration." He suggested that the alliance focus especially on the problem of finding jobs for youths and, if possible, that it extend its program to smaller towns and cities.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study. It highlights the need for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and the role of the researcher in this process.

The second part of the paper delves into the methodology used for the study. It details the data collection methods, the sample size, and the statistical techniques employed to analyze the data.

The third part of the paper presents the results of the study. It includes a detailed description of the findings, supported by statistical evidence and graphical representations where applicable.

The fourth part of the paper discusses the implications of the findings. It explores the practical applications of the research and the potential impact on the field of study.

The fifth part of the paper concludes the study. It summarizes the key findings and offers suggestions for future research. The author also acknowledges the limitations of the study and expresses gratitude to those who supported the research.

The author is grateful to the following individuals for their assistance and support during the course of this research: [Name], [Name], and [Name].

This research was supported by the [Organization/Institution]. The author wishes to express their appreciation to the management and staff of the organization for their cooperation and support.

The author is also indebted to the following individuals for their valuable comments and suggestions: [Name], [Name], and [Name].

The author is confident that the findings of this study will contribute to the existing knowledge in the field and provide a basis for further research.

The author is available for further inquiries and discussions. Contact information: [Phone Number], [Email Address].

Appendix 1

This acknowledgement by Nixon was the first serious suggestion of shifting antipoverty programs to the private sector.

In September 1972, President Nixon signed into law a bill providing for a three-year continuation of OEO after vetoing a two-year extension in 1971. Acting OEO Director Frank Carlucci wanted cities to use revenue sharing to fund CAPs.

President Nixon submitted his fiscal 1974 budget to Congress January 29, 1973. It called for a final dissolution of the Office of Economic Opportunity, the coordinating agency for antipoverty programs since the Johnson Administration, ending the \$384 million community action program. To accomplish this task, Nixon named Howard J. Phillips to serve as Director of OEO with orders to close agencies, while legal services for the poor would be reorganized as an independent agency, funded at \$71.5 million.

On March 14, 1973, four Democratic senators brought suit in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, seeking removal of Phillips as acting director of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), on grounds that federal law required Senate confirmation of the heads of federal departments within 30 days of their appointment. The senators were Harrison A. Williams (N.J.), chairman of the Labor and Public Welfare Committee, and Claiborne Pell (R.I.), Walter F. Mondale (Minn.) and William D. Hathaway (Me.).

"U. S. District Court Judge William Jones ordered Acting OEO Director Phillips April 11, 1973, to cease dismantling his agency and continue funding antipoverty programs at Congressionally appropriated levels 'until Congress changes that command."

Gerald R. Ford succeeded Richard M. Nixon August 9, 1974, as President of the U. S. In the decade that his predecessors, Lyndon Johnson and Nixon, had sought to aid the poor, the number of Americans living in poverty had declined from 36.1 million (or 19% of the population) in 1964 to 24.8 million (11.6% of the population) in 1974. In the calendar year (1974) in which Ford became President, nearly 29 million Americans, or 13.6% of the nation, received public assistance. During his first fiscal year in office (fiscal 1975), federal expenditures on the various programs for aiding the poor totaled \$27.8 billion.

Ford pointed out that most OEO programs, except for the Community Action Program (CAP), had been transferred to established departments and that there was much duplication in CAP and the Model Cities Program.

A compromise bill ending the existence of the controversial Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) but extending many of its programs through fiscal 1977 was passed by Senate voice vote December 19, 1974, and a 244-43 House vote December 20. President Ford signed the measure January 4, 1975.

The bill replaced the OEO with an independent Community Services Administration (CSA) immediately on enactment. Programs continued through fiscal 1977 included local community action, replacing forever the term community action program, community economic development, community food and nutrition, comprehensive health services, migrant workers, poverty research, Native Americans, Head Start and Follow Through.

Former Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia was elected President of the United States November 2, 1976, for a term beginning in January 1977. Carter, the Democratic candidate, defeated Republican incumbent Gerald R. Ford after a campaign in which welfare and the poor were major but not decisive issues.

The Carter Administration attempted to hold the line on further cuts in the budget of CSA. Based upon Congressional and Administration review, CSA had recovered from the charges of massive mismanagement and continued the programs operated by local community action agencies. In fact, the last budget request of President Carter would have greatly increased the appropriation of CSA and would have increased community action agency budgets as much as 200%.

The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 was to result in a realignment of domestic policy not experienced by the American people since the New Deal.

The effort to end the war on poverty by President Nixon and Acting OEO Director Howard Phillips finally came to fruition under Reagan with the passage of the Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act of 1981. Under provisions of the Act, CSA would cease to exist, leaving no federal agency to concentrate on the needs of the poor. The establishment of the Community Services Block Grant allowed states to continue to fund community action agencies but with only a very small staff within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), known as the Office of Community Services.

With the closure of CSA on September 30, 1982, the community action agencies were forced to become dependent upon a newly created state agencies. In the final days of debate on Reagan's Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act of 1981, Congress requested 90% of all Community Services Block Grant Funds be allocated to existing community action agencies with tri-partite boards.

The close of the Community Services Administration marked the end of the major component of the war on poverty. Even with the demise of CSA, community action agencies do continue. (De Land 67-101)

APPENDIX 2
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBER SURVEY

APPENDIX 2

Jacksonville, Illinois Chamber of Commerce Member Opinion Survey

CHAMBER PRIORITIES SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS: Most of the questions can be answered by placing an X across the bracketed number next to the response you wish to make. Answer other questions in your own words or fill in as asked.

Please tell us how valuable you feel the following programs and services of the Chamber are. Rate their value on a scale of 1 (very low value) to 5 (very high value).

	Value Scale					Don't Know
	Low				High	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Agri-Business Banquet	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Annual Meeting	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Apple for a Teacher (teacher recognition)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Attendance at Local Government Meetings	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Business After Hours (social hosted by member)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Business Development Information	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
CACHE (fund raising for colleges)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Chamber Annual Planning Conference	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Communication with Existing Industries	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Community Improvement	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Consumer Information Services	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Economic Development	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Golf Outing — Country Club	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Golf Outing — The Links	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Involvement in Education	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Involvement in Regional & State Chamber Programs & Issues	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Industrial Development & Expansion	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
JAIC (Jacksonville Area Industrial Corp.)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Legislative Reports & Data Affecting Businesses	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Newcomer Material on Jacksonville	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Newsletter	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
PAC-49 (Political Action Committee)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Promote Tourism & Conventions	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Promotion of Area as a fine place to live and do business	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Provide Local & State Travel and Recreational Information	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Public Relations of Chamber Activities	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Recognition of New and Expanded Businesses	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Seminars for Members	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Steak Fry	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Washington, D.C. Legislative Trip	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
West Central Illinois Road Improvement	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

The history of the United States is a complex and multifaceted story that spans centuries and continents.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

The first European settlers in North America were primarily men seeking economic opportunities and religious freedom.

These early settlements were often small and isolated, with limited resources and a high degree of self-sufficiency.

Over time, these settlements grew and developed, leading to the formation of distinct regional cultures and identities.

The process of westward expansion was driven by a combination of economic incentives and a sense of destiny.

This expansion led to the acquisition of vast territories and the displacement of Native American populations.

The American Revolution was a pivotal moment in the nation's history, marking the birth of a new republic.

The revolution was fought over issues of self-governance and the rights of the individual.

The resulting Constitution established a framework for a federal government with a system of checks and balances.

The early years of the republic were marked by political instability and economic challenges.

Despite these difficulties, the United States emerged as a powerful and influential nation on the world stage.

The Civil War was a defining moment in American history, fought over the issue of slavery.

The war resulted in the abolition of slavery and the preservation of the Union.

The Reconstruction era was a period of significant social and political change in the South.

The United States emerged from the Civil War as a more unified and powerful nation.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were characterized by rapid industrialization and westward expansion.

The United States became a global superpower, leading the world in economic and military power.

APPENDIX 2 - Page 2

The Chamber Commercial & Small Business Development Committee is anxious to assist you in improving your business. They have offered workshops and seminars based on the needs of Chamber members. In order to continue our seminars, please let us know what topics you would prefer.

	Please Check	
	Yes	No
"How To" Workshops		
1) How to reduce inventory and not lose sales.	___	___
2) How to prevent fraud.	___	___
3) How to tell if your customers are paying on time.	___	___
4) How to read business financial statements.	___	___
5) How to evaluate the purchase of a business.	___	___
6) How to calculate cash flow.	___	___
7) How to motivate employees to increase your profits.	___	___
8) How to avoid bad checks.	___	___

Other Available Workshops

1) "Written Communication"	___	___
2) "Effective Selling"	___	___
3) "Advertising"	___	___
4) "Developing a Plan for our Business"	___	___
5) "Women in Management"	___	___
6) "Financing your Business"	___	___
7) "Stress Management"	___	___
8) "Small Business Accounting"	___	___
9) "Non-Verbal Communication"	___	___
10) "Employee Selection & Interviewing"	___	___
11) "Time Management"	___	___
12) "Management Skills for Secretaries"	___	___
13) "How Legislation Effects your Business"	___	___
14) "Sales, Marketing, and Customer Relations"	___	___
15) "Dale Carnegie Courses"	___	___
16) "Workmen's Comp/Unemployment Insurance Procedures"	___	___

Other Seminar Topics: _____

When would you prefer to meet?
 Please circle one: Evening Saturday Weekdays: AM PM

Do you read the Chamber Newsletter? Yes () No ()
 Please rate it: Good () Fair () Poor ()

What information or feature would you like to see added? _____

Have you ever attended the Annual Meeting? Yes () No ()

Suggestions? _____



APPENDIX 2 - Page 3

Do you believe the Chamber should be actively involved in local political issues? Yes () No ()

Do you know the Chamber was instrumental in bringing United Gilsonite Labs to Jacksonville? Yes () No ()

Do you know the Chamber organized a Visitors & Conventions Bureau funded by a motel room tax? Yes () No ()

Do you know the Chamber has formed a task force to study the long range operation and maintenance of Jacksonville parks? Yes () No ()

Do you know the Chamber has developed a booklet to assist people who want to start their own business? Yes () No ()

Have you contacted the Chamber in the last 12 months? Yes () No ()

If yes, how did you contact the Chamber (check all that apply)

A. () by telephone C. () by mail

B. () by stopping in D. () other (please explain) _____

How satisfied were you with:	Not Satisfied			Very Satisfied	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
A. The service	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
B. The information	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
C. The office staff	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
D. The office facility	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
E. Location of office	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Rate the Chamber:	Poor		Fair		Excellent
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
A. The overall program	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
B. Volunteer leadership	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
C. Professional Staff	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
D. Communications with members	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
E. Ability to mold opinion	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
F. As a voice of business	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
G. Value to community	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
H. Service to members	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I. Assisting small business	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Do you believe the Chamber has a:	None		Some		Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. "Business" orientation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2. "Political" orientation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
3. "Social" orientation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
4. "Retail" orientation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

1. The first step in the process of identifying a problem is to recognize that a problem exists. This is often done by comparing current performance with a desired state or goal.

2. Once a problem is identified, the next step is to define the problem more precisely. This involves determining the scope and boundaries of the problem.

3. The third step is to analyze the problem. This involves identifying the causes of the problem and the factors that influence it.

4. The fourth step is to generate alternative solutions. This involves brainstorming and evaluating different ways to address the problem.

5. The fifth step is to select a solution. This involves choosing the most feasible and effective solution from the alternatives.

6. The sixth step is to implement the solution. This involves putting the chosen solution into action.

7. The seventh step is to evaluate the results. This involves monitoring the progress of the solution and assessing its effectiveness.

8. The eighth step is to adjust the solution if necessary. This involves making changes to the solution based on the results of the evaluation.

9. The ninth step is to document the process. This involves recording the steps taken and the results achieved.

10. The tenth step is to communicate the results. This involves sharing the findings and conclusions with others.

11. The eleventh step is to reflect on the process. This involves thinking about what was learned and how it can be applied in the future.

12. The twelfth step is to plan for the future. This involves identifying potential future problems and developing strategies to prevent them.

13. The thirteenth step is to review the process. This involves looking back at the entire process and assessing its overall effectiveness.

14. The fourteenth step is to celebrate success. This involves recognizing and rewarding the efforts of those who contributed to the solution.

15. The fifteenth step is to learn from the experience. This involves identifying lessons learned and applying them to future problems.

16. The sixteenth step is to share the experience. This involves sharing the story of the problem and its solution with others.

17. The seventeenth step is to continue to improve. This involves ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the solution remains effective.

18. The eighteenth step is to stay alert. This involves being aware of potential future problems and ready to act if they arise.