


# Topic 2.3 Lecture 1

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## The Process and Product of Community Visioning




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Welcome to lecture 1 of Topic 2.3. In this lecture we are going to introduce the concept of community visioning.



## Collaborative Planning Perspective

- Concerned with:
  - The processes used in communities for planning
- Believes community capacity can be built through developing the ability of diverse community stakeholders to work together to:
  - **Develop a shared vision for the future of their community**
  - Develop a plan to achieve the community's preferred future, and
  - Collectively take action to implement the plan and achieve the community's preferred future



In Topic 1.1 'Community Building' we noted that the collaborative planning perspective for building community capacity was one of seven perspectives for building community capacity that has been identified by Community Capacity Builders.

The collaborative planning perspective focuses on the processes used in communities for planning and considers that community capacity can be built by developing the ability of diverse community stakeholders to work together to:

Develop a shared vision for the future of their community

Develop a plan to achieve the community's preferred future, and

Collectively take action to implement the plan and achieve the community's preferred future

This topic, Topic 2.3 'Community Visioning', focuses on the first stage of the collaborative planning perspective – developing a shared vision for the future.



# Education for Sustainable Development

- Key Principles:
  - Envisioning a better future
  - Systems thinking
  - Critical thinking and reflection
  - Participation in decision making
  - Partnerships for change

Department of the Environment Water Heritage and the Arts, 2009



In the introduction Lecture for this course, we noted how important community visioning is as envisioning a better future is a key principle of education for sustainable development.

We identified in the introductory lecture that:

- Envisioning a better future involves developing visioning processes that enable people to articulate a vision of their ideal future. Visioning processes help people to connect their immediate actions with their preferred future and motivate people to undertake change.



## Collecting Information from Groups

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- Large Group Interventions
  - Commonly called 'whole system' interventions
  - Examples:
    - World Cafe
    - Future Search Conference
  - **Commonly used for Community Visioning Projects**



We also referred to community visioning in Topic 1.2 Community Based Research. In Topic 1.2 we noted that large group interventions are often used for whole of community visioning projects to collect primary information from large groups of diverse stakeholders for decision making.



## Uses of Community Visioning


- Collaborative 'whole of community' visioning and planning for large geographic areas
- Collaborative 'whole of community' visioning and planning for smaller geographical areas that link their visioning and planning to the visioning and planning processes of larger geographical areas, and
- Collaborative visioning and planning for projects and organisations



We will see during this topic, that in addition to being used for large scale 'whole of community' visioning and planning for large geographical areas, community visioning can be used for

Collaborative 'whole of community' visioning and planning for smaller geographical areas that link their visioning and planning to the visioning and planning processes of larger geographical areas, and

Can be used for collaborative visioning and planning for projects and organisations



# Research Project 2

**My research objective is to discover the community's preferred shared vision for the future for the problem/opportunity of:**

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Refer to any interests and/or identities if applicable

**For the year:** \_\_\_\_\_

State year 3, 5, 10, 20 years into the future


**In the community of**

State place \_\_\_\_\_

**By incorporating the ideas of these community stakeholders:**

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Refer to any communities of interest and/or communities of identity if applicable.



In topic 1.2 'Community Based Research' we noted that the research objective, what you need to find out, for the second research project for this program can be stated by completing the template shown in this slide.

For this research project you need to determine the preferred shared vision for the future for your problem/opportunity.


This can be achieved by bringing together community stakeholders and facilitating a community visioning process.



## Community Visioning Models

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- Consist of:
  - A process
    - Uses dialogue and deliberation tools and techniques to enable communities to collectively explore and define what they want their community to be like in the future and to develop a plan to achieve their desired future
  - A core product
    - Vision statement
      - A formal statement that describes the vision the community desires and is aiming to achieve




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Models of Community visioning consist of a process and a core product.

Community visioning is a process used by communities to get ahead of trends and other changes by setting and implementing strategic directions in order to manage the changes they are facing. The *community visioning process* uses the dialogue and deliberation tools and techniques we explored in Topic 2.1 ‘Communication for Collaboration’ and Topic 2.2 ‘Community Deliberation’ to enable communities to collectively explore and define what they want their community to be like in the future and to develop a plan to achieve their desired future.

The core product of community visioning is a *vision statement*, which is a formal statement that describes the vision the community desires and is aiming to achieve.


Whilst the process of community visioning is often thought to be more important than the product; the vision statement, as it is by going through the visioning process that a community builds community capacity (networks, organisation, attitudes, leadership and skills), it is the product, the vision statement, which provides a community with a mental picture of what the community is aiming to achieve.



## Community Visioning Models

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- Examples:
  - The Oregon Model
  - The Asset Based Community Development Model
  - The Mobilizing for Action through Partnerships and Planning Model
- All models develop a shared vision for the future
- Differ in the stage of their process where the vision for the future is created:
  - Analyse current situation before create vision
    - Oregon Model
    - Asset Based Community Development Model
  - Develop vision before analysing the current situation
    - Mobilizing for Action through Partnerships and Planning Model



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There are a variety of community visioning models used by communities for collaborative planning. During this topic, we will explore three collaborative community planning models that incorporate a community visioning process:

The Oregon Model

The Asset Based Community Development Model, and

The Mobilizing for Action through Partnerships and Planning Model


Whilst all of these models develop a shared vision for the future, they differ in the stage of their process where the vision for the future is created.

As we will see during this topic:

The Oregon Model and the Asset Based Community Development Model analyses the current situation of the community before creating a shared vision for the future


The Mobilizing for Action through Partnerships and Planning Model develop the shared vision for the future before analysing the current situation of the community





## Risk with Both Approaches

- Current situation analysed first:
  - May only focus on historical data and established understandings of the future
  - Unable to break free from analytical thinking
- Vision created first:
  - Vision could be ungrounded or impractical
  - The current situation may not be understood



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There are problems associated with both approaches - analysing the current situation first and creating a vision of the future first.

If the current situation of the community is analysed before creating a vision for the future there is a risk that participants whilst creating a vision for the future may only focus on historical data and established understandings of the future and be unable to break free from analytical thinking to think creatively about the future.

If the preferred vision for the future is created before the current situation of the community is analysed there is a risk that whilst participants may think creatively about the future the resulting vision of the future could be ungrounded or impractical because they have not understood the complexity of the current situation in their community.



## References

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- Department of the Environment Water Heritage and the Arts (2009), *Living Sustainably: The Australian Government's National Action Plan for Education for sustainability*, Australian Government, Canberra.

