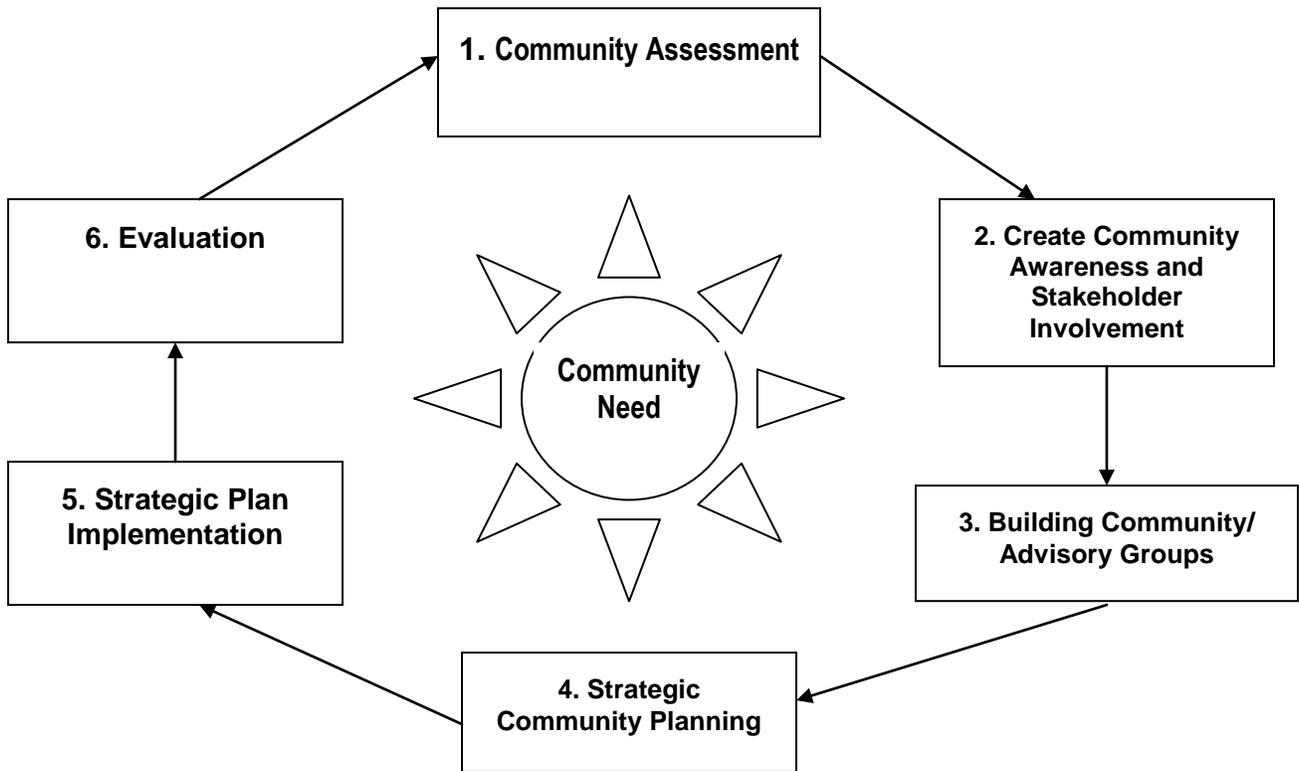


# The Community Building Lifecycle

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Community Building is a **process**. It may appear sequential, but each of the 'steps' may be repeated or revisited due to changes in the community, a project, stakeholders, situations, the economy, law or other events.



**1. WHERE IS YOUR COMMUNITY AND YOUR PROJECT IN THIS LIFE CYCLE?**

**2. HOW DO YOU KNOW?**

**3. AFTER REVIEWING YOUR WORKPLAN OR STRATEGIC PLAN, WHAT AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY BUILDING PROCESS DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST PERTINENT TO YOUR WORK?**

## **6-STEP COMMUNITY BUILDING PROCESS**

1. **Assess community needs (w. specific attention to poverty need the project was designed to address)**
  - Consult local teachers and experts about students' school performance. e.g. "67 students in our school district are reading below grade level."
  - Consult local nonprofit leaders about specific needs of low-income community, e.g. "families requested 12 tons more emergency food than we had available last year."
  - Consult local housing authority or nonprofit needs of low-income community, "e.g. 231 families lack access to affordable housing."
2. **Raise community awareness (of finding of community assessment)**
  - Create a press release and fax it to news outlets (press, radio, television, internet, etc.)
  - Do follow up calls to see that they
  - Ghost-write a letter to the editor for VISTA supervisor or local public figure.
  - Present at the meetings of local civic groups such as Kiwanis, Rotary, PTA.
  - Present findings at city council, tribal council and county commission meetings.
3. **Create a community group (to address the community need)**
  - Create a list of interview questions that get at potential board members commitment, skill and enthusiasm levels
  - Create a list of potential board members, be sure to include the low-income community that you intend to serve.
  - Begin to interview community members, leaders assessing interest in joining a community group.
  - Schedule first meeting and start an agenda, allow members to finish it when they meet.
  - Decide upon roles and responsibilities of group members.
  - Create board member job descriptions as a group.
4. **Develop a strategic plan to address the need in a way that encourages long-term change (with the community group)**
  - Facilitate step by step planning process
  - Develop a timeline

5. **Implement the strategic plan.**
  - Create a volunteer program within an existing organization or partnership.
  - Create a new organization
  - Create a service-learning program.
  - Create a campus-community service office.
  - Write grants to fund a program.
  - Create partnerships among college campuses, nonprofit organizations and schools to offer new services or better coordinate existing services.
  - Create partnerships with local businesses.
6. **Reflect on the effectiveness of the plan and its implementation, fine-tune, change and check in.**
  - Create and partner survey
  - Create a volunteer survey
  - Gather anecdotal evidence such as stories
  - Aggregate data, both quantifiable and anecdotal
  - Disperse report among board members
  - Decide upon what changes to make to your implementation strategy