

Planning for the Community Needs Assessment

Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members • Leadership team, agency staff, volunteers • Representatives from partner organizations • Other potential partners with a shared interest*
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the governing board of the need to conduct a full, comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (CNA) • Develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CNA goals** ○ Timeline, including updates and status reports ○ Data collection plan ○ Task list – create questions for surveys, interviews, forums, and focus groups • Recruit assessment team members
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 meetings lasting 1-3 hours each • Complete within 4 weeks
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and oversee a plan to conduct the CNA • Ensure assessment team diversity • Define responsibilities of the assessment team
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What information to collect ○ How to collect the information ○ Who will participate in forums, focus groups, and surveys ○ Timeline to conduct the assessment ○ Who will oversee and monitor the process

***Potential Partners and Volunteers:**

- University students in internships or graduate programs (i.e. planning, social work, public affairs)
- City or county staff in community development departments
- Head Start parents; School teachers, administrators, or Parent-Teacher Associations
- VISTA volunteers
- Chambers of Commerce, Lions Club, Rotary, and other service organizations
- Local churches, Salvation Army, or Catholic charity organizations

****Sample Goals:**

- Identify the causes and conditions of poverty in the service area
- Solicit recommendations of solutions to address barriers
- Determine level of poverty in the service area
- Gather data from broad categories, such as population profile, employment, education, income management, housing, emergency services, nutrition, linkages and coordination of services, self-sufficiency, health care