

Eight Characteristics of a Healthy, Vibrant, Resilient and Enterprising Community and Local Economy

1. Practices ongoing dialogue and broad-based community participation

Description: behaviours that value diversity and encourage active resident dialogue, participation and community ownership of the future.

Possible Indicators:

- Degree of resident participation in and control over decisions that affect community well being.
- Community participation levels by people of all abilities, races, genders, cultures and age groups.
- Presence of multiple mechanisms and opportunities for residents to contribute to community planning and decision making.
- Openness to alternative thinking and development approaches.
- Level of volunteering in the community.
- Quality of information sharing occurring within the community.
- Use of technologies to ensure widespread distribution of information.



2. Fosters commitment to place

Description: behaviours that strengthen resident affinity and connection to their community, environment and local economy.

Possible Indicators:

- Sense of community pride.
- Calendar of local celebrations and events that generate community gatherings and pride.
- Level of community generated solutions to local problems.
- Level of community support for local businesses.
- Degree of responses to local economic leakage.
- Welcoming spirit of the community.



3. Builds connections and collaboration

Description: behaviours that encourage collaborative planning and action, networking and strong relationships between residents, organisations, businesses and communities.

Possible Indicators:

- Level of local commitment toward collaborative actions and consensus building.
- Existence of mechanisms for cooperation between organisations.



4. Knows itself and builds on existing assets

Description: behaviours that discover, map and connect the capacities, passions, resources and relationships of the community.

Possible Indicators:

- Presence of mechanisms which map and connect community assets and capacities.
- Degree to which the resources of the whole community are drawn upon.
- Community awareness of its assets, capacities and windows of opportunity.



5. Shapes its future

Description: behaviours that enable a shared community vision of the future, as reflected in practical community goals, action plans and ranked priorities, coupled with a desire not to jeopardise the well-being of future generations.

Possible Indicators:

- Many and diverse opportunities for community conversation
- Creation of a community vision and community agenda that are widely supported shared and understood.
- Ability of the community to mobilise all sectors of the community around priorities.
- The balance between economy, environment and community well being.
- The focus on specific community actions to enhance community life.
- Use of performance measures and community indicators to enhance the flow of information and accountability to all residents, as well as providing guidance on whether the community is moving toward or away from stated goals.



6. Acts with idea and opportunity obsession

Description: behaviours that foster a never ending search for new and appropriate ideas, development possibilities and internal and external resources.

Possible Indicators:

- Presence of mechanisms and forums that support idea generation and discussion
- Sharing of experiences and knowledge to promote continuous and lifelong community learning.
- Ability of community to access outside resources.
- Degree of positive relationships with outside organisations allowing the community to gain access to information and technical and financial assistance and resources.



7. Embraces change and takes responsibility

Description: behaviours that strengthen the ability of the community to cope with change and recover from crises (eg economic diversification, local ownership, biological diversity, social support networks etc) coupled with a mindset that focuses on optimism, belief, expectation, hope and 'we can do it'.

Possible Indicators:

- Degree of diversity and local ownership in the local economy
- Presence of a resilient, 'can do' community spirit.
- Levels of optimism expressed by community members.
- Presence of formal and informal social support networks to support community members during times of challenge.



8. Generates leadership

Description: behaviours that continuously expands and renews the leadership capacity of the community

Possible Indicators:

- Perception within the community that local leadership is diversified and representative.
- Presence of a community leadership development strategy.
- Use of diverse and multiple resources to create opportunities for individual skill development.

