

# SESSION 1

WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU NEED  
ABOUT THE COMMUNITIES YOU SERVE?



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# WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU NEED ABOUT THE COMMUNITIES YOU SERVE?



## Session Overview

### Session Summary

In this session, participants will discuss five broad areas of data collection for the communities/counties they serve. They will reflect on the mission and vision of their organization to review what they want to accomplish in communities. Then they will determine in which of the five areas they need to gather data and what specific information is needed.

Participants will review sources for obtaining the necessary data and develop action plans for collecting it.

### Objectives

At the end of Session 1, participants will have:

1. become familiar with the five broad areas in which organizations can gather data about communities/counties
2. identified data to be collected in the following five areas:
  - area demographics/population
  - labor market conditions/workforce data
  - economic characteristics
  - physical infrastructure/locational conditions
  - community services/social infrastructure
3. developed an action plan for collecting the data

## Opening the Session

Review

Bridge

Introduction

## Skill Work

1. What information do you need to know about the communities/counties you serve?  
Strategy: group discussion
2. What information do you need about area demographics/population?  
Strategy: group discussion
3. What information do you need about the labor market/workforce?  
Strategy: group discussion
4. What information do you need about economic characteristics?  
Strategy: group discussion
5. What information do you need about physical infrastructure/locational conditions?  
Strategy: group discussion
6. What information do you need about social infrastructure/community services/?  
Strategy: group discussion
7. What is the process for finding and collecting the information you need to gather?  
Strategy: group discussion

## Follow-Through

Collecting data from various sources

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## Closing the Session

Review: What information do you need about the communities/counties you serve?

Preview: Analyze the information about the communities/counties you serve.

### Materials Needed

You will need some items for this session:

- co-facilitator's guide for Session 1
- Tool Kit 1.1A – “Profile Data Collection: Area Demographics/Population”
- Tool Kit 1.1B – “Profile Data Collection: Labor Market Conditions/Workforce”
- Tool Kit 1.1C – “Profile Data Collection: Economic Characteristics”
- Tool Kit 1.1D – “Profile Data Collection: Physical Infrastructure/Locational Conditions”
- Tool Kit 1.1E – “Profile Data Collection: Social Infrastructure/Community Services”
- Tool Kit 1.2 – “Community Assessment: Data-gathering Needs”
- Tool Kit 1.3 – “Sources of Information for Community/County Assessment”
- Flip Chart 1 – “Data-Gathering Areas”
- Flip Chart 2 – “Data Needed for Area Demographics/Population”
- Flip Chart 3 – “Data Needed for Labor Market/Workforce”
- Flip Chart 4 – “Data Needed for Economic Characteristics”
- Flip Chart 5 – “Data Needed for Physical Infrastructure/Locational Conditions”
- Flip Chart 6 – “Data Needed for Community Services/Social Infrastructure”
- Flip Chart 7 – “Action Plan for Collecting the Data”
- each organization's mission and vision, Part 1 Flip Chart 8 and Part 2, Flip Chart 2 and the vision of the community developed in COMMUNITY VOICES

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- overhead projector, screen/blank wall, flip chart pads, easel/stand, markers, tape

## Things To Do before the Session

1. Send a note to remind participants of the training session. Ask them to bring the organization's mission and vision flip charts (Flip Charts 8 and 23) developed in Parts 1 and 2 of *VOICES REACHING VISIONS* and the vision of the community developed in *COMMUNITY VOICES*.
2. Make copies of Tool Kits 1.1A-E, 1.2 and 1.3 for each participant.
3. Make a transparency or flip chart of Tool Kit 1.2
4. Prepare for training:
  - Review the session before the actual session takes place.
  - Check to be sure that all materials are developed.

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# Opening the Session

## Review

1. Ask volunteers to share some of their experiences writing an action plan since the previous session. Some specific questions might be:
  - How far are you in writing the plan?
  - What successes have you had in writing the plan?
  - Have you started to implement any of the action steps?
  - Have you had any challenges writing the plan?
  - How has your organization dealt with these challenges?

## Bridge

Previously, you developed vision and mission statements for your organization and internal goals to help your organization build a strong foundation to sustain its work. You also developed a vision of what you want the community to look like in the future. This vision provided your organization with something to strive toward in strengthening the communities that you serve.

## Introduction

In this session, you will begin the process of planning to reach your vision in the communities/counties you serve. First, you will review the types of information your organization needs.

We will discuss five broad information areas in which you can gather data to help you plan. These are (1) area demographics/population, (2) labor market conditions/workforce, (3) economic characteristics, (4) physical infrastructure/locational conditions, and (5) community services/ social infrastructure. Information from these areas will help you better understand the workforce, economic, physical, and social conditions in your communities. It will also help you plan more effectively and avoid working on issues, needs and concerns that are not relevant for your organization in communities it serves.

Guided by your mission and vision of the organization and your vision for the community, you will determine what information to collect to

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**enhance the quality of life and/or the standard of living of people who live in communities/counties that you serve.**

**Using this information, your organization will develop a community profile that you can use to gather demographic, economic and other relevant information. The results will be used to guide your efforts to strengthen communities you serve.**

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# Skill Work

## 1. What information do you need to know about the communities/counties you serve?

### Purpose

We have just completed the planning process for your organization. The planning process enabled you to develop or clarify your mission and vision. It also allowed you to identify your organization's internal goals. These internal goals help build a strong and effective organization that can serve people in your targeted communities.

To plan effectively to reach your community vision you will need to gather accurate and relevant information about critical needs, issues and concerns. Only then will you have solid information to help you explore opportunities.

Now, let's review the five broad areas of information in which to gather data needed to reach your vision of the community.

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### STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS

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**Strategy:** group discussion

**Materials Checklist:**

- Tool Kits 1.1A-E – “Profile Data Collection....” copies for all participants
  - Tool Kit 1.2 – “Community Assessment: Data-gathering Needs” copies and transparency
  - Flip Chart 1 – “Data-gathering Areas”
  - easel, flip chart pad, markers, tape, overhead projector, screen or blank wall
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### Directions

1. Distribute Tool Kits 1.1A-E – “Profile Data Collection...” to each participant. Explain that as you provide an overview of each of the areas listed, they will see the type of data they can collect.

2. Explain to the group in these, or your own, words:

We are now ready to discuss the five broad areas of data-gathering about communities. Data collection can help you plan for reaching the vision for your community. We will look at the physical, social and economic

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**conditions of communities as well as the characteristics of the people who live there. Doing this will help you avoid mistakes and delays as your organization engages in community and economic development.**

3. Post Flip Chart 1 – “Data-gathering Areas.”

<b>DATA-GATHERING AREAS</b>	
<b>1. Area demographics/population</b>	
<b>2. Labor market conditions/workforce</b>	
<b>3. Economic characteristics</b>	
<b>4. Physical infrastructure/locational conditions</b>	
<b>5. Community services/social infrastructure</b>	

Flip Chart 1

4. Distribute copies of Tool Kit 1.2 – “Community Assessment: Data-gathering Needs” to each participant.
5. Refer to the posted Flip Chart 1.
6. Explain the following in these, or your own, words:

**First, we will discuss two ways to strengthen the community: community development and economic development. Community development is a process to strengthen communities to improve the quality of life of the people who live there. Some examples of community development are:**

- **enhancing education and training to provide a workforce to match existing and future jobs that are available in communities**
- **enhancing the physical infrastructure of communities that might consist of providing adequate water, sewer systems, fire and police protection, road and highway development and transportation systems**
- **social infrastructure development such as improving community services like elder and day care facilities and services, housing and educational, cultural, historical and recreational facilities, sites and programs**

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- **Economic development strengthens the economy of communities by offering solutions to barriers that prevent prosperity. Some examples of barriers include:**
  - **declining existing businesses or failing to enhance new businesses**
  - **limited employment, high unemployment or underemployment**
  - **low wages, lack of a diversity of industries**
  - **lack of revenue to provide adequate community services**
  - **inadequate goods or services available within communities that force residents to go elsewhere to spend their money**

**Usually, community and economic development must go hand-in-hand in building and strengthening communities. When communities are strong and the people living in them are skilled, healthy and productive, a solid foundation exists for economic development.**

**The information you will need to gather from the five broad areas will help you plan for community and economic development in the communities that you serve.**

7. Place the transparency of Tool Kit 1.2 on the overhead and use Tool Kit 1.1A during the following discussion. Say to the group:

**Let's discuss what we mean by area demographics/population information. Demographic information provides data on characteristics of populations. Some examples of demographics are age, sex, income and level of education.**

8. Ask the group the following question and ask a volunteer to record responses on Flip Chart 1.

**Why do you need to gather information in the area demographic/population category to plan to reach your vision?**

9. Summarize the discussion by explaining in these, or in your own, words:

**Gathering information about area demographics and analyzing the population helps you to understand certain characteristics of the communities your organization serves. Demographic information can**

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**help you determine communities' economic vitality. Data about area demographics can also help you target a specific population for any proposed economic activity your organization would like to undertake in communities you serve.**

10. Say to the group:

**Let's discuss what we mean by labor market conditions/workforce. Information about labor market/workforce provides some idea as to which industries are growing in communities/counties and what types of jobs are available, as well as the levels of unemployment and underemployment.**

11. Ask the group the following question and ask a volunteer to record responses on Flip Chart 1.

**Why do you need to gather information in the labor market conditions/workforce category to plan to reach your vision?**

12. Summarize the discussion by explaining in these, or in your own, words:

**The data you will collect regarding labor market conditions provides information about the capacity of the communities that you serve for economic growth and workforce development.**

13. Explain in these, or your own, words:

**Let's discuss what we mean by economic characteristics. The economic characteristics of a community provide information about household and per capita incomes and what percentage of the total population is living in poverty.**

14. Ask the group the following question and ask a volunteer to record responses on Flip Chart 1.

**Why do you need to gather information about economic characteristics to plan to reach your vision?**

15. Summarize the discussion by explaining in these, or in your own, words:

**Economic characteristics – Understanding the local economic structure is an essential step toward designing a long-term economic development**

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**program that builds on the opportunities in the community and addresses local employment needs. The information you gather on the economic climate or conditions will enable you to identify critical issues, needs and concerns in this area and explore opportunities in community and economic development to address them.**

16. Say to the group:

**Now we'll talk about a community's physical infrastructure/locational conditions.**

**Physical infrastructure/locational conditions describe the physical resources in a community such as agriculture, mining, timber, industrial land availability, transportation and communication systems, housing stock and assets that could be used to promote tourism.**

17. Ask the group the following question and ask a volunteer to record responses on Flip Chart 1.

**Why do you need to gather information about the physical infrastructure /locational conditions to plan to reach your vision?**

18. Summarize the discussion by explaining in these, or in your own, words:

**The physical and locational features of the area that relate to the economic base need to be examined as a part of the planning process for community and economic development to strengthen communities you serve. This information will help your organization identify the locality's economic advantages and disadvantages.**

19. Explain in these, or your own, words:

**The last area of data collection is community services/social infrastructure. This information consists of a range of social, educational, recreational, and cultural services in the communities you serve. These services add to the attractiveness of the locale as a place to live and work.**

20. Ask the group the following question and ask a volunteer to record responses on Flip Chart 1:

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- **Why do you need to gather information about community services/ social infrastructure to plan to reach your vision?**

21. Summarize the discussion by explaining in these, or in your own, words:

**Community services/social infrastructure - The information that you collect regarding community services/social infrastructure can provide information regarding the basic human needs of residents and indicate what supports and enhances their quality of life.**

**Now that you have an idea of what information is included in each of the data-gathering areas to help you evaluate the communities you serve, let's reflect on your organization's experience with gathering data.**

22. Ask the group to answer the following questions:

- **What area of data gathering have you engaged in to help you plan to reach your vision?**
- **How did you use this information to help you plan for reaching your organization's vision?**

## Summary

**In this exercise, we reviewed the five broad areas in which organizations gather data about their communities. The areas you reviewed were area demographics, labor market conditions, economic characteristics, physical infrastructure/locational conditions and community services/ social infrastructure.**

**As we discussed, to plan effectively for community and economic development that strengthens communities you will need to gather relevant information in some or all of these areas. Planning that is based on accurate data will help you avoid mistakes and delays that can weaken your efforts for community and economic development.**

**Next, you will determine what area demographics/population information to gather about the communities your organization serves.**

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## 2. What information do you need about area demographics/population?

### Purpose

Gathering information about area demographics and conducting a population analysis helps you to determine the economic vitality of communities you serve. It can also help you assess the target population for proposed community and economic development in communities.

The information you gather about area demographics can include various age groupings with emphasis on the employment, income and occupational distribution of the population over the last decade. This information may also include data on the characteristics of the people who live in the communities/counties that your organization serves, such as gender, race, education and income.

Now, you will decide what information you need to collect in this area.

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### STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS

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**Strategies:** group discussion, follow-through activity

**Materials Checklist:**

- Part 1 Flip Chart 8 and Part 2 Flip Chart 2 of each organization's mission and vision statements
  - flip chart of each organization's community vision developed in COMMUNITY VOICES
  - Tool Kit 1.1A – “Profile Data Collection: Area Demographics/Population”
  - Flip Chart 2 – “Data Needed for Area Demographics/Population”
  - easel, flip chart pad, markers, tape
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### Directions

1. Post flip charts of the mission and vision statements of the organization developed in Parts 1 and 2 of VOICES REACHING VISIONS (Flip Charts 8 and 23) and the flip chart of the organization's vision of the community developed in the COMMUNITY VOICES program.
2. Explain in these, or your own, words:

**A reflection of your organization's mission and vision and your vision for the community will help you determine what information you need to gather about the area demographic/population of communities/counties. This reflection will also help you determine what information can enable**

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**you to enhance the quality of life and or the standard of living of people who live in communities that you serve.**

3. Ask the group to refer to the posted flip charts. This will help them to determine the information they need to gather in this area.
4. Explain in these, or your own, words:

**We have discussed reasons for gathering information about area demographics/population that can help your organization identify critical issues, needs, concerns and opportunities. Collecting this data and using it for planning can help lay the foundation for your organization's involvement in community and economic development.**

**The information you will collect about area demographics/population will include general population data that can answer questions about the characteristics of the people who live in communities/counties that you serve such as gender, age, race distribution and educational levels.**

**This data may also help explain the social and economic conditions of communities, such as how education levels can affect income levels. Higher educational levels may result in skill and wage levels being higher. Additionally, communities/counties that are experiencing a decline in population may be facing economic stress. Now you will make decisions about information you need to gather for planning to enhance community and economic development to reach your vision.**

**Now you will decide what information you need to gather in this area.**

5. Post Flip Chart 2 like the one below.

<b>DATA NEEDED FOR AREA DEMOGRAPHICS/POPULATION</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

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6. Ask the group to refer to Tool Kit 1.1A - “Profile Data Collection: Area Demographics/Population Data”
  7. Ask a volunteer to record the responses to the following questions in the appropriate space.
    - **What specific information do you need to gather about area demographics/population to enhance community and economic development to plan to reach your vision?**
    - **Why do you need to gather this information?**
  8. Summarize flip chart page(s) concerning area demographics/population data. Ask the group if any additional information is needed for their profile.

## Summary

**We have just developed the first section of the profile to include the area demographics/population information you will need to enhance community and economic development to plan to reach your vision in communities. This information will also provide a better understanding of the critical issues, needs and concerns in these communities as well as opportunities for addressing them through community and economic development.**

**Next, we will discuss the information you will gather about labor market conditions/workforce of the communities that your organization serves.**

## 3. What information do you need about the labor market/workforce?

### Purpose

**It is important to gather information about labor market conditions/workforce. This information includes the employment distribution by sex in each industrial category (SIC) and the rate of unemployment and underemployment by industrial sector over the last five years.**

**Employment patterns in the community will show what human resources are available or required for economic development and what portion of the existing labor force requires assistance.**

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**Now, let's begin to discuss what information you will need to gather about the labor market conditions/workforce of communities/counties to assist you in planning to reach your vision in communities.**

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## STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS

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**Strategies:** group discussion, follow-through activity

**Materials Checklist:**

- Part 1 Flip Chart 8 and Part 2 Flip Chart 2 of each organization's mission and vision statements
  - flip chart of each organization's community vision developed in COMMUNITY VOICES
  - Tool Kit 1.1B – “Profile Data Collection: Labor Market Conditions/Workforce”
  - Flip Chart 3 - “Data Needed for Labor Market/Workforce.”
  - easel, flip chart pad, markers, tape
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## Directions

1. Ask the group to refer to the posted mission and vision statement of the organization and the vision statement for the community. This will help them to determine the information they need to gather in this area.

2. Explain in these, or your own, words:

**We will reflect on your organization's mission and vision and your vision for the community to help you determine what information you need to gather about the labor market/workforce.**

**The data you will collect about the labor market conditions/workforce category provides information about the capacity for economic growth within communities or counties. Employment data can tell you which industries are growing, what types of jobs are available, and the levels of unemployment and underemployment.**

**Now, you will decide what information you need to gather in this area.**

3. Post Flip Chart 3 similar to the one following.

## DATA NEEDED FOR LABOR MARKET/WORKFORCE

Information Needed

Why Needed

Flip Chart 3

4. Ask the group to refer to Tool Kit 1.1B - "Profile Data Collection: Labor Market Conditions/Workforce."
5. Ask a volunteer to record the responses to the following questions in the appropriate space.
  - **What specific information do you need to gather about labor market conditions/workforce to plan to reach your vision?**
  - **Why do you need to gather this information?**
6. Summarize Flip Chart 3. Ask the group if any additional information is needed for the organization's profile.

### Summary

**In this exercise, we have discussed the information about the labor market conditions/workforce of communities/counties that your organization serves. The information you gather will also provide you a better understanding of the critical issues, needs and concerns of communities/counties relating to the labor market. This can assist you in planning to reach your vision in communities that you serve.**

**In the next exercise, you will discuss the information you gathered concerning economic characteristics.**

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## 4. What information do you need about economic characteristics?

### Purpose

Understanding the local economy is an essential step toward designing a long-term economic development program that addresses local employment needs and builds on the opportunities in the community. Changes in your community's economic base and how it responds to new economic conditions provide important information. This information can help you plan for community and economic development to reach your vision in communities.

Now, let's discuss what information you will gather in this area.

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### STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS

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**Strategies:** group discussion, follow-through activity

**Materials Checklist:**

- Part 1 Flip Chart 8 and Part 2 Flip Chart 2 of each organization's mission and vision statements
  - flip chart of each organization's community vision developed in Community Voices
  - Tool Kit 1.1C – "Profile Data Collection: Economic Characteristics"
  - Flip Chart 4 – "Data Needed for Economic Characteristics"
  - easel, flip chart pad, markers, tape
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### Directions

1. Ask the group to refer to the posted mission and vision statements of the organization and the vision of the community. This will help them to determine the information they need to gather in this area.
2. Explain in these or your own words.

**As we have seen in other sessions, reflecting on your organization's mission and vision and your vision for the community is an important first step in deciding if you need to gather data about the community in a variety of areas. In this session we will see what information your organization needs to gather on the economy.**

**Certain statistics tell us about the economic health of communities that we serve and the potential for creating new jobs and generating**

additional revenues. Information about the local economy must be analyzed from available data or gathered firsthand and evaluated.

Let's think of an economy as being like a house, with money and goods circulating in and out through doors and windows, like air. It is important to understand the amount of economic activity flowing in and out of communities. This lets us take advantage of what is coming in and be aware of what is going out. This involves knowing what services, goods or products citizens are purchasing in surrounding areas (30 miles away) and what might be offered in their own communities/counties.

Economic data provides information about what part of the local economy, such as agriculture, manufacturing, etc., is growing or declining and what industrial sites are available. The data in this category also tells us about average personal income and the number of families living in poverty.

The information on the labor market/workforce conditions may also provide information about the capacity for economic growth of your communities/counties. For example, from employment data we can learn which industries are growing, the availability of labor, the unemployment rate, and the female labor force participation rate. It can tell us how many people are unemployed or underemployed and their skills.

Now you will decide what information you need to collect in this area.

3. Post Flip Chart 4 like the one below.

<b>DATA NEEDED FOR ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

Flip Chart 4

4. Ask the group to refer to Tool Kit 1.1C – “Profile Data Collection: Economic Characteristics.”

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5. Ask a volunteer to record the responses to the following questions in the appropriate space:

- **What specific information do you need to gather about economic characteristics to plan to reach your vision?**
- **Why do you need to gather this information?**

6. Summarize Flip Chart 4. Ask the group if any additional information is needed for their profile.

## Summary

**We have just discussed the information you plan to gather about the economic characteristics of the communities/counties that you serve. This information will also provide you a better understanding of the critical issues, needs and concerns of communities/counties in this area and to explore opportunities to address them.**

**Next, we will discuss the information you will gather about the physical infrastructure/locational conditions of communities/counties.**

# 5 • What information do you need about physical infrastructure/locational conditions?

## Purpose

**Learning about the physical infrastructure/locational conditions of the communities you serve and how they relate to the economic base is important if you want to reach your vision. By physical infrastructure/locational conditions we mean basic facilities and resources that provide for the growth of communities, such as agriculture, mining, logging, industrial land availability (both serviced and unserved), transportation and communication systems, housing stock levels and tourism sites. Documenting locational strengths and liabilities will assist in identifying the community or county's economic advantages and disadvantages.**

**Now, let's begin to discuss what information to gather about physical infrastructure/locational conditions of the communities you serve.**

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## STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS

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**Strategies:** group discussion, follow-through activity

**Materials Checklist:**

- Part 1 Flip Chart 8 and Part 2 Flip Chart 2 of each organization's mission and vision statements
  - flip chart of each organization's community vision developed in COMMUNITY VOICES
  - Tool Kit 1.1D – “Profile Data Collection: Physical Infrastructure/Locational Conditions”
  - Flip Chart 5 – “Data Needed for Physical Infrastructure/Locational Conditions”
  - easel, flip chart pad, markers, tape
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### Directions

1. Ask the group to refer to the posted mission and vision statements and vision statement of the community.

2. Explain in these, or your own, words.

**As you have seen, we have established a pattern of looking at the mission and vision statements of your organization and the vision for your community to decide if information needs to be gathered for community planning. We will now do this to determine what data is needed to learn more about the physical infrastructure/locational conditions of your communities/counties.**

3. Explain in these or your own words:

**The information that you will gather about the physical infrastructure/locational conditions category can provide data about the availability of adequate systems to meet the issues, needs and concerns of communities or counties – resources that allow the people who reside there to live in a clean, safe and healthy environment. You will gather data about sources for drinking water, systems for sewage, transportation, and communication, and fire and police protection, if available.**

**Now you will decide what information to collect in this area.**

4. Post Flip Chart 5 – “Data Needed for Physical Infrastructure/Locational Conditions,” similar to the one following.

## DATA NEEDED FOR PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE/LOCATIONAL CONDITIONS

Information Needed	Why Needed

Flip Chart 5

5. Ask the group to refer to Tool Kit 1.1D – “Profile Data Collection: Physical Infrastructure/Locational Conditions.”
6. Ask a volunteer to record the responses to the following questions in the appropriate space:
  - **What specific information do you need to gather about physical infrastructure/locational conditions to plan to reach your vision?**
  - **Why do you need to gather this information?**
7. Summarize Flip Chart 5. Ask the group if any additional information is needed for their profile.

### Summary

**In this exercise, we have discussed information about the physical infrastructure/locational conditions in the communities/counties that your organization serves. The information that you gather will also provide a better understanding of critical issues, needs and concerns and help you explore opportunities in communities/counties.**

**We will now discuss the last area for gathering data: community services/social infrastructure.**

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## 6. What information do you need about social infrastructure/community services?

### Purpose

The information in this area could consist of a range of social, educational, recreational, and cultural services that may or may not be available to communities/counties that you serve. These services meet important needs for residents' overall well-being and their ability to live healthy and satisfying lives.

Now, let's begin to discuss what information you will gather about the community services/social infrastructure of communities that you serve.

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### STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS

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**Strategies:** group discussion, follow-through activity

**Materials Checklist:**

- Part 1 Flip Chart 8 and Part 2 Flip Chart 2 of each organization's mission and vision statements
  - flip chart of each organization's community vision developed in COMMUNITY VOICES
  - Tool Kit 1.1E – "Profile Data Collection: Social Infrastructure/Community Services"
  - Flip Chart 6 – "Data Needed for Social Infrastructure/Community Services"
  - easel, flip chart pad, markers, tape
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### Directions

1. Ask the group to refer to the posted mission and vision statements of the organization and the vision statement of the community to help them determine information they need to gather for this area.
2. Explain in these, or your own, words:

**As we look at this last data-gathering area, we will think about your organization's mission and vision as well as the vision you have created for the community. From the previous exercises you can see how important it is to connect the purpose of your organization and what you are striving toward with accurate information about community issues, needs and concerns.**

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3. Say to the group::

**The information you will gather about social infrastructure/community services may provide important data about the availability of facilities and services to support residents' basic human needs and enhance their quality of life. This area of information gathering focuses on housing, educational, cultural, historical and recreational facilities, as well as services such as child and adult day care.**

**For example, you will collect data about the housing conditions of residents, the availability of health services and what cultural and recreational activities or facilities exist.**

**Now, you will decide what information you need to collect in this area.**

4. Post Flip Chart 6 - "Data Needed for Social Infrastructure/Community Services," like the one below.

<b>DATA NEEDED FOR SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE/COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

Flip Chart 6

5. Ask the group to refer to Tool Kit 1.1E – "Profile Data Collection: Social Infrastructure/Community Services."
6. Ask a volunteer to record the responses to the following questions in the appropriate space:
- **What specific information do you need to gather about community services/social infrastructure to plan to reach your vision?**
  - **Why do you need to gather this information?**

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7. Summarize Flip Chart 6. Have the group decide whether any additional information needs to be gathered about social infrastructure.

## Summary

**In this exercise, you discussed information about the community services/social infrastructure for the communities/counties that your organization serves. As you can see, this information will provide a better understanding of the critical issues, needs and concerns and a basis to explore opportunities for community and economic development in communities/counties.**

**Next we will discuss the process for finding and collecting the information you need about communities.**

# 7 • What is the process for finding and collecting the information you need to gather?

## Purpose

**Now we will discuss how you will go about finding and collecting the information you want. In this session you will develop an action plan for collecting your data. The information you want to gather can be obtained from several sources. We will discuss the places where you can find existing data for the five areas of data collection we have just discussed.**

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## STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS

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**Strategies:** group discussion, follow-through activity

**Materials Checklist:**

- Tool Kit 1.3 – “Sources of Information for Community/County Assessment” photocopies
  - Flip Charts 2-6 generated in Skill Works 2-6
  - Flip Chart 7 – “Action Plan for Collecting the Data”
  - easel, flip chart pad, markers, tape
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## Directions

1. Post Flip Charts 2-6 generated in Skill Works 2-6 together in a location where the group can view them.

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<b>DATA NEEDED FOR AREA DEMOGRAPHICS/POPULATION</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

Flip Chart 2

<b>DATA NEEDED FOR LABOR MARKET/WORKFORCE</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

Flip Chart 3

<b>DATA NEEDED FOR ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

Flip Chart 4

<b>DATA NEEDED FOR PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE/LOCATIONAL CONDITIONS</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

Flip Chart 5

<b>DATA NEEDED FOR SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE/COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	
<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>

Flip Chart 6

2. Distribute copies of Tool Kit 1.3 – “Sources of Information for Community/County Assessment” to each participant.

3. Ask the group to follow along on the tool kit and say to the group:

**The information you want to collect for your profile can be obtained from these sources. You may identify other sources, as well, within your communities or counties.**

**The sources on this list are sometimes called secondary sources or existing sources. This means that other people, agencies and groups have collected the data. There are other ways to obtain data firsthand. In other words, you can collect data from primary sources such as surveys, interviews and focus groups. We will talk about surveys in a later session.**

You can see that the secondary sources on your list include extension centers, libraries, courthouses, city halls, public schools, colleges/technical schools, social service agencies, hospitals, banks, newspapers, chambers of commerce, United Way agencies and regional planning offices. Secondary sources also include published documents or publications like the Yellow Pages and basic census data.

For example, general population data from the U. S. Census of Population may be available through local extension centers, libraries, archives, state government offices or the Internet. Data on the educational levels for adults can also be found from the U. S. Census, while graduation and dropout rates can be obtained from public school systems or the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

4. Ask the group if there are any questions about Tool Kit 1.3.
5. Refer to the posted flip charts and explain the following in these, or your own, words:

**You have already identified the specific data you felt you needed to plan to reach your vision. Now we will list some sources where you can possibly obtain the information you need.**

6. Post Flip Chart 7 – “Action Plan for Collecting the Data,” similar to the one shown below.

<b>ACTION PLAN FOR COLLECTING THE DATA</b>				
<b>Area</b>	<b>Information Needed</b>	<b>Source/Where Located</b>	<b>Who Will Collect</b>	<b>By When</b>
<b>Area Demographics/Population</b> <b>Labor Market Conditions/</b> <b>Workforce</b> <b>Economic Characteristics</b> <b>Physical Infrastructure/</b> <b>Locational Conditions</b> <b>Social Infrastructure/</b> <b>Community Services</b>				

Flip Chart 7

- 
7. Ask a volunteer to copy the information from column 1, *Information Needed*, that is on all of the posted Flip Charts 2-6 to the column *Information Needed* onto Flip Chart 7.
  8. Ask a volunteer to record responses in the column *Source/Where Located* to the questions below. Ask the following questions:
    - **What sources of information could provide you with the data you need for area demographics/population?**
    - **Where are these data sources located?**
    - **What sources of information could provide you with the data you need for labor market conditions/workforce?**
    - **Where are these data sources located?**
    - **What sources of information could provide you with data for economic characteristics?**
    - **Where are these data sources located?**
    - **What sources of information could provide you with data for physical infrastructure/locational conditions?**
    - **Where are these data sources located?**
    - **What sources of information could provide you with data for community services/social infrastructure?**
    - **Where are these data sources located?**
  9. Ask a volunteer to record responses in the column *Who Will Collect* to the following question for all of the areas:
    - **Who from your organization will be responsible for collecting the information?**
  10. Ask a volunteer to record responses in the column *By When?* to the following question for all of the areas:
    - **When should your organization have this information?**

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## Summary

**In this exercise, you learned about the various sources from which your organization can obtain data that will be useful in helping to plan programs, projects, and activities to reach your vision of the communities you serve. You selected the sources for information and identified where they are located. And, as part of your planning process, you discussed who will be responsible for collecting the data and when the data is needed by your organization.**

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# Follow-Through

## Collecting data from various sources

### Purpose

**You have developed an action plan that will serve as a guide in completing the collection of data in the major areas you have chosen.**

### Directions

1. Post the action plan for collecting the data.
2. Explain in these, or your own, words.

**You are now ready to implement your action plan. It will serve as your guide for collecting the data you need.**

### Summary

**You have developed and implemented an action plan to collect the data you need to strengthen the communities you serve. Persons have been appointed or volunteered to gather the data from various sources. Once the data is gathered, it must be compiled and presented. Choose a spokesperson from your organization to report this data at the next meeting.**

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# Closing the Session

## Review

1. Have the group do a Go-Around:

**To close this session, I would like for each of you to tell some things you learned or thought were interesting in today's session.**

2. Ask these types of questions if the group needs guidance:

- **What is one thing you discussed today that will be very important to remember as your organization collects data?**
- **How do you think collecting data will help your organization in its planning?**

3. Summarize in these, or your own, words:

**In this session, we reviewed the types of information your organization will need to effectively plan to enhance community and economic development to reach your vision for strengthening communities. We discussed the broad areas or categories in which this information is divided. These are area demographics/population, labor market conditions/workforce, economic characteristics, physical infrastructure/locational conditions, and community services/social infrastructure.**

**You examined each of these areas in depth according to your organization's mission and vision and to your vision for the community. You determined what information you felt was necessary in each area to enhance the quality of life and the standard of living of people who live in communities that you serve.**

**Finally, you developed an action plan that serves as a guide for collecting the information you need to know about communities.**

## Preview

**In the next session, you will analyze the data collected on the profiles in the broad areas of data-gathering and identify issues needs or concerns of the communities/counties in area demographics/population, workforce, physical infrastructure, social infrastructure and economic development.**

# Tool Kits

## Tool Kit 1.1A

For \_\_\_\_\_ Community/County

### PROFILE DATA COLLECTION: AREA DEMOGRAPHICS/POPULATION

This data can help to explain the social and economic conditions of a community, especially if it is experiencing a decline in population that can be connected to economic stress. The data can also help explain that if a community has a higher proportion of elderly residents, it may face difficulties in providing services for this population.

	1990	2000	Most Recent Estimate
County Population	_____	_____	_____
Community Population	_____	_____	_____
<b>Population By Race &amp; Origin</b>			
White	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
African American	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
American Indian	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
Hispanic	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
Other	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
<b>Population By Age Group</b>			
65+ yrs.	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
55-64	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
35-54	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
20-34	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
10-19	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
5-9	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
<5	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %

For \_\_\_\_\_ Community/County

## PROFILE DATA COLLECTION: LABOR MARKET CONDITIONS/WORKFORCE

This information may determine the capacity for economic growth in communities and/or counties. For example, the educational level of a community or county may affect income levels (the higher the educational level, the higher the skill and wage levels).

### Educational Attainment of Youth

	Community		County		State	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Pre-school-age children enrolled in preschool	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Eligible children enrolled in Head Start	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Student/Teacher Ratio Elementary (Public)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Secondary (Public)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### Educational Level of Adults 25+

	Community		County		State	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than high school	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
High school graduate	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
More than high school	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### Number of Persons in the Workforce

Gender	Most Recent Estimate	2000 Estimate
Male	_____	_____
Female	_____	_____

### Employment by Sector

This information could predict which industries are likely to grow and thrive in a community or county. It also tells what types of jobs are available and the level of unemployment.

### Employment by Industry

	1990		2000 Estimate		Most Recent Estimate	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Construction	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Manufacturing	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Trans., Comm. & Public Util.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Trade	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Service Indus.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Education	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Public Admin.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total Employed	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### Total Employed Unemployment

	1990		2000 Estimate		Most Recent Estimate	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number Unemployed	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Unemployment Rate	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Average Unemployment	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

For \_\_\_\_\_ Community/County

## PROFILE DATA COLLECTION: ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

### (Income and Poverty Characteristics of the Population)

This data may provide information about the living conditions or standard of living of residents and how income is distributed among the population of communities and/or counties.

#### Median Household Income

	COUNTY			STATE		
	1990	2000	%	1990	2000	%
All Households	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
White	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
African American	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
American Indian	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Hispanic	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other Households	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

#### Per Capita Income

Percent of Population  
with Household Income

	COUNTY			STATE		
	1990	2000	%	1990	2000	%
<\$5,000	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$5,000-9,999	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$10,000-14,999	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$15,000-19,999	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$20,000-24,999	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$25,000-34,999	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$35,000-49,999	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$50,000 +	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

(cont. on next page)

**Percent of Families in Poverty**

	COUNTY			STATE		
	1990	2000	Most Recent Estimate	1990	2000	Most Recent Estimate
<b>Total Population</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>White</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>African American</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>American Indian</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Hispanic</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Other</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Female-Headed</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Female-Headed with Children &lt;18</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

For \_\_\_\_\_ Community/County

## PROFILE DATA COLLECTION: PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE /LOCATIONAL CONDITIONS

This information may provide data about the availability of adequate systems to meet the public health and safety needs of communities and/or counties and the residents that live there.

	COMMUNITY (IF AVAILABLE)		COUNTY	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Source of Water</b>				
Public Water System	_____	_____	_____	_____
Drilled Well	_____	_____	_____	_____
Dug Well	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Sewage System</b>				
Public Sewage System	_____	_____	_____	_____
Septic Tank	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>County 2010 Projection</b>				
<b>Transportation Systems</b>				
Distance to Nearest Airport	_____	_____	_____	
Railroads	_____	_____	_____	
No. of Major Highways	_____	_____	_____	
Distance to Major Highways in County	_____	_____	_____	
No. of Highway Interchanges in County	_____	_____	_____	

(cont. on next page)

**Fire and Police Protection (provide community data, if available)**

No. of Full-Time Police	_____	_____	_____
No. of Part-Time Police	_____	_____	_____
No. of Full-Time Fire	_____	_____	_____
No. of Part-Time Fire	_____	_____	_____

**Communication Systems**

Local Telephone Service Provider	_____
Long Distance Provider(s)	_____
Cellular Telephone Service	_____
911 System	_____ Yes _____ No

For \_\_\_\_\_ Community/County

## PROFILE DATA COLLECTION: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE/COMMUNITY SERVICES

This information may provide data about services for meeting basic human needs of residents and for supporting and enhancing their quality of life.

### Housing

	COUNTY		STATE	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total No. of Housing Units	---	---	---	---
Average No. of Residents per Housing Unit	---	---	---	---
Percent Inadequate Plumbing	---	---	---	---
Percent Renter-Occupied	---	---	---	---
Cost of Housing				
Median Value Owner-Occupied	---	---	---	---
Median Rent	---	---	---	---

### Health Providers

	COUNTY		STATE	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
No. of Hospital Beds	---	---	---	---
No. of Outpatient Clinics	---	---	---	---
No. of Physicians per 1000 Population	---	---	---	---

### Culture and Recreation

	COMMUNITY (IF AVAILABLE)		COUNTY	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
No. of Cultural Arts Facilities	---	---	---	---
No. of People Using Arts Facilities	---	---	---	---
Percent of Local Government Budget Spent to Support Arts	---	---	---	---
No. of Outdoor Recreational Facilities	---	---	---	---
No. of People Using Outdoor Recreational Facilities	---	---	---	---
No. of Indoor Recreational Facilities	---	---	---	---
No. of People Using Indoor Recreational Facilities	---	---	---	---
Percent of Local Government Budget Spent to Support Recreation	---	---	---	---

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: DATA-GATHERING NEEDS

DATA-GATHERING NEED	WHY SEEK?
<b>Area Demographics/Population</b>	<b>Helps to determine the economic vitality of communities and to assess target populations for different kinds of proposed economic activities in communities</b>
<b>Labor Market Conditions/Workforce</b>	<b>Provides information about the capacity for economic growth and workforce development within communities or counties</b>
<b>Economic Characteristics</b>	<b>Enables you to understand the economic climate and conditions to be able to develop a long-term economic development program</b>
<b>Physical Infrastructure/Locational Conditions</b>	<b>Helps identify economic advantages and disadvantages that relate to the physical features of the area and its locational strengths and weaknesses</b>
<b>Community Services/Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>Provides information regarding the basic human needs of residents and services that support and enhance their quality of life</b>

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITY/COUNTY ASSESSMENT**

### **Extension Centers**

Located in nearly every county. Provide access to a wide variety of published information ranging from the Census of U.S. Population data to various public and private studies about a community or county.

### **Libraries**

Located in most communities or counties, whether as a separate public institution or a public school library. Most libraries can request additional resources from the state library. Census data, business and commercial data, vital statistics (birth and death data) and local histories can be found in libraries.

### **Courthouse**

Contains information on property assessments, budgets for county government facilities and services, tax rates on property, vital statistics, property records and plats, county road systems, county planning and zoning records, tax revenues and expenditure patterns over time, crime statistics and patterns, rural health conditions, election results and statistics, agriculture, family economics, youth programs, special districts and traffic conditions.

### **City Hall**

Contains information on the city budget, tax revenues, the city plan, street patterns and conditions, level of city services (police, fire, utilities), crime statistics and population data for city and housing conditions.

### **Public Schools**

Contains information on school enrollment, dropout rates, standard test scores, school population projections, school budgets, tax revenues and levies and projected needs for education investments.

### **Colleges/Tech Schools**

Contains information on population and housing, college projection for higher education, employment projections in various vocational areas, experts and data on a variety of technical subjects.

### **Social Services Office**

Contains information on the welfare load, number of people in need by various categories, income statistics, housing conditions, employment needs and skill levels, handicapped numbers and types of handicaps with specialized needs and nursing home needs.

### **Hospitals**

Contains information on current beds and vacancy rates, emergency care numbers and types, types and rates of various illnesses, costs of care and health care personal needs.

### **Banks**

Contains information on economic conditions, deposits, capital, capital available for loans, services available to new businesses, locations of empty business space, housing sales and available housing.

### **Newspaper**

Contains information on the history of the community, stories about earlier planning processes, dates of events, participants in various activities and community statistical data. (cont.)

### **Chamber of Commerce**

Contains information on local businesses, promotions, employment in various occupations and businesses, types of merchandise available, community assets and tourist businesses and attractions.

### **United Way**

Contains information on social service organizations in the community, budget for social services, additional needs, list of volunteers and community willingness to contribute time and money.

### **Regional Planning Office**

Not found in all areas. Has information on the population, housing, income and employment. May have done special studies on water quality, waste disposal, utility needs, transportation needs, emergency services for the region. Also, many of them do industrial recruitment and other economic development activities for members of the region.

### **Yellow Pages**

Contain a wealth of information. It is a valuable source for finding various types of businesses, obtaining telephone numbers and addresses on businesses and establishing gaps in available services and products. Also lists governmental and private nonprofit agencies and organizations. Provides phone numbers and contact names.

### **Basic Census Data**

Information on census data can be obtained through the U.S. Census Bureau, some libraries, state governments and sites on the Internet.

### **Specialized Local, Statewide, or National Organizations**

If you are interested in a specific area such as health issues of the elderly, low cost housing, community beautification, etc., you would want to track down and consult with an organization specializing in that field or area of interest.

### **Web Sites on the Internet**

Many web pages and sites exist on the Internet that contain information you are looking for. For example, you can obtain demographic data from web sites designed by the state.

*Adapted from The Community Development Handbook, A Guide for Facilitators, Community Leaders and Catalysts and The Community Tool Box – University of Kansas*