

4.0 Future Community Visioning

4.1 Purpose of Setting the Vision

This is the First Step in the public participation process. It begins with setting of a future vision or image for the planning area or town.

A future community vision on the built environment or heritage is a **consensus statement or statements** that clearly and broadly describes a desired future image for the town by all the stakeholders. Such a vision should be jointly developed and agreed to by the stakeholders through a series of discussions, workshops supplemented by data from surveys and other secondary sources.

The purpose of setting such a vision is to unify the hopes and aspirations of different stakeholders into a **COMMON GOAL** for its environment improvement or heritage conservation efforts. The vision therefore must become a starting point for all negotiations and agreements for action. Once developed, the vision statement should be incorporated into statutory development plans or the overall town improvement or development plan, (in the case of the Melaka Study, the Area Wide Development Plan within the conservation area), as a basis for further planning and action.

When implemented effectively, the **process** of developing a Future Community Vision will achieve the following:

- It is a **catalyst for dialogue** among community as well as between the community and technical experts in the field of heritage conservation and urban development,
- It helps stakeholders to recognize a **common goal** or target to achieve,
- It helps stakeholders to focus on such a consensus vision as well as **identifying** themselves with such a vision,
- It develops the community's capacity and **sense of ownership**, to understand and deal with issues together with experts and the implementers,

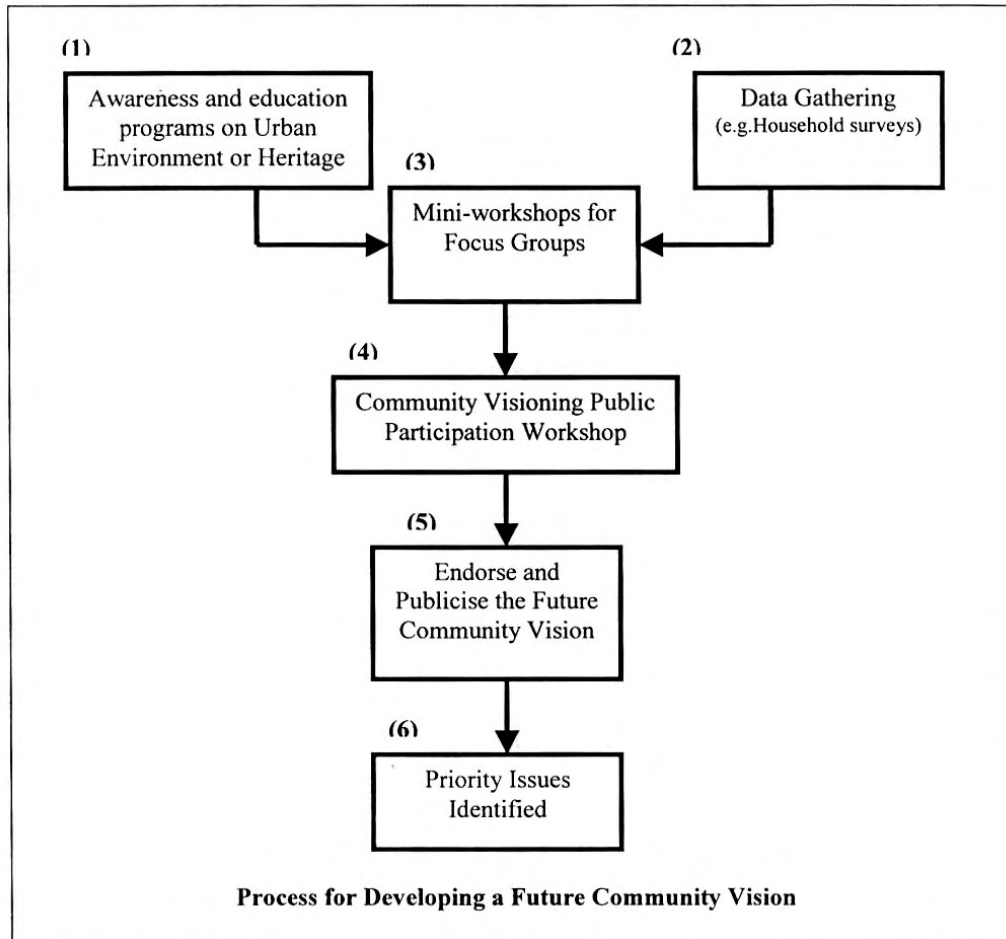
Apart from the above, the Future Community Visioning process also identifies **priority** issues that stakeholders agree to focus their efforts on, in order to achieve the future vision.

The process of Future Community Visioning comprises the following actions :

- (1) **Raising awareness** and understanding among stakeholders; to enable them to think and act towards urban environment improvement and heritage conservation,
- (2) Gathering views and **building a consensus** statement on the Future Community Vision,

(3) Endorsing, promoting and publicising the Future Community Vision.

The details of these actions are given below.



4.2 Actions to be Taken

(1) Raise Awareness of Stakeholders

The Task Force must **raise awareness** the town's urban environment or heritage as well as the Public Participation process to the community. Awareness raising campaigns can be carried out using:

1. **Mass media** such as local radio, local newspaper articles and interviews,

2. Information **materials** such as banners, posters, brochures, information booklets, exhibition stands and Internet websites,
3. Special awareness **activities and programs** can also be organised such as public talks and addresses, seminars and through “meet-the-people” sessions. It is critical that the top management of a local authority be seen by stakeholders to play a lead role. Thus the President or his secretary must involve themselves or lead actively in such activities.
4. The information that should be disseminated at such awareness activities must include:
 - a. The **purpose** of the planning or urban improvement activity which will be carried out and the expected outcomes,
 - b. Information regarding key social, economic, environmental or heritage **issues** that the town faces,
 - c. The **roles** of the community and other stakeholders in the planning process,
 - d. Details regarding their participation in developing the **Future Community Vision**.

(2) Gathering Views and Building a Consensus Statement

Based on results of the preparatory works on database mentioned in previous section, if the Local Authority feels that there is a lack of up-to-date information, then it must organise a series of physical and socio-economic **surveys** to gather such needed data.

The survey should cover a **representative** section² of the community. These data are to be analysed to portray the current living environment or heritage conditions of the town.

When there is lack of background information to portray the current situations of the town, **surveys** shall have to be carried out to determine:

- a. Key social, economic and environmental issues as perceived by the local stakeholders (residents, businesses and community groups),
- b. The **priorities perceived** on these local social, economic and environmental issues by the survey respondents.

(3) Holding of Mini Workshops for Focus Groups

With a good understanding of the current issues and their priorities by the local stakeholders, the Local Authority can then proceed to hold a series of **Focus Group**

² In the Melaka Study, a socio economic survey on a sample of 10% of households in the Study Area was conducted to gather views on local issues, perceptions on the environment and heritage in the Study Area, etc.

Mini Workshops (30-40 participants each time) for specific groups of stakeholders to gather their respective views and priority on the issues faced by them and the town.

- c. These focus group mini workshops should be held **at least** for the following groups; youth, physically handicapped, minority groups, women's groups, senior citizens, stakeholders interested in environment, stakeholders interested in social issues and local business groups.
- d. These mini workshops must be held in a **consistent manner** for all, and professionally conducted with trained facilitators to ensure effective participation and standardised results.

(4) Community Visioning Public Participation Workshop

A Public Participation Workshop on **Future Community Visioning** (minimum 200 participants) is to be held at the conclusion of all the focus group mini workshops mentioned above. This Workshop is to **collate** all the respective views from the focus groups on the various issues, negotiate on the priorities by different groups and to come up with a consensus statement or agreement.

- e. Present in an easily understandable manner the **outcomes of the surveys**,
- f. Present the **outcomes of the focus group mini workshops**,
- g. Through negotiation, **develop consensus** among all stakeholders on the Future Community Vision. (e.g. "*Towards a contemporary, culturally vibrant and relevant town that values and celebrates its heritage and history*")
- h. Discuss and find consensus on the **Priority Areas of Concern** in achieving the agreed Future Community Vision. (such as *Infrastructure and Urban Services Improvement, Integrating Economic development with heritage conservation*, etc)
- i. This Public Participation Workshop **must** be **professionally conducted with trained facilitators** to ensure effective participation and results that reflect the true consensus among the local stakeholders.

(5) Endorsing, Promoting and Publicising the Future Community Vision

For the Future Community Vision to be achieved, it must be agreed, upheld and accepted by all stakeholders. Local authorities must take the lead to recognise, publicise, officiate and **institutionalise** this Future Community Vision as part of the Administration, Management and Development of the Town or Municipality. The Local Authority must take the necessary actions to have:

1. The Future Community Vision endorsed by the local authority's **Full Council Meeting**,
2. The Future Community Vision endorsed by the **State Government** as a guiding principle for urban management and development within the State Development Plan for the Local Authority Area.
3. The Future Community Vision incorporated into all future **statutory development plans** such as the Local Plans and Structure Plans, including Special Area Plans if there are.
4. The Community Heritage Vision **publicised** throughout the municipality and its stakeholders

(6) Priority Issues Identified

Through the above community visioning process, the priority issues facing the community are also identified by the stakeholders. These issues shall be subjected to further analyses in the next step.

4.3 Guidelines on Holding The Visioning Workshop

The Future Community Visioning Workshop is an event that culminates months of awareness, promotions and discussions on the future of the town's living environment and heritage. In this event, all ideas and aspirations gathered so far by the previous focus groups mini workshops are discussed and a final **Vision Statement** is expected to be produced that will bring together diverse interests among the different stakeholders in the town.

This workshop will also identify **Priority Issues** that must be worked on in order to reach the agreed vision. Examples of these Priority Issues may include:

- Economic revitalisation and preservation of traditional trades,
- Tourism and its impacts,
- Degradation of Heritage Assets,
- Traffic and public transportation,
- Modernising infrastructure and urban services,
- Security and safety,
- Sustainability and training of future generations.

Recommended Workshop Programme

When holding this Workshop, the followings items are recommended for inclusion into the Workshop Programme:

1. **Exhibition panels** can be prepared and displayed at the Workshop Venue to further high-light on:

- Information regarding the Public Participation process and the role of stakeholders,
 - Survey findings and outcome of the focus groups mini-workshops,
 - Heritage assets of the town and issues facing the town.
2. **Presentation or Summary Speech** by the Local Authority on:
- Public Participation process, its expected outcomes,
 - The role and participation of stakeholders
 - The findings of the survey
 - The outcomes of the mini-workshops held before this.
3. **Panel discussion** by Local Authority, Representatives of Interest Groups, and other invited planning experts on:
- Survey findings and outcome of mini-workshops,
 - Heritage assets of the town and issues facing the town.
4. **Group discussions** (8 to 20 participants in each discussion group). This is to facilitate more in depth, detailed and systematic discussion on the issues raised. Each group is assigned with one facilitator.
- Divide participants into suitable groups of 8-20 persons, preferably with a balanced mix of professions, sex, age groups, race, etc.
 - Suggest a thought provoking question to induce the generation of ideas and views from participants. (For example, *“Imagine our town 20 years from today.... note down 5 or more positive characteristics you would like to see in our town’s heritage and urban environment”*) or (*“What are the areas we need to work on today for us to achieve our ideas for the future?”*)
 - Compile all the views and ideas and categorise them into suitable topics.
5. Facilitators to gather and combine the ideas on future vision of each of the discussion groups; and to develop a **draft vision statement** and priority areas of concern for each group.
6. **Plenary session** for all discussion groups to discuss together, review, approve and finally achieve a consensus on a draft Future Community or Heritage Vision Statement and priority issues.

4.4 Checklist for Future Community Visioning

Tick box when action item is completed:

- ☐ Decide on the scope and scale of the analysis
- ☐ Identify target groups and organisations that should be included in the Heritage Visioning process
- ☐ Training or engage facilitators to carry out group visioning process in workshop
- ☐ Implement awareness program on local heritage and on the Public Participation process
- ☐ Carry out household survey
- ☐ Carry out mini-workshops for specific target groups
- ☐ Carry out Community Heritage Vision workshops
- ☐ Endorse and publicise the Community Heritage Vision

5.0 COMMUNITY-BASED ISSUE ANALYSIS (CBIA)

5.1 Purpose and Method

This is the second step in the Public Participation Process. It follows from the Future Community Visioning Step where a consensus statement on the future vision of the town or planning area has been developed and various issues that required attention in order to achieve the vision have been identified.

Community-based Issue Analysis (CBIA) is a process of in-depth review of priority issues identified in the previous step by the partnership of stakeholders and implementer.

This step of CBIA is also managed and overseen by the Task Force on Public Participation in the Local Authority.

The CBIA is to be carried out by several **Study Groups** to be formed from the partnership of the stakeholders. Similar to those focus groups in the previous Future Community Vision Step, these Study Groups are formed so that each group can tackle each priority issue in details.

The detailed study of these priority issues shall be done through a series of facilitated mini-workshops or round table discussions. In the course of such study, site visits, research and interviews with other stakeholders and residents may also be carried out to gain further insights into the issues in question.

When implemented effectively, Community-based Issue Analysis:

- Enables detailed **dialogue** among local community groups and between community and experts among the stakeholders (museum department, NGOs, etc)
- Focuses planning on local **stakeholders' recognised need** and priorities
- Allows stakeholders to gain knowledge on **technical aspects** of the issues they wish to resolve and to weigh the impact of such issues from other perspectives,
- **Allow balances** between non-expert with expert assessments of the issues,
- Creates a **well-informed community** of residents capable of doing balanced analyses of issues the community or town faces.

The Study Group for each of the priority issue should implement CBIA with the following sequence:

1. Define the area to be covered,
2. Specify the scope of the priority issue to be analysed in this area,
3. Carry out analysis process
4. Prepare the results in a given format for the State of Town Report.

5.2 Output of CBIA

When completed, the tangible output of CBIA is a comprehensive **State of the Town Report** that illustrates the current state of the town in term of its urban living environment or heritage assets; as well as the threats and opportunities the town faces. This State of the Town Report thus is a compilation of the outcomes of the various detailed analyses by the study groups on the priority issues.

