

# Visioning

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|---|---|
| Engagement range                              | Inform/Consult/Partnership  |
| Difficulty level                              | Medium  |
| Cost  | Medium (\$1,000 to \$10,000)  |
| When might you use it                         | To develop community capacity<br>To communicate an issue<br>To develop action plan<br>To build alliances, consensus<br>To discover community issues |
| Number of people required to help to organise | One - three people  |
| Time to organise                              | Medium (six weeks to six months)<br>Long (over six months)  |
| Size of audience                              | Large (over 30)   |
| Issues/resources to think about               | Recorders; Resources for group participation;<br>(paper/pens/tables/chairs); Food   |
| Innovation level                              | High  |

## Description

Visioning exercises are used to define and help achieve a desirable future. Visioning exercises are regularly used in urban and strategic planning and allow participants to create images that can help to guide change in the city. The outcome of a visioning exercise is a long term plan, generally with a 20-30 year horizon.

Visioning exercises also provide a frame for a strategy for the achievement of the vision. Alternatively, some visioning tools may be used to promote thought and encourage discussion of future land use and planning options, without the need to create a future orientated document. Games can be developed to do this, for instance, the Wheel of Coastal Fortune, a game in which participants post cards to decide where facilities will be sited, is a planning exercise which encourages a holistic approach to planning and considering the impacts from the whole catchment area on the coastal zone (See also Scenario Testing).

## Objective

- To develop a preferred future scenario.

## Desired Outcome

- Future scenarios; together with the steps that are needed to achieve this vision, and a group of participants who have ownership of the vision, and therefore have a reason to help make this happen.

## Uses/Strengths

- Use when integration between issues is required.
- Use when a wide variety of ideas should be heard
- Use when a range of potential solutions are needed.
- Visioning encourages participation for developing a long-range plan.
- Visioning is an integrated approach to policy-making. With overall goals in view, it helps avoid piecemeal and reactionary approaches to addressing problems. Visioning uses participation as a source of ideas in the establishment of long-range policy. It draws upon deeply-held feelings about overall directions of public agencies to solicit opinions about the future.
- When completed, visioning presents a democratically-derived consensus.

## Special considerations/weaknesses

- Organisation of the visioning exercise can be costly.
- Vision can be difficult to transfer into strategy and policy

## Step by Step Guide

In a typical visioning exercise a facilitator asks participants to close their eyes and imagine they are walking along their shoreline as they would like to see it in 15 years.

What do they see? What do the buildings look like? Where do people gather? How do they make decisions? What are they eating? Where are they working? How are they travelling? What is happening on the street? Where is the centre of the neighbourhood? How does green-space and water fit into the picture? What do you see when you walk around after dark?

People record their visions in written or pictorial form; in diagrams, sketches, models, photographic montages, and in written briefs. Sometimes a professional illustrator helps turn mental images into drawings of the city that people can extend and modify.

To play games such as Wheel of Coastal Fortune, which promote thought and encourage discussion of future land use and planning options without developing any documentation, the following steps are taken:

1. The kit can be borrowed from the developer of the game, Katrina Luckie, or, with enough preparation time and funds, you could make your own.
2. Develop a map of the coastal zone beginning in the hinterland and flowing down to the sea. This should be sturdy and able to be transported for frequent use, and may be in the form of a patchwork rug, or a model in segments.
3. Develop cards that indicate the facilities likely to be proposed for the area (e.g. national parks, native forest, high-rise development, tourist developments, sewerage outlets, shopping centres, wetlands reserves, etc.) Develop boxes or cans into which these cards can be slotted, marked with the various natural resources of the region (e.g. island, wetlands, native forest, town, beach, forested hills, etc) with two less receptacles than there are cards. Two cards will be jettisoned by each player.
4. Ask for volunteers, and provide each with a full range of cards to 'post' and invite them to consider how they will match the facilities with the most suitable environments. They may throw out two cards each, and can post only one card per environment (can).
5. Once people have made their choices, record what was placed in each site, and invite the group to comment on these choices.
6. Invite the participants to discuss what was easy and what was difficult about the process, what they learned, and how they might use the game in the future.