New Rural Economy
Role of Community Events as Institutions in Rural Communities

Interviewee Name
Interviewee Title

Event Name
Address
Phone number   URL
Fax number   E-mail address

Interviewer
Community name   NRE cell number

The purpose of this interview is to identify the key elements of capacity and cohesion in the community to undertake collective functions - namely events, festivals, and celebrations.

There are three sections:
! Questions about the event itself.
! Questions about the importance of this and other events in the community.
! Questions about community action.

About the Event

1. When is the event normally held? (For example, the long weekend in August, first Friday of March, etc).

2. What is its duration? (For example, half-day, four days, etc).

3. What are the main activities? (For example, a parade, fireworks, etc)

4. What year did this event start?

5. Why did this event start in the first place?

6. Please provide a brief history of the event. Has the event gone through ups and downs over the years, particularly in the last 10 years? If so, explain why.

7. Describe the history of the event's leadership. Describe how long people generally stay involved in planning and working the event, any issues related to the turnover of volunteers and the recruitment or participation of new volunteers. (Note to interviewer: You should also prompt the interviewee with "Has the event been mostly the work of just a few individuals, or the work of many?" "Has the same organization or different organizations been responsible for the event over the years?")

8. Including yourself, about how many of the following types of people are involved in planning this event this year? (Identify all that apply)
a general citizens
b other volunteer groups
c businesses
d youth
e representatives of government agencies
f others (please specify)

9. Including yourself, about how many of the following types of people are involved in "working" (providing labour on the day of the activity) this event this year? (Identify all that apply)

a general citizens
b other volunteer groups
c businesses
d youth
e representatives of government agencies or departments
f others (please specify)

10. Do any of the following groups provide any financial (cash) or in-kind (materials, door prizes, supplies, etc) contributions to make this event possible? Please describe the in-kind contributions of each. Do not consider labour, as this was covered in question #2. (Note to interviewer: Simply place a check mark in the appropriate column beside each item. Write in the examples of in-kind contributions from each.)

	Financial	In-kind (list examples from each)
general citizens		
volunteer groups		
businesses		
youth		
municipal government		
provincial government		
federal government		
others (please specify)		

11. Approximately how much does this event cost (in real dollars) to put on?

12. Who participates in this event: what percent are from the local community, and what percent are visitors?
_____ % local people (from this community)
_____ % visitors

The Importance of This and Other Events

13. Please describe how this event contributes to the social well-being of the community.

14. Please describe the economic contribution this event makes to the community. (Note to interviewer: prompt the interviewee by asking if there is very much spending in local businesses as a result of the event, or if businesses have come to depend on this event for revenues, or if the event is an important fundraiser for an organization or a project, or if there are any other ways the event is important for the local economy.)

15. What would happen if people in this community were told this was the last year this event was to take place? Please explain.
a nothing - people wouldn't really notice
b a few people would express concern, but no one would step forward to take over
c the community would rally support and find a way to keep it going
d other (please specify)

16. If you, as the coordinator of this event, were to step down this year, would the event also stop, or would people step in and take over? Please explain.

17. Are there any annual events or celebrations that were important in the community which no longer happen? If so, please describe them, and explain why they are no longer part of the community.

18. In your opinion, what one or two events put on by people or organizations in this community would you say are the most identifiable with the community? In other words, which events do most people think of when they think of this community? Why?

Community Action

19. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor, how would you evaluate the citizens of this community in the following terms: (Note: Ask them to explain their answers and provide details.)

	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very Poor	Comments
openness to the opinions of many different people in the community	1	2	3	4	5	
ability to mobilize resources (time, money, volunteer)	1	2	3	4	5	
willingness to work together, cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	
ability to obtain government support	1	2	3	4	5	

20. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor, how would you evaluate the businesses of this community in the following terms: (Note: Ask them to explain their answers and provide details.)

	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very Poor	Comments
openness to the opinions of many different people in the community	1	2	3	4	5	
ability to mobilize resources (time, money, volunteer) on behalf of the community	1	2	3	4	5	
willingness to work together, cooperation with other businesses in the community	1	2	3	4	5	
ability to obtain government support	1	2	3	4	5	

21. What, in your opinion, are the most important formal or informal organizations, groups, committees, or boards which more or less define this community and contribute most to the "life" of this community/ Why?

22. What, in your opinion, are the prevailing attitudes of the people in this community? (Examples might be: independence, commitment to the community, "can-do" attitude, self-reliance.)

23. What, in your opinion, are the words that best describe how things get done in this community? (Examples might be: there is a high degree of consultation and discussion in the community, we rely on one or two people to do everything, we do things quickly, we do things slowly, we rely on our elected officials, we do things for ourselves, etc.)

24. How would you describe the "state of your community" today? (For example, it is prosperous, it is poor, it's not like it used to be, etc)

25. What accounts for the current state of this community? Are there factors that this community can control, or are they external factors?

26. Looking back at the last 30 years, what have been the long standing strengths of this community? Please explain. (For example, we always pull together in times of crises, good people always run for council, our business people support local clubs, etc).

27. Looking back at the last 30 years, what have been the long standing weaknesses of this community? Please explain. (For example, we never got the civic centre built, too many people have always shopped out of town, high school kids go to school in another community and don't have any connection with this community)

28. To what extent does the younger generation (those under 30 years of age) have similar or different attitudes about this community than the older generation (those over 55 years of age) in this community? Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Why? Please provide examples of similar attitudes and different attitudes.

Very similar attitudes   1   2   3   4   5   Very different attitudes

a this is a good thing
b this is a bad thing

Examples:

29. Have any new organisations / committees / boards been established in this community in the last 5 years? Why were they formed? (Examples might include: a youth council, an economic development committee, a "save our rink" committee)

30. Have any organisations / committees / boards ceased functioning over the last 5 years? Why did they stop functioning? (Possible answers might include: finished its mandate, no longer served its purpose, could not find leaders, key person retired)

31. How would you characterize where the "leaders" of this community come from? (Note: we define leaders in the broadest sense: people who are in elected and non-elected positions, as well as informal leaders such as school teachers, key business people, "movers-and-shakers", and others.)
_____ % were born and raised in this community
_____ % are from another rural or small town community
_____ % are from a larger community