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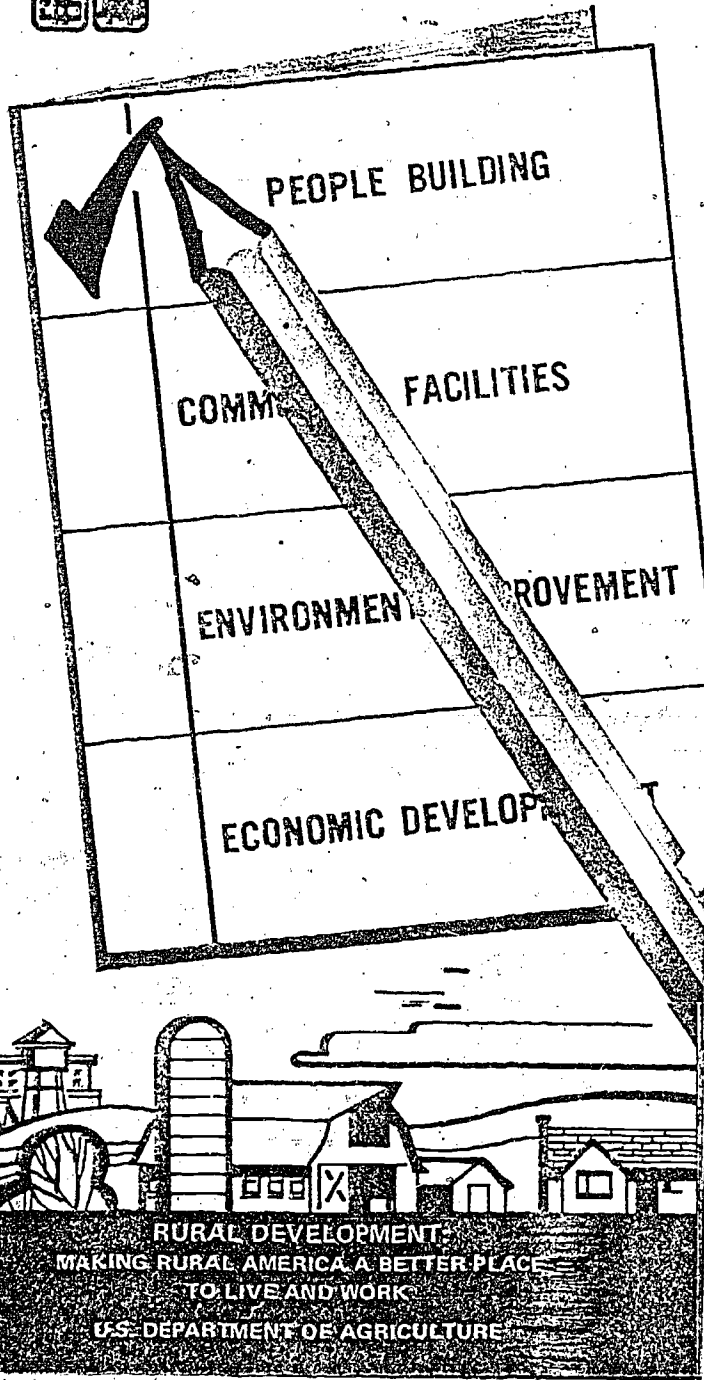
ABSTRACT

Designed to facilitate rural development efforts, this pamphlet presents a grading key for ranking community factors in each of four key areas of progress as follows: (1) People Building (education, health services, cultural satisfaction, outreach to the disadvantaged, and leadership); (2) Community Facilities (housing, transportation, utilities, and public services); (3) Environmental Improvement (conservation, recreation, and community initiatives); and (4) Economic Development (jobs, business and industry, credit, and natural resources). Additionally, this guide provides instructions for creating a community action plan, suggesting that a graphic community profile be developed; opinions regarding the profile be shared; the community needs be identified and prioritized; tasks be assigned to community representatives; a steering committee be formed; and an action group be established to secure help from such U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies as Cooperative Extension Service, Farmers Home Administration, Rural Electrification Administration, Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, and Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. (JC)

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COMMUNITY RC REPORT CARD



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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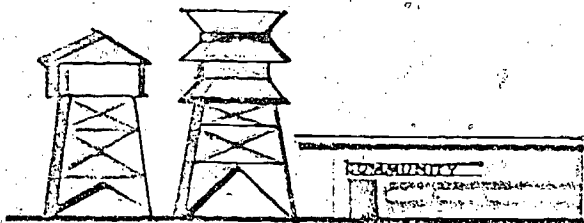
COMMUNITIES DON'T STAY THE SAME— THEY GET BETTER — OR WORSE.

FOUR KEY AREAS OF PROGRESS ARE:



1 PEOPLE BUILDING

GOOD COMMUNITIES ARE GOOD PLACES TO GROW UP IN AND STAY IN. THEY ARE BUILT BY ACTIVE, PROGRESSIVE CITIZENS. YOUR COMMUNITY CAN PROVIDE THE SERVICES AND FACILITIES NEEDED TO STIMULATE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.



2 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

RURAL LIFE DOES NOT HAVE TO LACK URBAN COMFORTS. IT CAN HAVE THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS: CITY CONVENIENCES AND THE ADVANTAGES OF COUNTRY LIVING. HOW YOUR COMMUNITY STACKS UP IN THIS REGARD IS A MEASURE OF ITS PROGRESS.



3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

RURAL AMERICANS ARE THE CUSTODIANS OF MOST OF AMERICA'S NATURAL BEAUTY. YOUR COMMUNITY SHOULD BE PROTECTING ITS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS — IMPROVING THEM — MAKING THEM USEFUL.



4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MILLIONS OF YOUTHS WOULD RATHER STAY IN RURAL AMERICA IF THEY COULD. GOOD JOBS ARE A KEY. MAKING YOUR COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK INCLUDES CREATING JOBS. HOW? BY INCREASING FARM AND BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND BY PROMOTING CIVIC IMPROVEMENT. YOUR COMMUNITY SHOULD BE ACTIVE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

NOW GRADE YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

GRADING KEY	
Superior	4
Good	3
Fair	2
Poor	1



PEOPLE BUILDING

EDUCATION

(Consider adequacy and availability to all)

High school _____

Vocational training facilities and instructors _____

Continuing adult education _____

Grade

HEALTH SERVICES

Availability of doctors, nurses, medical facilities _____

Health counseling services for those who need instructions and assistance _____

CULTURAL SATISFACTION

Availability of books and library services _____

Action by civic groups and clubs to meet community cultural needs. (Consider hobbies, music art, plays, athletic programs, youth and adult social programs.) _____

OUTREACH TO THE DISADVANTAGED

Extent to which community needs are met _____

LEADERSHIP

Degree to which your community leaders strive actively to make your community a better place to live and work _____

Degree to which young leadership is encouraged, respected, given a voice _____

Total _____

4



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

HOUSING

(Consider all sectors of your community in terms of living conditions — crowding, sanitation, upkeep and appearance, availability and costs) _____

Grade

TRANSPORTATION

Adequacy of streets, roads and public transportation service _____

UTILITIES

Adequacy of service and relative cost of —

Electricity and telephones _____

Gas _____

Water _____

Sewers _____

PUBLIC SERVICES

Police services and fire prevention and control _____

Trash and garbage removal _____

Meeting places _____

Hospitals and emergency ambulances _____

Total _____

5

GRADING KEY	
Superior	4
Good	3
Fair	2
Poor	1



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

CONSERVATION

Grade

Cleanliness of lakes, streams, ponds, forests and shorelines in your community area _____

Community antipollution ordinances to insure clean air, land and water _____

Protection of forests, water and wildlife resources in your community by:

Good fire control programs _____

Flood prevention and drainage _____

Erosion and sediment control _____

RECREATION

Degree to which private lands and waters in your community are serving local and regional recreational needs: fishing, swimming, skiing, hiking, camping, hunting _____

Use of public lands in your community to contribute to its beauty, its recreational needs _____

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Development of a group or committee to determine community environmental improvement needs and priorities _____

Creative projects - starting forests, development of water resources, beautification of existing assets _____

Good planning for community growth and expansion _____

Total _____

6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

JOBS

Grade

Degree to which your community encourages youth to stay after high school, college. Grade in terms of -

Economic activity _____

Financial opportunity _____

Availability of nonfarm work for part-time farmers _____

Job finding assistance _____

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Quality and variety of stores and services in your community _____

Attitude of your community with respect to seeking out and encouraging new industry _____

Community investment in civic improvement _____

CREDIT

Adequacy of credit sources _____

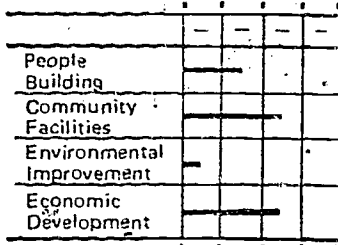
Contribution to community growth by banking and lending initiatives _____

NATURAL RESOURCES

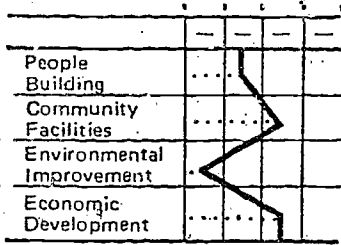
Use of natural resources - soils, forests, water, shorelines, weather, mountains, wildlife, etc. - to contribute to the community economy _____

Total _____

7



EXAMPLE BAR GRAPH



EXAMPLE BAR GRAPH



MODELS TO SHOW HOW TO USE CHART BELOW AS GRAPHS

PLOT YOUR COMMUNITY GRADES

10 17 25 33 40

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	SUPERIOR
PEOPLE BUILDING				
COMMUNITY FACILITIES				
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT				
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				

10 17 25 33 40

DO OTHERS AGREE WITH YOUR EVALUATION?

Get several opinions. Exchange views:

If you and others think change is needed —

FORM AN ACTION GROUP

- Agree on what your community needs to make it better.
- Set priorities.
- Decide on how each task should be approached —
 - by civic volunteer action
 - by municipal, county or State government

- through Federal or combination State-Federal programs.
- Assign action responsibility for each task.
- Set up a steering committee to push progress, to help with problems, and to publicize accomplishments.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

THROUGHOUT AMERICA, COUNTY, STATE AND REGIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES HAVE BEEN FORMED. THEY ARE PREPARED TO:

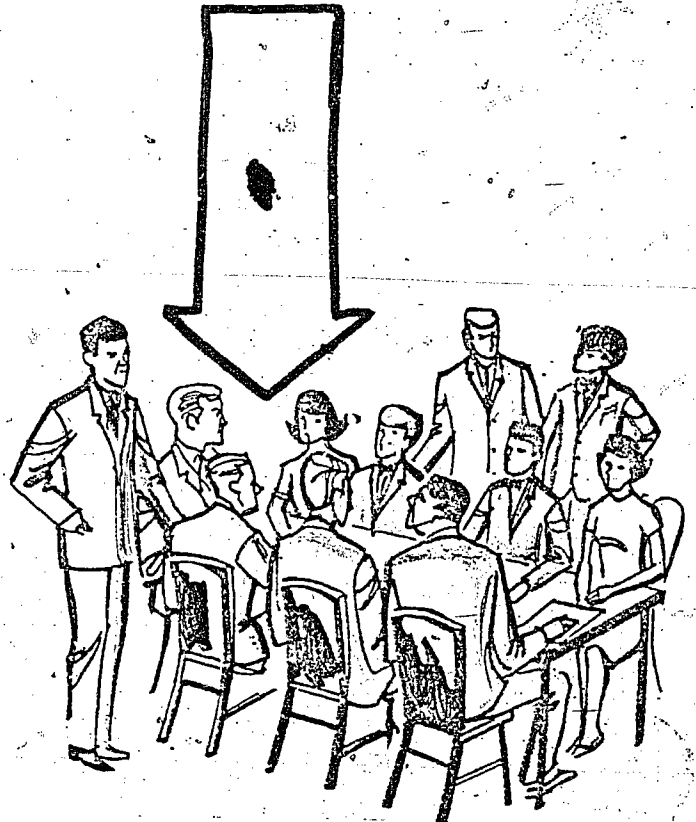
- PARTICIPATE IN YOUR COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT ON REQUEST
- FURNISH ADVICE REGARDING LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PROGRAMS THAT CAN HELP YOUR COMMUNITY
- SERVE AS A LINK BETWEEN YOUR COMMUNITY AND AGENCIES THAT CAN ASSIST IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT NEEDS
- SEE IF YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS CAN BE MADE A PART OF ON-GOING OR PLANNED COUNTY, STATE OR REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

TO GET RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS, SEE YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING USDA AGENCIES:

- COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
- FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION
- RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION
- FOREST SERVICE
- SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
- AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION SERVICE

IT'S YOUR COMMUNITY.
NO ONE KNOWS ITS NEEDS
BETTER THAN YOU AND
YOUR NEIGHBORS.

TAKE THE INITIATIVE



ISSUED NOVEMBER 1972

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, WRITE:

Rural Development
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Room 242-E
Washington, D. C. 20250

