



Community Assistance Guide

Smaller Community Technical Assistance

Livability Consulting for Smaller Communities

Providing services tailored for cities with populations of 5,000 to 75,000 and helping to restructure a community's physical environment, quality of life and image, while honoring small town values.



Smaller Community TA Fee

Upon Negotiation

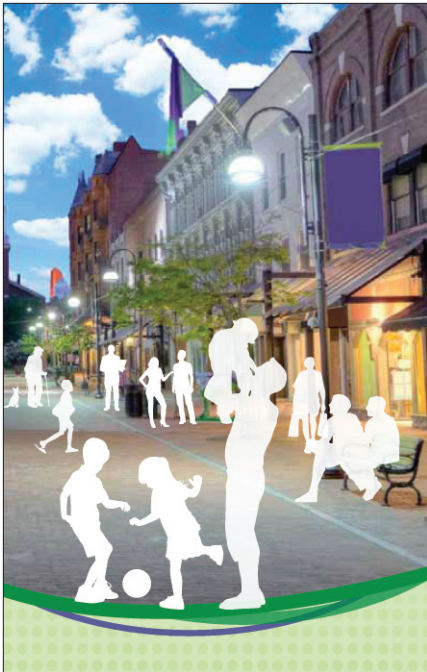
For over 30 years, Partners for Livable Communities has built a national reputation helping communities grow by developing their livability, or quality of life assets. Partners has historically worked with mid-size cities. However, Partners' special brand of community planning is highly relevant and adaptable to the needs of smaller cities as well. Livability consulting services are now available to cities with a population of 5,000 to 75,000. Partners understands the special challenges that smaller cities and towns face, such as how to encourage growth while maintaining small town amenities. Livability consulting for smaller communities can help communities achieve this balance, so that young people wishing to return home can find jobs. Livability consulting can also be a catalyst for change, helping restructure a community's physical environment, quality of life, and image, while honoring small town values.

Partners understands the special challenges that smaller cities are facing in today's economy, and the collaborative process necessary to devise appropriately catered solutions. Our unique approach to community development is highly adaptable to the range of development issues that each small, medium, and large city faces. It is true that larger and smaller communities must address related issues, for example:

- Demographic transitions
- Evolving economies
- Investment and resource distribution
- Civic leadership and community involvement
- Maintaining a sense of place
- Environmental challenges
- Quality and equitable infrastructure and services
- Nutrition, physical activity, and obesity

However, Partners understands that many of these issues manifest themselves as different challenges in small towns, and small towns address them with different priorities and resource bases. Expanding on the issues above, small communities:

- Face greater out-migration of young students and workers (the "brain drain" phenomenon) and influxes of new retirees seeking a slower pace of life and/or natural amenities
- Are hit harder by the decline of traditional industries and disappearing jobs
- Must often play catch-up with information and technology resources



Partners for Livable Communities

For further information on Technical Assistance Programs that can improve the livability of your community, contact bmcnulty@livable.org or call 202-887-5990 x 108.

- Must overcome stronger local traditions when working towards innovative and dynamic solutions
- Face tough environmental challenges that are much less abstract, where natural assets are often paramount to the town's economy and/or tourism
- Struggle with severely deteriorated housing, transportation, telecommunications, and other infrastructure, with insufficient services contributing to cycles of poverty
- Enjoy more natural amenities, yet suffer from higher levels of obesity

These differences can be exacerbated by greater distances between amenities, more limited resources, silo mentalities of local organizations and services, and negative stereotypes about rural America.

Partners can help small towns realize their powerful advantages, such as:

- Appealing and lucrative natural assets and amenities;
- Lower operating costs for local businesses
- An organic and strong sense of place
- Smaller and more flexible municipal bureaucracies
- Economic niches

Partners in Action: Livability Consulting in Smaller Communities

Marquette, Michigan: Up in the Upper Peninsula, famed as a city with over 300 inches of snow and a cold climate, Marquette and its environment—after Partners worked there on the Creative Economy—have emerged as one of America's Most Livable Communities with great pride in their academic institutions, their children's museums, their libraries, their environment, and their heritage.

Hobbs, New Mexico: A town off the interstates near the Texas-New Mexico border, this community had a downtown that was 90% vacant. Partners engaged the leadership of Hobbs to create a downtown revitalization program that would bring back pride and heritage to this growing Hispanic-American community of oil and gas service workers who service the wellheads in the Permian Basin area of New Mexico and Texas.

Woodlake, California: A majority Hispanic community with a gateway to Sequoia National Park, this area had its major bank withdraw and was desperate for resources and opportunity. Robert McNulty was brought in to facilitate dialogue. He discovered issues of pride, heritage and value that had been neglected and forgotten; it created momentum and Woodlake started building upon its heritage and its young people as assets to move forward with its future.

Jackson Hole, Wyoming: It is a wealthy community but one where all of the service workers in its resorts, elegant homes and facilities have come from three small villages in Central Mexico. Partners helped design, with the Community Cultural Center, a celebration strategy of the heritage of such individuals where their roots, their cuisine, their art and their language could, in fact, become a value used by the community cultural facility to bring together both wealthy visitors, second home owners and long-term residents and the new growth population of service workers for sharing of values.



Downtown Marquette

Another key asset of the small town is its people, who are often citizens with a strong sense of community pride, emphasize quality in business life, are more willing to invest in the future, have a cooperative community spirit, and are familiar with taking responsibility for their community. Partners will use these strengths to help your community reach comprehensive solutions to ongoing livability challenges.

Partners believes that tackling such complex issues requires a civic engagement strategy, an action agenda, clear community vision, strong leadership, and a ‘can-do’ attitude. Partners will help your community make the jump from vision to action; establish collaboration between community members, students, and faculty; provide a current and active resource center; and help discover underlying assets and obstacles to growth and development. Partners’ consulting services will get the right people at the table and keep them there, making sure things are done right the first time.

Partners has worked with communities as diverse as Marquette, Michigan; Salisbury, Maryland; Hobbs, New Mexico; and Emporia, Virginia, each time reinvigorating local life and economy. Today’s small towns must reinvent themselves to reflect the challenges of a changing global environment. Residents deserve to enjoy small-town life without sacrificing economic opportunities of the city, and Partners can help you get there.

Charles City, Iowa: Partners was engaged by the Wallace Foundation of Des Moines to do a workshop in Perry in the library to advance how this community should retain and enhance its quality of life and to become a national retirement magnet with safety, friendliness and civic value as part of its offering.

Robert McNulty facilitated communication at the “Conversations with Successful Communities” meeting, where six small groups comprised of community leaders and bank members came together to brainstorm and identify Charles City’s strengths. McNulty challenged participants to think globally and provided them direction for their town to continue to be a vibrant, successful and livable community. The result was a new plan for the community, one focused on the scenic Cedar River, promoting the city’s unique assets, highlighting the areas diversity, encouraging collaboration with the private sector, and developing future community leaders.

