

Building Community

Gary



**Strata and Community Title in Australia
for the 21st Century II**

22-24 August 2007

INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE FOR COMMUNITIES

Historical Background

- **Origins in North America in the 1920's**
- **Original focus was on land use planning – before public planning schemes**
- **Common interest subdivisions then emerged**
- **Homeowner Associations began to focus on building a sense of pride, wellbeing and belonging within their communities**
- **Australian developers followed North American trends**
- **The 1980's saw the emergence of “master planned communities” (? “subdivisions)**

Historical Background (Continued)

- **Community titles legislation emerged**
- **Take-up of community titles has been slow**
- **Increasing in popularity as its benefits become clearer to the market**
- **The benefits of community building are now starting to be recognized**

Scope of Paper

- **Focus is on building community in medium to larger size master planned communities**
- **These are mostly residential communities**
- **The concepts and ideas can be applied to residential home unit communities**

What is Community?

**Community Title + Owners Association
= Community**

NO!

The Components of Community

- **Planning and titling laws**
- **Physical layout**
- **Facilities**
- **Management structure**
- **Management**
- **Spirit and culture**

Impediments

- **Legislation**
- **Developers**
 - Failure to “seed” the process
 - Lack of physical facilities
 - Failure to tailor management
- **Managers**
 - Narrow focus
 - No enthusiasm for developing sense of community

Planning & Titling Laws

- **Facilitate -**
 - Establishment of the master plan
 - Staging or sub-development
 - Creating “controlled environment” (value + lifestyle)
 - Promotion of a sense of community
- **Need improving to further facilitate –**
 - Locking-in of land uses and headwork charges
 - Architectural and landscape controls
 - Development flexibility

Physical Layout

- **Master plan – land use patterns**
- **Must take full advantage of the topography and characteristics of the site**
- **Must address sustainability issues**
- **Public access must be restricted**
 - No place for ideology
 - Compromises security
 - Creates a barrier to building community
- **Generally handled well by developers but poorly by local government**

Facilities

- **Can be private or public or partly both**
- **Can be tangible (sports club, parks, swimming pools)**
- **Can be intangible (web site, newsletter)**
- **Examples in the paper**

Management Structure

- **Importance –**
 - Must connect and congregate residents
 - Must facilitate communication and interaction
 - Must provide means for development of sense of community and well being
 - Must be able to organize activities and opportunities for social discourse
- **Body corporate or community association is normal**
- **Their roles and structure needs to be improved**

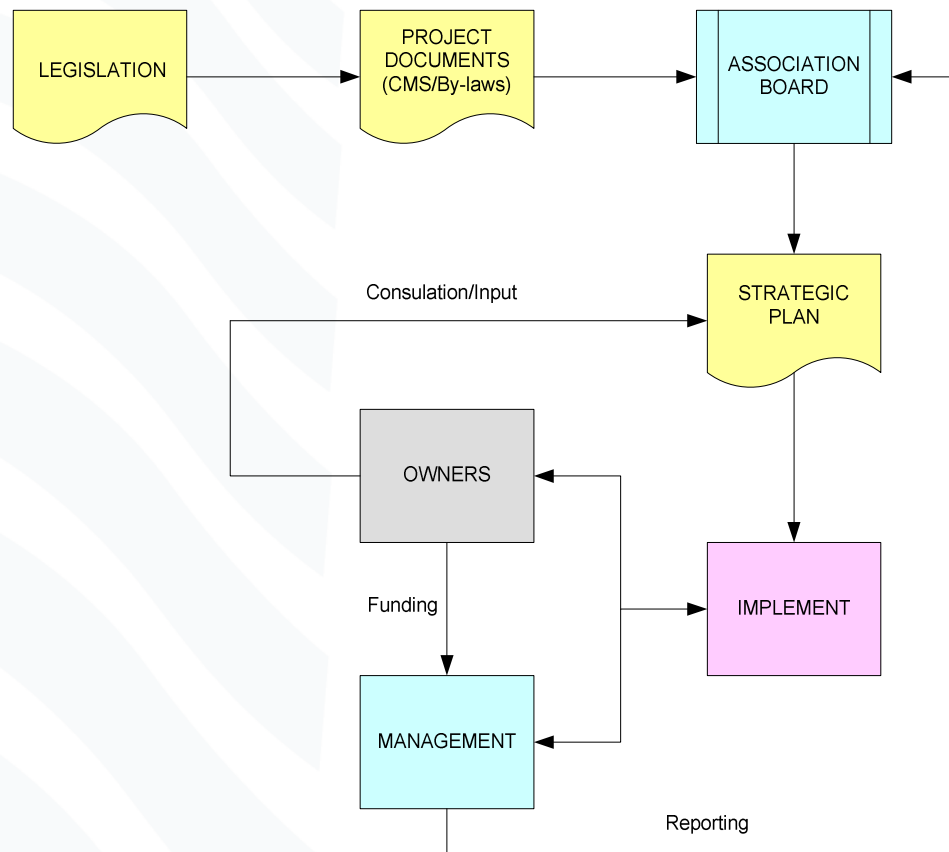
Management

- **Must have motivation and skills to foster and build spirit and culture**
- **In larger schemes –**
 - **Need not be a contracted manager**
 - **There may be a team (secretarial, maintenance, finance, community)**
- **Must appreciate the importance of children's programs**

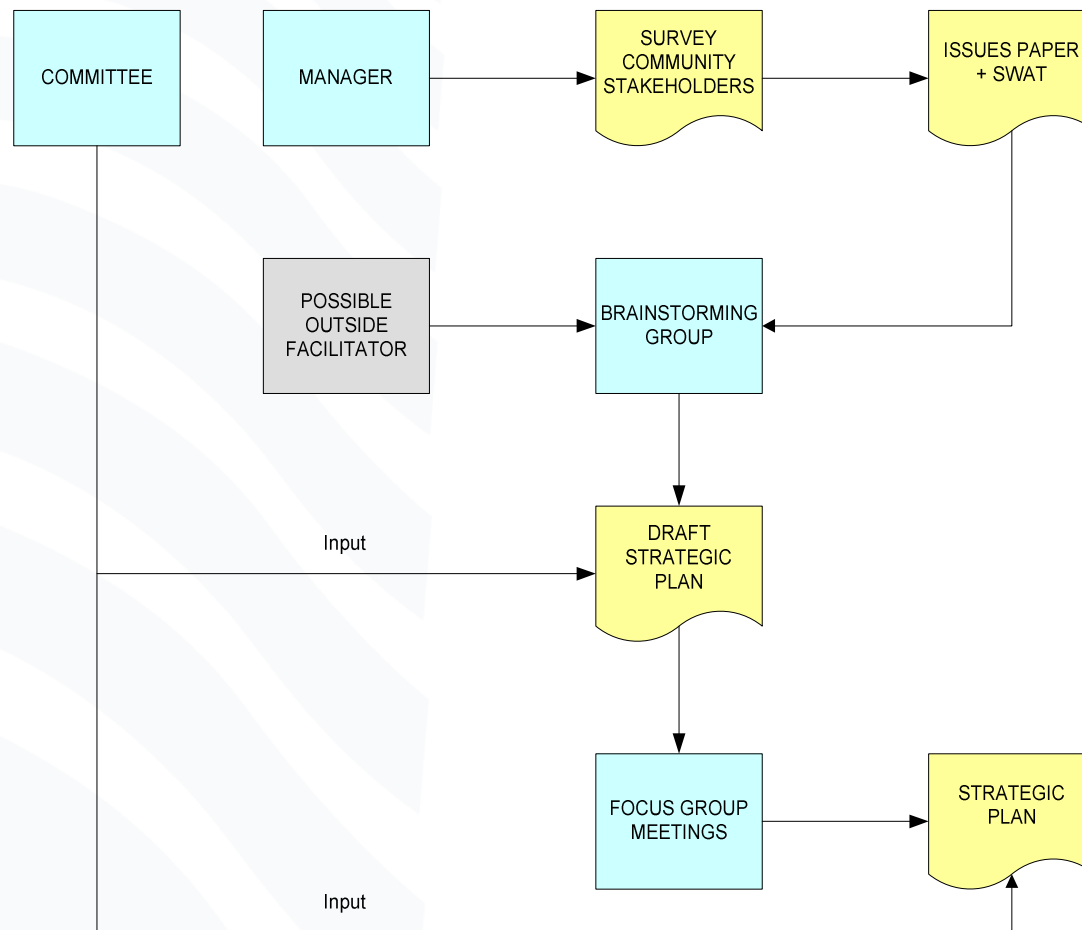
Spirit and Culture

- **The soul of the community**
- **The essence of harmonious and caring relationships**
- **Must exist at all levels –**
 - **Governors**
 - **Managers**
 - **General staff**
 - **Contractors**
- **Based on understanding, caring and tolerance**
- **Bring a sense of pride, well being and belonging in the community**

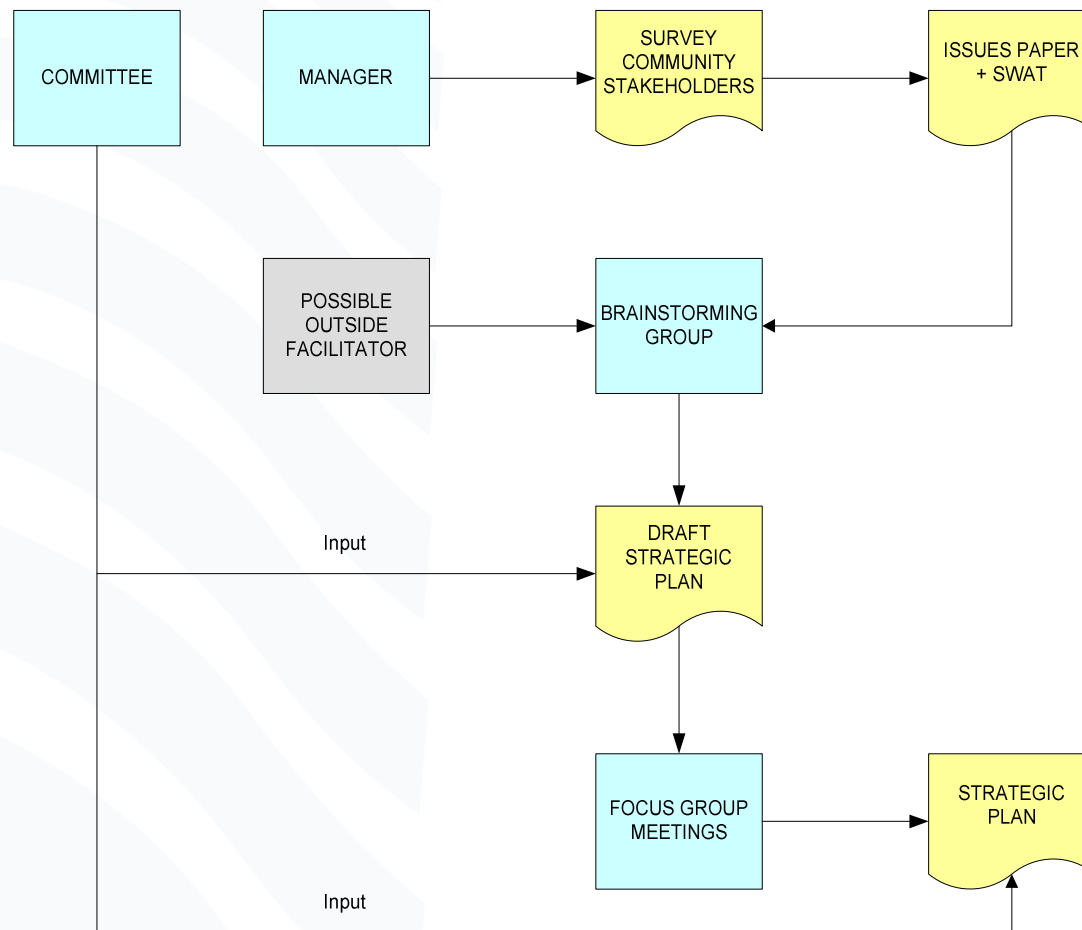
How to build community?



Strategic planning



Strategic planning



Essentials to Building Community

**Communication + Social
Interaction = Sense of
Belonging and Spirit**

Mechanism – Organized Activities

Adult Activities

Active –

- Golf days
- Tennis tournament
- Swimming carnival
- Bike riding
- Car rallies
- Sailing days
- Walking and running groups
- Picnic days
- Baby sitting clubs
- Community service projects (meals on wheels, mentoring, collections)
- Organized philanthropy (indigenous scholarship fund)

Passive –

- Card evenings
- Cocktail and dinner parties
- Barbecues
- Educational activities (photography, internet, computers, stock market, health and wellness)
- Book clubs
- Theatre parties
- Visits to galleries and museums
- Sightseeing tours

Children's Activities

Active

- ❖ Camping and fishing
- ❖ Summer camps
- ❖ Skateboard competitions
- ❖ Sporting competitions
- ❖ Blue light discos
- ❖ Sailing lessons
- ❖ Swimming carnival

Passive

- ❖ Concerts
- ❖ Movie nights
- ❖ Computer games nights
- ❖ Book clubs
- ❖ Bingo nights

Summing Up

- **Community has to be created – it will not just happen**
- **Governance and management must “drive” the process**
- **Strategic planning is essential**
- **There must be communal facilities to support a range of recreational, educational and social activities**
- **There must be good lines and means of communication**
- **There must be adequate funding**
- **Must be genuine commitment by everyone involved**
- **Rewards are well worth the cost and effort**

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