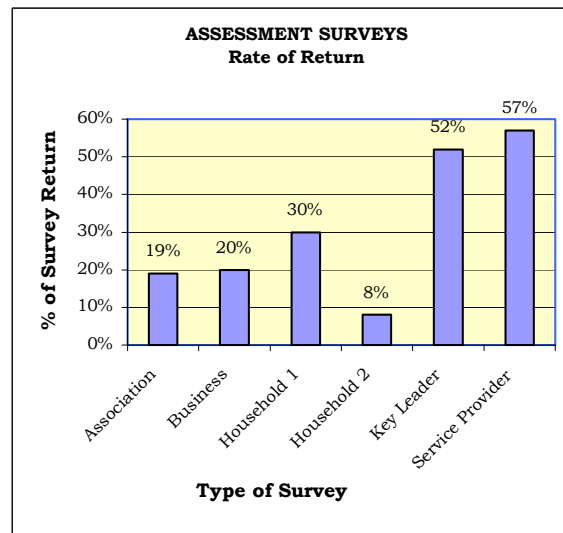


COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Caring Council and the Area Wide United Way launched the **Community Assessment Partnership (CAP)** in September, 2001 with the collaboration of over 30 civic leaders, social service organizations, schools, and businesses. Approximately \$8000 was pledged from ten partnership members to implement the assessment for Cape Girardeau County and Scott City. The Community Caring Council assumed the responsibility of implementing the COMPASS Community Assessment, a United Way community building tool.

Five different surveys were distributed throughout Cape County and Scott City from July 2002 through May 2003. Three of these surveys (Association, Business and Service Provider) documented community strengths and resources. The other two surveys (Key Leader and Household) documented perceptions of neighborhood and household challenges. The issues evaluated were quite broad in scope - economic development, education, housing, environment, leisure, health, safety, social issues and transportation.

Surveys Distributed	2889
Surveys Returned	693
Overall Rate of Return	24%



During the same time period, **demographic and indicator data** relating to the survey issues was collected. Survey data and indicator data were brought together in 10 Issue Sections. Different community groups were asked to critique and validate the relevant data and provide input for community strengths and challenges.

Eight **Focus Groups** were held throughout the community to present survey results and indicator data. Total focus participants included 128 community representatives and residents. Each group was asked to rank order the same issues included in the Key Leader Survey and the Household Survey. Additional **community presentations** to share survey results were made to seven other groups.

A second phase of Household Survey collection was implemented in November 2003. One thousand surveys were mailed to randomly selected households. Of the 83 surveys returned, 81 contained valid data. The results were very similar to the first phase of household survey collection. A comparison chart showing the survey results and Focus Group results follows.

COMPARISON CHART for RANKING of PRIORITY ISSUES

ISSUES	Key Leaders	Group 1 HH	Group 1 Neigh.	Group 2 HH	Group 2 Neigh.	Focus Groups
--ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT--						
Un/under Employment	9	10	11	7	9	13
Lack of Jobs	6	--	10	--	7	13
Poverty	13	--	13	--	10	7
Not enough \$ for food		9	--	13	--	7
Not enough \$ for clothes/shoes		7	--	8	--	7
Difficult to budget		3	--	3	--	7
--EDUCATION--						
Illiteracy	16	20	21	22	22	
Overcrowded Classrooms	10	--	16	--	16	
Unsafe school environment	21	15	23	16	24	
--ENVIRONMENT--						
Air or Water Pollution	20	12	18	11	15	
Noise or other Pollution	23	8	17	2	5	13
--HEALTH--						
Alcohol/Drug Abuse	5	18	6	19	8	3
Mental Illness/Emotional Issues	17	1	20	1	20	4
Children/Teens beh/emot issues	--	6	--	9	--	4
Affordable Medical Care	4	2	3	3	4	2
Unable to get care for serious illness/elder/senior	--	19	--	15	--	
HIV/AIDS	23	--	25	--	25	
--HOUSING--						
Shortage of Affordable Housing	2	14	12	12	10	5
Substandard Housing	8	16	19	17	16	15
Overcrowded Housing	22	17	24	20	23	
--LEISURE--						
Shortage of Recreational Facilities	7	--	7	--	10	
Unable to Afford Recreation/Entertainment	--	4 / 5	--	6 / 5	--	
Lack of Cultural Activities	11	--	1	--	3	
--SAFETY--						
Crime	18	21	5	21	6	10
Gangs	24	24	22	23	19	
--SOCIAL ISSUES--						
Teen Pregnancy	12	--	9	--	13	5
Family Violence-Adult/Child Abuse	14	23	15	--	18	9
Affordable/Avail Care for Children	15	13	8	18	20	12
Affordable Legal Help	--	11	--	9	--	
Racial and Ethnic Discrimination	19	--	14	--	14	16
--TRANSPORTATION--						
Inadequate Public Transportation	1	--	4	--	1	1
Poor Road/Traffic Conditions	3	--	2	--	2	
Special Needs Transportation	--	22	--	14		17
--ADDITIONAL ISSUES--						
Independent Living *						8
Parenting Skills *						10
--TOTAL RESPONDENTS--	117	444	444	81	81	128

Rank = rank of issues according to weighted scores
HH = concerns in resident's household
NH = concerns in resident's neighborhood
Group 1 - surveys distributed through schools, churches, agencies, etc.
Group 2 - randomly mailed surveys
-- question not asked on survey
* issues added during Focus Group discussions

SUMMARY of PRIORITIZED ISSUES of FOCUS GROUPS

Community Caring Council-30

1. Inadequate Public Transportation
2. Affordable Medical Care
3. Shortage of Affordable Housing
4. Children/Teens Beh/Emot Issues
5. Poverty
6. Teen Pregnancy
7. Difficult to Budget

Housing Needs Committee-13

1. Shortage of Affordable Housing
2. Inadequate Pub Transportation
3. Affordable Medical Care
4. Substandard Housing
5. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
5. Poverty
5. Mental Illness/Emotional Issues

Special Needs Population Issue Council-23

1. Independent Living
2. Affordable Medical Care
3. Inadequate Public Transportation
4. Mental Illness/Emotional Issues
5. Poverty
6. Special Needs Transportation
7. Shortage of Affordable Housing

Cape Neighborhood Watch-14

1. Crime
2. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
3. Family Violence
3. Lack of Jobs
3. Noise or other Pollution
3. Inadequate Pub Transportation
4. Shortage of Affordable Housing

Helping People in Crisis Issue Council-11

1. Difficult to Budget
1. Inadequate Public Transportation
2. Affordable Medical Care
2. Shortage of Affordable Housing
3. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
3. Teen Pregnancy
4. Mental Illness/Emotional Issues

United Way Board -12

1. Parenting Skills/Attitudes
2. Teen Pregnancy
3. Affordable Medical Care
3. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
4. Inadequate Pub Transportation
5. Mental Illness/Youth Beh/Emot
5. Racial/Ethnic Discrimination
5. Shortage of Affordable Housing

Health Issue Council-9

1. Affordable Health Care
2. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
3. Mental Illness/Emotional Issues
4. Family Violence/Adult/Child Abuse
4. Inadequate Public Transportation
4. Teen Pregnancy

Bldg Stable Fam Issue Council-16

1. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
1. Inadequate Pub Transportation
1. Parenting Skills/Attitudes
1. Teen Pregnancy
2. Affordable/Available Childcare
3. Ch/Teens Emotional/Beh Issues
3. Affordable Housing
3. Difficult to Budget

The analysis of **all** the data points - household survey results, key leader survey results, indicator data and prioritization results of the focus groups resulted in the selection of **11 community issues** of most concern:

- ❖ **Affordable Medical Care**
- ❖ **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**
- ❖ **Family Violence/Child Abuse**
- ❖ **Inadequate Public Transportation**
- ❖ **Independent Living**
- ❖ **Leisure/Cultural Activities**
- ❖ **Mental Health**
- ❖ **Parenting Skills**
- ❖ **Poverty**
- ❖ **Shortage of Affordable Housing**
- ❖ **Teen Pregnancy**

The next step was to gather specific and relevant information regarding each of these 11 issues into a "summary matrix" to help determine the final ranking of community issues. A Community Forum in January 2004 was attended by over 40 "community experts" to complete the matrices.

Using these 11 matrices, the issues were presented to the Community Assessment Partnership for final discussion and prioritization in late January 2004. **Top four issues** in order of priority were:

- ❖ **Inadequate Public Transportation**
- ❖ **Affordable Medical Care**
 - Later changed to "Access" to Affordable Medical Care
 - Primary Health Care
 - Dental Health Care
 - Mental Health Care
- ❖ **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**
 - Adult
 - Youth
- ❖ **Family Issues**
 - Housing
 - Independent Living
 - Parenting Skills
 - Self-Sufficiency
 - Youth Development

Four **Priority Issue Committees** met in February 2004 to select long term, intermediate and short term outcomes for each of the four issues. The CAP members approved these outcomes in late February 2004. Priority Issue Committees met through September 2004, challenged with the task of matching indicators to outcomes, choosing strategies and action steps that will impact the outcomes, and determining exactly who/what agency will accept leadership for each action step.

Presentation of the completed **Community Plan** to the CAP and interested community residents took place in October 2004. Several revisions to the plan were proposed and accepted through December 2004. Additional community presentations were made to educate and engage more individuals and agencies throughout Cape County.

The final draft (although never really final) was completed in January 2005. Recruitment of chairpersons and members for each of the 4 **Priority Issue Councils (PIC's) and the 10 sub-committees** began in February 2005. These councils and sub-committees will be responsible for plan oversight, including implementation,

tracking of outcomes, and ongoing plan modification. The official PIC Kick-Off was held April 22, 2005, although some of the groups had already had their initial meetings. It is noteworthy that progress is underway for several strategies across all four issue areas.

The **Community Caring Council** is to serve as the parent agency for these Community Plan Priority Issue Councils. These groups will report back to the Council on a quarterly basis and annual **Progress Reports and Plan Updates** will be presented to the community. Membership for any of these oversight groups is not static, nor are the goals, objectives, strategies, etc. of the Community Plan. The intent of the entire Assessment Project has been to involve as many community stakeholders as possible in order to address the identified issues and in so doing, improve the quality of life in Cape Girardeau County and Scott City.

This **Community Assessment Project** has been a tremendous undertaking of the Community Caring Council and United Way of Southeast Missouri. It has truly served as a process of **community building**. Much appreciation goes out to everyone who has been part of this time-consuming effort. The chart below shows the number of people (mostly unduplicated) who have provided input throughout this undertaking.

TOTAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

1291

Community Involvement	Number of Meetings	Number of Participants*
<i>Returned Surveys</i>	15+	693
<i>Community Presentations</i>	14	171
<i>Focus Group Meetings</i>	8	128
<i>Validating Data Meetings</i>	3	18
<i>CAP Partnership Meetings</i>	4	50
<i>Community Forum</i>	1	40
<i>Priority Issue Committees</i>	3	45
<i>Sub Committees</i>	5	40
<i>State FACT Board Presentation</i>	1	15
<i>UW Issue Councils/Plan Development Committees</i>	24+	88
<i>Staff Meetings</i>	60+	3
TOTALS	138+	1291

* Unduplicated counts

[As of April 1, 2005]