

## Approaches to and Examples of Three Common Visioning Approaches

This table shows a series of simplified approaches on a basis of scale and intensity. Approaches should be designed to suit the unique needs and outcomes for a specific situation; however this demonstrates some of the various options and pros and cons of different approaches.

STYLE of VISIONING	PROS	CONS
<p><u>Simple vision process</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More traditional process – often includes SWOT and whiteboard and “sticky-note” type approach</li> <li>• Typically used in small groups or teams, or in smaller community ‘town-hall’ style visioning events</li> <li>• Ideal for simple outcomes within an existing group or organization for shorter-term perspectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple process that achieves an immediate result – feel accomplished</li> <li>• It is fast – often done in half-day workshop</li> <li>• Relatively cheap to do</li> <li>• Easy to organize and facilitate</li> <li>• Gathers input in an easy and non-challenging manner</li> <li>• Often motivational and inspirational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often lacks deep critical thinking or meaningful examination of the external environment</li> <li>• Somewhat superficial outcome</li> <li>• Outcomes are often simple and don’t capture the depth of thinking</li> <li>• Produces a single view outcome; lacks complexity and little systemic change may be expected</li> </ul>
<p><u>Medium intensity visioning process</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally a more complex process (like scenario planning) – often includes examination of external variables</li> <li>• Generally done with a large key stakeholder or representative group</li> <li>• Effective for larger organizational or regional planning efforts with a selected group.</li> <li>• Typically a 1-2 day workshop event within a longer-term planning process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produces deeper thinking and examination of possible futures and implications</li> <li>• Draws in diverse stakeholder thinking and is holistic in nature</li> <li>• Builds capacity to think about the future in a flexible manner</li> <li>• Outcome often includes a ‘snapshot’ of thinking and issues – encapsulated in a report</li> <li>• Easy to run simplified engagement sessions around the outputs</li> <li>• Can be done quickly and connects well with a move to action and implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is more resource intensive</li> <li>• Requires considerable work before and after workshop to compile findings and summary</li> <li>• Does not directly engage wider community – mostly only occurs at stakeholder group level – may be seen as top-down.</li> </ul>

<p><b><u>High engagement long-term process</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrates engaged visioning process with public input and engagement</li> <li>• Generally is a 6-12 month process</li> <li>• Effective for large scale grass-roots driven visioning processes</li> <li>• Produces a large volume of public input and ownership via social media, workshops, engagement events and such mechanisms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideal for gaining public ownership of a long-term planning process and vision</li> <li>• Gathers a wide-range of input and can attract support of many groups, people and organizations.</li> <li>• Results in a wide variety of new partnerships and collaborations</li> <li>• Can lead to real long-term systemic change at a regional level and builds regional resilience and sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not always resolve conflicting views and positions</li> <li>• Time consuming and requires higher levels of resourcing</li> <li>• May not be well suited for quick response situations – takes time to build public understanding and engagement</li> <li>• Can be difficult to manage large scale public input mechanisms.</li> </ul>
--	---	---

### ***I. Simple Visioning Process – Newton, Iowa***

Newton, Iowa (population 15,000) faced a severe economic shock following the May 2006 closure of a major local manufacturing plant. The community's initial response was to form the Newton Transformation Council which then hosted a community visioning session. This one evening session attracted nearly 300 local leaders and stakeholders and formulated the basis of a long-term vision and the creation of a series of action teams. This visioning session was then embedded in a larger longer-term economic and community development program. Outcomes from this visioning process included:

- **Community Mobilization** – some 100 people became active member of action teams formed at the community visioning event.
- **Future Focus** – the event refocused the population and stakeholders on the future opportunities, giving a sense of vitality and enthusiasm about potential for the local economy and community.
- **Regional Initiative** – The community quickly realized it was part of a larger regional economy and initiated a program (with grant funding support) of regional planning and workforce development.
- **Economic Development and Job Creation** – since the plant closure, Newton has been successful in attracting a number of major new employers, primarily in renewable energy manufacture and technology, replacing many of the jobs lost.

### ***II. Medium Intensity Visioning Process – Humboldt County, Nevada***

The Winnemucca Futures Project ([www.winnemuccafutures.com](http://www.winnemuccafutures.com)) is an initiative of the Humboldt Development Authority, Winnemucca, Nevada. With a local population of about 18,000, this county-wide project is designed to proactively promote the public interest by encouraging community growth and sustainable development through communications and collaboration. It is designed to be an open and fair process, which is dedicated to hearing all voices. This county-wide visioning and action planning process was initiated in early 2010, and involved a three month planning process that included scenario planning, public engagement and action planning session. It has resulted in clear vision for the future of the county, and has formed a series of action teams that are built around four strategic focus areas including:

- **Community Capacity** – Build the leadership and education systems that stimulate new thinking and create opportunities.

- **Building the Foundation** – Identify and invest in critical infrastructure foundations for future community and economic growth.
- **Collaborative Culture** – Create an engaged and collaborative community culture that focuses on a shared vision.
- **Economic Diversification** – Explore and develop innovative economic systems to capitalize on local strengths and embrace emerging industries.

### ***III. High Engagement Long-term Process – Future West Cork Project, West Cork, Ireland***

The Future West Cork Project ([www.futurewestcork.com](http://www.futurewestcork.com)) is a long-term, two-year regional engagement process. During 2010 and 2011, the West Cork Region in Ireland has been undertaking a large scale community engagement and visioning exercise. With a population of over 100,000 people, the region is experiencing 14 percent unemployment, out-migration of skilled workers, and the overhang of excess housing stock. The region is experiencing a severe economic shock. Regional leaders have embarked on an ambitious long-term visioning process with scenario planning, social network mapping, and extensive community engagement at its core. This project aims to build regional resilience and to articulate a vision for the future. The purpose is to bring renewed prosperity and to embed new and innovative thinking, while valuing the region's strong cultural tradition and natural heritage. Expected and emerging outcomes of the project include:

- **Regional Vision** – The articulation of a regional vision with high degree of public support To date, over 1,000 people, from all ages and walks of life, have been directly engaged in town hall meetings, online discussions, and sector workshops to explore what is the preferred future.
- **Realignment of Resources** – Key funding organization have already begun to realign their resources to match the emerging community aspirations, and local people are now connecting their projects and innovations to the emerging aspirational future.
- **Increased Competitiveness** – It is anticipated the region and its agencies will be more competitive in European funding programs, because of the high degree and quality of community engagement and identification of important priorities.