

COMMUNITY EXPLORATION

Start by exploring the proposed community to understand better how Kiwanis can meet its needs and who can support that effort. Site selection is crucial. Thoroughness during this part of the process will help the rest run smoothly. Meeting with community leaders to gather information will offer insight into the community and its needs. (Remember, this is not a recruiting visit.) These visits will also give you additional community leaders to contact — and eventual access to prospective members.

SITE SELECTION IS A TWO-STEP PROCESS:

STEP 1: Discussion of potential club sites.

Review the list of possible sites from the district growth plan. Focus on the needs of the targeted communities and the improvements a new Kiwanis club can make. Take into consideration:

- Other service organizations and Kiwanis clubs in the community.
- Size and population diversity.
- Number of schools and their community support and parental involvement.
- Number of local businesses.
- Accessibility to a meeting area.
- Proximity to other active Kiwanis clubs.

STEP 2: Conducting the site survey. The goal of the site survey is to evaluate the needs of the community and to gauge support for the target site. A site survey is not necessarily a visit to recruit or sign up members. Its purpose is to collect information. However, note any contacts who will be appropriate to visit during the recruitment phase.

Who should participate? As many leaders of your team as possible! The enthusiasm of community leaders will inspire your team members. Spend a day visiting community leaders, including:

- Chamber of Commerce executive director. Ask about other service clubs. How active are they? Are they open to diverse members? Where do they meet? Is there a contact person for them? What might be a good place to have a meeting? What major project would improve their community? Has the community conducted a needs assessment?
- School administrators, the superintendent and principals of high schools, junior high schools and elementary schools. Are they familiar with Key Club, Builders Club, K-Kids, Terrific Kids and Bringing Up Grades (BUG)?
- Bank presidents.
- City administrators, township and county officials.
- Law enforcement officials such as the police chief, D.A.R.E officer and fire chief.
- Real estate and insurance brokers.
- Librarians or media specialists.

As time and the size of your exploration team allow, also consider connecting with:

- Religious leaders.
- Postmaster.
- Hospital administrator and staff of the pediatrics unit.
- Hotel, restaurant, apartment and community center managers. Examine possible meeting locations. Inquire about availability, private rooms, prices, etc.
- College, university and technical school administrators: Are they familiar with Circle K?
- Human-service agency representatives.
- Organizations that benefit from Kiwanis service, such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts.
- Newspaper editors and radio, television and cable TV executives, bloggers and child-focused publication writers.

Spend 10 to 15 minutes with each community leader and explain that you are gathering information. Ask for business cards and names of other people to contact. Tell them you will inform them as soon as a decision is made and thank them for their time.



INFORMATION GATHERING

Town/city _____

Recent/recurring community events _____

EXISTING SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATION	WHEN IT MEETS	MEETING LOCATION	NOTES (how long they have been in town, what they are known for in the community, etc.)
KIWANIS			
ROTARY			
LIONS			
OPTIMIST			
JUNIOR CHAMBER INTERNATIONAL			
OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS			

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Ethnicity _____

Languages _____

ECONOMIC SITUATION

Mean or median income _____

Top professions/employers _____

EDUCATION

Average educational levels _____

Childcare options _____

Local schools _____

What service projects could the club undertake immediately after organization? *Prioritize them.*

What service projects in the next 2-5 years? _____

Which Kiwanis members or community stakeholders have an investment in the new club's success?

Local schools _____

Additional notes _____