



4. Our Job Now: Implementing the Vision

our future. here. is an agenda for common action for the entire county. The initiative is built on a broad and inclusive community dialogue. It is the result of an unprecedented effort that involved more than 1,100 Champaign County residents over the course of 15 months. The goals and action strategies that make up this vision for Champaign County are a testimonial to the remarkable interest and commitment of those who participated.

Constructing a Shared Future

Many individuals and organizations stepped forward to formulate **our future. here.** As **big.small.all.** turns from talk to action, the energy and excitement of those who participated and many others must be harnessed towards achieving the vision.

our future. here. did not emerge in a vacuum. The vision was developed in the context of ongoing and emerging initiatives by many organizations. It should be seen as a complement to and extension of existing strategic plans and organizational agendas. Much of it will be achieved by supporting, extending, and building on those initiatives.

Implementation will require the coordinated efforts of individuals and organizations representing the public, private, and civic sectors of the

community. Of the vision's 145 action strategies, 29 percent require action by government bodies. Another 26 percent will require action jointly by both public and private entities. Twelve percent can only be implemented by the private sector. The remaining 33 percent can be implemented by either public or private entities or both

It is important to note that the vision is not, nor is it intended to be, a government policy document. Even those action strategies that require public sector involvement need an active citizenry to place them on the agendas of government agencies and ensure that the agencies follow through.

Implementation can be structured in several ways, and no single approach is relevant to every initiative.

- Action can be taken by private and public entities working independently.
- Task Forces can be organized centrally but operate independently.
- A central entity can take action or work to coordinate and assist existing and new initiatives.

our future. here. contemplates a mix of approaches adjusted to the characteristics of each action strategy and the differing financial, institutional, and technical circumstances within which each action takes place. To a great degree implementation can be structured around existing organizations and initiatives.

big.small.all. Can Help

While individuals and organizations can take on one or more action strategies independently, more can be accomplished if these initiatives are coordinated. A central entity can help disseminate and share information, provide clearinghouse services, and promote initiatives to the general public. It can also be a means by which citizens and community leaders develop a broader view of community programs and projects and, so, reinforce efforts to make the initiatives mutually supporting.

The importance of motivating the community to take effective action and the need to synchronize a multiplicity of efforts creates an ongoing responsibility for **big.small.all.**

In the long run, the details of **big.small.all.'s** organizational structure and the means by which it is funded should reflect the extent of the implementation-related functions **big.small.all.** takes on. The greater the responsibilities the more important a formal structure will be. The future character of **big.small.all.** will evolve as the vision evolves. The elements of the vision that have the strongest support will shape the optimal arrangements for the ongoing effort.

As an informal organization **big.small.all.** has no assets and no liabilities. It exists as a responsibility that existing organizations may choose to take on jointly or individually.

The functions of **big.small.all.** could be absorbed into the operations of an existing organization. It would become an ongoing program of that organization. In that case, it would operate under the governance and financial structure of the parent organization.

big.small.all. could also continue to operate under its current arrangements with the support of an existing organization, which would have to assume its financial liabilities. Several models already exist for supporting informal coordinating bodies such as the Metropolitan Intergovernmental Council. These can be adapted to support **big.small.all.**

Depending on the scope of its responsibilities, at some point it might be most convenient to incorporate **big.small.all.** In some form incorporation may be the simplest means to create a public/private entity that has a clear cut governance and financial structure. This wouldn't have to create a new bureaucracy. The effort, in fact, could remain pretty much as it has with significant volunteer contributions and staff support from an existing entity like the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission.

In the short term, **big.small.all.** will remain informally organized and will continue to operate under the terms of its charter (Appendix A). It will remain unincorporated with its day-to-day activities and finances being handled by the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. The organizational structure need not be altered to start implementation. Under current arrangements **big.small.all.** will take a range of steps to coordinate, support, and monitor implementation.

big.small.all. will:

1. Maintain a contact list of interested individuals developed from implementation interest cards submitted at the Community Choice Workshops, project participant lists, and new contacts;
2. Recruit individuals and entities to implement specific action strategies or integrate them into ongoing initiatives;
3. Link interested persons with new and ongoing efforts and vice versa;
4. Provide implementers with limited technical assistance primarily by linking them with appropriate sources of expertise and facilitating meetings;
5. Disseminate information about new and existing initiatives to decision makers and the general public;
6. Promote the vision and related initiatives through:
 - a. news media;
 - b. presentations to business and civic groups, government bodies, etc; and
 - c. distributing the vision document; and
7. Monitor and report on implementation efforts.

Possible Implementation Roles for big.small.all.

big.small.all. could take responsibility for the first three objectives' starting points which are fundamental to the visioning process and can jump start all of the other elements of the vision..

- **County Identity:** Organize an annual event intended to bring all the people of the county together in a comfortable and fun setting that also helps broaden understanding and mutual appreciation of every element of the county community.
- **A Tolerant Community:** Develop specific proactive strategies to operate on an ongoing basis to promote tolerance and mutual understanding.
- **Strategic Thinking:** Develop a set of agreed upon countywide statistical indicators that track conditions relevant to the objectives contained in the vision.

With appropriate resources **big.small.all.** could also:

8. Promote the vision through:
 - a. an updated website with up-to-date information and links to agencies with new or ongoing initiatives;
 - b. develop materials for display in public venues; and
 - c. mount displays at fairs and festivals.
9. Undertake follow-on actions such as:
 - a. mounting exhibitions;
 - b. sponsoring speakers; and
 - c. conducting forums on particular questions, etc.

big.small.all. could also take responsibility for implementing, directly, one or more key action strategies (see sidebar).

Actions Not Intentions

In the end, it is the actions that we take as citizens in our roles in business, the professions, civic groups, government, and as individuals that will make this vision a reality. So, it is really up to you.

To link up with others working on objectives you care about call 328-3313 or email contact@bigsmallall.cc.

collaborative

prosperous

sustainable

supportive

enriching

our future. **here.**
