

The following checklist describes qualities of a good vision statement. Use it to determine what is missing or needs to be changed in your community vision statement in order to make it stronger.

## *Our vision statement . . .*

- Clarifies purpose and direction for the community (can be used to guide decision-making)
- Is comprehensive, focusing on more than one aspect of the community
- Is written in present rather than future tense (e.g., “we are” rather than “we will be”)
- Is easy to read and understand

### Is Future Focused

- It describes what we want the community to look like in 20 years (a preferred and meaningful future state)
- It describes where the community wants to go (but *not* how the community will get there)
- It describes the community’s future in positive terms (instead of describing what the community does not want)

### Is Reflective of Our Community

- It builds on our community’s history and culture
- It emphasizes the uniqueness of our community
- It reflects our community’s values
- It is inclusive of the community’s diverse population (reflects more than one or two viewpoints)

### Is Inspiring and Descriptive

- It captures the desired spirit of the community
- It provides a motivating force, even in hard times
- It kindles excitement and fosters commitment and dedication
- It gets people’s attention
- It creates a picture in the readers mind of what the community will look like

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#### Sources for the Vision Statement Checklist:

- Bryson, J. M. (1995). *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*. Revised Ed. Jossey-Bass Publishers: San Francisco.
- Green, G., Haines, A., Halebsky, S. *Building Our Future: A Guide to Community Visioning*. UW-Extension Publication G3708.
- Martinelli, F. (1999). *Strategic Planning Manual*. Center for Public Skills Training: Milwaukee