

A RESEARCH DESIGN:  
ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS  
A RESEARCH PROPOSAL  
FOR  
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Local government leaders are voicing the need for citizens to participate in the planning and policy-making process. The question before them is how to engage local citizens in the planning process and to effectively analyze and use the results. The Institute of Cultural Affairs has designed a one-day town meeting format that concretely engages local citizens in the practical planning needed for the future at the municipal and community level. The ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS will be the product of the proposed research which may be used as a planning tool for assuring citizen participation in the local government planning process.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs  
4750 North Sheridan Road  
Chicago, Illinois 60640

## PROGRAM NARRATIVE

### NEED DESCRIPTION

Local government leaders are voicing the need for citizens to participate in the planning and policy-making process. The question before them is how to engage local citizens in the planning process and to effectively analyze and use the results. The Institute of Cultural Affairs has designed a one-day town meeting format that concretely engages local citizens in the practical planning needed for the future at the municipal and community level.

### PLANNING DATA

The concrete form of these contemporary community Town Meetings is a specially designed six-hour think tank. Using methodologies of corporate work, problem-solving, and group brainstorming, the think tanks enable a diverse community of individuals to voice their concerns and ideas and weld them together into a common creative product. The flow of each think tank is in two phases. First the participants locate, analyze, and rationally organize the concerns and issues of the community. In the second phase the participants, using the data of phase one, think through, agree upon, and corporately write out proposals indicating directions for the future of the community.

### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Local citizens have a strong desire to voice their concerns where they feel their ideas can make a difference. The think tank methods enable individuals from diverse backgrounds and with divergent viewpoints to work together effectively, moving beyond personal opinions to wrestle with actual needs and issues. Further, local citizens are eager to participate in building a consensus for concrete, cooperative action in their communities. They move beyond cynicism to articulate real excitement for the future. And they are eager to devise sensible proposals for creating viable neighborhoods and communities. It has been demonstrated that where local government, community leaders, businesses, social agencies, and other institutions lend their support to such proposals, the citizens respond with active participation.

### PROGRAM CONSULTANT

The role of the Institute of Cultural Affairs in the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS proposal is that of a research and program consultant. The Institute's primary demonstration project in community reformulation has been with the citizens of 5th City on Chicago's West Side. Government agencies and private institutions have acknowledged 5th City as a unique example of the impact of local involvement upon the decision-making processes determining the community's future. The ICA is a not-for-profit corporation with a chartered board of directors and an international consulting board. The Institute is supported by foundations, corporations, government, and concerned individuals.



## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

OPINION ACCESS	The goal of the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS proposal is to provide, through research and testing, local governmental officials and agencies with a method of access to the needs and desired services of local citizens in order to improve the effectiveness of the local governmental planning process.
FORMAT REFINEMENT	Objective I. By July 31, 1975, the Institute of Cultural Affairs will have refined the one-day Town Meeting format for use in local communities in Illinois as a method for gathering the issues and proposals data from local citizens that will comprise a body of data that may be used by local government for analysis and planning. This will include a data retrieval and report system.
DATA COLLECTION	Objective II. By September 30, 1975, the Institute of Cultural Affairs will have tested the Town Meeting in four communities, to be chosen, in Illinois. Issues and proposals will have been documented and collected from each of the Town Meetings. This body of data will be representative of a minimum of four hundred local citizens' opinions.
FEASIBILITY DETERMINATION	Objective III. By November 30, 1975, the Institute of Cultural Affairs will have tested the feasibility of using the results of the four Town Meetings as data input to the four respective local government bodies in order to assess the Town Meeting construct as a method of access to citizens' needs data that is relevant to the local community planning process.

## PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

REFINEMENT PHASE	The program activities in the Refinement Phase will include construct refinement of the Town Meeting so as to insure maximum data input of local citizens' opinions. A data retrieval and report system will be developed by the Program Evaluation Associate to insure accurate data collection for reporting and evaluation. The data forms will be developed in accord with the goals of this research design proposal in order to maximize data input that will be useful in the local governmental planning process.
TESTING PHASE	The program activities in the Testing Phase will include data collection from four Illinois Town Meetings. The four test communities will be chosen according to criteria including interest and cooperation of local government officials and

priorities of the Department of Local Government Affairs of the State of Illinois. Issues and proposals from the four Illinois Town Meetings will be pulled together and a presentation format will be prepared that would be appropriate for presentation to local government offices. Preliminary analysis and evaluation of the data will be carried out by the Program Evaluation Associate in order to maximize the presentation format as a planning tool. This process will also serve as a control mechanism for future use of the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS design.

VALIDATION  
PHASE

The program activities in the Validation Phase will include making available the Compendium of Results to the designated government offices in the four test municipalities in Illinois. Evaluations will be requested from the designated government offices in terms of the usefulness of the Town Meeting results as data input for the local government planning process. Criteria for evaluation will be developed in order to facilitate the evaluation process. Standard evaluation criteria for the local government evaluation process will also facilitate the final evaluation of the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS design. Evaluation results will be documented and included in the final report on this project. The feasibility of the future use of the Compendium of Results as a method of access to the needs of local citizens in Illinois and as relevant data input for the local governmental planning process will be included in the final report.

ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS

PROGRAM BUDGET INFORMATION

Budget categories for the six month research design program

	<u>State Funds</u>	<u>ICA Funds</u>	<u>Total</u>
1.0 Personnel			
1.1 Salaries and Wages			
Program Director	\$ 9,000		
Program Evaluation Associate	7,000		
Computer Programmer Consultant		\$ 5,000	
Secretary	3,000		
1.2 Fringe Benefits	<u>1,000</u>	<u>2,000</u>	
	\$20,000	\$ 7,000	\$27,000
2.0 Program			
2.1 Supplies		1,500	
2.2 Paper and Printing		2,500	
2.3 Office space, phone		3,000	
2.4 Computer Time		<u>3,000</u>	
		\$ 9,000	9,000
Total Costs	\$20,000	\$16,000	\$36,000

A RESEARCH DESIGN:  
ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS  
A RESEARCH PROPOSAL  
FOR  
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Local government leaders are voicing the need for citizens to participate in the planning and policy-making process. The question before them is how to engage local citizens in the planning process and to effectively analyze and use the results. The Institute of Cultural Affairs has designed a one-day town meeting format that concretely engages local citizens in the practical planning needed for the future at the municipal and community level. The ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS will be the product of the proposed research which may be used as a planning tool for assuring citizen participation in the local government planning process.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs  
4750 North Sheridan Road  
Chicago, Illinois 60640



## PROGRAM NARRATIVE

### NEED DESCRIPTION

Local government leaders are voicing the need for citizens to participate in the planning and policy-making process. The question before them is how to engage local citizens in the planning process and to effectively analyze and use the results. The Institute of Cultural Affairs has designed a one-day town meeting format that concretely engages local citizens in the practical planning needed for the future at the municipal and community level.

### PLANNING DATA

The concrete form of these contemporary community Town Meetings is a specially designed six-hour think tank. Using methodologies of corporate work, problem-solving, and group brainstorming, the think tanks enable a diverse community of individuals to voice their concerns and ideas and weld them together into a common creative product. The flow of each think tank is in two phases. First the participants locate, analyze, and rationally organize the concerns and issues of the community. In the second phase the participants, using the data of phase one, think through, agree upon, and corporately write out proposals indicating directions for the future of the community.

### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Local citizens have a strong desire to voice their concerns where they feel their ideas can make a difference. The think tank methods enable individuals from diverse backgrounds and with divergent viewpoints to work together effectively, moving beyond personal opinions to wrestle with actual needs and issues. Further, local citizens are eager to participate in building a consensus for concrete, cooperative action in their communities. They move beyond cynicism to articulate real excitement for the future. And they are eager to devise sensible proposals for creating viable neighborhoods and communities. It has been demonstrated that where local government, community leaders, businesses, social agencies, and other institutions lend their support to such proposals, the citizens respond with active participation.

### PROGRAM CONSULTANT

The role of the Institute of Cultural Affairs in the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS proposal is that of a research and program consultant. The Institute's primary demonstration project in community reformulation has been with the citizens of 5th City on Chicago's West Side. Government agencies and private institutions have acknowledged 5th City as a unique example of the impact of local involvement upon the decision-making processes determining the community's future. The ICA is a not-for-profit corporation with a chartered board of directors and an international consulting board. The Institute is supported by foundations, corporations, government, and concerned individuals.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

OPINION ACCESS	The goal of the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS proposal is to provide, through research and testing, local governmental officials and agencies with a method of access to the needs and desired services of local citizens in order to improve the effectiveness of the local governmental planning process.
FORMAT REFINEMENT	Objective I. By July 31, 1975, the Institute of Cultural Affairs will have refined the one-day Town Meeting format for use in local communities in Illinois as a method for gathering the issues and proposals data from local citizens that will comprise a body of data that may be used by local government for analysis and planning. This will include a data retrieval and report system.
DATA COLLECTION	Objective II. By September 30, 1975, the Institute of Cultural Affairs will have tested the Town Meeting in four communities, to be chosen, in Illinois. Issues and proposals will have been documented and collected from each of the Town Meetings. This body of data will be representative of a minimum of four hundred local citizens' opinions.
FEASIBILITY DETERMINATION	Objective III. By November 30, 1975, the Institute of Cultural Affairs will have tested the feasibility of using the results of the four Town Meetings as data input to the four respective local government bodies in order to assess the Town Meeting construct as a method of access to citizens' needs data that is relevant to the local community planning process.

## PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

REFINEMENT PHASE	The program activities in the Refinement Phase will include construct refinement of the Town Meeting so as to insure maximum data input of local citizens' opinions. A data retrieval and report system will be developed by the Program Evaluation Associate to insure accurate data collection for reporting and evaluation. The data forms will be developed in accord with the goals of this research design proposal in order to maximize data input that will be useful in the local governmental planning process.
TESTING PHASE	The program activities in the Testing Phase will include data collection from four Illinois Town Meetings. The four test communities will be chosen according to criteria including interest and cooperation of local government officials and



priorities of the Department of Local Government Affairs of the State of Illinois. Issues and proposals from the four Illinois Town Meetings will be pulled together and a presentation format will be prepared that would be appropriate for presentation to local government offices. Preliminary analysis and evaluation of the data will be carried out by the Program Evaluation Associate in order to maximize the presentation format as a planning tool. This process will also serve as a control mechanism for future use of the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS design.

VALIDATION  
PHASE

The program activities in the Validation Phase will include making available the Compendium of Results to the designated government offices in the four test municipalities in Illinois. Evaluations will be requested from the designated government offices in terms of the usefulness of the Town Meeting results as data input for the local government planning process. Criteria for evaluation will be developed in order to facilitate the evaluation process. Standard evaluation criteria for the local government evaluation process will also facilitate the final evaluation of the ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS design. Evaluation results will be documented and included in the final report on this project. The feasibility of the future use of the Compendium of Results as a method of access to the needs of local citizens in Illinois and as relevant data input for the local governmental planning process will be included in the final report.

ILLINOIS TOWN MEETING COMPENDIUM OF RESULTS

PROGRAM BUDGET INFORMATION

Budget categories for the six month research design program

	<u>State Funds</u>	<u>ICA Funds</u>	<u>Total</u>
1.0 Personnel			
1.1 Salaries and Wages			
Program Director	\$ 9,000		
Program Evaluation Associate	7,000		
Computer Programmer Consultant		\$ 5,000	
Secretary	3,000		
1.2 Fringe Benefits	<u>1,000</u>	<u>2,000</u>	
	\$20,000	\$ 7,000	\$27,000
 2.0 Program			
2.1 Supplies		1,500	
2.2 Paper and Printing		2,500	
2.3 Office space, phone		3,000	
2.4 Computer Time		<u>3,000</u>	
		\$ 9,000	9,000
 Total Costs	\$20,000	\$16,000	\$36,000