

Demographic Survey Taskbook

Target Location - _____

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Introduction

The purpose of a Church Planting Demographic Survey is for a *Demographic Taskforce* to analyze a geographical target location and determine if the targeted area would be receptive to a new church plant.

The *Population Survey* investigates the growth trends from various perspectives: historical, population movements in or out of the target location, ethnicity, and housing and income statistics. A population survey should reveal who lives in the target location, their housing, their income level, population density, employment information, and finally a target area should begin to surface through this survey.

The *Ecclesiastical Survey* locates existing evangelical churches, church plants, Christian organizations and ministries in the target location. This survey should assist in selecting a target location that is not already saturated with the Gospel witness and also determine where partnerships can be made with other churches and Christian ministries.

The *Community Survey* is a sociological tool to study the target location's community characteristics, political, and social life. This information will be helpful in making contacts and sensing the heartbeat of community life.

The *Community Targeting* aspect of the Demographic Survey is very valuable. At this stage interviews will take place, excursions into the target location are arranged, and a vision for where the church should be planted begins to emerge.

The conclusion to the Demographic Survey is the compilation, study, and discussion of all the findings from the various sections of the Survey. During this final stage the Taskforce will formulate recommendations for where the church should be planted in the target location, what people should be targeted, and develop recommendations for approval. All this will assist the future church planter and his core team.

It should be noted that it may be tempting to take some shortcuts with the Survey by generalizing information about the target location or accepting someone else's evaluation of the target location. The profit of doing this Survey is for the Taskforce to come to its own understanding and interaction with the target location and compile an accurate and informative tool for the church planter.

A final reminder. Church planting and the targeting of an area are ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit and the direction He gives during the course of the Demographic Survey (Acts 16:1-10). A Taskforce should bathe their work in prayer and seek the Holy Spirit's leading. During the course of the Survey the Taskforce should be looking for the Spirit to open doors and close some. They need to look for His leading to helpful people in the target location and His direction for the place he wants the Church to be planted. Prayerful and diligent work will lead to a target location that is warranted by the Demographics and the Holy Spirit's blessing.

Demographics

Population Survey

- I. Search the U.S. Census Bureau's Web Site for the latest population statistics on the community under investigation.

Note: Look at age, income, housing, and ethnic categories specifically.

Assigned to:

Project Completion Date:

- II. Search the local statistics of the target location. Visit the city and County Planning or Zoning offices, usually located in the County Courthouse and/or City Hall.

Note: Look for a "Census Tract," or a recent planning projection booklet, maps or other information that will give you a breakdown of what areas of the county/city are set aside for residential development. Seek to determine if the county/city has a proposed "Planning" strategy for the future. This will help you determine if certain areas are designated for future housing or future industry. When in the zoning or planning offices pick up all the various maps that are available and look them over carefully and highlight pertinent information.

Assigned to:

Projected Completion Date:

Ecclesiastical Survey

- I. Complete a Church Survey. Search for all the evangelical churches in the target location and any church plants.

Note: A good place to start is the yellow pages of the local phone book. Try to find a copy of the most recent publication of a local religious newspaper. Look for the religious section of a weekly paper and scan local shopping papers. Locate any Ministeriums in the area. Contact the local “Council of Churches,” although mostly liberal, they may have some useful information, and learn what conservative representation is on the Council. Another good idea is to do a drive-through of the county/city to locate churches that may not be listed in publications. List all churches on a county/city map. List all addresses, phone numbers, names of pastors, denominational affiliations, and times of services if possible.

Assigned to:

Projected Completion Date:

- II. Complete a community Christian organizational survey. Locate and list any of the following in the target location: Christian Schools, Missions, Christian youth Centers, pregnancy care centers, Christian social services (include Catholic and others under the name of Christian), Christian day care centers, Christian food banks, etc. List the names, addresses, phone numbers, description of services, director or leader’s names, and office hours.

Note : Find out the mission statement of each ministry and why they exist. What is their purpose in the target location? Try to get brochures or any printed information on the group.

Assigned to:

Projected Completion Date:

Community Survey

- I. Complete a civic/social survey. Locate social clubs or organizations, newspapers, radio stations, television stations, fraternal organizations, recreation centers (Olivets, PAL, etc.). List names, addresses, phone numbers, director or leader's names.

Note: Find out what is the mission of the business or organization and its reason for existing. Collect all printed materials and brochures.

Assigned to:

Projected Completion Date:

- II. Complete a political/government survey. List public officials in county/city government, police force officials, etc., and try to determine if any are Christians. List names, offices held, addresses, phone numbers, and responsibilities.

Note: City Hall and the Court House may be good places to go after this information, or if someone on the Survey Team knows a police officer or politician it would be helpful to contact them.

Assigned to:

Projected Completion Date:

- III. Complete a business survey. List key business leaders in the county/city and try to determine if any are Christians. List names, addresses, and phone numbers.

Note: Try to locate a local Business Directory. Look for advertising in newspapers. You may want to check with the Chamber of Commerce or civic groups like Rotary, Lions, Realtor Board, etc.

Assigned to:

Project Completion Date:

Community Targeting

- I. Field Review - It would be a valuable experience for the Survey Team to take several drive-throughs of the potential target area of the county/city. This should be done as a group. As you drive through look for ethnic and cultural characteristics of the community that stand out, places where people gather, and other things that will help identify the community.
- II. Field Survey – Identify a small housing development or community in the potential target community and do door-to-door surveys. The Surveys and Scripts are available through the Church Extension Office and the Director will be willing to train your group before going out.

Drive Through #1 – Location _____

Project Completion Date:

Drive Through #2 - Location _____

Project Completion Date:

Drive Through #3 - Location _____

Project Completion Date:

- II. Interviewing - Seek to interview individuals in the following categories and ask the following questions:
 - What are some of the greatest needs in the community?
 - What can churches do to assist in meeting these needs?
 - What is your opinion of the church's role in the county/city?
 - What advice would you give a new Pastor seeking to establish a church in the county/city?
 - Where in the county/city do you think a new church would most helpful?

Try to meet the person at their place of work or business and set an appointment assuring them that this will take very little time and that they will be of great help to you. Give

your credentials as representatives of the Bible Fellowship Church. Carefully note responses, one person asks the questions while another records responses.

Interview #1 - A Businessperson -

Assigned to:

Project Completion Date:

Notes:

Interview #2 - Two local evangelical Pastors -

Assigned to:

Project Completion Date:

Notes:

Interview #3 – A county/city Official:

Assigned to:

Project Completion Date:

Notes:

Interview #4 – A Cultural/Civic Leader -

Assigned to:

Project Completion Date:

Notes:

Interview #5 – A Ministry Director (i.e. Mercy Crisis Pregnancy)

Assigned to:

Project Completion Date:

Notes:

Conclusions

Concisely record what *important observations and conclusions* you have discovered while completing the Demographic and Field Surveys, and Interviews. You may want to list the Team's responses on a black/white board and then the Team can prioritize the observations. Remember that your information, observations, and conclusions will assist the future Church Planter and his team as they begin their ministry.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Recommendations

Where do we go from here?

Your observations and conclusions will lead you to see more clearly where you should go after completing your Demographic Survey. Consider several of the following directions:

- If your Survey leads you to believe that a BFC Church should be planted in the county/city, then you may want to:
 1. Take your findings and recommendations back to your particular churches and present them to the Mission's Committees and Elder Boards for approvals.
 2. If the Churches are supportive, organize a *Church Planting Resource Team* (This could be the Demographic Task Force with the addition of other interested individuals). The Resource Team will contact Church Extension and request that Church Extension facilitate the Team in the planting of a new church. When the request is approved by Church Extension and a new Mission Church is opened, the Resource Team can proceed.
- Develop a profile of what the Church Planter would look like for the new plant.
- Identify the ministry target area within the city.
- Develop a plan and timeline for launching the new Mission Church.

Recommendations to Elders and Mission Committees:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Church Extension will be available to assist you with each step of this Demographic Survey. Please do not hesitate to contact Director David Gundrum, if you have any questions or need further clarification during the Survey. May the Lord bless this wonderful opportunity to learn about your community, as well as discovering the Lord's will for a Church to be planted.

Checklist & Schedule

CHECKLIST:

ASSIGNMENT

DATE COMPLETED

1. Population Survey

2. Ecclesiastical Survey

3. Community Survey

4. Drive-Throughs

5. Interviews

6. Conclusions

7. Recommendations