

## XI. Community Reinvestment Act – Community Contacts

---

### Review of Information on Assessment Area(s)

A review of all available background materials prior to the community contact process is vital in developing a working understanding of the community you are about to enter. The nature, extent and age of the information available prior to conducting community contacts influences your objectives for the community contact process. A well developed context also allows for more detailed and in-depth community contact interviews.

### Review Process

The examiner should do the following:

1. Assess prevailing economic conditions and demographic characteristics within and near the assessment area(s).  
This includes a review of available data on:
  - Various population segments within the community;
  - Trends in migration;
  - Labor and employment characteristics;
  - Comparisons to state and county/MSA data; and
  - Housing and real estate market statistics.
2. Assess infrastructural and geographic characteristics within the assessment area(s).  
This includes a review of:
  - Maps;
  - Natural areas;
  - Major thoroughfares;
  - Access to public transportation;
  - Locations of low- and moderate-income census tracts;
  - Names of specific low- and moderate-income neighborhoods; and
  - Proximity of the assessment area(s) to military bases, airport facilities, and metropolitan centers.

*TIP: Internal mapping software, information from the financial institution, and information from local planning, transportation, economic development or real estate boards are good sources for possible information.*

3. Assess distribution and availability of branch and ATM services especially with regard to low-income areas within the community. Include a review of check cashing facilities, if possible.

*TIP: Internal mapping software, if available, can allow the examiner to map these locations.*

4. Assess, to the extent information is available, local development issues and priorities in the areas of:
  - Affordable housing;

- Commercial activity; and
- Economic and community development.

A summary of such information may be available from the Community Affairs staff.

5. In addition, the examiner may wish to review previous community contacts for the locality including those from other regulatory agencies.
6. If the examiner is reviewing an MSA, he or she should contact the city's municipality and obtain a copy of its Consolidated Plan ("Conplans"). Conplans list the needs of an MSA as identified and prioritized by its officials.
7. The examiner may also consider obtaining public reports from Multiple Listings Services (MLS) and news articles on local development projects.  
Quantitative sources may include:
  - Feasibility studies;
  - Market analysis; and
  - Commercial appraisal reports for local development projects.

*TIP: State or local economic development agencies, utility companies, real estate organizations, and universities present in the immediate or surrounding area are often good sources for such material. Refer to the topic "Identify Potential Community Contacts" for additional potential sources for these types of material.*

8. Determine the priorities of the community and the opportunities for financial institutions to participate with local governmental and non-profit organizations in the areas of:
  - Affordable housing;
  - Small business/farm development; and
  - Economic and community development.
9. Review the number and nature of government agencies, non-profit and neighborhood organizations that provide programs and resources to the assessment area(s) for these purposes.

*TIP: Sources of information for this step include prior community contacts in the area, information on local programs from the institution, and discussions with appropriate agency staff.*

10. Based upon information reviewed above, identify areas that require further inquiry through the community contacts process.

For example: