

# Emergence Stronger.



## Part 3: Assessing Community Engagement.

### Engagement Assessment Checklist:

*Hint: the more check marks you have next to “yes”, the more well-rounded your engagement process is; the more check marks you have next to “no”, the more work your organization must do to make engagement work for your entire community.*

#### Frequency

Have you engaged the public outside of a Comprehensive Plan or other similar planning effort?

Yes       No

Has your most recent community-wide engagement taken place in the last 1-3 years?

Yes       No

#### Awareness

Does your engagement efforts consist of mailing out information and/or relying on legal notices in the newspaper?

Yes       No

Do your engagement activities clearly explain the purpose of the activity and how the responses will be used?

Yes       No

Does your engagement strategy utilize “boots on the ground”, such as (check all that apply):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood groups            | <input type="checkbox"/> Service organizations   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ISDs and colleges/universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious institutions         |  |

Does your engagement plan include the use of (check all that apply):

- |                                       |                                      |  |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City website | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio       | <input type="checkbox"/> TV              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper   | <input type="checkbox"/> Local magazines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email        | <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience |  |

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Does your engagement strategy enable citizens to participate (check all that apply):

- In the morning?     In the afternoon?     In the evening?  
 On weekends?     Online?     Via mobile phone?  
 In person?

Is your engagement strategy inclusive of (check all that apply):

- People who prefer one-on-one communication?  
 People who prefer small group settings?  
 Larger group settings?  
 Children?  
 Seniors?

### Purpose

Do your engagement efforts begin by clearly stating the purpose and how input will be put to use?

Yes     No

Is the staff clear as to the purpose of the engagement and how input will be put to use?

Yes     No

Is your engagement focused primarily on listening to residents rather than information collection?

Yes     No

Do your engagement efforts provide a combination of informing (pushing out information), compiling (taking in information), and revolving (interactive exchanges)?

Yes     No

At the conclusion of each engagement activity (and overall engagement plan), do you debrief and discuss lessons learned and how to improve the next one?

Yes     No

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Does your engagement help citizens understand the resources and trade-offs necessary to achieve their desired outcomes?

Yes      No

### Diversity & Trust

Do your engagement activities take into account:

ADA accessibility

Local cultures

Local languages (in addition to English)

Child care

People without reliable transportation

Disadvantaged and homeless people

People with disabilities

Do your engagement efforts take into account local, state and national events, local politics and issues, historical influences, cultural sensitivities, and the experiences of all residents (rather than a few)?

Yes      No

Do your engagement efforts make everyone feel welcome and heard?

Yes      No

Is your engagement people-focused first, and task-focused second?

Yes      No

Do officials and leaders in your community participate in a meaningful way?

Yes      No



### Organizing a “Cultivator Cabinet” in Your Community

The “Cultivator Cabinet” for a community is similar to a Board of Directors for a company. Much like a large company has a number of departments focused on different services or geographic regions, a community has a group of organizations and partners that work together to move the community forward. Companies typically have structured meetings at various times to allow for cascading communication from the Board of Directors and company leadership down through the different departments and offices, as well as a feedback process to collect input and ideas from frontline employees to inform the company’s leaders. Communities often lack this same intentionality with respect to coordinating communication and resources among the different organizations and people. The purpose of a Cultivator Cabinet is to get local leaders, representatives, and change agents from throughout the community together on a quarterly basis to discuss progress on shared goals and coordinate consistent information sharing between city leaders, community partners, and constituents including businesses, residents, investors, and change agents that might not otherwise have the opportunity to interact with each other at the same time.

#### Members of the Cultivator Cabinet could include representatives from the following:

City Council	City Manager
Economic Development	School district
State DOT	MPO
Public transit organizations	Regional water/wastewater providers
Community development corporations	Non-profit organizations
Young people/youth organizations	Individuals without homes and/or their advocates
Chamber of Commerce	Faith communities
Senior Center	Immigrant advocates (and translators)
Unions and worker co-ops	Artists
Food banks	Anchor institutions (hospitals, universities, etc.)
Tenant advocates	Advocates for incarcerated individuals
Advocates for people with disabilities	Mental health specialists
Neighborhood groups	Ethnic business associations
Local developers	Activist groups



### Example of a “Cultivator Cabinet” summit agenda:

#### Cultivator Cabinet Quarterly Meeting Agenda (1-2 days depending on size of community)

1. Review Community Vision and Culture
  - A. Review the Community’s “purpose”—why do we exist?
    - i. What is the community’s overarching vision for the future?
    - ii. What is the most important focus for the next 3-5 years in the context of the community’s broader vision?
    - iii. What’s at stake if we’re not successful?
  - B. Guiding Principles: what are the core values that make our community unique and that should be guideposts for all decisions and communication?
  - C. Organizational Spotlight: feature 2 or 3 organizations each meeting and allow them to present their organization’s vision, guiding principles, and priority objective for the current year.
    - i. Organizational purpose, vision, principles, and objectives should connect to the community’s overarching purpose and key objectives.
    - ii. Try to get all organizations featured once a year.
2. Annual Plan
  - A. Review the 3-5 most important community objectives for the current year
  - B. Objective 1
    - i. Goal for Year / Goal for Quarter
    - ii. Report progress on action items from last meeting
    - iii. Collect input on ideas and next steps
    - iv. Assign action items for next quarter
  - C. Objective 2
    - i. Goal
    - ii. Report progress on action items from last meeting
    - iii. Collect input on ideas and next steps
    - iv. Assign action items for next quarter
  - D. Objective 3
    - i. Goal
    - ii. Report progress on action items from last meeting
    - iii. Collect input on ideas and next steps
    - iv. Assign action items for next quarter

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3. Organization Updates: opportunity for each cabinet member/organization rep to provide an update on key projects, issues, and input from the group they're representing
  - A. Key projects - progress update on any key projects or initiatives with a priority on those that impact overall community or other organizations
  - B. Issues and/or opportunities
    - i. Time-sensitive > revisit later in agenda to put action plan together
    - ii. Others > put on future agenda for further discussion
  - C. Input: summary of citizen/employee surveys, stakeholder meetings and other engagement efforts with residents, land owners, business owners, or other community members have ideas or feedback for community leaders
4. Topic Discussion: placeholder for group discussion on issues raised in previous meetings and time-sensitive items raised in Org Updates.
  - A. Topic 1
    - i. Intro
    - ii. Discussion
    - iii. Action Items
5. Meeting Wrap-Up
  - A. Summarize next quarter's action items for community objectives
  - B. Modify if needed to incorporate results of org updates and topic discussions
  - C. Assign/remind what organizations will be featured in Organizational Spotlight in the next meeting - adjust if needed.