

## Community Civic Health Self-Assessment & Discussion Guide

Most activities that build community and strong civic health start at the local level, among friends, neighbors, and local leaders. The following tool<sup>1</sup> is designed to help you and a group discuss the strengths and opportunities for growth of civic health in your own town or neighborhood.

For each statement in this self-assessment, mark the column with the answer you think best describes the condition of this statement in your community.

- ❖ **STRENGTH** = This condition is present and contributes to the success of the community.
- ❖ **OPPORTUNITY** = We want to improve or bring about this condition
- ❖ **MIXED** = There are both strengths and opportunities present.
- ❖ **UNSURE** = We need to do more homework and outreach.

### Self-Assessment

Social Connection		STRENGTH	OPPORTUNITY	MIXED	UNSURE
1	My community has active groups and organizations that build strong ties among the people who live here.				
2	My community actively creates opportunities for people from all across the community and from all backgrounds.				
3	My community has vibrant places we celebrate and get together that are comfortable for all people.				
4	My community is open to new people and ideas and flexible to incorporate diverse perspectives.				
Confidence in Institutions		STRENGTH	OPPORTUNITY	MIXED	UNSURE
5	Decisions and policies are made based on what matters most to those who live, work, and play here.				
6	Leaders in my community are trusted, responsive, and accessible.				
7	Leaders and institutions are deeply committed to my community and genuinely care about its success.				

<sup>1</sup> Assessment and guide based on Community Heart & Soul “Getting Started Workbook”. Learn more about this great resource for engaging a community and shaping its future at <https://www.communityheartandsoul.org/>.

8	Government leaders, advisory boards, and commissions represent the full diversity of my community.				
<b>Community Engagement</b>		<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITY</b>	<b>MIXED</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
9	In civic life, my community values the contributions and gifts of all people.				
10	My community has abundant opportunities to be involved in civic life.				
11	People in my community are effective at getting together to make positive changes.				
12	My community brings together groups and coordinates between organizations.				
<b>Politics and Discourse</b>		<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITY</b>	<b>MIXED</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
13	People in my community use their voice and their vote to influence decision-making.				
14	My community has many civic minded sources of factual news and information.				
15	In community meetings, people lean into differing opinions on issues to work collaboratively and respectfully.				

**Discussion Guide:**

1. *Work individually* to circle the three statements you think will have the greatest impact on the community's success. These could be strengths that you believe are important to success or opportunities for growth you think could hinder success if not addressed.
2. Divide into small groups of three or more, depending on the size of your full group.
3. In your small groups, take turns sharing the three statements you circled and why.
4. *As a group*, select three statements you think will have the greatest impact on the community's success and write them down.
5. For each statement you wrote down, discuss the following questions as a group and have someone record the responses:
  - a. What examples from the community influenced the selection of these statements?
  - b. How can the community benefit from these conditions or how might the community's success be hindered if this condition is not addressed?

6. Bring the large group back together. Have each group report out on one of their statements and share highlights of their discussion.
  - a. Where are responses similar?
  - b. Where are they different?
  - c. What action items come to mind to capitalize on a strength or take advantage of an opportunity for growth?