

# **PUBLIC INNOVATORS TOOLKIT**

## MAKE THE PERSONAL CHOICE TO TURN OUTWARD

**Directions:** Review the two columns below and think about the work you do every day and where you spend the majority of your time. For each row, choose the word that best describes the predominant focus of your work or efforts in relationship to the community. Then answer the questions that follow.

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# ARE YOU MOSTLY TURNED INWARD OR OUTWARD?

*I am generally focused on:*

Activity vs.  Action

Program vs.  People

My Organization vs.  The Community

People as Consumers vs.  People as Citizens

Process vs.  Progress

Outreach vs.  Engagement

Public Relations vs.  People's Reality

Inputs vs.  Impact

Claiming Turf vs.  Coming Together

# HOW CAN I TURN MORE OUTWARD?

1. Identify three areas where you are already Turned Outward and why being Turned Outward in each area is important to you:

**AREA**

**WHY IT IS IMPORTANT**

.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

2. Identify three areas where you would like to be more Turned Outward and why those are important to you:

**AREA**

**WHY IT IS IMPORTANT**

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.....	.....
.....	.....

3. What will you need to do differently in order to Turn Outward in each of the areas listed in your answer to question two:

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.....	.....
.....	.....

# TURNING OUTWARD ACROSS KEY FUNCTIONS

## BEING TURNED OUTWARD

VS.

## BEING TURNED INWARD

### *Engaging the Community:*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go beyond the “usual suspects”</li> <li>• Hold a deep understanding of people’s shared aspirations and concerns</li> <li>• Engage without feeling obligated to have the answer and/or to take ownership of the solutions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to people we know and/or feel comfortable with</li> <li>• Focus on “problems” or visioning or getting feedback to ready-made plans</li> <li>• Feel nervous engaging people without having the answer or ownership</li> </ul> |
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### *Managing Relationships + Partnerships:*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share deep knowledge of the community with partners and potential partners</li> <li>• Choose partners – “who we run with” – that are Turned Outward and share common aspirations for the community</li> <li>• Shed partners that are holding us back so we can focus on the right partners</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don’t often think about this possibility. Often hold close whatever knowledge we do have</li> <li>• Choose partners based on legacy, tradition and who we think we are “supposed” to pick</li> <li>• Keep partners over time. Fear repercussions of letting go</li> </ul> |
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### *Develop + Implement Strategies:*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop strategies, plans and programs using people’s shared aspirations and concerns</li> <li>• Develop strategies that fit the community’s Stage of Community Life</li> <li>• Develop the underlying community conditions needed for strategies and plans to work effectively (work in “The Sweet Spot”)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make decisions based on history, funders, data and best practices</li> <li>• Focus primarily on factors that impact your organization and/or partners</li> <li>• Spend our time on programmatic strategy and implementation</li> </ul> |
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### *Generate Resources – Human and Financial:*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Root fund-raising strategies in people’s shared aspirations and concerns</li> <li>• Connect people to relevant opportunities to take action on their aspirations – even if that means connecting them to other groups</li> <li>• Treat people as citizens who want to be a part of the solutions and have the ability to make a difference</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask people from the get-go for donations, time and support</li> <li>• Provide opportunities that serve the organization and seek to hold onto names. Veer toward window dressing at times</li> <li>• See people largely as consumers (or donors) who want problems fixed for them</li> </ul> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### *Measure, Evaluate and Communicate Results:*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set realistic expectations about potential impact and change</li> <li>• Focus on whether underlying community conditions are improving</li> <li>• Tell stories that reflect the community’s progress – and not just our own organization’s</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create expectations that we cannot meet</li> <li>• Focus just on moving the needle on an issue</li> <li>• Toot our own horn</li> </ul> |
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# WHERE I CAN EMBED TURNING OUTWARD

**Directions:** Choose two areas from the previous page and identify the key opportunities in each area for you to Turn Outward. Then define what you are currently doing and what you will need to do differently in order to be, and stay, Turned Outward.

## EMBEDDING TURNING OUTWARD

**AREA:**

Opportunities:	Doing now:	Need to do differently:
• .....	• .....	• .....
• .....	• .....	• .....
• .....	• .....	• .....

**AREA:**

Opportunities:	Doing now:	Need to do differently:
• .....	• .....	• .....
• .....	• .....	• .....
• .....	• .....	• .....

## **APPLY BEING TURNED OUTWARD TO MY DAILY CHOICES**

Based on years of research and work, The Harwood Institute has developed a set of touchstones for thinking about and making daily choices when it comes to being Turned Outward. We call these touchstones The 3A's of Public Life – Authority, Authenticity and Accountability. Each “A” comes with its own “Intentionality Test.”

# **THE 3A'S OF PUBLIC LIFE**

## **AUTHORITY**

**Intentionality Test:** Could I stand up on a table and talk to people about their community, their aspirations and concerns, and would they believe me?

**In our daily lives, to hold authority means to:**

- Hold a deep knowledge of the community – people’s lives, aspirations and concerns
- Actively apply knowledge about the community to the work we do

## **AUTHENTICITY**

**Intentionality Test:** Do I reflect the reality of people’s lives, and do they believe I have their best interests at heart, even when we disagree?

**In our daily lives, to be authentic means to:**

- Reflect the reality of people’s lives in what we do and say
- See and treat people as citizens (members of a larger community) rather than only consumers (or donors or members)
- Deeply listen to the community in an ongoing way

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Intentionality Test:** Am I living up to the pledges and promises I have made?

**In our daily lives, to be accountable means to:**

- Set realistic expectations about potential impact of the work and promises made to people in the community
- Pursue actions meaningful to people – avoid window dressing
- Build on what came before, and create a foundation for what might follow









## USE DIFFERENT ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

In addition to the Community Conversation Guide, there are two other engagement tools you can use: **"ASK"** and **"ASPIRATIONS."** Both tools are derivatives of the Community Conversation Guide.

- **"ASK" TOOL** – this tool is ideal for engaging individuals in quick three- to seven-minute interviews

### It works especially well with individuals:

- On local streets
- At malls
- At conferences
- Over the telephone
- And elsewhere

- **"ASPIRATIONS" EXERCISE** – this tool is ideal for helping to shift the frame of reference from an organization (or organizations) to the community, and to uncover the conditions that need to change in the community to make progress as well as what steps are needed

### It works especially well with:

- Organization staff, a particular department, senior staff, etc.
- Partners
- A group or coalition of organizations
- A board or steering group

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# "ASK"

**Directions:** Start by introducing yourself by saying, “Hi, I’m part of [name of organization] and we’re trying to learn more about people’s aspirations for the community. Would you be willing to answer four quick questions?”

1. WHAT KIND OF COMMUNITY DO YOU WANT TO LIVE IN?

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2. WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT TO YOU?

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3. HOW IS THAT DIFFERENT FROM HOW YOU SEE THINGS NOW?

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4. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT NEED TO HAPPEN TO CREATE  
THAT KIND OF CHANGE?

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# "ASPIRATIONS"

**Directions:** Ask people to take a few minutes to fill out each question on their own. Then go through people's responses one question at a time and identify the key themes.

**ASPIRATIONS.** MY ASPIRATIONS FOR MY COMMUNITY ARE:

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**CHALLENGES.** THE CHALLENGES WE FACE IN REACHING THESE ASPIRATIONS ARE:

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**NEW CONDITIONS.** THE CHANGES NEEDED IN MY COMMUNITY TO REACH OUR ASPIRATIONS ARE:

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# ASPIRATIONS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Instructions for leading a conversation about aspirations:

- For this exercise you'll be asking the three questions shown below and helping to identify patterns or themes from the answers given.
- Make sure everyone has a copy of the Aspirations questions.
- Give your participants ten minutes to read and write down their answers to these three questions.
- Go through the questions in order and for each, record their answers on a flip chart and identify any patterns or themes that emerge from their answers.

## **1. What are your aspirations your community?**

Record your participant's answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use.

Ask the group:

- What patterns do you see?
- Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes.

Make sure that you've captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

## **2. What challenges do we face in reaching these aspirations?**

Record your participant's answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use.

Ask the group:

- What patterns do you see?
- Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes.

Make sure that you've captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

## **3. What needs to change in the community to reach our aspirations?**

Record your participant's answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use.

Ask the group:

- What patterns do you see?
- Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes.

Make sure that you've captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

*Continued ...*

# ASPIRATIONS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

## **How to summarize:**

Once the three questions have been answered and the responses recorded, summarize what your participants have said by telling a story.

We began by saying that we wanted a community where \_\_\_\_\_ (aspirations) but we face \_\_\_\_\_ (challenges). So if we want to reach our aspirations, we need to create \_\_\_\_\_ (new conditions/change)

## **HOW TO MAKE IT WORK**

1. Record the themes and post them where people will frequently see them. Ask: If this story about our shared aspirations is true, then what does that mean for our work together?
2. Share this exercise with others - with your co-workers, at your place of worship, with friends, your PTA, your board, etc. Ask: What are the implications for our work? What other groups could use this exercise for their own work?

Next Step? Register for a Harwood Learning Experience, like a Public Innovators Lab, read a Harwood book or sign up for our weekly blog for inspiration and news:  
[www.theharwoodinstitute.org/harwoodhalfhour](http://www.theharwoodinstitute.org/harwoodhalfhour)

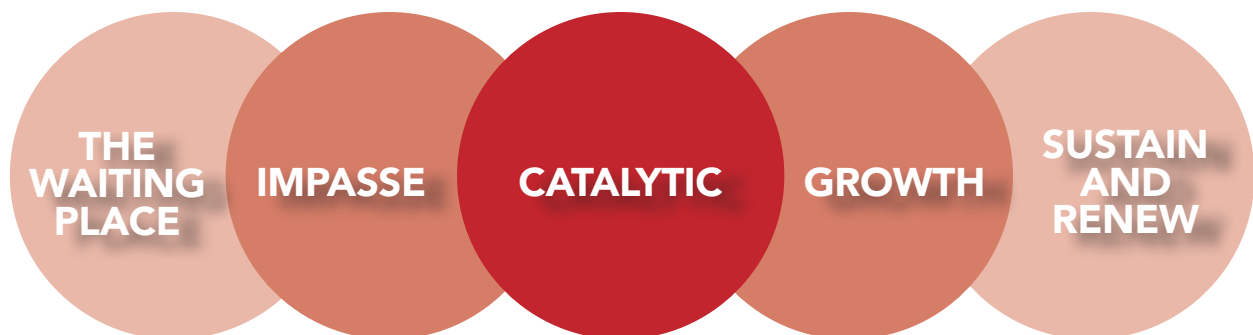
## **KNOW THE STAGE OF MY COMMUNITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE ACTION**

# **COMMUNITY RHYTHMS**

In this section, you will be using a Harwood Institute framework called, “Community Rhythms: The five Stages of Community Life.”

Most communities are in one of these stages. What’s important is to identify which stage your community is in – as each stage has different implications for how to help a community move forward.

## **THE FIVE STAGES OF COMMUNITY LIFE**



**Directions:** On your own, answer the four questions that follow. To answer these questions, make sure you have a particular “community” in mind – which can be a geographic community, a state, a neighborhood or part of town, a network that exists across communities or a community of interest (e.g., one that focuses on a particular issue or agenda). It doesn’t matter which community you pick; what does matter is that you are using the same community as your reference point in answering the four questions.

## THE COMMUNITY RHYTHMS QUESTIONS

1. How broad and deep is the leadership - at all levels of the community (including official leaders, quasi-official, people on neighborhood blocks, connectors between organizations), who understand the true concerns of the community as a whole, and who hold strong credibility and trust?
  - A. Not much depth beyond some official leaders and civic leaders (if they even meet the definition above).
  - B. A core group of such leaders starting to emerge.
  - C. Core group expanding; depth within the community starting to form.
  - D. Rich supply of leaders at all levels of and throughout the community.
2. How strong and constructive are the community norms for public life - that help guide how people and organizations act individually, interact and work together?
  - A. Stuck in old patterns such as finger pointing; looking for ways to place blame; turf battles; mistrust; divisive, frustrated, or non-existent community conversations.
  - B. While old patterns still exist, can see new ones starting to develop. People starting to work more toward solutions, hold more constructive conversations, take greater personal responsibility. Seeds of trust appearing.
  - C. A common sense of direction and purpose flourishes throughout community; people in the community work well together; things get done; constructive community-wide discussions are the expectation. Trust exists.
3. How broad and deep are the "informal networks and links" - that connect various individual, groups, organizations and institutions together to create a cross-fertilization effect of experiences, knowledge and resources in the community; where people carry and spread ideas, messages, and community norms from place to place?
  - A. Tattered.
  - B. Forming, but not yet strong, broad, and deep.
  - C. Strong, growing, widespread, functioning really well.
4. How strong is the collection of boundary spanning organizations - those that help engage people in public life, spur discussion on community challenges and marshal a community's resources to move ahead? These organizations help lay the foundation for community action - often convening different groups and resources - but once an initiative is up and running, they move on to the next challenge.
  - A. We've got lots of organizations but can't really see more than one or two boundary spanning organizations - and I am not sure if they're even the real thing.
  - B. We've got one or two true boundary spanning organizations but they're often overworked and/or overwhelmed; they often tend to have a hard time keeping their focus.
  - C. We've got a real handful of true boundary spanning organizations; you can feel their presence and good work. They enjoy strong credibility and trust across the community.



# THE STAGES OF COMMUNITY LIFE

## THE WAITING PLACE

- In the Waing Place, people sense that things are not working right in their community, but they are unable to clearly define the problem; the feeling could be described as a "felt unknown."
- People feel disconnected from leaders and from different processes within the community for making decisions; the community itself is fragmented; discussion about common challenges is infrequent and/or highly divisive.
- Community discussion about challenges is infrequent and/or highly divisive. People want to create change, but negative norms for public life keep them locked into old patterns.
- People often are waiting - for issues to become clearer, for someone else to "solve" their problems. People in this stage often say, "Everything will be better when we get the right mayor to save the community!" So, people just wait.

## IMPASSE

- At Impasse, the community has hit rock bottom, and people can be heard saying, "Enough is enough! It can't go on like this any longer!"
- In this stage, unlike in the Waiting Place, there is a sense of urgency in people's voices; people are tired of "waiting." But while people want change, they lack clarity about what to do.
- The community's norms and ways of working together keep the community stuck in an undesirable status quo. The community is mired in turf wars; it lacks leadership at different levels and people seem fixated on their own individual interests.
- People's frustrations have hit the boiling point, but the community lacks the capacity to act.

## CATALYTIC

- The Catalytic stage starts with small steps that are often imperceptible to the vast majority of people in the community.
- Small numbers of people and organizations begin to emerge, taking risks and experimenting in ways that challenge existing norms in how the community works.
- The size of their actions is not the vital gauge. Their actions produce some semblance of results that gives people a sense of hope.
- As this stage unfolds, the number of people and organizations stepping forward increases, and links and networks are built between and among them.
- A key challenge in this stage is the emerging conflict between a nascent story of hope and the ingrained narrative that "nothing can change." Even as change appears, the old narrative will still dominate people's communication and outlook until more progress is made and trust builds.

## GROWTH

- During the Growth stage, people begin to see clearer and more pervasive signs of how the community is moving forward.
- People in the community are able to name leadership at all levels and where such leadership is expanding and deepening - from the official level to neighborhoods, within civic organizations and nonprofits. Networks are growing, and a sense of common purpose and direction are taking deep root.
- People feel a renewed spirit of community. More people are working together. Efforts are taking place across the community and are targeted to more concerns.
- A feature of this stage is that you can randomly ask people on the street what kind of community they live in, and they provide similar answers. A common story has emerged about the community.

## SUSTAIN AND RENEW

- In Sustain and Renew, the community is ready to take on, in a deeper and more sustained way, the tough, nagging issues that may have been tackled before but were not adequately addressed.
- Such issues might include the public schools, racism and race relations and economic growth in all neighborhoods; change on these concerns typically requires sustained, long-term effort.
- Lessons and insights and new norms that have emerged over time now pervade the community.
- But, the community may be struggling to maintain its momentum. It must find new ways to bring along a new cadre of leaders, civic groups and active citizens, as others tire or move on.
- There is a danger that the community will fall into a new Waiting Place as it comes to rest on its laurels.

# THE STAGE OF MY COMMUNITY

1. Once you have answered the four questions, review the description of each of The five Stages of Community Life on page 64. Based on your answers to the four questions, choose the stage you think your community is in. Make sure to read carefully again the stage right before and the stage right after the one you think you're in; sometimes this helps clarify which is the right stage.

## YOUR COMMUNITY STAGE

.....  
*(write in the name of the stage)*

2. Next, find two other people whose community is the same stage as yours. Look at the Do's and Don'ts Chart on page 7 and then answer the following questions:

- When you think about your community, what does it feel like to be in this stage? Jot down a few words or phrases that come to mind.

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- What has been your experience in terms of what people and groups tend to do and/or say to move things forward in this stage?

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- What tends to happen when they try to do these things? What have you seen?

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## STAGES OF COMMUNITY LIFE :: DO'S AND DON'TS

Be Careful Not To	What to Do	What To Think About
<b>THE WAITING PLACE</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inflate expectations by announcing grand plans</li> <li>• Start visioning exercises that fail or don't have enough community support for action</li> <li>• Try to engage people by making them feel guilty they are not involved</li> <li>• Rely on one-shot projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create forums for conversation and interaction where people feel they belong and crystallize feelings of frustration</li> <li>• Connect community actions to realities in people's lives</li> <li>• Demonstrate small signs of progress</li> <li>• Keep working, despite feelings of limited progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you really know how committed your partners are?</li> <li>• What small things could help us move forward?</li> </ul>
<b>IMPASSE</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inflate expectations by announcing grand plans</li> <li>• Convince yourselves there are strong networks and organizations to support new civic work</li> <li>• Shut out citizens because they are frustrated</li> <li>• Try to develop action plans too quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let people share their concerns and discover common aspirations for something different</li> <li>• Identify taboo issues that contribute to impasse</li> <li>• Find language that helps people imagine an alternative future</li> <li>• Look for windows to pull people into small efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What issues are citizens most immediately concerned about – are those issues being worked on?</li> <li>• What is being done to bring people back into public life?</li> </ul>
<b>CATALYTIC</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate activities too quickly, stifling innovation and action</li> <li>• Rush to visioning exercises before the community is ready</li> <li>• Do too much, too fast</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try lots of small things with room for failure, emphasize learning</li> <li>• Build Boundary-Spanning Organizations that can generate change</li> <li>• Encourage informal conversations, networks and new engagement norms</li> <li>• Develop a new cadre of leaders</li> <li>• Tell authentic stories of progress over time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is motivating folks to work together?</li> <li>• Where are the Boundary-Spanning Organizations in the community? Who supports them?</li> <li>• What are we learning?</li> <li>• How do we know if our work is grounded in the community's aspirations?</li> </ul>
<b>GROWTH</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miss parts of the community left out of progress</li> <li>• Let "official leaders" drive the action</li> <li>• Neglect the need to continually strengthen networks, leaders and organizations that can keep the community moving forward</li> <li>• Ignore underlying community issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use community-wide engagement activities to coalesce and spring forward from the Catalytic stage</li> <li>• Do bigger projects, building on natural progress and collaborations that have come before</li> <li>• Reinforce positive norms for working together and continue to develop Boundary-Spanning Organizations and new leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is doing the hard work? Are citizens involved?</li> <li>• Are new people getting involved in the efforts?</li> <li>• How are the new efforts connected to the work done before?</li> </ul>
<b>SUSTAIN AND RENEW</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think "success" has been achieved</li> <li>• Assume others know the story of progress and norms for action that have been built</li> <li>• Become arrogant and feel you have solved it all</li> <li>• Start to rest on laurels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop new leaders across the entire community and new Boundary-Spanning Organizations to create progress</li> <li>• Continue creating opportunities to bring citizens into processes – especially new residents</li> <li>• Look for challenges not yet tackled to focus energies, and use lessons learned to expand progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the new leaders?</li> <li>• Who is still missing from the community's progress?</li> <li>• How are we feeling about ourselves: pride, fully humble or smugly selfconfident?</li> <li>• How are we consciously strengthening our norms of working together?</li> </ul>



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