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Getting Involved in your Local Government & Community

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Road Map



1. Why is this important?
2. Role of Active Participation
3. Continuum of Community Participation
4. Practical Next Steps
5. Bringing it all together



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Significance

Why is this important?





What is Civic Engagement?

Civic engagement means promoting the quality of life in a community through activities both political (e.g., voting, organizing) and non-political (e.g., local team sports, volunteerism).



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What is Civic Engagement?

Where the rubber hits the road: “Participation” is the key. This means doing the work to stay involved, providing input and feedback, showing up to events and meetings, and maybe even taking on leadership roles.



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What is Civic Engagement?



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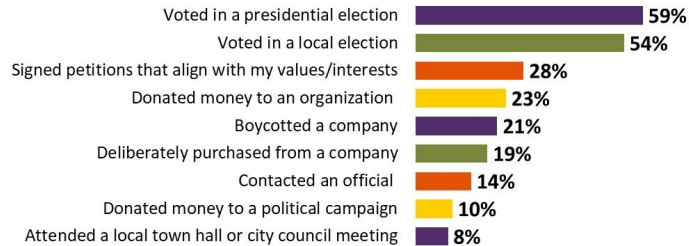
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Active Engagement Extends Beyond Voting

In the past two years, respondents were most likely to vote compared to other civic engagement activities.



SOURCE: Morning Consult online poll of 2,210 adults ages 18+ (August 2022). Data weighted to approximate a nationally representative sample based on gender, educational attainment, age, race, and region.

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A row of white classical columns in a building facade, receding into the distance. The columns are fluted and have papyrus capitals. The building is made of light-colored stone or marble. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

56%



Role of Active Participation

Community Benefits





Positive Impact on Economic Health

Civic engagement cultivates attachment to community and “creates an infrastructure that encourages people to invest, spend, and hire locally.”



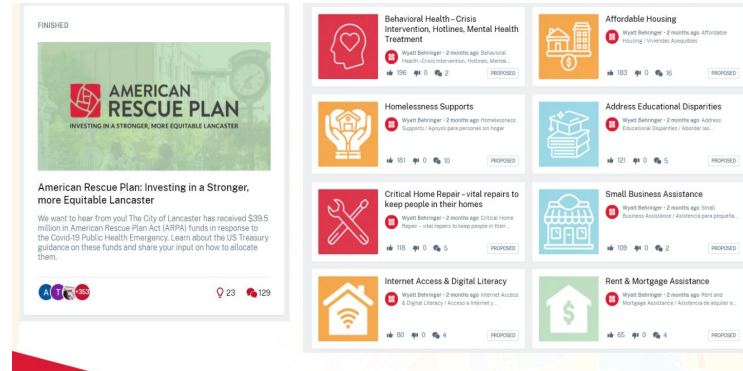
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Positive Impact on Economic Health

Citizen feedback ensure resources are being focused on solving the right problems



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Positive Impact on Community Member Health

Community engagement

- produces better policy outcomes
- is associated with better health and well-being in its own right
- empowerment and engagement of community members is, in and of itself, health promoting



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Positive Impact on Community Member Health

“Greater control over individual circumstances can improve personal outcomes and lead to a greater sense of well-being and a better quality of life.”



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Builds Strong Communities

- Fosters stronger and happier communities
- Facilitates ownership and community pride



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Better Outcomes

- Create more effective solutions.
- Drawing on local knowledge from a diverse group creates solutions that are practical and effective.
- Increase the likelihood that projects will be executed.



Community Based Organization Partner Snapshots

As part of our engagement strategy for the One Seattle Plan, OPCD has partnered with five Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to design & implement unique engagement strategies in the historically underrepresented communities they serve. This space showcases some of their work.



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Trust Building

- Increase trust in community organizations and governance.
- Improves communication and understanding.
- Knowing what government, community citizens and leaders, and organizations can and cannot do may reduce future conflict.



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Realtors are An Integral Part of the Community *& they know their communities well*



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Role of Active Participation

Individual Benefits





Benefits

Individual	Professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make Friends• Create a greater feeling of community• Have fun• Learn something new• Informed about issues that may impact your property, family, and/or neighborhoods• Sense of ownership & accountability in your community• Increased empathy & understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build your network & expand your skill set• Ensure that you are informed about issues that may impact your business• Be seen as someone in the know• Heightened visibility & reputation• Access to mentorship & learning opportunities, especially with complex issues



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Individual Benefits

- Developed personal relationships
- Constantly learning
- Attend Fun events
- Alert friends and family to issues or opportunities that may impact them



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Professional Benefits

- Benefit from subject matter expertise on a wider array of topics & issues
- Stay up-to-date on local happenings
- Develop professional relationships with those who have gone before you



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Midway Q & A



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Civically Engaged CBO Networks

- Nonprofits
- Chambers of Commerce
- Business Councils
- Neighborhood groups
- Regional economic organizations



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Continuum of Community Engagement

Multiple levels of involvement



What is Available for Interested Community Members?



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Practical Next Steps

Where do I start?





How do I get started?

Step 1: Get informed

- Sign up for e-newsletters
- Review the official public meeting agenda
- Follow public orgs and key group on social media
- Read the paper
- Listen to local radio
- Pay attention to who is tabling at events you are already attending

Step 2: Determine your capacity, interest, and goals



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How Do I decide which engagement approach is best for me?

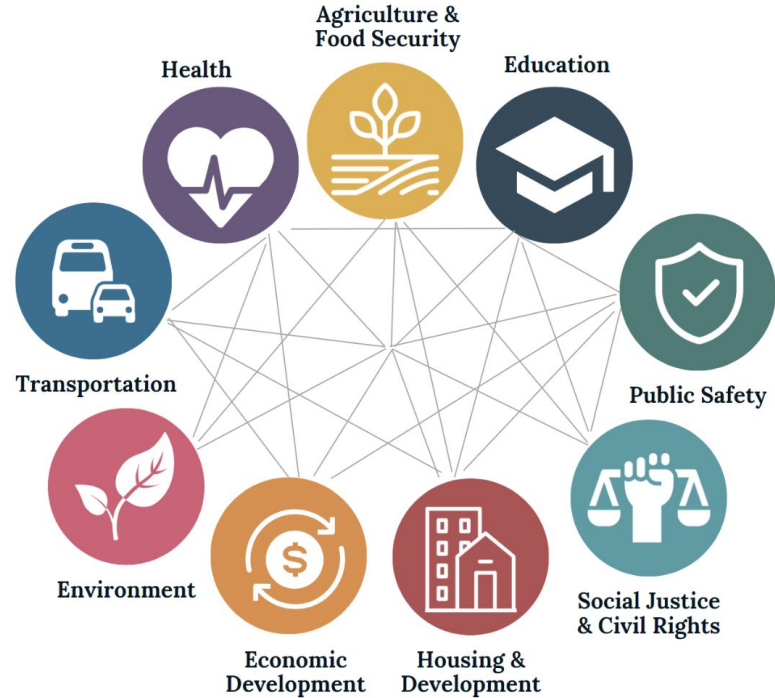
Engagement Type	Time	Financial
Vote in Local Elections	🕒	
Sign up for a newsletter	🕒	
Donate money to an organization or political campaign	🕒	\$\$
Provide Feedback (Survey, issue mapping, etc.)	🕒🕒	
Write/Speak at a Public Meeting	🕒🕒	
Participate in community meeting or town hall	🕒🕒	
Join a civically engaged group	🕒🕒🕒	\$
Get others involved (tabling, voter registration, etc.)	🕒🕒🕒	
Leadership Series	🕒🕒🕒	\$\$
Leadership roles in civic organizations	🕒🕒🕒🕒	
Join a board or commission	🕒🕒🕒🕒	
Run for office	🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒	\$\$\$



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Topic areas to engage in



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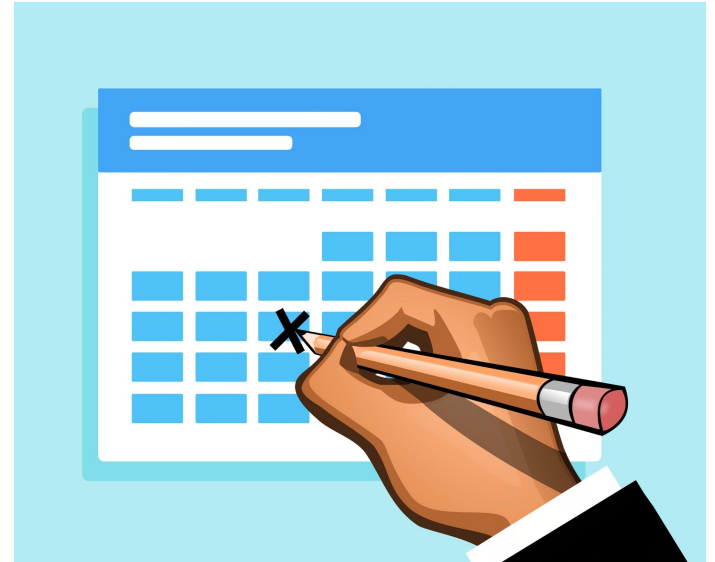
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How do I get started?

Step 3: Take action

- “Membership” or “contact us” pages of civic orgs
- Put a meeting or event on your calendar & then attend
- Take that survey when asked
- Review postings of open commission/board spots



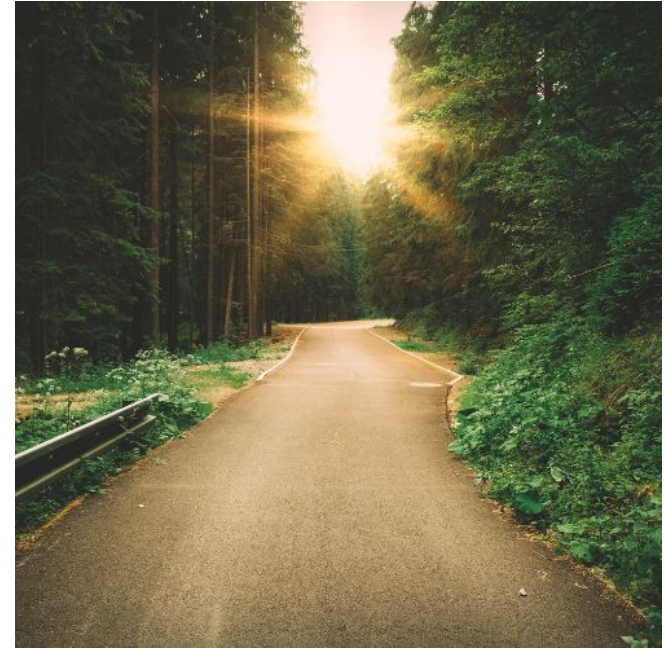
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Where Can This Lead?

- Greater fulfillment within your community
- Greater access to opportunities for business and within specialized industries
- Involvement in leadership, decision-making, and community planning
- Advocacy and social entrepreneurship
- Potential to run for higher office



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Bringing It All Together



Bringing It All Together



- **What is your why? What are your motivations and goals?**
- **What is your plan? Honor your constraints and put a plan together.**
- **Take action! Don't wait and follow through.**



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Thank You!

Any questions?

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