

3.3 Take the Civic Index

Instructions:

- **What:** The National Civic League developed the Civic Index to help communities measure and develop skills and processes for evaluating and improving their civic infrastructures. This index can aid the community visioning process and planning and strengthen problem-solving capacity.
- **Why:** To help your community unlock your potential and ability by evaluating and improving your civic infrastructure.
- **Who:** This process is most effective when used by a group of engaged citizens with diverse perspectives and interests.
- **When:** You can use this as a stand-alone process to enhance your civic infrastructure or as a part of your long-term visioning process.

Civic Index Scope:

Grade the following statements for your community A (excelling) through F (failing).

Community Leadership

Our community has active programs to encourage the development of emerging leaders.	
Our community has specific programs to encourage the leadership development and community engagement of young people.	
Our local leadership programs provide multiple avenues for new leaders to apply their skills.	
Our leadership programs seek to develop and encourage a diverse and inclusive group of leaders.	
Community leaders listen to the views of others and encourage the public to be engaged in the local problems-solving and planning effort.	
Community leaders encourage and seek collaboration in local planning and decision-making efforts.	
AVERAGE	

Public Participation and Civic Engagement

Residents of our community feel their participation matters in solving community challenges.	
Most residents are more committed to problem-solving to address community issues rather than assigning blame.	
It is easy to get people's engagement in community issues.	
It is easy to get qualified people to run for public offices.	
The community has adequate public opportunities for residents to engage in public planning, decision making and problem-solving.	
Residents have ample opportunities to learn and practice their rights and responsibilities as members of the community.	
Public spaces in schools, libraries, and local government buildings are readily made available to community residents as welcoming spaces to meet.	
Public participation efforts in our community typically lead to positive outcomes.	
AVERAGE	

Diversity and Inclusiveness

Our community recognizes and celebrates its diversity and inclusiveness (ages, ethnicities, genders, cultures, religions, and sexual orientation and expression).	
Our community takes the extra steps to ensure that broad diversity of residents is included in local and regional planning and actions that directly impact them.	
Our community is welcoming and inclusive of immigrants and refugees, seeing them as assets and not liabilities.	
Our community does a good job of addressing equity issues.	
Our community does a good job of creating democratic spaces for young people where they can actively participate with other community residents in addressing community issues.	
AVERAGE	

Networking and Communication

The community is well informed of the plans of the local governing bodies.	
Most community residents know how to access information on public issues.	
The local news media report credible information about public issues.	
Community residents use social networking tools to organize and/or communicate on important issues.	
There are opportunities for community residents from all walks of life to access communication and information technology.	
Local government and school districts have a strong commitment to openness and information sharing.	
There are both online and face-to-face public forums where community residents can engage in civil conversation and dialogue about their interests and concerns.	
AVERAGE	

Decision Making and Consensus Building

The community addresses challenges directly and quickly, instead of deferring or postponing difficult decisions.	
Community members can disagree about ideas and issues without differences typically leading to a breakdown in progress.	
Community leaders usually resolve controversial issues fairly with practical compromises and solutions.	
The community does have neutral conveners and forums to resolve pressing conflicts and challenges.	
The community is willing to try new ideas to solve problems.	
The community holds the local government accountable for the decisions that are made.	
AVERAGE	

Partnerships and Collaboration

Local governments in the region work well with each other to address local and community-wide challenges.	
Most community leaders are able to set aside their own interest for the border community good.	
Community agencies and organizations do a good job of coordinating their activities.	
Our local government seeks partnerships with nonprofit groups and private sector leaders.	
Nonprofit groups manage “turf” issues well and collaborate with each other in seeking resources.	
Nonprofits work together to jointly address community problems.	
Local businesses partner with nonprofits and schools to achieve better community outcomes.	
Local businesses encourage community volunteerism and charitable giving on the part of the employees.	
AVERAGE	

Community Vision and Pride

Our community regularly engages in strategic planning and other actions to help achieve a common vision.	
Our residents have strong positive identification with the community and a clear sense of what makes the community unique.	
Residents feel a strong sense of attachment and pride in their neighborhoods and community.	
Our community has a shared vision of what it wants to look like in the future.	
AVERAGE	

TOTAL CIVIC INDEX AVERAGE	
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