COMMUNITY BUILDING TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides basic tools and templates for anyone hoping to have resources "at their fingertips" for planning, delivering, or following up on a community building process including information on the following topics:

FRAMING COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

What do we mean by community building, what is shared leadership, and why is it essential for successful community work? How can we understand our own leadership and be attentive to where it might grow?

RELATIONSHIPS: THE NOT-SO-SECRET SAUCE OF COMMUNITY BUILDING

How do we listen to others, build authentic connection and trust, and give and receive feedback in our community work?

WHO'S INVOLVED AND WHY: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND TEAM BUILDING

What's needed to engage a diverse set of partners in our community work, and how can we build a strong team?

MAKING MEETINGS MATTER: THE ART OF FACILITATION AND CONSENSUS-BUILDING

What are the basics of designing and facilitating a good meeting, and how can we build consensus and follow-up with clear action?

WHEN CHALLENGES ARISE: CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND TRANSFORMATION

How do we understand why conflict occurs and what to do about it?

THE LONG HAUL: PLANNING AND LONG-TERM DECISION-MAKING

How can we plan for our community efforts and keep people engaged?

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides a high-level overview of certain perspectives and practices that support leadership for comprehensive community development. It is for anyone involved or interested in neighborhood-based community building.

There are tip sheets, tools and practices, and templates in each of the sections outlined above, all of which can be shared with neighborhood residents and partners to learn together or for use in your meetings and community planning work. If you are looking at the online version of this toolkit, there are links for many of the handouts and templates so that you can easily make copies (or adapt) as needed.

FRAMING COMMUNITY BUILDING
AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

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Community building is a process that focuses primarily on creating strong relationships and developing shared leadership that is positive, solutions-oriented, and asset-based

This means that -- in the work of comprehensive community development -- we focus on healthy relationships between people to support creating healthy places and explore opportunities rather than getting caught in defining needs and what's missing

Comprehensive community development looks at all the different opportunities in any neighborhood and connects them to achieve more powerful, more lasting outcomes

Leadership is both an individual and group responsibility: shared leadership means that people are working together toward a common vision or goal, and are committed to distributing tasks and problem-solving together

WHAT IS COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Comprehensive Community Development recognizes that no one approach to community building and neighborhood development will achieve the outcomes that residents and community organizations hope to see. It is an integrated approach that combines a focus on issues across Family Income and Wealth, Housing, Youth and Education, Safe and Healthy Environments, Economic Development, and Leadership and Advocacy to realize the promise of our communities. Comprehensive Community Development is community-driven, solutions-oriented, and builds on the existing assets in a community.

WHAT IS SHARED LEADERSHIP AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In comprehensive community development work, we emphasize the importance of shared leadership. We believe that a leader is not a single person or a hero doing everything and anything to accomplish a task or transform a neighborhood. A leader is a person who is passionate about their community, who is willing to bring their skills and to learn, who is committed to action and (most importantly) dedicated to acting with others to outline a vision, set goals and produce results. Community work is too challenging and too dynamic for any one person to act as "the leader": we are the leader, demonstrating the old adage that "many hands make light work." It may not be easy, but it will be more successful and more lasting because we are working together.

CLASSICAL AND SHARED LEADERSHIP COMPARED

CLASSICAL LEADERSHIP	SHARED LEADERSHIP
Displayed by a person's position in a group of hierarchy	Identified by the quality of people's interactions rather than their position
Leadership evaluated by whether the leader solves problems	Leadership evaluated by how people are working together
Leadership provide solutions and answers	All work to enhance the process and to make it more fulfilling.
Distant differences between leaders and followers: character, skill, etc.	People are interdependent. All are active participants in the process of conversation.
Communication is often formal	Communication is crucial with a stress on conversation
Can often rely on secrecy, deception, and payoffs	Values democratic processes, honesty and shared ethics. Seeks a common good.

RELATIONSHIPS: THE NOT-SO-SECRET SAUCE OF COMMUNITY BUILDING

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A relational approach supports community building and connection, and requires being a good listener, asking about people's stories and hopes, and following up with people. The keys to relationship building are regular communication, offering people opportunities to share their ideas and get involved, and to be able to successfully give and receive feedback (and encourage others to do the same). Relationships are grounded in trust, which is built by regular connection, clarity of roles, and accountability (doing what you'll say you'll do when you say you'll do it)

LISTENING SKILLS

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MOST PEOPLE	SKILLED LISTENERS
Immediately evaluate what is being said	Suspend judgment and listen
Spend time rehearsing what they will say next	Focus on what the other side is saying
Try to steer the conversation toward the direction they want	Let the other person direct the conversation
Hear everything through their own frame of reference	Try to enter the other's frame of reference
Only ask questions when the other seems to need help	Ask questions to satisfy their own curiosity, interests, or desire to solve a problem
Disagree with the other's point of view	Seek to understand other's perspective
Try to take in and respond to everything	Sort for main ideas
Allow their mind to wander to other things	Keep focused on the other and what they are saying
Parrot back exactly what they heard	Reflect back the essence and feeling of what was said
Give little verbal and non-verbal response	Actively encourage speaker through verbal and non-verbal cues

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY BUILDING
= HEALTHY, TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS
...

TO BE INCLUSIVE CREATE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

The only way to create a healthy relationship is to go out there and "do it".
Before you reach out, ask yourself the following questions:

Name: _____   Affiliation: _____

Telephone: _____   Email: _____

ATTENTION	Why has this person come to your attention?
INTEREST	What is this person interested in? What is their interest in your neighborhood?
EXPLORATION	What kind of questions will you ask them? What are you curious about regarding who they are and their interest?
EXCHANGE	What kind of an exchange would you like to have with them? What type of resources do they have that would be supportive of how you are working to change your neighborhood?
COMMITMENT	What will you commit to doing to cultivate this relationship on an ongoing basis?

Resource: Marshall Ganz, Kennedy School, 2006

WHO'S INVOLVED? WHY?:
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND TEAM BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

Community engagement requires an open, inclusive approach to different people who are part of (or have an influence in) the community--including youth, seniors, businesses, government agencies, and others
Not everyone in your community will respond to the same messages or ways of communicating--it's important to tailor approaches to different populations

There is a difference between inclusive community engagement and outreach--the first sees community members as partners, the second tends to be about seeing community as a source of information

Creating an asset map helps identify what resources are in or available to your community, and can be a community building tool for sharing stories and inspiring ideas

Using a story to engage community members and partners helps build connection and common purpose--and can help with neighborhood "branding" and sharing your vision more broadly (with other neighborhoods, with city agencies and larger businesses)

OUTREACH TO STAKEHOLDERS

GROUP	INTEREST(S)	OUTREACH IDEAS	MEETING SETTING
YOUTH	To have an impact and a voice; to use their creativity and be seen as capable and independent.	• Engage youth as part of planning teams and projects • Create separate opportunities for youth to organize • Recruit youth to recruit their friends for organizing • Offer youth-only programs/ projects that build skills	• Use a hashtag (#Youth) for meeting • Have music playing at the beginning of meeting • Build in networking/socializing time for the meeting before or after
DIFFERENTLY-ABLED	To have communities acknowledge their interests and incorporate them in design.	• Provide a forum for all community members to learn about issues facing disabled populations • Conduct a listening campaign and build relationships with disabled people and service organizations	• Determine if meeting space is accessible • Be prepared to alter seating (make space for wheelchairs, etc) • Add Differently-Abled body signage at entrance of meeting
LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKERS	To honor their own culture while participating fully in community decision making.	• Design culturally-appropriate events for engagement • Be curious and open to learning by building relationships based on their identity and experience • Use alternative/non-linguistic meeting activities • Develop independent projects (but invite others) • Create opportunities for small group discussion/input • Encourage cross-language learning	• Offer interpretation at meetings; • Use visuals, images to describe something or a concept • Pair up individuals that know multiple languages to encourage peer learning and information sharing
BUSINESS OWNERS	To build relationships and communities that support healthy business practice.	• Offer forums that allow for business owners to network • Invite business owners to support AND participate in events • Engage business owners in community beautification and economic development projects • Recruit business owners to offer internships and jobs for youth and community members	• Provide a table to place fliers, announcements, etc. that business owners want to market
ELECTED OFFICIALS/ GOVERNMENT	To understand and respond to constituency concerns; to have information and stories that prove need or amplify impact.	• Invite officials, their representatives, and other government staff to meetings/ events with clear role • Ask officials and government staff to both share ideas and services while participating as partners • Give them a chance to "win with you"	

COMMUNITY ASSET MAP

_____

_____

_____

_____
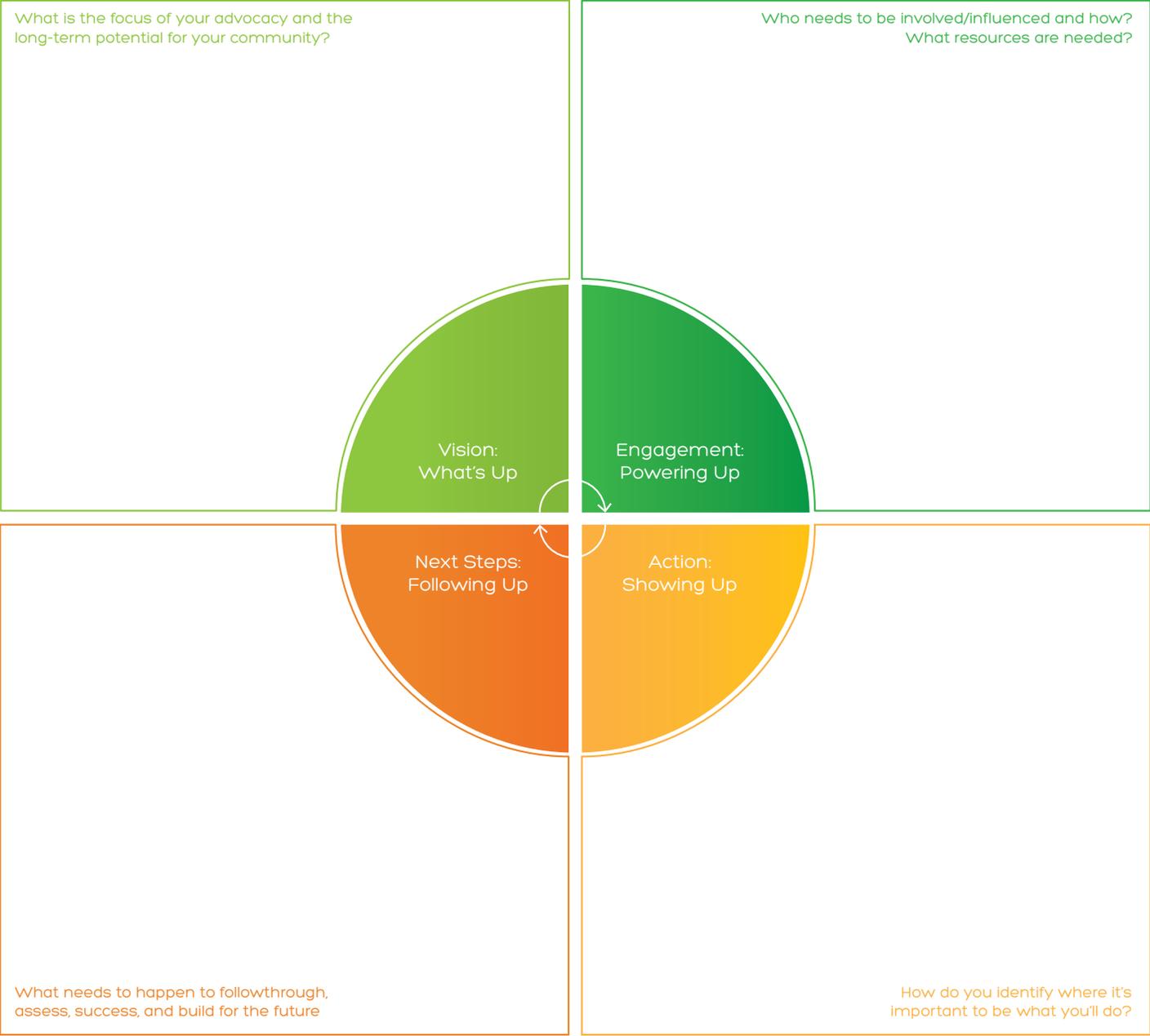
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Associations

Physical Space

MY COMMUNITY

Institutions

Local Economy

_____

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_____

Individuals

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ADVOCACY AND ORGANIZING CYCLE OVERVIEW

What is the focus of your advocacy and the long-term potential for your community?

Who needs to be involved/influenced and how? What resources are needed?

Vision: What's Up

Engagement: Powering Up

Next Steps: Following Up

Action: Showing Up

What needs to happen to followthrough, assess, success, and build for the future

How do you identify where it's important to be what you'll do?

MAKING MEETINGS MATTER: THE ART OF FACILITATION AND CREATING CONSENSUS

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- Meetings are the heart of coming together in a community to connect, share stories, develop a vision, and plan for action
- Meetings can (and should!) v fun-- the quote "Why Have a Meeting When You Can Have a Party?" reminds us that productive meetings should involve food, getting-to-know-you and team building activities (and can even be parties)
- Every meeting should have a facilitator--the person who can help guide conversation, keep the meeting on time and on track, and who helps set the agenda
- Every meeting should have an agenda--a map of what's happening when during your meeting--as well as clarity about roles (Who's facilitating? Who's taking notes? Who's bringing cookies?)

LEADING MEETINGS THAT MATTER

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WHY LEARN HOW TO LEAD AN EFFECTIVE MEETING?
- Can anyone describe a meeting that you have attended that went really bad?
- Can anyone describe a meeting that went very well?
- People in power lead good meetings and we want to be able to influence those people and to learn how to use our power as well.

GOOD MEETINGS LOOK LIKE, FEEL LIKE AND ACCOMPLISH:
Everyone feels included and people want to come back
Allows for shared leadership to be practiced and replicated
Action-takes a concern and breaks it down into manageable, actionable, shared tasks and responsibilities

10 KEYS TO EFFECTIVE FACILITATION
(adapted from NeighborWorks: Building Leaders: Building Communities)
1. Always have an agenda
2. Be Relational-help connect the people in the room to one another
3. Be the guide of the process; don't lose control, but don't control too much
4. Be flexible and inclusive-make sure everyone has the opportunity to participate
5. Start and end on time-respects everyone's time
6. Be strategic-help move the process, but make sure other's voices are included in the outcome
7. Be a good listener
8. Reflect on how you did as a facilitator and on how the meeting went overall

WHAT TO INCLUDE?
- Do something that connects people to one another (activity, storytelling.)
- Why are we meeting? What do we want to accomplish?
- Time for discussion: purposeful time to be inclusive of others thoughts, feelings and proposals
- Decision Making: What are we going to do? When are we going to do it?
- Action/take assignments: who will do what, when, where and with whom?
- What's next? (When and where is the next meeting? Who wants to facilitate?)
- Time for reflection (How does everyone feel about the meeting? What worked, what could be better?)

CREATING AGENDAS THAT MATTER

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TAKING NOTES—THOSE MATTER TOO!

WHY?

1. Includes others that were not able to attend, but are interested in being involved.
2. It creates a "paper/electronic" memory of what happened and of what decisions were made.
3. It allows space for holding people accountable to doing what they said they would do (following-through on action/assignments).

HOW?

1. Who attended?

2. What is the goal of the meeting?

3. What were the key points discussed?

4. Who committed the following-up on action items and how?

5. What questions need to be asked or addressed before the next meeting?

6. When and where is the next meeting and who is facilitating?

SESSION PLANNING AND EVALUATION TEMPLATE

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Design each session using P-O-P (purpose--outcomes--process) for your agenda.

Session Title and Date: _____

Session Purpose: _____

Session Outcomes: _____

AGENDA	DESIRED OUTCOME	PROCESS USED	LEAD	NOTES

Materials Needed:

☐ Space

☐ Food

☐ Flipchart/Easel

☐ Markers

☐ Post-its

EVALUATION

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Session Title:

Session Facilitator:

Date:

What did you like most about this meeting or training?

What was one key take-away? Is there an action you will take or something you learned that you will use?

What would you do differently? What could be improved to make this more valuable?

On a scale of 1-10, how valuable was this session for you? (1 = not valuable at all, 10 = highly valuable)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Do you have other comments, questions or suggestions?

SAMPLE ROOM SETUPS

HALLOW SQUARE
Use for large board meetings, rountable disscussions. Does not work well for larger groups

CONFERECE
Use forsmall board meetings, roundtable discussions. Does not work well for larger groups

U-SHAPE
Use for board meetings, roundtable discussions where an AV presentation is also incorporated into a meeting. Does not work well for large groups.
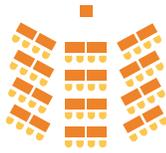
Chevron Classroom
Use when attendees will be in an extended session or need to refer to materials, take notes, etc.
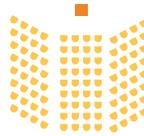
Chevron Theater
Use when you need to mazimize seating for room or if attendees are required only to listen to presentation without needing to take notes, etc.

Chevron Classroom
Ideal for classroom-style presentation where you also want groups to have rountable discussions.

Straight Classroom
Use when attendees will be in an extended session or need to refer to materials, take notes, etc.

Crescent Rounds
Ideal for classroom-style presentations where you also want groups to have roundtable discussions.

Rounds of 8 or 10
Ideal for dinners, social events or meetings that may have a working lunch, continental breakfast or round table discussion

Herringbone Classroom
Use when attendees will be in an extended session or need to refer to materials, take notes, etc.
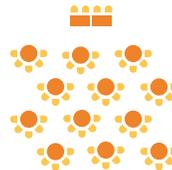
Herringbone Theater
Use when you need to mazimize seating for room or if attendees are required only to listen to presentation without needing to take notes, etc.

Straight Theater
Use when you need to maximize seating for a room or if attendees are required only to listen to presentation without needing to take notes, etc.

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WHEN CHALLENGES ARISE:
CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND TRANSFORMATION

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Conflict--in community settings, and everywhere--is normal. We are dealing with people and the places and issues they care about: we will not always agree on what do and how to do it. What's important is to be able to understand conflict, our reaction to it, and how to navigate it. If you can manage your reaction and approach, navigating the conflict becomes easier (not easy, but easier). Our primary role in shared leadership and resolving conflict is to preserve relationship, move ahead with our partners, and to support learning that emerges from conflict.

RESOLVING CONFLICT CREATIVELY WORKSHEET

Attitude
How do you feel about this conflict?
About the prospects for resolving it in a way
that preserves relationships and creates
possibilities?

Assumptions
What do you think the other's
(individual, organization, community) view
on this issue? What are their interests?

Action
What will you do to begin resolution of
this conflict? What are the 3–5 steps you
can take to move forward? Where will you get
support as you act?

Alignment
Where do you see possibilities for
coming to an agreeable solution? What
might satisfy those involved in this conflict?

TOOLS FOR MANAGING CONFLICT (AND OUR REACTIONS TO IT)

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There are a number of ways that we might manage conflict, depending upon our default style and what is appropriate to the situation.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Always speak with a calm but firm voice

- Don't get into a back-and-forth power struggle

- Be prepared to acknowledge the conflict and still move ahead, as appropriate

- "An ounce of prevention"

- Understand your default reaction to conflict and style

- Assume an "Attitude of resolution"

- Prepare for your meeting with an agenda and sense of your audience.

- Develop a set of strategies with allies.

- Be clear about boundaries (what are you willing to do or not do?)

- Handling Intense Emotions (your's or another's)

- STOP: Stop-Take 3 Breaths-Observe-Proceed

- Use a "50-50" practice: half a your awareness should be on the conflict and half on your reaction to it.

- Assure the other person they are being heard: acknowledge them and express your understanding of their concern.

- Mirror, Don't Mock: legitimize their concern without condescension or judgment.

- Develop Clear Next Steps

Where do you go for help?

It's not knowing what to do, it's knowing what to do when you don't know what to do. It is absolutely critical that you have at least one other person in any meeting you are running who understands the structure you are proposing, the community, the potential conflict you might face, and the strategies you are considering for addressing those conflicts.

It is often the case that you can develop allies in a public meeting context as well, if they are engaged in the topic and you can connect with them in a positive way and to encourage them to remain calm in the face of conflict as well. Raising the bar by appealing to people's core values and a desire to have a voice in a building a healthy community is a time-honored and very effective conflict resolution technique.

THE LONG HAUL: PLANNING AND LONG-TERM DECISION-MAKING

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- Engaging in community building work is not simply about creating relationships and working together on common goals, but about framing a long-term vision and plan
- Developing structures that can support decision-making over time helps sustain engagement, involvement, and shared leadership
- Finding and using data to support your current work and your long-term goals can help build understanding and make your case across your neighborhood, to the city, and to funders
- Using a planning tool can help define and document shared vision, goals, and roles
- Being able to sustain ourselves and the work we are doing is central to community-building: taking care of our health and creating time for reflection and learning on our work is critical
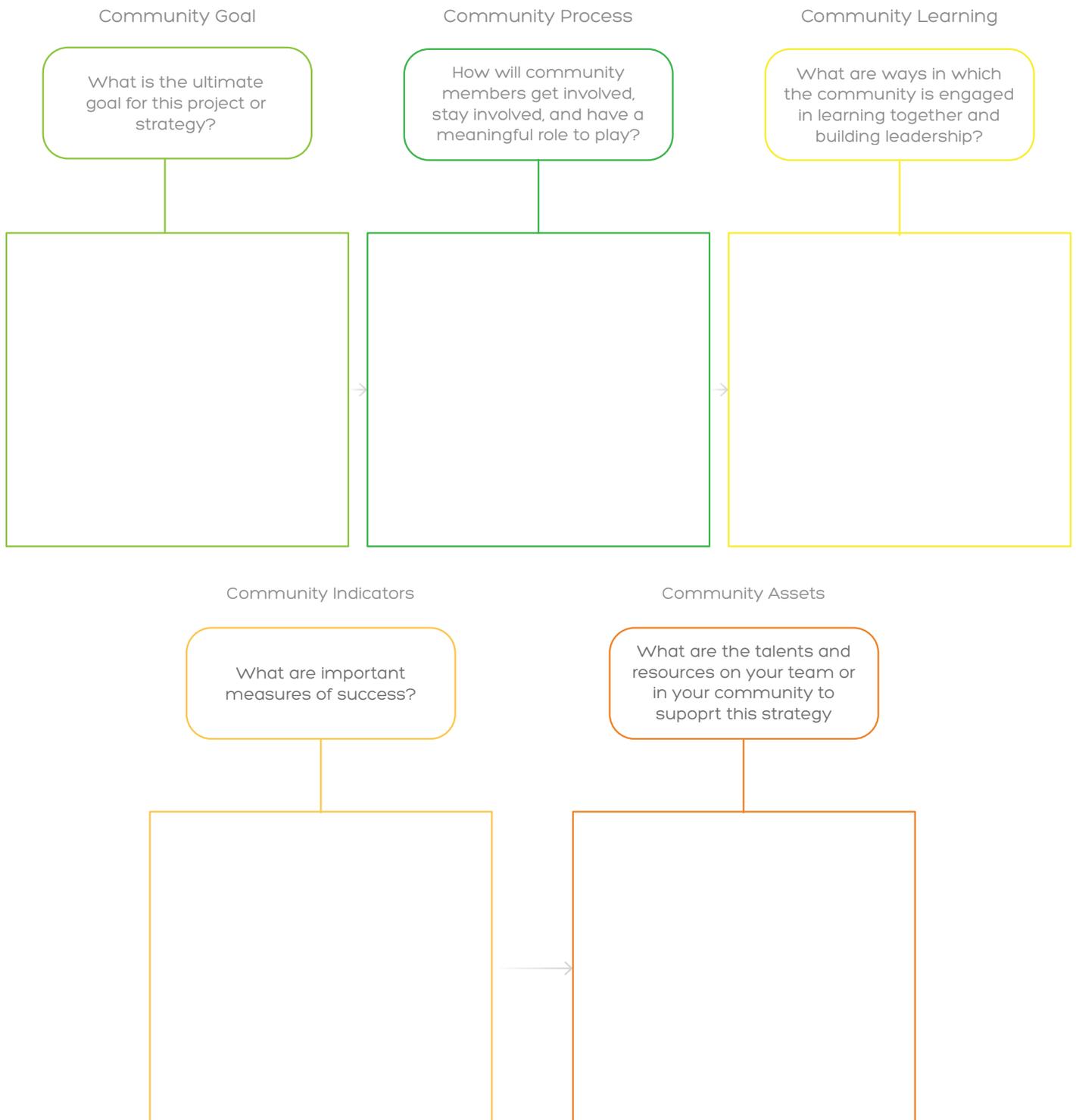
COLLABORATIVE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES TIPS

PRINCIPLE/PRACTICE	STRIVE TO...	AVOID
Shared Vision	Work with all stakeholders to outline a shared vision	Setting an agenda informed only by a few
Inclusion	Create welcoming meetings, membership that represents and honors all stakeholders	Getting into a pattern of the same people coming to meetings, doing all the work
Open Decision Making	Clarify how decisions are made and conflicts are addressed; use data to make informed decisions	Having a only a few people making decisions based on opinion and their own individual or agency agenda
Effective Communication	Develop a communications plan and clear messages about the work to share	Withholding information, or sharing confusing or contradictory information
Leadership	Encourage everyone to take on a role, based on their talents and interests and celebrate success often	Focusing on leadership that is about one or a few people seen as "the leaders"

Adapted from: Working Collaboratively--Some Principles to Assure Effective Functioning. Center for Collaborative Planning/ Public Health Institute.

STRATEGY MAP FOR COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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A strategy map enables us to set (or reset) direction for our work as a whole, for a particular strategy, or for a specific project. It provides a common focus for team or community members in a simple structure.

Community Goal

What is the ultimate goal for this project or strategy?

Community Process

How will community members get involved, stay involved, and have a meaningful role to play?

Community Learning

What are ways in which the community is engaged in learning together and building leadership?

Community Indicators

What are important measures of success?

Community Assets

What are the talents and resources on your team or in your community to supoprt this strategy

PLANNING TOOL

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The following format can help provide a structure for planning a particular project or process, using the strategy map on the first page to offer guidelines on the foundation that can make the plan successful. This tool can also be used online as an interactive planning template for a team.

Project or Priority Name: _____

_____

Outcome Desired: _____

_____

Timeline (initiation, duration, completion): _____

_____

Objective (what "building block" is needed to fulfill the outcome?	Actions (what specific steps will complete this objective?) *each may require its own line*	Lead or Team Responsible (who will ensure this is done?)	Due Date (when will this be completed?)	Resources/Support Needed (what funding, materials, or consultation needed?

21 SELF CARE TIPS

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The most important act we can take in our community building work — and in our lives! — is to take care of ourselves so we can stay healthy for all that we want to do.

1. Take a deep breath (or two). Then take a timeout, so breathing slows for at least five minutes.
2. Take a break. Get some fresh air (and maybe a new perspective).
3. Go for a walk, or exercise in an inconspicuous area near your station (stretching, bending, etc).
4. Take a nap – sleep is critically important.
5. Listen to some music (and maybe even get your groove on) – hearing the right songs will adjust your attitude and lift your spirits.
6. Be reasonable with caffeine, nicotine, and adult beverages (not a good time to quit but neither is it a good time to kick it up a notch).
7. Keep in contact with friends by telephone, text, e-mail, or Skype.
8. Hydrate! (Dehydration is dangerous and no one likes being around you when you have a nasty headache).
9. Have a healthy snack (e.g. fruits, nuts, yogurt) when you need energy.
10. Check how your sports teams are doing (unless they're in crash and burn mode – you don't need more stress while on assignment).
11. Sometime during your assignment, have dessert first (in case there is an emergency or you are worried about your weight, you can skip the meal).
12. Play a game with someone – hangman, tic tac toe, 20 questions, etc., or make up your own game.
13. Read a book/magazine you brought, or participant workbooks of various activities, or whatever is available.
14. Take a little time off.
15. If something bad happens, write it up immediately. Putting it on the right form now helps get it out of your head, so you can move on to better things.
16. Practice positive self talk (best to do this silently or in a private so people won't begin to wonder about you).
17. Isolation is bad; reliance on peer support is good. Stay connected, talk things out, and you'll be supported.
18. Cry if you want to (or need to). Allowing tears to come can wash away some of the pain.
19. Ask for help when you need it – it's okay!
20. Journal – write about your experiences (positive and negative) nothing what you see and hear, feel, and hope.
21. Reflect upon and remember what worked and forgive (don't relive) things that didn't.

Resource: The American Red Cross