Guide to Civic Measurement:
Using *Mapping Civic Measurement* in your Community

INSTITUTE FOR **CITIZENS & SCHOLARS**™

National Civic League

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> **"Measurement may be the unifying force that helps us chart many paths forward towards a shared goal: a *vibrant constitutional democracy* in which we are all proud to participate.**
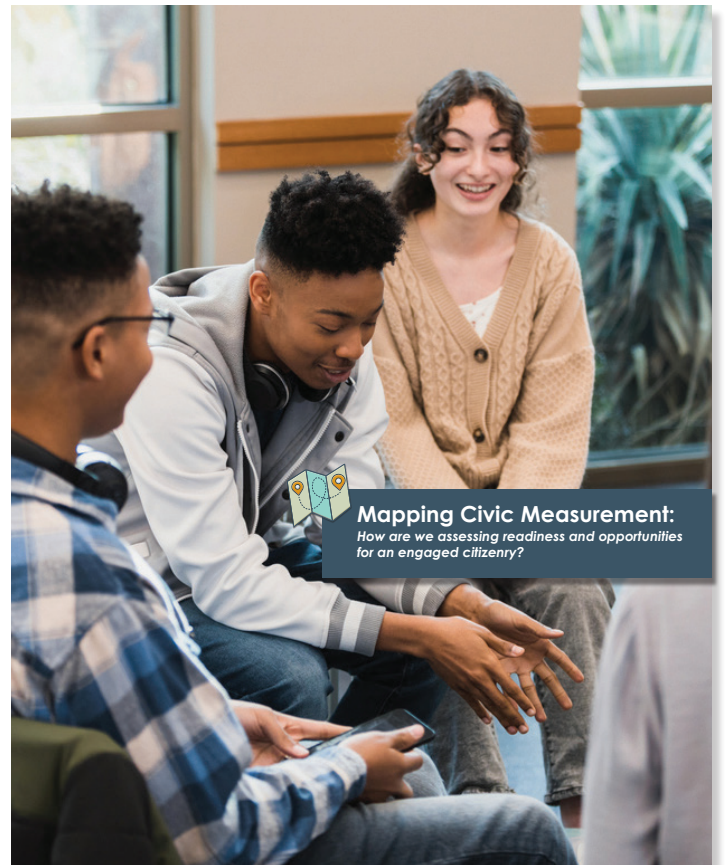
RAJ VINNAKOTA, PRESIDENT, CITIZENS & SCHOLARS

Mapping Civic Measurement

A comprehensive civic measurement landscape review and a first-of-its-kind framework for mapping civic readiness and opportunities.

The report features a collection of measurement tools, rubrics, and more than 200 resources in use by practitioners across education, business, philanthropy, community institutions, media, government, and civil society. You'll come away from the report with new ways to think about measuring civic learning impact, new research to inform your work, and new opportunities to connect with other practitioners.

Read the report [here](#).

Mapping Civic Measurement:
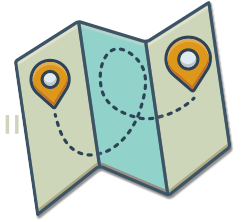*How are we assessing readiness and opportunities for an engaged citizenry?*

CONTENTS

We recommend printing the following pages to complete the exercises. You should feel free to jot down thoughts, sketch diagrams, or brainstorm ideas directly alongside the content.

INTRODUCTION

What is civic measurement and why is it important?

Civic measurement is essential for evaluating our progress in strengthening democracy. It answers two important questions:

- How prepared—or civically ready—are individuals to contribute effectively to civic life?

- What kinds of infrastructure—or civic opportunities—are available and how well do these opportunities support, enable, and inspire individuals to contribute to civic life?

Understanding these aspects is critical because they significantly impact our lives. Strong connections between residents, robust relationships with public institutions, and deep attachments to the places we live are highly correlated with a range of positive outcomes, from better physical health to higher employment rates and greater resilience in crises.

The strength of our democracy hinges on the quality of civic readiness and civic opportunities. When they are weak, people of different backgrounds and political perspectives are less likely to communicate or work together, which exacerbates partisan polarization. When civic opportunities are distributed inequitably, they deepen economic and social inequities.

By measuring and improving civic readiness and opportunities, we can foster a more inclusive, resilient, and connected society.

How do we conduct civic measurement?

Civic measurement tools can help people working in many different fields better understand their work. A tool is a discrete method for capturing qualitative or quantitative data. For instance, a tool can help you learn about your community or the target audience for a program or event; it can help you understand whether an initiative was successful (according to your own definition of success); it can help you track progress over time.

A few examples of what civic measurement could look like:

- A **high school history teacher** interested in assessing their students' knowledge about how the Supreme Court works could administer a test.

- A **community-based organization** interested in improving people's sense of belonging might conduct pre- and post-event surveys.

- A **local government** interested in making their public meetings more productive might track attendance and citizen ratings at those meetings over a period of time.

- A **researcher** interested in measuring whether citizens trust leaders, or whether leaders trust citizens, could use a short tracking survey over a period of time.

- A **university** interested in evaluating the quality of students' civic participation on campus could assess the full range of civic opportunities it provides.

Civic Measurement Maps

To think through questions of civic measurement, this guide uses the civic measurement framework introduced in the 2023 report by the Institute for Citizens & Scholars, *Mapping Civic Measurement: How are we assessing readiness and opportunities for an engaged citizenry?*

This civic measurement framework is built around two maps: one for **civic readiness** showing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are measured related to individuals, and another for **civic opportunities** portraying the many ways institutions and organizations allow individuals to build and use their civic skills, knowledge, and dispositions. Each map is divided into four quadrants: **PARTICIPATE, UNDERSTAND, BELIEVE,** and **CONNECT.**

Full size maps can be
found on page 38-39 (*quick jump*)

What is your civic measurement purpose?

As you embark on this civic measurement exercise, determining your purpose for measurement is a helpful initial step. The following sections will help you better understand what to measure, but first, it's important to clarify your why. Knowing your purpose for civic measurement will guide you in choosing the right kinds of tools later in your civic measurement journey.

Before you walk through the sections of this guide, are you primarily...

A	**B**	**C**
Trying to understand the effect or impact of a program?	Seeking to ascertain the current state of knowledge, skills or dispositions of a group or population?	Working to understand the landscape of civic opportunities?

*Keep this answer in mind as you complete the guide.*

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is organized into four sections, corresponding to each of the four quadrants of the civic measurement maps: **PARTICIPATE, BELIEVE, UNDERSTAND**, and **CONNECT**.

Each section is designed to help you:

- deepen your understanding of the various aspects of readiness and opportunities that could be measured in that quadrant.

- reflect on why sections of the map are important to you and your work and what you are already doing in those areas.

- prioritize what you want to measure and what resources you might need to do so.

While we *do* recommend completing the sections for each of the four quadrants in their entirety, there is no prescribed order for working through the quadrants. Our guide begins with **PARTICIPATE**, but you may decide to start in a different quadrant and come back to that one later.

A CIVIC MEASUREMENT CASE STUDY: THE RESIDENTS OF UNION HILL
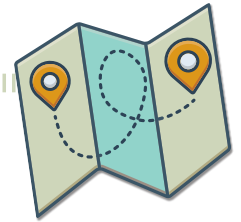
Mayor Liberty and members of her government want to understand the landscape of civic opportunities in Union Hill. They are particularly concerned about social disconnection and loneliness among their residents, so they decide to start their inquiry with **CONNECT**.

The Mayor's team gathers a small discussion group, inviting members of the Union Hill Town Council, the Union Hill Public Schools Superintendent, and the Directors of Recreation, Libraries and Senior Services.

They begin the discussion with why "connection" is important, and they land on a few key reasons:

- Loneliness is bad for town residents and bad for democracy. Connection is a way to prevent loneliness.

- Connection is important to building trust—both interpersonal and institutional—and is exceptionally important for small towns like Union Hill.

- Successful community-building requires connection and Union Hill wants to ensure a pipeline of community leaders for the future of their municipality.

After establishing these reasons for focusing on Connect, the small group considered what they want to focus on measuring. They identify a few critical measures:

- Interpersonal skills, where their schools are already making progress;

- Openness;

- Personal Responsibility; and

- Belonging—three areas that are crucial, but where cultivation opportunities are uncertain.

With these areas in mind, the Union Hill small group takes a look at the *Mapping Civic Measurement* report and checks out the tools in the Appendix: Civic Readiness Map Tools. After reviewing the tools associated with **CONNECT**, the group decided that the Union Hill Public Schools team will start to use data from its administration of the Panorama Education Social Emotional Learning Survey to better understand Interpersonal Skills in the young people of Union Hill. They also agree to work with a professor at Union Hill University, the local college, to review the handful of tools that focus on Openness, Personal Responsibility, and Belonging. The professor will then recommend to the group which tool(s) might work to help Union Hill understand what these areas of readiness look like in young people and adults in the town.

Now that they have a plan for how to measure what they care about, they decide to take a look at the inventory of civic opportunities in Union Hill. They start with the **CONNECT** quadrant again and realize that they already have a vibrant public square where residents gather to celebrate, along with many community groups, activities, and events—almost too many to count. They have already started working on some special Union Hill Civic Awards, and several opportunities to address differences, which feels especially important as the town has recently begun welcoming refugees to Union Hill. While they also want to consider character-building programs and bridge-building opportunities, they do not currently have any in place.

Now that they've started looking at these opportunities, they wonder if they should take a look at the other quadrants, too, and see if any of the Civic Opportunities under **BELIEVE**, **UNDERSTAND**, or **PARTICIPATE** might also help them in their work. Feeling a bit overwhelmed by the whole project, the Union Hill residents decide to spend the first year of their project gathering data on their key **CONNECT** measures and then regroup to decide what to do next.

PARTICIPATE
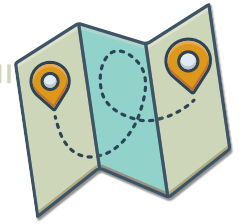
When people have the skills and confidence to participate in public life, they are better able to inform and influence the policies that affect them. They are also better able to work with others to solve problems and improve the way things work. The more they participate, the more people **UNDERSTAND** their community, **CONNECT** with others, and **BELIEVE** in the value and potential of democracy.

Figure 1: *Measuring Civic Readiness* **PARTICIPATE** *Quadrant*
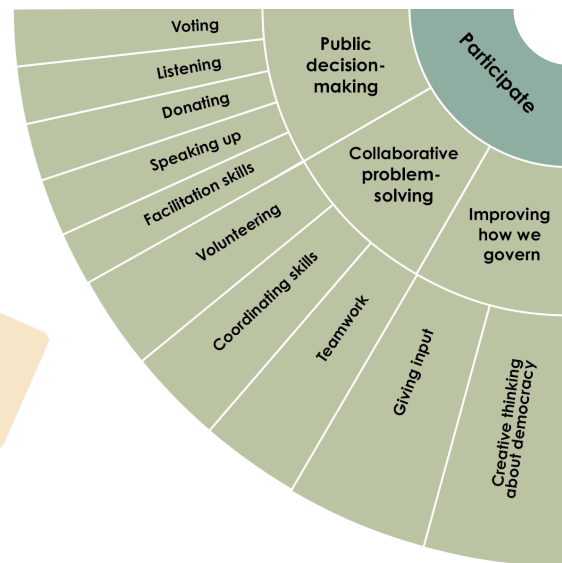
What these activities can include (outer ring coordinates):

- **Voting**: Commitment to vote, including the willingness to seek information about candidates and issues.

- **Listening**: Willingness to listen to differing perspectives, even on controversial issues, and appreciate that a range of solutions might exist.

- **Donating**: Making financial contributions to candidates, parties, and political priorities.

- **Speaking up**: Making presentations, writing letters to the editor, or posting on social media.

- **Facilitation skills**: Ability to support discussions and deliberations among other people.

- **Volunteering:** Ability to devote time, energy, skills, and connections on behalf of others, and to solve shared problems.

- **Coordinating skills**: Ability to organize logistics, develop plans, and recruit other people.

- **Teamwork**: Ability to help build and sustain teams, identify assets, and help assign roles.

- **Giving input**: Ability to rate public services, report problems, and rank priorities.

- **Creative thinking about democracy**: Willingness to think creatively about how democracy should work and help redesign systems, services, and processes.

Questions for reflection and discussion about civic readiness:

- Why is **PARTICIPATE** important to us?
- Which of the elements (second ring) of **PARTICIPATE** are most important to us?
- Which of the coordinates (third ring) of **PARTICIPATE** are most important to us?
- Which of them do we think (anecdotally or based on research) we're doing well on? On which are we not doing well?

add your responses here

Prioritizing how you measure PARTICIPATE

There are several reasons why you might prioritize measuring some elements and coordinates over others. Certain coordinates may not seem as important as others, while some may be important to you, but are already at a satisfactory level, so additional measurement isn't necessary. In some cases, you might prioritize measuring a particular coordinate because your community is making a major effort to improve it, and you want to track progress. Additionally, some coordinates may be so critical that you choose to measure them regardless of other factors.

Coordinate	Not critical	Critical but OK	Making a push	Critical and uncertain
Voting				
Listening				
Donating				
Speaking up				
Facilitation skills				
Volunteering				
Coordinating skills				
Teamwork				
Giving input				
Creative thinking about democracy				

Having filled out the grid, you can make some decisions:

- What are our top priorities for measuring **PARTICIPATE**? (coordinates we have to measure)
- What are our secondary priorities? (coordinates we would like to measure if possible)

add your responses here

What are we doing to improve PARTICIPATE?

Measuring some of the **PARTICIPATE** coordinates will help gauge where you are and where you want to go, but it may not help you figure out exactly how to get there. In most cases, it is not enough just to develop people's civic readiness skills; you also need to give them civic opportunities where they can exercise, refine, and celebrate those skills. You can also measure the effectiveness of these civic opportunities that may make an impact on **PARTICIPATE**. Some of them may be things your community is already doing, while others are things you may want to develop in the future.

There are several ways that schools, governments, nonprofit organizations, and other groups are giving people chances to **PARTICIPATE**.

Figure 2: *Measuring Civic Opportunities* **PARTICIPATE** *Quadrant*
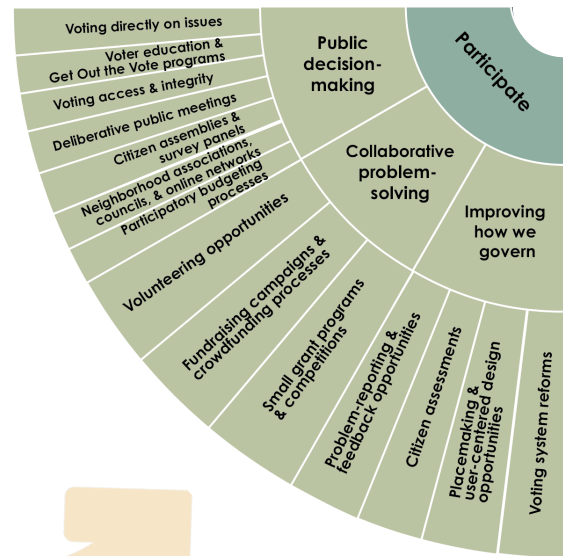
Here is more information on what we mean by these activities (outer ring):

- **Voting directly on issues:** Opportunities to vote directly on decisions and policies, such as ballot initiatives and referenda, in addition to voting for representatives.

- **Voter education and get-out-the-vote programs:** Efforts to inform voters about candidates and issues and to encourage them to participate in elections.

- **Voting access and integrity:** Efforts to ensure that people can vote, such as early voting or voting by mail, and that elections are fair, such as voter identification laws or election monitoring.

- **Deliberative public meetings:** Regular meetings and hearings that include officials, staff, citizens, and other stakeholders, that allow people to share experiences, learn together, consider options, and decide on solutions.

- **Citizen assemblies and survey panels:** Groups of citizens who have been randomly selected to give input, either by answering surveys on public issues or by deliberating intensively on an issue and then issuing recommendations to officials.

- **Neighborhood associations, councils, and online networks:** Ongoing opportunities for neighbors to meet (in-person, online, or both) to share information, give input on public decisions, and solve local problems.

- **Participatory budgeting processes:** Regular processes at the school, neighborhood, or local level that allow people to allocate money from a dedicated fund to worthwhile projects and ideas, and in some cases to give input on the overall organizational budget.

▶ ▶ ▶

- **Volunteering opportunities:** Projects and programs that encourage people to devote their time and energy to helping other people and their communities, including school- and university-based programs.

- **Fundraising campaigns and crowdfunding processes:** Platforms and programs that allow people to donate money and services to ideas and community improvement efforts.

- **Small grant programs and competitions:** Programs run by governments, foundations, and other institutions that offer small amounts of money for problem-solving and community improvement efforts powered by volunteers.

- **Problem-reporting and feedback opportunities:** Digital platforms and other opportunities for people to report problems like potholes or graffiti or give feedback on a public service like bus routes or health clinics.

- **Citizen assessments:** Citizen audits and rating systems that allow people to assess the overall performance of institutions.

- **Placemaking and user-centered design opportunities:** Exercises that encourage people to co-design buildings, public spaces, or services according to the needs and goals of the users.

- **Voting system reforms:** Changes in voting that try to ensure that the will of the people is accurately reflected in elections, such as runoffs, proportional representation, or ranked choice voting.

Use the following grid to take an inventory of some of the civic opportunities listed for PARTICIPATE:

Civic Opportunity	We don't have this and don't want it	We would like this but don't have it yet	We're working on creating this	We have it! (though we may need to expand it)
Voting directly on issues				
Voter education and get-out-the-vote programs				
Voting access and integrity				
Deliberative public meetings				
Citizen assemblies and survey panels				
Neighborhood associations, councils, and online networks				
Participatory budgeting processes				
Volunteering opportunities				
Fundraising campaigns and crowdfunding processes				
Small grant programs and competitions				
Problem-reporting and feedback opportunities				
Citizen assessments				
Placemaking and user-centered design opportunities				
Voting system reforms				

It will also be helpful to understand the level of resources already being used on these civic opportunities, as well as those you plan to allocate for future opportunities.

Pick the most noteworthy opportunities you listed above and plot them on this chart:

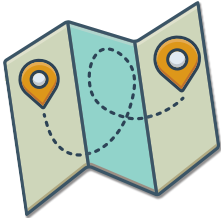| Civic opportunity	Funding*	Staffing*	How many people are directly involved in this activity?	Critical and uncertain

Funding*
What does it cost to provide this annually?

Staffing*
How many people (including volunteers) are involved in making this happen?

BELIEVE

Positive beliefs about democracy and community are vital to civic success. When people trust one another, feel that they share the same values, and are confident about their ability to make things better, the more they **PARTICIPATE** in civic activities, **CONNECT** with others, and **UNDERSTAND** their community.

Figure 1: *Measuring Civic Readiness* **BELIEVE** *Quadrant*
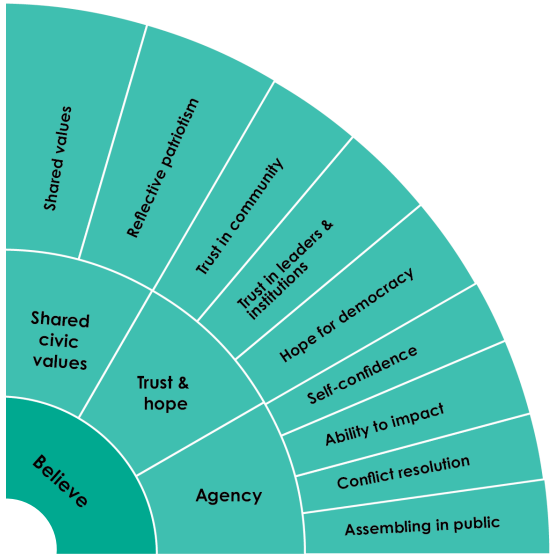
What these activities can include (outer ring coordinates):

- **Shared values:** Dedication to understanding different perspectives, finding shared goals, and working to achieve them.

- **Reflective patriotism:** Commitment to country and an ability to both uphold and critique American institutions and ideals.

- **Trust in community:** Earned trust in neighbors, fellow community members, and Americans as a whole.

- **Trust in leaders and institutions:** Earned trust in government, business, faith, education, and other institutions and leaders.

- **Hope for democracy:** Confidence in the strength and potential of citizenship and democracy.

- **Self-confidence:** Confidence that you have the ability to effectively express your interests and concerns.

- **Ability to impact:** Belief that you can contribute to solving community problems and making public decisions.

- **Conflict resolution:** Confidence that you can engage in difficult issues and resolve conflicts with others.

- **Assembling in public:** Taking part in public events, marches, or peaceful forms of protest to show your support for a particular idea or cause.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

- Why is **BELIEVE** important to us?
- Which of the elements (second ring) of **BELIEVE** are most important to us?
- Which of the coordinates (third ring) of **BELIEVE** are most important to us?
- Which of them do we think (anecdotally or based on research) we're doing well on? On which are we not doing well?

add your responses here

Prioritizing how you measure BELIEVE

There are several reasons why you might prioritize measuring some elements and coordinates over others. Certain coordinates may not seem as important as others, while some may be important to you, but are already at a satisfactory level, so additional measurement isn't necessary. In some cases, you might prioritize measuring a particular coordinate because your community is making a major effort to improve it, and you want to track progress. Additionally, some coordinates may be so critical that you choose to measure them regardless of other factors.

Coordinate	Not critical	Critical but OK	Making a push	Critical and uncertain
Shared values				
Reflective patriotism				
Trust in community				
Trust in leaders and institutions				
Hope for democracy				
Self-confidence				
Ability to impact				
Conflict resolution				
Assembling in public				

What are we doing to enhance BELIEVE?

Measuring some of the **BELIEVE** coordinates will help gauge where you are and where you want to go, but it may not help you figure out exactly how to get there. In most cases, it is not enough just to develop people's civic readiness skills; you also need to give them civic opportunities where they can exercise, refine, and celebrate those skills. You can also measure the effectiveness of these civic opportunities that may make an impact on **BELIEVE**. Some of them may be things your community is already doing, while others are things you may want to develop in the future.

There are a number of common ways that schools, governments, nonprofit organizations, and other groups try to instill positive beliefs about democracy and community.

Figure 2: *Measuring Civic Opportunities* **BELIEVE** *Quadrant*

Here is more information on what we mean by these activities (outer ring):

- **Public ceremonies and celebrations:** Civic holidays, the National Anthem, the Pledge of Allegiance, citizenship ceremonies, and other events and practices that honor our country and communities.

- **Transparency in public decision-making:** Laws and practices that ensure that public business is conducted in public, including televised meetings and easily accessible and searchable public records.

- **Communication about leaders and institutions:** Making leaders and institutions accessible and available to the citizens they serve.

- **"Meet and greet" opportunities:** Activities that allow public servants to build relationships with the people they serve.

- **Student government:** At high schools and universities; includes clubs and other student organizations.

- **Leadership development opportunities:** Programs for young people and adults that help them make connections, find their voices, and learn and hone leadership skills.

- **Commissions and councils:** Standing bodies of appointed citizens, including youth commissions, who represent and directly engage their peers on important issues.

- **Opportunities to address conflicts:** Real-world or simulated activities that bring people together to negotiate conflicts and help them learn and hone dispute resolution skills.

Use the following grid to take an inventory of some of the civic opportunities listed for BELIEVE:

Civic Opportunity	We don't have this and don't want it	We would like this but don't have it yet	We're working on creating this	We have it! (though we may need to expand it)
Public ceremonies and celebrations				
Transparency in public decision-making				
Communication about leaders and institutions				
"Meet and greet" opportunities				
Student government				
Leadership development op-portunities				
Commissions and councils				
Opportunities to address conflicts				

It will also be helpful to understand the level of resources already being used on these civic opportunities, as well as those you plan to allocate for future opportunities.

Pick the most noteworthy opportunities you listed above and plot them on this chart:

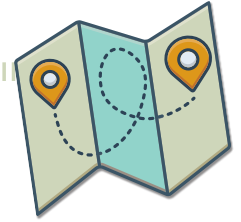| Civic opportunity	Funding*	Staffing*	How many people are directly involved in this activity?	Critical and uncertain

Funding*
What does it cost to provide this annually?

Staffing*
How many people (including volunteers) are involved in making this happen?
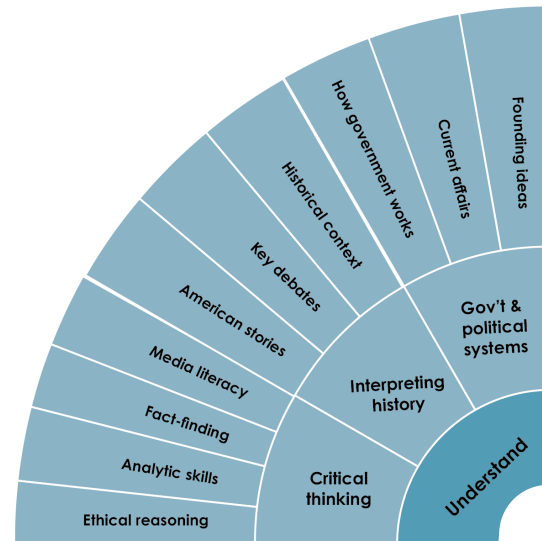
UNDERSTAND

When people understand the civic networks and governance layers in their community, they are better able to make important **CONNECTIONS** to neighbors and stakeholders, **BELIEVE** in the value and potential of democracy, and **PARTICIPATE** in more meaningful ways.

Figure 1: *Measuring Civic Readiness* **UNDERSTAND** *Quadrant*

What these activities can include (outer ring coordinates):

- **Founding ideas:** Understanding of philosophical and political principles underlying the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and our system of government, such as checks and balances, the three branches, self-governance, and the Bill of Rights.

- **Current affairs:** Knowledge about important local, state, and federal policy questions, and why they matter.

- **How government works:** Understanding the structure, roles, and limits of government, and how public decisions are made at the federal, state, and local levels.

- **Historical context:** Familiarity with historically significant decisions, conflicts, victories and failures.

- **Key debates:** Understanding of the major concepts, debates, and different perspectives that informed what America is today.

- **American stories:** Appreciation for the experiences, cultures, and traditions of Americans.

- **Media literacy:** Capacity to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and participate with messages in a variety of forms—from print to video to the Internet.

- **Fact-finding:** Ability to find reliable sources, identify mis/ disinformation, and sort fact from fiction.

- **Analytic skills:** Ability to consider problems and weigh potential solutions.

- **Ethical reasoning:** Capacity to reach individual, well-thought-out conclusions about issues where judgments are needed.

Questions for reflection and discussion about civic readiness:

- Why is **UNDERSTAND** important to us?
- Which of the elements (second ring) of **UNDERSTAND** are most important to us?
- Which of the coordinates (third ring) of **UNDERSTAND** are most important to us?
- Which of them do we think (anecdotally or based on research) we're doing well on? On which are we not doing well?

add your responses here

Prioritizing how you measure UNDERSTAND

There are several reasons why you might prioritize measuring some elements and coordinates over others. Certain coordinates may not seem as important as others, while some may be important to you, but are already at a satisfactory level, so additional measurement isn't necessary. In some cases, you might prioritize measuring a particular coordinate because your community is making a major effort to improve it and you want to track progress. Additionally, some coordinates may be so critical that you choose to measure them regardless of other factors.

**Use the following grid to help make decisions about civic readiness measurements concerning UNDERSTAND:**

Coordinate	Not critical	Critical but OK	Making a push	Critical and uncertain
Founding ideas				
Current affairs				
How government works				
Historical context				
Key debates				
American stories				
Media literacy				
Fact-finding				
Analytic skills				
Ethical reasoning				

What are we doing to enhance UNDERSTAND?

Measuring some of the **UNDERSTAND** coordinates will help gauge where you are and where you want to go, but it may not help you figure out exactly how to get there. In most cases, it is not enough just to develop people's civic readiness skills; you also need to give them civic opportunities where they can exercise, refine, and celebrate those skills. You can also measure the effectiveness of these civic opportunities that may make an impact on **UNDERSTAND**. Some of them may be things your community is already doing, while others are things you may want to develop in the future.

There are several ways that schools, governments, nonprofit organizations, and other groups are giving people chances to **UNDERSTAND**.

Figure 2: *Measuring Civic Opportunities* **UNDERSTAND** *Quadrant*
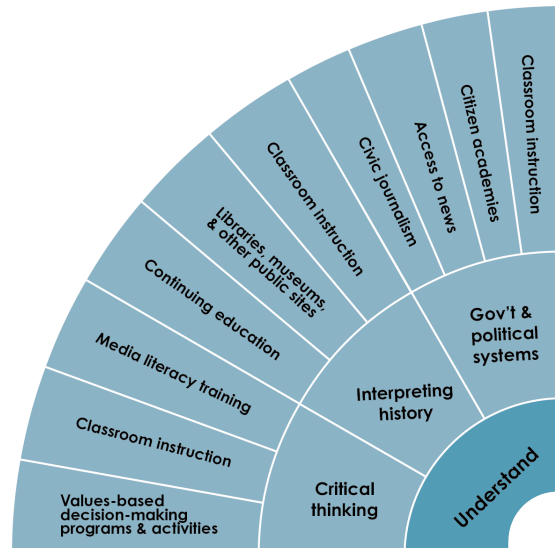
Here is more information on what we mean by these activities (outer ring):

- **Classroom instruction:** Curricula and teaching practices that help students learn about government, ethical reasoning, history, civics, and current affairs.

- **Citizen academies:** Programs that teach citizens about their local government and how they can engage.

- **Access to news:** Objective, accessible coverage of public issues and decisions, especially at the local level.

- **Civic journalism:** Programs and practices that encourage interaction between journalists and their audiences around topics, editorials, and how to use the news.

- **Libraries, museums, and other public sites:** Publicly available locations for people to learn about American history.

- **Continuing education:** Public programs provided by libraries, museums, universities, clubs, and other institutions.

- **Media literacy training:** Programs that help people apply critical thinking to media messages and use media to create their own messages.

- **Values-based decision-making programs and activities:** Community and civil society programs that help people build character and self-awareness.

Use the following grid to take an inventory of some of the civic opportunities listed for UNDERSTAND:

Civic Opportunity	We don't have this and don't want it	We would like this but don't have it yet	We're working on creating this	We have it! (though we may need to expand it)
Classroom instruction				
Citizen academies				
Access to news				
Civic journalism				
Libraries, museums, and other public sites				
Continuing education				
Media literacy training				
Values-based decision-making programs and activities				

It will also be helpful to understand the level of resources already being used on these civic opportunities, as well as those you plan to allocate for future opportunities.

Pick the most noteworthy opportunities you listed above and plot them on this chart:

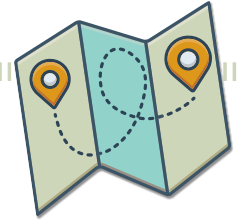| Civic opportunity	Funding*	Staffing*	How many people are directly involved in this activity?	Critical and uncertain

Funding*

What does it cost to provide this annually?

Staffing*

How many people (including volunteers) are involved in making this happen?
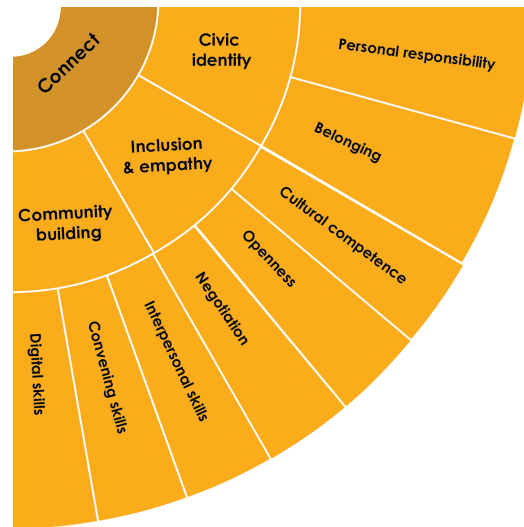
CONNECT

When people are connected to their family, friends, community, colleagues, and government staff and officials, they are likely to **PARTICIPATE** in various forms of civic life, **BELIEVE** in the value and potential of democracy, and **UNDERSTAND** the importance of being civically minded.

Figure 1: *Measuring Civic Readiness* **CONNECT** *Quadrant*

What these activities can include (outer ring coordinates):

- **Interpersonal skills:** Self-regulation, self-awareness, and positive and clear communication.

- **Convening skills:** Ability to bring people together around things they value.

- **Digital skills:** Ability to use social media and other digital tools responsibly and well.

- **Cultural competence:** Ability to understand and interact effectively with people from a range of backgrounds.

- **Openness:** Tolerance and appreciation for different backgrounds, identities, and perspectives.

- **Negotiation:** Skills for resolving conflicts across divides.

- **Personal responsibility:** Belief that you are part of a social contract and have both rights and obligations in a pluralistic society.

- **Belonging:** Belief that you matter to people in your family, neighborhood, school, workplace, and your community as a whole.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

- Why is **CONNECT** important to us?
- Which of the elements (second ring) of **CONNECT** are most important to us?
- Which of the coordinates (third ring) of **CONNECT** are most important to us?
- Which of them do we think (anecdotally or based on research) we're doing well on? On which are we not doing well?

add your responses here

Prioritizing how you measure CONNECT

There are several reasons why you might prioritize measuring some elements and coordinates over others. Certain coordinates may not seem as important as others, while some may be important to you, but are already at a satisfactory level, so additional measurement isn't necessary. In some cases, you might prioritize measuring a particular coordinate because your community is making a major effort to improve it, and you want to track progress. Additionally, some coordinates may be so critical that you choose to measure them regardless of other factors.

Use the following grid to help make decisions about civic readiness measurements concerning **CONNECT**:

Coordinate	Not critical	Critical but OK	Making a push	Critical and uncertain
Interpersonal skills				
Convening skills				
Digital skills				
Cultural competence				
Openness				
Negotiation				
Personal responsibility				
Belonging				

Having filled out the grid, you can make some decisions:

- What are our top priorities for measuring **CONNECT**? (coordinates we have to measure)
- What are our secondary priorities? (coordinates we would like to measure if possible)

add your responses here

What are we doing to enhance CONNECT?

Measuring some of the **CONNECT** coordinates will help gauge where you are and where you want to go, but it may not help you figure out exactly how to get there. In most cases, it is not enough just to develop people's civic readiness skills; you also need to give them civic opportunities where they can exercise, refine, and celebrate those skills. You can also measure the effectiveness of these civic opportunities that may make an impact on **CONNECT**. Some of them may be things your community is already doing, while others are things you may want to develop in the future.

There are several ways that schools, governments, nonprofit organizations, and other groups try to instill positive beliefs about democracy and community.

Figure 2: *Measuring Civic Opportunities* **CONNECT** *Quadrant*
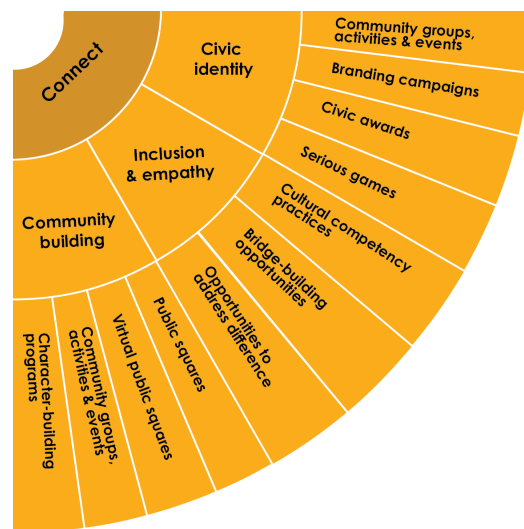
Here is more information on what we mean by these activities (outer ring):

- **Public squares:** Public buildings and outdoor spaces, including libraries, city halls, community centers, plazas, and parks, that are welcoming and useful to all kinds of people.

- **Virtual public squares:** Online platforms and networks that allow neighbors to share information, build relationships, and identify problems and priorities.

- **Community groups, activities, and events:** Clubs, associations, teams, concerts, festivals, sporting events, and other opportunities to build relationships with neighbors, leaders, officials, and public servants.

- **Character-building programs:** Opportunities for young people and adults to become emotionally stronger, more independent, and better at dealing with problems.

- **Cultural competency practices:** Workshops, trainings, and exercises that help people understand differences, biases, and debates around equity and opportunity.

- **Bridge-building opportunities:** Programs and practices designed to build relationships between people of different backgrounds and beliefs.

- **Opportunities to address difference:** Regular opportunities for people to productively discuss issues of ideology, race, gender, religion, and other differences.

- **Branding campaigns:** Public art, signs, sporting events, celebrations, and other efforts to communicate the distinct qualities of a community or institution.

- **Civic awards:** Awards, honors, and titles that recognize the contributions of neighborhood, school, and local leaders.

- **Serious games:** Fun exercises that help people learn, understand different perspectives, strengthen relationships, and generate creative solutions to shared problems.

Use the following grid to take an inventory of some of the civic opportunities listed for CONNECT:

Civic Opportunity	We don't have this and don't want it	We would like this but don't have it yet	We're working on creating this	We have it! (though we may need to expand it)
Community groups, activities, and events				
Character-building programs				
Cultural competency practices				
Bridge-building opportunities				
Opportunities to address difference				
Branding campaigns				
Civic awards				
Serious games				

It will also be helpful to understand the level of resources already being used on these civic opportunities, as well as those you plan to allocate for future opportunities.

Pick the most noteworthy opportunities you listed above and plot them on this chart:

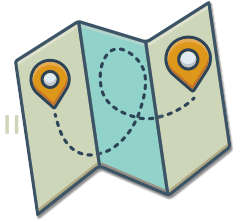| Civic opportunity	Funding*	Staffing*	How many people are directly involved in this activity?	Critical and uncertain

Funding*
What does it cost to provide this annually?

Staffing*
How many people (including volunteers) are involved in making this happen?

EXAMPLE TOOLS ||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||

Now that you've considered your measurement purpose, reviewed elements and coordinates of civic readiness, and reflected on the levels of resources available for investing in civic opportunities, you may be ready to identify the type of tool or tools that can help you accomplish your measurement objectives.

The following section is designed to help you understand the type of tool that you may want to use based on your civic measurement purpose. Examples are provided to help demonstrate what these tools look like in practice.

Think back to your civic measurement purpose. Are you primarily:

A	B	C
Trying to understand the effect or impact of a program?	Seeking to ascertain the current state of knowledge, skills or dispositions of a group or population?	Working to understand the landscape of civic opportunities?

If your goal is primarily A, to understand the effect or impact of a program, you are looking for tools that can help you evaluate progress.

You might use a pre/post survey or questionnaire to evaluate whether your program has affected a shift in civic attitudes or dispositions. Or you might use a repeated knowledge assessment to determine whether participants' knowledge increased as a result of your program or intervention.

Here are some examples of the kinds of tools you might use for evaluating the impact of programs. (Please note that these are only examples, and you will want to carefully consider the content and type of tool you need based on your program and your audience.)
- Democratic Knowledge Project's Civic Values Questionnaire
- US Naturalization Exam (sample questions found here)
- Social Cohesion Impact Measure (SCIM)

If your goal is primarily B, to ascertain the current state of knowledge, skills, or dispositions of a group or population, you are looking for tools that can help you survey or assess what people know, think, believe, or do at a point in time.

Here are some examples of the kinds of tools you might use for ascertaining the current state of knowledge, skills, or dispositions of a group or population. (Please note that these are only examples, and you will want to carefully consider the content and type of tool you need based on your program and your audience.)

- US Naturalization Exam (sample questions found here)
- Democratic Knowledge Project's Civic Knowledge Test
- NCL's Civic Index

If your goal is primarily C, to understand the landscape of civic opportunities, you are looking for an audit. Audits can help you make sense of what exists, what is missing, and, in some cases, assess the quality of opportunities.

Here are some examples of audit tools you can use:
- Public Agenda's Participatory Governance Index
- CASEL's Community Partner Inventory on Schoolwide Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) Implementation

You may also want to keep in mind the following considerations when thinking about measurement tools:

- What is the context of what you are measuring? (a program, course, intervention, something else?)
- Who is your audience? (adults, youth, urban vs. rural, etc.)
- What type of data would be most useful? (quantitative vs. qualitative)

NEXT STEPS
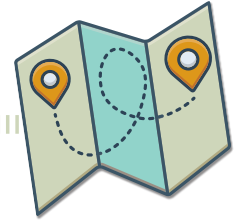
We hope that this guide has helped you better understand the many aspects of civic readiness and opportunities and identify and prioritize those that you would like to measure. The next part is up to you!

Here are some things that you can do next to continue your measurement journey:

- Talk to others in your network/community who might have an interest in or are already measuring similar coordinates.

- Dig deeper into measurement tools by taking a look at what is listed in *Mapping Civic Measurement*.

- Consider the process of building the measurement tool—can this be done in-house, or will you need to seek a partner for assistance?

- Contact NCL or Citizens & Scholars if you have questions or feedback about this guide.

CIVIC READINESS MAP

The Civic Readiness Map is focused on the efforts that develop and measure the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions of people.

CIVIC OPPORTUNITIES MAP

The Civic Opportunities Map is focused on the ways that institutions and organizations allow citizens to build and use their civic skills and knowledge.