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# HOW TO WORK WITH YOUR WORKING GROUP

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POUGHKEEPSIE CHILDREN'S CABINET



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# Welcome to the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet!

In the months to come, you'll work collaboratively within your Working Group to develop a report to submit to the Children's Cabinet Executive Committee and Poughkeepsie community. This report will include guidance and recommendations for advancing major structural changes in your focus area, including reform around: data collection and reporting, fiscal allocation, programmatic innovation, and new approaches to family and community engagement.

Your recommendations will serve as roadmaps for a new citywide agenda in child and youth development from cradle-to-career. On behalf of the City of Poughkeepsie, thank you for your leadership and continued collaboration with the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet.

Warm Regards,

The Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Team

# Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Executive Committee

City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Rob Rolison (Co-Chair)

Poughkeepsie City School District Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser (Co-Chair)

**Stacey Bottoms**, Associate Minister,  
Youth Director and Assistant Clerk,  
Beulah Baptist Church

**Dr. Elizabeth Bradley**, President of  
Vassar College

**Paul Calogerakis**, Chairman of the  
Board, Poughkeepsie Alliance

**Frank Castella**, Executive Director  
and CEO of the Dutchess County  
Regional Chamber of Commerce

**Dr. Donald P. Christian**, President of  
SUNY New Paltz

**Sally Cross**, CEO of the Community  
Foundations of the Hudson Valley

**Gloria Cukar**, Director of External  
Affairs, Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital  
of Westchester Medical Center

**Brian Doyle**, Chief Executive Officer  
of Family Services

**Dr. Pamela Edington**, President of  
Dutchess Community College

**Jonathan Jacobson**, New York State  
Assemblyman

**Tom Lawrence**, Director of the  
Poughkeepsie Public Library District

**Geraldine Laybourne**, Co-Founder of  
Day One Early Learning Community

**Heather Martino**, Poughkeepsie High  
School Special Education Teacher and  
Poughkeepsie Public School Teachers'  
Association President

**Timmian Massie**, Senior Vice President  
for Marketing, Public Affairs and  
Government Relations at Nuvance  
Health

**Marcus Molinaro**, Dutchess County  
Executive

**Jeannie Montano**, President and CEO  
of the United Way of the Dutchess-  
Orange Region

**Dr. Dennis Murray**, President of Marist  
College

**Tamoya Norwood**, President of the  
PTA, Early Learning Center

**Andrea Reynolds**, President and  
CEO of the Dyson Foundation

**Dr. Tim Ryan**, President of the  
Culinary Institute of America

**Sarah Salem**, Councilmember-at-  
Large of the City of Poughkeepsie  
Common Council

**Sue Serino**, New York State Senator

**Karmen Smallwood**, Dutchess  
County Assistant Youth Commissioner

**Gabriela Vega-Matthews**,  
Community Organizer and Advocate

**Dr. Felicia Watson**, President of the  
Poughkeepsie City School District  
Board of Education

**Robert Wright**, President of Nubian  
Directions II Inc.

## Cabinet Staff & Consultant Team

**Kristina Giangreco**, E-Tech Principal;  
Interim Director of Special Projects,  
Poughkeepsie City School District

**Kylynn Grier**, Cabinet Consultant

**John Penney**, Director of Community  
Engagement, City of Poughkeepsie

**James Watson**, Cabinet Consultant

**Rob Watson Jr.**, Cabinet Consultant

## 1 Introductions and Guiding Principles

- What are our shared goals?
- What principles will guide our work together?

## 2 Frame the Issues

- What are the issues at hand?
- What barriers exist in addressing these issues?
- Who isn't in the room for this discussion and how can we hear their perspective?

## 3 Ideate Solutions

- What interventions could address the issues at hand?
- Who should we talk to in order to generate a broad brainstorm of ideas and solutions?
- What community assets are relevant?



## 4 Develop Proposals

- Who are potential partners for each of these ideas and what could they contribute?
- What is a rough budget and timeline for each idea?

## 5 Prioritize

- What variables should we use to narrow down these recommendations into a targeted list?
- Who should we talk to in order to make sure our proposal is representative of community interests?

## 6 Present Interventions

- What recommendations do we want to present to the Executive Committee as our final list of interventions?
- How can we most effectively communicate our recommendations with the public?

# Introduction

## HOW CAN YOU WORK TOGETHER EFFECTIVELY?

### Roadmap, Timeline, and Goals

- Review the suggested roadmap, decide on a proposed timeline as a group and collectively identify group goals beyond your main goal, which is to submit recommendations to the Executive Committee for interventions that could improve the lives of children in Poughkeepsie.

### Other Considerations

- In what ways will you communicate and how frequently?
- Who will run meetings?
- How will you take notes?
- Will roles alternate?
- Who will send out reminders?
- What happens if you don't agree? How will you reach consensus during times of disagreement?

### Introductory Activities

- Draw a picture of your dream Poughkeepsie and share with the group
- Other activities that include movement, drawing, music, or games

### Get to Know Your Working Group

- Why did you get involved in this process?
- What is a value that has brought you here?
- What are your personal goals for being involved?
- What are your expectations of this process over the next several months?



# Community Agreements

Decide on guiding principles for your meetings.

These examples could help to start the conversation:

- One mic
- Take space, make space
- What's said here, stays here; what's learned here, leaves here
- Speak from your own experience
- Assume best intent, attend to impact
- ELMO - Everyone, let's move on
- Jargon Giraffe
- Multiple ways of knowing
- One person speaks at a time
- Balance your participation with the participation of others, and help to create a welcoming atmosphere for everyone to participate
- Outside of the meetings, don't share specific stories or personal details, but do share general learnings in other parts of your life
- Recognize that you have a personal perspective and that you can only speak for yourself, and not for others
- Assume that people are acting with good intentions but, when something harmful happens, work as a group to address the consequences
- You can use this as a phrase to recognize when the group needs to move on from a specific discussion
- Speak plainly so that everyone can understand and, if you don't understand something, ask!
- Recognize that each member has different types of knowledges and experiences that they contribute, and make space for all of these to contribute to the group's work



# The Civic Design Framework

This section presents a framework that could be useful for your group in thinking about how to work together and how to incorporate inclusive public engagement into your work. The Civic Design Framework explained here was developed by [The Move](#) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, by Professor Ceasar McDowell and his colleagues. The Move is “a movement to rebuild our public’s muscle for democracy” and “our public’s resilience for the difficult conversations necessary for a functioning democracy.” The Civic Design Framework includes two components that may be useful to your group:

## Civic Design Phases:

1. Framing: creating a shared understanding
2. Ideation: offering possible solutions
3. Prioritizing: weighing the value choices
4. Deciding: agreeing on paths forward
5. Implementing: following through on commitments
6. Monitoring: being accountable

## Civic Design Principles:

- Margins
- Collaboration
- Equity
- Systemic Change
- Ecological Solutions
- Analog + Digital
- Multiple Forms of Expression
- Healing

The following pages contain more in-depth descriptions of each of these six design phases and eight design principles to introduce you to the different concepts and guide you to think about how your group might incorporate them into your work. The information in this section primarily comes from resources provided by [The Move](#), and more information can be found on their webpage, including a series of articles and podcasts.

# The Civic Design Phases

Breaking your work together into phases can be a helpful way to think about how to thoughtfully engage with others throughout this process. Six phases of a civic design process are outlined below.

As you read through these phases, think about how these phases could apply to your work with your Working Group, and where community feedback would be most useful.

While each phase is useful in an effective community engagement process, this booklet focuses on the first four phases.

These could be most relevant for your Working Group's task of developing recommendations for the Children's Cabinet Executive Committee and the greater Poughkeepsie community.



## Framing: creating a shared understanding

How we frame (or define) what the issues are directly impacts which actions we perceive to be appropriate in a given situation, and how we start to think about solutions.

The public is seldom provided opportunities to frame issues that affect their lives to policymakers, yet framing conversations are perhaps the most important conversations in which to hear multiple perspectives in a problem-solving process. In framing conversations, we see and understand the world through our individual and collective lived experiences, providing us a richer and fuller understanding of any issue.



## Ideation: offering possible solutions

Conversations around ideation ask people to imagine possible and even improbable solutions to a particular issue or challenge.

These conversations are generative and can support multiple forms of expression. They are not the place for decisions to be made, but the place where people can witness their collective intelligence and creativity and dream big.

# The Civic Design Phases



## Prioritizing: weighing the value choices

Prioritizing involves weighing the value of options generated during the previous brainstorming or ideation phase, that emerged from other processes.

Prioritizing conversations identify an array of options, of which any one would result in an equitable improvement.



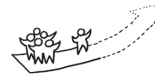
## Deciding: agreeing on paths forward

When we are faced with choosing one option from among a set of viable options, we're weighing trade-offs based on our values. When people are able to have open conversations about these trade-offs, it is more likely that more members of the group can live with the final decision, even if it was not what they would have chosen. For a demographically complex public, this understanding helps people stay connected when the unintended consequences of choosing a particular option adversely impact a particular group or population.



## Implementing: following through on commitments

The public's role does not end in deciding (voting) or influencing decisions made in the public's interest by others. In a democracy, the public also has an integral role in implementing decisions that impact the public. Yet, the public is seldom provided an opportunity to be in this type of conversation. Conversations around implementation create these opportunities for the public to put decisions into action.



## Monitoring: being accountable

After a decision is implemented, the public also has an integral role in monitoring results of the decision. Monitoring conversations create opportunities for the public to reflect upon and monitor the effectiveness and equity of decisions over time.

How could your Working Group use these phases to move through the process of developing recommendations for the Executive Committee? You can use the activity outlined below as a template to brainstorm in your working groups what value you see in each of them in your context.

You can use the template in a visual remote collaboration platform, such as [Miro](#) or [Mural](#), or facilitate the activity in person using a large whiteboard or just a simple white surface with sticky notes!

### Suggested templates that can be adapted to be used in this context:

- MURAL: Team Charter, Challenge Wheel, Team Canvas, Workshop Planning
- Miro: Brainwriting, Concept Map, Opportunity/Solution Tree

# Here is an example of a template from Mural that you can use to think about using the Civic Design Phases with your Working Group

## Civic Design Framework

Guidelines for designing more just and inclusive civic engagement processes for our democracy

### A Civic Design Phases: 6 conversations that should include the public

#### 1 Framing

##### creating a shared understanding

In framing conversations we see and understand the world through our individual and collective lived experiences, providing us a richer and fuller understanding of any issue

1. Brainstorm: Use sticky notes to show your thoughts.

Value

2. Consolidate: Choose your groups top 6-8 values.

Value

3. Refine: Turn your notes into concise sentences.

- [ Value 1 ]
- [ Value 2 ]
- [ Value 3 ]
- [ Value 4 ]
- [ Value 5 ]
- [ Value 6 ]
- [ Value 7 ]
- [ Value 8 ]

#### 2 Ideation

##### offering possible solutions

Generative conversations to imagine possible and even improbable solutions to a particular issue, challenge, policy

1. Brainstorm: Use sticky notes to show your thoughts.

Value

2. Consolidate: Choose your groups top 6-8 values.

Value

3. Refine: Turn your notes into concise sentences.

- [ Value 1 ]
- [ Value 2 ]
- [ Value 3 ]
- [ Value 4 ]
- [ Value 5 ]
- [ Value 6 ]
- [ Value 7 ]
- [ Value 8 ]

#### 3 Prioritizing

##### weighing the value choices

Prioritizing conversations identify an array of options, of which any one would result in an equitable improvement

1. Brainstorm: Use sticky notes to show your thoughts.

Norm

2. Consolidate: Choose your groups top 6-8 norms.

Norm

3. Refine: Turn your notes into concise sentences.

- [ Norm 1 ]
- [ Norm 2 ]
- [ Norm 3 ]
- [ Norm 4 ]
- [ Norm 5 ]
- [ Norm 6 ]
- [ Norm 7 ]
- [ Norm 8 ]

#### 4 Deciding

##### agreeing on paths forward

When we are able to have open conversations about trade-offs, it is more likely that more members of the public can live with the final decision even if it was not what they would have chosen

1. Brainstorm: Use sticky notes to show your thoughts.

Role

2. Consolidate: Choose your groups necessary roles.

Role

3. Refine: Turn your notes into concise sentences.

- [ Role 1 ]
- [ Role 2 ]
- [ Role 3 ]
- [ Role 4 ]
- [ Role 5 ]
- [ Role 6 ]
- [ Role 7 ]
- [ Role 8 ]

#### 5 Implementing

##### following through on commitments

Create these opportunities for the public to put decisions into action

1. Brainstorm: Use sticky notes to show your thoughts.

Metric

2. Consolidate: Choose your groups top 6-8 metrics.

Metric

3. Refine: Turn your notes into concise sentences.

- [ Metric 1 ]
- [ Metric 2 ]
- [ Metric 3 ]
- [ Metric 4 ]
- [ Metric 5 ]
- [ Metric 6 ]
- [ Metric 7 ]
- [ Metric 8 ]

#### 6 Monitoring

##### being accountable

Create opportunities to reflect upon and monitor the effectiveness and equity of decisions over time

1. Brainstorm: Use sticky notes to show your thoughts.

Standard

2. Consolidate: Choose your groups top 6-8 standards.

Standard

3. Refine: Turn your notes into concise sentences.

- [ Standard 1 ]
- [ Standard 2 ]
- [ Standard 3 ]
- [ Standard 4 ]
- [ Standard 5 ]
- [ Standard 6 ]
- [ Standard 7 ]
- [ Standard 8 ]

# The Civic Design Principles



## Design for the Margins

Create a space where those at the margins feel welcomed, respected, and understood.

### Who are people at the margins?

People at the margins include people who don't have access to relevant mainstream resources, are socially isolated or excluded, are not safe, cannot maintain stability, or have poor self-perception.

### Why does it matter?

Communities and individuals at the margins are better positioned to innovate because they have a broader sense of the system from which they have been excluded. Their knowledge and experience is fundamental for advancing social change.



## Design for Collaboration

Create a process where the design requires participants to work together in imaging, planning, deciding, and implementing solutions that each person may not have been able to come up with on their own.

### Who needs to be included?

The appropriate individual, organizational and institutional participants.

### Why does it matter?

In demographically complex publics and communities, solutions are the most mutually acceptable when they have been arrived at through collaboration. In engagement processes that are designed for collaboration, each participant helps build a collective understanding of both the problems being faced and the varying impacts of potential solutions.

# The Civic Design Principles

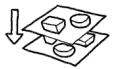


## Design for Equity

Work towards equity in the design of the space/structure/process as well as in plans and solutions that come out of the engagement process.

### Why does it matter?

Our world does not have a level playing field and different people need different things to improve their situations. Equity, rather than equality, is 'about everybody getting what they need' to improve their wellbeing as well as to participate in the engagement process.



## Design for Systemic Change

Approach every project as part of a larger system. This system goes beyond the project itself to include underlying structures, mental models, and cultural values that we need to examine in order to understand the context of the project. To design with systemic change is to create the conditions that enables the public to examine any issues from a systems perspective.

### Why does it matter?

In order to effectively address an issue the public needs to understand more than just the event itself. They also need to understand the underlying structures and mental models that created the conditions for the initial events.



## Design for Ecological Solutions

Embrace the values and patterns found in nature to understand the interconnectedness of life; to mimic the core principles of the natural world.

### Why does it matter?

Turning to ecological solutions and principles for inspiration can help open up the public's imagination to see the situation at hand from a different perspective. A more comprehensive and holistic intervention can allow participants to take a step back from the complexity and interpersonal details in order to find fresh solutions. A system-scale view can also be empowering for participants struggling to find meaning in their efforts.



## Design for Analog + Digital

Include both formats to connect with the community. Advances in digital tools allow us to gather more information and create new ways for communities to engage in the planning process but they cannot replace in-person forms of engagement. These tools must complement each other to create a more holistic understanding of the communities we serve.

### Why does it matter?

Though technology creates the opportunity to reach a larger population, the opportunity to reach a larger population, it may leave out those without access or ability to participate. The benefit of using both means the participant has the option to engage independently using digital methods or collaboratively in an analog setting. Using both requires you to weigh the benefits and drawbacks of each option and find synergy.

# The Civic Design Principles



## Design for Multiple Forms of Expression

Accommodate each person's unique set of values, talents and experiences; to allow people with different backgrounds and abilities to connect and contribute through the mode most comfortable to them.

### Why does it matter?

This principle challenges you to think outside of yourself and consider all possible forms of interaction and expression people might want to engage in, in a way that is the easiest and most meaningful to them. Everyone's inherent biases need to be set aside when creating a space that will allow for the entire public to feel welcome and supported to be their fullest selves.



## Design for Healing

Acknowledge the repetition of betrayal systemic and public processes have created for those at the margins of society, establishes a process for attending to possible future harms, and maintain a space for constant reflection of how systems of betrayal (oppression, etc.) are showing up in the process.

### Why does it matter?

We cannot assume everyone coming into the process is aware of the past, current, and potential harms. We also cannot assume all are OK with established conditions of the engagement process underway. If you don't address these underlying issues of justice, you can't create a sustainable system. Thus, no healing work can be done.









How do the Civic Design Principles resonate with you as an individual and as a member of your working group? In what ways can they be helpful in your context? Brainstorm in your working group using the following prompt: "How might we find value in each of the Civic Design Principles for our community?" using the template provided on the following page.

Here is an example of a template from Mural that you can use to think about using the Civic Design Principles with your Working Group



## EXPLORING THE CIVIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Use this when you discuss the Civic Design Principles in your working group to foster sharing understanding of the concepts and prioritizing the working group's values within the Civic Design Framework.

 The Margins	 Collaboration	 Equity	 Systemic Change	 Ecological Solutions	 Analog + Digital	 Multiple forms of expression	 Healing
The Learnings	The Learnings	The Learnings	The Learnings	The Learnings	The Learnings	The Learnings	The Learnings





## Civic Design Phases for Children's Cabinet Working Groups

While all of the civic design principles mentioned in the previous section are integral to enhancing community engagement efforts within your Working Group, we encourage you and your team to focus your attention on three of the principles for the purpose of the Children's Cabinet: **designing for the margins, equity, and systemic change**. Think of these three principles as a lens or a set of approaches that can help guide your Working Group journey.

When developing a roadmap for Working Group collaborations, take time to question and discuss your process.

Are you developing recommendations that aim to improve and transform systems, ensure equity for children and youth from all walks of life and elevate the voices, experiences and perspectives of community members who have historically been marginalized and excluded from social change efforts?

In the following pages, we offer more information that could help you and your team unpack each principle and its importance within the Poughkeepsie context.



Migrant Youth Helsinki piloted 30 programs and established five including: Make Some Noise, which trains young migrants on public speaking; Buddyschool, a peer-to-peer tutoring program. ([Source](#))

# Design for the Margins

*"Design for the margins means creating a space where marginalized people and groups feel welcomed, respected, and understood. If you design your solution so that it works for those at the margins, it will likely work for those in the middle." - The Move*

## Why Design for the Margins?

"Marginalized members of society have much to offer. They are adaptive and creative. They know the problems of our systems well. They have knowledge to add to the discussion: unique insights that come from an intimately lived experience with our society's failures. In fact, when minorities and the most vulnerable in society are missing in planning and policies, we create a system that only serves the majority. And it is those who are at the margins who will suffer its social, political, and economic failures. We can only build a fair, just and equitable society with their full participation." - The Move



Changes to the built environment of the Santa Rosa School in Cali, Colombia to reduce drug and gang activity had the effect of doubling school attendance. ([Source](#))

### Designing for the Margins Within the Children's Cabinet

Working Group team members should consider how their public engagement process and final recommendations incorporate community members and demographics that have been historically excluded from public processes and decision-making. It will be important to reflect on those individuals and segments of the community who are least thought of, heard from, and/or lack access to spaces of agenda-setting.

These groups may experience numerous obstacles that prevent them from meaningful participation, including a lack of time or resources and barriers such as language or transportation. Your Working Group can play a pivotal role in visualizing these challenges and developing concrete strategies to incorporate these voices, stories and perspectives into the design process, developing solutions that are constructed for them and by them. Recognizing that those most affected by issues of exclusion in Poughkeepsie possess knowledge on how to address it will be foundational to this work.

#### Guiding Questions / Provocations

- How can Working Groups use their community engagement processes to bring the voices and perspectives of those most marginalized to the attention of local leaders?
- Are there groups that are never involved or often sidelined?
- How can the Working Groups use this opportunity to rebuild trust with community members at the margins and create a path forward that incorporates their experiences and ideas?
- What does transparency and accountability look like between Working Groups and the Executive Committee, and between Working Groups and the broader community?

# Design for the Margins: Resources

These resources can contribute to your Working Group's collective understanding of strategies and solutions for reaching people and groups within the Poughkeepsie community that have been excluded from community development conversations.

## Readings:

- [Design for the Margins](#)
- [COVID-19: How to Include Marginalized & Vulnerable People in Risk Communication and Community Engagement](#)
- [A Talk to Teachers](#)

## Audiovisual:

- [Democracy from the Margins](#)
- [The Danger of a Single Story](#)

## Case Studies:

- [Ontario Health Service, Canada](#)
  - Analysis of Ontario Community Health Centers' efforts to engage marginalized communities
- [NOSSAS's Online to Offline Activism, Brazil](#)
  - Online mobilization gateway to more intensive offline participation
- [Nelson Youth Council, Nelson, New Zealand](#)
  - Example of a council giving youth a voice in local government

- [Hola Vecino, San Pedro Garza Garcia, México](#)
  - Example of workshop and programs to bring residents, organizations, and other stakeholders together for neighborhood level change
- [Migrant Youth Helsinki, Finland](#)
  - A citywide strategy geared towards working with Helsinki's migrant populations to identify what types of government services would be most helpful in supporting recent immigrants integrate into Finnish society.
- [Mesas de Cultura Ciudadana \(Civic Culture Councils\), Colombia](#)
  - A case study highlighting the creation of civic culture councils within Santiago de Cali's socioeconomically challenged neighborhoods to build trust and reconciliation processes between local residents and public institutions to address issues such as poverty, violence and inequality.
- [Quiero mi Barrio, Chile](#)
  - Resident-driven revitalization of neighborhood + public spaces through participatory planning

# Design for Equity

*"Designing for equity means giving everyone what they need to succeed, understanding that our shared histories and traditions mean not everyone has had the same opportunities or ability to raise their voice. It thus is important that both the process and outcome of public engagements work towards equity."*

-The Move

## Why Should We Design for Equity?

"Our world does not have a level playing field for all, and inequities exist along the lines of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, class, and religious belief, among others. As a result, people require different things in order to fully participate in society and improve their wellbeing." -The Move

## Designing for Equity within the Children's Cabinet

Working Group members should strive to develop a shared understanding of what equity and inequity is, and how it manifests in our build and social environments. We encourage you to reflect on your identities as individuals with a set of diverse backgrounds and experiences. As you work, we encourage you to think about how racial, class, and other types of privilege impact the ways in which individuals move through institutional systems and structural hierarchies differently.

Members should then use this developed understanding of equity to consider how these concerns impact the ability of individuals to effectively participate in community engagement.

While learning more about designing for equity through the resources provided, ask yourself - how can we design processes that allow us to meet community members where they are at and provide accessible and inviting forms of engagement and participation? processes.

## Guiding Questions/Provocations in Designing for Equity

- How can Working Group members help to compensate each other and also compensate other community members who participate in the process?
  - Examples beyond a stipend might include: flexible working schedules, child care/elder care, professional development, community resource fund (food, clothing, skill share, housework, technical assistance, etc.)
- How can members create healing spaces within the Working Group and in broader public engagement efforts to welcome all individuals to participate in the ways in which they want, and feel able to express themselves as they need?



The 2017 Urban Data Pioneers get ready for their first kickoff meeting. (Source: City of Tulsa).

# Resources

## Readings:

- [Understanding Equity vs. Equality](#)
- [The Case for Reparations](#)
- [White Privilege and White Supremacy Culture](#)
- [App to Help Educators Address Microaggressions](#)
- [Emergent Strategy](#)
- [Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement](#)
- [The Politics of School Districting in Poughkeepsie, NY](#)
- [Past as Prologue: Preservation as a Tool for Social Inclusion in the City of Poughkeepsie](#)
- [National Equity Atlas](#)
- [The Opportunity Atlas](#)
- [The Labor of POC to Educate](#)

## Audiovisual:

- [We Need to Talk about an Injustice](#)
- [Equity is Not a Zero Sum Game](#)
- [Equity in COVID-19](#)
- [Indigenous Ways of Knowing](#)
- [Skills Needed for Teaching in Diverse Classrooms](#)
- [Racial Segregation through Redlining](#)
- [The Move Podcast: Town Hall for Venting](#)

## Case Studies:

- [Budgeting for Outcomes](#), Fort Collins, Colorado
  - A participatory budgeting process that was developed to engage citizens on prioritizing city budget allocations based on the effectiveness of a given program or service.
- [Urban Data Pioneers](#), Tulsa, Oklahoma
  - A citywide volunteer program that convenes city employees and community members to analyze data to inform policy-making.

# Designing for Systemic Change

*"Every project or process is part of a larger system which includes underlying structures, cultural values, and mental models. Designing for systemic change involves creating the conditions that enable the public to address these underlying structures that lie beneath surface level events or problems, and to examine any issue from a systems perspective." -The Move*

## Why Should We Design for Systemic Change?

"In order to effectively address the root of an issue, the public needs to understand more than just the event itself. They also need to understand the underlying structures, values, and mental models that created the conditions for the initial events." -The Move

## Designing for Systemic Change within the Children's Cabinet

Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Working Groups are charged with identifying the underlying challenges and structures that limit holistic development and educational attainment of children and youth. In developing strategies and solutions for systems change, Working Group teams should consider what are the necessary levers of change to build integrated educational and child development supports that allow each student to reach their full potential. Think of designing for systemic change as a lens through which you unpack the root causes of inequity and injustice, identify promising practices already taking place in the community with the potential to be scaled.

In thinking through systems change, Working Groups should consider the policies, symbols, practices, and the community and institutional realities that shape a child's trajectory in the City of Poughkeepsie.

## Guiding Questions/Provocations in Designing for Systemic Change

- What are the underlying structures, cultural values, and mental models that are obstacles and opportunities for your work?
- What are examples of designing for systemic change in your community that have succeeded? What can be learned from these experiences?
- What are examples of systems change efforts that have failed? What can be learned from these efforts?
- What are the policies, programs, cultural values, and resources that are necessary to transform the systems that impact your area of focus?

# Resources

These resources can contribute to your Working Groups' collective understanding of strategies and solutions for systemic change. Some of the resources are centered specifically around child development and educational achievement, while others highlight systems change approaches to community development that have the potential to build a sustainable infrastructure that supports children, youth and families.

## Readings:

- [The Urgent Need for Children's Cabinets](#)
- [Building Citywide Systems of Opportunity for Children](#)
- [Sustaining Cross-Sector Systems of Opportunity for Children](#)
- [Promising Tools for Customizing Student Supports & Opportunities](#)
- [COVID-19 as an Opportunity for a Paradigm Shift](#)
- [Local Children's Cabinet Network](#)
- [By All Means Cities Consortium](#)

## Audiovisual:

- [Mayors & Superintendents Partner to Create Local Children's Cabinets](#)
- [Getting to All Means All](#)
- [The Move Podcast](#)
- [How America's Public Schools Keep Kids in Poverty](#)
- [The Harlem Children's Zone Approach to Ending Poverty](#)
- [Hood Feminism](#)
- [Architecture That's Built to Heal](#)
- [One Poughkeepsie Native is Changing the Way We Look at Energy](#)

## Case Studies:

Here are some best practices from around the United States that are introducing comprehensive systems change efforts in key programmatic areas that are aligned with the themes of the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Working Groups. These examples are presented to provide Working Group members with information on some of the leading evidence-based child and youth development programming in the country.

### *Integrated Health and Human Services:*

- [City Connects](#): An evidence-based systemic approach to supporting the whole child needs of students through an individualized system of in-school and community supports and resources to address the out-of-school factors that impact learning.
- [The Poverty Spotlight](#): A tool and methodology that activates the potential of families and communities to lift themselves out of poverty through a multidimensional approach.



Forum for Youth Investment & Child Trends Sample Dashboard

Forum for Youth Investment & Child Trends, 2010	Early childhood 0-5	Elementary age 6-10	Middle school 11-13	High school 14-18	Young adult
<b>LEARNING:</b> children & youth succeed in school	% children read to by a family member 6 or 7 times in the past week	% 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> graders proficient in reading	% of students with high levels of "school connectedness"	High school graduation rate	% of 18-24-year-olds enrolled in college or completed college
<b>WORKING:</b> youth & young adults are ready for work	% children with at least one employed parent	% children given useful roles in family and community	% of students who participate in career awareness activities	% of students with job internship/apprenticeship experience	% of 18-24-year-olds employed
<b>THRIVING:</b> children & youth make healthy choices	% low birth weight	% children with a medical home	% youth who drank alcohol before age 13	% of youth who drank alcohol in the past 30 days	% of young adults overweight or obese
<b>CONNECTING:</b> children & youth have positive relationships with peers and adults	% children whose parent describes the parent-child relationship as "very warm and close"	% of children who eat a meal with their family 6 or 7 days per week	% of children who "receive support from three or more nonparent adults"	% of students with high levels of "school connectedness"	% of parents where parents are 20 or older, married, have at least 12 years education, and at least one is employed
<b>LEADING:</b> youth contribute to their community	% of children taken by family members on outings in the community 1+ times within the past week	% children 6-17 who participated in sports teams, clubs, organizations or other organized after-school activities in the past 12 months	% of children who participate in school decision-making	% of youth volunteering in their community	% of 18-24-year-olds who voted in the previous general election

Cabinet Working Groups will contribute to establishing a citywide agenda for all children and youth. ([Source](#))

*Out-Of-School Enrichment and Learning:*

- Providence Afterschool Alliance: A citywide public-private partnership to provide universal access to high quality out-of-school learning to Providence children and youth in after-school hours and during the summer break.
- Newbury Armory Unity Center: A citywide hub in nearby Newburgh, New York that provides children, youth and adult education services through out-of school enrichment and learning.

*Prenatal to Adulthood:*

- Cradle-to-Career Pipeline, Harlem Children's Zone: A pioneering pipeline of comprehensive supports for children, youth and families starting with prenatal programming and continuing through college and career that aims to eliminate multi-generational poverty.
- Baby College, Harlem Children's Zone: An immersive educational program for parents of children ages 0-3 that builds understanding around the essentials of early childhood development and prepares children to be kindergarten ready.
- Stockton Service Corps: A first-of-its-kind citywide AmeriCorps partnership that is placing 100 Corps members in educational organizations to support children, youth and families from cradle-to-career.

*College, Career and Civic Readiness:*

- College Advising Corps: A national program that places recent college graduates in high schools as full-time college advisors to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students who enter and complete higher education.
- My School Votes, When We All Vote: A national movement to institutionalize student voter readiness in high schools, ensuring that every eligible student is registered to vote, informed about the issues and participates in elections.
- Generation Citizen: A national nonprofit leading the integration of action civics pedagogy in K-12 education to ensure every student has access to a high-quality civics education and is empowered to fully participate in democracy.

*Cabinet Connections:*

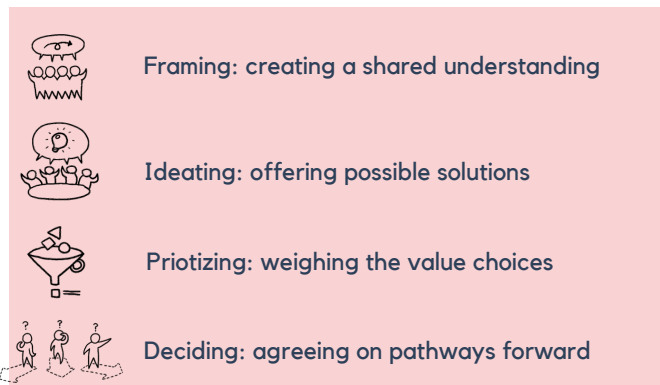
- Reimagining Civic Commons: A national initiative in five US cities working to revitalize and connect civic assets (public spaces, community centers, parks, neighborhoods, etc.) through community engagement.
- Baltimore Corps: A Baltimore-based fellowship program that enlists young professionals and places them in social impact organization to build a citywide agenda for equity and racial justice.



# Activities for Civic Design Phases

This section provides resources and additional information to guide working groups through the four phases of the Civic Design Framework (framing, ideating, prioritizing, and deciding) that will help your group gather the ideas and knowledge necessary to be able to present recommendations to the Cabinet Executive Committee and community at-large.

As a brief reminder, the four phases to focus on are:



The activities suggested in this section are designed to be a toolkit your Working Group can reference in order to decide how to proceed in each of the phases. Each proposed activity includes a brief description and is hyperlinked to a page with relevant information on how to implement each activity.

Additionally, they are tagged with one or more of the above four phases to show in which stage of the process they might be most useful. However, these suggested activities are not exhaustive. Groups should feel free to select from this "menu" of options, as well as contribute additional activities that will aid in collaboration and decision-making throughout the process of working together.

We have divided these activities into two categories: 1.) Inter-Group Activities, which focus on facilitation-related activities to use within your Working Group or with members of the broader community and 2.) Community-Focused Activities, which are more explicitly designed to help you engage with members of the community during each of the four civic design phases.

The majority of our activities have been selected from several websites and online toolkits with a wide range of participatory design activities. For a full selection of sample activities and best practices, we recommend that you review these three resources to get started:

- [Citizen Engagement Resources](#), Cities of Service
- [Community Toolbox](#), Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas
- [The Participatory Analysis for Community Action Field Guide for Volunteers](#), Peace Corps



Example of community-asset mapping.

# SWOT ANALYSIS

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal origin (attributes of the organization)	Strengths	Weaknesses
External origin (attributes of the environment)	Opportunities	Threats

Example of a SWOT analysis.

## Inter-Group Activities

The following pages contain a sample of potential activities that you can deploy in your internal Working Group meetings, as well as when facilitating public meetings, to build shared understanding, ideate solutions, prioritize actions, and build consensus on a set of strategic priorities. These activities will help your group to source collective knowledge and experience, identify blind-spots, and incorporate diverse perspectives into your work.

### Citizen Engagement Checklist



- A checklist tool to help your Working Group think through its community engagement process before you get started in your process of establishing an agenda for your area of focus.

### Draw Your Neighborhood

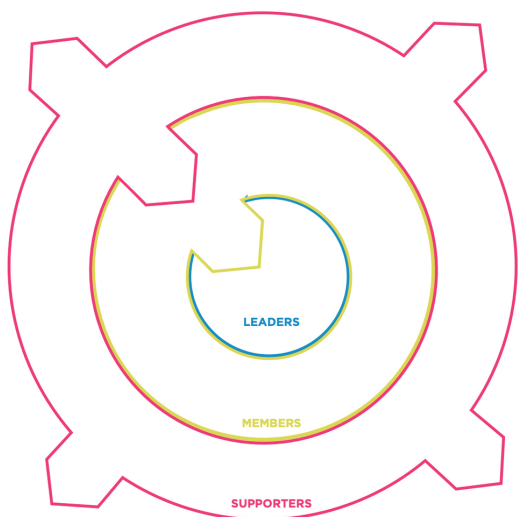


- Using colored pens and markers, draw a map of the neighborhood you came from. Label any distinguishing features that you remember. Who and what did you see around you? What places did you spend the most time around? What places did you avoid; why? Afterwards, take turns, sharing the maps with your colleagues!

### Draw Your Ideal Poughkeepsie



- Using colored pens and markers, draw your 'ideal Poughkeepsie.' What does the city look/feel/sound/etc. like to you? What are some hot and sore points of the city? Afterwards, take turns, sharing the maps with your colleagues!



An initial step in power mapping is to think through the different levels of individuals and groups who could support your work. (Source)

**Privilege Reflection, including: Privilege Walk, Privilege for Sale, or Privilege Chain**

- These types of exercises challenge participants to reflect on their privileges and how these privileges have impacted their life experiences, ability to navigate the world, etc.

**Community Walk**



- This activity can be used as an opportunity to connect with local leaders and organize site visits to neighborhoods and key community locations to build understanding around place-based realities.

**Personas**



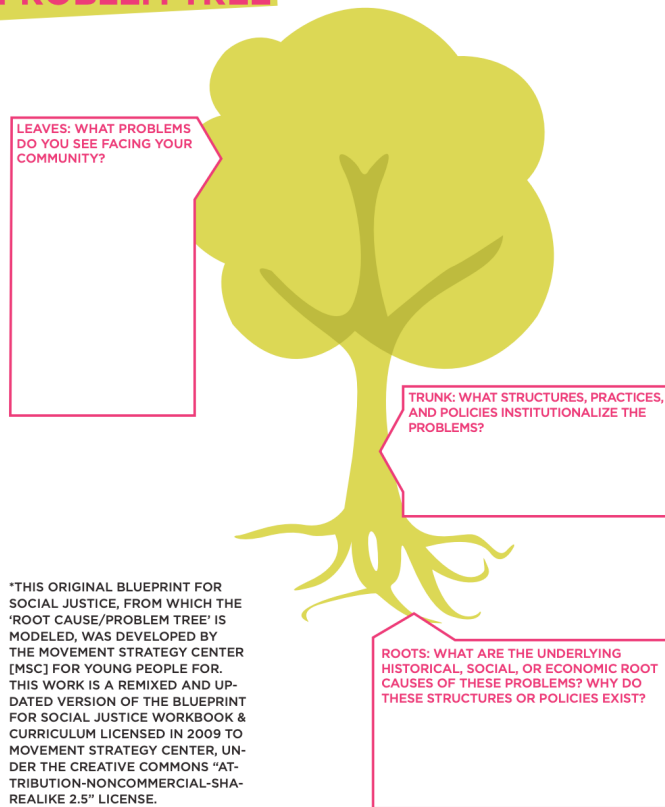
- Create fictional profiles of individuals living in your community rooted in the realities of specific demographic groups. This activity could be used to begin to understand who you should connect with through community engagement efforts.

**SWOT Analysis**



- Explore your community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for advancing social change efforts.

**PROBLEM TREE**



Use a problem tree to visualize the “roots,” “trunk,” and “leaves” of different problems to understand them better. (Source)

**Problem Tree (p. 1)**



- This tool can facilitate deeper group conversation on the problems related to an issue, by identifying their root causes and the structures that institutionalize them.

**Power Mapping (p. 2-4)**

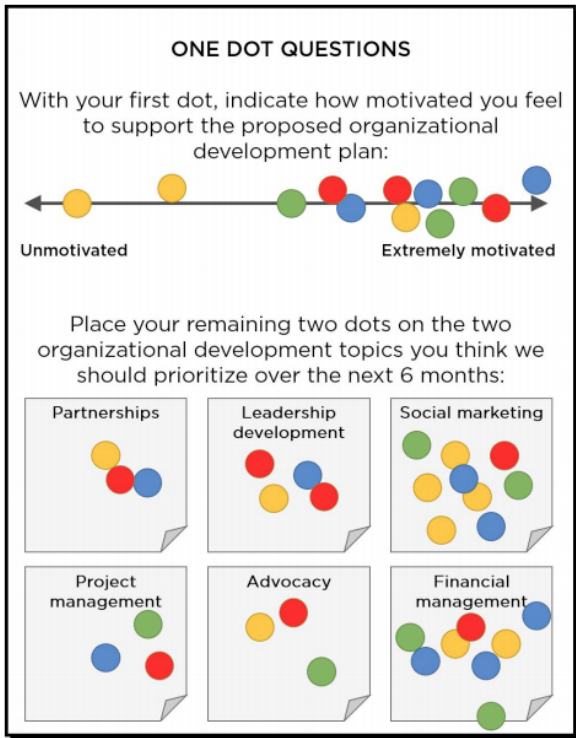


- Power mapping is an initial step in thinking about who connects to your focus issue, how they have influence, and how they can support your efforts.

**Asset Mapping**



- This tool centers a focus on the assets that exist in your community by helping you highlight the existing strengths and resources that can help your cause.



Example decision dot activities to help capture group sentiment and prioritize issues. (Source)

**Group Brainstorming**



This resource provides a guide for coordinating a group brainstorming as a way of co-generating a wide range of ideas and solutions, as a starting point.

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**How Might We**



This brainstorming activity helps to reframe challenges and problems as opportunities by opening up and being creative about their potential solutions.

- This brainstorming activity helps to reframe challenges and problems as opportunities by opening up and being creative about their potential solutions.

**Site Visits/Field Trips**



- Visits to specific places and community sites related to your focus issue can help you connect with leaders in the field and uncover resources and ideas that are useful in many different phases.

**Design Considerations**



- This activity will allow Working Groups to review the data, feedback, insights and perspectives that have been gathered from community engagement activities to identify major themes and considerations for the development of recommendations, programming and interventions.

**Decision Dots**



- This activity uses visual representation of participants' opinions to summarize convergence or divergence of viewpoints on a particular issue, select the most important issues, or make a choice between alternatives.

**Needs Assessment and Priority Ranking**



- The tool of a needs assessment can be used at various stages in the process because it gives space to participants to identify their desires, needs, or problems and rank them in order of priority.

# Community-Focused Activities

In addition to the facilitation-related activities suggested in the previous section, these are potential activities that you can implement in public to engage a diversity of individuals, organizations, institutions, and other key stakeholders in Poughkeepsie. Community-focused activities will help you gain insights on the needs and aspirations of specific groups of people, as well as reflect on the big ideas and proposals that the Working Group is considering to advance structural change.

Community events can range in their scope and scale and should consider a variety of audiences (i.e., youth, families, existing coalitions, institutional representatives, neighborhood/housing complex associations, etc.).

In particular, Working Group team members should prioritize meeting community leaders where they operate and identify opportunities for civic engagement within existing spaces that convene local leaders.

Examples of existing spaces include:

- Existing Coalition Meetings (Youth Coalition, Northside Collaborative, Poughkeepsie Affordable Housing Coalition, Tenants associations, Parent-Teacher Associations, etc.).
- Saturday Morning Lights
- First Fridays
- Events at local higher education institutions
- Awards ceremonies, community-wide breakfasts, lunches and dinners
- School-based events (parent-teacher meetings, exhibitions, athletic events, after-school programs)
- Faith-based events
- Local government meetings (common council, school board, public forums)
- Music and cultural festivals

**Card Storming**



- o A brainstorming activity to solicit community member input around specific issues of community development and identify recurring themes that can contribute to future solutions and interventions.

**Storytelling**



- o This tool can be used within a group to talk creatively about difficult subjects, generate trust, and reveal details about people’s experiences that can be helpful moving forward. Storytelling can be a powerful tool to elevate perspectives and insights from community members that are not so easily captured in more traditional methods such as surveys or interviews. In addition to being delivered orally, storytelling may also be adapted to be delivered through art, poetry, music and in written form through themes such as Open Mic night or within existing community events.

**Participatory Budgeting**



- o This tool is "...a democratic process in which community members decide how to spend part of a public budget. It gives people real power over real money. PB started in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 1989, as an anti-poverty measure that helped reduce child mortality by nearly 20%. Since then PB has spread to over 3,000 cities around the world, and has been used to decide budgets from states, counties, cities, housing authorities, schools, and other institutions."
- In Action: [Case Study](#)

**Co-Creation Sessions**



- o A model of civic design that will allow Working Group members to invite community members to work with them to actively construct project proposals and interventions together. You can leverage this activity to envision new programs, policies and approaches to child and youth development.

**Journey Mapping**



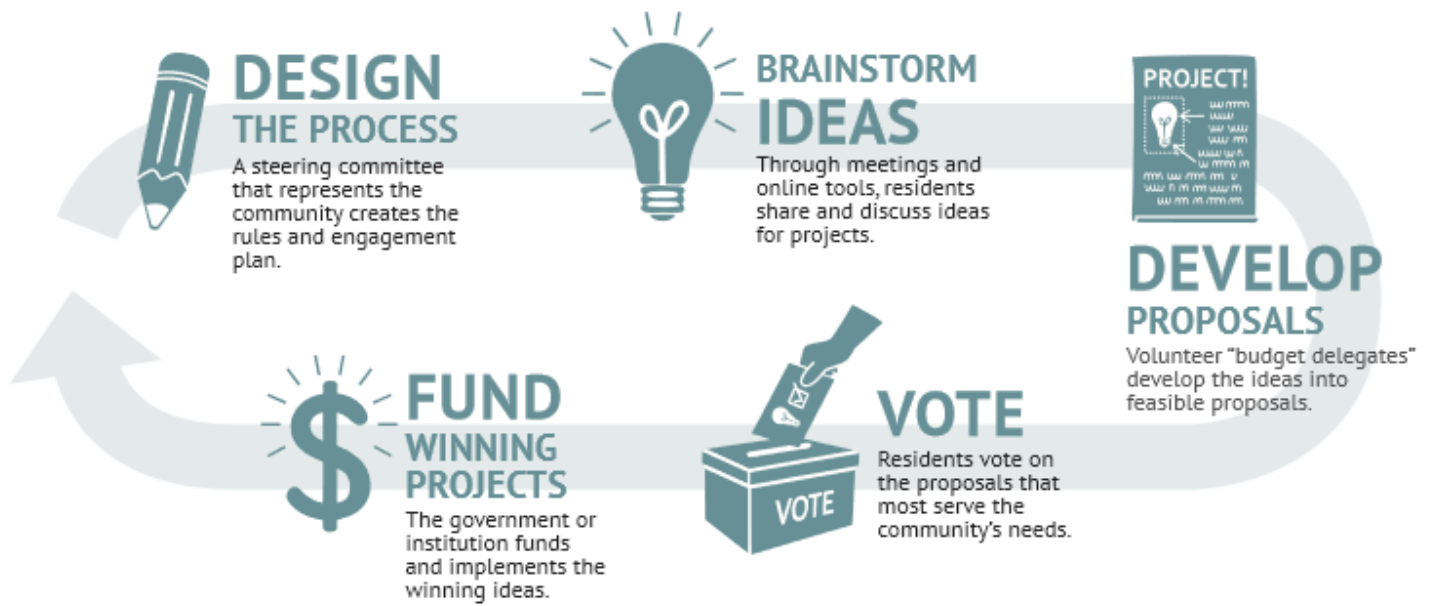
- o This tool will allow Working Groups to engage community members in a process of plotting out their major touchpoints with key public and community-based supports and services to identify strengths and weaknesses in the local social safety net. These insights can help inform policy and programmatic reforms in school systems, city government, public agencies and nonprofit organizations.

**Town Hall or Public Forum**



- o This activity will allow you to convene the community at-large and/or specific demographics and stakeholders to discuss key issue areas, identify problems, express frustrations, highlight critical needs and propose solutions. Public forums are very flexible and can be used to focus on different phases of the design process.





Participatory budgeting can be used creatively to help groups ideate potential solutions, collectively develop proposals, and prioritize ideas. ([Source](#))



Sticky-notes and poster boards can be useful tools for many of these community-focused activities, either in small groups at a table or on a wall where everyone can participate. ([Source](#))

### **Focus Groups**

- Focus groups will allow you to convene a specific group of stakeholders (for ex: teachers, youth, residents from a specific housing complex, nonprofit leaders, college students etc.) around a specific discussion topic that your Working Group is particularly interested in unpacking.
- Focus groups typically require the support of a trained facilitator to guide the conversation and note takers to capture the perspectives of the audience that is participating. These spaces will allow you to hone in on a particular issue or group that you're hoping to hear from to better understand their perspectives.

### **1-on-1 Interviews**

- 1-on-1's can be leveraged to capture the opinions of specific community members whose feedback is essential to your process. It may be helpful to interview individuals with a deep understanding of the local educational landscape, community history or institutional memory around major child and youth development efforts in Poughkeepsie.
- It can also be helpful to interview residents who are unlikely to attend or participate in group meetings or have not typically been invited or asked to participate in community activities.

### **Surveys**

- Surveys will allow you to capture feedback, ideas, opinions, and other relevant information from community members throughout the civic engagement process. There are many types of surveys with different purposes that can range in their level of complexity for design and implementation.
- In designing a survey, it is recommended that Working Groups connect with nonprofits and local higher education institutions that can serve as thought partners in developing a methodology that works for your team. Additionally, to ensure high levels of participation in a survey, it will be important to identify effective outreach strategies with local community partners.

### **Prototype**

- For the purposes of this initial phase of Working Groups, prototyping can provide your team with an opportunity to pilot innovative ideas, allow residents to interact with an intervention and gain feedback from it.
- Prototypes can help you narrow in on the right type of intervention that you may ultimately want to propose in the final report to the Cabinet Executive Committee and public.

### **Solutions Narrative**

- An exercise to help local leaders identify creative solutions to pressing challenges across different issue areas. The activity also allows participants to discuss the enablers and inhibitors to each solution, unpacking what will allow them to be unleashed or prevent them from being successful.

# Mini-Deliverables by Phase

The following is a set of mini templates to guide your Working Group through producing a deliverable at the end of each phase of this process, as you build towards your final briefs for the Executive Committee and the public. Consider using quotes and artifacts from your community engagement process throughout the deliverables to support your arguments and recommendations.

## Phase I. Introductions

Share a one-page introduction to your Working Group, including:

- Title of Working Group
- Proposed Timeline for Work
- List of Guiding Principles
  - For collaborating with your Working Group
  - For external collaboration with the public, the Executive Committee, other Working Groups, etc.

## Phase II. Frame the Issues

Share a brief on your Working Group's understanding of its focus issue (after initial framing efforts within the group and with the public), including:

- Concise description of the focus issue, including what the main challenges and opportunities will be in working towards a set of solutions
- Identification of data/information that relate to the issue, including those you have already relied on, and what types of data/information are unavailable or inadequate

- List of groups affected by/engaged with/related to the focus issue, including how they are connected and what related challenges they face
  - Proposed community engagement plan to include these groups in the upcoming phases

## Phase III. Imagine Solutions

List of all possible solutions generated during this phase (policy, coordination/alignment, programming, resource needs, etc.) Each possible solution should include:

- Brief Description
- Source of Solution (include all implementation-related contributions from this source, such as suggested partner(s), budget ideas, etc.)
- Precedent(s) and/or Additional Resources

**Phase IV. Develop Proposals**

List of all solutions generated in the previous phase, now developed to include further implementation details:

- Each solution should now also include:
  - Potential Partner(s)/Responsible Actor(s)
  - Estimated Timeline & Initial Implementation Steps
  - Estimated Budget
  - Necessary Resources: i.e. staff capacity, financial resources, coordination, continued community engagement, etc.
  - Possible Barriers or Challenges to Implementation

**Phase V. Prioritize**

Narrowed down list of recommendations to use in final phase of decision-making, as well as a brief reflection on:

- Criteria used to compare proposals
- Constraints that affected prioritization
- Process used to prioritize proposals (including internal group efforts, public engagement strategies, etc.)

**Phase VI. Present Interventions**

- Final brief to the Executive Committee (see page 31-2)
- List of recommendations shared with the public (see page 33-4)

# Submitting Interventions

The following is a template for the submission of each Working Group's brief as a way of sharing their process and their recommendations. Consider using quotes and artifacts from your community engagement process throughout the brief to support your arguments and recommendations.

## Section I. Introduction to the Working Group

### Working Group Title:

### Working Group Topic:

*One to three sentences describing the focus of your Working Group, as you understand it at the end of the process.*

### Working Group Members:

*Photos and brief introductions of each member, including related experience with the topic and why it is important to them/why they think action on this particular issue is important.*

### Mission & Values Statement:

*Three to five sentences explaining the principles that guided your collective work (including your community engagement process, general research, and synthesis).*

## Section II. Process Summary

*Explanation of the process that led your Working Group to this final product. This could include:*

- *A timeline to demonstrate the different stages of the work.*
- *Written reflection on when/how strategy was adopted at different points, what methods were used during which stages (community engagement practices, as well as other research methods), and a description of the community engagement process (who did you talk to/when/how/why, specific methods or techniques that were valuable, etc.)*
- *Highlight people (individuals and organizations), data, and resources that reveal new opportunities for continued collaboration in the future*

## Section III. Recommendations & Action Items

*This section should propose recommendations and action items to the Executive Committee, and others, including, but not limited to:*

- *Fiscal allocations/reform, policy reform, programmatic innovations, opportunities for cross-sector alignment, pitches/proposals to specific organizations/institutions in the community who have the jurisdiction/capacity to catalyze structural change in a given issue area, etc.*



A meeting of the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet. Photo Credit: Rob Watson.

*Recommendations could be organized by level of difficulty, by actor(s) responsible, by issue/topic, or some combination of these, and should follow this template:*

**Recommendation #\_\_:**

- Brief Description
- Actor(s) Responsible (*organizations on the Executive Committee, and not*)
- Length of Time/Level of Difficulty (*small-, medium-, and large-lift solutions*)
- Necessary Resources:
  - *i.e., staff capacity, financial resources, coordination, continued community engagement*
- Suggested Timeline
  - *Focus on the first steps/how to get started*
  - *Including suggestions for how to implement and monitor*
- Possible Barriers or Challenges to Implementation
- Precedent(s) & Additional Resources

**Section IV. Reflections & Insights from the Field**

**Overall Takeaways:**

*Connections between the recommendations, suggestions of more visionary outcomes that arose from the process/research, etc.*

**Process Reflections:**

*What worked well and not so well, suggestions for future community engagement efforts on these issues based on your learnings, etc.*

**Individual Reflections:**

*What did you learn, how did this process change your professional identity/goals, how will you incorporate your findings or ideas into your personal practice, etc.*

# Sharing Interventions with the Public

The following is a template for adapting your Working Group's brief in order to share your findings with the general public. Consider using quotes and artifacts from your community engagement process throughout the brief to support your arguments and recommendations.

## Section I. Introduction to the Working Group

### Working Group Title:

### Working Group Topic:

*One to three sentences describing the focus of your Working Group, as you understand it at the end of the process.*

### Working Group Members:

*Photos and brief introductions of each member, including related experience with the topic and why it is important to them/why they think action of this particular issue is important.*

### Mission & Values Statement:

*Three to five sentences explaining the principles that guided your collective work (including community engagement process, general research, and synthesis).*



Poughkeepsie kids and parents. Photo Credit: Community Matters 2 Facebook.

## Section II. Process Summary

*Abbreviated description of the process that led your Working Group to this final product. This could include:*

- A timeline to demonstrate the different stages of the work
- Written commentary to accompany the timeline that highlights milestones, strategies or techniques used, moments of public engagement, etc.



Community Matters 2 volunteers in Poughkeepsie, NY. Source: Community Matters 2 Facebook.

**Section III. Recommendations & Action Items**

*This section should adapt your Working Group's proposed recommendations and action items in order to share your primary ideas with the general public.*

*Recommendations could still be organized by length of time and varying level of difficulty (small, medium, and large-lift solutions), and should follow this general template:*

**Recommendation #\_\_:**

- Brief Description
- Actor(s) Responsible
- Length of Time/Level of Difficulty

- Suggested Timeline
  - Focus on the first steps/how to get started
  - Including suggestions for how to implement and monitor
- Precedent(s) & Additional Resources



### What is the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet?

The Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet is a collective impact organization that convenes leaders across sectors to develop a citywide cradle-to-career agenda for children, youth and families. By seamlessly coordinating the supports and services that communities provide, children's cabinets address young people's holistic needs as they grow and develop.

The Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet is a member of the [Local Children's Cabinet Network](#), a national initiative of the Harvard Graduate School of Education's EdRedesign Lab, the Forum for Youth Investment and the Children's Funding Project.

### About this booklet

This brief was created through a collaboration between the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Engaging Community: Models and Methods for Designers and Planners course, led by Professor Ceasar McDowell. It is meant to guide Cabinet Working Groups towards fruitful collaborations. The icons in the booklet have been adapted from the visual library for graphic facilitation by [biggerpicture.dk](#)

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