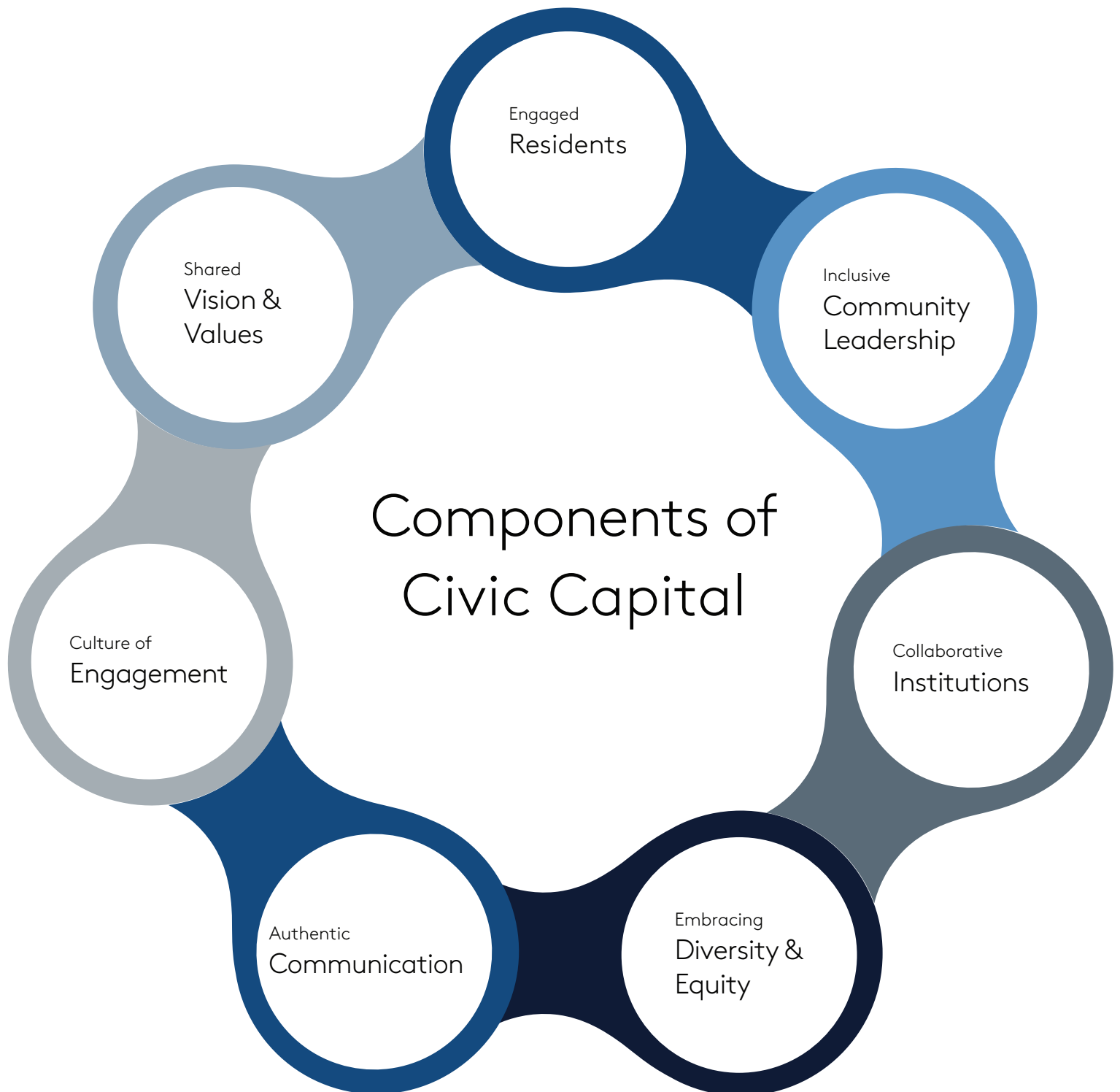National Civic League

Civic Index

4th edition

Civic Capital

The formal and informal relationships, networks and capacities communities use to make decisions and solve problems

Components of Civic Capital

- Engaged **Residents**
- Inclusive **Community Leadership**
- Collaborative **Institutions**
- Embracing **Diversity & Equity**
- Authentic **Communication**
- Culture of **Engagement**
- Shared **Vision & Values**

National Civic League
Civic Index

The Civic Index is a self-assessment tool for measuring a community's civic capital – the formal and informal relationships, networks and capacities that communities use to make decisions and solve problems. You can use this tool in a small group - with partners, community members or others to spark conversation about community strengths and areas in need of improvement. If you're using this with others come to a general agreement on the community you're talking about.

Community: _____ Date:_____

Note: Many of the statements below ask about inclusion of diverse perspectives. By diverse perspectives, we mean the views and experiences of those from different racial, ethnic or religious backgrounds, different socio-economic statuses, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical and mental abilities, long-term residents and recent immigrants, etc. Every community has diverse perspectives, the key is to understand and engage the diversity in your community.

Put a check mark under the response that best reflects your rating for each factor. Consider the full diversity of the community, not just those you usually engage.	We don't have this — We know it matters, but don't really have it, yet	This is a challenge for us — We have very few examples, of this	This is a moderate strength — We have some examples here and there.	This is a real strength — We have great examples across the community
Engaged Residents				
We have many resident-initiated and resident-led community/ neighborhood organizations and activities				
In community meetings, people tend to work collaboratively to solve-problems; instead of being critical and confrontational				
Neighborhood councils and community groups reflect the community's diversity and regularly work with city officials to provide input into decision-making				
It is easy to find residents to serve on local boards and commissions, or run for office				
Inclusive Community Leadership				
We have a wealth of trusted, respected leaders across all-sectors and levels				
We have programs to develop leaders from all backgrounds, ages and sectors; especially those from traditionally marginalized communities				
Local leaders work together, build consensus, and set aside their own ego to focus on getting things done for the whole community				
Leaders and community members face challenges head-on, instead of ignoring tough conversations or decisions				
Government advisory boards, commissions reflect the full diversity of the community *and* exercise real decision-making power				
Collaborative Institutions				
We work with other communities to address local and regional challenges				
Local government, nonprofits, philanthropies, schools, civic associations and businesses collaborate effectively to solve community problems				
We have many trusted organizations that bring people together to resolve pressing conflicts and challenges.				
We have regular, established opportunities for information-sharing and decision-making across various sectors				

Put a check mark under the response that best reflects your rating for each factor. Consider the full diversity of the community, not just those you usually engage.	We don't have this — We know it matters, but don't really have it, yet	This is a challenge for us — We have very few examples, of this	This is a moderate strength — We have some examples here and there.	This is a real strength — We have great examples across the community
Embracing Diversity, Equity				
Services and opportunities are provided equitably to all groups and neighborhoods				
We have policies to fight discrimination in all forms				
Immigrants, new residents and under-represented groups actively participate in community events and discussions				
We honor, value and highlight the contributions of the community's full diversity in our public spaces				
We are taking ongoing steps to discuss, learn about, and help address historical barriers to participation, inclusion and employment				
Authentic Communication				
We have many trusted, civic-minded sources of information and news in the community				
Local government and other groups provide information in the languages that people speak and in ways that are culturally appropriate				
There are many ways to communicate with and get information from government (i.e., 311, social media, text, local events, etc)				
We have authentic two-way communications between members of the community, the government and other institutions				
Culture of Engagement				
We have a culture of engagement; we expect our government and other institutions to engage the full community to guide decision-making				
Government agencies, nonprofits and other institutions work to learn from residents and other stakeholders before creating new programs				
We make an extra effort to ensure traditionally underrepresented groups are engaged as part of community decision-making				
Government, nonprofits and other groups engage people in accessible, comfortable or familiar locations, and at convenient times for residents.				
Local government and others engage community members in an ongoing fashion, not just when they need buy-in or quick feedback				
We have formal discussions about difficult issues like race, immigration, drug addiction, etc.				
Shared Vision and Values				
We have a strong sense of attachment to, and pride in, our neighborhoods and community				
Our community strategic planning efforts include the full diversity of the community to help identify a common vision				
People have a clear sense of what makes the community unique and a shared vision for what we want to become in the future				
Local government and nonprofit actions clearly align with the community's shared vision				

Exceptional	32	- 27
Strong	26	- 20
Average	19	- 13
Limited	12	- 6
Needs improvement	5	- 0

Count checkmarks in these columns to find your overall score

_____ + _____

Civic

moderate+real strength tally _____

check your score against the chart to the left

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