1. Identify current initiatives
Take stock of what you are already doing, distinguishing between exchange and engagement efforts.

2. Determine receptiveness
Assess how receptive your organization is to initiatives from community groups and to what extent your organizational culture supports civic engagement.

3. Work with your elected officials
Convene a community conversation on engagement to hear from residents how they wish to be involved in shaping community life and how local government could contribute to meeting their aspirations.

4. Identify potential issues
Look at issues that need resident engagement and involvement, including new ways staff could interact with residents in the day-to-day delivery of services.

5. Plan an engagement event
Match the purpose and intended outcomes with the appropriate technique and activity.

6. Actively recruit
Look for diverse stakeholder groups beyond the “usual suspects” who always participate.

7. Provide a forum for discussions
Participants should have multiple opportunities to compare values and interests and articulate self-interests, and include opportunities in both large forums and small-group discussions.

8. Engage
Seek to combine both online and face-to-face engagement opportunities and venues.

9. Identify goals, outcomes and how to measure success
Design engagement initiatives to move from talk to action by identifying tangible goals and desired outcomes; then, measure your success.

10. Develop an ongoing program
In partnership with residents and community organizations to build meaningful engagement and facilitate resident problem solving in the work of local government.

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY