

**WHAT'S  
NEXT**

**ALEXANDRIA**

*#WHATSNEXTALEX*



# Community Dialogue

April 30, 2013





**William D. Euille**

*Mayor, City of Alexandria*

Welcome



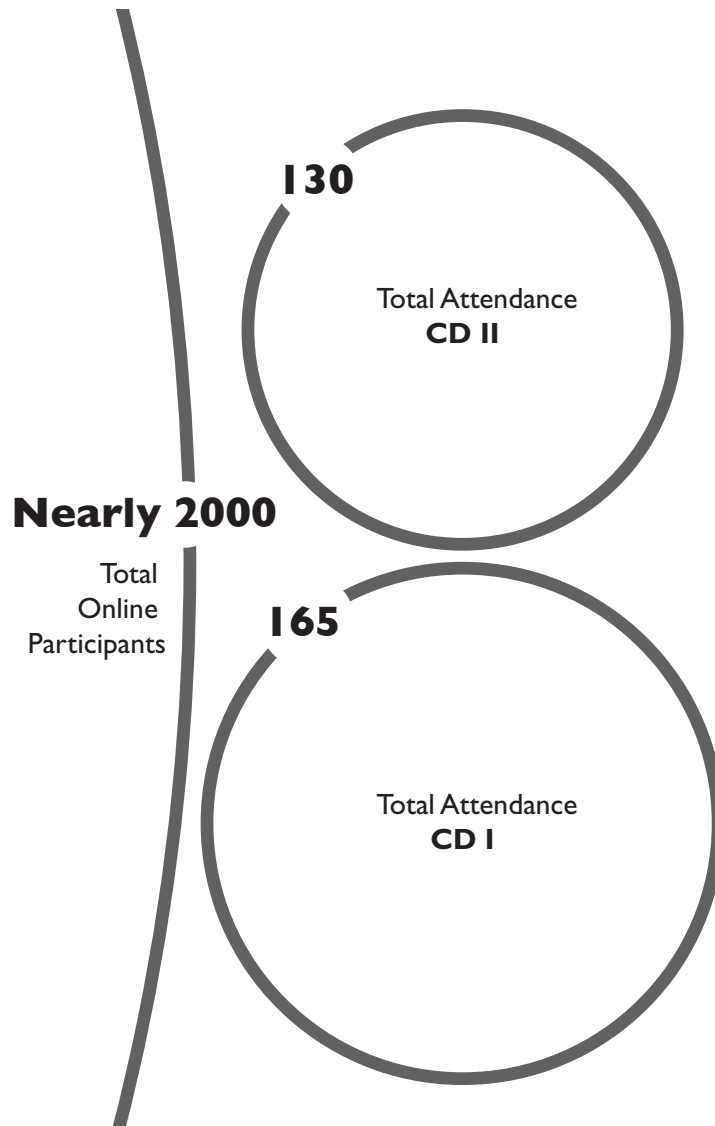
# What is **What's Next Alexandria?**

A City initiative to **begin a community conversation** about civic engagement and planning for the future.

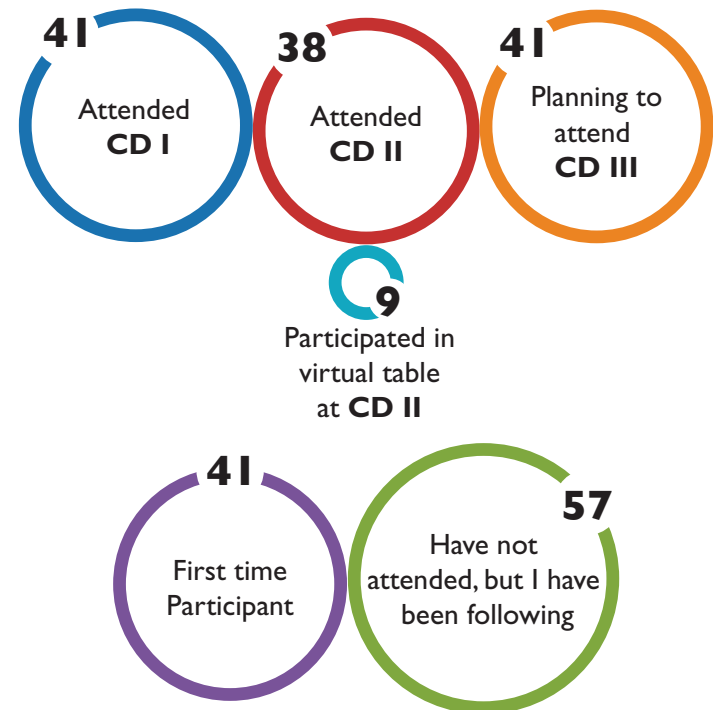
How Alexandrians can best **participate in the public decisions** that shape the City.

**The Goal: Principles and a Framework** that will guide future civic engagement processes in Alexandria.

# Participation to date



## WHO RESPONDED TO THE 3RD ONLINE POLL?





# Introductions

City Council

Members of Alexandria Boards & Commissions

Deputies, Department Heads, Staff

Members of the Community

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**Chris Lewis**

*School Board Member,  
Alexandria City Public Schools*

Introduction



# Ground Rules

- Treat each other with **respect**
- Only **one person speaks** at a time
- Listen as an **ally not an adversary**
- Ask for **clarification**, don't assume you know what someone means
- Stick to the **task at hand – follow the agenda**
- Give everyone a chance to **participate equally**; avoid dominating
- Avoid side conversations
- No one will characterize other people's view in or outside of the meeting





# Where We Are



**POLL**

September/October 2012

1

**COMMUNITY DIALOGUE 1**

November 15, 2012

Online Interaction and refinement  
January 4-14

2

**COMMUNITY DIALOGUE 2**

January 29

Online Interaction and refinement

3

**COMMUNITY DIALOGUE 3**

Present final Principles and Framework  
Discuss how to achieve success  
April 30

Online Interaction and refinement

4

**COMMUNITY DIALOGUE 4**

June

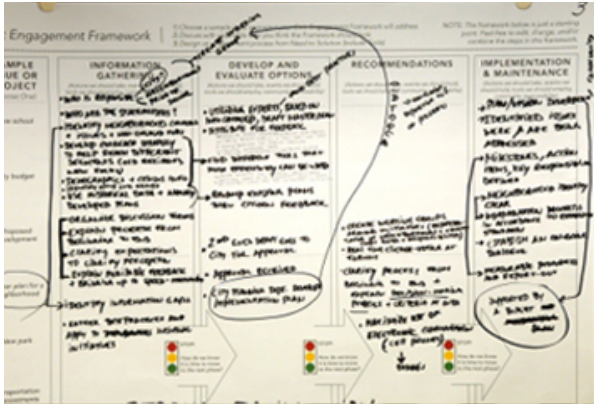
**NEXT STEPS**

*Briefings, outreach  
Council adoption  
Implementation, training, monitoring*



# What We Heard: 1/29 Evaluations

- Outreach - **concern for lack of diversity** in engagement. How to reach everyone?
- Concrete **action** - What will come of these meetings and principles?
- Staying informed is a two-way street; **citizens AND City have responsibility**
- Early **communication** from City, early **opportunity to be heard**; both critical in order to influence process.
- It was **a great collaborative effort** – I got a better understanding of what is needed to improve community involvement.





# Goals for Tonight

- Present final **Principles** for Civic Engagement
- Present **Framework** for Civic Engagement
- Have **a conversation** about working towards success in civic engagement



**Rashad Young**

*City Manager,  
City of Alexandria*





# Civic Engagement Principles | Poll

160 respondents

85% confirmed their support for Civic Engagement Principles

## Comments:

“Words and statements help focus, but it is all about **commitment and actions to make these principles a reality!**”

“City needs to do much better job on **transparency and early involvement**”

“There needs to be some emphasis on **expediency and finality of action.**”

“Generalizations meaningless unless tied to **specific actions.**”

“Looks good on paper. Shows intent...**more important is execution.**”



# Civic Engagement Principles

EARLY INVOLVEMENT

EASY PARTICIPATION

EVALUATION

INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

RESPECT

SUSTAINED COLLABORATION

TRANSPARENCY



# EARLY INVOLVEMENT

Alexandria identifies and involves stakeholders early in decision-making processes. Community members are involved in framing issues before any conclusions have been drawn, requiring early and ongoing communication with participants through each phase in the process.





# EASY PARTICIPATION

Alexandria promotes open and readily accessible government. Communications and information are timely, easy to understand, and offered in a variety of formats, appropriate to a given process. The City will provide clarity about the public decision making process, including milestones and a defined endpoint. Participants will have the flexibility to participate in a variety of ways, including online and in person.



# EVALUATION

The City will work in partnership with the community to periodically assess the application of civic engagement principles. The evaluation will quantify participant feedback, document lessons learned, and identify strategies for refinement.



# INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY

Alexandria reaches out to and encourages the participation of all members of the community in dialogue and decision-making processes, including those who will be affected by the issue as well as those who have not historically been engaged. All members of the community are informed and empowered to participate; all views are equally heard and inform the outcome; and all impacts and benefits are fairly distributed.



# MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Alexandria provides opportunities for all community members to participate in an open and unbiased process, free of predetermined outcomes, to consider and deliberate feasible options. The City authentically solicits, acknowledges, incorporates, and responds to community input.



# MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The City and community are mutually accountable for a fair process, honest and respectful participation, informed and fact-based discussion, outcomes that reflect citizen input, and acceptance of the result. City processes will include meaningful assessments to measure progress, implementation of improvements as needed, and effective communication of both.



# RESPECT

Alexandria values a process of engagement where participants demonstrate respect in words and actions and approach decisions with open-mindedness so that everyone feels comfortable expressing their opinion regardless of differences.



# SUSTAINED COLLABORATION

Alexandria promotes a culture of community engagement that enhances public decision making processes and invests in long-term working relationships, learning opportunities and ongoing, open collaboration between community members, community groups, City leaders and staff.



# TRANSPARENCY

City government will act with integrity in an open process, and will provide timely access to clear, trustworthy information, presented and employed by all parties from the beginning to the end of the process, including the reasoning that leads to and supports the policy conclusion.



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**Allen Lomax**

*City Resident*

# Civic Engagement Framework



Framework activity though Live Stream participation

# Civic Engagement Framework

3

Civic Engagement Framework

1) Choose a sample issue or project your Civic Engagement Framework will address  
 2) Discuss with your table how you think the Framework should look  
 3) Design an engagement process from Need to Solution (Include tools)

NOTE: The framework below is just a starting point. Feel free to edit, change, and/or combine the steps in this framework.

SAMPLE ISSUE OR PROJECT (Choose One)	INFORMATION GATHERING (Actions we should take, events we should hold, tools we should employ, community responsibility)	DEVELOP AND EVALUATE OPTIONS (Actions we should take, events we should hold, tools we should employ, community responsibility)	RECOMMENDATIONS (Actions we should take, events we should hold, tools we should employ, community responsibility)	IMPLEMENTATION & MAINTENANCE (Actions we should take, events we should hold, tools we should employ, community responsibility)
New school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? (CITY? NEIGHBORHOOD? PRIVATE SECTOR)</li> <li>WHO ARE THE STAKEHOLDERS?</li> <li>IDENTIFY NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS + ISSUES + NON-ENGAGED FOLKS</li> <li>DEVELOP OUTREACH STRATEGY TO HELP REACH DIFFERENT SEGMENTS (OLD RESIDENTS, NEW FOLKS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UTILIZING EXPERTS, BASED ON INFO GATHERED, DRAFT MASTER PLAN</li> <li>DISTRIBUTE FOR FEEDBACK</li> <li>FIND DIFFERENT TOOLS THAT MOST EFFECTIVELY CAN BE USED</li> <li>RAMP UP EXISTING PLANS THRU CITIZEN FEEDBACK</li> </ul>		
City budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEMOGRAPHICS + CENSUS INFO</li> <li>IDENTIFY ACTIVE CIVIC GROUPS</li> <li>USE HISTORICAL DATA + ALREADY DEVELOPED PLANS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2ND GOV DEPT GOES TO CITY FOR APPROVAL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CREATE WORKING GROUPS AROUND INITIATIVES (RESPONSIBILITY OF NEIGHBORHOOD + CIVIC GROUPS)</li> <li>REAL TIME CHECK-VOTING AT FORUMS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLANS/VISION DEVELOPED</li> <li>IDENTIFIED ISSUES WERE A ARE BEING ADDRESSED</li> <li>MILESTONES, ACTION ITEMS, KEY RESPONSIBILITIES DEFINED</li> <li>NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY CLEAR</li> <li>IMPLEMENTATION PROCEEDS IN ACCORDANCE TO ESTABLISHED STANDARDS</li> <li>ESTABLISH AN ONGOING DIALOGUE</li> </ul>
Proposed development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ORGANIZE DISCUSSION FORUMS</li> <li>EXPLAIN PROCESS FROM BEGINNING TO END</li> <li>CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS TO CLARIFY PERCEPTION</li> <li>EXPLAIN AVAILABLE FEEDBACK + BRINGING UP TO SPEED-MECHANISM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APPROVAL RECEIVED</li> <li>CITY PLANNING DEPT. DEVELOPS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLARIFY PROCESS FROM BEGINNING TO END + EXPLAIN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS + CRITERIA AT ONCE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MEASURABLE PROGRESS AND REPORT-OUT</li> <li>SUPPORTED BY A BUDGET</li> </ul>
Master plan for a neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IDENTIFY INFORMATION GAPS</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MAXIMIZE USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION (CELL PHONES)</li> </ul>	
New park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GATHER BEST PRACTICES AND APPLY TO PROMOTE INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES</li> </ul>			
Transportation improvements				

STOP! How do we know it is time to move to the next phase?

STOP! How do we know it is time to move to the next phase?

STOP! How do we know it is time to move to the next phase?

COMMUNITY

LOGS

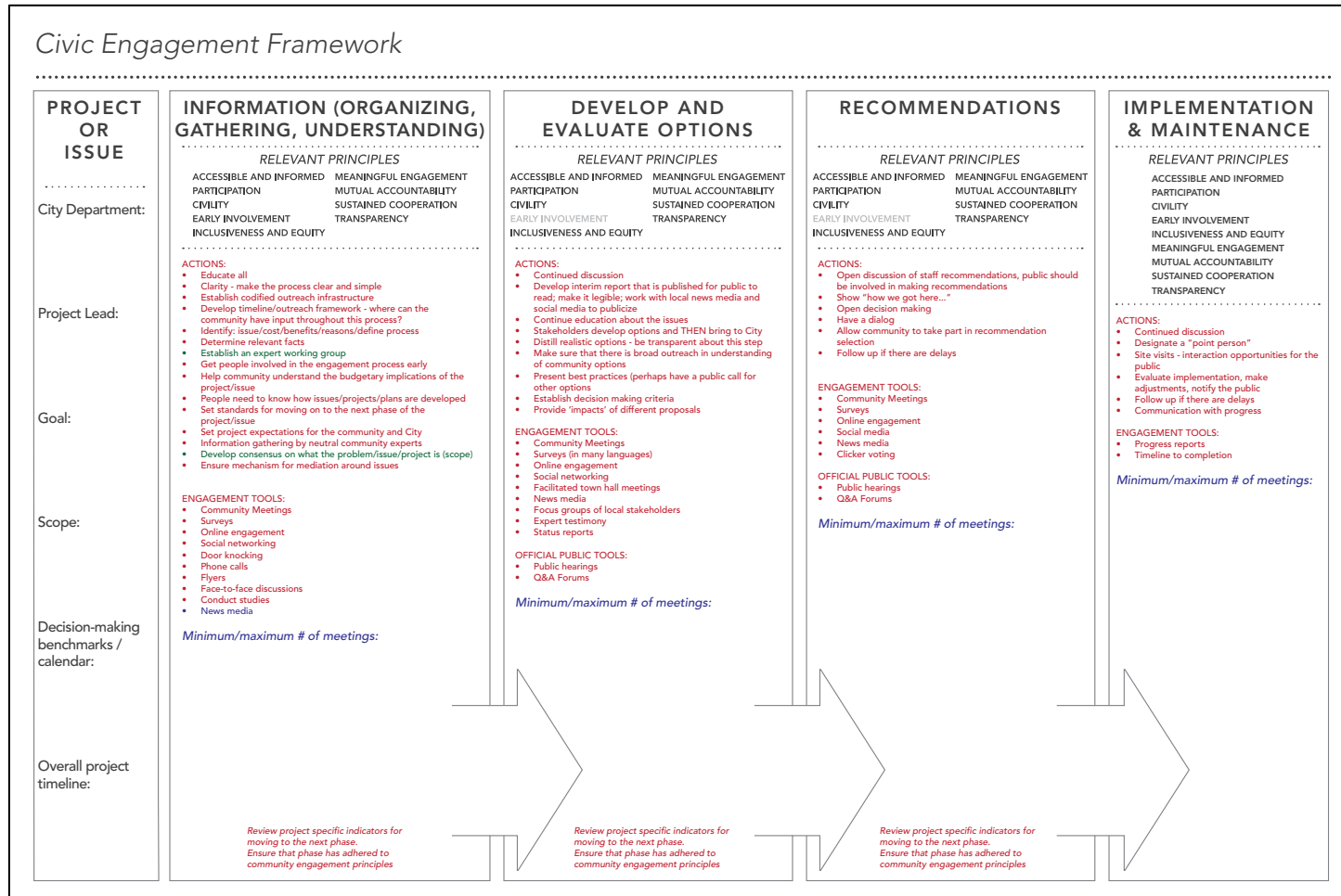
REPORTING OUT OF PROGRESS

NEED TO WORKING

AND BEST PRACTICES

Framework worksheet from one of the tables during Community Dialogue II

# Civic Engagement Framework



Compiled Framework Activity results from Community Dialogue 2 (1/29/2013)

# Civic Engagement Framework

## Civic Engagement Framework

City Department:

Project:

Goal :

Overall project timeline:

### Phase 1 Information (Organizing, gathering, understanding) 2 Develop and evaluate options 3 Recommendations 4 Implementation and maintenance

#### Key Principles:

Meaningful Engagement  
Mutual Accountability  
Early Involvement  
Easy Participation  
Inclusiveness and Equity

#### Engagement Activities:

- Facilitated public meeting(s) with constructive exercises
- Public information gathering and research
- Community education (online and in-person)
- Extensive call for public participation (phone calls, door knocks, flyers, social networking)

#### Tools:

- Online engagement (surveys, feedback, social media publications/conversations)
- Mapping

#### Deliverables:

- (Prior to start) Community engagement strategy
- Preliminary report with project scope, timeline, expectations, costs, benefits, budget, etc.
- Concrete standards for moving on to each phase
- Community vision and community-identified issues and opportunities.

#### Key Principles:

Sustained Collaboration  
Easy Participation  
Transparency  
Inclusiveness and Equity

#### Engagement Activities:

- Facilitated public meeting(s) with constructive exercises
- Public education about options, including presentation of best practices
- Research of options and externalities

#### Tools:

- Online engagement (surveys, feedback, social media publications/conversations)
- Focus groups with local stakeholders

#### Deliverables:

- Interim report with set of genuine options for achieving community vision. Will include process and criteria for decision making.

#### Key Principles:

Transparency  
Easy Participation  
Sustained Collaboration  
Mutual Accountability  
Meaningful Engagement

#### Engagement Activities:

- Facilitated public meeting(s) with constructive exercises
- Presentation of final options and selection process; show "how we got here"
- Public testimony followed by consideration, revision and approval by public officials

#### Tools:

- Online engagement (surveys, feedback, etc.)
- Social media publications / conversations)
- Focus groups with local stakeholders.  
Public hearings

#### Deliverables:

- Report of evaluated options and selected recommendation. (Report will show how the community's input and other evaluation criteria guided the selection of a recommended approach. Proposed implementation plan and timeline.)

#### Key Principles:

Transparency  
Meaningful Engagement  
Sustained Collaboration  
Mutual Accountability

#### Engagement Activities:

- Offer site visits when applicable
- Evaluate implementation
- Designate a municipal "point person"
- Civic engagement based around specific implementation steps

#### Tools:

- Interactive implementation timeline
- Public notifications

#### Deliverables:

- Evaluation of the quality of the civic engagement that has occurred
- Regular progress reports published according to implementation timeline developed in the previous phase.





# Civic Engagement Framework

- Feedback generated by the community on 1/29
- All projects with a civic engagement component will start with this menu of options and will be tailored to the specific project
- Resources are limited; decisions must be made about engagement priorities
- Participation by the public is essential to achieve success

Civic Engagement Framework			
City Department:	Project:	Goal:	Overall project timeline:
<b>Phase 1</b> Information (Organizing, gathering, understanding)	<b>2</b> Develop and evaluate options	<b>3</b> Recommendations	<b>4</b> Implementation and maintenance
<b>Key Principles:</b> Meaningful Engagement Mutual Accountability Early Involvement Easy Participation Inclusiveness and Equity	<b>Key Principles:</b> Sustained Collaboration Easy Participation Transparency Inclusiveness and Equity	<b>Key Principles:</b> Transparency Easy Participation Sustained Collaboration Mutual Accountability Meaningful Engagement	<b>Key Principles:</b> Transparency Meaningful Engagement Sustained Collaboration Mutual Accountability
<b>Engagement Activities:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitated public meeting(s) with constructive exercises <input type="checkbox"/> Public information gathering and research <input type="checkbox"/> Community education (online and in-person) <input type="checkbox"/> Extensive call for public participation (phone calls, door knocks, flyers, social networking)	<b>Engagement Activities:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitated public meeting(s) with constructive exercises <input type="checkbox"/> Public education about options, including presentation of best practices <input type="checkbox"/> Research of options and externalities	<b>Engagement Activities:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitated public meeting(s) with constructive exercises <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation of final options and selection process; show "how we got here" <input type="checkbox"/> Public testimony followed by consideration, revision and approval by public officials	<b>Engagement Activities:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer site visits when applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Designate a municipal "point person" <input type="checkbox"/> Civic engagement based around specific implementation steps
<b>Tools:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Online engagement (surveys, feedback, social media publications/conversations) <input type="checkbox"/> Mapping	<b>Tools:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Online engagement (surveys, feedback, social media publications/conversations) <input type="checkbox"/> Focus groups with local stakeholders	<b>Tools:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Online engagement (surveys, feedback, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Social media publications / conversations <input type="checkbox"/> Focus groups with local stakeholders Public hearings	<b>Tools:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Interactive implementation timeline <input type="checkbox"/> Public notifications
<b>Deliverables:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> (Prior to start) Community engagement strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary report with project scope, timeline, expectations, costs, benefits, budget, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete standards for moving on to each phase <input type="checkbox"/> Community vision and community-identified issues and opportunities.	<b>Deliverables:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Interim report with set of genuine options for achieving community vision. Will include process and criteria for decision making.	<b>Deliverables:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Report of evaluated options and selected recommendation. (Report will show how the community's input and other evaluation criteria guided the selection of a recommended approach. Proposed implementation plan and timeline.)	<b>Deliverables:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of the quality of the civic engagement that has occurred <input type="checkbox"/> Regular progress reports published according to implementation timeline developed in the previous phase.

# Conversation

## Successful Civic Engagement



# Conversation

**OBJECTIVE :** Talk about working toward success

## **DIRECTIONS :**

1. Review the Framework on the back of your agenda.
2. Have a group conversation about applying the principles and framework for successful civic engagement (25 minutes), using questions provided as a guide.
3. Individual exercise (15 minutes)



A large, solid orange speech bubble with a tail pointing towards the bottom right. The text "INTRODUCE YOURSELVES!" is centered within the bubble in white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

**INTRODUCE YOURSELVES!**



# Conversation

**OBJECTIVE :** Talk about working toward success

**DIRECTIONS:** Discuss applying the principles and framework for successful civic engagement using the questions below as a guide:

## QUESTIONS:

1. How will we as a community contribute to making the civic engagement initiative successful?
2. What specific things will demonstrate that things are different?
3. What will be the most important measures of success?
4. List ways in which City government and community members can be held accountable.



# Individual Exercise

## QUESTIONS:

- 1) How will you contribute to making the civic engagement initiative successful?
- 2) List three things that will demonstrate this process is different than the past.
- 3) What will be the two most important measures of success?
- 4) List the ways in which City government and community members can be held accountable.

An orange speech bubble with a white outline and a small tail pointing towards the bottom right. Inside the bubble, the text "REPORT OUT and COLLECT" is written in white, uppercase letters, centered horizontally and vertically.

REPORT OUT  
and  
COLLECT

# Next Steps and Meeting Evaluations



# Next Steps

## Final Meeting in June

- Design outreach and community organizing infrastructure
- Presentation of Draft Plan
- What's Next Alexandria celebration
- Sign Up!

Summer: Briefings, outreach

Fall: Council Adoption

Future/Ongoing: Implementation

Training, monitoring

#WHATSNEXTALEX

**Stay Connected!**

[Alexandriava.gov/WhatsNext](http://Alexandriava.gov/WhatsNext)

[Alexandriava.gov/WhatsNextEspanol](http://Alexandriava.gov/WhatsNextEspanol)

**Next Community Dialogue**

June 2013



**ALEXANDRIA**