



## Civic Readiness Self-Assessment & Discussion Guide

Successful redevelopment of brownfields often requires a robust network of relationships and a considerable investment of civic resources. The following tool is designed to help you and a group discuss the civic readiness of your town or neighborhood to develop a successful brownfields program.

**First**, define the purpose of your project. What are you attempting to do? (Site redevelopment, community-wide program, corridor revitalization, etc.)

**Secondly**, define your “target community” who will primarily benefit from or be impacted by this project- is it the whole community or a neighborhood? Is it multiple communities?

**Lastly**, who is your “core group” that you have **right now** to work on this project? Not who you hope will be, or who you would like to be, who currently knows about and is a partner on your project? If it’s just you, answer the ‘core group’ questions about yourself.

1. Project Purpose

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2. Target Community

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3. Core group

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There are two parts to this assessment- 1) Core Group: strengths and weaknesses **internal** to the core group working to develop a brownfields program, and 2) Community: dynamics of the broader community, **external** to the group, that may be opportunities for engagement and redevelopment or threaten the work.

For each statement in this self-assessment, mark the column with the answer you think best describes the condition of this statement in your group and community.

- ❖ **STRENGTH** = This condition is present and contributes to the success of our project.
- ❖ **WEAKNESS** = We want to improve or bring about this condition. If unaddressed, this might impede the success of our project.
- ❖ **MIXED** = There are both strengths and opportunities present.
- ❖ **UNSURE** = We need to do more homework and outreach.

## 1. Core Group

Relationships & connections		STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	MIXED	UNSURE
1	Our group has positive relationships with formal and informal community leaders and key stakeholders of the target community				
2	Our group has positive relationships with people who have business aspirations or ideas for redevelopment				
3	Our group has positive relationships with current brownfield property owners				
Trust & Awareness		STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	MIXED	UNSURE
4	Our lead organization is known and trusted in the target community.				
5	Our group has a clear picture about what matters most to the target community-their current priorities and vision.				
6	Our organization has access to trusted communication channels that will reach the community where they are.				
7	Our decision-making process for this project incorporates perspectives that are representative of the target community				

## 2. Community

Relationships & connections		STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	MIXED	UNSURE
8	The community has vibrant programming, active groups and organizations that build ties among the people who live here.				

9	Our community has many places and events where people can visit with each other and gather.				
10	Our community is open to new people and ideas and flexible to incorporate diverse perspectives.				
11	The cultural and historical identities of the community are celebrated and visible.				
<b>Trust &amp; Awareness</b>		<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>WEAKNESS</b>	<b>MIXED</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
12	Our partner organizations are known and trusted in the target community. i.e. City gov't, dev. district, NDEE, EPA, etc.				
13	Community leaders acknowledge that brownfields are a concern and believe that something can and should be done.				
14	The target community as a whole is aware that brownfields are a concern and wants to do something about them.				
<b>Engagement</b>		<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>WEAKNESS</b>	<b>MIXED</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
15	The target community has volunteer organizations and associations that will be supportive of this work.				
16	The target community has access to sources of funding that could be leveraged to support redevelopment projects.				
<b>Politics and Discourse</b>		<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>WEAKNESS</b>	<b>MIXED</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
17	Residents in the target community are comfortable reaching out to their elected leaders on issues.				
18	In public discourse, people respect differing opinions and work collaboratively to find solutions.				

When you finish the assessment, continue working individually to circle the **three** statements you think will have the greatest impact on your program's success. These could be strengths that you believe are important to success or opportunities for growth you think could hinder success if not addressed.

## Discussion Guide

1. Divide into small groups of three or more, depending on the size of your full group. In your small groups, take turns sharing the three statements you circled and why.
2. *As a group*, select three statements you think will have the greatest impact on the program's success and write them down.
3. For each statement you wrote down, discuss the following questions as a group and have someone record the responses:
  - a. What examples from the community influenced the selection of these statements?
  - b. How can the community benefit from these conditions or how might the program's success be hindered if this condition is not addressed?
4. Bring the large group back together. Have each group report out on one of their statements and share highlights of their discussion.
  - a. Do any of the statements surprise you?
  - b. What common themes do you see?
  - c. What differences do you see?
5. What are 3 commitments we can make as a group to build on these strengths and address these weaknesses for our project going forward?