Cultivating “Civity”
Enhancing City Resilience
with Bridging Relationships
and Increased Trust

Palma Joy Strand
Creighton Law School
“City”
“City”
Complex Adaptive Systems
City-System
“We are the city.”

Geoffrey West
Resilience:

“the ability to change or adapt in response to stresses and strains.”

Pendall, Foster & Cowell
Social Networks
Weak-Tie, Small-World Networks

Group/Network
Group members, because of their frequent interaction, tend to think alike over time. This reduces the diversity of ideas, and in worst-case scenarios leads to "groupthink".

Weak Ties
Weak ties are relationships between members of different groups. They are utilized infrequently and therefore don’t need a lot of management to stay healthy. They lead to a diversity of ideas, as they tie together disparate modes of thought.

Strong Ties
Strong ties are relationships between people who work, live, or play together. They are utilized frequently and need a lot of management to stay healthy. Over time, people with strong ties tend to think alike, as they share their ideas all the time.
# Framework for Civic Relationships

**Voices Joined to Achieve Arlington’s Vision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Board</th>
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| **Commitment** | • We are a caring community  
• We seek and stay informed about issues that affect the whole community  
• We get involved  
• We take initiative in problem solving | • We value the community input  
• We actively seek community input to our projects and decisions  
• We design processes that provide the activities and time needed for meaningful engagement | • We nurture the partnership between community & gov’t.  
• We believe that good ideas can come from anyone  
• We support processes to make better decisions |
| **Clarity** | • We identify opportunities to improve Arlington, and provide input into decision processes  
• We strive to build consensus around possible solutions to issues and concerns  
• We define consensus as outcomes that most participants can live with | • We specify at the start of a process the opportunities for public input and influence  
• We provide transparency on decision making processes  
• We give feedback on how we considered community input  
• We respect and report diverse viewpoints  
• We define consensus as outcomes that most can live with | • We strive for clarity of everyone’s roles and responsibilities  
• We provide opportunity to identify values, facts and policies that underpin issues  
• We define consensus as outcomes most participants can live with |
| **Connections** | • We reach out to new residents and other parts of the community  
• We seek to include and engage all residents  
• We share information via a variety of forums  
• We initiate and organize meetings/forums | • We design processes that engage and provide access to all interested parts of the community  
• We speak many languages  
• We engage people from their point of view  
• We initiate and organize meetings and forums | • We ensure that all voices in our community have the chance to participate and be heard |
| **Communication** | • We voice our opinions and listen to each other  
• We advocate for policies, resources and programs to improve the community  
• We generate new ideas to solve and/or address concerns | • We listen to our community  
• We provide the information needed for meaningful engagement  
• We advocate for policies, resources to improve community  
• We generate new ideas to solve and/or address concerns  
• We support latest technology and more traditional formats | • We clearly communicate our decisions and rationale  
• We listen to all concerns |
| **Civility** | • We respect and value all participants’ ideas and opinions  
• We value all participants’ time and are respectful of timelines | • We value and respect people’s time  
• We design and facilitate process based on civil dialogue | • We do not shy away from conflict, but respectfully discuss our differences |
| **Capacity** | • We contribute our talents, skills, energy & time  
• We build on our existing community resources and assets (non financial) | • We contribute our skills and ideas  
• We provide staff with training needed for civic engagement  
• We measure our success in transparent ways  
• We learn from each process and refine our approaches  
• We help people join our processes at any point | • We assure access to the resources and educational opportunities needed for everyone to participate |
Civity
Building “Bridging” Relationships
Bridges across demographic divides
Bridges between jurisdictions
Bridges across sectors
Nurturing Trust

“Creativity comes from trust.”

Rita Mae Brown
Community gardens
Trust in bridging relationships
IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

**Inform**
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

**Consult**
To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

**Involve**
To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

**Collaborate**
To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

**Empower**
To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

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**Promise to the public**
- We will keep you informed.
- We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
- We will implement what you decide.

**Example techniques**
- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses
- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings
- Workshops
- Deliberative polling
- Citizen advisory committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory decision-making
- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision

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Civity entrepreneurs
“We have met the enemy, and he is us”
Enhancing City Resilience by Cultivating Civity