

Moving From Deliberation to Action: What Can We Do?

This is an agenda to use after participants have discussed diverse approaches to the issue and established the beginnings of a common ground for action. This may have happened in one community discussion or in several sessions over a period of weeks.

The purpose of this session is to move to action. First, we will look at the assets we have; next, we will brainstorm action ideas; we will then connect our action ideas with our assets; and, finally, we will set priorities for action.

Part One: Community Assets Brainstorm

Every town or city has strengths or assets. Assets can be people, places, or organizations—whatever makes our community a better place is an asset.

"Brainstorming" is a creative way for a group to come up with lots of ideas in a short amount of time. Build on one another's ideas. All ideas are OK. Don't stop to discuss or judge them. The facilitator will write down every idea. You can use these headings for **Community Assets**:

People Other	Places	Institutions/ Organizations	Funding sources
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Use these questions to help people start the brainstorm:

- Who has talents and skills that they might offer?
- What groups in the community can help use out.
- What sources of funding do we have in our community/
- What groups do you belong to? How can they help?
- Can you think of anything else?

Part Two: Brainstorm Action Ideas

Remember the approaches that were discussed in the prior session or sessions. Try to come up with specific actions that fit with these approaches. How many different ideas can we come up with?

Make a list of ideas in the following categories:

- Things that you can do on your own
- Things you can do with other small groups of people
- Things organizations can do: new partnerships, collaborations, or projects
- Community-wide actions: new policies, institutional change including individuals, organization and public officials working together

Part Three: Connect Action Ideas with Assets

Post the list of action ideas beside the assets, and talk about which ones can be linked. Keep these connections in mind as we prioritize our action ideas.

Part Four: Set Priorities for Action

Look at your list of ideas for action. These questions will help you set priorities for action:

- Which ideas are the easiest to get done?
- Who would work with us on these ideas?
- Which ideas might do the most good?
- Which ideas might have a long-term impact?

As a group, choose two or three ideas that are important and doable. Then, consider the following questions:

- What would it take to make this happen?
- Who can step forward to lead which parts?
- What community assets could we use to move this idea forward?

This agenda may lead directly to working groups around the priorities that are established, or, if a number of forums or dialogue circles has been held, may be presented at a large group action forum where ideas from many deliberations are presented and organized for action.

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