



Inspiring Civic Engagement and Political Participation -

Community Conversation Proceedings Summary

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Background

This document summarizes key themes and discussion points shared during the Civic Engagement and Political Participation community conversation as part of Silicon Valley Community Foundation's Grantmaking Review process. This is the fifth of six community conversations convened by the community foundation as part of this project. A total of 93 community participants attended the convening, including six public officials and two Silicon Valley Community Foundation board members – Rose Jacobs Gibson and Wade Loo. In addition, various representatives of SVCF's leadership team attended the community conversation, including CEO and President, Emmett Carson, Chief Community Impact Officer, Erica Wood, and Manuel Santamaria, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives and Grantmaking.

Overview OF GRANTMAKING REVIEW PROCESS

The grantmaking strategic review process is intended to be both a look back at what SVCF has achieved with its grantmaking investments since 2008, as well as a look forward to assess and understand where there are emerging opportunities for SVCF to make a positive difference for our community through grantmaking. The review process will provide SVCF's staff and board of directors with the information necessary to determine whether to stay the course with our grantmaking, make adjustments or direct our investments to new strategic areas of concern. Decisions based on this review process will be announced in October 2017.

STRUCTURE OF COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Each community conversation follows a similar model, designed to provide participants with a common context and framing for productive discussion. SVCF's CEO and President, Emmett Carson, and Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Grantmaking, Manuel Santamaría, opened the conversation with a welcome, provided an overview of SVCF's accomplishments related to civic engagement and political participation, and introduced the three critical questions participants were being asked to discuss:

- What significant and actionable opportunities have the most recent election cycle opened up for SVCF and our partners to increase civic engagement in Silicon Valley?
- How can we most effectively create incentives for, and remove barriers (systemic or individual) to, participation in civic and political processes?
- What creative, innovative, or non-traditional approaches, including the use of technology, might we consider to encourage greater civic engagement and participation in local and regional political processes?

Shiree Teng of the consulting team, Teng & Smith, Inc., provided instructions on the expectations and group agreements for breakout circles. Participants were invited to self-select one group to engage in direct conversations with each other through facilitated small-group discussions and rotate after a 40-minute discussion to provide the opportunity to answer two of the three questions.

SVCF staff was present in the breakout circles as either notetakers/scribes or listeners only. After small group discussions were over, participants reconvened as a large group where SVCF staff provided information about next steps in the grantmaking review process and reminded participants to check www.siliconvallecf.org/svcfgrants for more information. All aspects of the conversations were recorded by notetakers and then synthesized for the community foundation to take under consideration.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION THEMES

Participants welcomed the opportunity to share and connect with each other and to provide input by focusing on the field of Education as a whole and not just specifically on one issue or as one nonprofit in one sector of the issue. Teng and Smith, Inc. transcribed participants' post-

it notes, as well as the notetakers'/scribes' own observations and reflections, providing for a rich and detailed summation of each question.

Given the wealth of information gathered, SVCF decided to organize the data to be most faithful to participants' ideas, which are presented in the following pages. However, the most common themes on how SVCF can use its influence in the sector were:

- *Policy* - Advocate for policy that supports the integrity of the electoral process, increases access to the ballot, and build electoral power.
- *Jurisdictions* - Work with jurisdictions to strengthen authentic civic engagement around public processes. Help them to outreach and strengthen connections to their constituencies. Hold them accountable to their mandate for authentic thorough engagement.
- *Philanthropy* - Work with other foundations to build and link resources for civic engagement across the philanthropic sector.
- *Organizing* – Build capacity and foster alignment among organizations that can contribute to increased civic engagement and political participation through education and organizing.
- *Communications and Information* – Gather and amplify true information; interrupt false information. Set a tone of integrity in public dialogue. Invest in technology where it adds significant value - to increase access, disseminate information and build engagement.

Conversation Summaries

The group discussions identified further pressing needs and opportunities for greater impact in our region. The following section summarizes discussion for each critical question in an overview of the conversation and reflections on the role of SVCF to influence Civic Engagement and Public Policy in Silicon Valley.

Please note that the detailed notes for each conversation are available in a separate appendix. They are actual comments and feedback from the participants from this community conversation and may not reflect the opinions or future plans of the community foundation.

QUESTION ONE

What significant and actionable opportunities have the most recent election cycle opened up for SVCF and our partners to increase civic engagement in Silicon Valley?

(Six breakout circles; total of 66 participants)

Overview of Conversation

Key themes:

- *Leverage energy and current momentum for further civic engagement. Opportunities and guiding principles.* Participants view this as an opportune moment in time to leverage the energy and momentum gained from the mass marches, rallies and protests following the Inauguration. Participants recognize the general public and local elected officials are motivated, empowered, and ready to help and push back but need guidance. "Civic engagement does not start and end with Election Day." Supporting the appetite for direct action and connecting to policy advocacy will be important to increasing civic engagement.

Participants also see opportunity to deepen analysis and challenge traditional notions of civic engagement, to expand processes for understanding and inclusive of different views, to convene larger communities, and to organize around education funding, sanctuary states and breaking silos to collaborate across issue areas.

Participants laid forth some guiding principles for moving forward. Concentrate on positive outcomes. Promote the bottom up and holistic approach. Unite and collaborate. Honor those who have already been in the movement and who have set the foundation. Building on current and previous success is just as important as looking at alternate and innovative ways to approach issues. Lift the voices of the most marginalized communities. Bring the foundation of love and compassion into difficult conversations. Bring radical ideas and solutions to traditional political arenas. Alleviate fear, despair and cynicism by focusing on local, winnable, relevant issues.

- *Constructive communication and dialogue.* Dialogue must be intentional. Combative conversations will not resolve the challenges ahead. Participants recommend structured dialogue for sharing and listening between community members and public officials holding different viewpoints. Community members who generally have limited experience with elected officials should be heard. Structured, intentional dialogue will invite and create safe spaces for people to share concerns and needs. Provided that new policy changes will create gaps, changes, losses and gains -- we should learn and develop ways for individuals and groups to prepare and move from feeling to action.
- *Focus & issue areas.* Participants highlighted specific issue areas for increasing civic engagement efforts. The issues present greater opportunities for policy and programming. Housing and transportation, building community trust in law enforcement, promoting citizenship and voter registration (even during non-election years), homelessness, working individuals and families, guaranteed basic income, job

displacement from automation and trade, youth engagement, girls and women's inclusion in government engagement, the plight of immigrants and refugees, examining exit polls and voting restrictions.

- *Youth organizing and training.* A majority of conversation participants support focusing on youth as a way to increase civic engagement. They suggest training the next generation to advocate for their communities and active recruiting of young candidates who reflect the communities they serve. Participants presented questions about how to engage youth before voting age and how to keep youth safe in direct action. They want to see youth involved in activism and encouraged to run for office. Training youth to organize, educating youth to increase understanding of the impact of civic engagement, increasing leadership opportunities for youth to build power and learn from each other, media literacy and making youth voices stronger at the local level were ideas participants presented.
- *Diversify the platform.* Strengthen the presence of electoral coalitions led by and rooted in communities of color, with technology and funding. Use data-based reflections on demographics to lead to coalition building. Create broad, inclusive coalitions. Be proactive in building multi-ethnic multicultural connections. Achieve greater diversity in the high tech sector and mobilize diverse professional communities.
- *Partner and identify allies. Build relationships.* Partnerships and relationship building were prevalent themes that emerged in response to question one. The recent election cycle presents an 'opportunity to take narrow interests, build alliances and go wide.' Cross issue, cross region and cross sector institutions should partner and create a common civic engagement agenda and voter engagement plan.' Projects that can benefit from partnership building include relationship-based rapid response networks for community protection and intervention, political mobilization, government meetings and public mobilization rallies. Participants mentioned categories of potential partners including local government, state level legislators, funders, nonprofits, small business owners, faith communities (often which have a high value on service), agriculture growers, counties and health care providers, and specific organizations Bay Rising and Puente.
- *Collaboration.* Participants elaborated on types of collaboration they want to see. Work with local governments on civility -- effective governance. Use online communities to connect people across distances and ideological lines. Explore AMESA organizations and build new AMESA leaders to counteract Islamophobia. Invest in finding common ground among organizations without diverse (diversity) goals. Encourage local governments, schools, special districts, cities, and counties to gather, to study, to discuss and to act as one as they work to engage their residents, maximizing efforts to educate and engage public on issues of shared concern. Educate with social interaction to move "from fear to friendship."
- *Organizational capacity building.* At the organizational level, participants recommended

providing institutions help in onboarding volunteers and handling potential influxes of volunteers. They want to empower smaller and grassroots CBOs who work with specific ethnicities. Community organizations and community leaders can benefit from training and development in civic participation, 'know your rights' education and capacity-building. Building on prior success, participants suggest continuing to draw from the Promotor model especially when targeting marginalized communities.

- *Community capacity building and training.* For families and communities of color, participants proposed education and training of parents and community leaders. Teach strategies on how to engage in civic discourse in the correct context of the expanded definition of facts or truth. Increase civic education on how federal, state, and local governments work and the respective decision-making processes. Develop a 'Civics 101' toolkit of structure and process for political action to reverse the erosion of Civics from the education system. Train the community on how to engage local civic leaders. Provide tools for communities of color to engage with allies for support.
- *Action strategies, ideas for organizing.* Participants pointed out that many people have either made a donation, marched or signed an online petition. They want to channel this energy toward rapid response into civic participation and connect the dots; connecting people, creating a culture of participation. Political capacities -- organizing, coalition building and facilitation -- are in great demand. Specific ideas for action and organizing included: civic engagement boot camps, developing a list of websites offering opportunities for civic engagement, searchable databases of issues and ways to get involved from one-off activities through policy, a networked community organizing approach to community protection and liberation, community forums, and using a LinkedIn or nextdoor.com type platform connecting people with similar concerns or issues.
- *Election and voting process reform.* Participants want to hear from San Mateo and Santa Clara congressional delegations as well as from California state government about capacity and what can be done at the state level that can't be done at the federal level. Mobilization strategies should be shaped by local elections as they are timed with federal elections. Participants proposed tying local elections to national elections when turnout is too low for off-cycles. Participants laid forth the need to address differences between midterm and presidential elections as well as remedy persistent participation gaps in voter turnout in California. VoteCal has been implemented by the State of California as a new voter database, enabling pre-registration for young people and same-day voter registration.
- *Funding / grantmaking for impact.* Participants called for riskier grant making and rapid response funding in response to the recent political events. There is newfound urgency to redirect funding and collaborate across sectors. Participants propose targeting funding 'to where it is needed to buttress the state against the federal government.' Emergency grantmaking can stimulate a continuation of action and giving; encouraging people who have just become involved in movements and incentivizing nonprofits to

promote civic engagement. 'Funders can share information and resources around civic education and public participation, diversify philanthropic efforts of the Silicon Valley community to better reflect the demographics of communities in need,' and budget to bring multi-sector partners together for brainstorming, cross-pollination and collective action.

- *Information gathering, communication and messaging.* "People are hungry for information to know their rights." This is an opportunity for information gathering and communication. Participants offered specific ideas for obtaining information. For example, holding joint congress presentations on what can and can't be done in Congress, asking what Congress needs from us, attending state and federal meetings to introduce who is working on which issues so we can all follow them. They would like to see communities engaged around concrete policy pain points before they happen, i.e. ACA repeal, immigrant rights, as well as orientations on "Washington 101": how many votes to block, how many to change legislation, what we can do in California as "safe" districts? Storytelling and dynamic marketing campaigns were recommended for educating communities on civic engagement.
- *Educate and inform.* "Educate! Educate! Educate!" "Inform! Inform! Inform!" Educating high-school-aged youth and communities through civic literacy curriculum, mobile learning and resources took precedence among conversation participants. They want community members to be trained in soft skills related to organizing and communication training on the power of voting; who votes, who doesn't and how the impact of community members taking leadership can create positive change in 2018 and 2020.
- *Safe spaces.* Safe space will be increasingly vital to facilitate dialogue on contentious issues. Provide places for people to share concerns in safe, civil environments that are welcoming of diverse views. Create and sustain sources of trusted, accurate information. Safe spaces can support the cultivation of advocates and allies.
- *Invest in development of informed and engaged "citizens."* 'Integrate the region's popular movements to be more racially, economically and socially inclusive' -- and live by the words of Lilla Watson. If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let's work together."

QUESTION TWO

How can we most effectively create incentives for, and remove barriers (systemic or individual) to, participation in civic and political processes?

(Eight breakout circles; total of 62 participants)

Overview of Conversation

Key themes:

Structural Barriers

- *Participants articulate impact areas within civic and political processes.* Participants' comments address "participation in civic and political processes" in three discrete arenas: awareness of and participation in public processes – those led by jurisdictions and regulatory agencies; ability to connect/advocate with governing representatives and legislative offices; and electoral power at the ballot.
- *Participants' understanding of structural barriers.* Some participants noted that it was important to understand root causes and name structural barriers to civic engagement and participation in political processes. Comments and ideas are clustered around these structural barriers and corresponding strategies: discouragement or lack of understanding of pathways to impact on political outcomes and subsequent disinvestment/alienation; lack of information about how to get involved/participate in processes; inaccessibility of public engagement processes; or inconvenience and complexity of time-consuming public processes; pervasive systemic inequalities that lead to power differentials, including access to information and de facto exclusion of community members; de jure exclusion of population segments and communities (e.g. young people, immigrants, incarcerated); lack of substantive engagement efforts from jurisdictions, or guidelines and accountability mechanisms to shape them; citizenship and immigration status; irrelevant or biased electoral systems and mechanisms; and lack of truly representative political leadership; and lack of sustained / empowered organizing electoral base.

Strategies

- *Set the tone for dialogue in the political sphere.* Be strategic and purposeful in fostering dialogue and disseminating information in the political sphere. Participants name the importance of taking charge of communication and messaging to mobilize people around civic engagement. Set the tone of dialogue in a place of integrity and fact – "go high" – using research and data to ground dialogue. Communicate the importance and urgency of community engagement. Leverage the strengths of sanctuary cities in service of other vulnerable communities. Activate local community serving media outlets.
- *Education around civic engagement.* Participants see education as an important part of engagement. They call out for education around avenues of participation, an overview of political processes and actors, and pathways to impacts and outcomes. Education,

particularly for young people and immigrants, but also more broadly, for everyone, including senior citizens and parents. Participants name faith-based institutions and other community institutions as safe places and vehicles to increase awareness about civic participation. They cite the importance of connecting the dots – showing how action results in impact – in civic education.

- *Increase literacy access at the ballot.* Simplify and streamline language of voting materials in order to understanding of ballot initiatives. Clearly communicate the proposition in relation to stakeholder audience(s) and interests; make clear what is at stake. Ensure multilingual access.
- *Safe places.* Participants name the importance of safe spaces in communities where people can engage, share information, learn and feel empowered to act together in this political moment. Existing relationships of trust and institutions such as community based faith institutions are potential safe places.
- *Mobilize broadly and strategically.* Participants call out to organize broadly as well as tailor organizing strategies to fit specific groups such as parents, workers and corporations - “*meet the people where they are.*” Capture the momentum of this present political moment by helping people plug in to organizations, issues and ways to make a difference. Use creative ways to engage and organize, including “arts and cultural based methods that are life affirming, intergenerational and contagious.”
- *Use technology for civic engagement and political participation.* Use technology when it helps to make political participation/civic engagement more alluring, accessible, fun, relevant, efficient and increase access to information.
- *Increase participation in the local sphere of civic engagement.* Hold jurisdictions accountable for robust public engagement, outreach and outcomes. Work to remove barriers to participation: “go to the people you want to engage,” design engagement efforts around their needs, make it user friendly. Acknowledge power dynamics that animate the terrain. Increase language accessibility. Use technology as one of multiple tools to reach different segments of community.
- *Build electoral power.* Support a sustained effort to build electoral power. Work to increase engagement of low-frequency voters and underrepresented residents in key geographic areas year round and in non-election years. Invest in capacity building for civic engagement organizations, especially to gather and synthesize data. Strive to remove barriers to voting through policy and electoral reform. Make voter registration easier and more accessible. Increase transparency in the electoral process, in terms of tracking vote outcomes, money, and electoral process and timing of important pieces of legislation.
- *Mobilize non-voters.* Work to engage those who don’t vote. Also, work to mobilize those who can’t vote. Work to change policy to extend the franchise further, to those who have lost their right to vote such as incarcerated populations. Explore ways to help

people participate in the political arena and elections to influence and express opinions outside of the electoral process.

- *Strengthen civic engagement in immigrant communities.* Participants lift up the importance of increasing access to citizenship, facilitating the pathway through language and citizenship classes. They also raise the idea that civic engagement for immigrants can be understood as a continuum, that there are meaningful impactful opportunities to engage along the way to citizenship and independent of citizenship. Finally, participants suggest we explore what meaningful civic engagement means from an immigrant(s)-centered perspective.
- *Increase equity in democratic participation.* Increase ground up participation in the political sphere. Address the disparities in privilege and power that inhabit electoral processes and civic engagement processes. Work to acknowledge, diminish and ultimately end them. Support pathways for candidates from underrepresented communities into elected office. Emphasize strategies for community dialogue and visioning to inform a political agenda. Foster closer connections between constituents and their elected officials/representatives. Identify informal divides that operate to preferentially limit information and access.
- *For CBOs - build capacity, create alignments.* For nonprofit organizations working to increase civic engagement and political participation, participants urge capacity building generally, and in the area of advocacy in particular. They suggest that it is important to create alignment across different organizations and platforms, to raise the profile of issues rather than organizations.
- *A role for philanthropy.* Funders and foundations can leverage their unique assets in important ways: they can put resources on their priorities; they have longstanding relationships with grantees; they have an encompassing perspective on the terrain. Participants suggest that the role for philanthropy at this time is to fund civic engagement priorities with more multi-year, less restrictive, general support grants, to build the capacity of existing key organizations and to resource movements strategically to be effective.

QUESTION THREE

What creative, innovative, or non-traditional approaches, including the use of technology, might we consider to encourage greater civic engagement and participation in local and regional political processes?

(Six breakout circles; total of 59 participants)

Overview of Conversation

Key themes:

- *Old school community engagement.* “Old school” community engagement can be a way to bring innovation to civic engagement and political participation. Knowing your neighbors and connecting geographically is a mode of engaging without relinquishing all efforts to social media, web/online or technology. Participants defined “old school” ideas such as getting to know your neighbors personally to build community and share information, using local access public T.V. stations, using libraries as community gathering spaces, and residential welcome packets in which new neighbors receive print information about their local government officials.

Additional examples of old school engagement included Strong Neighborhoods Initiative 2.0 neighborhood activation strategies, Portland’s neighborhood budgeting systems, participatory budgeting and leveraging platforms like nextdoor.com for the access it provides to neighborhood community members.

- *Guiding principles and values to encourage greater civic engagement and participation.* Participants want to see engagement efforts that are reflective of real life and tactical; efforts with tangible and sustainable outcomes. “All the marching in the world and all the social media generated will not make a difference unless people are working on those day-to-day relationships to make change in their local communities.” There were calls to make civic outreach more fun and engaging. Build a beloved and harmonious community at the very grassroots level. Encourage social action to move “from fear to friendship.” Real connection, sharing intergenerational knowledge and cross-cultural understanding will also help guide this work.
- *Messaging strategies. Storytelling.* Capturing and sharing real-life, human stories through video and media platforms can help generate public empathy. Participants proposed storytelling by specific subgroups ranging from Dreamers to commuters. Discussion participants noted that communication and messaging cannot take place in a vacuum. A few ways to create distance from ‘messaging in a vacuum’ could be selecting different audiences for messaging or designing goals and roadmaps connected to tangible results for campaigns marketed widely.
- *Mobile platforms.* Mobile learning and engagement via phone apps are possible avenues for reaching more students, immigrants and groups who can be more effectively reached through text. Participants mentioned texting as a tool to push messages, vote, promote events, and reach out to elected officials by citing examples like Twilio, Textizen and Cityvoice. Naturalization preparation, courses and resources could take place via mobile learning. App development, supporting creation and implementation of rapid response networks could be of help informing communities about advocacy efforts and matching communities with resources.
- *Developing and leveraging social media.* Participants recognize the need to find ways to use social media for engaging and empowering community members. They suggest developing social media training for grassroots organizing and youth engagement. Use videos, hashtags, and internet challenges like the Mannequin challenge and Ice Bucket

challenge to demystify civic engagement. Use social media to connect vulnerable populations (immigrants, females seeking abortion and medical services) with advocate surrogates in California. Promote media literacy for groups, young and old. Participants agreed Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook – “all of these sites can be better utilized to catalyze movement within younger generations.”

- *Leveraging technology, data and web resources.* Participants discussed using technology as a tool to provide access, communicate truth and facts, and focus on ways to develop and perhaps create empathy. Developing tech tools for rapid response networks, databases, data visualization maps, website portals and clearing houses for legal information, organization lists, event listings, and local opportunities to take action can propel efforts for greater civic engagement and participation. Web-based polling and survey engagement by local governments have the potential to provide alternatives to attending public meetings, which would enable access for people limited from participating by transportation or geography.
- *Voting process.* To encourage greater civic engagement and participation in creative, non-traditional ways, participants suggest creating a pilot for mobile voting and a pilot allowing non-citizens to vote in local elections. Voting age for local elections could be lowered. Analysis of demographics, issues, voting, engagement as well as training can assist community members in learning about who votes in their area (by district, city and county) and who doesn't, and learn how that impacts public policy. Equipped with that knowledge, communities can ask what they can do to make democracy work for them -- meeting their needs and priorities.
- *Targeted funding and philanthropic opportunities.* Community conversation participants offered ideas on ways to think about funding and philanthropic opportunities, methods for providing funding and what to fund. They proposed funding that is not line item restricted, but builds capacities of grassroots and neighborhood organizations, and connects with unifying causes like civic engagement or public processes. Foundations, government or donors should “allot more timing for planning and strategic thinking and ally development versus one-year project outcomes.” Mini grants, seed grants, giving circles and GoFundMe are ways to distribute rapid, responsive funding on urgent issues. Funding for polling, technology, state and local advocacy, scholarships for civic engagement and for design competitions aimed at solving local civic engagement problems were ideas that emerged from the discussion.
- *Partnership building and cross-sector collaboration.* Make introductions between unlikely partners. Work collaboratively instead of being in competition. Encourage different coalitions to create a collective movement that is more impactful. Create cross-sector regional or city agendas for housing, immigrant rights, civic engagement or environment. Consider national versus local reach.

Participants shared ideas for potential partnerships between organizations and companies. One idea is to bring the “two Silicon Valleys” together, tech and non-tech, to

work on specific issues of concern. Pair geographic spaces and assets of older companies with newer tech spaces for community use. Partner with law schools or bar associations on civic engagement and political participation for commissions or policy advocacy. Connect community-based organizations with marketing so work can be shared and highlighted, encouraging ongoing civic engagement.

- *Access and inclusion.* Access and inclusion both have a role in local and regional civic engagement and participation. Hosting local government meetings that are accessible by public transportation surfaced as a means of promoting inclusion. Another suggestion was to bring decision-makers into communities to listen to diverse, under-heard points of view. Seniors, students, stay-at-home and working populations need targeted outreach.

In the online sphere, web portals may enable access to decision-makers through public texting mechanisms. Assistive technology can promote meeting participation for bilingual communities. Public access television studios can broadcast people far away using Skype to connect with live studio audiences. Participants suggested passing legislation to facilitate remote discussion at local and regional meetings as well.

- *Community-based, local leadership development.* Recognize and develop leadership and civic engagement inclusive of everyone. Support pipelines for underrepresented residents to take greater leadership positions in local and state government. Invest in leadership among diverse women.
- *Youth engagement and capacity building.* Participants contributed substantially on the topic of youth engagement in local and regional political processes. Most agreed civic engagement should be integrated into educational curriculum in school whether that be through graduation requirements or after-school enrichment activities. These can provide youth leadership opportunities, virtual visits to legislative offices, Khan Academy type curricula or “fun, project-based activities like conferences, rallies and marches.” “Find ways to actively engage students in the civic process. Embed civics topics into relevant school subjects in multiple grades; not just in high school history.”

Investing in youth leadership and community member development can provide historical context, build alliances, and offer youth a place on decision-making boards and commissions. Discussion participants recommended working with and building from existing structures like youth commissions to mobilize, network and form solutions increasing civic engagement among youth.

- *Community engagement.* Discussion participants predominantly suggest promoting civic engagement and participation via teaching and training. Offer civics classes, workshops, or short trainings on critical thinking skills to decipher fake news, on knowing your rights, on creating movements and messaging, on functionality and issues within local government, and on voting. The process and instructions to participate politically must be simplified, less overwhelming, and nonpartisan to appeal to wider groups and communities.

- *Ideas for civic engagement activity.* Several additional ideas for civic engagement activities were laid forth. One non-traditional approach may involve decentralizing leadership with coordinated structures of methods for participation. Enabling volunteers to rise to leadership positions and lead on political issues is one way to flip traditional models for leading civic engagement activities. Other creative ideas included adapting Promotoras models for civic engagement, holding an annual day of democracy, leveraging the City of San Jose’s program for tech access to information and maintaining US Census process integrity. Art and commissioned artists could be enlisted as vehicles for resistance and bridge building.