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Building Community Through Strengths

A guide to activate change in your community



A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT, ACTIVATION AND IMPACT

This guide shares the story of the implementation of Strong Cincinnati in Madisonville and provides resources and recommendations for empowering community residents and activating change in your neighborhood. It is organized into six key steps that are critical to leading strengths-based community impact and packed with linked templates and implementation tips. **Let's get started!**



Strong Cincinnati is an initiative of **Mayerson Academy** that fosters strong, connected communities through the activation of character strengths within individuals, organizations, and neighborhoods. Strong Cincinnati made its initial launch in the neighborhood of Madisonville, asking:

What if we could activate character strengths in our neighbors to create more connected, engaged and empowered residents?

Strong Cincinnati laid out 3 core beliefs which shaped the approach for this community effort:

- (1) Communities thrive when their residents are at their best.**
- (2) Community members already have the strengths necessary to achieve their goals and purpose.**
- (3) Our role is to support residents to activate their strengths and impact their community.**

With these beliefs in mind, the team developed a process for strengths-based, resident-led community improvement projects that connected neighbors, positively impacted the community, and created leaders of change in the neighborhood.

Madisonville residents worked with Strong Cincinnati staff and local partners to develop projects aimed at making Madisonville the strongest community it can be. They did this by activating strengths within themselves and their neighbors. After a community voting process, five resident-led projects were chosen and implemented in the community, by the community.

Watch an overview video of the Strong Cincinnati initiative in Madisonville [HERE](#).



Mayerson Academy

For more than two decades, [Mayerson Academy](#) has been deeply committed to inspiring successful outcomes for learners of all ages through creative learning experiences. It has been their mission to celebrate strengths and inspire people to reach their greatest potential—one organization, one team and one person at a time. To achieve this, Mayerson Academy deploys strengths-based approaches for shifting culture in schools, organizations and communities- like Strong Cincinnati!



RESULTS

Strong Cincinnati created measurable impact for:



Individuals: Project leaders reported increases in their leadership capacity, confidence, and self-efficacy. When surveyed, **100%** of project leads reported a greater connection to the community and a greater sense of purpose.



Community: Strong Cincinnati engaged over **500** residents and **30** local businesses. When surveyed, **95%** of respondents reported an increase in their awareness of the strengths inherent in their community and **78%** reported stronger connections to their community.

"You hear things all the time about developments or projects happening in Madisonville, but nothing ever happens. This is the first time I've actually seen projects completed like they said they would, and they were led by regular people, our neighbors!"
-Madisonville Resident

Manuel D. & Rhoda MAYERSON FOUNDATION

Through support from The Mayerson Foundation, the vision of Strong Cincinnati to foster connected communities through the activation of strengths came to life. With the foundation's continued support, this guide describes key insights from the initiative to assist you in helping to continue to work, neighborhood by neighborhood, to create a stronger Cincinnati.





The 24 VIA character strengths make up a framework of personality traits that describe what is best about human beings. Each person has all 24 strengths within them and possesses a unique combination of top strengths that describe who they are when they are at their best. Research shows that individuals who apply strengths in their life are 3x more likely to report having an excellent quality of life and 6x more likely to be engaged at work. Learn more about character strengths at www.viacharacter.org.

KEY LESSONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1

Use a research-based framework to keep everyone on the same page. Strong Cincinnati used the **24 VIA Character Strengths** to empower and connect residents throughout the initiative. The strengths framework provides a common language for learning and accelerated engagement. Additionally, this approach was especially valuable as research shows that when people are aware of and using their strengths they are more able to achieve goals and overcome challenges.

2

Build a team, because this work takes people power. To adequately engage and support individuals with varying levels of project management experience takes significant time and effort. A key learning for Strong Cincinnati was that this support required more staff hours than originally budgeted and more hours than a comparable initiative situated in an organization. The project required 2 full time staff and relied heavily on community partners and volunteers.

3

Meet people where they are. Strong Cincinnati found it incredibly important to understand the unique needs and interests of diverse neighbors and remove unnecessary barriers to engaging in the process. The initiative prioritized engaging residents from all backgrounds and with varying levels of experience, and thus required a process that provided differentiated levels of coaching and support. To meet community members where they were, Strong Cincinnati staff relied on key community partners to better understand neighborhood history and dynamics and to shape a process that was responsive to those dynamics and worked to cross community divides.

4

Community driven leads to community owned. Communities are rich with experience and knowledge. Rather than coming to the community with answers and best practices, Strong Cincinnati leveraged the power and knowledge in residents through a process that was community-driven at each step. Resident voices determined the project ideas, pitched the projects, selected the projects to be implemented, and led the implementation of projects to create community change. Strong Cincinnati found that when the work is from the head and heart of a neighbor, residents are much more likely to support and own it.

6-STEP PROCESS FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE



PLANNING



ENGAGEMENT



PITCH NIGHT



IMPLEMENTATION



CELEBRATION



REFLECTION

4 ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Four distinct functions were needed to complete this project. The functions are defined by the work that needs to be done, not necessarily the person or team doing it. As you proceed through the guide, you will see how these functions contributed to each step of the project. You will also notice that not every function is required in each step of the process.

Funding | Overseeing the grants process and fiscal management

Project Management | Planning and implementing the initiative, including measuring and sharing impact

Coaching | Empowering community members and project leaders to take on challenges

Communications & Engagement | Building awareness of projects and engaging the community to get involved and take action

PLANNING



Start your initiative off right with a solid plan. In this step, you will need to take your big idea and build out a plan of action that is responsive to the unique context and needs of your community. Make sure your effort has teeth behind it by creating a budget and securing the necessary funding.

Essential Functions

FUNDING

- Secure funding
- Determine the project grant amount
- Set boundaries for what will be funded
- Secure a core team to support projects
- Determine how money will be allocated, including financial reporting requirements
- Determine whether to grant to individuals or organizations

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Build out budget, action plan, timeline, goals, and metrics
- Assess existing strengths and resources of community
- Align initiative's goals to support existing community plans and vision

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

- Map out partner organizations
- Create a communication strategy
- Attend community meetings/represent the face of the initiative
- Set-up meetings with community leaders
- Identify hard-to-reach populations
- Identify neighborhood issues/dynamics

What To Do

Listen First. Even if you have lived or worked in your community for years, it's valuable to meet with key influencers and residents to understand what they believe to be the needs and strengths of their community. Use this insight to shape and strengthen your action plan as well as to secure partners for the work.

Build Your Framework and Team. Put your plan to paper and map out your approach to your community initiative. Identify budget needs, results, metrics, and the required people power to bring the effort to life. Begin to assemble your team of passionate individuals who will devote their time and skills to creating community change.

Secure Funding. Once you've built a budget that outlines the financial needs of the initiative, start looking for investors. Consider grant opportunities and donations from local non-profits or foundations. Look for existing funds in your community that could be reallocated for an initiative such as this. Do not forget in-kind investments! Look for partners to provide use of space, childcare services, food, communication channels, etc. free of charge.



Strong Cincinnati's Reflection

We chose to partner with John P. Parker Elementary School in Cincinnati Public Schools in part because of their impressive implementation of another of Mayerson Academy's programs: Thriving Learning Communities. Also, schools are wonderful anchors in the community that can reach families and individuals who may not often engage in community change initiatives. Before launching the Strong Cincinnati initiative in Madisonville, we met with John P. Parker leadership and, per their recommendation, we met with community leaders, attended community meetings, and listened to the concerns of residents to make sure that Strong Cincinnati would add value to their community.



Community Member's Perspective

Alex Smith is a member of Madisonville's Community Council. When Strong Cincinnati representatives came to talk to the council about the opportunity he was immediately interested. "This is a chance to do something for Madisonville. We have to take advantage of this." He later pitched his Abandoned Lots to Pocket Parks project, and the community voted to move it on to implementation!



Helpful Hints:

- When considering how to fund projects, consider your process. Will you fund individuals, 501c3's, or a combination of both? For strong Cincinnati, we highly encouraged project leaders to identify a fiscal agent to hold funds for individual project teams. We also were able to provide funds directly to individuals as 'awards.'
- Capture this process on camera! Images are powerful when telling a story. Photos are great to use in communications materials to build a hyper-local, familiar face to the initiative's brand. Get permission from individuals in your photos before you use them!



Resources

- Budget template
- Role descriptions
- Contact Cards
- Flyer templates
- Example list of partner organizations
- Communications plan
- Photo release form

ENGAGEMENT



Turn your plan into reality by engaging others to be part of it. In this step, you will need to build awareness and engage neighbors in the effort through clear, consistent, and relevant messages. Make sure your process for community ideation, project development, and pitch creation ensures all neighbors can be involved.

Essential Functions

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Plan community meetings
- Create the application process
- Facilitate awareness, ideation, project proposal, and pitch meetings
- Review proposals and provide feedback
- Build a community review committee to ensure projects meet requirements

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

- Engage partners in the process
- Build neighborhood networks to share information
- Implement neighborhood awareness strategies such as community mailers and flyers

COACHING

- Coach applicants on the development of proposals
- Support project teams in developing and practicing their pitches
- Build teams' awareness of strengths
- Build a network of diverse mentors to support project teams in building their projects, action plans, budgets, and pitches.

What To Do

Build Awareness: Craft simple, relevant communications that have a clear call to action for neighbors to get involved. Attend community meetings and post on frequently-used communications channels to share information – platforms like NextDoor.com, social media or community newsletters work well. Seek the help of partners to reach specific groups of neighbors that might be difficult to engage through traditional approaches. Consider an every-door direct mailer to make sure you reach every address in your neighborhood and ensure all residents are included.

Spur Ideation: Facilitate meetings that bring together residents to develop ideas for community improvement projects. Encourage similar ideas to partner together on a combined project to foster collaboration and creativity.

Support at Every Step: Support resident project teams through group workshops and one-on-one meetings to develop their project ideas, build a budget, create an action plan, and craft a pitch. Different project groups will need different types of support. Partner with local individuals or organizations who have expertise in these areas to help mentor project teams. To build in accountability and ensure every project is set up for success, consider creating project requirements and providing coaching, reviews, and feedback along the way.



Strong Cincinnati's Reflection

We wanted Strong Cincinnati to be an opportunity in which all Madisonville residents could participate, especially individuals who are not typically involved in community development projects. To make sure this was possible, we knew we had to pay careful attention to how we engaged neighbors and supported them along the way. We worked to eliminate unnecessary barriers to leading a project (like a lengthy application) and provided adequate support to all individuals by offering different mentors and coaches from across Cincinnati. It was important to us to make sure coaches not only had relevant expertise to share with residents but that they also looked like our project teams (racial, gender, and age diversity) and were committed to supporting, not influencing.



Community Member's Perspective

Ginny Jefferson is a member of John P. Parker Elementary School's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). When she heard about Strong Cincinnati from another PTA member, she was interested in the opportunity but also intimidated by the proposal process and the idea of giving a pitch in front of her neighbors. She went to the coaching sessions, where she grew in her confidence and took the lead. "I learned about character strengths at that first coaching session, and I used them to get through the entire project," Ginny shared. She pitched her project and the community voted to move it on to implementation.



Helpful Hints:

- Create a process that matches the needs of the community. Are most neighbors computer literate? Can your materials be available both digitally and on paper? Are you providing resources that are easily understandable and that use common language? Look for barriers your neighbors might have to participating and remove them from the process.
- It's important that the individuals who serve as "experts" to help coach project teams are approachable and relatable. Pay attention to the racial, gender, and age diversity of your mentors as well as any other identifiers that are relevant to your community and find mentors that reflect your project teams.
- Set up every project for success. Do not let a project get to pitch night without feeling confident about funding it if it is selected. Set clear guidelines for projects to meet before pitch night and provide support to help teams meet them.



Resources

- Project proposal process
- Agendas for meetings
- Pitch worksheet
- Rubric for reviewing projects
- Proposal template

PITCH NIGHT



A pitch night is a way to bring awareness of all the projects to a broad community audience, give the power of project selection to the community through a transparent voting process, and connect neighbors through a fun, positive and unique event. In this step, you need to organize and execute a process for the community to decide what projects will move forward to implementation.

Essential Functions

FUNDING

- Determine how many projects to fund
- Decide funding levels for each project
- Determine criteria for funding (expectations)

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Develop the event's agenda
- Plan & execute event logistics
- Secure vendors/location
- Secure relatable emcee
- Recruit volunteers
- Determine the pitch and voting process
- Plan enrichment activities for children

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

- Promote and ensure all residents are aware of and invited to the event
- Engage partners in planning the event
- Be the face of the initiative in the community
- Capture the event through photography and video

What To Do

Plan a True Community Event. Choose a location that is comfortable for all residents, like a school or community center, and provide the necessary accommodations to make their attendance easy, like child activities, local food, music, etc. Source as much as you can from the neighborhood by choosing a local food vendor and local emcee to enhance the community feel.

Determine a Pitch & Voting Process. Create and communicate a clear process for project teams to pitch their ideas to the community audience and a clear process for the community to vote on the projects they like best. Set time limits for pitches and provide posters to share more information about each project. For voting, plan a process that makes sure community members' voices are weighted above all others.

Promote. Social media is a great, low-cost way to promote events but it does not reach all community members. Consider other promotion tools, like mailers, promoting at community events, and leaving flyers at local organizations and businesses to make sure all residents are aware of and have the opportunity to attend and vote at pitch night. Get project teams involved, too, by providing the information and resources (like drafted emails, sample Facebook posts, yard signs, etc.) for them to promote the event to their networks.



Strong Cincinnati's Reflection

We knew we wanted the community to select the projects to be implemented, not us. A pitch night is an excellent way to make this happen, but to truly have community voice selecting the projects, we needed to make sure the community was there. We created mailers and used USPS's every door direct mail system to make sure every address in Madisonville received an invitation. This and other communications efforts resulted in filling John P. Parker school with over 150 community members to support and vote on their neighbors' projects. An added benefit of using a pitch night as the process for community selection is that it built the skill of project leads in communicating their ideas.



Community Member's Perspective

Culinary entrepreneur, Kristen St. Clair, wanted to make cooking classes more accessible to her community of Madisonville and saw Strong Cincinnati as an opportunity to bring this wish to life. At Pitch Night, Kristen noted, "It was kind of scary to present my idea to my neighbors, but it was cool to see the community come out to support the event." She said that she felt genuinely supported by the staff from Strong Cincinnati and that they had true interest in the community, sharing, "Pitch Night was a way to get authentic input from the community, and overall it was a really great night." Kristen's project was voted to move on into implementation.

Helpful Hints:

- If your event is open to the general public, consider a system that weighs the voices of residents more than those of other attendees. Strong Cincinnati used a system that gave attendees different colored tickets to indicate whether they lived in the neighborhood, worked there, or were connected to another neighborhood. Tickets for residents and those who worked in Madisonville determined the 5 projects that were selected, and the overall ticket count – including tickets from non-residents and workers – determined the overall winner.
- Make sure you capture this event! Designate a volunteer to take photos throughout the night. Strong Cincinnati also hired a team to capture live footage which was later used to create a meaningful video that was shared at the celebration event.



Resources

- Event mailer template
- Pitch Night agenda
- Project posters and instructions
- Emcee talking points
- Event program template
- Pitch Night voting process

IMPLEMENTATION



Once projects are selected by the community, it's time to help project teams turn those ideas into reality. In this step, you need to support project teams to successfully implement their projects. You will also need to keep the broader community, outside of the project teams, engaged in the work.

Essential Functions

- FUNDING**
 - Communicate grant expectations and manages reporting requirements
 - Allocate money based on project needs
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT**
 - Set expectations for project timelines and deliverables
 - Follow up on project requirements
 - Schedule & plan coaching meetings
- COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT**
 - Promote projects through communications
 - Attend project events and capture progress through photos and videos
 - Connect projects with community organizations and with each other
 - Plan and attend community events to maintain neighborhood-wide engagement
- COACHING**
 - Conduct monthly one-on-one meetings with project teams
 - Facilitate regular group coaching workshops
 - Coach teams on data collection & reporting
 - Coach teams through challenges using a strengths-based approach

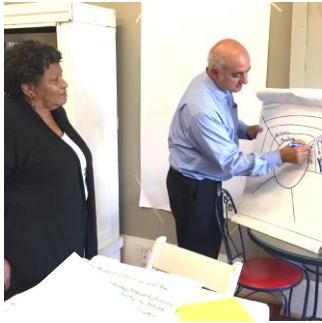
What To Do

Set Expectations. Work with project leaders to clearly define expectations for completing their projects. Document and share the financial distribution and reporting process, project timelines, and any attendance policies for meetings or coaching.

Build in accountability. It is important to think through how you will hold leads accountable for their projects. Monthly check-ins, progress updates, and contracts are helpful tools for making sure project leads are accomplishing their goals.

Provide ongoing coaching and support. Coaching not only helps the projects move along, it also helps the project leaders develop their confidence and leadership skills. There isn't one way to support a person and no frequency that suits everyone. When building a coaching strategy think about how people learn and how to connect them to each other and to the community. When you coach, you want to encourage, not discourage. When you take an assets-based approach while coaching, you focus on strengths, inspiring confidence and action.

Continue to engage with the broader community. Continue to attend community events and meetings and share updates. Hold and attend community events to raise awareness of the projects. Share information in broad ways like newsletters. Keep talking with the community, gathering feedback and maintaining momentum!



Strong Cincinnati's Reflection

Our project leads had varying levels of knowledge and experience with project management and implementation. We coached the project leads on a variety of topics tailored to their unique needs, from grant reporting to community engagement. To do this, we used mixed methods of coaching including, (1) individual coaching sessions, (2) group meetings, (3) marketing, communications, and design support, and (4) tailored support to fit the needs of each project. We also wanted to make sure we were tapping into the project leads' strengths, especially when challenges arose, so we used [Character Strengths](#) to support project leads and provide a common language across project teams to celebrate each others' efforts.



Community Member's Perspective

Once the Curiosity Through Chess project was voted to move into implementation, the work really began. Project lead, Ms. Toni Tanks, who always worked alone found herself working collaboratively with the community to achieve her project's vision. She shared that the purpose behind her project was to break down the biases elders and teens have for each other in the community. Through the coaching she received from Strong Cincinnati, she was able to create a space to start addressing this issue. She shared that the strengths-based coaching helped her stay positive about the work no matter what challenges came her way.



Helpful Hints:

- Persistence and empathy pay off. Project leaders are busy people, with jobs and lives outside of completing their projects. With this in mind, work with them to identify which method of coaching and communication works best, and with what frequency. And don't be afraid to reach out again (and again) if needed.
- Build connections between project leaders and their teams. Many of the project leaders said they found a lot of value in hearing about other projects and learning from their peers. Facilitate and foster these connections to help the leads support and champion each other.



Resources

- Agendas for group coaching meetings
- Action plan templates
- Project team expectations
- Reporting worksheets

CELEBRATION



Your community projects just wrapped up – it's time to celebrate! In this step, focus on recognizing the impact of project teams and what the community accomplished together.

Essential Functions

FUNDING

- Support project teams in completing final financial reports and submitting all materials
- Work with project leads to determine how to use any left-over funds

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Plan & execute event logistics
- Secure gift/recognition for project teams
- Create & disseminate community and project team survey to collect impact data
- Share impact data with the community
- Manage final reporting logistics

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

- Promote the event to all residents
- Engage all partners and supporters of the initiative in planning the event
- Communicate the impact of individual projects and the whole initiative
- Develop a program for event that shares impact

COACHING

- Coach project teams to complete final financial and project reporting
- Coach project leads to collect and analyze their impact data
- Coach project teams to build a sustainability plan
- Coach project leads to communicate their impact

What To Do

Create a Community Celebration. Plan a celebration event where project leads can show off their accomplishments and residents, volunteers, mentors and other support systems can be lifted up as part of the success. Congratulate the community for their engagement and support. Similar to pitch night, source as many things as possible from the neighborhood to enhance the community feel.

Collect Impact Data. Design a process for collecting data on how the initiative impacted the broader community. Consider the celebration event as an opportunity to disseminate surveys and gather feedback from the community. Make sure to share this data back with the community.

Get Feedback for the Future. Just because the projects are coming to end doesn't mean the work has to stop. Spend some time with the community to see where they want to go next and what they thought was successful. Develop a mechanism to capture community members' feedback.

Continue Coaching. Coach the leads on how to keep their work going after the grant is over. Help them think through ways to identify other sources of funding and the amount of time they can continue to devote to their project.



Strong Cincinnati's Reflection

We wanted the celebration night to be all about celebrating the community for creating meaningful change. During the event, we debuted a video highlighting all of the project leads and the incredible work they accomplished. We shared all of the impact the projects and initiative as a whole made and recognized the community's role in achieving this impact. We also presented each project leader with an award recognizing their incredible effort and accomplishments and provided them with tools to continue their work as positive leaders in the community.



Helpful Hints:

- The project leads have done a lot of work and have a lot to be proud of - give them space and the opportunity to celebrate their successes. Encourage them to share their experience with others.
- For many projects the celebration is not the end. Help project leads generate strategies for identifying resources to keep their work going and to make their projects sustainable. Connect project leads with grant opportunities and venues for sharing their work with the broader community.



Community Member's Perspective

Kathy Garrison and Terri Henry-Hayden, co-project leaders for the Simply Fresh Farmers Market project saw Strong Cincinnati as a "real launching point" for their idea. Kathy and Terri used the grant to build partnerships and conduct community research to build a foundation for the farmers market. Recognizing that access to healthy food options is a challenge in their community, Kathy and Terri knew from the beginning that the market needed to continue past the Strong Cincinnati initiative. Because of this, sustainability was a huge focus of this project and success wasn't just the launch of the first market event, it was the viability of the market to continue to operate.



Resources

- Event plan & timeline
- Agenda
- Flyer
- Program
- Poster template & instructions
- Awards ideas

REFLECTION



Reflection is an important step in any project as it gives participants the chance to pause and learn from implementation. Take advantage of this pause to apply learnings to your future work and continue to deepen your impact.

Essential Functions

- FUNDING**
 - Reconcile initiative's budget
 - Reflect on which investments created greatest impact
 - Reflect on fund allocation process
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT**
 - Facilitate debrief process to gather learnings and insights
 - Collect & analyze data to understand impact
 - Communicate learnings with key stakeholders
 - Build materials to secure additional funding
 - Create plan for future iterations of the work
- COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT**
 - Reflect on engagement and communication process
 - Share key learnings and next steps with community
- COACHING**
 - Reflect on coaching and support of project teams
 - Facilitate project leads in sharing their own learnings and reflections

What To Do

Debrief the Project. If resources allow, hire an outside facilitator to walk your team through an “after-action” review process (see template on next page). Hold meetings with project leads and community partners to collect their insights and ideas for improvement. Make a plan for how to apply these learnings in the work.

Collect Additional Data. Think about what you want to know and what information will inform your work moving forward. If you don't already have that information, make sure you get it! Consider follow-up surveys or one-on-one meetings to get more information and insights from key partners, project teams, and community members.

Decide What's Next. Apply the learnings from this first implementation to develop an improved plan for moving forward. Consider what contextual changes might have occurred (change in funding, change in capacity, etc.) that might impact future planning. Communicate your next steps with the community and keep them engaged in the process.

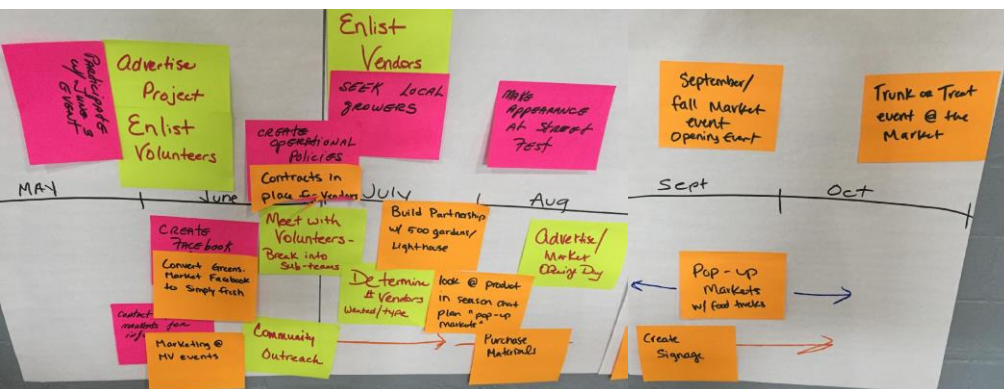


Learning → Action

- **LEARNING:** If the community owns something, it will get done. There is greater accountability if all your neighbors are cheering you on. **ACTION:** We are working to build Strong Cincinnati as a sustainable structure in Madisonville that is truly owned by the neighborhood. We are looking to partner with local Madisonville organizations and leaders to maintain the project going forward.
- **LEARNING:** The strengths were most valuable as a tool/framework for coaching and building the personal leadership development of resident leaders. They also provided a positive, common language to connect individuals. **ACTION:** In Mayerson Academy's work to impact organizations and communities, we are using character strengths to help individuals develop into leaders of change, just like we saw project leaders do in Madisonville.

Strong Cincinnati's Reflection

We learned so much through the implementation of Strong Cincinnati in Madisonville but with work moving as quickly as it did, it would have been easy to step into the next phase or next project without adequate reflection and learning. We hired an outside team of consultants to help us slow down and intentionally uncover our learnings. They lead us through a process using learning tools like after-action reviews and process mapping to dig deep into the work and yield useful insights. This team also interviewed project leaders and key partners in Madisonville to get their perspectives on the initiative. Having a neutral individual conduct these interviews ensured that we would get more authentic feedback than if we conducted them ourselves. The key learnings from this process are found throughout this guide and also informed our next steps as an organization.



Resources

- After action review template
- Debrief agenda
- Sample surveys
- Evaluation plan

Ready, Set, IMPACT!

In less than a year, the residents of Madisonville made tremendous impact through Strong Cincinnati. Community residents were empowered to realize their own potential and to use their strengths to improve their community. For residents like Ginny, it changed their lives. After completing her project Ginny shared: "I have been changed and am thankful for this opportunity. I am better because of it." Strong Cincinnati also connected neighbors to each other and contributed to a positive culture shift in the community that continues today.

You can create this type of impact too! Download the digital version of this guide to access the linked resources at www.strongcincinnati.org. Use this guide as a tool to make your community the best it can be, activating the strengths of your neighbors to create meaningful, lasting change. Need help building out your initiative? Email us at info@mayersonacademy.org and we can craft tailored support for you and your community.

For more information on Strong Cincinnati and the five resident-led projects implemented in Madisonville check out the Strong Cincinnati website at www.strongcincinnati.org.



The impact of strengths goes beyond the community.

Interested in building a strengths-based school or strengths-based organization? Email us at info@mayersonacademy.org to see how we can help!

Click on the images below to view a story of impact from each project

