



**Problems get solved when
you get involved**

FORWARD CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

**Get engaged.
Make a difference.
Move your community Forward!**

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FORWARD CIVIC

PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT

TURNING PASSION INTO PRAGMATIC ACTION

Civic participation is the involvement of individual constituents or communities in local, state, and national government. Civic involvement can include voting, political activism or education. In short, it is the participation of people in government and democratic processes.

The best outcomes for people are made possible by an open, healthy, and functional democracy. If we want a truly representative government, we have to grow our civic participation, give voters more choices, and create more effective ways to choose our leaders. Above all, the right of Americans to choose our own government is absolute.

Civic engagement is any individual or group activity addressing issues of public concern. This is your guide to helping communities to work together, or even individuals working alone to make positive changes, provide support, and build pride in our communities.

At the heart of the Forward Party mission is a commitment to providing pragmatic solutions in ways that do the most good for the most people. We believe that inspiring and organizing actions that result in positive impacts in our local communities are a critical part of bringing the values of the Forward Party to life. Taking actions to move your community forward is an easy way that you can have a positive impact and set the example of what being a Forwardist is all about.

HOW WILL FORWARD VOTERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Voting is the most elemental tool in our democracy.
It's how we make their voices heard in an extremely impactful way

Here are some facts:

- [58% of Americans believe our country needs major reforms](#) or a complete overhaul of our constitutional democracy.
- [About 70% of elections were uncontested in 2020](#). That means that there was only one candidate on the ballot.
- [Over 30% of nonvoters report](#) that their lives are not improved no matter who wins.
- [Over 20% of nonvoters](#) say that the system is too broken to be fixed by voting.

Unfortunately, the two party system has taken the wheel from Americans, and through the primary system, partisan gerrymandering, billion-dollar party coffers and their pervasive use of plurality voting despite evidence of the benefits of ranked or approval voting they have shown that they are more interested in parties steering the country than in people having a say.

We can fix this, but we need to vote – not just in general elections, but in primaries where the major parties have a stranglehold on our representation.

Three steps to turn things around and put the people back in the driver's seat:

1. Unless you are in a state where Forward Party has established official party status with the FEC, do not attempt to change your registration to Forward Party. Remember, voter registration is a ticket to primaries. Your voter registration does not bind you to voting for a candidate of that party. You can vote in a Democratic or Republican primary and still cast your ballot in the general election for any candidate of your choosing, including a Forward Party candidate if one is on the ballot! Similarly, if you can register with the Forward Party, that doesn't mean that you can't vote for a major party candidate if you prefer. We are simply building a third viable option.
2. Check to see that you are registered to vote as close to the first primary or general election as possible. States have been known to purge voter rolls at the last minute. Don't assume that you registered and that you're all set to vote. It only takes a minute to check. [CHECK MY VOTER REGISTRATION](#).
3. Make sure you know where to vote and if you can vote early. This information can easily be changed, and you don't want to go to the wrong place! [CHECK MY POLLING LOCATION](#).

The Forward Voter will not only know HOW to make sure they can show up on game day! We are also educated voters. If this sounds like too much work, here are a few tips to help you decide how to vote.

IDENTIFYING FORWARD PARTY CANDIDATES

Look for candidates who are advocating for Democracy reforms such as ranked-choice voting and open or nonpartisan primaries. While other policies are important, a candidate willing to encourage competition and more civil elections is someone willing to be held accountable.

Listen to the words the candidates choose. By listening to what they say, you can tell someone who is looking to divide and someone who is looking to inspire. We need innovators in government, not party lap dogs. A candidate who talks about the opponent's party as the enemy is not likely to enter the halls of any legislative body willing to work with others. We want candidates who will work effectively in the sandbox, not fight over who owns it.

While a Forward Party candidate is sure to have been vetted for the right personality for innovative leadership, not all Forward endorsed candidates will be running as Forward Party candidates. First, we are building right now, and we don't have candidates to run everywhere. We're working on that. Secondly, good candidates don't all come from the left or the right. We will support candidates from across the entire political spectrum who align with our core values. It is absolutely our goal to run candidates who identify openly and proudly as Forward Party.

We must identify candidates and currently elected officials who want to be a part of a movement that is dedicated to embracing pragmatic solutions that will move America Forward.

HOW TO GET POLITICALLY INVOLVED

Civic Education & Voting

- Identify local/state/federal representatives and provide information to citizens on their stances on issues and contact information.
 - Social media handles
 - Phone number
 - Office addresses
- Letter/phonebank campaigns on important local issues/votes
- Petitioning for aligned causes
- Provide public with resources for voting such as primary dates, polling place addresses, and instructions for how to register (get out the vote drives)
- Alert the public to important local meetings such as town/city/county council, school board.
- Finding ways to promote and support local newspapers
- Score local/state/federal candidates on Forward values and policies.

Communicate to Forward State and National leadership when you find interesting candidates.

CHOOSING AN ISSUE THAT WE CAN WIN

DECISION AID

*"There are two sources of power in the political process:
money and people.*

*Since we can't match opponents,
we gather power through recruiting, training, and mobilizing activists."*
— Gwyn Jones, Choosing an Issue You Can Win

Where to begin: Engage your local community to solve local problems

Be Hyper Local: Focus on your immediate local community

1. Even if an initial idea is proposed, dedicate yourselves to engaging in a Brainstorm session.
2. As a group to throw out as many ideas as possible, have someone take notes to capture the list.
 - o Example:
 - Cleaning and Greening, Parks and Rec.
 - Blood drives
 - Church organization events
 - Food drives
 - Clothing drives
 - Elderly assistance (cleaning, specific projects)
 - Serve meals at local food pantry/shelter
 - Local sports assistance



Choosing an issue from your brainstorm

Here are some questions to ask that will help you narrow it down:

- Is the problem or issue one with a broad enough area of concern?
- Or, is it one that will directly impact individuals in a meaningful way?
- Is the issue winnable? Something that will inspire wide support.
- Does it Inspire action?
- Would actions taken be repeatable or will this be a one time event?

Think broader; Consider impacts on how this action represents the Forward Party in the eyes of your community.

Some good types of questions to openly discuss with your group:

- Does it align with FWDP's priorities?
- Will it build capacity?
- Will it build community?
- Are there any potential negative impacts?
- Do you have enough resources?

_____ \$\$ _____ People _____ Time

ORGANIZING CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

- The values and vision are consistent with your community & where you want it to be
- Impact on people's lives will be positive, not divisive
- Concrete, quantifiable improvement on the environment
- Makes people aware of their own power to create positive change
- Alters power relations, such as in enacted policy, legislation, or election
- Fosters a feeling of working toward something valuable, but the problem is not so wide it's overwhelming
- The issue is deeply felt and inspires action
- The issue is easy to understand
- Clear decision-maker (Who is the person(s) who can give us what we want? A person, not an institution, not the public. E.g., mayor or city council.)
- Has a clear time frame determined by events like hearings, electoral calendar
- Opportunities for involvement; builds leadership
- Sets group up for next campaign/project—e.g. phone bank; speaking skills
- Consistent with your personal values and vision
- Can many people contribute or is this a solo mission?
- Are other groups in the area working on the same issue?

Look at the issue with an equity lens

Long-term

- Are we breaking down structures or walls of division and polarization?
- Are we promoting unity through grace and tolerance?

Short-term

- Does the problem affect different groups differently?
- Does the solution affect them differently?
- How will we make sure victory results in equity?

CONSIDERATIONS FOR EVENT PLANNING

Pre-Event Activities

This section provides an overview of protocols and actions to consider prior to organizing an event.

Approval

Prior to organizing an event, the organizer(s) must request and receive approval for the event from their state lead and/or HQ. The approval must be provided in writing.

Team Formation

Organizing events often necessitates the formation of several key teams to manage all the details. The event organizer should seek to establish the specific teams necessary for the type of event.

Examples of different types of teams include:

- Core-Committee – Responsible for Budget, Event Approval, Strategic Planning, Overall Monitoring, Wrap-Up, Feedback, Documentation
- Venue Management Team - Logistics, Transportation, Parking, VIP Guest Arrangements, Catering Management
- Guest management Team - Invitations, RSVPs, Greeters, Registration, Seating Arrangements, etc.
- Speakers/Presenters Management Team - Responsible for Selecting, Confirming, Logistics, Management, etc.
- Activities/Entertainment Team - Coordinate music, games, etc.
- Publicity/Promotion Team - Web Presence, Events Calendars, Printed Programs, Media Relations, Signage, Social media, etc.
- Sponsor/Partner Management - Coordinate and manage sponsorships & partners

Budget Establishment

Create a comprehensive budget that lists all expenses for the event and determine which expenses will be assumed by different stakeholders (e.g. host, potential sponsors, attendee fees)

Items to consider when establishing the budget:.

- Participation kit
- Waste removal
- Marketing & Branding materials

- Parking & Transportation fees
- Guest accommodations
- Food and beverage
- Entertainment & Recreation
- Audio visual equipment
- Odds & Ends (e.g. paper, pens, paper clips)
- Security contingency funds for unanticipated expenses
- Source of Income (Participation Fees, Sponsorship & Partnership)
- Insurance

Determine Venue/Location

The following are suggested considerations for determining the location of the event.

- The Accessibility, size, and capacity of the venue
- Weather forecast, especially if considering an outdoor venue
- Security - (needed? If so, how much and for how long?)
- Plan for ample set-up and clean-up time
- Parking availability (including designated parking for VIPs).
- Audiovisual needs, Consider the following potential A/V needs:
 - Sound system
 - Projector Screen (size e.g. square or rectangle)
 - PowerPoint/Slidedeck presentation in appropriate format
 - Microphone (podium mic, standing mic, handheld, collar mic, etc.)
 - Internet connection (for accessing online content)
 - Laptop (provided by facility vs. bring your own to connect to their system)
- Consider other potential facility needs as well:
 - Podiums
 - Conference Speaker
 - Name Plates
 - Extension cords
 - Photography
 - Videography
 - Pens, Paper, etc.
 - Wifi information
- Accommodation of guests: If the event involves out-of-town guests, travel time and cost to reach a destination, cost of accommodation of the guest, and additional miscellaneous expenditures

Set an Event Date

The following factors should be considered when scheduling an event date.

- Check state and national calendars to ensure no conflicting events or obligations
- Check availability with key stakeholders e.g., speakers, presenters, VIP guests, etc.
- Check to ensure no conflicting national or religious holidays

Identify and Establish Partners/Sponsors

Seeking sponsors and partners for an event helps broaden support, increase participation, and offset costs. The scale of the partnership and/or sponsorship will vary depending on the size and nature of the event.

EX: For a trash clean-up, potential partnerships may include a local elected official or organization (e.g. city or state environmental agency). Public officials often have access to resources such as supplies, waste removal services, promotional items, etc.

Advertising & Promotion

Advertising and promoting an event helps generate awareness and increase participation. When soliciting sponsors or donors for an event it is important to consider logo placement and formatting for promotional materials. Once a sponsor/donor has been confirmed, ask if they would like to have their logo featured on promotional items and acquire the necessary copy and/or branding. Note, sponsors and donors will often provide funding to offset advertising costs. The sponsor/donor logo should be visible and legible. Branding should be consistent to ensure uniformity and schematic association. The format should be clean with appropriate calls-to-action where applicable.

Advertising and promotional items should be designed and printed where applicable.

Examples include:

- Invitations/RSVP's
- Web pages
- Brochures
- Banners
- Flyers
- Digital graphics
- Merchandise
- Giveaway items

Create a Communications Plan

A strong communications strategy is essential in order to effectively execute an event. A communications plan helps promote the event to increase awareness and participation.

Types of event communication/promotion include:

- Discord announcement
- Invitations
- Press release
- Web site story and/or banner
- Newsletter
- Email announcement(s)
- Flyers/posters
- Direct mail

- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, blogs, etc)
- Phone call or text

Event Activities

This section provides an overview of protocols and actions to consider the day of the event.

Day of Event

Prior to the event, create a day-of checklist to maximize efficiency and organization. The following are some items to consider when creating a checklist.

- Have an emergency plan in place
- Confirm media attendance
- Ensure registration tables are prepared with necessary items (e.g. pens, paper, flyers, etc.)
- Ensure all promotional items (e.g. gifts, swag) are accounted for and on-site
- Confirm catering services are on-time as scheduled
- Confirm security and parking
- Confirm participant/guest speaker attendance

During the event

Prior to the event, create a checklist of items that will need on-going attention throughout the event. The following are some items to consider when creating a checklist.

- Are there enough supplies such as water, snacks, etc.? Determine a plan in advance of what to do if you run out of supplies.
- What is the overall tone of the event? Do people seem to be enjoying themselves?
- Did all the speakers show up?
- Check-in with team leaders throughout the day of the event to ensure no significant roadblocks.

Post Event Actions & Communications

This section provides an overview of protocols and actions to consider after the event.

Post-Event Actions

- Follow up with stakeholders to solicit feedback about their experience at the event.
- Send thank you notes/messages to relevant stakeholders including sponsors, partners, donors, and participants.

Post-Event Communications

- Disseminate appropriate post event communications to highlight the event and thank participants. Remember to request permission where applicable.
 - Solicit feedback about the event from stakeholders
 - Include post-event stories in photo and/or video format via:
 - Social media posts
 - Web page/event page - include information on the success of the event with testimonials from VIP's, participants, guests, speakers, etc.
- E.g., "we had a big turn-out at our cool event - almost 1000 people showed up"
- Newsletters
 - Blog posts

Comprehensive Report & Metrics

- Assess your goals and metrics.
- Did you accomplish what you expected too?
- What went well?
- What Fell short?
- If you took the action over again what would you do differently?

5. Sample Checklist

No	Task List	Responsible Person
	Pre-Event (one month in advance)	
1	Establish event objectives and themes. Solicit event approval from state lead and/or HQ.	
2	Establish budget	
3	Create event committee(s); determine roles	
4	Select event date Make sure the event date does not conflict with other important dates. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check availability of HQ and state calendars	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check availability of key stakeholders (e.g. speakers, presenters, VIP guests, etc.) • Check national and religious holidays 	
5	<p>Identify venue</p> <p>Things to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people are you expecting? • Security? • Parking availability? • Where will you set up a registration desk? • Do you need any additional furniture? Or other supplies? 	
6	<p>Audiovisual requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound system • Projector Screen • Microphone (standing mic, handheld, collar mic, etc.) • Internet connection • Laptop (provided by facility or bring your own) 	
7	<p>Potential facility considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podiums • Conference speaker nameplates • Extension cords • Photography • Videography 	
8	VIP and guest accommodation	
9	<p>Advertising and Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request logos from sponsors/partners for printing and digital promotion • Create marketing/promotional materials 	
10	<p>Speaker/presentation Liaison:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize presentation/speech topics • Request bio information & photos • Make travel and accommodation arrangements for speakers 	

11	<p>Communications plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop program draft ● Develop event script drafts (i.e. speaker introductions, thanks, closing, etc.) ● Develop media list and media kit materials (e.g. speaker info, photos, etc.) ● Create event page on website ● Create posts for social media promotion (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn Twitter, YouTube, etc.) 	
12	<p>Catering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confirm budget and catering vendor 	
	<p>Pre-Event (at least one week in advance)</p>	
13	<p>Send out event reminders Create checklists for day of event</p>	
14	<p>Presenters/Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confirm travel/accommodation details ● Request copy of speeches and/or presentations 	
15	<p>Sponsorship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confirm sponsorships and underwriting 	
16	<p>Schedule a meeting for all committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brief all hosts, greeters, volunteers about their event responsibilities and timelines ● Finalize seating/floor plan ● Make print and online copies of any speeches, videos, presentations, etc., or any other requirement by the speakers ● Create checklist of to-do's for the day of the event 	

	Day of Event	
17	<p>Confirm the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do you have a day of checklist ● Media attendance ● Ensure all signage is in place ● Ensure registration and media tables are prepared and stocked with necessary items such as participation kits (e.g. pens, paper, badges), ● Ensure all promotional items, gifts, swag are on-site ● Guest introductions ● Catering services ● Security ● Parking 	
	Post-Event Activities	
18	<p>Evaluate objectives and goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Measure metrics, KPI's, etc. <p>Solicit post-event feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct a post-event survey to solicit feedback about the event, where applicable. ● Conduct a post-event meeting to evaluate congruence of objectives vs. outcomes ● Thank attendees for participating Send thank you's to sponsors, VIPs, guests, participants, etc. <p>Post-event communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highlight event activities & outcomes ● Thank stakeholders 	

Version 1.0