

The most comprehensive way to mobilize
your community for change.



Community Action Lab



The Strong Towns approach is changing everything.

Cities and towns across North America are building local prosperity by:

- ▶ Enabling incremental housing development.
- ▶ Designing safer and more productive streets.
- ▶ Increasing transparency of city finances.
- ▶ Ending excessive highway expansion.
- ▶ Removing wasteful parking mandates.

These tasks can seem enormous and become overwhelming for local governments to tackle. Strong Towns has created the Community Action Lab to coach communities through the steps they can take today to ensure local prosperity for generations to come.

The **Community Action Lab** is the most comprehensive way to mobilize your town or city for change.

The Community Action Lab is shifting the vital center of dialogue in participating communities using Strong Towns' broad reach, non-partisan appeal, and accessible messaging. The Community Action Lab:



A two-year program to build transformative local capacity.

The Community Action Lab consists of a **two-year strategy** to accelerate community transformation. **Year 1** consists of the most active project phases, including a tailored public engagement strategy and regular coaching sessions with a local Action Team of 12-15 staff members and community heroes, while **Year 2** includes strategic support as communities continue to implement the strategies they've developed during coaching sessions. Throughout these two years, community leadership and the Action Team receive focused mentorship in developing an incremental, practical approach to community development, with unlimited access to Strong Towns' library of community building resources.

Month 1

A: Foundation

- Launch a custom content marketing campaign with targeted messaging
- Conduct baseline community survey
- Orient 12-15 members for a local Action Team
- Introductory briefing with local leadership

Month 2

B: Introduction of Ideas

- Community kickoff event
- In-person meeting with local leadership, project stakeholders
- In-person orientation with the Action Team

Months 3-7

C: Engagement

- Virtual Action Team Coaching Sessions every 2-3 weeks
- Launch custom curriculum on academy.strongtowns.org
- Intensify content marketing, track content engagement
- Collaboratively plan and conduct public event #2

Months 8-12

D: Implementation

- Shift Action Team sessions to focus on local application
- Outreach to local media to share success stories
- Continued content marketing
- Collaboratively plan and conduct public event #3

Months 13-24

E: Strategic Support

- Remote meetings with Strong Towns staff as needed
- Continued access to Strong Towns resources
- Recommendations to outside resources as necessary
- Facilitated connections with other Community Action Lab communities

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the cost of the Community Action Lab?

The Community Action Lab requires a financial commitment averaging \$185,000 for the two-year program, invoiced in smaller payments throughout the project term. The project may be funded by a foundation, donor, or financial partner, but local leadership must engage as the primary partner.

The Community Action Lab seems like a great fit for my town/city/county, but it just isn't within our budget. What now?

Get in touch with us! We may be able to help you find a local funding partner.

Can small towns partner together to host a Community Action Lab? What about counties, districts, or neighborhoods?

Yes! Strong Towns has intentionally designed the framework of the Community Action Lab to remain flexible to suit different types of communities.

What kind of time commitment for this project can community leadership and staff expect?

Elected officials and high level leadership can expect to dedicate 1-2 hours per month to stay informed on project progress. Project management and technical staff that are members of the Action Team can expect to commit 10 hours per month to coaching sessions, event planning, and online coursework.

I am a passionate local advocate and a big fan of Strong Towns, but not in a community leadership role. What can I do to bring the Community Action Lab to my town?

You can be a local champion for the Community Action Lab by sharing this handout with your local leaders and encouraging them to reach out to our staff. Connect with other Strong Towns advocates in your community at strongtowns.org/local.

To learn more about how the Community Action Lab can mobilize your community for change, contact:

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Or visit strongtowns.org/cal for more information.



Community Action Lab