



Civic Leadership Assessment Report

Prepared for: Councilman John Doe

Dear Councilman Doe:

We have finished calculating the responses from your participants. There were 21 individual survey responses responding to the 6 survey questions you selected for them.

These were:

1. Elected officials, the public, and the staff treat each other with mutual respect
2. All viewpoints are discussed in public debates.
3. Explanations and apologies are rendered by elected officials and staff when errors have occurred.
4. There is mutual trust between staff, the public, and elected officials.
5. Staff appear to have the appropriate professional qualifications to do their jobs.
6. There is strong commitment to public service from elected officials as well as the staff.

There were a significant number of responses to these questions in the range of Slightly Disagree to Strongly Disagree.

Given that, we feel there is cause for concern here. This is a report of concerns and possible remedies you should consider in your re-election campaign.

Analysis of data & survey concerns

Concerns and Recommended Remedies

1. Acknowledge the Concern Directly

A primary concern identified was a perceived lack of respect, trust, transparency, and accountability in local government.

The feedback should not be dismissed, even though the sample size is limited. The campaign should acknowledge that some residents perceive a lack of respect, trust, transparency, and accountability in local government.



Suggested message: “The feedback indicates that some residents perceive a lack of respect, trust, transparency, and accountability in local government. I take that seriously and will make improving public confidence a priority.”

2. Commit to a Civility and Respect Standard

Because the first concern involves elected officials, staff, and the public treating one another with mutual respect, the candidate should propose a visible commitment to civil and respectful engagement.

- Adopt a formal civility pledge for public meetings.
- Set clear expectations for respectful conduct by officials, staff, and residents.
- Improve meeting facilitation to reduce personal attacks and keep debate focused on issues.

3. Improve Public Debate and Inclusion of Viewpoints

If participants feel all viewpoints are not being discussed, the campaign should emphasize broader participation and more transparent engagement.

- Hold listening sessions in different neighborhoods.
- Create more structured public comment opportunities.
- Publish summaries of public input and explain how feedback influenced decisions.
- Encourage advisory committees or citizen working groups on major issues.

4. Strengthen Accountability When Mistakes Happen

The survey suggests concern that explanations and apologies are not consistently offered when errors occur. The campaign should frame accountability as a sign of responsible leadership.

- Use a public “what happened, what we learned, what we will change” process after major errors.
- Set clear timelines for staff or elected officials to respond to public concerns.
- Provide regular public updates on unresolved issues.
- Promote a culture where acknowledging mistakes is treated as responsible leadership, not weakness.

5. Rebuild Trust Among Staff, Officials, and the Public

Low trust is one of the most serious findings. Remedies should focus on consistency, transparency, respectful communication, and follow-through.

- Publish campaign commitments and track progress publicly if elected.



- Avoid overpromising; make specific, measurable commitments.
- Meet regularly with staff and residents to identify recurring problems.
- Improve communication between elected officials and professional staff so public messaging is consistent.

6. Address Perceptions of Staff Qualifications Carefully

The issue may not be that staff lack qualifications, but that the public may not fully understand staff roles, credentials, or professional responsibilities. The campaign should be careful not to politicize staff performance.

- Share staff qualifications and department responsibilities more clearly in public-facing materials.
- Support professional development and continuing education.
- Conduct periodic performance and service-delivery reviews.
- Avoid blaming individual staff members during the campaign.

7. Reinforce Commitment to Public Service

If residents question commitment to public service, the candidate should focus on visibility, responsiveness, accessibility, and service-oriented leadership.

- Announce regular office hours or community meetings.
- Respond promptly and respectfully to constituent concerns.
- Highlight examples of public service, problem-solving, and collaboration.
- Frame the campaign around restoring confidence, service, and professionalism.

Campaign Message Theme

Option 1: “Restoring respect, rebuilding trust, and recommitting local government to public service.”

Option 2: “A government that listens, explains, respects, and serves.”

Questions or comments? Please contact us at 321.613.2355.