



**Role/Duty of the Action Committee:** The goal of a local action committee is to inspire and motivate groups in its community to take an active role in increasing community vibrancy.

### Steps to Forming an Action Committee:

1. Recruit a Team
  - a. The committee should include leaders from some of the groups it is trying to motivate. For example: local garden clubs, museums, historical societies, or libraries.
  - b. Tourism Commissions/Councils
  - c. Local artists
  - d. Local Businesses and Non Profits
  - e. Community advocates and residents who are passionate about the community
  - f. Community leaders – consider including city or county council members. Including community leaders and local councils can help the group gain more support and help push the committee’s effort forward.
2. Determine how formalized the committee will be.
  - a. Committees with numerous guidelines, bylaws, and attendance policies will not gain many followers.
  - b. Consider committee size – too many members can make the effort unnecessarily difficult.
  - c. Consider establishing leadership roles within the committee. (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary)
3. Establish a Committee Leader
  - a. Ensure there is a leader that will schedule and inform committee members of upcoming meetings.
  - b. A good committee leader will champion the committee’s initiatives.
4. Assess the Community
  - a. The Community Assessment Template is an effective tool in this step.
  - b. Assess the community as a whole, while also assessing individual parts of the community.
  - c. Determine what projects are already being done and what projects are in the works . This will enable the committee to inform groups who have actions ideas to help prevent duplication and extra work.
5. Establish the committee’s purpose to fine tune its efforts. The first project the committee champions should be easily accomplishable. The committee will gain more support when it is viewed as effective.
6. Get the community’s support - educate the community on the importance of community vibrancy and why their community should be concerned with it.
  - a. Create a vision of what can be accomplished.
  - b. Advertise the existence of the local action committee.
  - c. Compile a list of success stories.
  - d. Gain the support of local businesses that would benefit from increased tourism revenue.
  - e. Allow the community to participate by hosting a contest to determine projects that the committee will complete.
7. Find Funding
  - a. Partner with local and county councils. Many municipalities are willing to provide funding for projects that improve the look of the community.
  - b. Gain the support of local businesses that would benefit from increased tourism and traffic to their stores.
  - c. Look for grants – many grants are available to groups working to improve their communities.
8. Motivate local groups to move forward the committee’s projects.
  - a. Consider awarding grants to groups that agree to complete a project focused on community vibrancy.
  - b. Illustrate to the groups why their effort will benefit them. For example, a better looking downtown or public art on a main street would increase tourism and revenue.
9. Measure the committee’s success.
  - a. Establish a method of measuring the committee’s success.

- i. Look for transformations in your community
- ii. If the committee helps coordinate an event, consider measuring attendance or money raised at a fundraiser.
- iii. Social media follower engagement/“buzz”
- b. Publicize the success. If the committee is seen as effective it will gain more support from the community and will more easily be able to obtain business partnerships for funding.

## LESSONS LEARNED & BEST PRACTICES

- Citizens within the community have to be free to make the initiative their own. People take more pride in an effort if they feel as if they are part of the movement.
- Collaboration is imperative to successful community vibrancy initiatives. True change take collective action.
- Successful initiatives stem from leaders that have fun and love what they do. Find out what your community wants and utilize the assets your community already has that makes it unique and start there.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What is important to have to ensure a local action committee is successful?**
  - *It is “essential to have a visionary leader, someone who is whole heartedly invested in the community, with a sterling reputation and respect from all”. Support from all aspects of the community is also essential. This support should include: local colleges, school districts, and business and industry support. –Robin Reed, KNOW(2) Cherokee*
  - *Think about issues that are important to your community and how you can improve those areas. The Hub Bub chose to focus on improvements to local education, poverty, healthcare, arts, and engagement with the youth population. Consider your community’s unique culture – Jordan Clayton, Project Manager, Hub Bub*
- **What should I do if I’m interested in starting a local action committee?** *A successful advertising campaign is essential for promoting the initiative. Enlist the help of local media outlets to get the word out to as many citizens as possible. Includes several different types of media in the campaign. Know(2) included yard signs, neighborhood ambassadors, videos, the local newspaper, and a liftoff event to get the word out about their organization. – Robin Reed, Know(2) Cherokee*
- **Why is a local action committee important to have in my community?** *It is important to have a platform in which citizens can come together to share creative ideas for the improvement of their community. – Jordan Clayton, Project Manager, Hub Bub*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Need more information? Contact one of these individuals that have successfully coordinated the formation of a local action committee:**

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This How-To: Forming a Local Action Committee Guide is part of the How-To Guides for Community Vibrancy, an initiative of Ten at the Top's Community Vibrancy Task Force. The task force includes stakeholders from across the Upstate with a goal to maintain and reinvigorate the vibrancy in our region's small towns and urban areas. For more information about Ten at the Top,

please visit [www.tenatthetop.org](http://www.tenatthetop.org).

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