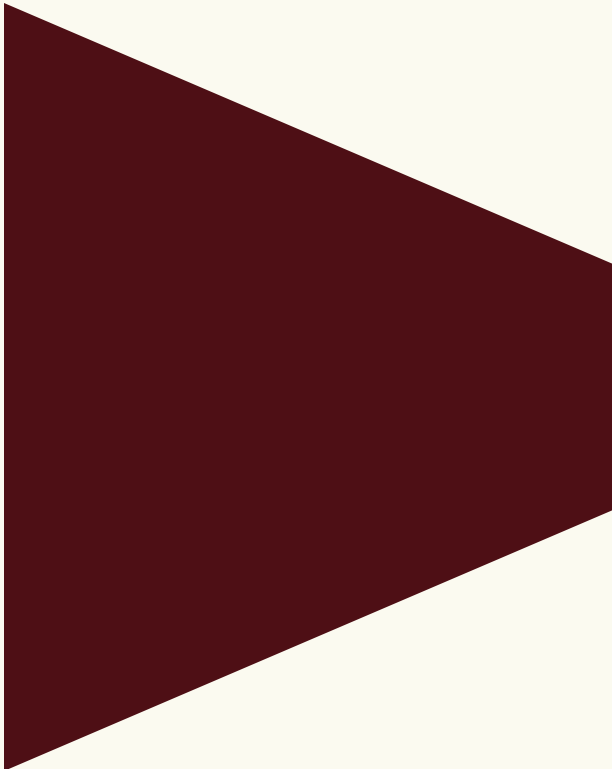
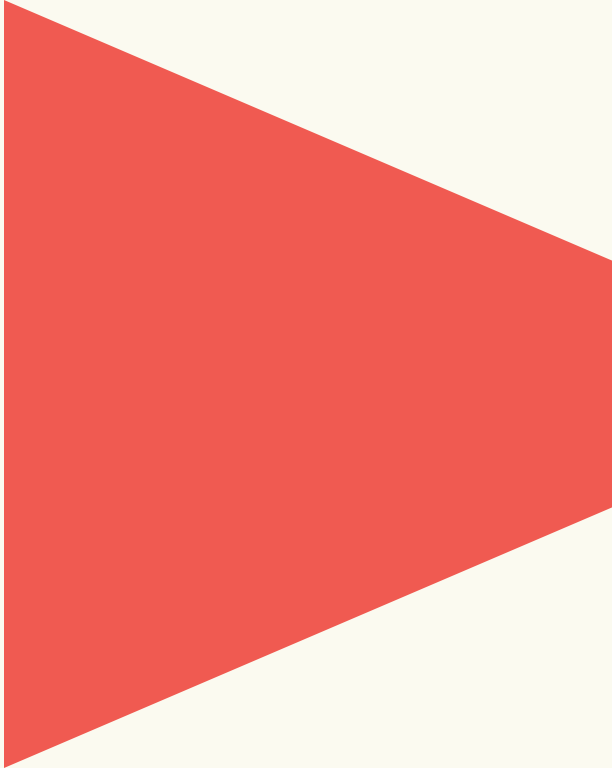
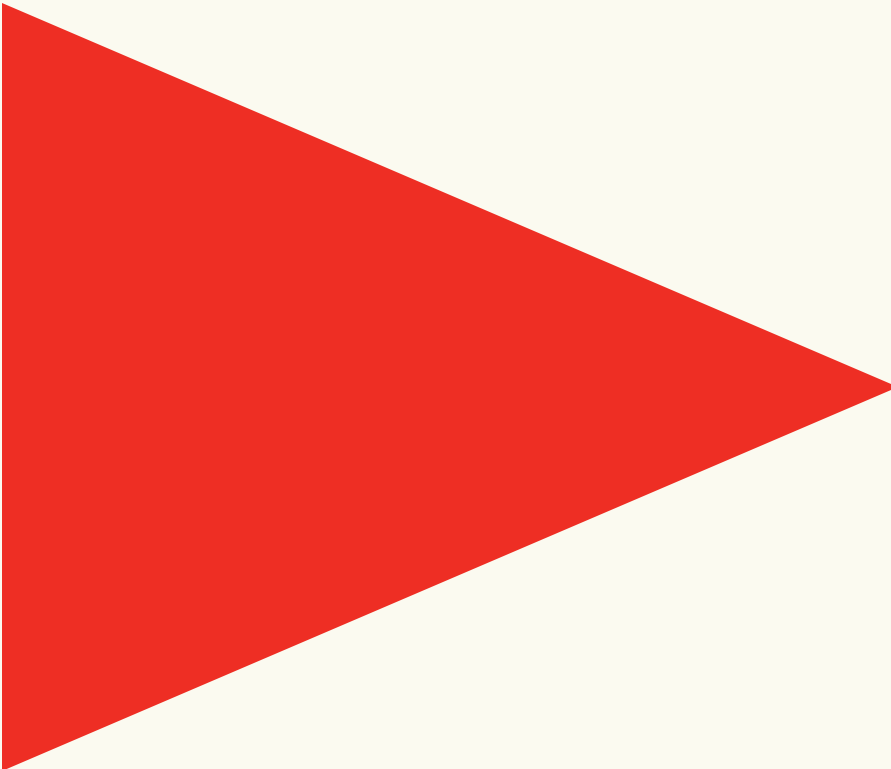


*Make government more
participatory and inclusive*



Action Area: Dynamic and Representative Government

Recommendation: Make government more participatory and inclusive

Strategy 1

Expand pathways for engagement to improve the accessibility of local governments.

- ▶ **Action 1.1:** Pass a suite of voting and electoral reforms to improve access to voting and to increase voter turnout. This should include automatic voting by mail, lowering the voting age to 16, and authorizing ranked choice voting statewide.
- ▶ **Action 1.2:** Cities and towns should hire community-based organizations and other institutional partners to expand capacity for community engagement for local projects. The Commonwealth should provide additional resources to these organizations to expand their capacity and service offerings.
- ▶ **Action 1.3:** Update Open Meeting Law to meet current civic engagement expectations and to enable remote participation in public meetings.
- ▶ **Action 1.4:** Provide resources for cities and towns to plan for and invest in municipal broadband. Prioritize resources for areas with limited digital accessibility; couple this with efforts to build local digital literacy.

Strategy 2

Enhance resident influence and representation in local decision-making.

- ▶ **Action 2.1:** Cities and towns should pilot and expand the use of participatory budgeting.
- ▶ **Action 2.2:** Require cities and towns to post all board and commission vacancies online.
- ▶ **Action 2.3:** Cities and towns should provide a stipend to board and commission volunteers.
- ▶ **Action 2.4:** The Commonwealth should require a municipality's zoning bylaws and ordinances to comply with its master plan. There should be complementary requirements to ensure meaningful local engagement in master planning processes. The Commonwealth should provide technical assistance to ensure master plans are updated periodically and provide clarity on the baseline level of information that should be included in a master plan.

Strategy 3

Grow local efforts to promote diversity, equity inclusion in the municipal workforce and across government boards and committees.

- ▶ **Action 3.1:** Municipalities should collect and report data on municipal workforce and board and committee demographics on an annual basis. Cities and towns should follow a specified data standard to ensure information is comparable.

- ▶ **Action 3.2:** Expand the role of the Commonwealth's Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity to include technical assistance for local governments to start and expand diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.
- ▶ **Action 3.3:** The Commonwealth should allocate funding for cities and towns to hire a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, either independently or regionally.