



ProgressLex

A four-year, member-supported campaign to help Lexington become the most civically informed and engaged city in the country.

***civic: adj.* - of or relating to a citizen, a city, citizenship, or community affairs**

What is ProgressLex?

ProgressLex is a four-year, member-supported campaign to help Lexington become the most civically informed and engaged city in the country.

ProgressLex started in 2008 as a grassroots collection of citizens united in opposition to the Centrepointe development in downtown Lexington. Since then, the organization has trained citizen journalists, built cross-sector connections, facilitated community dialogue, and more. ProgressLex was a winner of the 2013 Knight Information Challenge and is a finalist in the 2017 Knight Cities Challenge.

In 2016, ProgressLex underwent a reframing process that transformed the organization into a 4-year campaign. This campaign will end on December 31, 2020, sunsetting the organization.

Why a campaign?

ProgressLex restructured into a campaign for a number of reasons:

- It provides a focus and sense of urgency.
- It eliminates concerns about long-term sustainability.
- It makes impact measurement clearer.
- It makes budgeting simpler and more predictable.
- It reduces the chances of mission drift.

Why do this at all?

Fueled by geographic and economic separation and increasingly partisan media sources, the underlying structures of civic conversations are fracturing.

Americans spend 33% less time with their neighbors than they were in the 1970's, and there is a staggering decline in trust among local communities.

Local newspapers are finding their financial models strained by changes in the media landscape.

We are quickly losing civic infrastructure at the local level. We need a new approach that responds to these rapid changes by helping citizens understand what is happening in their cities, rebuilding their trust in our Democracy.

What are the steps to get there?

1. **Build a platform for an informed civic democracy**
2. **Train new and existing civic leadership**
3. **Design new ways for local government to hear from citizens**

Step One: CivicLex

A platform for an informed civic democracy

CivicLex is a three-part platform that will connect citizens with what's happening in the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government and serve as a database for non-partisan information about local issues.

CivicLex is a partnership between ProgressLex and Under-Main.

Issue Hub

In today's information overload, it can be difficult to access clear and accurate data on civic issues by piecing together local journalism, social media chatter, and rumors.

CivicLex's Issue Hub will be a web platform that serves as a central point for information about specific civic issues. Each issue will be given individual pages that will centralize differing perspectives on the issue, relevant legislation, local press coverage, examples from similar communities, a history of the issue, and more.

It will be paired with in-depth reporting about the issue from CivicLex. All information will be filterable by parties involved, locations impacted, and more.

Field Reports

People often forget that working for the government is a day job, and that the gears of the city mostly turn during the workday in board and committee meetings. This timing makes it difficult for individuals to keep up with the daily democratic process without taking time away from work.

CivicLex's Field Reports will come from trained community-recruited journalists that attend most city board and committee meetings. They will produce clear, easy to understand reports to help citizens understand what is happening in government's daily grind. These reports will be centralized in the CivicLex platform, and shared through social media in image-based formats.

All issues and meeting reports will be categorized and filterable by sector, geography, legislation, and people involved.

Direct Engagement Strategies

Online platforms are great, but access to them can be limited. That's why we are making CivicLex a multi-modal platform that doesn't just exist on the internet.

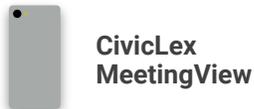
CivicLex's Direct Engagement strategies are a set of tools to engage the public directly with the civic process.



CivicLex On Air will be a weekly radio show hosted on WEKU - FM that covers relevant issues. It will feature interviews with individuals involved in civic issues - and a call-in component throughout the show.



CivicCast is a network of linked displays that highlight place-based civic information in public spaces throughout Lexington. CivicLex will partner with CivicCast to grow and utilize their network throughout Lexington.



Each city government board and committee meeting that is attended by CivicLex journalists will be livestreamed through CivicLex's Social Media accounts. This will allow for both direct citizen participation through social media commentary and the ability to review meetings after they happen.



CivicLex Town Halls will bring together stakeholders and everyday citizens to discuss specific issues. CivicLex Town Halls will be free of charge, with a suggested donation of \$5.

Step Two: EngageLex

Training new and existing civic leadership

ProgressLex's campaign will see a transformation of ProgressLex's EngageLex Fellowship program - a 5 part seminar started in 2013 that sought to equip grassroots leaders with a toolbox of skills that strengthened their voices.

Fellowships

ProgressLex will revive the Fellowship program in 2018, with the goal of training new civic leadership, and creating knowledge exchanges between existing political structures, grassroots organizations, and citizens who do not yet have civic leadership roles.

Civic Manual & Curriculum

Understanding the processes behind local democracy is an important first step towards building more competent civic leadership. ProgressLex will work with lawmakers, advocacy groups, and everyday citizens to design an easy-to-understand civics manual that is place-specific to Lexington.

This manual will be available through the ProgressLex website, and will also be made into a curriculum for educators in Fayette County Public Schools.

Step Three: CitizenLex

Designing new ways for local government to hear from citizens

The last step to making our city more civically informed and engaged is designing new and better ways for local government to listen to its constituents.

CitizenLex will work with government officials, artists, open data specialists, and citizens to design more creative, effective, and efficient methods of citizen engagement and input.

While these new methods haven't been determined, practices such as having department-specific artists-in-residence and using art as a tool for displaying civic data have been successful in cities across the country. CitizenLex will help develop more place-specific strategies for community input in Lexington.

What do we need to be successful?

1. A Plan
2. A Budget
3. Community Support

Item One: A Plan

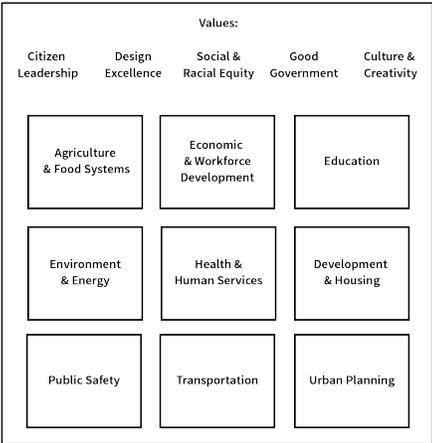
ProgressLex's campaign structure makes it possible to create a month-by-month plan for the entire 4-year campaign with concrete deadlines and goals.

In order to maintain flexibility, ProgressLex has created an annual focus-area framework. Each year, ProgressLex will hold a planning process that plans out the monthly goals for the following year.

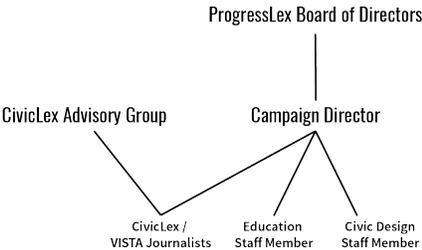
The 4 year program plan can be seen below and 2017 monthly campaign plan is available at: progresslex.org

2017	2018	2019	2020
Program Focus: Establishing CivicLex Context : Comprehensive Plan Update ---- - Establish Partnerships - Create CivicLex Advisory Group - Hire Campaign Director - Fundraise for 4-year campaign - Recruit Americorp VISTAs - Hire Education Director - Launch CivicLex - Launch Education Programming	Program Focus: Establishing EngageLex; Begin Toolkitting Context: Local & State Elections, Local Issues ---- - Hire Civic Design Director - Launch Tactical Programming	Focus: Establishing CitizenLex; Toolkitting Context: Gubernatorial Election, Primaries, Local Issues ---- TBD	Focus: Spinning off CivicLex; Spread Toolkit; Measurement Context: Presidential, State, & Local Elections ---- TBD

Programmatic Focus



Organizational Chart



ProgressLex
4-year Program Plan

Item Two: A Budget

ProgressLex's campaign structure also makes it possible to develop a complete campaign budget in advance. This enables us approach donors and funders for a full 4-year campaign commitment, instead of an open-ended annual request.

ProgressLex's revenue comes from three main streams - Membership, Program Income, and Foundational Support.

Below, you will find the 4-year projected ProgressLex campaign budget.

Income	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Campaign
Membership Income	\$59,000	\$75,625	\$92,500	\$94,375	\$321,500
CivicLex Income	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$144,000
Grant / Foundational Support	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$160,000
Program Income	\$5,000	\$18,500	\$9,500	\$10,500	\$43,500
Total income	\$140,000	\$170,125	\$178,000	\$180,875	\$669,000

Expenses	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Campaign
Staffing - Campaign Director	\$37,494	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$172,494
Staffing - Education Director	\$18,750	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$138,750
Staffing - Civic Design Director	\$0	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$100,000
Staffing - Healthcare Stipend	\$3,750	\$6,250	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$25,000
CivicLex Expenses	\$31,000	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$94,000
Office (\$400 / mo. - 7 mo.)	\$2,800	\$6,000	\$7,200	\$7,200	\$23,200
Bookkeeping & Accounting	\$3,300	\$3,300	\$3,300	\$3,300	\$13,200
Marketing	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$24,000
Program Expenses	\$2,300	\$9,100	\$10,100	\$10,100	\$31,600
Misc. & Overhead	\$5,270	\$7,833	\$9,005	\$9,005	\$31,112
(Expenses - 2016 Consulting)	\$15,000	\$0	\$0		\$15,000
Total expenses	\$125,664	\$164,483	\$189,105	\$189,105	\$668,356

Item Three: Community Support

Since almost all of its programming will be offered for free, ProgressLex will depend heavily on community support.

Products from the campaign will be beneficial to anyone who works in civic or community sectors. This includes non-profit organizations seeking to better understand city funding structures, businesses wanting clarity on development and economic development policy, and citizens wanting to know what exactly is going on in their backyard.

We hope to capture the value of this applicability in both goodwill and financial contributions.

The goodwill of the citizens of Lexington will help position CivicLex as a model for community-based journalism and policy reporting that is not controversial or partisan - and one that can potentially be replicated elsewhere.

ProgressLex's budget relies on annual fees that individuals contribute to support and access the work of ProgressLex.

Since almost all of the campaign's work will be free to the public, membership is voluntary. However, ProgressLex members will receive benefits that will evolve and develop as the campaign progresses.

In order to make membership accessible, we will offer memberships at various annual contribution levels. Below, you will find our targets per membership level.

Membership Annual Targets	2017	2018	2019	2020
Sponsor (\$10,000)	2	3	4	4
Donor (\$5,000)	5	6	7	7
Contributor (\$1,000)	10	11	12	13
Supporter (~\$250)	10	11	12	13
Member (\$25)	60	75	100	125

How will we know when we are successful?

1. Potential
2. Measurement
3. Transparency

Item One: Potential

ProgressLex believes that our city has the potential to become the most civically informed and engaged city in the country through intentional citizen and government engagement training and creating better ways of distributing civic information.

Despite Lexington having a reputation as a successful and thriving city, we are faced with some troubles:

- Due to budgetary issues, our city newspaper has no permanent, consistent reporter in city hall.
- There are few people running for office - in our most recent city council election, only 1 out of 12 district council members ran opposed.
- Our city is facing infrastructure challenges - including fulfilling a \$290M consent decree from the EPA for water quality issues (which we were recently fined for failure to perform), an affordable housing crisis, a renewed push to expand our urban growth boundary, and a public transit system in need.

In the wake of the 2016 election season, and with our dwindling local journalism, the feeling of civic apathy is palpable.

This moment and this place provide a perfect setting to lay a foundation for thinking differently about civic dialogue and information.

Our vision is for a Lexington that is built by and for all of its citizens.

Item Two: Measurement

Civic engagement can be a difficult thing to measure, but we have identified metrics to track the performance of our campaign:

- Attendance figures at public hearings and neighborhood association meetings
- Engagement between council members and their constituents
- Social media interactions with CivicLex accounts, local journalism, and local civic organizations
- Analytics from the ProgressLex website and social media
- Increased opinion writing/op-eds in our local newspaper
- Attendance at ProgressLex events and forums
- Audience ratings for radio program
- Increased competition for local elected positions
- Political campaign platforms that more clearly address local issues

Item Three: Transparency

We believe that transparency is key to rebuilding trust in democracy - and that transparency must start with ProgressLex as a campaign.

In order to be as transparent as possible, we have developed strong transparency requirements and goals for the campaign, including:

- Availability of ProgressLex budgets and campaign outlines on its website
- Reasonably up-to-date campaign timelines on the ProgressLex website
- Holding monthly public check-ins, where individuals can weigh in on how they feel about the campaign and talk with staff
- Releasing weekly reports with summaries of important topics gathered in CivicLex's Field Reports, and brief descriptions of what the campaign's work was that week
- Complete listing of fund contributors and contribution amounts (unless specifically requested to be anonymous or private)
- Public posting of audited annual financial documents

How can you help out?

1. **Become a member at:
progresslex.org**
2. **Talk to your friends & neighbors
about ProgressLex**
3. **Sign up for our newsletter & weekly
reports by emailing:
news@progresslex.org**
4. **Attend your neighborhood
association meeting**
5. **Attend a city council meeting**

