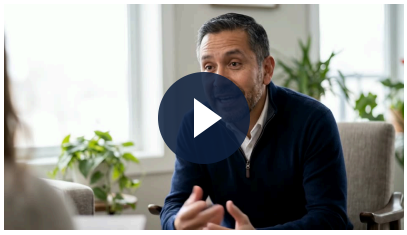
COLLECTION I — THE 12 POINTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Strategic Vision — Citizen's Guide

The importance of long-term thinking in governance and how communities can advocate for it.

By Daniel P. Devine · Civest Sphere · November 2026



WATCH THE VIDEO

Strategic Vision in 60 Seconds · 0:57

Watch it on American Civic Power or YouTube.

https://www.americancivicpower.com/goodgovernance#strategic-vision

What it means

Strategic vision means leaders plan for the community's long-term future: infrastructure, housing, the environment, the economy and finances, not just the next budget or election.

Why it matters

Problems ignored today get more expensive tomorrow. Aging pipes, underfunded pensions and unplanned growth are all costs of short-term thinking.

Signs it's working

- An up-to-date comprehensive plan that guides zoning and investment.
- Multi-year capital plans for roads, water, buildings and equipment.
- Reserves set aside responsibly, with a clear purpose.

- Planning for risks like flooding, storms and climate change.

Warning signs

- A comprehensive plan that's decades old.
- One-time money used to cover ongoing costs.
- Repeated emergency repairs instead of planned replacements.
- Big decisions made without considering long-term costs.

What you can do

1. Find out when your town or county last updated its comprehensive plan.
2. Attend capital-plan and budget hearings, and ask about the five- and ten-year outlook.
3. Ask candidates what they want the community to look like in twenty years, and how they'd get there.
4. Join or follow planning boards and long-range committees.

Related points

Effectiveness & Efficiency, Consensus Orientation, Local Power.

Last reviewed November 2026. This guide is general information, not legal advice. Laws, deadlines and procedures change, so confirm details with the official source before you act.

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