



# Activity 3.8: Community Timeline

## Materials Needed

Paper  
Writing Utensils  
Timeline for wall  
Post-it notes

## Intended Audience

Members or Staff of your Organization

## Time Needed

45 Minutes

## Purpose of the Activity

This activity is designed to give participants information about the history of your community. It will help build a shared analysis of the past in order to think collectively about a vision for the community's future. The activity will also introduce participants to community visioning as a research method.

## By the End of Activity Participants Will

- Have learned about the history and timeline of the community or issue you are working on
- Have learned about community visioning as a research method

## Before this Activity Participants Will Need to

Know about your campaign and how research fits into the campaign

## Part I: Introduction to Community Visioning (15 minutes)

### Facilitator Instructions

1. Welcome everyone. Ask attendees to introduce themselves and mention one recent change that they have noticed in the neighborhood.
2. Explain that we are here today as part of a community visioning process to have our voices heard about what type of future we want for our community (or schools, housing complex, etc.).
3. Explain that everyone's input will be used to create a plan for the future of our community.

## Part II: Timeline of Community Development (30 minutes)

### Facilitator Instructions

1. Before the meeting put a timeline on the wall. You can start as far back as you think makes sense and can divide the years in 5 or 10 year increments (i.e. 1950s, 1960s, etc.).
2. Make sure participants are seated in a way that they are able to see timeline on the wall.
3. Set the context: before we come up with a plan for our community's future development we want to review the history of development in our neighborhood.



4. Give each participant several post-it notes and ask them to write something that happened in the neighborhood during some point along the timeline. This could include the creation or demolition of a building or school or a major political or social event.
5. Ask everyone to place the post-it notes on the wall next to the corresponding year(s).
6. Ask participants to explain what they put on the timeline. Make it interactive. Ask participants for input: Does anyone remember when building x was demolished and a luxury condo was built in its place? Who can describe what the community looked like in the 1970s, 80s or 90s and how it was different than today?
7. As you finish the timeline and get to the present, get the group to analyze the development process. Are there any major trends that stick out over time? Are these trends good for our community or not? What does this history mean for our community now?