EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document suggests various social media strategies that relate to community division. Community leaders can adapt some of these strategies to a social media plan that is tailored to their community. The suggestions in this guide are intended to complement, rather than displace, existing strategies used by community leaders.

Currently, community leaders are using some of the following general strategies (discussed under these section headings in more detail), each of which warrants creation of accompanying policies and training.

1. Use social media, websites, and apps to create widely-used and trusted online information sources for residents that will help maintain and enhance residents' confidence and become an antidote to inaccurate news and unsubstantiated rumors.

2. Use social media, websites, and apps to increase input from residents in ongoing decisions and respond to residents' concerns.

3. Use social media, websites, and apps to promote offline, face-to-face events and to support online dialogue among residents in order to build community resiliency.

4. Work to reduce and combat online hate speech/discriminatory conduct through social media so as to reduce the effects.

5. Mine social media and other online data as part of an overall ongoing initiative to better understand community concerns.

We suggest that you begin reading with the checklist that begins on the next page and lists strategies pertinent to three different situations: during tranquil times, during unrest, and following unrest. Use the chart as a stress test for your community — have you taken advantage of all the opportunities social media offers for building trust and dealing effectively with divisions? If you want to learn more about a particular idea, these strategies are discussed in more detail in the Part entitled "Strategies." The guide concludes with a glossary of social media terms and a list of sites that offer additional guidance on social media use by community leaders.

CHECKLIST FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT ON COMMUNITY LEADERS' SOCIAL MEDIA USE FOR DIVIDED COMMUNITIES

Before Community Unrest

Strategy for local leaders	*Goals*
Strategy 1: Create widely-used and trusted online information sources and capacities during tranquil times. When in crisis, people use existing communication vehicles. 　✿ Provide information that residents will find useful (1b) 　✿ Publicize the social media sites ahead of time (1c) 　✿ Use an authentic voice (1d) 　✿ Use multi-media (1e) 　✿ Use hashtags (1f) 　✿ Get verified (1g) 　✿ Develop strategies to reach each key group, sources that will resonate with each, and a list of critical people to get out messages (1i-k) 　✿ Create and announce policies for staff using social media (1l) 　✿ Develop an on-call staff list (1m)	**Serve residents** **Establish trusted sources of information**
Strategy 2: Use social media to gain input from and respond to residents 　✿ Provide opportunities for residents to ask questions (2a) 　✿ Gain residents' input on some decisions (2b) 　✿ Act on residents' ideas (2c) 　✿ Adopt policies and training for staff to implement these strategies (2d)	**Serve residents** **Keep them engaged** **Build trust in public officials** **Improve decision-making**

Strategy 3: Promote offline and online dialogue among residents ⚙ Bring residents to in-person discussion sites (3a) ⚙ Stream key live events online(3b) ⚙ Recognize positive contributions (3c)	**Build resiliency of community**
Strategy 4: Reduce and combat hate/discriminatory/ threatening online speech ⚙ Monitor to discover such speech (4a) ⚙ Call on social media platforms to change (4b) ⚙ Ask local employers to adopt guidelines for such speech (4c) ⚙ Help residents understand that you care about their hurt, and instruct them about how to deal with the online harassment ⚙ Work with social media platforms for change (4d)	**Help reduce residents' fears and alienation** **Foster a collaborative and inclusive environment on social media platforms**
Strategy 5: Mine social media and other online data to learn about community concerns ⚙ Watch residents' questions (5a) ⚙ Track hashtags and trending topics (5b) ⚙ Use data to understand where concerns are arising (5c) ⚙ Use analytics on own sites (5d) ⚙ Consider more predictive uses (5e) ⚙ Make and communicate policies/ethical standards regarding potential privacy, free speech and assembly, and discrimination (5f)	**Anticipate residents' concerns in order to deal with these concerns during tranquil times** **Understand deeper issues that may become salient when dealing with a crisis**

After Community Unrest

Strategy for local leaders	Goals
Strategy 1: Add to widely-used and trusted online information sources ✴ Be especially attentive to speed and detail in putting information online, including photos and videos; phone numbers for national media requests (1a) ✴ Put up information in a more permanant way (e.g. pinning certain posts) for residents in the midst of crisis, including information about any key incidents, and about traffic or safety (1b) ✴ Consider a place to check rumors (1b) ✴ Let residents know where they can get help with trauma, injuries, and property damage ✴ Put forth a message that can unify all groups (1h) ✴ Use lists of critical people to reach the sources that will reach each group and resonate with them (1i-k) ✴ Expand the staff available (1m)	**Counteract inaccurate news** **Maintain trust** **Reduce fear**
Strategy 2: Use social media to gain input from residents and respond to their concerns ✴ Provide opportunities for residents to ask questions ✴ Bring in staff to respond quickly to residents' questions (2a) ✴ Add questions inquiring how things are going for them	**Serve residents** **Keep them engaged** **Build trust in public officials** **Improve decision-making**
Strategy 3: Promote offline and online dialogue among residents ✴ Use social media to bring residents to events that allow them to express views and emotions (3a) ✴ Live stream key events (3b)	**Create sense of commonality across divisions and permit positive ways to express views and emotions**
Strategy 4: Reduce and combat hate/discriminatory/ threatening online speech ✴ Monitor to discover such speech (4a) ✴ Help residents understand that you care about their hurt, instruct them about how to deal with the online harassment ✴ Work with social media platforms for change (4d)	**Reduce fears and alienation**

After Community Unrest (continued)

Strategy 5: Mine social media data to learn about community concerns ✱ Monitor both the content of concerns and the intensity of feelings about these concerns (5a-f) ✱ Use social media data to inform strategies for effectively engaging with community members both online and offline	**Be responsive as new concerns and feelings develop**

In the Aftermath of Community Unrest

Strategy for local leaders	*Goals*
Strategy 1: Add to widely-used and trusted online information sources ✱ Keep residents informed about ongoing negotiations as well as progress in dealing with concerns that were raised during unrest (1a) ✱ If consensus was reached on changes, provide an easy way to monitor implementation of the changes	**Build trust** **Counteract inaccurate news**
Strategy 2: Use social media to gain input from and respond to residents ✱ Provide opportunities for residents to ask questions about developing plans (2a) ✱ Gain residents' input on some decisions (2b) ✱ Act on residents' ideas (2c)	**Serve residents** **Keep them engaged** **Build trust in public officials** **Improve decision-making**
Strategy 3: Strategy 3: Promote offline and online dialogue among residents ✱ Use social media to bring residents to events that allow expression of views and emotions (3a) ✱ Live stream key events (3b)	**Create sense of commonality across divisions and permit positive ways to express views and emotions**

Strategy 4: Reduce and combat hate/discriminatory/ threatening online speech
 	
  ✿ Monitor to discover such speech (4a)
 	
  ✿ Help residents understand that you care about their hurt, instruct them about how to deal with the online harassment
 	
  ✿ Work with social media platforms for change (4d)
	Reduce fears and alienation

Strategy 5: Mine social media data to learn about community concerns
 	
  ✿ Use the means developed during tranquil times to monitor both the content of concerns and the intensity of feelings about these concerns (5a-f)
 	
  ✿ Use social media data to measure the success of strategies to increase online and offline dialogue and strategies to reduce hate/discriminatory/ threatening speech
	Be responsive as new concerns and feelings develop
	
	Use social media research to help structure the conversations with residents