

VICINISM

The Neighbor-First Civic Movement

FOUNDING FRAMEWORK / PLATFORM / DECLARATION / ORGANIZING BLUEPRINT

"We belong to one another more than we belong to any party."

Foundational Draft 1.0. Developed from the June 24, 2025 conversation "Internal Tyranny and Opposition." This is a proposal for open, representative ratification—not a finished creed imposed from above.

THE FRAMEWORK AT A GLANCE

Inside this document

A practical constitutional base for a movement that begins with neighbors, protects difference, and builds power upward through accountable institutions.

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Founding safeguard: "Unity above all" is refined here as unity without uniformity. No call to unity may override equal rights, honest dissent, conscience, due process, or peaceful opposition.

Executive Statement

Vicinism is a neighbor-first civic movement. It begins with a simple claim: political life should be organized around people who share places, institutions, risks, memories, and futures - not around parties that remember communities mainly when they need votes.

Vicinism draws its name from the Latin *vicinus*: a neighbor, or one belonging to the same vicinity. Its primary political unit is the lived neighborhood: the block, village, rural township, apartment cluster, tribal community, small town, or urban district in which people can meet repeatedly, know the consequences of decisions, and act together.

Vicinism is not socialism, communism, conventional Democratic politics, conventional Republican politics, libertarianism, or an ideology of the political center. It is a different axis of politics. The central question is not simply left versus right. It is this:

How far is power from the people who live with its consequences?

Vicinism takes useful ideas from many traditions without surrendering to any of them: civil and constitutional rights from liberalism; civic duty and resistance to arbitrary power from republicanism; family, place, and social obligation from communitarian thought; enterprise and experimentation from market traditions; worker voice and shared prosperity from labor movements; stewardship from conservation; and decentralized problem-solving from the work of Elinor Ostrom. ^{[7][8][9][10]}

Its method is equally important. Neighbors listen before prescribing. They map assets before describing deficits. They complete visible common projects before asking for political power. They deliberate across difference, measure results, disclose money and conflicts, rotate leadership, and organize upward through a federation of self-governing chapters.

The aim is neither a weak government nor an all-encompassing one. The aim is capable public power at the closest level that can do the job, with higher levels responsible for universal rights, fair resources, national coordination, and problems that cross local boundaries. This is subsidiarity with solidarity. ^[8]

The movement's governing phrase is:

Unity without uniformity. Dignity without exception. Power from the neighborhood up.

Part I - Identity and First Principles

1. The Name

Vicinus, vicinia, and Vicinism

The Latin *vicinus* means neighboring or neighbor. It comes from *vicus*, a settlement, village, street, or urban quarter. The related Latin *vicinia* means neighborhood, vicinity, or the neighbors collectively. ^[2]

"Vicinism" is therefore a natural English formation for a philosophy of neighboring. The term is not linguistically empty, however. It already has a specialized botanical meaning: natural cross-pollination among nearby plant species or varieties. ^[3] That existing meaning creates a search and branding challenge, but it also offers an unusually fitting metaphor. Civic Vicinism is the human cross-pollination that happens when different people share a place without losing their distinctiveness.

Recommended public presentation:

Vicinism - The Neighbor-First Civic Movement

Recommended member name:

Vicinist - a person who practices neighborly self-government and mutual responsibility.

Recommended plain-English motto:

Neighbors United - From the Neighborhood Up

A note on "Vicini Uniti"

The original conversation adopted *Vicini Uniti* for "Neighbors United." *Vicini* is the Latin masculine or mixed plural of neighbor. *Uniti* is readily understood through modern Italian and Neo-Latin usage, but the phrase should not be advertised as an unquestionably Classical Latin construction. The movement may keep *Vicini Uniti* as a living Romance-language heritage line while leading publicly with the inclusive English phrase "Neighbors United." A classicist should review any Latin intended for a permanent seal.

Brand protection before launch

Before formal incorporation, the founders should commission a trademark, domain, state-name, and social-handle review. Because "vicinism" already appears in scientific dictionaries, discoverability should rely on the paired descriptor "neighbor-first civic movement" or the phrase "Civic Vicinism."

2. The Founding Definition

Vicinism is a pluralist civic philosophy and organizing movement that places equal human dignity, neighborly obligation, local self-government, and freedom from arbitrary power at the center of public life. It builds capable communities from the neighborhood up and federates them to solve problems at the scale those problems require.

Every part of that definition matters.

- **Pluralist** means no party, religion, class, race, ideology, region, or way of life owns the movement.
- **Civic** means the movement exists to practice self-government, not merely to express opinions.
- **Equal dignity** is the non-negotiable rights floor beneath every local decision.
- **Neighborly obligation** means freedom includes duties to people and places that make freedom possible.
- **Local self-government** means decisions should be made near those who bear their consequences whenever that level can act effectively.
- **Freedom from arbitrary power** means opposing domination by government, monopoly, political machines, landlords, employers, mobs, algorithms, or movement leaders alike.
- **Federation** means local autonomy without local isolation.

3. Why a Neighbor-First Movement, and Why Now

The opening for Vicinism is real. In late 2025, only 17 percent of Americans told Pew Research Center that they trusted the federal government to do what is right always or most of the time. Gallup has found far greater confidence in local government than in Congress, while Pew's 2025 neighborhood research found that only 23 percent of Americans believed all or most of their neighbors shared their political views. ^{[4][5][6]} The country is locally more mixed than partisan media often implies, and local institutions remain a more credible place to rebuild democratic practice.

The evidence also supports the movement's core intuition. Robert Sampson and colleagues define collective efficacy as social cohesion among neighbors combined with a willingness to act for the common good; their Chicago research found it associated with lower neighborhood violence even after accounting for major structural factors. ^[11] Elinor Ostrom's work demonstrated that communities can govern shared resources through locally legitimate rules, monitoring, conflict resolution, and nested institutions rather than relying only on centralized states or privatization. ^[7]

This does not mean neighborhoods are automatically wise or just. Local communities can exclude renters, newcomers, minorities, poor residents, young people, or anyone without time and money to attend meetings. They can defend scarcity in the name of character. They can be captured by the loudest faction. Vicinism therefore treats localism as a method bounded by equal rights, open participation, evidence, appeal, and solidarity across places.

4. The Six Ideals

Dignity

Every person has equal moral worth and civic standing. No neighbor is disposable, invisible, or a tool for someone else's project.

Belonging

People need more than services and consumer choice. They need a durable place in a web of memory, relationship, contribution, and care.

Agency

People should have meaningful power over decisions that structure their lives. Participation must move resources and change outcomes, not function as a decorative listening session.

Reciprocity

Rights and responsibilities travel together. A neighbor may ask the community for help and is also invited to contribute time, knowledge, care, work, or resources according to ability.

Stewardship

We inherit streets, schools, institutions, land, water, stories, and public trust. We owe them to the next generation in better condition.

Concord

Unity is not sameness. Concord is the disciplined practice of acting together where we can, disagreeing honestly where we must, and refusing to turn political opponents into enemies.

5. The Twelve Tenets of Vicinism

1. Neighbor before party

Party affiliation may describe a vote. It must not outrank the obligations created by shared life. We will cooperate with anyone who honors human dignity, constitutional democracy, nonviolence, truth, and the movement's rules.

2. Unity without uniformity

No member must surrender conscience, faith, culture, identity, or honest disagreement to belong. Unity means shared responsibility and peaceful constitutional action, not silence or ideological obedience.

3. A universal rights floor

Local majorities may not vote away the civil, constitutional, or human rights of minorities or dissenters. The closer power moves to home, the stronger due process, transparency, equal protection, and avenues of appeal must become.

4. Power at the closest capable level

Decisions should be made by the smallest, nearest body that can handle them effectively. Higher levels act when rights, resources, expertise, spillovers, scale, or national coordination require it. Subsidiarity is not abandonment; it is disciplined allocation of responsibility. ^[8]

5. Mutual responsibility and radical neighborliness

Every person is treated first as a neighbor, not a demographic, consumer, taxpayer, worker, partisan, problem, or stranger. We protect the vulnerable, notice isolation, share burdens, and make contribution possible for everyone.

6. Freedom as non-domination

Freedom is not merely being left alone. It is security against arbitrary, unaccountable power. Vicinism opposes government abuse, corruption, monopoly, coercive workplaces, predatory extraction, political machines, and private control of essential life without accountability. ^[9]

7. A plural economy that serves life

Markets, public institutions, cooperatives, mutuals, nonprofits, family firms, and community ownership are tools, not articles of faith. The movement judges them by outcomes: dignity, freedom, broad prosperity, innovation, resilience, fair competition, and accountable local benefit.

8. Truth in public

Expertise must be accountable, understandable, and open to challenge; popular participation must be informed by evidence. Vicinism rejects both rule by unaccountable experts and politics that treats expertise itself as an enemy.

9. Democracy is a practice

Voting is essential but insufficient. Democracy also lives in assemblies, juries, unions, schools, libraries, associations, public budgets, cooperatives, hearings, and repeated acts of shared problem-solving. Representative deliberative processes and participatory budgeting give residents direct experience with difficult tradeoffs. ^{[12][13]}

10. The neighborhood defines itself openly

Politicians should not be free to divide communities for partisan advantage. Neighbors should document their communities of interest through public mapping, history, institutions, travel patterns, economic ties, cultural life, and testimony. Those definitions remain subject to population equality, the Voting Rights Act, and anti-discrimination law. ^{[14][15]}

11. Local autonomy, national solidarity

No prosperous neighborhood is an island, and no distressed place should be abandoned. Chapters govern their own work within the charter while sharing resources, knowledge, and obligations through a national federation.

12. Service before status

Leadership is earned through listening, organizing, delivery, and trust. No chapter should endorse candidates before it has completed visible local work. No national leader should be insulated from members. The movement exists to build neighbors' power, not a founder's brand.

6. The Vicinist Test

Vicinism cannot be a random collection of attractive policies. Any proposal, whether commonly called left, right, or center, must pass a consistent test.

1. **Dignity:** Does it protect equal rights and the dignity of every affected person?
2. **Proximity:** Is authority placed at the closest level capable of succeeding?
3. **Non-domination:** Does it reduce arbitrary power and prevent capture by government, wealth, monopoly, faction, or movement leaders?
4. **Reciprocity:** Are burdens, benefits, duties, and voice distributed fairly?
5. **Belonging:** Does it strengthen people's capacity to remain, contribute, and build relationships in their community?
6. **Evidence:** Are the assumptions public, the tradeoffs plain, and the results measurable?
7. **Reversibility:** Can the policy be piloted, reviewed, corrected, or ended if it fails?

8. **Federation:** Does it respect local variation while accounting for effects on other communities and future generations?

Part II - A Distinct Political Identity

7. The Traditions Vicinism Learns From

Tradition	What Vicinism carries forward	What Vicinism refuses
Constitutional liberalism	Equal rights, conscience, speech, due process, privacy, limits on power	Atomized citizenship and the belief that consumer choice alone creates freedom
Civic republicanism	Self-government, civic virtue, anti-corruption, freedom from arbitrary power	Romantic nationalism, exclusionary citizenship, and coerced conformity
Communitarian thought	Place, family, association, memory, obligation, the social nature of the person	Using "community values" to suppress difference or individual rights
Market traditions	Enterprise, dispersed knowledge, price signals, experimentation, property, small business	Monopoly, extraction, inherited privilege, and treating every human need as a commodity
Labor and social-democratic traditions	Worker voice, bargaining power, social insurance, public goods, economic security	Class reductionism, permanent bureaucratic control, and a predetermined socialist end state
Conservative traditions	Stewardship, continuity, family and voluntary institutions, skepticism of concentrated state power	Hierarchy without accountability, exclusion, nostalgia, and tolerance of concentrated private power
Ecological and Indigenous traditions	Interdependence, long time horizons, responsibility to land and generations	Romantic appropriation, tokenism, and policy made without the authority of affected peoples
Ostromian polycentric governance	Local rule-making, monitoring, conflict resolution, nested institutions, multiple centers of authority	The false choice between total centralization and total privatization

8. What Vicinism Is Not

Not DSA or a socialist transition project

The Democratic Socialists of America's 2026 program explicitly seeks a classless society, public ownership of the largest corporations and essential industries, a new constitution, and a democratic socialist republic. ^[22] Vicinism may agree with DSA members on specific goals - stronger worker power, healthcare access, housing, democratic reform, anti-monopoly policy, or opposition to unnecessary war - but it does not organize society around class struggle or treat the replacement of capitalism as its predetermined destination.

Vicinism organizes around place and neighborly obligation. It supports a plural economy in which private enterprise, worker ownership, public utilities, cooperatives, community trusts, and nonprofits can coexist under rules that prevent domination and deliver public value.

Not communism

Vicinism rejects one-party rule, vanguard politics, suppression of dissent, comprehensive state ownership, political violence, and the subordination of the person to a class or party. It protects property, enterprise, association, religion, speech, due process, opposition, and peaceful changes of power.

Not conventional Democratic politics

The Democratic Party is a national electoral coalition whose formal platform is implemented primarily through candidates, administrations, legislation, agencies, and allied institutions. ^[23] Vicinism is not an auxiliary of that coalition. It will cooperate on shared aims and oppose it when national party incentives, donor networks, bureaucracy, or electoral expediency override the expressed needs of communities.

Traditional campaigns appear near election day and disappear after votes are counted. A Vicinist chapter remains after the election, whether its preferred candidate won or lost. Its first measure is not votes delivered to a party, but neighbors organized, trust built, projects completed, resources moved, and local power made accountable.

Not conventional Republican politics

Vicinism shares concerns about bureaucracy, family and community stability, enterprise, religious liberty, public order, and distant government. It rejects strongman politics, nativism, corporate impunity, denial of equal rights, indifference to concentrated poverty, and the idea that markets or charity alone can secure freedom for every neighbor.

Not libertarian withdrawal

Vicinism values personal liberty, voluntary association, entrepreneurship, privacy, and limits on government. It also recognizes that people can be dominated by private monopolies, employers, landlords, inherited exclusion, and the absence of essential public goods. Freedom sometimes requires common provision and collective bargaining power.

Not technocracy or anti-expertise populism

Experts should inform decisions, disclose uncertainty, explain consequences, and answer to the public. They should not rule by obscurity. Popular leaders should translate legitimate anger into accountable institutions, not use it to concentrate personal power or turn expertise into an enemy category.

Not empty centrism

Vicinism is not a compromise halfway between existing parties. It may take a position that no major party currently owns. Unity means building enough relationship to govern through disagreement; it does not mean averaging every conflict or refusing moral judgment.

Vicinism is not the midpoint between left and right. It is the movement from distant power toward accountable power.

Part III - The Founding Platform

9. How to Read the Platform

This is a values-bound platform, not an unchangeable policy catechism. It states national commitments and preferred tools. Local chapters may adapt priorities to place, but they may not violate the charter's rights floor, nonviolence rule, financial integrity standards, or equal-membership principle.

Each major plank should eventually be converted into a public policy brief containing the problem, affected neighbors, evidence, constitutional authority, level of government, cost, funding, implementation owner, measurable outcomes, risks, and sunset or review date.

10. Pillar One - Neighbor Democracy and Electoral Repair

Vicinism seeks representation that follows real communities rather than manipulating them.

- Require transparent redistricting with published criteria, public data, public mapping tools, multilingual hearings, and a written explanation of how testimony affected the final map.
- Use genuinely independent or cross-partisan commissions where state law permits, with strict conflict rules and judicial review.
- Protect constitutional population equality and the full force of the Voting Rights Act before applying community-of-interest criteria. Section 2 applies nationwide and prohibits discriminatory results as well as discriminatory intent. ^[15]
- Give documented neighborhoods and communities of interest meaningful weight after those legal obligations, consistent with criteria recognized in many states and proposed federal reform. ^{[14][16]}
- Prohibit partisan mid-decade redistricting except when required by a court or a clearly defined legal necessity.
- Support experimentation with proportional multi-member representation and ranked-choice voting where lawful and where the design protects minority voting strength. The Fair Representation Act introduced in 2025 offers one federal model, not a final Vicinist blueprint. ^[16]
- Expand nonpartisan civic information, accessible voting, auditable elections, transparent administration, and meaningful remedies for voter suppression or intimidation.
- Create participatory budgeting at municipal, school, park, library, housing, and neighborhood levels so residents control a visible share of public resources.
- Use representative civic lotteries for difficult planning questions, with stratified selection, balanced evidence, paid participation, and a required public response from officials. OECD guidance emphasizes random selection and structured deliberation as defining features. ^[12]

- Strengthen public financing, real-time donor and lobby disclosure, revolving-door rules, open calendars, conflict reporting, procurement transparency, and bans on officials trading individual stocks while in office.

11. Pillar Two - Rights, Rule of Law, and Freedom from Domination

Local democracy is legitimate only when every person is secure in equal rights.

- Protect speech, conscience, religion, assembly, press, privacy, due process, equal protection, voting rights, bodily security, and peaceful political opposition.
- Reject collective punishment, political violence, dehumanization, government retaliation, viewpoint-based policing, and the use of public power to persecute lawful dissent.
- Impose clear limits, disclosure, legislative review, and expiration dates on emergency powers.
- Provide independent inspectors general, ombuds offices, whistleblower protection, public defenders, open-records enforcement, and accessible administrative appeals.
- Require law-enforcement, surveillance, and public-algorithm systems to operate under law, warrant standards where applicable, audit, and meaningful civilian oversight.
- Protect the freedom to organize unions, businesses, cooperatives, religious communities, civic associations, and opposition movements consistent with equal rights and nonviolence.

12. Pillar Three - Capable Government at the Right Scale

Vicinism rejects both bureaucratic distance and performative government-cutting that leaves communities unable to act.

- Assign each function to the closest level that can perform it effectively, while higher levels guarantee rights, minimum standards, fair fiscal capacity, technical help, and coordination across boundaries.
- Write laws, budgets, notices, and public forms in plain language, with translations and accessible formats.
- Publish service standards, wait times, unit costs, contracts, grants, performance measures, known failures, and corrective actions in usable public dashboards.
- Build professional public service protected from patronage, paired with strong ethics, performance review, and resident-facing accountability.
- Default to pilots and phased implementation for uncertain programs; publish results and stop what does not work.
- Use intergovernmental compacts for watersheds, housing markets, transportation, public health, energy, and other problems no neighborhood can solve alone.

13. Pillar Four - A Plural Economy and Community Wealth

The economy should reward initiative while keeping people and places from becoming raw material for distant extraction.

- Defend the right to start, own, grow, sell, and pass on a lawful business under rules that preserve fair competition, labor rights, public health, and the environment.
- Enforce antitrust and competition policy against monopoly, monopsony, price fixing, predatory platforms, and private gatekeepers that can dictate the terms of essential life.
- Expand access to small-business counseling, fair credit, community development finance, procurement, technical assistance, and succession planning. The SBA's national SBDC network offers an existing delivery infrastructure. ^[28]
- Give locally rooted small firms a fair opportunity in public procurement without sacrificing quality, price transparency, or anti-corruption controls.
- Support voluntary employee ownership, cooperatives, mutuals, credit unions, community investment vehicles, and conversions that preserve viable local firms when owners retire. USDA notes that cooperatives can fill market gaps, keep profits local, and operate in sectors from broadband and energy to childcare and housing. ^[17]
- Use public or municipal ownership when a natural monopoly or essential service cannot be made accountable through competition, regulation, cooperative ownership, or contracting.
- Require major subsidies and development deals to disclose beneficiaries, opportunity costs, job quality, local hiring, ownership, community benefits, and clawbacks for broken promises.
- Protect workers' right to organize, bargain, change jobs, report abuse, and receive transparent pay. Pair wage growth with productivity, training, profit-sharing, employee ownership, and sector-specific conditions.

14. Pillar Five - Housing, Land, and the Right to Remain

Vicinity supports rootedness and mobility: the ability to remain in a community one helped build and the ability to move toward opportunity.

- Build enough homes of varied sizes and prices near jobs, schools, services, and transportation, including starter homes, apartments, accessory units, senior housing, and "missing middle" options.
- Make permitting timely, legible, and predictable while preserving genuine health, safety, environmental, and design responsibilities.
- Preserve existing affordable homes and prevent displacement through targeted assistance, tenant protections, home repair, property-tax circuit breakers, and anti-fraud enforcement.

- Expand community land trusts, limited-equity models, shared-equity homeownership, and mission-driven acquisition where local demand supports them. HUD research describes the capacity of community land trusts to preserve long-term affordability while also noting financing and scale constraints. ^[18]
- Tie new development to infrastructure, schools, parks, water, transportation, accessibility, and measurable community benefits.
- Give renters, homeowners, unhoused residents, builders, workers, and future residents a voice in planning; neighborhood participation must not become a veto reserved for current property owners.

15. Pillar Six - Dignified Work, Family Life, and Care

No economic system is successful if ordinary people cannot form households, care for one another, and plan a future.

- Protect the right to organize a union and the right to form a business.
- Build apprenticeships, career and technical education, portable credentials, paid work-based learning, and pathways from school or displacement into skilled work.
- Establish portable benefits that follow workers across employers and work arrangements.
- Ensure paid family and medical leave, reliable childcare and eldercare options, predictable scheduling, and protection from retaliation for caregiving responsibilities.
- Support neighborhood-scale care cooperatives, home-care networks, respite services, and intergenerational programs alongside larger public and private systems.
- Design taxes and benefits so work, caregiving, marriage, saving, and small-business formation are not punished by abrupt eligibility cliffs.

16. Pillar Seven - Education, Libraries, and Civic Formation

Democracy must be learned by doing.

- Guarantee strong public schools and equitable access to teachers, facilities, arts, science, language, special education, career education, counseling, and safe learning conditions.
- Teach constitutional literacy, local government, media literacy, statistics, civil disagreement, organizing, budgeting, and the history of the actual community - including achievements, conflict, exclusion, and repair.
- Give students practice through school participatory budgets, juries, service projects, apprenticeships, and student governance with real responsibility.
- Treat libraries as core civic infrastructure: trusted places for information, meetings, digital access, local archives, navigation of public services, and encounter across difference.

- Support multiple educational models where they meet transparent quality, civil-rights, fiscal-integrity, and access standards.
- Make lifelong learning, trade transitions, and community college affordable and closely connected to regional opportunity.

17. Pillar Eight - Health, Recovery, and Human Flourishing

Every person should have reliable access to essential health care without financial ruin. Vicinism is open to public, cooperative, nonprofit, and private delivery, but not to a system that leaves neighbors untreated.

- Guarantee practical access to primary, preventive, emergency, maternal, mental-health, dental, and substance-use care.
- Measure success by health, access, continuity, avoidable hospitalization, financial protection, patient experience, and community conditions - not simply spending or insurance enrollment.
- Strengthen neighborhood clinics, rural health, mobile care, school-based services, home care, and telehealth while protecting privacy and quality.
- Treat addiction with a combined strategy of prevention, treatment, recovery support, family support, public order, and focused enforcement against predatory trafficking.
- Address clean air and water, safe housing, food access, mobility, violence, isolation, and work conditions as health issues.

18. Pillar Nine - Safe Neighborhoods and Equal Justice

People deserve safety from violence and safety from abuse of authority at the same time.

- Maintain well-trained, adequately staffed, accountable emergency and law-enforcement services focused on serious harm, constitutional practice, problem-solving, and public trust.
- Invest in violence interruption, youth opportunity, victim services, domestic-violence response, credible messengers, mental-health crisis teams, street outreach, and environmental design.
- Publish stop, search, force, arrest, clearance, complaint, discipline, and response-time data with appropriate privacy protections.
- Strengthen public defense, speedy case resolution, evidence integrity, proportional sentencing, restorative options where appropriate, reentry, and remedies for official misconduct.
- Build collective efficacy through resident relationships and shared action, not vigilantism or suspicion based on identity. ^[11]
- Give victims a durable voice and material support without using their suffering to justify indiscriminate punishment.

19. Pillar Ten - Infrastructure, Stewardship, and Resilience

Public works are a covenant across generations.

- Adopt a "maintain first" discipline for roads, bridges, water, sewer, schools, parks, transit, public buildings, and digital infrastructure before chasing prestige projects.
- Ensure clean water, clean air, healthy soil, reliable waste systems, and transparent enforcement in every community.
- Build energy systems that are affordable, reliable, increasingly low-pollution, resilient to disaster, and capable of supporting modern industry.
- Give affected communities meaningful participation, direct benefits, mitigation, and transparent data when major infrastructure, extraction, generation, transmission, or data facilities are proposed.
- Invest in local disaster readiness, cooling and warming centers, mutual-aid plans, microgrids where useful, flood and fire protection, and resilient communications.
- Use full lifecycle costs and make polluters bear the costs they impose rather than transferring them to neighbors or future generations.

20. Pillar Eleven - Technology, Privacy, and Human-Scale Systems

Technology should extend human agency, not make public life more remote or opaque.

- Establish strong rights to know, access, correct, transfer, and delete personal data, with heightened protection for children, health, biometrics, location, and political activity.
- Require public agencies to disclose and audit consequential automated systems for bias, accuracy, security, appeal, and human oversight.
- Preserve in-person and low-tech access to essential services; digital efficiency must not exclude people without devices, broadband, language access, or technical skill.
- Expand universal, affordable broadband and community digital-literacy support.
- Use open standards and interoperable public systems to reduce vendor lock-in and preserve democratic control.
- Prohibit manipulative design, surveillance, or algorithmic targeting that exploits children or covertly distorts civic participation.

21. Pillar Twelve - Belonging, Immigration, and National Solidarity

Vicinism refuses the false choice between order and humanity.

- Maintain secure, competently administered borders and ports of entry under law.

- Create predictable lawful pathways responsive to family unity, humanitarian duties, workforce needs, and national capacity.
- Guarantee humane treatment and due process; reject collective blame based on national origin, race, language, or religion.
- Establish a demanding but achievable path to regular status for long-settled residents who meet clear conditions, while focusing enforcement on serious harm and exploitation.
- Prevent employers and contractors from using immigration status to suppress wages, steal pay, or endanger workers.
- Invest in English learning, civics, credential recognition, local orientation, and reciprocal integration that welcomes newcomers into both rights and responsibilities.
- Honor tribal sovereignty, treaty obligations, and the authority of Indigenous nations rather than reducing them to stakeholder groups.

22. Pillar Thirteen - Peace, Democratic War Powers, and Service

The original Vicinist speech arose partly from anger at leaders who promised restraint while allowing war, money, and unaccountable power to outrun public consent. The durable principle is broader than any one country or conflict.

- Require clear constitutional authorization, objectives, costs, reporting, and renewal for sustained military action.
- Prefer diplomacy, alliances, deterrence, trade, development, and targeted tools before war, while retaining the capacity for legitimate defense.
- Make civilian protection, international law, proportionality, and post-conflict responsibility central to policy.
- Publish the influence of defense contractors, foreign agents, major donors, and outside interests on public decisions.
- Fully support service members, military families, veterans, interpreters, and communities carrying the costs of war.
- Expand respected civilian national and local service without military or partisan compulsion.

23. Pillar Fourteen - Fiscal Honesty and Generational Fairness

Every promise has a cost, including the promise to do nothing.

- Publish honest multiyear costs, distributional effects, funding sources, operational owners, risks, and opportunity costs for major proposals.
- Protect basic public investment from cycles of neglect followed by expensive crisis repair.

- Use progressive and comprehensible revenue systems that limit avoidance, reduce arbitrary complexity, and do not crush work, small enterprise, or ordinary household formation.
- Review subsidies, tax expenditures, contracts, and programs on the same schedule as direct spending.
- Pair new permanent commitments with sustainable revenue or credible savings.
- Do not transfer today's consumption, pollution, deferred maintenance, or political convenience to younger and future neighbors.

Part IV - Movement Architecture

24. The Unit of Belonging

A Vicinist neighborhood is not a political district, gated association, ethnic enclosure, homeowner club, or marketing boundary. It is:

A lived geography in which people repeatedly share institutions, public spaces, services, risks, and a plausible capacity for mutual action.

Urban, suburban, rural, and tribal places will define this differently. A chapter's proposed boundary should be created through an open mapping process and should document residences, schools, commercial streets, workplaces, transit and travel patterns, places of worship, civic institutions, cultural ties, environmental systems, and local history.

Anyone who lives in the boundary may join without ideological screening. People who work, study, worship, own a local business, provide care, or spend substantial time there may participate as neighborhood stakeholders. Each person chooses one primary voting chapter to prevent organizational vote-stacking. Public electoral rights remain governed by law; movement membership does not alter them.

25. A Federated Structure

Level	Typical scale	Primary work	Authority and safeguards
Neighbor Circle	5-15 people	One-to-one relationships, care, listening, small projects, recruitment	No separate treasury; selects a convener for six months
Neighborhood Assembly	25-250 active members	Local priorities, projects, public accountability, chapter policy	Chartered bylaws, open minutes, elected stewards, annual budget, grievance process
Regional Council	3 or more assemblies	Shared infrastructure, training, cross-boundary issues, mediation	Delegates plus randomly selected members; no power to dissolve a chapter without due process
National Commons	Federation-wide	Charter, shared tools, rights floor, brand, training, national platform, solidarity fund	Bicameral member and chapter representation; transparent finance; independent ethics and appeals

The design follows a polycentric logic: multiple centers can act, learn, monitor, and correct one another. Larger problems are handled through nested cooperation rather than automatic command from the top.

[7]

26. Governance Rules

Membership

- Individual membership, not organizational bloc membership.
- No loyalty oath to a party, candidate, religion, or complete policy slate.
- Required agreement to the charter: equal dignity, constitutional democracy, nonviolence, honest participation, anti-corruption, and financial rules.
- Voting membership after a short orientation and a meaningful contribution of time, service, dues according to ability, or another approved form of participation.
- Fee waivers and alternatives so income never controls membership.

Decisions

- Deliberation and consent-seeking first.
- Simple majority for routine operations and ordinary budgets after adequate notice.
- Two-thirds for endorsements, major policy positions, officer removal, boundary changes, and bylaws.
- Three-quarters plus chapter ratification for changes to the national charter or rights floor.
- Secret ballots for contested elections, discipline, and endorsements.
- Written minority reports for major national decisions when at least 20 percent of the deciding body requests one.

Leadership

- Two-year terms, staggered where possible.
- No more than two consecutive terms in the same office.
- Co-leadership or distributed portfolios rather than a single permanent chair.
- Recall and removal procedures with notice, evidence, response, independent review, and protection from retaliation.
- Training pipelines so every leader must develop successors.
- Founders receive no permanent veto, special class of membership, or ownership of the movement's member data.

Representation

- Local elected delegates carry instructions and report back.
- Civic-lottery members add voices not produced by internal elections alone.
- National bodies should publish composition and participation data while protecting privacy.

- No demographic quota should reduce a person to identity alone, but recruitment and selection must make a serious, measured effort to include renters, homeowners, working-class residents, young adults, elders, disabled people, newcomers, long-term residents, and the racial, religious, linguistic, and political diversity of the place.

27. Money and Independence

Money is necessary and dangerous. The movement should practice the independence it demands from public institutions.

- Build the operating base from small recurring dues and individual donations.
- Publish donors above a low threshold, contracts, officer compensation, reimbursements, restricted grants, related-party transactions, and chapter transfers.
- Cap the share of an annual national budget that may come from one donor or related group.
- Give businesses, unions, foundations, parties, and partner organizations no voting rights in exchange for funds.
- Prohibit anonymous earmarks, donor review of policy before members see it, personal use of movement assets, and contracts to officers without independent approval and disclosure.
- Maintain an independent audit or financial review appropriate to scale, plus a member-readable annual report.
- Create a solidarity formula so prosperous chapters support organizing capacity in under-resourced places without controlling them.

28. Legal Architecture: A Phased Recommendation

Vicinity should not begin by building a party or PAC. It should begin by building public legitimacy, chapters, and service.

Phase 1 - Civic association: Operate initially as a carefully governed unincorporated founding network or state nonprofit while counsel evaluates liability, tax, charitable solicitation, lobbying, election, employment, and data obligations.

Phase 2 - Social-welfare advocacy: If advocacy and lobbying become central, a 501(c)(4) social-welfare organization may fit. IRS guidance allows lobbying as a primary means of furthering social welfare and some electoral activity, but electoral intervention cannot become the organization's primary activity. Contributions are generally not charitable deductions. ^[25]

Phase 3 - Separate civic-education charity: A separately governed 501(c)(3) may conduct nonpartisan education, research, service, and voter participation work, but it is absolutely prohibited from supporting or opposing candidates. ^[24]

Phase 4 - Electoral entity only when justified: A legally separate PAC or other committee may be created if members later choose candidate activity. Federal nonconnected committees generally register after contributions or expenditures exceed \$1,000 in a calendar year, with state rules applying separately. ^[26]

These entities require real separation of funds, governance, staff time, data, and decision-making. This framework is planning information, not legal advice. Election and nonprofit counsel should design the actual structure before money or endorsements cross legal thresholds.

29. The Member Covenant

As a Vicinist, I will:

1. Meet people as neighbors before treating them as political categories.
2. Defend the equal dignity and rights of people with whom I disagree.
3. Tell the truth as I understand it, disclose uncertainty, correct errors, and reject dehumanizing rumor.
4. Listen for experience and interest before arguing position.
5. Offer service as well as criticism.
6. Refuse political violence, intimidation, collective blame, and scapegoating.
7. Disclose conflicts and reject hidden control by money, office, or personal loyalty.
8. Protect dissent, due process, privacy, and fair participation inside the movement.
9. Measure our work by what neighbors can now do together that they could not do before.
10. Leave my chapter, my institutions, and my place stronger for the next neighbor.

30. The Anti-Capture Code

The following are grounds for investigation or discipline when supported by evidence and fair process:

- Political violence, threats, stalking, or organized intimidation.
- Dehumanization or exclusion based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship status, age, class, housing status, or party affiliation.
- Knowingly fabricated evidence, coordinated disinformation, or refusal to correct material falsehoods.
- Undisclosed donor, employer, party, government, foreign, or organizational control.
- Financial self-dealing, embezzlement, bribery, kickbacks, or misuse of member data.
- Retaliation against whistleblowers, complainants, dissenters, or witnesses.
- Factional vote-stacking, sham chapters, membership fraud, or abuse of chapter boundaries.

- A personality cult, permanent founder privileges, or claims that one leader uniquely embodies the movement.

Discipline must itself honor due process. Accusation is not proof; anonymous claims require corroboration; sanctions should be proportionate; appeal must be available; and published case summaries should protect privacy while showing that rules are real.

Part V - Organizing Method

31. Practice Before Politics

The movement's theory of change is:

Relationship creates trust. Trust makes cooperation possible. Cooperation creates proof. Proof creates legitimate power. Legitimate power changes institutions.

Research on cross-partisan contact is promising but appropriately modest. Conversation can reduce out-party animosity, yet one-off dialogue does not reliably change democratic behavior. ^{[20][21]} Vicinism therefore moves from dialogue to shared work. Neighbors should not be asked merely to understand one another; they should be given the tools and resources to accomplish something together.

Asset-based community development offers a practical starting point: identify residents' gifts, local associations, institutions, spaces, businesses, histories, and informal networks before treating the neighborhood as a list of needs. ^[27] Marshall Ganz's public-narrative framework - story of self, story of us, and story of now - informs how Vicinists turn private concern into shared action without manufacturing an enemy. ^[29]

32. The First Three National Campaigns

Campaign One - We Define Our Neighborhood

Each pilot chapter conducts an open community-of-interest mapping process.

- Collect resident stories, routes, shared institutions, economic ties, environmental features, public assets, and historic boundaries.
- Hold separate sessions at varied times and locations, then a joint map assembly.
- Publish the proposed map, disagreements, excluded alternatives, and evidence.
- Submit the result to relevant redistricting, planning, school, park, transportation, or budget processes.
- Never claim that a movement map overrides constitutional population equality, tribal authority, civil rights, or the Voting Rights Act.

Campaign Two - One Visible Win

Every new chapter completes one measurable common project within 90 days. Examples include a dangerous crossing, abandoned lot, public-benefit enrollment gap, school repair, small-business corridor, cooling plan, food network, library hours, youth program, transit stop, water test, or public-records project.

The project must:

- Be chosen through listening, not announced by founders.
- Involve people who did not already know one another.
- Have a defined owner, cost, deadline, and public measure.
- Build capacity rather than make the chapter a permanent substitute for government.
- End with a public accounting of what worked, what failed, and who contributed.

Campaign Three - A Budget Neighbors Can Touch

Each chapter asks one public institution to dedicate a real, visible pool of funds to participatory budgeting or a resident-designed equivalent. An experimental evaluation published by the Inter-American Development Bank found participatory budgeting increased participation, aligned spending more closely with stated priorities, increased revenue collection, and improved satisfaction with services in the studied setting. ^[13] The result is encouraging, not a guarantee; design and local capacity matter.

33. The First 90 Days of a Pilot Chapter

Days 1-30 - Listen and map

- Recruit a founding circle of 8-12 people who reflect different parts of the place.
- Complete at least 100 one-to-one neighbor conversations using a common listening guide.
- Map people, associations, institutions, spaces, businesses, public systems, stories, conflicts, and existing work.
- Identify who is missing and change meeting times, language, accessibility, childcare, transportation, or outreach accordingly.
- Publish a short "What We Heard" memo that includes disagreement, not only consensus.

Days 31-60 - Assemble and choose

- Hold a founding neighborhood assembly with food, childcare, interpretation, disability access, and hybrid participation where useful.
- Adopt the provisional charter and member covenant.
- Select one visible project through a transparent, rights-respecting vote after deliberation.

- Elect temporary stewards for no more than six months.
- Publish budget, decision, owners, measures, and next meeting.

Days 61-90 - Deliver and account

- Complete or materially advance the visible project.
- Conduct the first community-of-interest mapping session.
- Train at least five additional members in one-to-one organizing, facilitation, public narrative, records, and conflict practice.
- Hold a public review: promise, result, money, learning, and correction.
- Decide whether the chapter has earned a one-year charter.

34. The First Year

- Launch three deliberately different pilots: urban, suburban or small-city, and rural or tribal in partnership with legitimate local authority.
- Complete at least three visible wins per chapter.
- Win one participatory public resource process or formal public response in each pilot.
- Establish the national rights, ethics, finance, training, data, and appeal systems before rapid growth.
- Hold the first National Commons using elected chapter delegates and a stratified civic lottery.
- Ratify Foundational Draft 2.0 after publishing member amendments and minority reports.
- Do not endorse candidates nationally during the first year.

35. Measures That Matter

The movement should not count followers as if they were power.

Relationship

- One-to-one conversations completed.
- New relationships across age, tenure, class, race, faith, and political difference.
- Member retention and return rates.
- Members who report having someone local they can ask for or offer help.

Participation

- First-time civic participants.
- Attendance accessibility by time, language, disability, caregiving, and digital access.
- Share of speaking time and leadership rotation.
- Participation beyond the already organized.

Delivery

- Projects completed on time and within budget.
- Public dollars, private capital, volunteer hours, and institutional commitments moved.
- Measurable changes in service, safety, housing, business, environment, or participation.

Integrity

- Donor concentration.
- Conflicts disclosed.
- Complaints resolved with due process.
- Meeting records published on time.
- Corrections issued for material errors.

Power

- Policies adopted or changed.
- Public institutions providing written responses.
- Community maps recognized in official processes.
- Members moving into durable civic leadership without becoming unaccountable to the chapter.

36. Failure Modes and Safeguards

Localism becomes exclusion

Risk: Homeowners or long-term residents treat the neighborhood as property and exclude renters, newcomers, minorities, youth, or future residents.

Safeguard: Universal rights floor, open membership, stakeholder participation, representative recruitment, independent appeal, and explicit attention to future neighbors.

Unity becomes silence

Risk: Leaders label dissent divisive or demand neutrality in the face of abuse.

Safeguard: Unity without uniformity, minority reports, secret ballots, whistleblower protection, and no retaliation for principled dissent.

Community becomes a substitute for government

Risk: Volunteers absorb responsibilities while public institutions withdraw resources.

Safeguard: Every service project includes an institutional-power analysis and a plan for durable public, cooperative, or private ownership.

Anti-technocracy becomes anti-knowledge

Risk: Lived experience is used to dismiss data, professional competence, or inconvenient evidence.

Safeguard: Evidence panels, public assumptions, red-team review, plain-language expertise, correction protocols, and measurable pilots.

Federation becomes central command

Risk: National staff control funding, data, brand, and endorsements until chapters become franchises.

Safeguard: Enumerated national powers, chapter ratification, shared data governance, formula-based funds, independent appeals, and member-elected national bodies.

Autonomy becomes incoherence

Risk: Chapters take contradictory positions or violate the movement's identity.

Safeguard: A short binding charter, common decision standards, transparent local variation, mediation, and fair charter review.

The movement becomes one person's vehicle

Risk: The founder's story eclipses the neighbors' stories.

Safeguard: No permanent office or veto, distributed spokespersons, leadership rotation, succession, member ownership of records, and public separation between personal projects and movement assets.

The name confuses or narrows the audience

Risk: The botanical meaning of "vicinism" hurts discoverability; Latin aesthetics feel academic, Roman, masculine, or culturally narrow.

Safeguard: Lead with plain English, use inclusive visual language drawn from real neighborhoods, explain the root briefly, test the name across communities, and adopt "Civic Vicinism" or a public-facing companion name if research supports it.

Part VI - Declaration and Message

37. The Declaration of Existence

Vicinism - From the Neighborhood Up

We gather not as a faction asking to be managed more gently, but as neighbors remembering that self-government begins with us.

For too long, our public life has been organized around a false choice. One party tells us progress will arrive if we hand more decisions to distant institutions. Another tells us restoration will arrive if we hand more power to a forceful leader. Both too often speak of communities they rarely enter, draw districts they do not live in, and reduce people to markets, blocs, audiences, and votes.

Meanwhile, the people are left exposed.

Exposed to the quiet consolidation of power - public and private. Exposed to housing costs that uproot families and hollow out neighborhoods. Exposed to work that demands more while offering less security. Exposed to systems so complicated that ordinary people cannot tell who decided, who profited, or how to appeal. Exposed to technologies that know us intimately while remaining strangers to accountability. Exposed to wars whose purposes expand after they begin and whose costs arrive in homes that did not choose them.

Our institutions were built to serve, but too many have learned to speak only to one another. Our parties were built to organize democracy, but too often they organize resentment. Our experts possess knowledge we need, but too often the knowledge arrives without humility or consent. Our populists name real betrayals, but too often they answer domination with a promise of domination by someone new.

We have waited for courage and been handed branding.

We have waited for vision and been handed management.

We have waited for unity and been told unity means defeating half the country.

This is not only a failure of policy. It is a failure of relationship, imagination, and neighborly duty.

So let this be the moment we stop waiting to be assembled by people who profit from keeping us apart.

We do not deny our differences. We are conservative and progressive, religious and secular, urban and rural, native-born and newly arrived, owners and renters, workers and employers, young and old. We carry different histories, fears, loyalties, and hopes. We will argue. We will sometimes lose votes. We will not be required to pretend that every conflict has an easy compromise.

But we refuse to make disagreement a license for contempt.

We refuse to believe that a party knows a person better than a neighbor can.

We refuse to let lines drawn for political advantage tell us where our community begins or ends.

We refuse the politics that asks whom we hate before it asks what we can build.

We refuse to be corralled - and we refuse to abandon one another.

We declare that democracy does not live only in Washington, a state capitol, or city hall. It is renewed in barber shops and beauty salons, union halls and small businesses, libraries and schools, porches and apartment lobbies, farms and tribal councils, parks, places of worship, block clubs, workshops, kitchens, and public meetings where people return after disagreement because they still share a place.

We declare that the neighborhood is a republic in seed - not a sovereign island, not a gated enclave, but a school of democracy. It is where we learn whether our principles survive contact with actual people. It is where freedom becomes responsibility, where rights acquire defenders, and where public promises can be seen and measured.

We declare that every neighbor possesses equal dignity and civic standing. No majority may erase the rights of a minority. No leader may make loyalty to themselves the price of belonging. No donor, party, corporation, bureaucracy, union, church, algorithm, or angry crowd may own the movement.

We declare a plural economy: enterprise where enterprise serves, public provision where public power is necessary, cooperation where ownership should be shared, and firm rules wherever power can become domination. We will judge systems by whether people can live with dignity, create, work, care, belong, and hand a healthier place to those who follow.

We declare that expertise must become legible and accountable, and that public participation must become serious and informed. We reject rule by obscurity. We also reject the pride that mistakes anger for knowledge. Truth is not owned by a credential, a crowd, or a party. We will test, measure, correct, and learn in public.

We declare that unity does not mean uniformity. It means that no political disagreement cancels our duty to protect one another's dignity and constitutional rights. It means we can act together without becoming the same. It means we seek concord, not obedience.

This is Vicinism.

A belief that power should live as close as possible to the people who bear its consequences.

A belief that every neighborhood contains knowledge, gifts, memory, and unrealized power.

A belief that the nation is renewed not by flattening our differences, but by federating places capable of governing themselves and caring for one another.

A belief that we belong to one another more than we belong to any party.

We will begin with a conversation, not a slogan.

We will map the people and places politicians divide.

We will complete one visible act of common work.

We will put a real public budget into the hands of neighbors.

We will train leaders who develop successors, publish money and mistakes, protect dissent, and step aside when their term is done.

We will build from the circle to the assembly, from the assembly to the region, and from the region to a national commons strong enough to act without becoming distant from its source.

Let it be known:

We are not fringe.

We are not a voting bloc waiting to be harvested.

We are not managed identities in someone else's coalition.

We are here.

We are different.

We are neighbors.

And we are many.

From the corner to the commons, we declare our existence.

From the neighborhood to the nation, we declare our responsibility.

From this day forward, we will build the public life we have been waiting for.

Neighbors United.

From the neighborhood up.

38. The Vicinist Creed

We begin with the neighbor.

We defend dignity before party.

We seek unity without demanding sameness.

We place power at the closest capable level.

We join local agency to national solidarity.

We welcome enterprise, cooperation, and public action as tools of the common good.

We make expertise answerable and participation informed.

We serve before we seek status.

We resist domination without becoming what we resist.

We leave the place stronger for the next neighbor.

39. Message Kit

One sentence

Vicinism is a neighbor-first civic movement that brings power closer to people, builds community across political difference, and organizes neighborhoods into a national force for accountable democracy and shared prosperity.

Thirty-second explanation

The parties organize people into blocs. Vicinism organizes neighbors into communities capable of acting. We start with listening, asset mapping, one visible local win, and a real share of public decision-making. We support equal rights, local self-government, a plural economy, transparent institutions, and national solidarity where problems require a larger scale. We are not asking people to agree on everything. We are asking them to belong, deliberate, and build together.

Three contrasts

- **Not left versus right:** distant power versus accountable power.
- **Not unity through sameness:** unity through shared responsibility.

- **Not service without power or politics without service:** visible common work that builds durable democratic power.

Core lines

- Neighbor before party.
- From the neighborhood up.
- We belong to one another more than we belong to any party.
- Unity without uniformity.
- Power close to the people.
- We will not be corralled, and we will not abandon one another.
- Every neighborhood is a republic in seed.

Language to avoid

- "Enemies," "traitors," "vermin," "invaders," or any collective dehumanization.
- "The people" when it implies dissenters are not part of the public.
- "Sovereign neighborhood" without the constitutional rights and federalism explanation.
- "Common sense" as a substitute for evidence.
- "Unity above all" when it can be heard as obedience; say "unity without uniformity" or "unity in defense of dignity and democracy."
- Anti-expert language that confuses unaccountable authority with knowledge itself.
- Claims that one founder, leader, class, race, faith, or generation uniquely speaks for neighbors.

40. Frequently Asked Questions

Is Vicinism left wing or right wing?

Neither label is sufficient. Vicinism has a clear moral and institutional framework: equal dignity, constitutional rights, neighborly obligation, subsidiarity, anti-domination, plural economics, evidence, and federation. That framework can produce positions associated with different parties, but it does not split the difference for its own sake.

Is this just communitarianism under a new name?

Vicinism belongs to the communitarian family because it treats people as socially embedded and values local institutions. It adds a stronger constitutional rights floor, civic-republican freedom from domination, Ostromian polycentric governance, a defined organizing method, and a federated national project. ^{[7][9][10]}

Does local control mean states or towns can violate civil rights?

No. Rights are the floor beneath local autonomy, not an item local majorities can remove. Higher levels of government have an affirmative duty to protect equal citizenship and address harms that cross boundaries.

Does the movement oppose experts?

No. It opposes expertise insulated from explanation, accountability, affected knowledge, and correction. A movement serious about governing needs scientists, engineers, teachers, planners, clinicians, tradespeople, administrators, historians, and people with lived experience working together.

Does Vicinism oppose capitalism?

It opposes domination and extraction, not enterprise as such. It protects property, entrepreneurship, competition, and small business while supporting unions, cooperatives, public goods, social insurance, community ownership, and public or municipal provision where those tools work better.

Will Vicinism become a political party?

Not at launch. A party created before durable chapters would reproduce candidate-centered politics. Members may later choose endorsements, ballot lines, fusion arrangements, independent candidates, or partnerships, but only after the movement proves that it can govern itself and serve communities.

Who counts as a neighbor?

Every person has a human claim to neighborly dignity. For chapter governance, residents form the core while people who work, study, worship, care, own a local business, or share substantial life in the place have structured participation. Each member chooses one primary voting chapter.

What happens when neighbors cannot agree?

They deliberate under shared facts and rules, protect rights, vote when necessary, record dissent, and continue living and working together. Vicinism promises a better practice of disagreement, not the end of conflict.

Part VII - Founding Decisions and Next Work

41. Decisions Required Before a Public Launch

1. **Name:** Retain Vicinism, use Civic Vicinism, or adopt a public companion name after community and brand testing.
2. **Motto:** Lead with "Neighbors United" and decide whether *Vicini Uniti* remains a secondary heritage line.
3. **Pilot places:** Select three communities only after trusted local conveners request or co-design a pilot.
4. **Founding council:** Recruit people with organizing, governance, law, finance, labor, small business, public service, civil rights, rural, urban, tribal, faith, secular, technology, housing, and youth experience.
5. **Rights floor:** Ask a diverse constitutional and civil-rights panel to review the charter before recruitment.
6. **Legal form:** Obtain nonprofit, election, charitable-solicitation, employment, insurance, and data counsel.
7. **Financial rules:** Adopt donor concentration, disclosure, conflicts, compensation, audit, and solidarity standards before accepting major funds.
8. **Data covenant:** Decide who owns member data, what is never collected, retention periods, access, security, and exit rights.
9. **Founding curriculum:** Build training in one-to-ones, facilitation, public narrative, asset mapping, participatory budgeting, conflict, records, finance, civil rights, and policy design.
10. **Ratification:** Set the process by which members amend and ratify this draft within the first year.

42. The Founder's Proper Role

The founder should offer a story, a question, and a disciplined first structure - not a permanent claim to authority.

The founder's work is to convene the first neighbors, protect the openness of the process, recruit people stronger in missing disciplines, disclose interests, invite correction, and design succession from the start. If Vicinism cannot survive the founder stepping away from the center, it is a personal platform rather than a movement.

43. The First Public Ask

The first public ask should not be "Join our ideology." It should be:

Meet ten neighbors you do not already know. Help map the place politicians divide. Choose one thing you can fix together in ninety days. Show the work. Then decide what power you are ready to claim.

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Closing Note

The strongest insight in the original 2025 draft remains the strongest insight now:

Every neighborhood is a republic in seed.

The refinement is equally important. A seed is not the whole republic. It needs a rights-protecting constitutional soil, resources and expertise from larger institutions, exchange with other places, disciplined rules, and care over time. Vicinism succeeds when neighborhoods become capable without becoming closed, when national solidarity becomes strong without becoming remote, and when unity becomes a practice of shared responsibility rather than a demand for sameness.