



## CDP's Guide to Asking a Pressing Question

CDP's mission is to help communities grow smarter and stronger by making evidence-based decisions. This process starts with asking a Pressing Question.

We believe "a question well scoped is half answered." A well-written and thoughtful Pressing Question will identify the crux of the problem, illuminate a clear path to a solution, and help your leaders make better decisions.

### What are the key elements of a *Pressing Question*?

- It's specific.
- It gets to the root of a challenging, long-standing, or formidable problem.
- The answer to the question will help solve the problem.

*Examples of Pressing Questions:*

What is the supply and demand for affordable housing in my community?

What businesses are growing the fastest and how can I support them?

What metrics help us communicate our progress the most effectively with our stakeholders?

What is the daily population in my community (including visitors)?

### Try this 3-step process to develop your own Pressing Questions:

**Step 1.** Think of the biggest problems facing your organization or department. They could be in areas such as environment, transportation, population, jobs, recreation, and emergency services. Pick one.

**Step 2.** Imagine how your community would benefit from understanding this problem and all the contributing factors. Identify the most important thing (or even just *one* important thing) you'd need to know in order to solve that problem.

**Step 3.** Use that to create a clear, compelling question. Remember: Pressing Questions are specific, directly address the problem, and will help solve the problem once answered.

*Don't think about **how** to answer the question (that's our job!) - you just need to ask the question.*

**Congratulations, you have asked a PRESSING QUESTION!**

Repeat the process above to come up with another. And for even better results, gather a group of leaders from your community and do the three steps together!

Visit [www.CommunityDataPlatforms.com](http://www.CommunityDataPlatforms.com) or email us at [Emery@communitydataplatforms.com](mailto:Emery@communitydataplatforms.com) to see how we can help your community ask and answer Pressing Questions, so you can make evidence-based decisions and solve your biggest problems.