

PROGRESS
2026

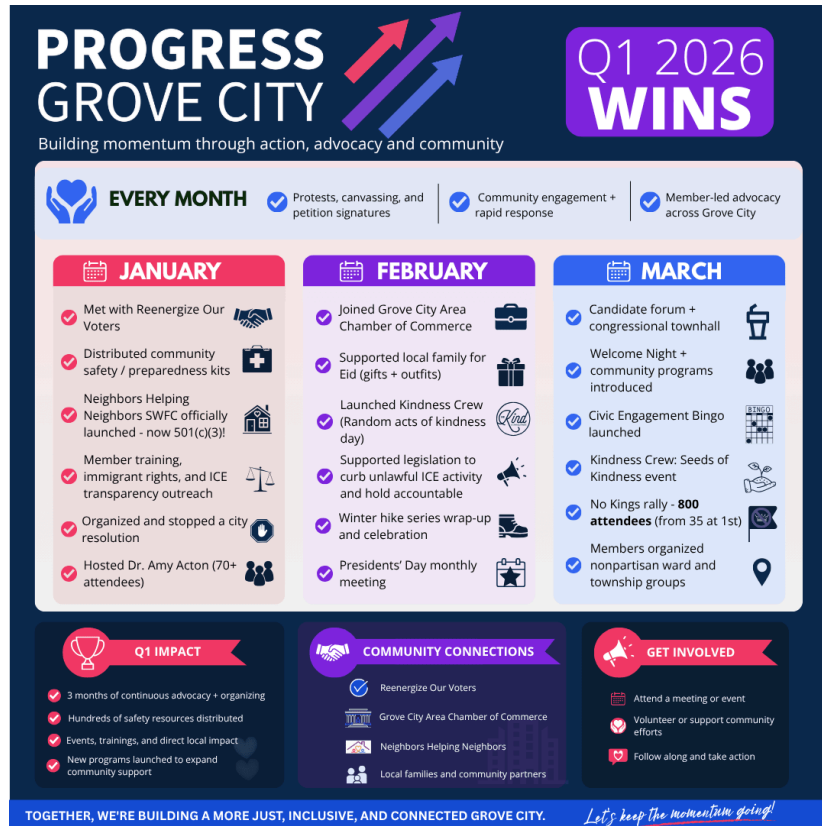
Special Edition

Q1 Progress Report

PROGRESS
GROVE CITY



Progress GC - We Really Make Progress



If the first three months of 2026 are any indication, this is going to be a year of real, tangible impact- and we want to make sure you know about it. Before we get into the highlights, there's something worth naming that happened every single month this quarter: our members were out there. Protesting, canvassing, and collecting petition signatures, consistently, without fanfare, because that's what sustained civic engagement actually looks like. It's not always an event or a headline. Sometimes it's just people showing up, again and again, because it matters.

We started January with intention. A meeting with Reenergize Our Voters gave us new ideas and connections for reaching people who've stepped back from civic life, because we know that an engaged community means *everyone* has a voice, not just the loudest ones. At the same time, Neighbors Helping Neighbors - the mutual aid nonprofit that grew out of our own community - officially voted on its name, filed for nonprofit status, and opened a bank account. Watching something go from an idea to an institution is a remarkable thing.

Safety was front and center this quarter in a very real way. We distributed hundreds of whistle kits as part of a deliberate community safety and ICE preparedness initiative, and held trainings on how to safely document federal agents and disengage from encounters safely. We educated members on immigrant rights, detention preparedness, A-number documentation, and how to connect people with legal observers and rapid response networks. We also published a sample letter so members could contact their elected officials to demand transparency and data on ICE activity in our area, and our members really followed through- writing, calling, and emailing congress. We additionally requested data directly from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. This work matters because an informed community is a protected community, and no one should have to navigate fear alone.

One of January's biggest moments: the city council was moving toward a resolution that our community had serious concerns about. We organized, we showed up, and we got it stopped. That's democracy working the way it's supposed to. Then we closed the month by hosting Dr. Amy Acton for a private, invite-only conversation with more than 70 community members in the room. Not a rally. Not a campaign stop. Just people who care enough to show up, ask real questions, and sit with real answers. It was exactly the kind of space we keep trying to build.

February brought new connections and new energy. Joining the Grove City Area Chamber of Commerce was more than an organizational milestone, it

actually opened the door to something genuinely historic: Grove City's first-ever nonpartisan voter registration booth at the Farmers Market. No candidates, no issues, no agenda. Just resources, available to every resident regardless of party or politics. That same month, we did something that quietly captures everything this group is about: we adopted a family through Head Start for Eid al-Fitr, collecting funds, purchasing gifts, and shopping for brand-new Eid outfits for every member of the family. New clothes are a cherished part of Eid celebration - a tradition of joy and fresh beginnings - and being able to help make that possible for a local family is a reminder that inclusion isn't just a value we list. It's something we practice.

February also brought the official launch of the Kindness Crew, starting with a Kindness Rocks event and a daily kindness challenge leading up to Random Acts of Kindness Day, with an incredible response from community members who showed up, shared, and spread positivity across Grove City. We kept pushing on Five Minute Activism by encouraging members to contact their representatives in support of House Democratic bills and resolutions. Our winter hike series kept bringing people together outside the meeting room, because community isn't only built in crisis, it's built in the everyday.

March was a full month by any measure. On March 18, we hosted what we truly believe was one of the most meaningful civic events our community has seen in a long time: a candidate forum featuring Ohio State Senate District 3 candidates Stacie Baker and Natasha Wheatley-Caffrey in a structured debate, followed by a forum with U.S. Congressional candidate Don Leonard that organically became a genuine townhall when the audience jumped in with their own questions. That kind of unplanned, real conversation is exactly what civic engagement is supposed to look like. The entire event was livestreamed to our private group, with recordings and candidate questionnaires shared so residents could revisit, reflect, and make informed decisions. We showed up.

Also in March, the Kindness Crew hosted Seeds of Kindness, where participants painted flower pots and took home milkweed seeds to plant, an act of care extended not just to each other but to our local ecosystem and the butterflies that depend on it. It was a beautiful reminder that kindness doesn't stop at the people around us.

Welcome Night launched as a new quarterly tradition, a relaxed evening designed specifically for newer members, with no recruitment pitch and no overwhelming agenda. Just good conversations, familiar faces from the Kindness Crew and Neighbors Helping Neighbors, a Community Bingo card to make local engagement feel accessible, and the simple message that there's a place for you here. From what we can tell, it landed exactly the way we hoped. We'll keep hosting these every quarter.

Speaking of Civic Engagement Bingo- we launched two-level cards designed to meet people wherever they are, from reading a local news article to speaking at city council. Completed lines earn entries into prize drawings featuring Progress shirts, gift cards to local businesses, and more. The whole point is that every action counts, and we want people to feel that.

March also brought two important community conversations that are bigger than any one organization. Several Progress Grove City members have taken the initiative to start independent, nonpartisan ward and township groups across our community- not affiliated with or run by Progress Grove City. These are open to everyone regardless of background or politics, and focused on the conversations that matter most at the neighborhood level: things like the community center, local development, and daily life in Grove City. We're proud to have members helping get those tables built.

On the issue of data centers: a grassroots coalition called Ohio Residents for Responsible Development is working to place a constitutional amendment on the November ballot that would ban the construction of large data centers - those using more than 25 megawatts of power - in Ohio. Large data centers consume as much electricity as 20,000-25,000 homes and threaten rural communities, farmland, and natural resources. The Ohio Ballot Board unanimously certified the proposal, and signature gathering is underway with a July 1 deadline. Progress Grove City has petitions available at our events, and we're proud to support this bipartisan effort to protect Ohio's land, resources, and communities.

And for the third time, we promoted and supported No Kings in GC. The first rally drew 35 people. The second more than doubled that. No Kings 3.0 brought approximately 800 neighbors into the streets to make their voices

heard. We are so thankful to see that same energy, sustained and growing. We keep showing up. And every time, there are more of us.

Thirty-four years from now, someone might look back at Q1 2026 and wonder what people were doing. The answer, here in Grove City, is: *a lot*.

Thank you for being part of it.

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