Civic engagement and collaborative public management are concepts that are defined broadly, making theoretical explication challenging and practical application of empirical research difficult. In this article, the authors adopt definitions of civic engagement and collaborative public management that are centered on the citizen and the potential for active citizenship. Following a historical review of civic engagement in the United States, a conceptual model of five approaches to civic engagement is offered. Citizen-centered collaborative public management is enhanced through these approaches. The authors suggest the need for further empirical research on collaborative public management that is grounded in citizenship action.

There is a renewed interest in civic engagement that extends widely across local, regional, national, and online communities. The current manifestations of civic engagement have taken on many forms at these different levels. The importance of this subject to interested citizens, publics, policy makers, and public administrators is reflected in the activities, programs, and projects that have been initiated in recent years.

Our objective in this article is to consider how civic engagement influences collaborative public management. Definitions of each concept are established to meet this objective. Macedo et al. rely on a broad definition of civic engagement: “any activity, individual or collective, devoted to influencing the collective life of the polity” (2005, 6). We wish to distinguish the different types of civic engagement to which Macedo et al. allude in terms of what each offers for the achievement of collaborative public management.

We advance the argument that deliberative and collective action strategies of civic engagement hold the most promise in achieving a public-involving, citizen-centered collaborative public management. This kind of collaborative public management represents a form of governance that extends beyond “the process of facilitating and operating in multiorganizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot be solved, or solved easily, by single organizations” (Agranoff and McGuire 2003, 4). We intentionally use the phrase citizen-centered collaborative public management to emphasize the role of the public in collaborative management processes, which have not always recognized the value of citizenship. In achieving this outcome, we believe that civic engagement means “people participating together for deliberation and collective action within an array of interests, institutions and networks, developing civic identity, and involving people in governance processes” (Cooper 2005, 534).

With these definitions in hand, we offer a review of American civic engagement over the past half century. Following this review, we consider five approaches to civic engagement and how each might contribute to citizen-centered collaborative public management. This discussion is followed by consideration of five dimensions or questions that can help us to understand and assess civic engagement efforts in practice. Through our reviews and discussions, our aim is to provide a new framing of the relevant literature on the challenges and opportunities associated with effectively engaging citizens in collaborative public management.

**Historical Shifts in Civic Engagement**

There has been a marked shift in civic engagement interest and emphasis over the past half century. Today, in light of research findings that point to a loss of social capital (Putnam 1995) and a decline in trust of government (Nye, Zelikow, and King 1997), stakes are high in knowing more about the role of civic engagement as a central component of a vital American democracy.

Civic engagement in the United States goes back at least to the early Puritan communities, with their organization around covenants that provided the basis for self-governance. The Mayflower Compact, signed by 41 male passengers aboard the Mayflower in 1641,