



Wyoming
Association of
Municipalities
Building Strong Communities



Strategic Planning

2023 LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP
CORE COURSE

Course Objectives

1

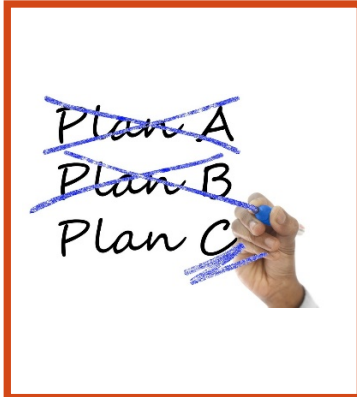
Learn how to strategically plan for your municipality

2

Know how to implement your plans to get things done

Why do Strategic Planning?

- Set priorities
- Focus energy and resources
- Strengthen operations
- Build consensus
- Establish agreement around intended outcomes/results
- Assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment



Strategic planning does much to improve effectiveness and efficiency – two very important objectives for any municipality.

*“If you don’t know
where you’re
going, any plan
will do.”*

Peter Drucker

Vision

- Defines where you want to be; incorporates community values

Mission

- Defines your role in helping to achieve the vision; reflects internal values

Values

- How you choose to operate and/or what you truly want

Be strategic!
All types of
plans should be
developed with
your municipal
values, your
vision, and your
mission in mind

Municipal Strategic Plan

Comprehensive Master Plan

Economic Development Plan

Capital Improvement Plan

Project Plan

All of these types of plans call for strategic planning.



Consider were you want to be in the future

- What do we hope will be true in the future?
- What is your community's Vision for the future
- What must change?
- What could be better?
- SWOT analysis should guide planning



Guiding Values

- Beliefs that are shared by stakeholders in organization
- Values are what drives an organization's culture, establishes its priorities, and provides the basis from which decisions can be made
- How we choose to operate is just as important as our goals

Important to identify guiding values in the organization

Guiding Values, such as...

- Integrity
- Community
- Ownership
- Respect
- Competency



Develop them, define what each looks like, and always speak to values

Examples of “Ownership” Value



**I WILL NOT SAY
“IT’S NOT MY JOB”
OR “WE ARE
SHORT-STAFFED”**



**I AM AVAILABLE
TO ASSIST,
ENCOURAGE AND
HELP OTHERS**



**I WILL TAKE
RESPONSIBILITY
FOR MY ACTIONS
AND BEHAVIOR**



**I WILL THINK
“TEAM”, SHARING
SUCCESSSES &
FAILURES
TOGETHER**

(From Memorial Hospital of Converse County)

“The Cheyenne Police Department mission is ‘Protecting the Legend’ of Cheyenne by working in cooperation with citizens to lead the charge in preventing crime and defending the rights of the community”

What is your Mission?

Your mission is defined by ***your role*** in accomplishing the community vision

- Why do we exist?
- What contributions do we make to the community and to the quality of life for our citizens?
- What is the value we give to our citizens?





Articulate a Vision for the Future

- Think of the future in the present tense
- What is your community like? Who lives there? Why do they stay? What is unique? What do you value?
- What should be retained? What should be dropped? What is missing that should be created?
- **Ask: *What if?***

11

- Come up with some “what if” statements that
- Challenge assumptions
 - Explore options
 - Break free of mental cages



Brainstorming your Vision

Economically diverse

Forward-looking

Fun, recreation

Growing in a planned, sustainable way

Opportunities to live, work and play

Hometown pride

Attractive community

Value of youth in community

Vision Statement

Saratoga prides itself on its people, its rustic community heritage, its first-class outdoor recreational opportunities, and its constant quest to dream big





Best practice: Plan to plan

- What is the best process to develop your particular plan?
- Start by clearly identifying a need for the plan
- Consider your limitations & constraints
 - Time and money
 - Expertise and technical assistance
 - Need for a facilitator?
 - Best practices are successful strategies that have a proven track record

Tips and suggestions:

If an issue is controversial or complicated, consider hiring a facilitator

Do you need to reinvent the wheel?

Effective public participation is critical, so prioritize it

Set deadlines and deliverables in advance, and stick to them

If there is a clear need for the plan, then move on to consider the planning process itself

Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science

In crowdsourcing, agencies submit an open call, generally through the Internet, for voluntary assistance from a large group of individuals to complete defined tasks. Similarly, in citizen science, participants assist with science-related tasks, such as collecting and analyzing data, and interpreting and reporting results.

Idea Generation (Ideation)

Agencies ask participants to submit ideas to address a specific issue or problem, and may allow them to comment on ideas submitted by other participants, and vote to express their support for an idea.

Open Data Collaboration

Agencies mobilize participants to share, explore, and analyze publicly-available data sets, and to use the data to conduct research, design data visualizations, or create web and mobile applications and websites that help people access and use the data.

Open Dialogue

Agencies collect and respond to information, observations, and perspectives from a range of citizen, experts and stakeholders. They can do this using online tools, such as websites or interactive webinars, and in-person meetings or forums.

Prize Competition or Challenge

Agencies identify a problem to solve or a specific goal it wants to achieve, and ask members of the public to submit potential solutions. The agency evaluates these proposals, and provides a monetary or non-monetary award to selected winners.

What level of environmental scan is needed?

Who are the stakeholders?

How should the public be engaged?

Who should participate and when?

How should the community and/or partners provide feedback on the plan?

Is there general agreement on the direction, or is your community at a crossroads?

How will the plan be used in decision-making?

Some people think that solving problems is all about defining the problem or question. In the public world, it's always best to get input from those who are most affected by the problem – they know what's wrong (even if they don't know the solution).

Three Fundamental Questions



WHERE ARE WE
NOW?

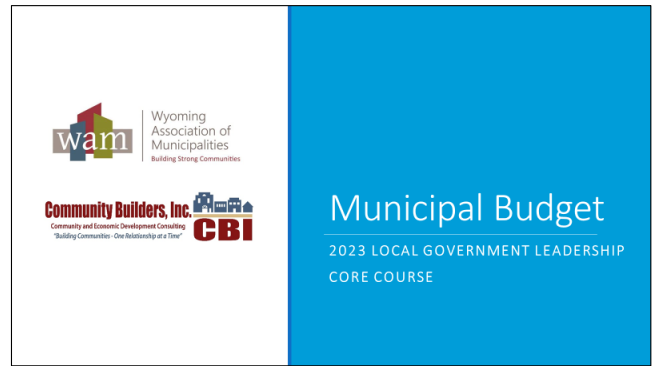
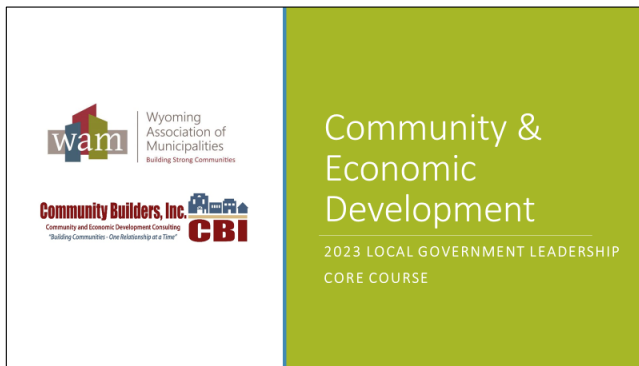


WHERE DO WE
WANT TO BE IN THE
FUTURE?



HOW DO WE GET
THERE?





How many plans does it take to run a municipality?

Strategic planning concepts and principles are applicable in a number of areas. Because WAM is focused on municipalities, there are specialized plans that towns and cities must regularly prepared (including annual budgets and economic development plans).

Two of the most important plans you will create include your municipality's Comprehensive Development Plan (Master Plan) and your annual municipal budget, both of which are mandated by law.

Strategic Planning Steps

Identify & Include Stakeholders

Collect Objective Data

Gather Input

Create Draft

Review, Revise, & Finalize

Disseminate & Publish

Implement Action Steps

Monitor Performance

Report On Progress

Continually Update



Identify & Include Stakeholders

Think broadly to include organizations, residents, and others who will be affected by the plan

- Local elected leaders
- Key staff
- Other local governments, joint powers, etc.
- Businesses
- Taxpayers
- Residents
- Nonprofit organizations

ALWAYS include the public/press/media

Stakeholder Analysis



Tips and suggestions:

Do not try to stack the deck with “yes” men

It is always wise to keep your “enemies” close

Encourage openness and fairness – let everyone speak their mind – but stick to the agenda

Invite citizens to volunteer for the process (it is a great way to identify future board members, and it demonstrates transparency)

Where Are We Now?

Present condition – find out through an environmental scan:

- Stakeholder Analysis
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Assessment
- Data Collection
- A thorough assessment will give you a “snapshot” in time as a reference point



SWOT ANALYSIS



Recognize progress and accomplishments
Determine length of time under consideration



Collect Background Documents

What are the critical background documents?

- ✓ Fiscal (Budget, Audit, Program Analysis)
- ✓ Legal (Municipal Code, State & Federal Law)
- ✓ Plans (previous strategic plan, Master Plan, Economic Development Plan, etc.)
- ✓ Other (WAM budget guidance, CREG reports, community surveys, etc.)

Distribute relevant documents to entire planning team and stakeholders (consider making all documents available online)

Tips and suggestions:

- You can kill a lot of trees with paper that many will not read – go green
- Creation of a Facebook or other web page that is focused on the planning process is very helpful
- Encourage all stakeholders to identify background studies and documents
- Do not ignore or hide documents, data, or other information that does not support your position



SWOT Assessment

What are the **STRENGTHS** of our local government organization? (Internal)

What are the **WEAKNESSES** of our local government organization? (Internal)

What **THREATS** might our community face that we need to be on guard for? (External)

What **OPPORTUNITIES** might be presented to our community? (External)

What's right?
 What's wrong?
 What's missing?

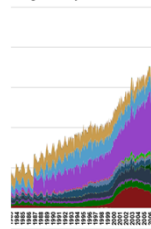
Environmental Scan of Trends

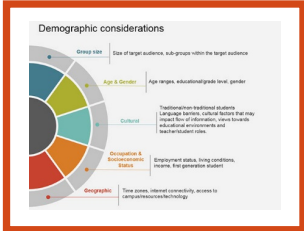
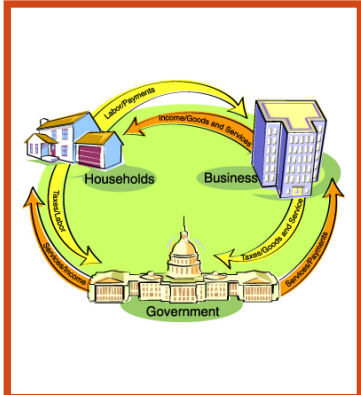
Analysis of trends can often be more informative than a snapshot of one moment in time

- Demographics & Economics
- Social
- Technological
- Environmental
- Political
- Regulatory or legal impacts



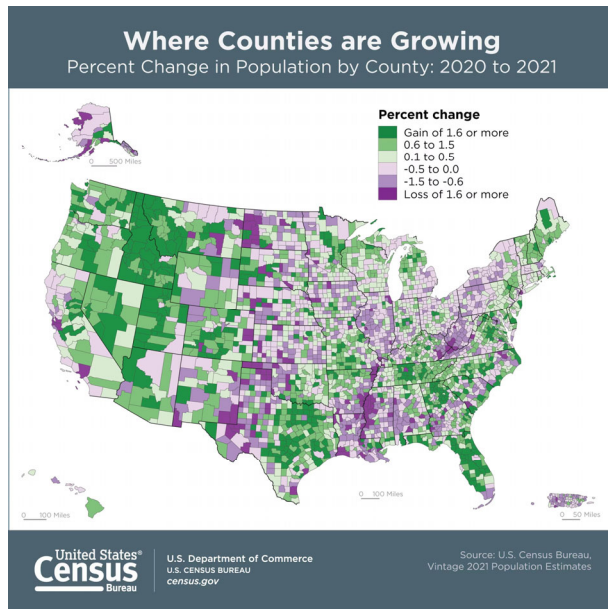
oming - Monthly Gas Production





Data Collection

- Demographic and economic information
- Needs assessment
- Financial condition
- Infrastructure status
- Citizen surveys
- Other indicators

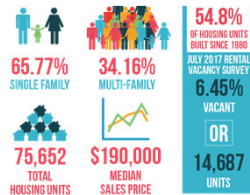
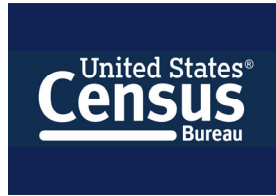


Tips on Collecting Objective Data

- Use official public data whenever possible (free, verifiable & trusted)
- Consider asking WBC or UW to help
- Trends are usually more important than a snapshot of a moment in time
- Create appropriate charts and other illustrations that graphically convey information so it's not just numbers

Some people struggle with numbers

Collect Objective Data



- Where and what is the data?
- Population and social demographics
- Start with official sources like Census Bureau and State
- Economic measures and financial indicators
- Follow unemployment rate, sales tax, and mineral production for your county
- WCDA and WY Division of Economic Analysis provide great reports

Gather subjective input from citizens and others

- Seek first to understand, then to be understood
- Public meetings are typically poorly attended (unless the issue is controversial, and then loud voices show up)
- Everyone has a different perspective – find the common ground



Facilitators may be available for little or no cost

Gather Input

- Values, ideas, support
- Subjective and objective data
- Public meetings, surveys, focus groups
- Perceptions, rumor mills, press coverage, public comments can affect outcomes



- **Goal is to determine community values, ideas, and support for potential solutions**
- **Subjective input can be combined with the objective data to create a better understanding of the problem and potential solutions**
- **Public meetings, surveys, focus groups**
- **Perceptions, rumor mills, press coverage, public comments can affect outcomes**

How do we get
there from
here?

How do we turn our
vision into a reality?

*Your plan should reflect
specific actions that
must be done to achieve
success*



Setting Goals and Objectives



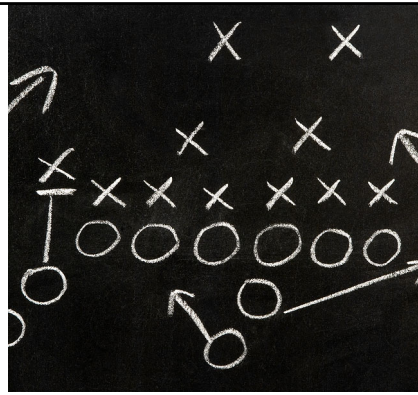
Goals: Specific projects, programs or efforts that collectively form a strategy that reflects your vision and values

Objectives: Expected outcomes, results or deliverables attained by achieving specific goals

- Can be short-term (1 year or less) or long-term

Implementation – Make it so!

- ✓ Take action!
- ✓ Establish milestones – steps to make it happen
- ✓ Create and follow a timeline (from start to completion)
- ✓ Enable leaders
- ✓ Build accountability
- ✓ Who else needs to be involved?
- ✓ Create a specific action plan to accomplish each goal and objective



- Reliance on other entities to accomplish goals
- Project management
- Regular communication on status
- Accountability and support
- Adjustments over time



The key to a successful plan is to implement specific actions



Incorporate the plan into your operations (budget, staff, etc.)



Manage all operations in a manner that consistently supports your vision and mission



Support all action steps, even those implemented by others

Break it down into specific action steps

Tips and suggestions:

- Do not assume that progress is being made; ask for progress reports
- Actively manage your internal team
- Remember that volunteer advisory committees are VOLUNTEERS
- Give credit where it is due

Goal: Develop Options for Navigation and Mobility Throughout Community

Action	Outcomes	Timing	Players	Resources
Completion of Trails Master Plan	Enhanced pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle routes	Long Term; over 10 years	City Council, County Commissioners, property owners, developers, engineers	WYDOT, developers, property owners; 1% Sales Tax
Implement Safe Routes to Schools Plan	Safer school access	Underway and will be completed with 1-2 years	City, Engineer, Public Works, Police Department	WYDOT, school district
Develop plan for bicycle routes and lanes within City	Better overall mobility	Mid to Long Term; 5-10 years	City, Engineer, Public Works, Police Department	WYDOT; Safe Routes to Schools

Implementation - Action Plan

This is a sample action plan from a Comprehensive Plan that CBI worked on.



Monitor Performance

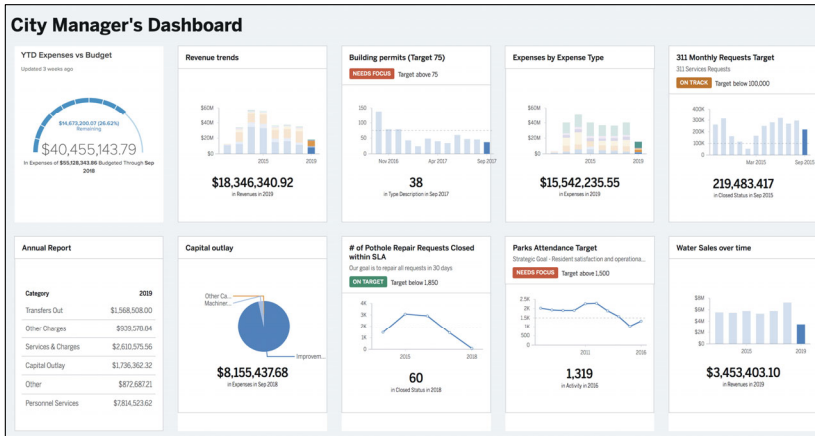
- Regularly review progress
- Annual, quarterly, or monthly review
- Performance measures should be clear to all
- Incorporate performance into department reviews & employee evaluations
- Adjust when/as necessary
- Keys: Accountability, transparency, and effectiveness
- Celebrate successes!

Develop a “balanced scorecard” metric – set standards, measure against standard, and report quarterly

- Develop Performance Metrics
 - Identify appropriate metrics for each initiative
- Build on existing culture of performance measurement

Report On Progress

- Create a comprehensive report or template that fits the plan
- Provide written and verbal reports, as appropriate
- Post progress updates on same website where plan is posted
- Outcomes should clearly move the community closer to the Vision
- Keep the public informed of significant achievements AND setbacks





Most plans can quickly become outdated
(some are as soon as they are created)



Develop a method to update the plan when
performance monitoring suggests need for
change



Strategic plans do not become better with
age; however, the cumulative impact of good
plans can steadily improve your community



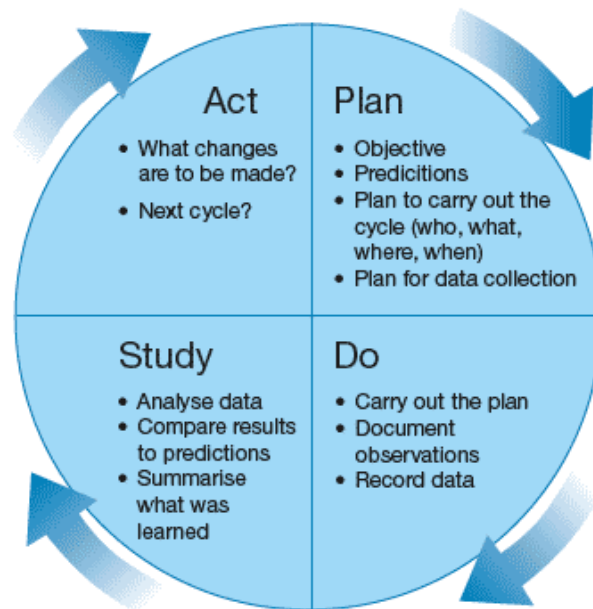
Set a window of time for consideration of
updating the plan or creating a new one

Continually Update

Continually Update

W. Edwards Deming's cycle of continuous improvement:

Plan, Do, Study, Act



Professor Deming (who was from Wyoming) created the concept of a cycle of continuous improvement. Toyota used his management model and dominated the American auto industry. Deming's Plan – Do – Study – Act cycle is ideal for managing municipalities.

Vision	Skills	Incentives	Resources	Action Plan	Change
?	Skills	Incentives	Resources	Action Plan	Confusion
Vision	?	Incentives	Resources	Action Plan	Anxiety
Vision	Skills	?	Resources	Action Plan	Resistance
Vision	Skills	Incentives	?	Action Plan	Frustration
Vision	Skills	Incentives	Resources	?	False Starts

Why do plans fail to create the desired change?
 Consider Managing Change with Strategic Planning (Dr. Mary Lippitt)



Adapted from The Managing Complex Change Model, Dr. Mary Lippitt.

Bringing change to your community requires all the above. It takes vision, skills, incentives, resources and an action plan to produce change in a community. If you have all five, you will likely end up with change. If you leave one of the components out, you will likely end up with something different.

If you have no vision — that guiding force behind what you’re trying to do — you will not end up with change. You will end up with confusion because you won’t have that guiding force to refer back to during the process.

If you lack the skills necessary (i.e. communication, public speaking, political or advocacy) to effect the change you seek, you will be left with anxiety.

If you have people who are unprepared to do the work, it doesn’t matter if they have a great vision.

If you leave out the incentives — the types of things (rewards, recognition, celebrations) that keep key community stakeholders involved — you may have change, but it will be more gradual. It may take years to years to accomplish what you could have done in a shorter period of time.

If you leave out the resources (money, time, equipment), you will end up with a lot of frustration because you’ve got a plan, and you know how to accomplish it, but you don’t have the resources to get the job done.

Without an action plan — a plan broken down into steps that people can take and accomplish in

small bits — you will end up with a lot of false starts. The members may take off in a certain direction, only to realize that an important step was skipped, forcing them to stop their progress and go back and take care of it.



Questions
about Strategic
Planning?

Thank You!

This presentation was prepared by Community Builders, Inc., a Wyoming-based consulting firm specializing in community and economic development, under contract and in cooperation with the Wyoming Association of Municipalities.

Contact Info:

Joe Coyne, Principal Consultant
(307) 631-2413
Joe@consultCBI.com



Wyoming
Association of
Municipalities
Building Strong Communities

