

Strategic Governance

Worksheet

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Use this worksheet to capture your own answers during each activity throughout today's session. It follows the same order as the presentation, and includes the working definition for each component of strategic governance discussed so you can refer back to it later. This worksheet is entirely for your own use.

Strategic Planning

1 Before You Start: Taking Stock

*Before you start planning, it is critical to accurately and precisely characterize the **current state in your community**.*

This could include:

- *Reviewing available data on trends in your community (e.g., population trends, employment trends, etc.)*
- *Seeking perspectives from community members through structured events or public surveys*
- *Gathering input from Council members and staff*

Goal: *Create consensus around the most pressing issues facing the community.*

Individual Activity

1. What data on trends might you want to look at in identifying the ~5 most pressing issues in your county?

2. Who might you want to get input from?

Consider:

1. *What perspectives are needed to identify the most pressing problems? Who can speak for them?*
2. *Who are the people, interest groups, or organizations who are necessary to implement solutions, can block action, and control resources?*

3. What are your organization's strengths and areas for growth? How might you find out more information?

Consider:

1. *People (Human resources) and Culture*
2. *Systems, Processes, and Technology*
3. *Financial Resources*
4. *Interactions with Community and Partners (incl. local, state, federal)*

2 Vision

Definition: A vision statement describes the ideal future state of your community, what success looks like in 10–20 years. It is aspirational, community-centered, and memorable.

Individual Activity

1. If you left the County today and did not return until this day in 2036, what would you like to see in the County? Feel free to answer as specifically or broadly as you wish.
2. How could you state this in 1 sentence? Ideally, this would be something concise that you could easily remember.

Next Steps

1. To what extent does your county's current vision statement reflect the vision you set out in your brainstorm?
2. How could you work with your Council/Administrator to update the vision?

3 Mission

Definition: A mission statement defines your county's core purpose — who you serve, what you do, and why. It answers the question: Why does this organization exist?

Individual Activity

1. What would happen in the community if the county government ceased to exist? What would not get done?
2. How could you state this purpose in 1–2 sentences?

Next Steps

1. To what extent does your county's current mission statement reflect what you just brainstormed?
2. How could you work with your Council/Administrator to update the mission?

4 Values

Definition: Values are the principles that guide HOW your organization operates, the non-negotiable behaviors and commitments that define your culture.

Examples:

Integrity · Equity · Innovation · Accountability · Service · Collaboration · Transparency · Responsiveness · Respect · Excellence · Data-Driven · Empowerment · Efficiency · Quality · Resilience · Inclusion · Accessible · Sustainability · Forward-thinking · Compassion · Other

Individual Activity

1. Which 4–5 of these values (or others) are most important to you to see in your local government?

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

2. Pick at least one: what would it look like for the county to exhibit that value in practice?

Next Steps

1. To what extent does your county currently operate according to the values identified?
2. How could you work with your Council/Administrator to identify and define a common set of shared core values?

5 Goals & Strategies

Definition: Goals define WHAT you want to achieve. Strategies define HOW. Both should be time-bound, tied to a specific planning horizon (typically 3–5 years).

Two types of goals

- A. *Community-Focused Goals — tangible outcomes the community will value (e.g., improve roads, increase local employment, reduce crime).*
- B. *Governance Goals — the resources, processes, and people the county needs internally to be able to pursue those community-focused goals (e.g., qualified job applicants, healthy fiscal reserves, quality community engagement).*

Individual Activity

1. What are 2–3 community-focused goals you would like to see your county pursue?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. What are 2–3 governance goals you would like to see your county pursue?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Next Steps

1. How could you work with your Council/Administrator to identify and define 3-5 prioritized goals for the county to pursue over the next 3-5 years?
 - a. *Guiding Questions:*
 - *What is the full set of priorities that county leaders would want to see accomplished?*
 - *Of everything on our list, what can't wait another year, and what could?*
 - *Where do priorities already overlap, even if they are framed differently?*
 - *If you can only fully deliver on a few of these, which would you stand behind as proof you did what you said you'd do?*
 - *What's the version of this list each leader could support, not necessarily the ideal, but the workable version?*

6 Performance Measurement

Definition: Performance measurement is the process of evaluating whether the county is making progress toward its goals and ensuring everyone in the county is working in the same direction.

Potential Sources

- Government Records
- Trained Observers
- Citizen / Staff Surveys

Considerations

- Measures need to be valid and reliable
- Measurement should not cause an undue burden
- Simple is often better than complex

Types of Performance Indicators

- Demand: Community need or requests for service (e.g., # of pothole complaints received)
- Input: Resources used to deliver services (e.g., \$ budget allocated, FTEs assigned)
- Output: Volume of work produced (e.g., # of potholes repaired per month)
- Efficiency: Cost or time per unit of output (e.g., Cost per pothole repaired)
- Effectiveness: Quality and responsiveness of service (e.g., % of potholes repaired within 48 hours)
- Outcomes: Long-term impact on community well-being (e.g., % of residents rating roads as good/excellent)

Group Activity

What type of measures are each of the following?

1. Number of customer service requests received _____
2. % of requests responded to within 24 hours _____
3. % annual reduction in accidents _____
4. Number of staff hours dedicated to community engagement events _____
5. % of residents who report they can easily access county services _____
6. Number of animal spay-neuter surgeries _____
7. Cost per solid waste load _____

Individual Activity

1. What data does your county currently report? Is it mostly output-focused or outcome-focused?
2. Think of one of the goals you identified earlier: What data would you like to see to know if you are on track to meet that goal?