



How to Implement Strategic Plans

February 20, 2024

Thank you to our sponsor



Today's Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Strategic Planning Overview
- Implementation Elements
 - 1: Measuring Plan Progress
 - 2: Building Stakeholder Support
 - 3: Allocating Resources
- Wrap Up

Session Objectives



Share implementation tips for communities with a current strategic plan



Demystify strategic plan implementation for communities without a plan

Digital Ground Rules

- Success needs full participation
- Remain muted while others are speaking
- Sharing and discussion – unmute or use chat
- Questions – hold until the end of the presentation or use the chat
- Respect comments and ideas of others
- Assume you have something to learn
- Ask for what you need
- Seek clarity on issues

Parking Lot



Opening Framing

Strategic Planning Overview

What is a Strategic Plan?

A management tool that outlines:

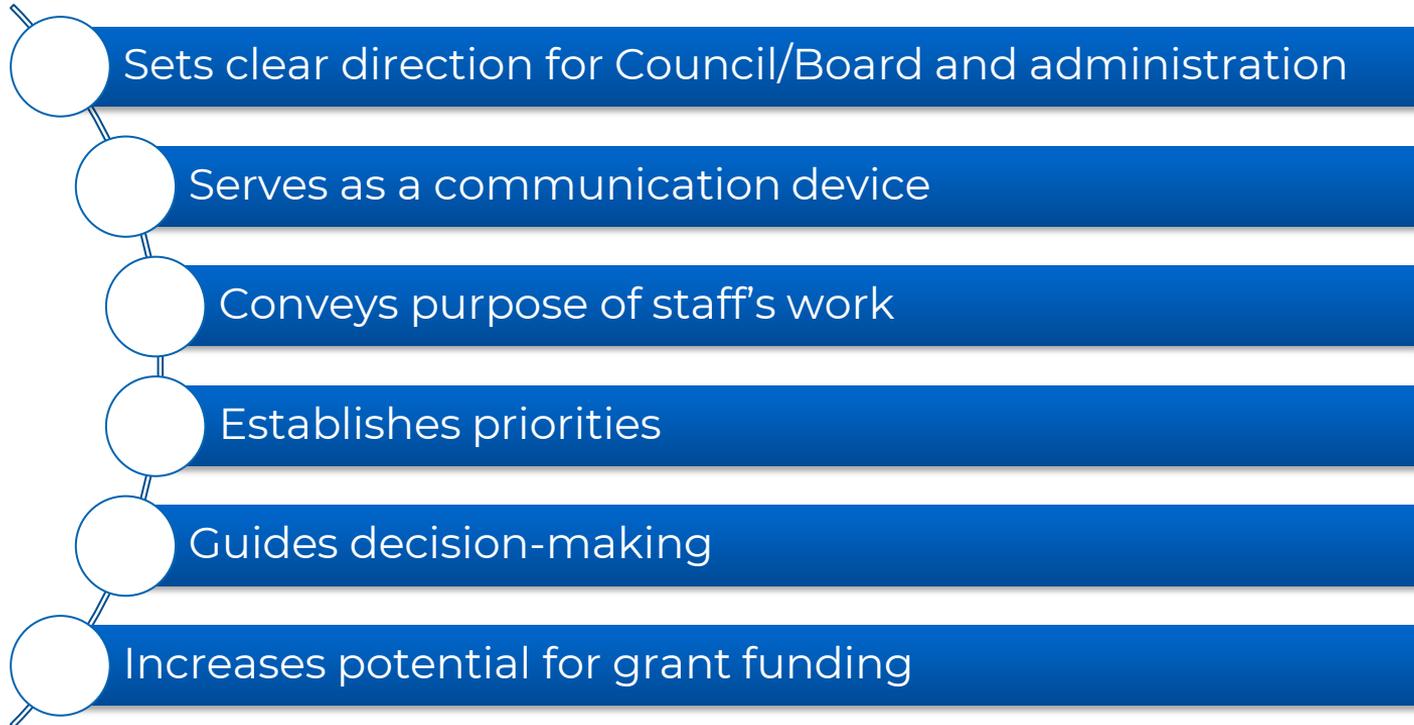
- Where a community is going in the future (vision)
- Goals and actions needed to make progress (blueprint)
- How to define success (accountability)



Strategic Plan Core Components



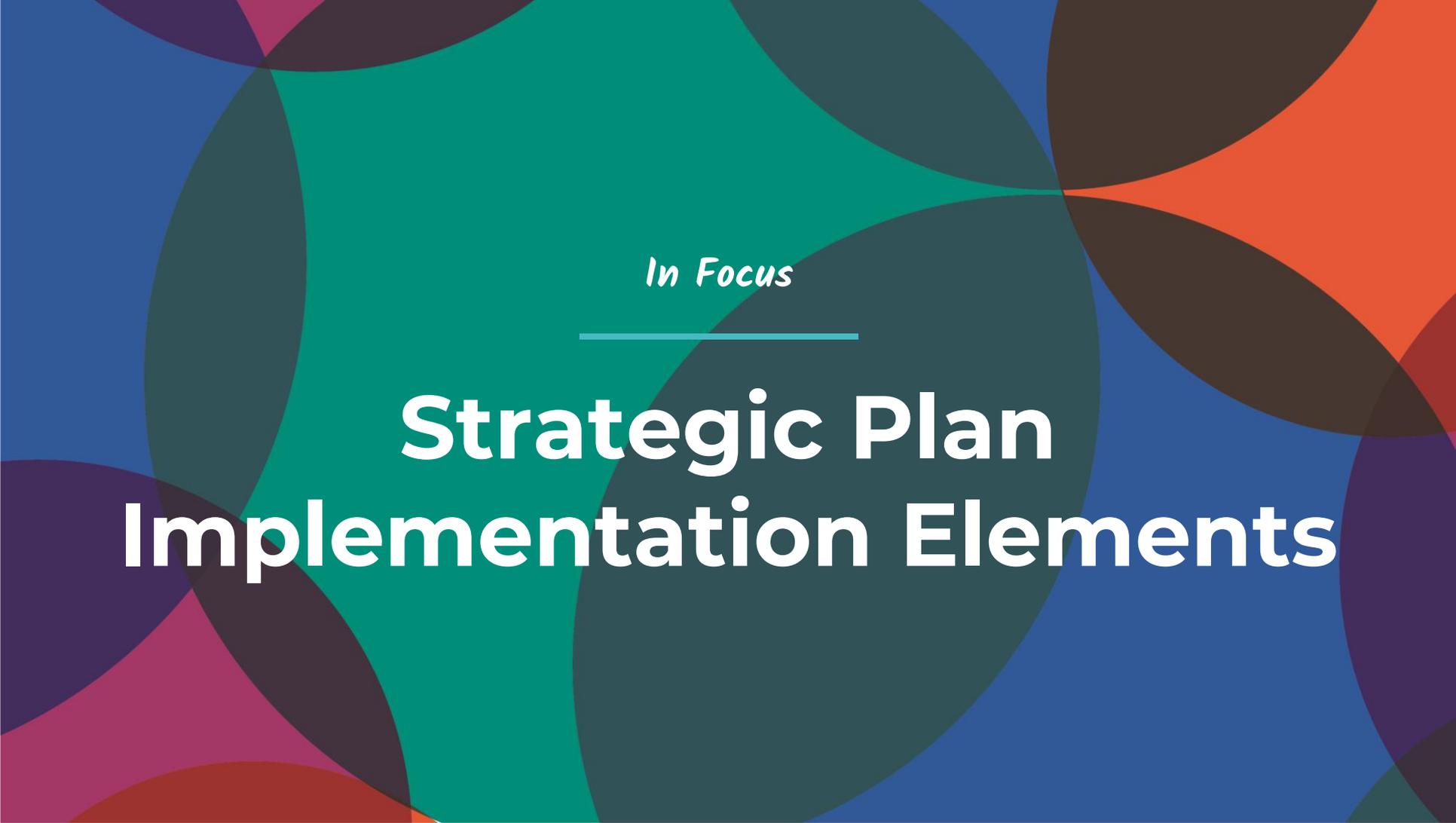
Importance of an Implementation Plan

- 
- Sets clear direction for Council/Board and administration
 - Serves as a communication device
 - Conveys purpose of staff's work
 - Establishes priorities
 - Guides decision-making
 - Increases potential for grant funding

Group Discussion



- Do you have a current strategic plan?
- If you have a strategic plan, did you have an implementation plan as part of the plan approval process?
- If you don't have a strategic plan, what have been some barriers to developing a strategic plan?



In Focus

Strategic Plan Implementation Elements

Measuring Plan Progress



Purpose of Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring the status of the strategic plan implementation

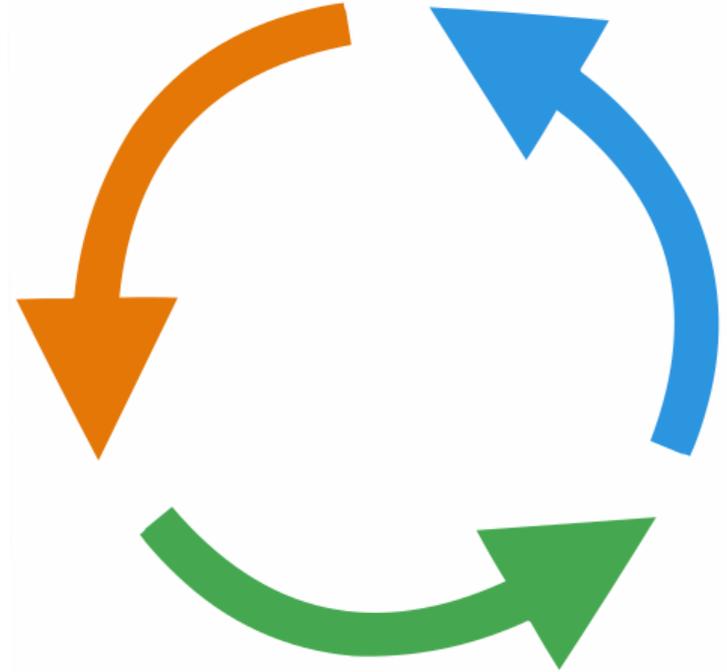
- Tool for administration
- Continuous assessment of performance, progress (or delay)
- Frequency: Monthly or quarterly
- Short-term focus: *“Did we do what we said we would do?”*

Evaluating the impact of the plan and conditions which required changes to the plan

- Tool for Council/Board
- Assessment of impact and what, if any, changes are needed to plan
- Frequency: At least once per year
- Long-term focus: *“What has improved as a result of this plan? Are changes needed to the plan?”*

Benefits of Monitoring & Evaluation

- Builds accountability
- Creates consistency
- Offers transparency



Monitoring Roles & Responsibilities

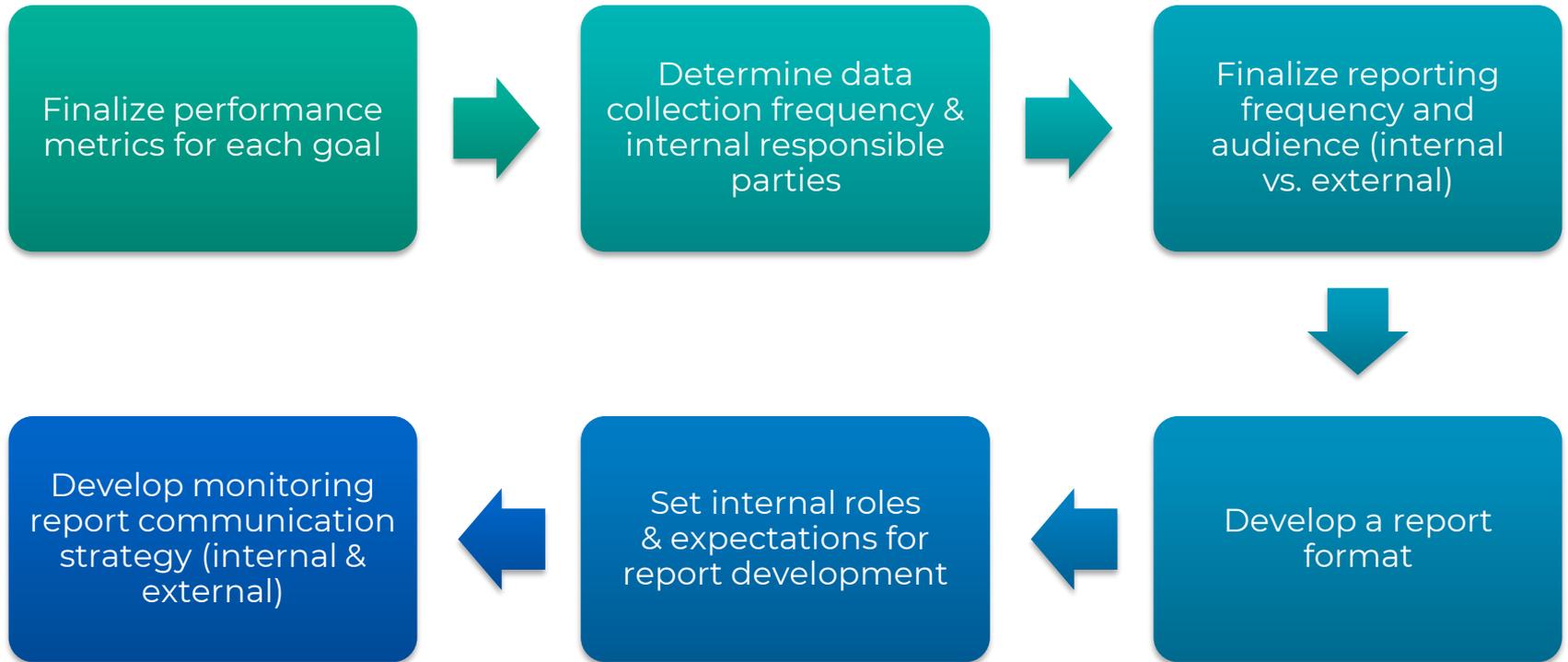
Roles

- **Lead/Coordinator:** Manager/Administrator or Designee
- **Support/Contributor:** Department Directors

Monitoring Responsibilities: Ongoing

- **Staff:** Track and report performance; share successes with management
- **Manager/Administrator:** Manage performance; share updates with Council/Board and public
- **Council/Board:** Provide guidance to management; share progress with public

Steps to a Monitoring Approach



Spotlight: Cabarrus County

Plan Monitoring & Reporting

Regularly (Every 4-8 weeks)

- Task force meetings
 - Develop timebound plans
 - Assign responsibility
 - Track progress
 - Monitor environment/trends

Quarterly

- Qualitative and quantitative progress updates (beginning in September 2024)

Annually

- Plan review
- Business plan alignment
- Budget alignment
- Comprehensive plan report (July/August)

Evaluation Roles & Responsibilities

Roles

- **Lead/Evaluator:** Council/Board
- **Lead/Coordinator:** Manager/Administrator or Designee
- **Support/Contributor:** Department Directors

Evaluation Responsibilities: Annually

- **Staff:** Track progress on impact measures; identify challenges
- **Manager/Administrator:** Prepare & submit annual impact report; include any recommend changes
- **Council/Board:** Evaluate report; recommend & approve changes

Sample Measure Types

Types of Measures	What are they measuring?	Examples
Workload	How many of something; raw counts of outputs	Calls received, work orders completed, zoning applications processed
Efficiency	Ratio, relationship between outputs and inputs, can be expressed in percentage	Cost per job reviewed, cost per capita, application processed per analyst, calls per police officer, building permits per inspector
Outcome	Effectiveness, obtains quality, if a program or service is having an impact	Resident satisfaction, impact of a program, response time of 5 minutes or less

Source: ICMA

Spotlight: Cabarrus County

Measurements Worksheet

- What top 3 things could you measure that would assess the impact of a specific goal?
- What data points do you currently have access to related to this measure?
- Who collects the data?
- At what frequency is the data collected?

Strategic Plan Measurements Worksheet			
Goal	[Goal Title/Description]		
	<i>Strategies (in support of this goal)</i> 1. 2. 3.		
In the boxes to the right, list the top three things you could measure that would assess the impact of this goal. <i>(NOTE: The measures should primarily align to the goal. Where feasible, you may also align the measures to the strategies.)</i>			
What data points do you currently have access to related to this measure?			
Who collects the data?			
At what frequency is the data collected?			

From Measures to Metrics



Measures

- Reflect raw data
- Are necessary to determine metrics
- Track current status
- *Example: # of employees*



Metrics

- Show the relationship between 2 or more measures
- Put measures into context
- Measure progress toward goals
- *Example: employee retention rate*

Group Discussion



- What types of metrics do you currently use to measure progress?
- What data are you collecting that you could use to measure progress?
- What additional data would be helpful for measuring progress?

Building Stakeholder Support



Plan Ownership

Having ownership fosters:

- Commitment to the plan's success
- Engagement
- Accountability



Single vs. Shared Ownership



Single Ownership

- 1 person or department primarily responsible



Shared Ownership

- Multiple parties or departments responsible
- “Culture of Accountability”

Group Discussion



- How can you solve for plan ownership when you have a small staff or limited staff capacity?
- What issues can arise if no one is assigned as the plan owner?

Internal Stakeholder Communication

Key Considerations

- Determine how and when to roll out the plan
- Decide how frequently you will share updates
 - Can align with reporting schedule



External Stakeholder Communication

Key Considerations

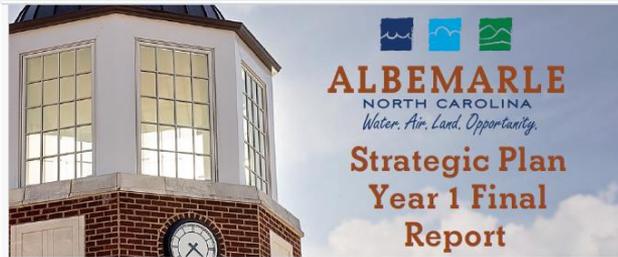
- Measures/metrics of interest
- Method of communication
- Amount of background and context needed
- Complexity of data presented



Spotlight: City of Albemarle

Year 1 Implementation Progress Report

- Highlights from 1st year of plan implementation
 - Progress
 - Success stories
 - Reflections – lessons learned, challenges, benefits



OUR THREE-YEAR GOALS

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY
Invest in our workforce to enhance City operations and efficiency to better serve the community.

SAFETY & SECURITY
Enhance resources and improve practices to protect our residents and safeguard the city in order to improve quality of life.

INFRASTRUCTURE
Invest in infrastructure needed to ensure reliable and consistent service delivery.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES
Guide growth and facilitate economic opportunities in order to benefit all residents and businesses.

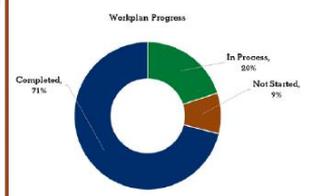
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Enhance community amenities, programs, and services to engage residents of different backgrounds, lifestyles, and generations.

OUR PROGRESS

Fiscal year 22/23 was the first year of the 3-year plan. In this first year, the City team worked collaboratively to establish the procedures, forms, and processes necessary to track our progress on the FY2023 Tactics.

Significant progress was made in Year 1. We tracked and monitored 45 Tactics, supporting 5 Goals. Tactics are the action items the City committed to in order to accomplish the Goals of the Strategic Plan.

In our first year of implementation and monitoring we were able to set into motion 91% of Tactics, with only 4 not started do to lack of funding or capacity.



Category	Percentage
Completed	91%
In Process	8%
Not Started	9%

Group Discussion



- What strategy did you just hear that would work in your community?
- Are there other strategies you would like to use that were not mentioned?

Employee Engagement

Individual Performance Evaluations

- Incorporate strategic plan performance measurements
 - Include process and timeliness metrics
 - Avoid quantitative metrics beyond an individual's control
- Linking core values



Employee Appreciation

Recognition Programs

- Reinforce core values, highlighting staff demonstrating excellent customer service



Group Discussion



- If you've linked your strategic plan to annual performance reviews, what have been the benefits?
- Are there issues you foresee with linking a strategic plan to performance review in your community?

Allocating Resources



Linking Strategic Plan to Budget



Ensuring Plan-Budget Alignment

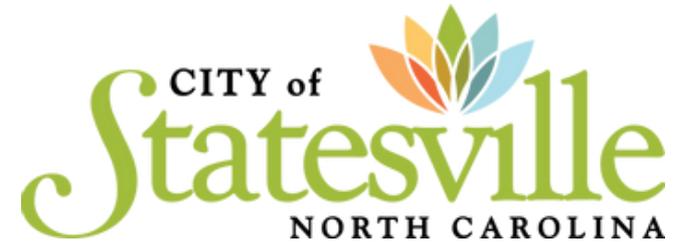
Key Questions

- Have you identified funding requests & budget priorities prior to the start of the budget process?
- How will you communicate about funding allocations that support Council/Board goals?
- Have departments received guidance on connecting funding requests to the strategic plan?



Spotlight: City of Statesville

- Annual budget provides summary of requests supporting Council measurables in strategic plan
- Illustrates how individual expenditures move the City's vision forward
 - E.g., Request to fund additional waterline technician supports strategy for ensuring infrastructure viability



Group Discussion



- If have a strategic plan, what is your process for gathering funding requests to determine how to allocate resources in the annual budget?
- If you do not have a strategic plan, what currently informs your annual budget process (e.g., CIP, Council/Board direction)?



Session Reflections

Upcoming Training Opportunities

March 14 th 10:00 am – 11:30 am	Virtual	<i>Small Town Peer-to-Peer: Communications*</i>
April 25 th 10:00 am – 12:00pm	In Person	<i>Centralina Learns: Aging Sensitivity & Age-Friendly Planning</i>
May 7 th 9:00 am – 11:00 am	Virtual	<i>Centralina Learns: How to Tell Your SMART Story in Grant Applications</i>
May 9 th 10:00 am – 11:30 am	Virtual	<i>Small Town Peer-to-Peer: Personnel & Operations Policies*</i>

*** Small Towns Focus**

THANK YOU

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