Strategic Planning Nuts and Bolts: Developing an Organization-Wide Strategic Plan

Wednesday, January 6 2015

Management and Leadership Training Conference

Presented by:
Jarle Crocker
Community Action Partnership
1140 Connecticut Ave, NW, Suite 1210
Washington, DC 20036

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“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”

— Warren Bennis

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Agenda

- What do you want to learn about strategic planning?
- A basic overview of strategic planning
- Stage One Preparation
- Stage Two Assessment
- Stage Three Planning

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Overview: Community Action and Strategic Planning

- What is strategic planning?
- Strategic planning and CSBG Mandates
- Organizational Standards for strategic planning
- Results Oriented Management Accountability and strategic planning

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Characteristics of Strategic Planning

- Board-driven, staff engaged
- Sets long-term goals that are targeted, specific, and achievable
- Driven by data
- Forces choice based on strategic needs, competing resources, and time
- Aims to increase integration and efficiency in management and operations
- Builds on and leverages relationships with internal and external stakeholders
- Seeks to improve outcomes through change and innovation

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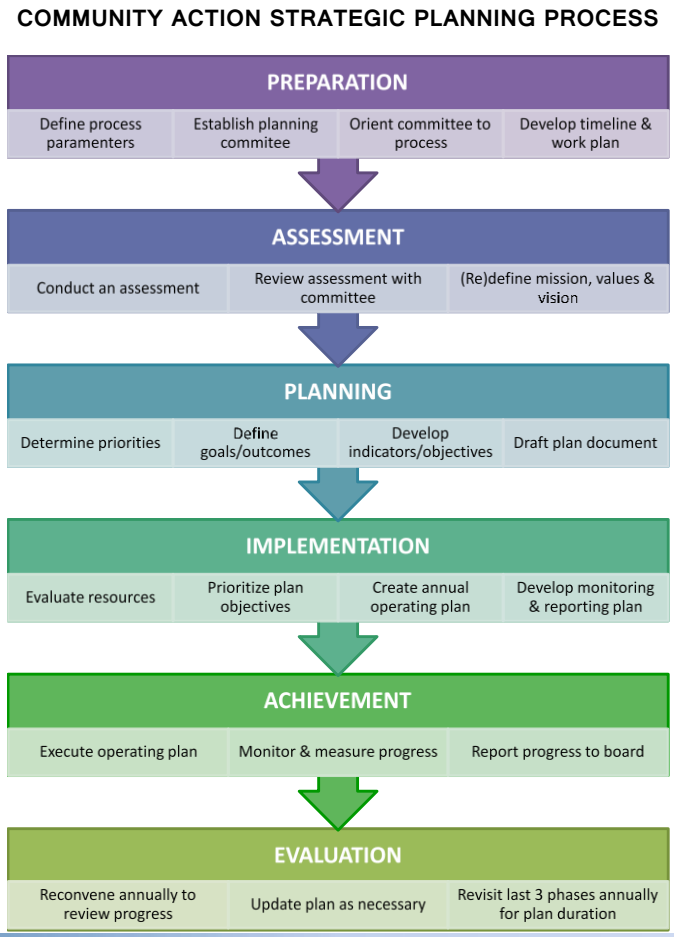
A Community Action Model for Strategic Planning



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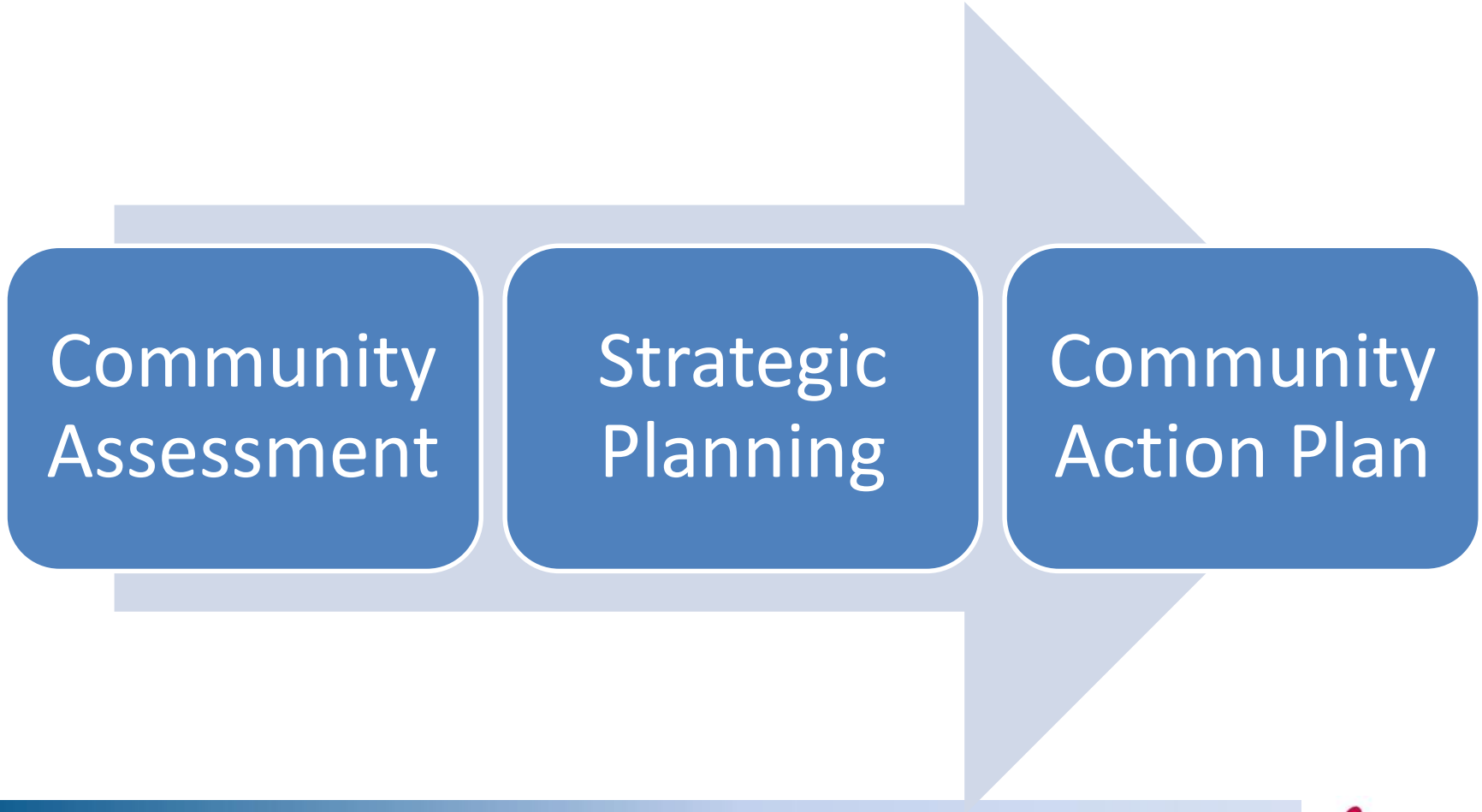
Strategic Planning in Context



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Strategic Planning and CSBG Mandates

- Anti-poverty goals of the CSBG Network
- Role of planning in agency activities
- Maximum feasible participation
- Role of the tri-partite board

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CSBG Anti-Poverty Goals

The CSBG Act describes in Section 672 its goals "to provide assistance to States and local communities, working through a network of community action agencies and other neighborhood-based organizations, for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become fully self-sufficient."

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Role of Planning in CAA Activities

The Office of Economic Opportunity Instruction 6320-1 (1970) states, “CAA(s) must develop both a long-range strategy and specific, short-range plans for using potential resources…In developing its strategy and plans, the CAA shall take into account the areas of greatest community need, the availability of resources, and its own strengths and limitations.”

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Maximum Feasible Participation

The CSBG Reauthorization Act Section 672(D) states that a CAA will achieve its goals through the "maximum participation of residents of low-income communities and members of the groups served by programs assisted through the block grants made under this subtitle to empower such residents and members to respond to the unique problems and needs within their communities."

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Role of the Board in Planning

Section 676B of the Community Services Block Grant Reauthorization Act of 1998 requires that, as a condition of designation, private nonprofit entities and public organizations administer their CSBG program through tripartite boards that “fully participate in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program to serve low-income communities.”

Translating Values into Practice

The strategic planning process ideally should be:

- Inclusive: Includes diverse internal and external stakeholders
- Participatory: Stakeholders play a role in shaping the process and its outcomes
- Collaborative: Decisions are made in a deliberative and transparent process

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Organizational Standards 6.1

- **Standard 6.1 • private**

  The Organization has an agency-wide Strategic Plan in place that has been **approved by the governing board** within the **past 5 years**.

- **Standard 6.1 • public**

  The Department has a Strategic Plan, or comparable planning document, in place that has been reviewed and **accepted by the tripartite board/advisory body** within the **past 5 years**. If the Department does not have a plan, the tripartite board/advisory body will develop the plan.

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Organizational Standards 6.2

- **Standard 6.2 • private**

  The approved Strategic Plan **addresses** reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.

- **Standard 6.2 • public**

  The approved Strategic Plan, or comparable planning document, **addresses** reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.

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Organizational Standards 6.3

- **Standard 6.3 • private**

  The approved Strategic Plan contains Family, Agency, **and/or** Community goals.

- **Standard 6.3 • public**

  The approved Strategic Plan, or comparable planning document, contains Family, Agency, **and/or** Community goals.

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Organizational Standards 6.4

- **Standard 6.4 • private**

  Customer satisfaction data and **customer input**, collected as part of the Community Assessment, is included in the strategic planning process.

- **Standard 6.4 • public**

  Customer satisfaction data and **customer input**, collected as part of the Community Assessment, is included in the strategic planning process, or comparable planning process.

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Organizational Standards 6.5

- **Standard 6.5 • private**

  The governing board has received an **update(s**) on meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan within the **past 12 months**.

- **Standard 6.5 • public**

  The tripartite board/advisory body has received an **update(s**) on meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan/Comparable Planning Document within the **past 12 months**.

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Related Organizational Standards 4.1

- **Standard 4.1 • private**

  The governing board **has reviewed the Organization's mission statement within the past 5 years** and assured that:

  1. The mission addresses poverty; and

  2. The Organization's programs and services are in alignment with the mission.

- **Standard 4.1 • public**

  The tripartite board/advisory body **has reviewed the Department's mission statement within the past 5 years** and assured that:

  1. The mission addresses poverty; and

  2. The CSBG programs and services are in alignment with the mission.

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Related Organizational Standards 4.2

- **Standard 4.3 • private**

  The Organization's Community Action Plan and Strategic Plan document the continuous use of the full ROMA cycle or comparable system (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation). In addition, the Organization documents having used the services of a ROMA-certified trainer (or equivalent) to assist in implementation.

- **Standard 4.3 • public**

  The department's Community Action plan and strategic plan document the continuous use of the full Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle or comparable system (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation). In addition, the department documents having used the services of a ROMA-certified trainer (or equivalent) to assist in implementation.

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Related Organizational Standards 9.3

- **Standard 9.3 • private**

  The organization has presented to the governing board for review or action, at least within the past 12 months, **an analysis of the agency's outcomes and any operational or strategic program adjustments and improvements identified as necessary.**

- **Standard 9.3 • public**

  The department has presented to the tripartite board/advisory body for review or action, at least within the past 12 months, **an analysis of the agency's outcomes and any operational or strategic program adjustments and improvements identified as necessary**

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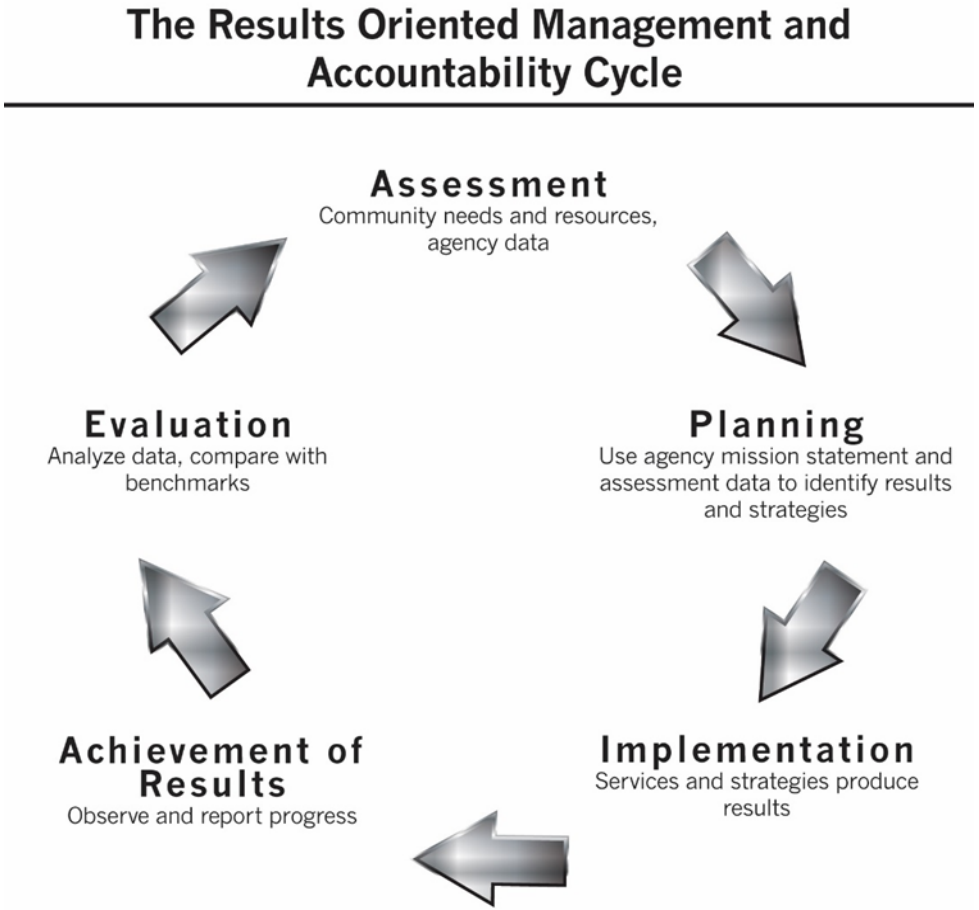
ROMA and Strategic Planning



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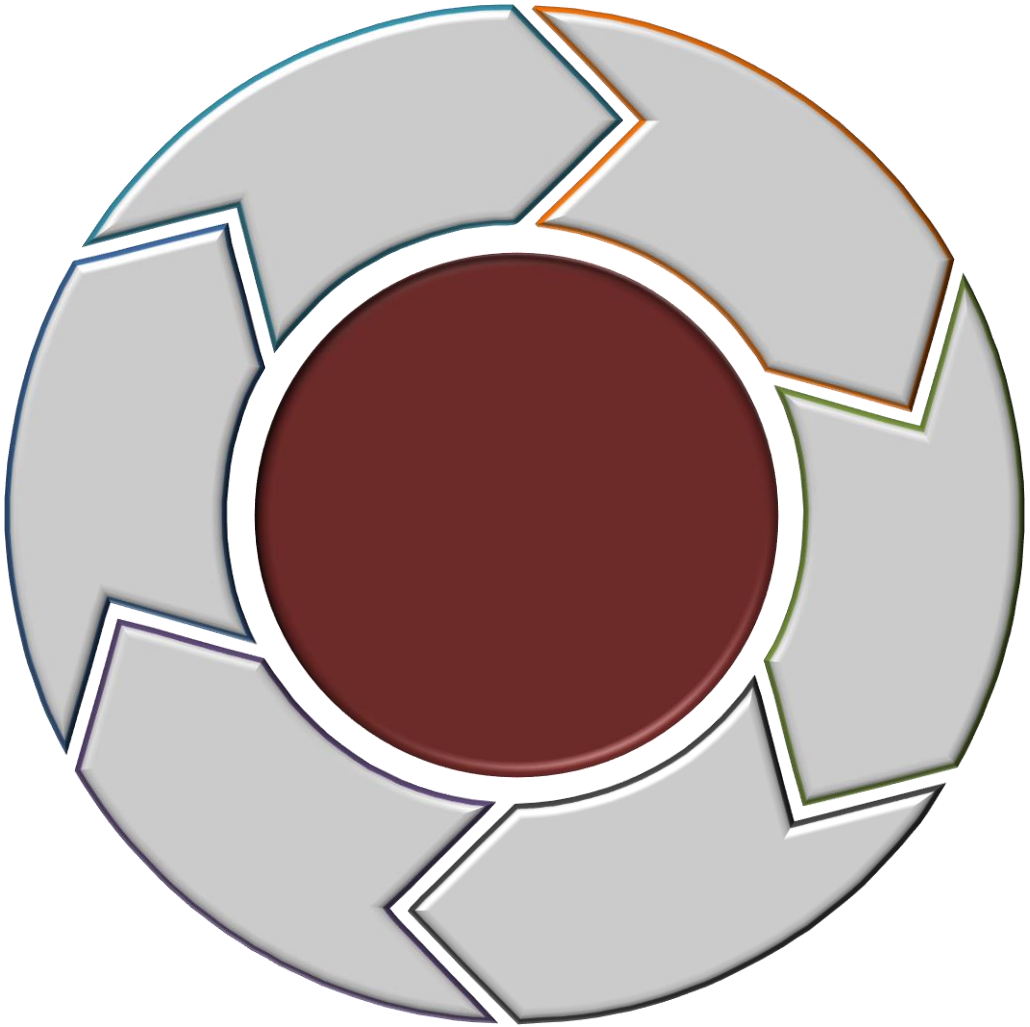
Incorporating the Theory of Change

Theory of Change

- What are the underlying causes of poverty in our community identified in the needs assessment?
- What actions can we take to address these causes?
- Why do we think these actions will be effective?



Incorporating the Theory of Change

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Strategic Planning

A Six Stage Model for Community Action Agencies

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Planning to Plan

1. Preparation

- Clarify roles of the ED, board, and staff
- Choose when to begin
- Create the planning committee

Strategic Planning Roles

Board	Executive Director	Staff
• Provide input on agency's strategic direction • Assist with process design and research • Identify resources to support process	• Initiate discussion on purpose and timing • Ensure adequate resources • Oversee process design and research • Engage key internal and external stakeholders	• Manage planning committee • Develop research plan and conduct research • Develop strategic planning process • Manage communications • Manage logistics

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Worksheet Review

- Look at Worksheet One
- How does your agency begin the strategic planning process?
- What challenges or suggested practices have you seen?

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Questions About Readiness

- Why are we planning and what do we hope to achieve?
- Does the agency face any strategic choices?
- Are we achieving our vision, aligned with our mission, and cultivating a healthy organizational culture?
- Is the agency financially sound and sustainable?
- Do we have adequate human capital, technological capacity, and physical infrastructure?
- Is the board sound, engaged, and effective?

Factors Affecting Timing

- Needs assessment
- Fiscal year or other financial schedules
- Leadership transitions
- Organizational events (e.g. conferences)
- Availability of time and resources
- Monitoring schedule

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Resources Required for Planning

- What staff do you need? (Leadership, research, process, administrative)
- What outside expertise do you need? (Facilitation, research)
- How much time do you need? (Three, six, twelve months?)
- What facilities do you need? (Meeting rooms, off-site facilities)
- What is your budget? (In-kind, volunteer or donations, space, consultants)

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Organizing the Planning Committee

Membership

- Board
- Executive Director
- Leadership team
- Planning/research staff
- Program managers
- Administrative support
- Other stakeholders: line staff, customers, key partners

Roles

- Design strategic planning process
- Design and conduct research process
- Provide logistical support
- Manage communication with internal and external stakeholders

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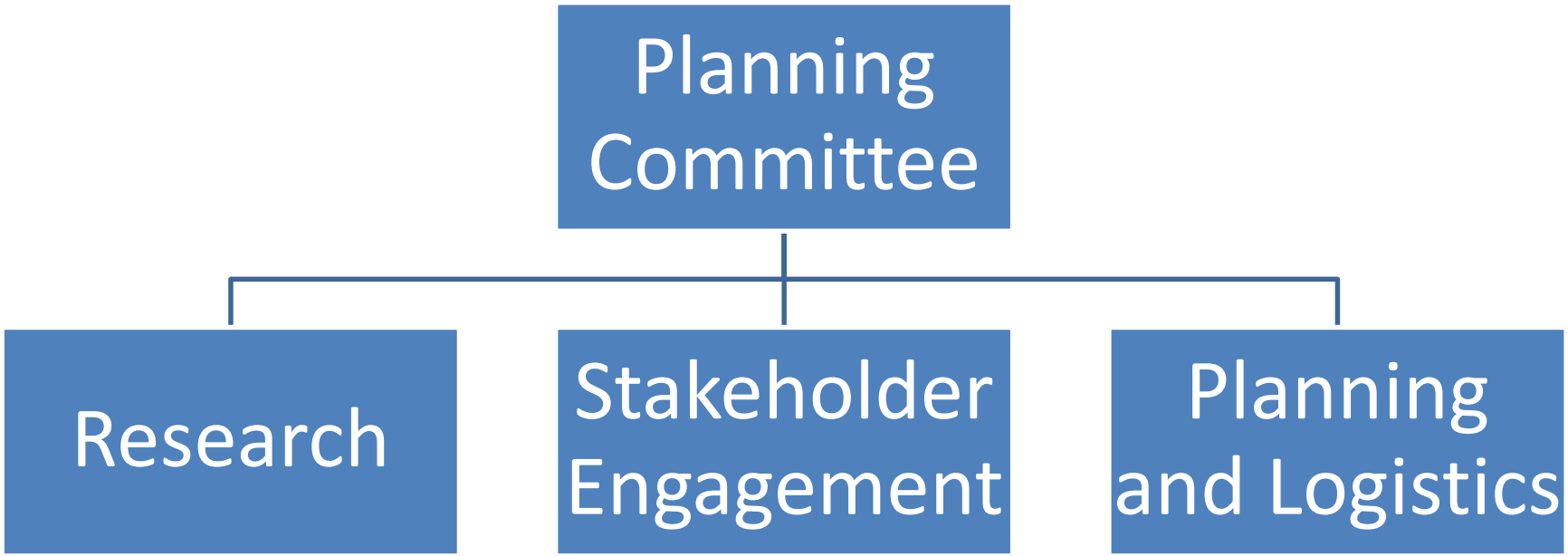
Planning Committee Size and Structure: Task Group Model



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Getting Started

- Review the purpose and goals of the process
- Discuss CSBG mandates, Organizational Standards, and ROMA framework
- Clarify roles and connections to primary stakeholders (board, agency leadership, staff, customers, key partners)
- Develop process plan, work plan, and budget

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Key Questions for the Planning Group

- **Why** are we engaging in the strategic planning process? What are its benefits?
- **Who** should participate?
- **How** will we conduct the process?
- **When** is the timeframe for finishing the plan?
- What are the **results** of the strategic planning process? What are the deliverables for each stage of the process?

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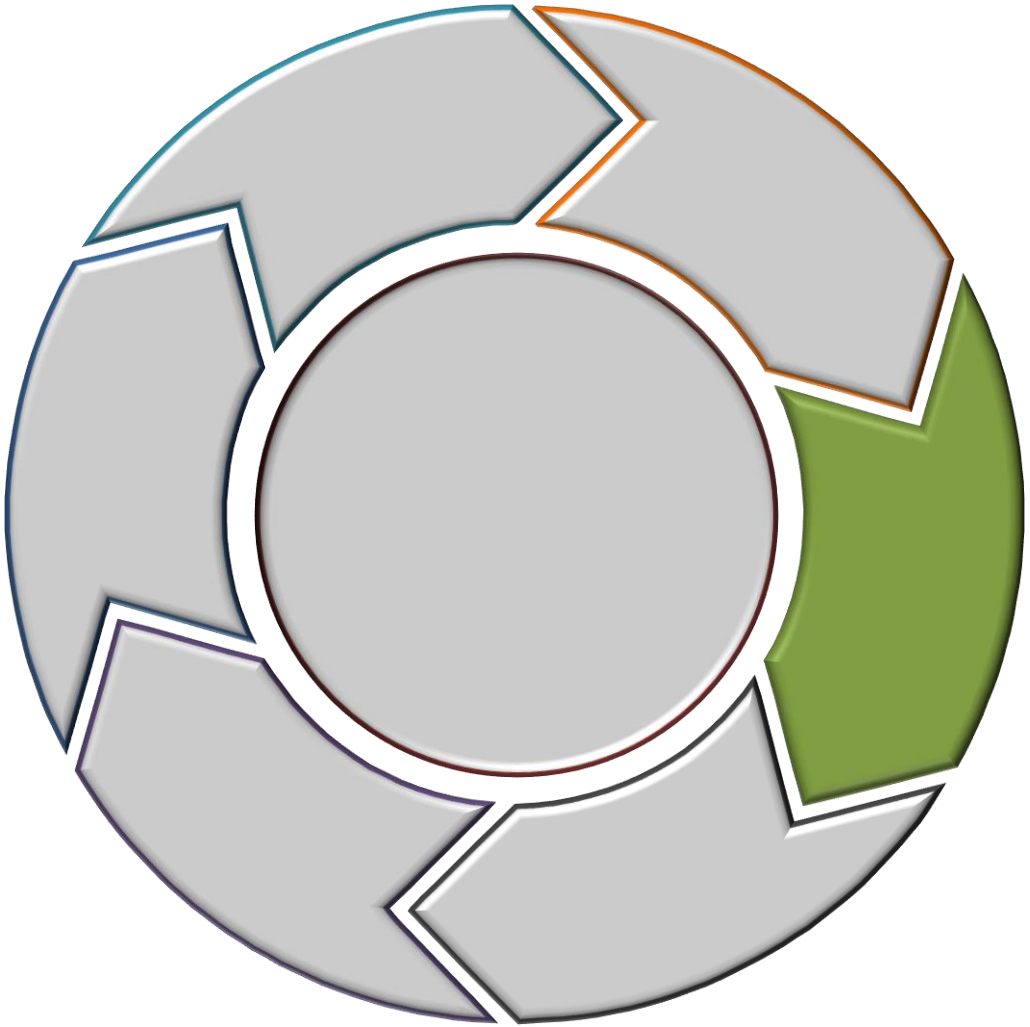
Conduct Research

2. Assessment

- Collect existing research and information
- Identify stakeholders and define research methodologies
- Conduct SWOT analysis
- Review vision, mission, and values



Back to main

Collect Existing Research and Information

- Previous strategic plan
- Summary data from the needs assessment
- Agency-wide budget
- Output and outcome data from programs and services
- Customer satisfaction data
- Key studies and reports

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Identify Stakeholders

Internal

- Board
- Leadership team
- Human resources
- Finance/budget
- Facilities
- Program managers
- Front line staff

External

- Customers
- Key partners
- Funders
- State CSBG Lead Agency
- Nonprofit service providers
- Public agencies
- School system
- Private sector
- Faith community
- Grassroots/advocacy

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Choose Research Methods

- Key informant interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Small and large group methods (community forums, open space)
- Archival research

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Tips for Research Design

- Use the research process as a way to engage stakeholders
- Look for opportunities to convene diverse stakeholders (e.g. different departments and hierarchies) to compare perspectives
- Match the method to the information needed (e.g. surveys for opinions, focus groups for analysis)

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Questions About the SWOT Analysis

- Why do you do one?
- Who should be involved?
- How do you design the actual assessment process?
- How do you use it once its done?

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The SWOT Analysis

	Internal	External
Helpful	Strengths	Opportunities
Harmful	Weaknesses	Threats

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Process Options for the SWOT Analysis

- Large group as “open space” exercise
- Small groups of diverse stakeholders
- All issues assessed within different stakeholder groups
- Individual issues by “expert” groups

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Strengths and Weaknesses (Internal)

- Programs and services
- Customer satisfaction and input
- Partnerships with key stakeholders/sectors
- Outreach, awareness, and advocacy
- Human resources/staff
- Facilities
- Funding/budget
- Data/information technology

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Opportunities and Threats (External)

- Political – legislation, climate
- Economic – employers, trends
- Social – civic culture and infrastructure
- Technological – data, workforce needs
- Legal – court rulings
- Environmental – transportation, housing

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Tips for the SWOT Analysis

- Make sure to define issues/items within each quadrant for the participants before starting
- Frame the discussion of four quadrants in the context of the needs assessment results and agency outputs and outcomes
- Direct analysis of the issues towards how the agency can capitalize on strengths and opportunities and respond to weaknesses and challenges
- Use weighted voting to prioritize results

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Matrix Map – SWOT Component or Stand Alone Exercise

- Do you know which program areas have a financial benefit and those which loose the agency money?
- Do you know which programs have a large mission impact and those that are less impactful?

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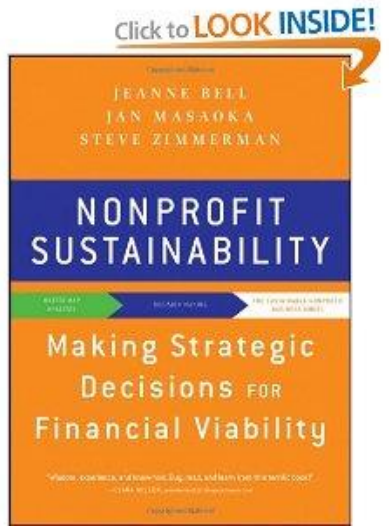
Matrix Map Resources

- *Nonprofit Sustainability: Making Strategic Decisions for Financial Viability (2010)*
  - Jeanne Bell, Jan Masaoka, Steve Zimmerman
  - Fiscal Oversight combined with programmatic oversight



Matrix Map Analysis → Decision Making → The Sustainable Nonprofit Business Model

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A Duel Bottom Line: Mission Impact and Financial Return

From: Nonprofit Sustainability: Making Strategic Decisions for Financial Viability (2010)

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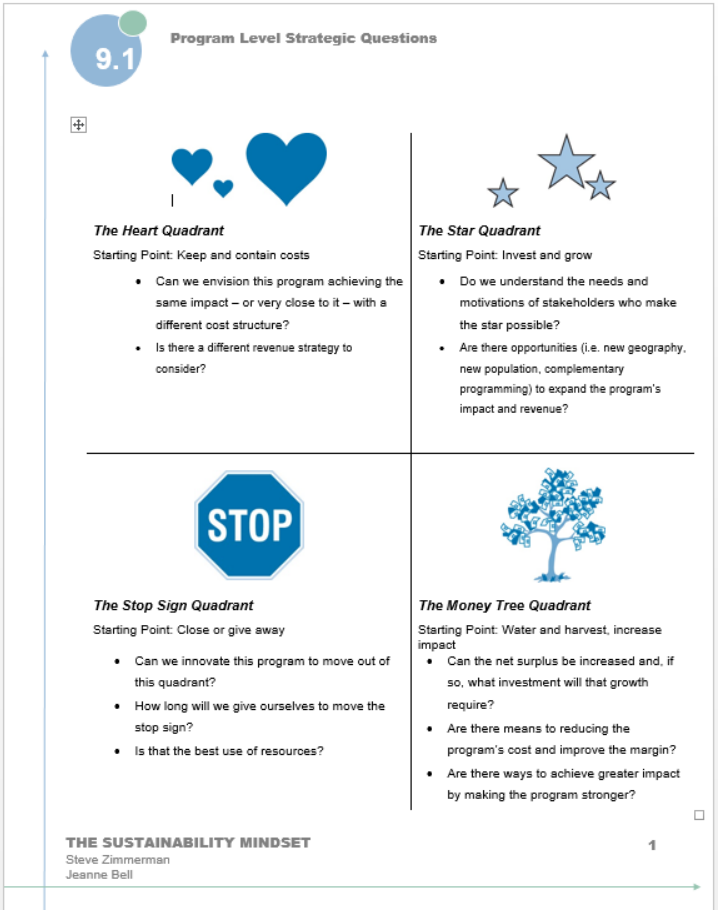
The Sustainability Mindset



9.1

Program Level Strategic Questions

The Heart Quadrant

Starting Point: Keep and contain costs

- Can we envision this program achieving the same impact – or very close to it – with a different cost structure?
- Is there a different revenue strategy to consider?

The Star Quadrant

Starting Point: Invest and grow

- Do we understand the needs and motivations of stakeholders who make the star possible?
- Are there opportunities (i.e. new geography, new population, complementary programming) to expand the program's impact and revenue?

STOP

The Stop Sign Quadrant

Starting Point: Close or give away

- Can we innovate this program to move out of this quadrant?
- How long will we give ourselves to move the stop sign?
- Is that the best use of resources?

The Money Tree Quadrant

Starting Point: Water and harvest, increase impact

- Can the net surplus be increased and, if so, what investment will that growth require?
- Are there means to reducing the program's cost and improve the margin?
- Are there ways to achieve greater impact by making the program stronger?

THE SUSTAINABILITY MINDSET

Steve Zimmerman
Jeanne Bell

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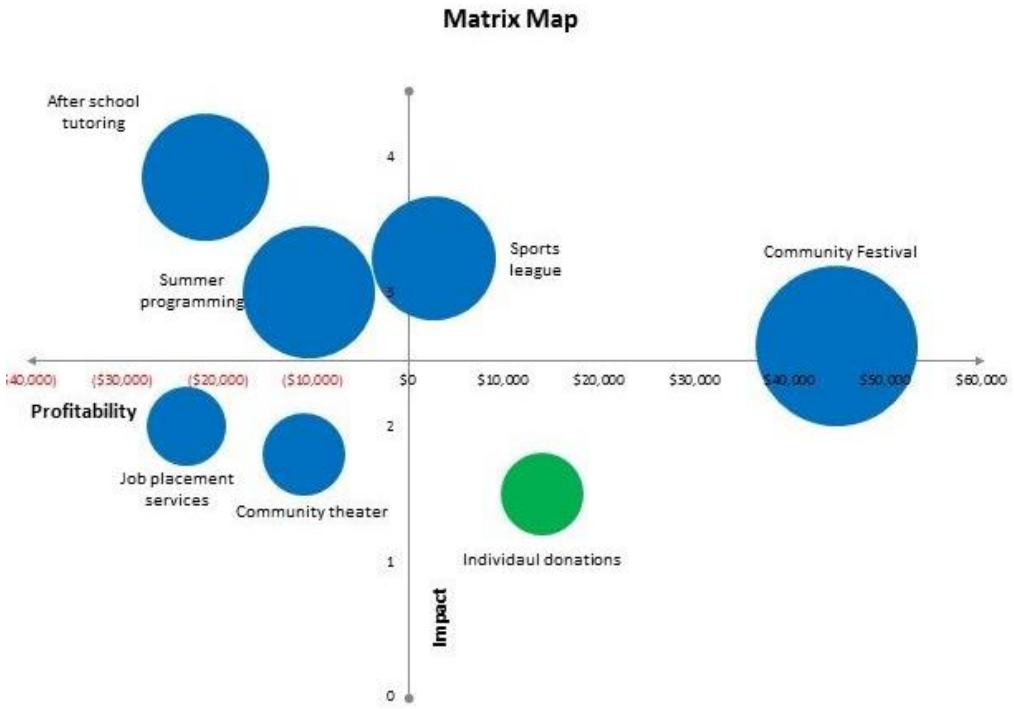

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Program, Cost, Outcome, Need Matrix

1. List all the agency's programs and services
2. Calculate the total cost per client served/unit produced
   --Total staff + direct + overhead costs/total clients served or units produced
3. List outcomes
4. Connect programs and services to needs

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Program, Cost, Outcome, Need Matrix

Program	Unit Cost	Outcomes	Needs
• Job training • Child care quality	• $10,000 per placement • $4,000 per slot	• 15 jobs • 10 child care slots	• Living wage jobs • Child care

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Assessing Vision, Mission, Values

- Can be done as part of SWOT analysis or as a separate exercise
- Typically conducted with key leadership and board, but can involve other stakeholders
- Standard 4.1 requires that “The governing board has reviewed the organization’s mission statement within the past 5 years and assured that: 1) the mission addresses poverty; and 2) The organization’s programs and services are in alignment with the mission.

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Reviewing Your Vision Statement

- Does it describe your agency's optimal goal and reason for existence?
- Does it describe the ideal conditions of how the community would look if key agency goals were completely addressed?
- Does it present an inspiring view of the preferred future?
- Is it brief and easy to communicate?
- Is it shared by members of the community?

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ROMA: Four Key Mission Elements

- Population
- Services
- Outcomes
- Relationship

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Reviewing Your Mission Statement

- What are the primary needs of the families, organizations, and communities we serve?
- What goals do we want to achieve for the families, organizations, and community in our service area?
- What is our core business and primary services?
- What are our service delivery strategies?
- Who are our primary customers?
- Who are our primary partners?
- What is our theory of change?
- Are our services, programs, and other activities aligned with our strengths and opportunities? With our mission?

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Questions to Connect Mission to Programs

- Where are we providing services but not achieving good outcomes? (Where do we need to do better?)
- Where are we providing services but not meeting family and community needs? (Where do we need to do more?)
- Where are there gaps in services and/or needs for different types of services? (Where do we need new services?)
- On a scale of “completely disconnected” to “highly integrated”, where are our services? (Where do we need to align services?)
- How effective is our overall anti-poverty agenda?
  --Network of stakeholder relationships
  --Awareness of poverty-related issues by the broader community
  --Strength of a policy/systems change agenda

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Reviewing Your Values

- How do we want to treat others?
- How do we want to be treated ourselves?
- What are our attitudes and values about our clients?
- What are our attitudes and values about our processes?
- What are our attitudes and values about our performance?

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PLANET 501 c3 = TALES FROM THE NONPROFIT GALAXY

BY MIRIAM ENGELBERG

STRATEGIC PLANNING MAGIC TRICKS... REVEALED

STRUGGLING TO FINISH A STRATEGIC PLAN? WE WENT UNDERCOVER AT A SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION TO FIND OUT HOW THEY DID IT...

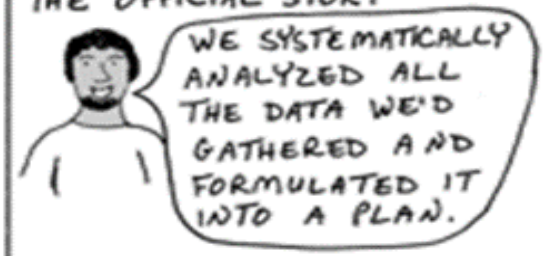
REACHING CONSENSUS:

THE OFFICIAL STORY—

HOW IT WAS REALLY DONE—

WRITING THE PLAN:

THE OFFICIAL STORY—



HOW IT WAS REALLY DONE—

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN:

THE OFFICIAL STORY—

HOW IT WAS REALLY DONE—

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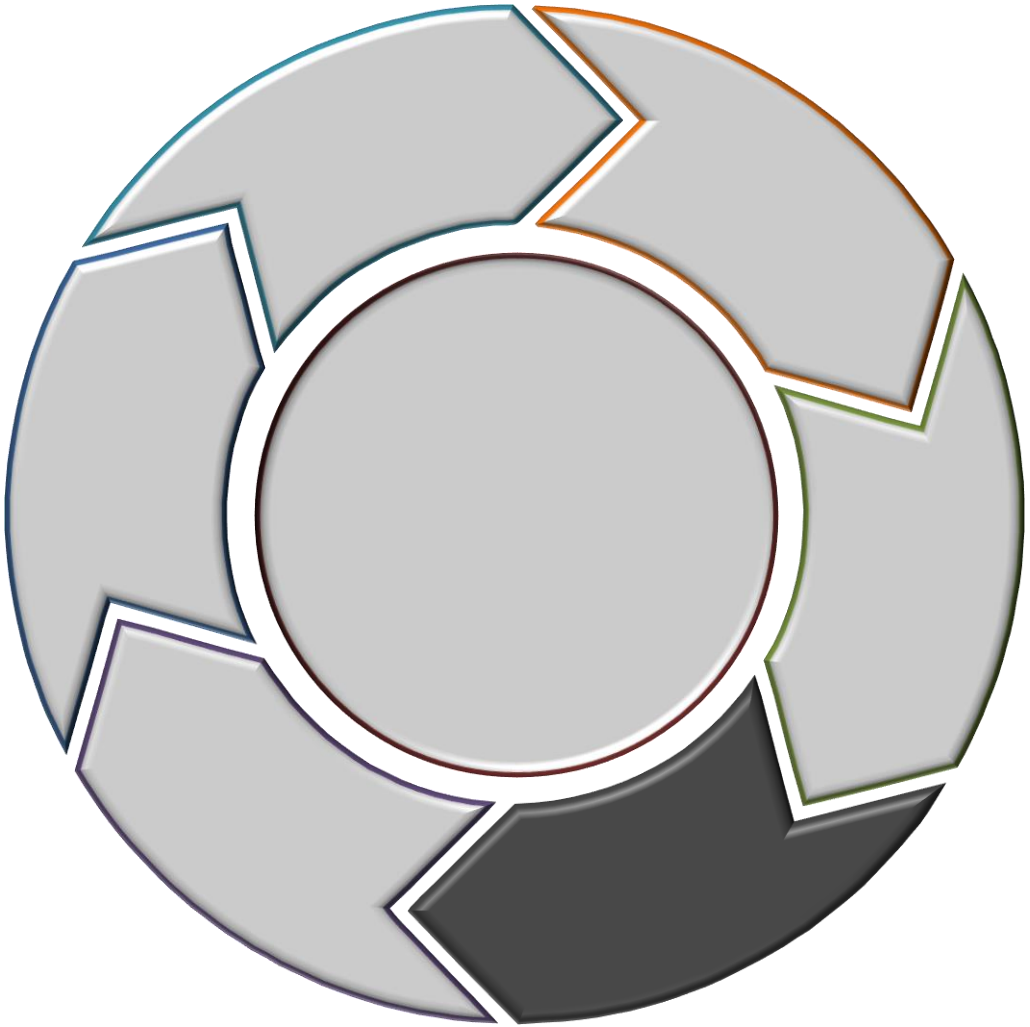
Create the Plan

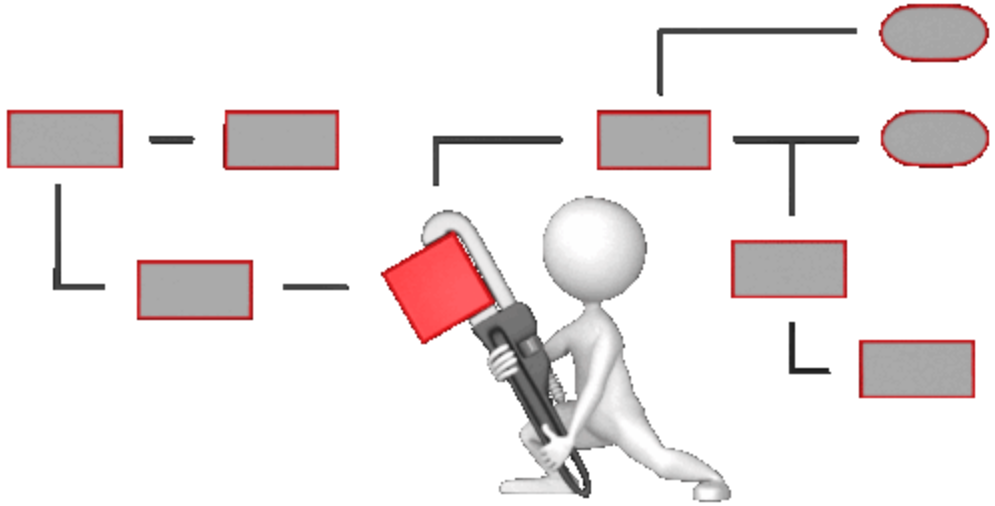
3. Planning

- Design plan development process
- Develop the plan
- Finalize the plan



Process Design Options

- Committee and task groups
- “Open space” large group meeting
- Team-based negotiation
- Retreat with small group



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Word Scramble

- Measure
- Outcome
- Goal
- Indicator
- Milestone
- Output
- Target
- Action
- Strategy

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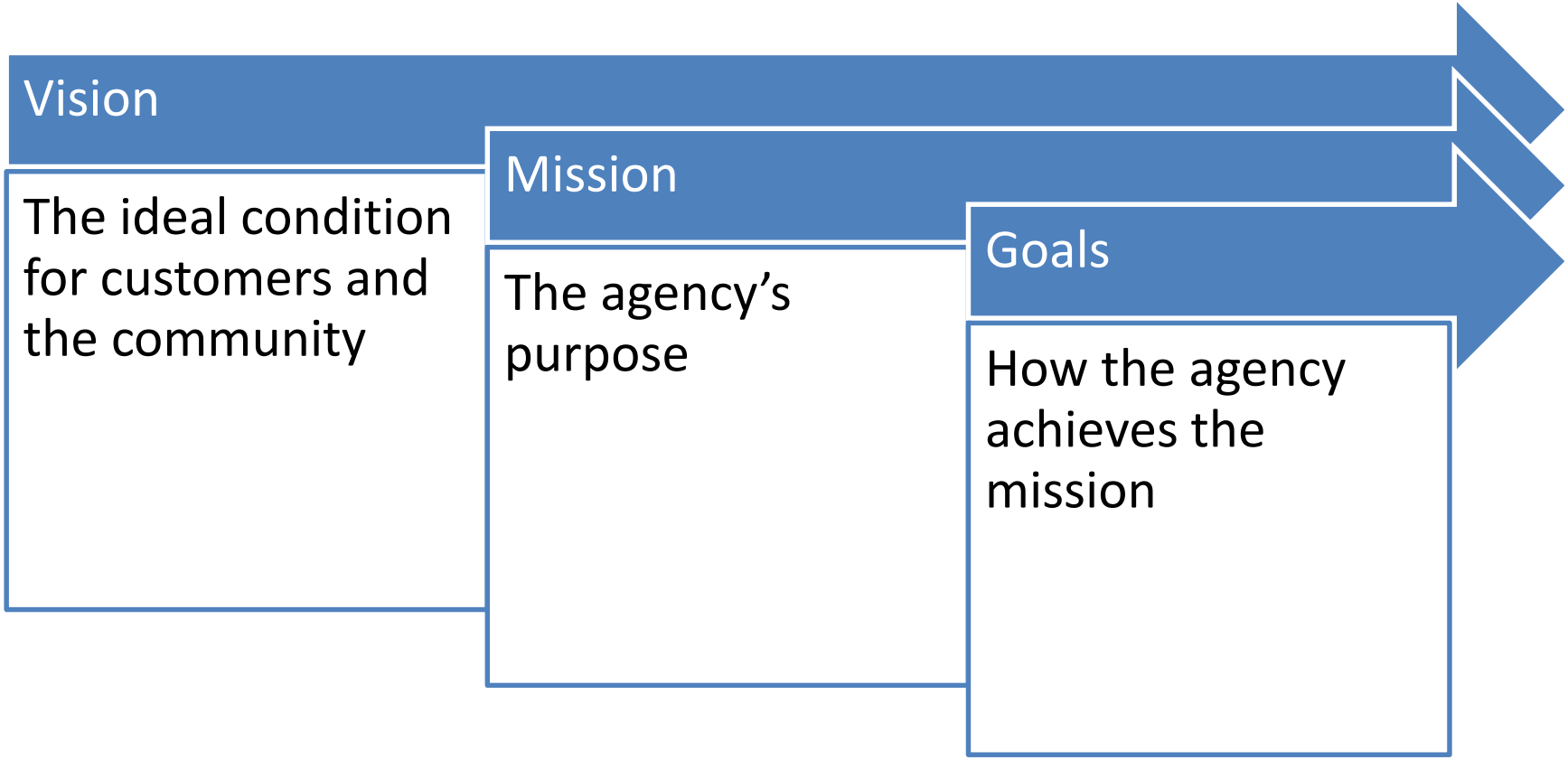
Connecting the Vision to the Goals



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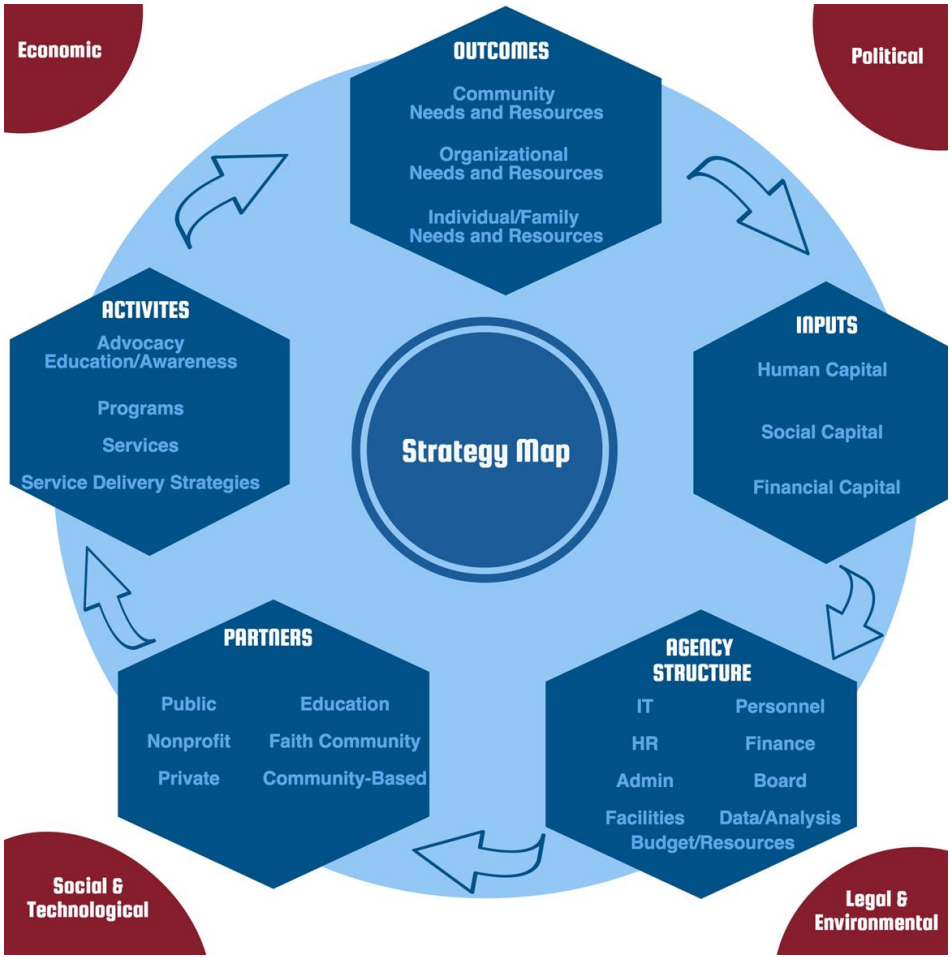
Strategy Map



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Elements of the Strategy Map

- External environment
- Agency inputs
- Agency infrastructure
- Relationships
- Programs and services
- Needs

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Identify, Discuss, and Prioritize Strategic Issues

1. Review the summary of your needs assessment
2. Review the prioritized list of your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
3. Review the discussion of your vision, mission, and values
4. Review any additional key data – budget, program outcomes, reports
5. Identify, discuss, and prioritize the key strategic issues that face the organization
6. Develop and prioritize goals

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Goals, Objectives, Actions

- Goals address strategic issues, are aligned with the mission, and meet needs
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Attainable
  - Realistic
  - Timely
- Objectives are ways to achieve your goals
- Actions are the steps to implement your strategies

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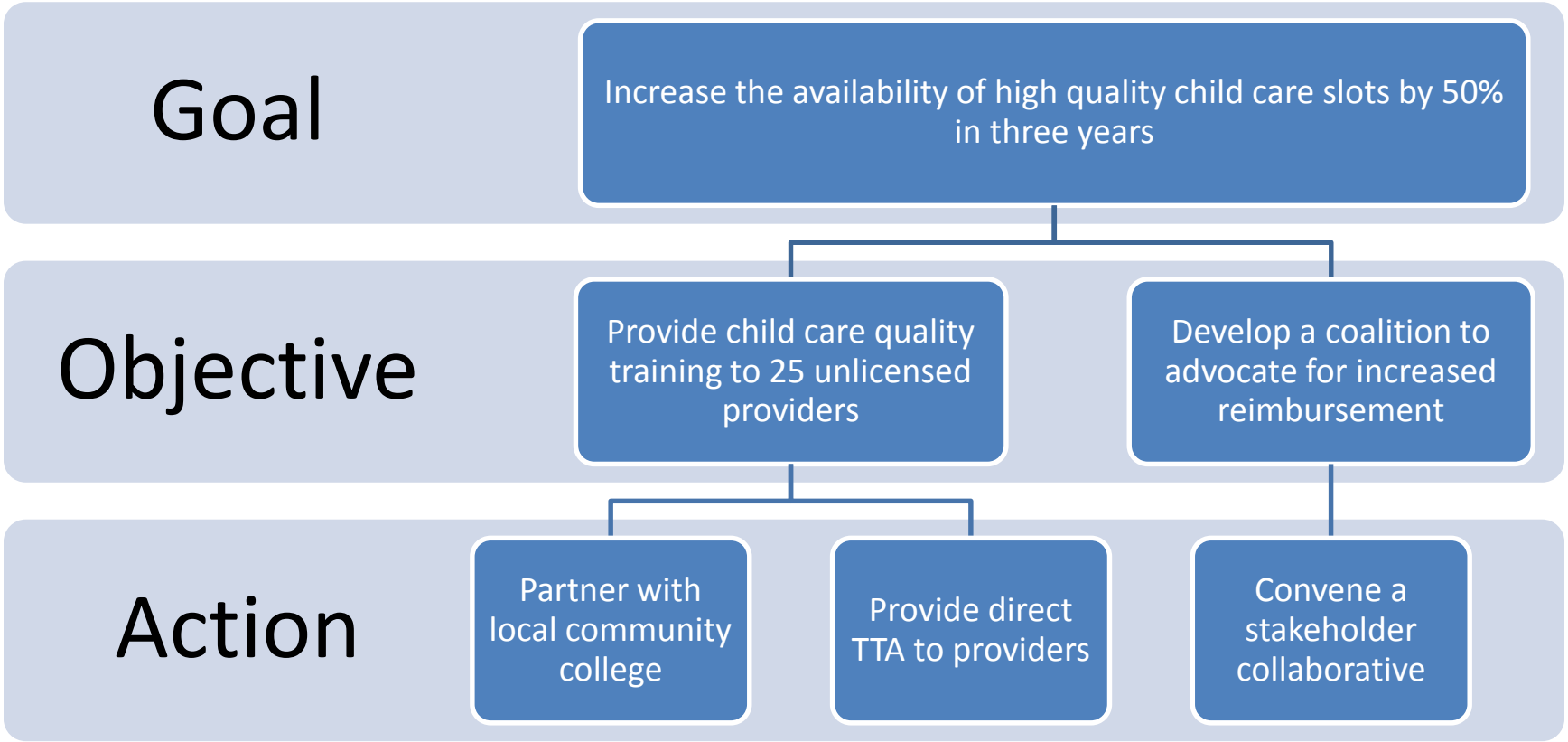
Goals, Objectives, Actions Ex. 1



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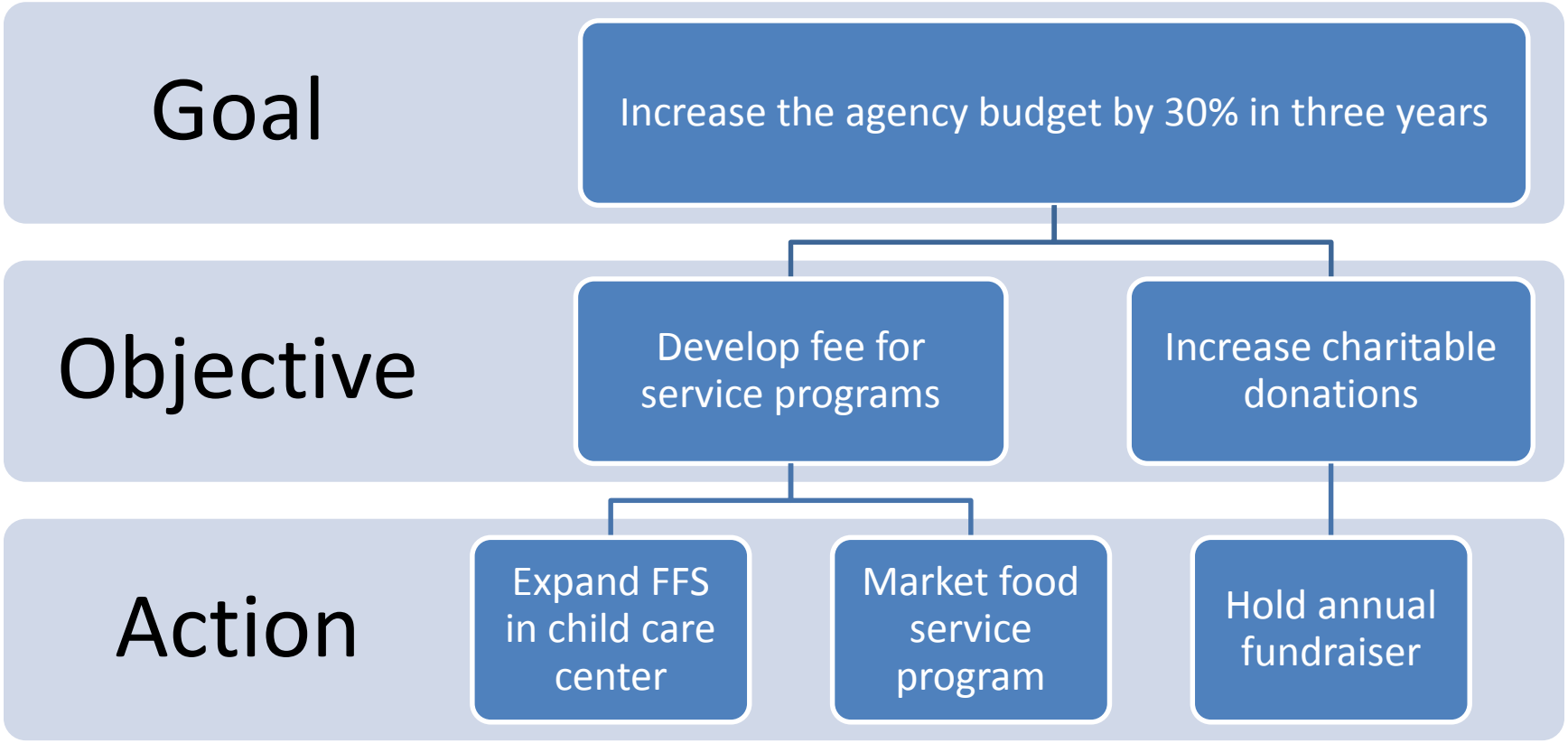
Goals, Objectives, Actions Ex. 2



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Incorporating the Six National Goals

Goal 1. Low-income people become more self-sufficient. **(Family)**

Goal 2. The conditions in which low-income people live are improved. **(Community)**

Goal 3. Low-income people own a stake in their community. **(Community)**

Goal 4. Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved. **(Agency)**

Goal 5. Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results. **(Agency)**

Goal 6. Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems. **(Family)**

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Incorporating the Six National Goals

- Standard 6.2 requires that strategic plans address one or more goals that seek: reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self sufficient
- Some CAAs use the Six National Goals as their broad strategic goals
- Some have the plan roll up into to the six goals operationally but not directly as part of their plan
- Some key into Family, Agency, and Community as the overlay for their plan
- No one right way to do it, but good to have the Six National Goals considered

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Incorporating ROMA Target Goals

Standard 6.3 requires that strategic plans include one or more of:

- Family goals
- Agency goals
- Community goals

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Organizing the Plan's Structure

I. Executive Summary
II. Introduction: Purpose, Process, and Stakeholders
III. Mandates: CSBG, Standards
ROMA
IV. Assessment Summary
a. Internal
b. External
c. Mission, vision, values
V. Strategic Issues
VI. Goals, Objectives, Actions
VII. Next Steps

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Tips for Writing the Strategic Plan

- Shorter is better
- Leave the writing for after the meeting – the focus should be on articulating goals, objectives, and actions
- Don’t get too detailed on the actions – these will be developed in the action plans
- Leave time for comments and revisions

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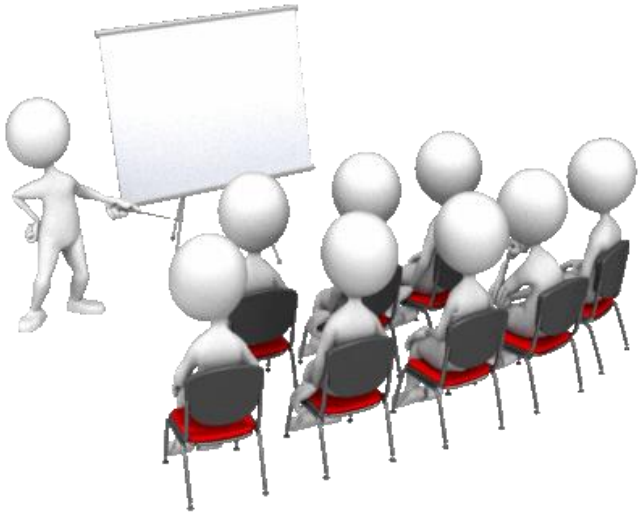
Finalizing the Plan

- Ensure all goals have timelines, resource requirements, and assigned responsibilities
- Planning Committee gathers any additional information and feedback
- Initial draft is completed and circulated to stakeholders for review
- Final draft is completed and submitted to board for approval
- Implementation committee (or similar structure) is created



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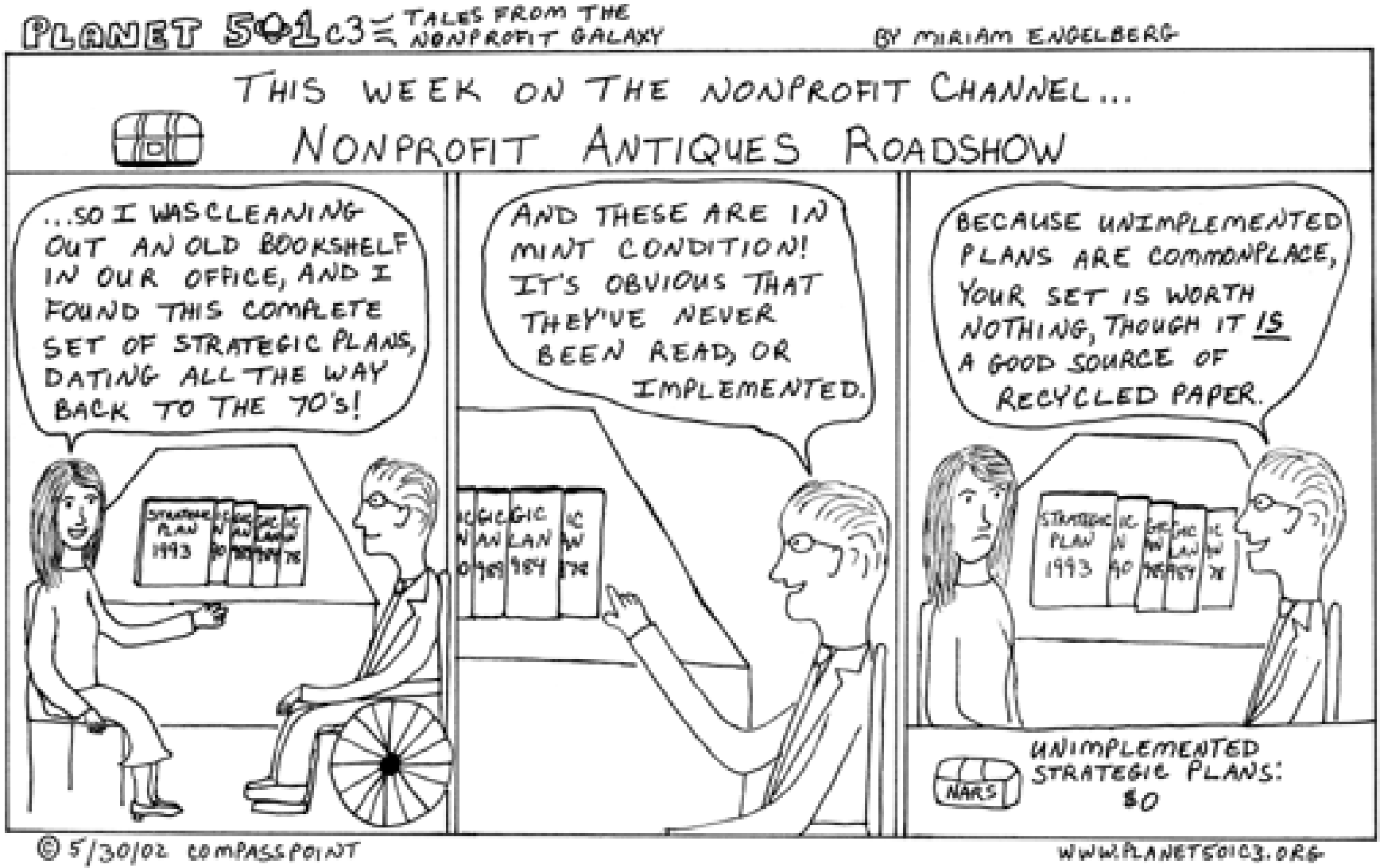

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Acting on the Plan

4. Implementation

- Decide on implementation process

- Develop action plans

Options and Responsibilities for the Implementation Process

Process

- Single committee
- “Handoff” to leadership team
- Task groups organized by strategic plan goals
- Integrate into program or department work plans

Responsibilities

- Develop action plans
- Develop strategic planning score card
- Review budget and resource needs
- Regular meetings to review progress (at least quarterly)
- Report to leadership team and board
- Identify and address implementation challenges

Developing Action Plans

- Each Objective will typically have its own Action Plan
- Action plans are developed by the staff responsible for implementing the plan
- Action plans should include:
  - List of action steps
  - Resources required
  - Staff responsible
  - Timeline
  - Outcomes
  - Method of tracking

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Table Exercise

- Using the goals you developed for the previous exercise, create an action plan for at least two objectives using the worksheet

Integrating the Strategic Plan into Management and Operations

- Quarterly or Annual report to the board
- Monthly or quarterly updates to the leadership team
- Monthly meetings by the implementation team to oversee progress on individual goals
- Creation of task committees to manage individual goals
- Integration into or development of an agency-wide or balanced scorecard to track progress
- Make strategic plan goals part of formal job descriptions
- Updates on strategic plan progress at staff meetings

Monitor the Plan

5. Results

- Develop score card or other monitoring tool
- Track results of strategic plan goals
- Conduct updates to strategic plan goals and work plans as necessary

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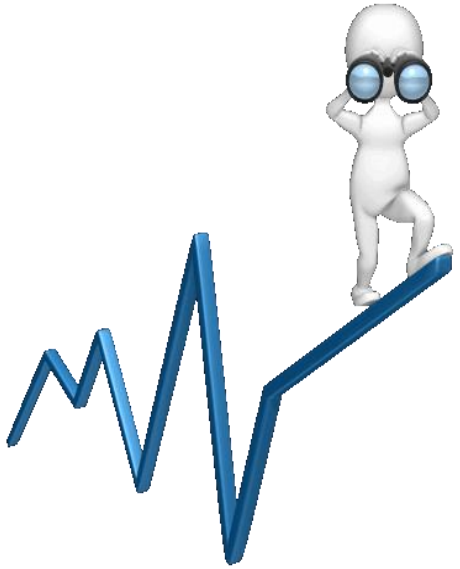
Monitoring the Strategic Plan

- Convene six month or annual review of strategic plan goals
- Continue monthly or quarterly reporting of plan outcomes through a strategic plan scorecard, the implementation committee, or similar structure and process
- Provide time for board discussion and feedback



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Elements of a Strategic Plan Scorecard

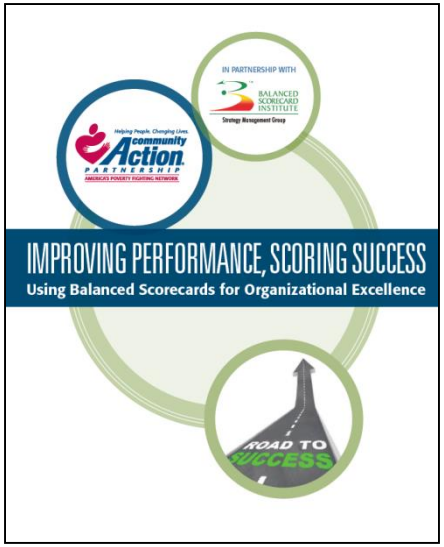
Objective	Measure	Target	Frequency	Source	Year to Date
Develop single intake application					
Offer fee for service child care in CC center					

Strategic Plan Scorecard Table Exercise

- Using the Objectives for one of your strategic plans Goals, develop a scorecard to track implementation progress

Top Ten Tenets to Create a Balanced Scorecard

1. Gain top leadership support; it helps if there is a 'burning platform' for change.
2. Measure the right things - things that customers, stakeholders, and employees find value in -- not everything.
3. Create a governance process that engages key stakeholders.
4. Design the system to follow the actual work of the organization.
5. Start development of measures at both the top and bottom of the organization and cascade them in both directions.
6. Create a communications campaign that explains how a Scorecard both reflects and drives a focus on mission.
7. Align systems: tie them to the organization's planning, measurement, and budget cycles.
8. Insure the credibility of the process and honesty in reporting.
9. Create transparency of information that is as real-time as possible; this is key to its credibility and usefulness to both senior and frontline managers.
10. Align incentives: link rewards to performance through effective evaluation and performance appraisals.



Balanced Scorecard Toolkit

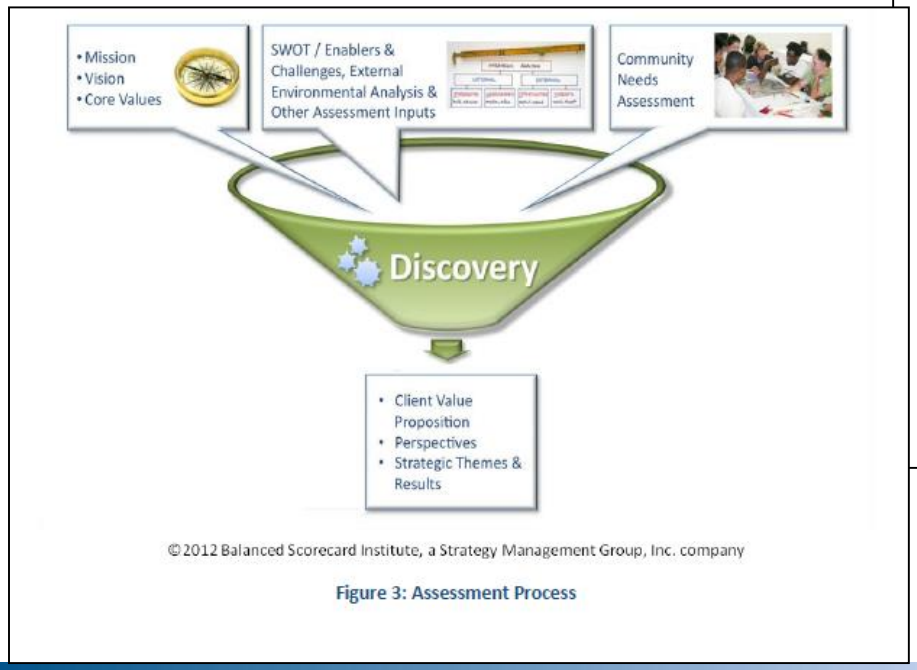


Figure 3: Assessment Process

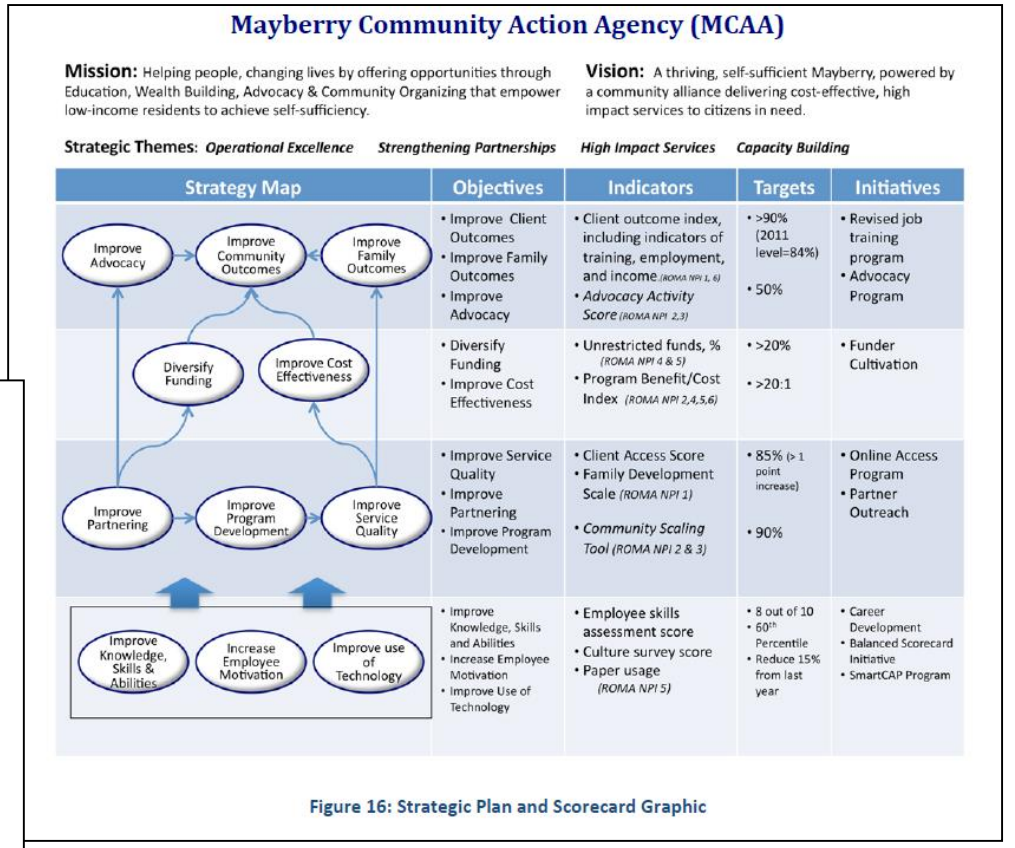


Figure 16: Strategic Plan and Scorecard Graphic

This publication was created by the National Association of Community Action Agencies – Community Action Partnership, in the performance of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services Grant Number 90ET0428. Any opinion, findings, and conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. The publication is provided free of charge to CSBG grantees and is part of the National T/TA Strategy for Promoting Exemplary Practices and Risk Mitigation for the CSBG program. To download the report, please visit www.communityactionpartnership.com.

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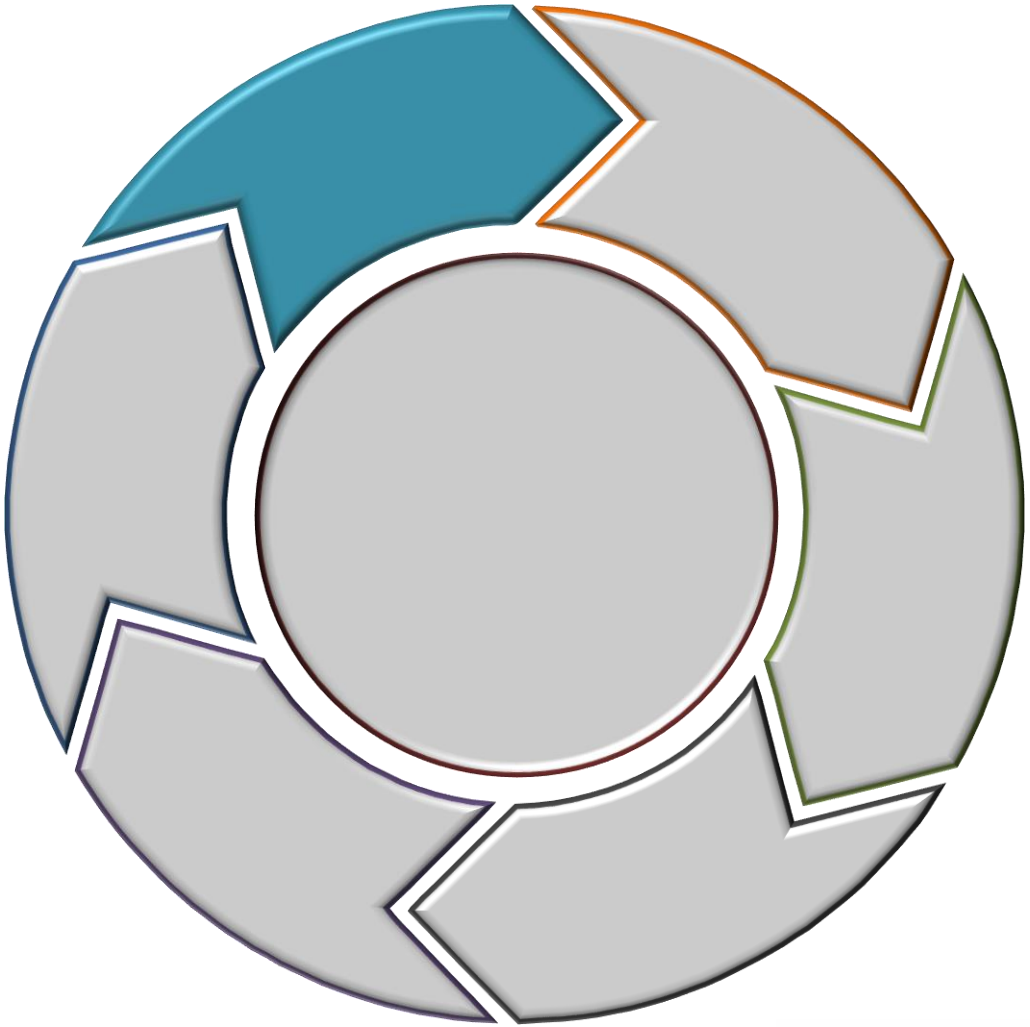
Assess the Impact

Evaluation

- Evaluate outcomes
- Update strategic plan and operational plans
- Connect strategic plan outcomes to upcoming community assessment



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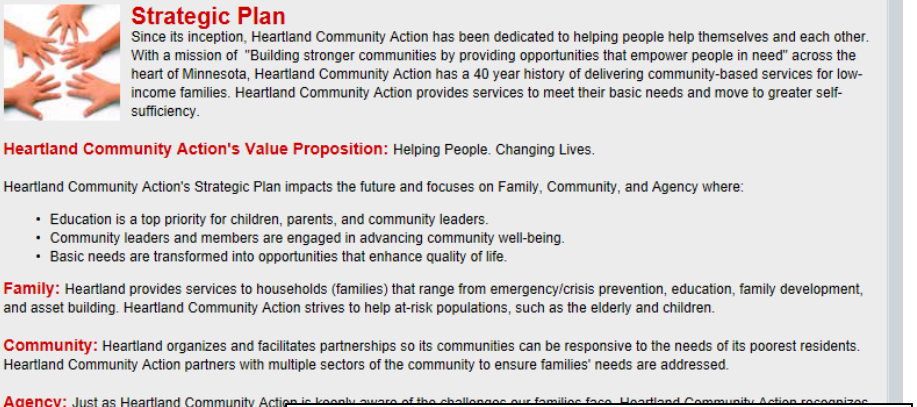
Managing the Evaluation Process

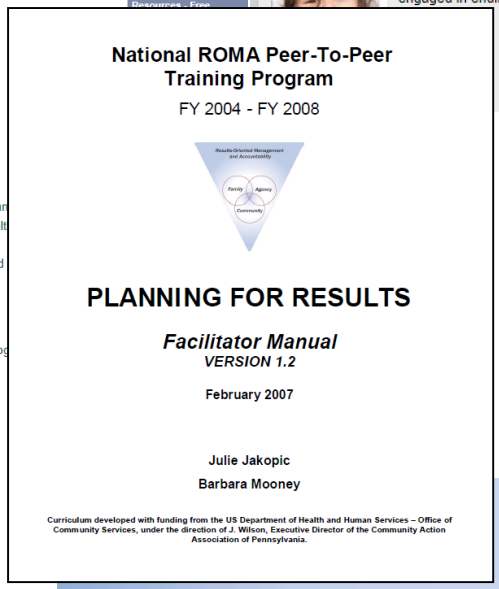
- Clarity and accountability for the monitoring process are critical
- Use a dual accountability system – staff checks in monthly or quarterly with leadership, leadership checks in quarterly or semi-annually with the board
- Maintain a board strategic planning committee to monitor progress
- Focus on outcomes – not just implementation progress

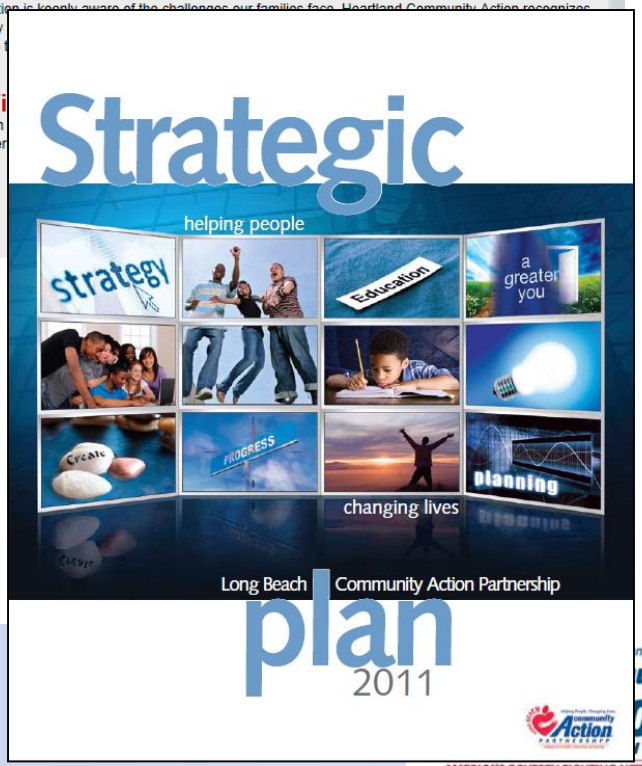
Potential Challenges

- Unclear or unassigned leadership roles
- Disengaged board
- Inconsistent follow-through
- Decision-avoidance
- Lack of a willingness to change
- Budget decisions get delayed, and delayed, and delayed….
- Unclear expectations of staff and board members
- Time frame keeps extending…the never ending strategic plan….
- It gets done and sits on a shelf gathering dust

Community Action Examples







Community Action Examples

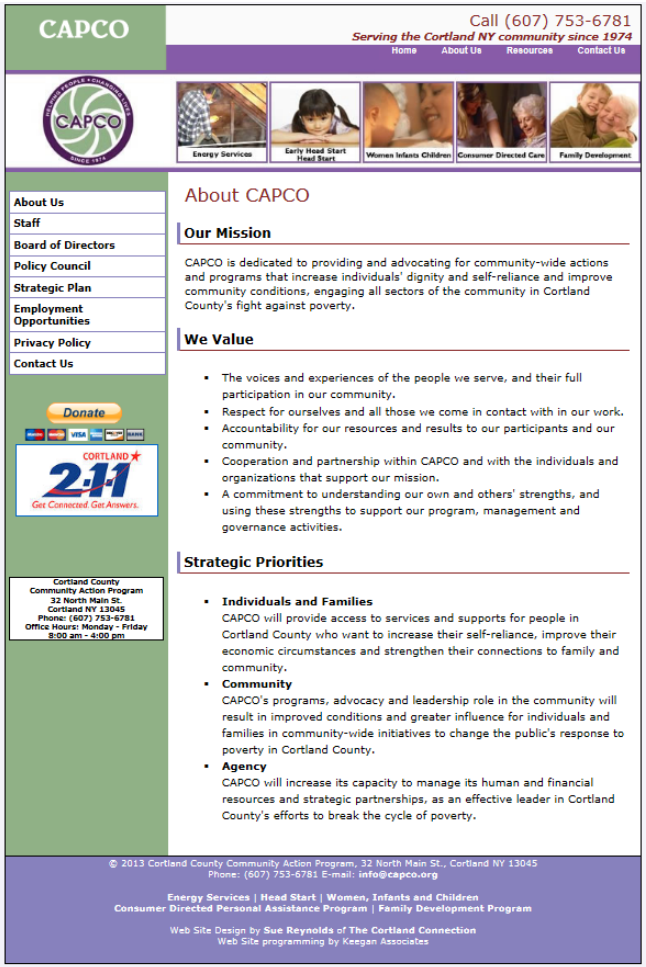
Community Action Partnership of Riverside County

Strategic Plan
2013 - 2015

If we do nothing
people will continue to live in poverty

Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County

Strategic Plan
2011-2021



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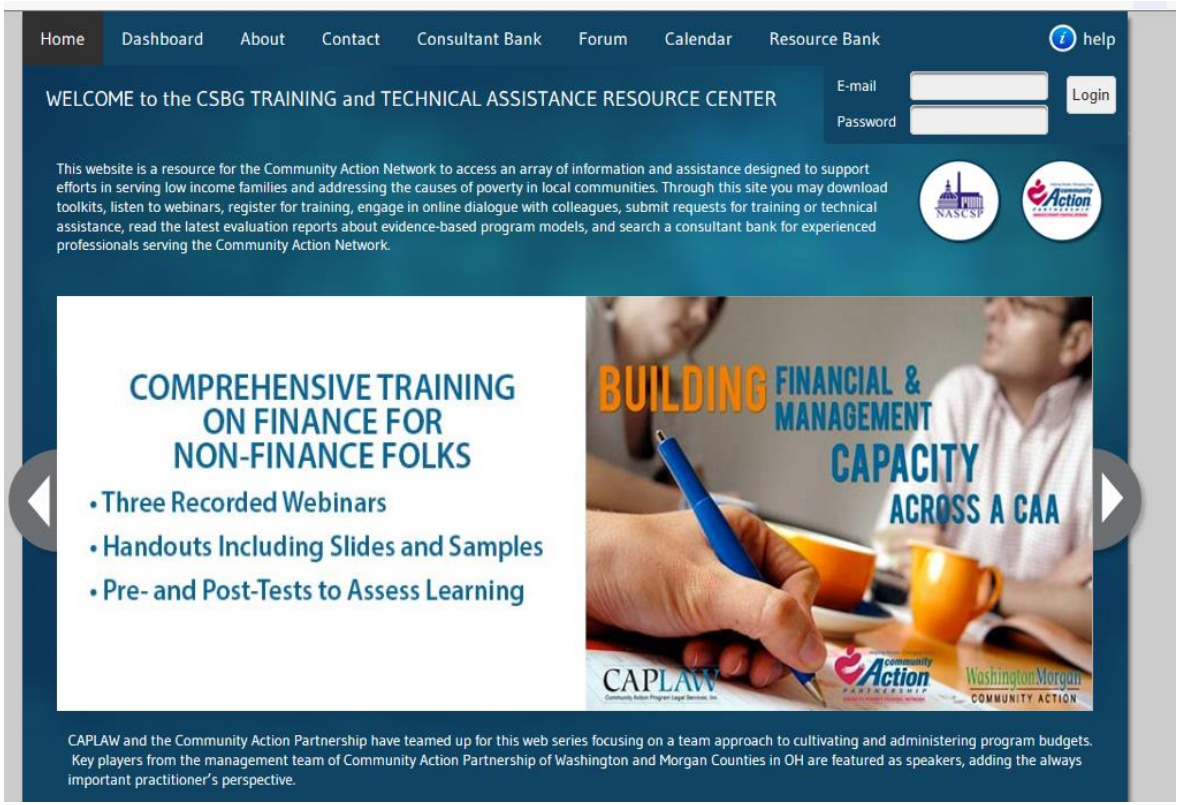
CSBG T/TA Resource Center

National Training Center

- www.csbgtta.org
- *Many more toolkits, webinars, and print resources*
- Consultant Bank
- Training Calendar
- Discussion Forum
- Shared Calendar
- Individual registrations for Board and Staff



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Pathways to Excellence: The Network's Premier Capacity Building Initiative

- Getting Started at Getting Better – the process starts where you are today
- Diagnostic process using 35 National CAA Standards in a guided Self-Study Process
- Feedback reports identify Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

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The Pathways Process

- 2 day Self-Study training for your Pathways team
- 9 months to complete the Self-Study, with Partnership Technical Assistance monthly by Web Meeting
- 3 months for the expert peer review and Feedback Report process

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Questions?

Contact

Jarle Crocker, PhD

202-449-9774

jcrocker@communityactionpartnership.com

Thank you!