

W E L C O M E T O T H E



Michigan  
Municipal  
Executives

2026 Winter Institute

# Welcome



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# From Vision to Dollars

Aligning Strategic Plans with Community Budgets

# Core Ideas



- Strategic plan – creates structural alignment
- Structure – optimizes budget
- Budget alignment – basis for performance
- Performance – boosts public trust and establishes narrative





# 1 | Community Plans

# Every Community Plans –

*\*Even if we don't call it strategy*



- I

## Community Plan Types

Master Land Use Plan (MLUP or Comp)	Public Art Plan	Corridor Development Plan
Parks and Recreation Plan	Affordable / Attainable Housing Plan	Economic Development Plan
Climate Action Plan	Downtown Sanitation Plan	Road Improvement Plan
Complete Streets or Multimodal Plan	Downtown Development Plan	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)



# Live poll – Inventory Check

- Capital Improvement Plan
- Master Land Use Plan
- Parks and Recreation Plan
- Complete Streets Plan
- Public Art Plan
- Housing Plans
- Sanitation Plans
- Other – are there any innovative or obscure plans not on our list?



# How do we treat these plans?

- **Community Policy Guide**

*How we think, act, and talk about our community*

- **Project & Priority Playbook**

*How we prioritize and organize investments, staff time, and actions*

- **Council Mandate / Compliance Item**

*Adopted for good governance—but difficult to operationalize, can clutter the website or grow dust on the shelf until it's time to update*



## 2 | Strategic Planning



*" If a person knows not which port they sail, no wind is favorable"*

-Seneca

# Key Components to a Strategic Plan

- **Community Vision Statement – setting the port**

*What does our desired future state of the community look like, what are all of these plans for?*

- **Community Outcome Areas – understanding the winds**

*What are our critical success factors for that vision – these areas provide the language for our storytelling*

- **Goals – charting our course**

*Adopted plans include many ideas and initiatives – demonstrate that we want a lot – how do we prioritize?*

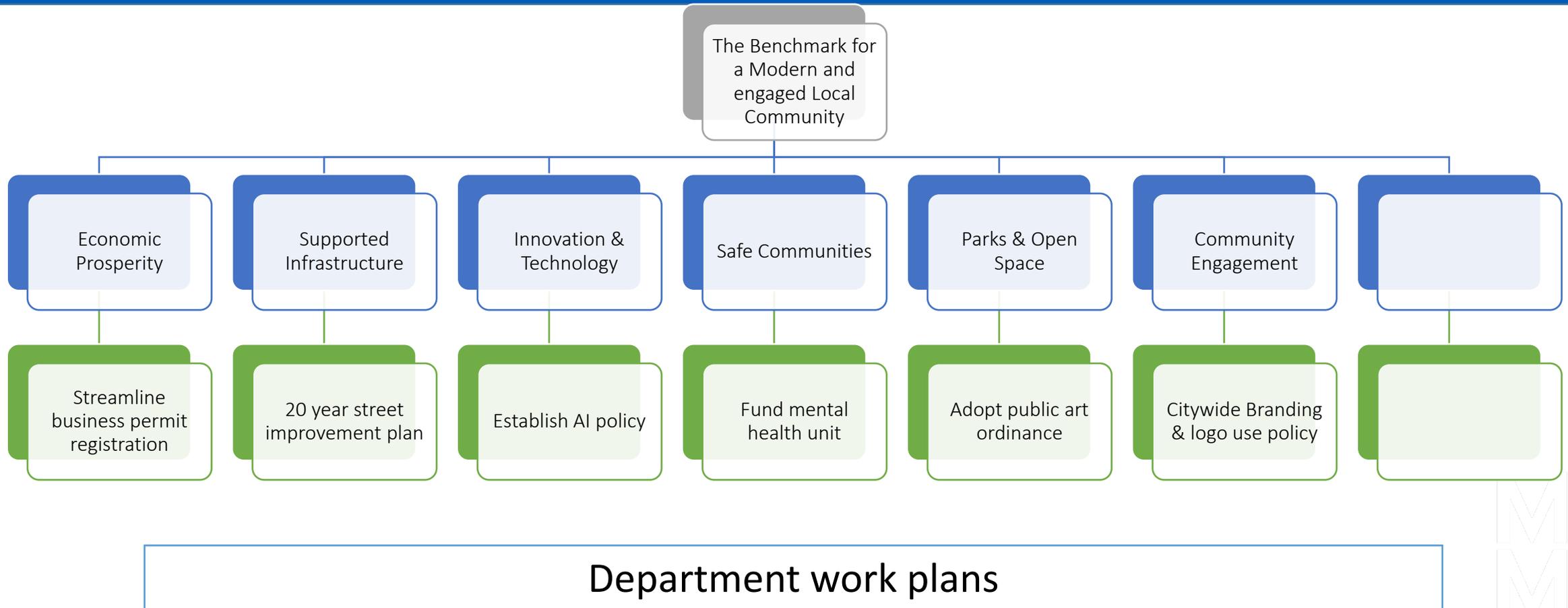
- **Actions – rowing**

*Department project implementation and performance management*

# Cascade Model



# Cascade Model In Practice



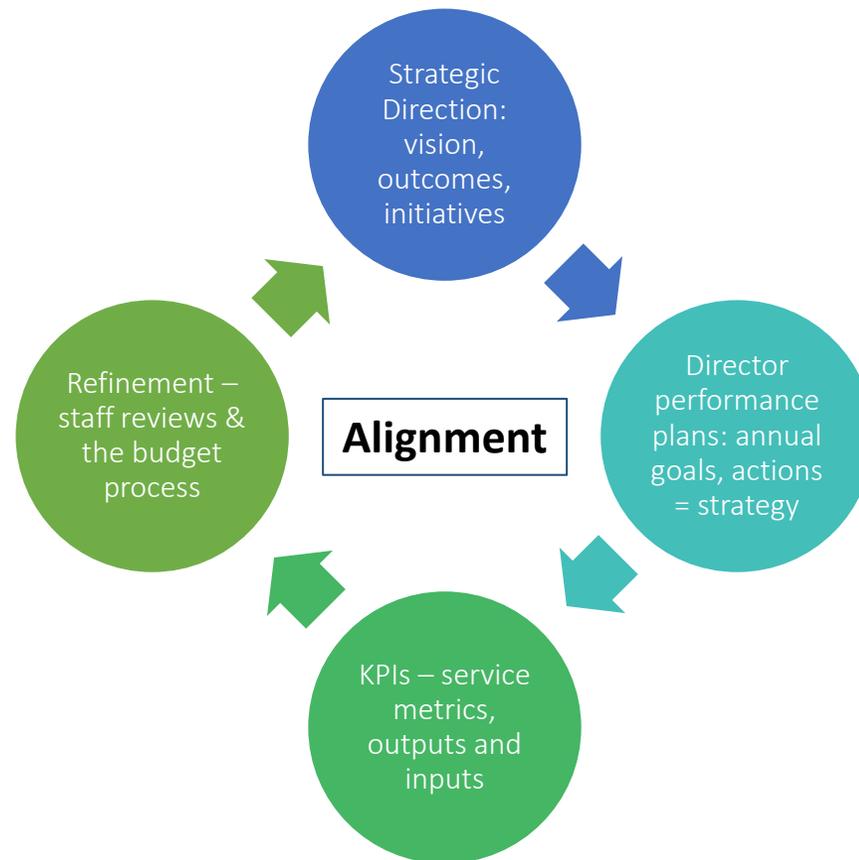
# From Strategy to Work Plans – and back again



- Performance planning is how strategy becomes day-to-day work.
- Performance plans are set at the start of the fiscal year, following the budget
- Department goals align with or advance strategic initiatives
- Measurement creates a feedback loop, improving future decisions



# The Positive Loop





Measurement is a leadership habit, not a technical exercise

# KPI – Simple to say, hard to sustain, worth starting



- KPIs are easy to talk about, but difficult to implement and sustain well
- Capacity constraints are real, especially in local government
- The goal is progress, not perfection



# Atomic Habits

## Start small – build the habit



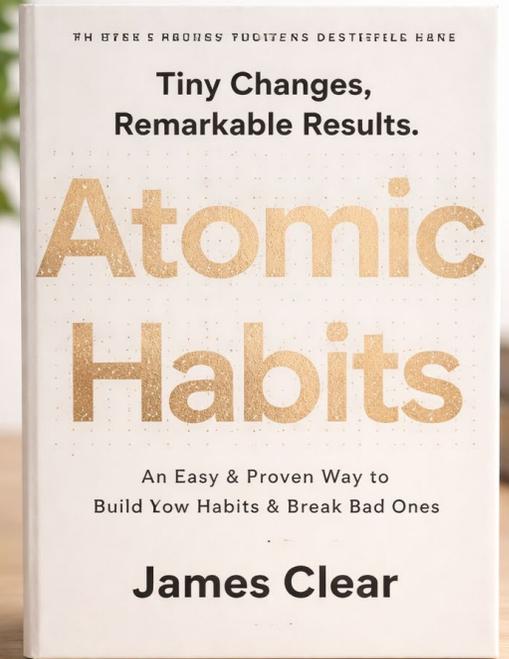
Start Small



Repeat  
Consistently



Improve over  
time



# Atomic examples



## **Financials**

- Budget-to-actual performance

## **Community Engagement**

- Number of public meetings, events, or touchpoints
- Participation counts or survey results

## **Project Delivery**

- Survey or feedback results tied to initiatives
- Milestone completion status

## **Performance Status**

- **Green / Yellow / Red**
  - On target
  - At risk / not progressing
  - Off target

## **Service Delivery**

- Permit processing time vs. adopted standards





# 3 | Priorities & the Budget Process

# Common budget roadmap



# Potential shortfalls



- Departments default to previous year assumptions
- Department needs may precede community or elected official priorities
- Progress on adopted plan priorities?



# Prioritized budget roadmap





**A TEAM**

**Accountability, Alignment, and Action**

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# The upside: Accountability



- Organization priorities come before department wants
- Strategy sets direction, the budget enforces it
- Resources follow priorities, not org charts or incrementalism
- The budget signals what behavior is rewarded



# The upside: Alignment



- Departments support strategy, not the other way around
- Justification to say no to ideas not on plan
- Expectations are set before requests are submitted



# The upside: Action



- Budgeting for outcomes in the strategic plan is a step toward priority based budgeting
- Implementing initiatives from adopted plans aligned with the strategic plan outcomes strengthens purpose
- Purpose strengthens storytelling and resilience.



# CITY OF HAWKINS

## STRATEGIC PLAN



# Hawkins Strategic Plan

- 10 Minutes
- Organize in groups of 4-6

## Table Resources:

- 1 Strategic Outcome
- 2 Strategic Initiatives per outcome
- Departments and Line Items
- \$500,000 in resource chips

## Chip Values:

- White Chips: \$10,000
- Red Chips: \$50,000



# CITY OF HAWKINS

## STRATEGIC PLAN



# Hawkins Strategic Plan

- Vision Statement:

*Hawkins is a safe, thriving community where families flourish, public spaces are vibrant and protected, and our city remains firmly right-side-up.*



**SAFE &  
SECURE**

**DEMI-GORGON  
FREE PARKS**

**FAMILY &  
COMMUNITY  
STRONG**

# From Budget to Narrative



When outcomes, resources, and KPIs are aligned, the budget becomes:

- A statement of City Council policy priorities
- A tool for decision-making
- A clear story of investment and progress

*Not just: a financial deliverable*



# Why that matters



1. Outcome language reinforces community brand
2. Streamline performance, budget capacity, and staffing conversations
3. Frame budget updates around Council-adopted priorities
4. Elected officials care about policy wins and outcomes — this reinforces the priorities *they already set or desire to see.*



# Three Peer City Examples



1. Novi, Michigan: [Council Goals - City of Novi](#)
  - Performance Dashboard – municipal website provider
2. Germantown, Tennessee: [Administration | City of Germantown](#)
  - Strategic Plan - Clearpoint Strategy
3. Brooklyn Park, Minnesota: [Brooklyn Park 2025 - Brooklyn Park](#)
  - Strategic Plan Dashboard – ArcGIS Story Maps – ESRI



# Thank you



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# Outcome



## Economic Prosperity



# Outcome



## Supported Infrastructure



# Outcome



## Innovation & Technology



# Outcome



## Safe Community



# Outcome



## Parks & Open Space



# Outcome



## Engaged Community



# Strategic Initiative



Small business Permit Review  
Process – (support Scoops ice  
cream)



# Strategic Initiative



Hawkins Roads & Reality  
Stability Plan (20 – year  
infrastructure plan)



# Strategic Initiative



Establish an AI and Public  
Surveillance Policy (no  
unauthorized government  
experiments



# Strategic Initiative



Establish a mental health  
response team (Post-Upside  
Down Support Unit)



# Strategic Initiative



# Hawkins Public Art Ordinance



# Strategic Initiative



Create a Welcome to the new  
Hawkins logo and brand policy



# Strategic Initiative



# Main Street Hawkins Redevelopment Plan



# Strategic Initiative



# Data Center Land Use Policy



# Strategic Initiative



Post Demogorgon damage  
repairs: (Facilities condition  
assessment)



# Strategic Initiative



## Safe Parks & Playgrounds Program (Demogorgon – free zones initiative



# Strategic Initiative



Fire department annual SCBA  
(breathing apparatus) capital  
replacement plan



# Strategic Initiative



Launch a new city website

