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Why Benton County is Facilitating the “2040 Thriving Communities Initiative”

Benton County is a proud Community of diverse people and plentiful resources, with a rich blend of rural and urban qualities that yield robust opportunities for all. And yet, the next 25 years are projected to force issues and pressures upon our Communities that we have never faced. Impacts from climate change, population growth, aging infrastructure, changing demographics, water availability, and a projected major earthquake are but a few examples.

Our people and communities create a dynamic system, and so our government must be responsive and adaptable to change. Communities across the country are recognizing no local government can continue with traditional approaches of providing services with diminishing budgets and limited staffing. Instead, a new approach is required to provide critical services and long-term planning to ensure personal well-being and community resiliency and vitality.

Accordingly, Benton County embarked upon an exploration of identifying community needs and is committed to realigning services and budgets to reflect those values. In October of 2015, the County formed an internal committee to establish the public engagement process and a potential framework. From the outset, the Internal Committee’s fundamental guiding principle was the 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative would be community led.

In spring of 2016, the 2040 Thriving Communities Council was formed. The 2040 Council is a group of individuals representing a variety of interests, including the farming and logging industries, OSU, regional development, municipalities, the private sector, and community organizations. Once core values are identified, the 2040 Council will establish strategies, actions, and measures of progress to guide future governance.

For additional information and to be kept up to date, please visit www.Benton2040.org.

**2040 Thriving Communities Council:
Membership**

Name	Title, Company / Profession	Affiliations, Boards, Commissions, Community Groups, etc.
Vince Adams	Extension Educator, College of Public Health & Human Sciences, OSU	509J School Board; Central Willamette Community Credit Union Board; Corvallis Sustainability Coalition; South Corvallis Planning Group
Yazmin Brambila	Executive Director, Casa Latinos Unidos de Benton County	Casa Latinos Unidos de Benton County; Board Member, Old Mill Center; Organización de Latinas Unidas (OLU)
Theresa Conley	Albany Area Metro Planning Organization Manager, Oregon Cascades West COG	Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (CWACTION-TAC); Corvallis Transportation System Plan (TSP) Steering Committee; Linn Benton Health Equity Alliance
Gerald Dyer	Graduate Student, OSU	
Elizabeth French	Vice President, CH2M	Corvallis Public Schools Foundation; Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Complex; Benton County 4-H Association; Corvallis Chamber of Commerce; Benton County Economic Development Advisory Board; Eugene Airport Citizen's Advisory Commission; Leadership Corvallis Advisory Board; Corvallis Corporate Roundtable
Tom Gerding	President, Gerding Builders	
Matt Gordon	Pastor, First Christian Church	Benton County Interfaith Association; Downtown Ministerial Association; Corvallis Daytime Drop-In Center; Stone Soup of Corvallis; Central Park Area Neighborhood Association; Pastoral Counseling Center
Jim Gouveia	Staff Counselor, OSU	Board Member, CCO/IHN Samaritan Health
Pat Hare	City Manager, Adair Village	
Peter Kenagy	Farmer	Board Member, Benton County Farm Bureau; Benton County Soil & Water Conservation District Committee Member; Cooperative Weed Management Area
Ken Kenaston		Chair, Benton County Planning Commission
Peggy Lynch	Citizen Advocate	Natural Resources Coordinator, League of Women Voters of Oregon Action Team; Member, League of Women Voters Corvallis
Jeremy Monroe	Director, Freshwaters Illustrated	
Jim Moorefield	Executive Director, Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services	Linn Benton Health Equity Alliance; City of Corvallis Housing Development Task Force; Benton County Housing Opportunities Action Committee; Oregon Housing Alliance
Michael Pope	Executive Director, Greenbelt Land Trust	Marys River Watershed Council; Central Park Neighborhood Association; Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

**2040 Thriving Communities Council:
Membership (cont.)**

Name	Title, Company / Profession	Affiliations, Boards, Commissions, Community Groups, etc.
Paul Smith	Executive Director, Strengthening Rural Families	Center for Nonprofit Stewardship; Linn-Benton Health Equity Alliance; Parenting Success Network; 4-H; Benton County Positive Youth Development Coalition; Governing Board, Linn-Benton Lincoln Early Learning Hub; Oral Health Coalition
Jim Swinyard	Retired, Benton County Sheriff	Director, Oregon State Credit Union; Greater Corvallis Rotary Club; Trustee, Corvallis First United Methodist Church
Ellen Tappon	Retired, Hewlett Packard	Chair, AFRANA; Facilitator, South Benton County Recreation Alliance; Steering Committee, Marys Peak Alliance; BC Natural Areas and Parks Advisory Board; Master Gardener & Master Naturalist; Mid-Valley Bike Club
Sharon Thornberry	Rural Communities Liaison, Oregon Food Bank	Board Member, Bread for the World & Bread for the World Institute; Leadership Team, Closing the Hunger Gap; Advisory Council, OSU Small Farms & Community Food Systems Center; Oregon Community Food Systems Network
Marc Vomocil	Vice President Forestry, Starker Forests, Inc.	Corvallis Sister City Ukraine Council; Friends of Corvallis Police Board; Corvallis Lions Club Board; Corvallis Parks, Natural Areas, and Recreation Advisory Board; Red White Blue Music Festival Committee

2040 Thriving Communities Council: Meeting Ground Rules (Adopted August 7)

Meeting Dialogue

- Value Open Discussion: Safe opportunity for everyone to share voice, thoughts, & opinions
- Explore & capture 'Core Values' to guide the 2040 Initiative process & outcomes
- Everything is always on the table for discussion
- Speakers will try to be concise & stay on topic
- Facilitator will provide 'Bike Rack' for issues to be addressed soon

2040 Council Deliberations & Decision-Making

- Respect each individual's internal process by allowing reflection during and between meetings
- Share input on an issue within one month; Afterwards, lack of feedback is consent
- Disagree with grace & civility ("No fisticuffs")
- Staff/Facilitator will provide 'Check-Ins' on meeting agenda & during discussion
- Informal Voting: Thumbs up, down, or sideways for a temperature read or topical decision
- Formal Decisions: 2040 Council will strive for consensus {but formal decision-making process to be determined}

2040 Council Logistics

- During meetings, Members & Staff will try to:
 - Place phones on silent & limit side conversations
 - Honor time commitments by starting and ending on time
 - Avoid too much focus on other community plans; it risks confining our perspective & awareness of opportunities
- Between meetings, Members & Staff will try to:
 - Be proactive & complete all assigned Action Items

2040 Thriving Communities Council: Desired Outcomes & Guiding Principles (Final Draft: January 3)

Board of Commissioners' 2040 TCI Resolution Charges to Council:

- Develop and articulate, with active community engagement that assures diverse participation and input, a countywide Vision Statement in which everyone who lives, works, learns, and plays in Benton County has equal opportunities to thrive in a livable, healthy, resilient, and sustainable community.
- Identify strategies and implementation actions to be implemented by community partners and governments that recognize systems-thinking and policy integration to achieve long-term, systemic solutions to dynamic community challenges and opportunities.
- Explore, capture, and annually publicize appropriate innovative and integrated benchmarks, measurements, and data to comprehensively assess community progress, including a Benton County Thriving Communities Index.
- Work and collaborate with our communities and partners to integrate the Vision Statement, strategies, and actions into their activities and operations.

Board of Commissioners' 2040 TCI Resolution Charge to Benton County Government:

- Benton County is committed to adopt and institutionalize the 2040 Vision Statement, strategies, and actions into county culture, budgets, policies, initiatives, and operations.

Desired Outcomes & Guiding Principles of 2040 County Staff Working Group:

Engagement Process

- (Re)Develop trust in government by Benton County communities
- Capture common culture, language, & story for Benton's future
- Educate, and be educated by, our people
- Differences will be openly shared & respected
- Identify & earnestly connect with partners & individuals
- Engage & excite people to build a community-owned process
- Community members & their government are connected in new ways

2040 Thriving Communities Initiative Plan

- Must Not Sit on a Shelf!
- Focuses on long-term impacts to achieve our vision; not short-term efficiency to address crises
- Reinforces sense of place & sense of connection
- Reviewed, modified (if necessary), & re-adopted every 5 years
- Short-, medium-, & long-term actions & initiatives are identified
- Full integration into daily County government actions, initiatives, & policies (reduce inertia of silos); realignment of government services & departments; align with Benton County's budget & process
- Integrated activities are recognized, tracked, & publicized
- Collective, collaborative outcomes with identified community partners to move our initiative forward
- Easily accessible to public; community ownership

Desired Outcomes & Guiding Principles of 2040 Council:

Guiding Principles

- Build Relationships: Inclusive, open dialogue, transparent
- Recognition of integrated, interconnected nature & function of our challenges & solutions
- Identify Core Values within the concepts of livability, resiliency, sustainability, health, & equity
- Need to connect 2040 Initiative with everyday, local activities, while also addressing regional issues

Engagement Process

- New, creative, broad, and long-lasting community engagement; Mobilized community for action
- Inclusivity of all communities: not only long-time community activists, but also populations not usually reached (minority, rural, & non-English speaking), disenfranchised, and people who do not or cannot attend traditional public meetings

Desired Outcomes – Themes

- Some of the greatest values and outcomes of the 2040 Initiative will be the connections of different stakeholder groups, and a greater sense of community
- Identification of Benton County's Core Values; 2040 Initiative will strengthen elements that make our County a great place to live
- Full inclusion of Equity & Health throughout 2040 Initiative's components
- Identify & convey aspirational visions & strategies with tangible, integrated actions
- When identifying themes & core values, do not use siloed topics like transportation, environment, public safety, etc. Instead, identify systemic issues that require multiple, non-traditional partners
- Linkage with other planning processes; show the connections across plans
- Identify strategies that are multi-faceted, cross many sectors, and identify collective impact
- Integrated strategies will guide the identification of specific goals
- Address funding strategies and capacity building in needed areas
- Recognize the broader region and not in a bubble, and consistently apply rules across region

Desired Outcomes – Operations & Tools

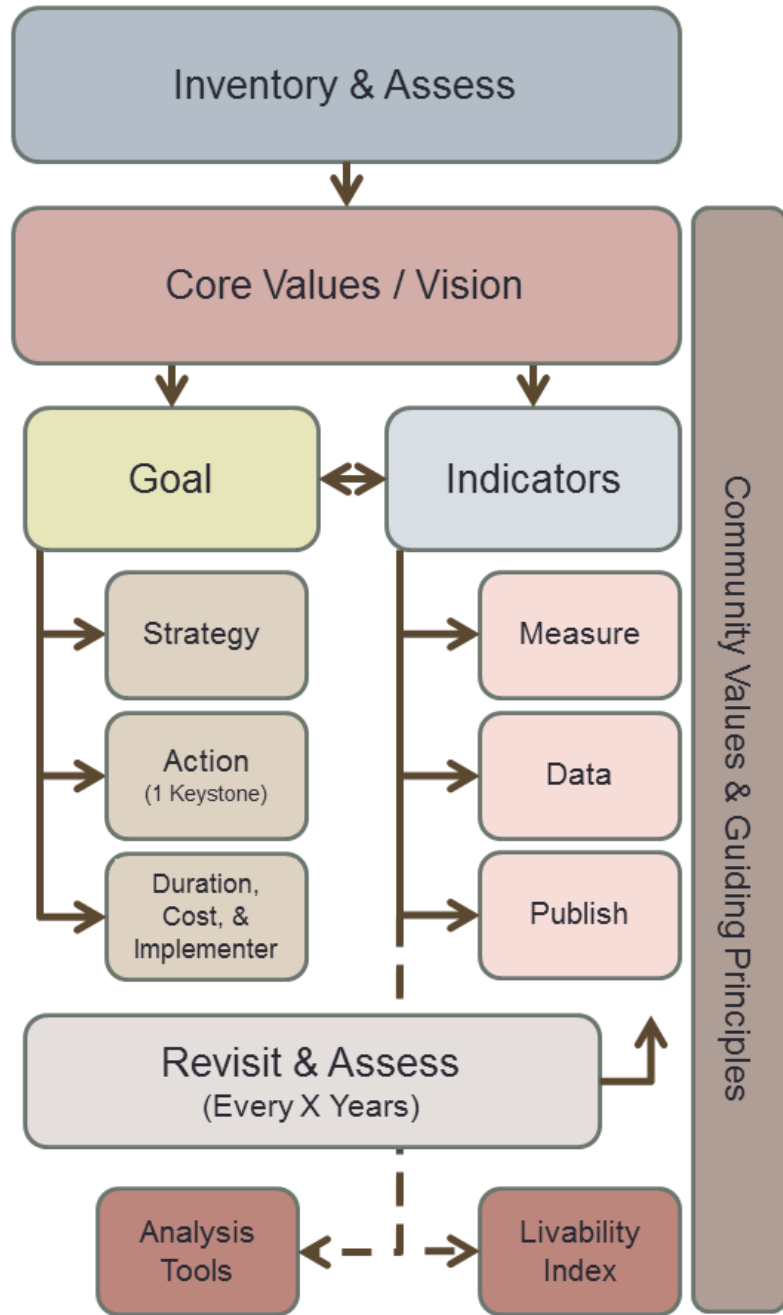
- The 2040 Initiative outcomes will guide realignment of County structure, policies, and services, and will be fully connected with County budgets & operations
- Scenarios Planning: combinations of trends as affected by values, goals, strategies, & policies
- Holistic, innovative metrics that aptly measure progress & demonstrate interconnectedness

2040 Thriving Communities Initiative: Draft Layout & Structure

Potential 2040 TCI Framework

Comments

- Incorporates many of the successful components
- Incorporate Values & Principles throughout the process
- Do we need Mission & Responsibilities?
- Updated annually or biennially
- Develop policy & budget analysis tools
- Potential to develop 'Livability Index'



Public Engagement & Plan Development Process

Overview:

The general intent of the 2040 Community Initiative is to first develop a series of respective Values that will guide future the Initiative's process and activities in order to develop a 2040 Vision of our Communities in 2040. The next step will be to galvanize and energize our partners to develop necessary actions to implement our collective vision. During this process, innovative indicators and metrics will be identified and subsequent data collected to track progress of our actions. Also, indicators and metrics will be holistic and outcome-based; not how many widgets were created, but are we making true communal progress. The third component – worked on in parallel with related initiatives – will be to institutionalize the Vision, Values, and Actions into the County budget & operations. A major Guiding Principle throughout the process is that the Initiative is a living document and effort and to ensure it will be assessed, modified, and updated long into the future.

Inventory & Assess Previous County Livability & Sustainability Efforts

Status: Drafted

The first step will be to inventory past County efforts related to livability, sustainability, and similar initiatives. From this, a draft list of Values and Guiding Principles will be developed to present to the public & staff for feedback and edits.

Staff & Public Engagement to Identify Core Values & Develop 2040 Vision

Timeframe: Early Fall, 2016 – Winter, 2017

Led by the Council & in collaboration with community partners, a draft set of Guiding Principles and 2040 projections (demographics, environmental, etc.) will be developed. Once created, staff will engage Communities to develop a Vision for Benton County in 2040.

Develop Strategies & Benchmarks to Achieve 2040 Vision

Timeframe: Winter, 2017 – Summer, 2017

Once the 2040 Vision is developed, appropriate Strategies and Benchmarks will be identified and assigned to achieve our Vision. The level of detail of actions associated with the Strategies will be developed at that time.

Institutionalize a Subset of Vision & Actions into County Budget & Operations

Timeframe: Winter, 2017 – June, 2017

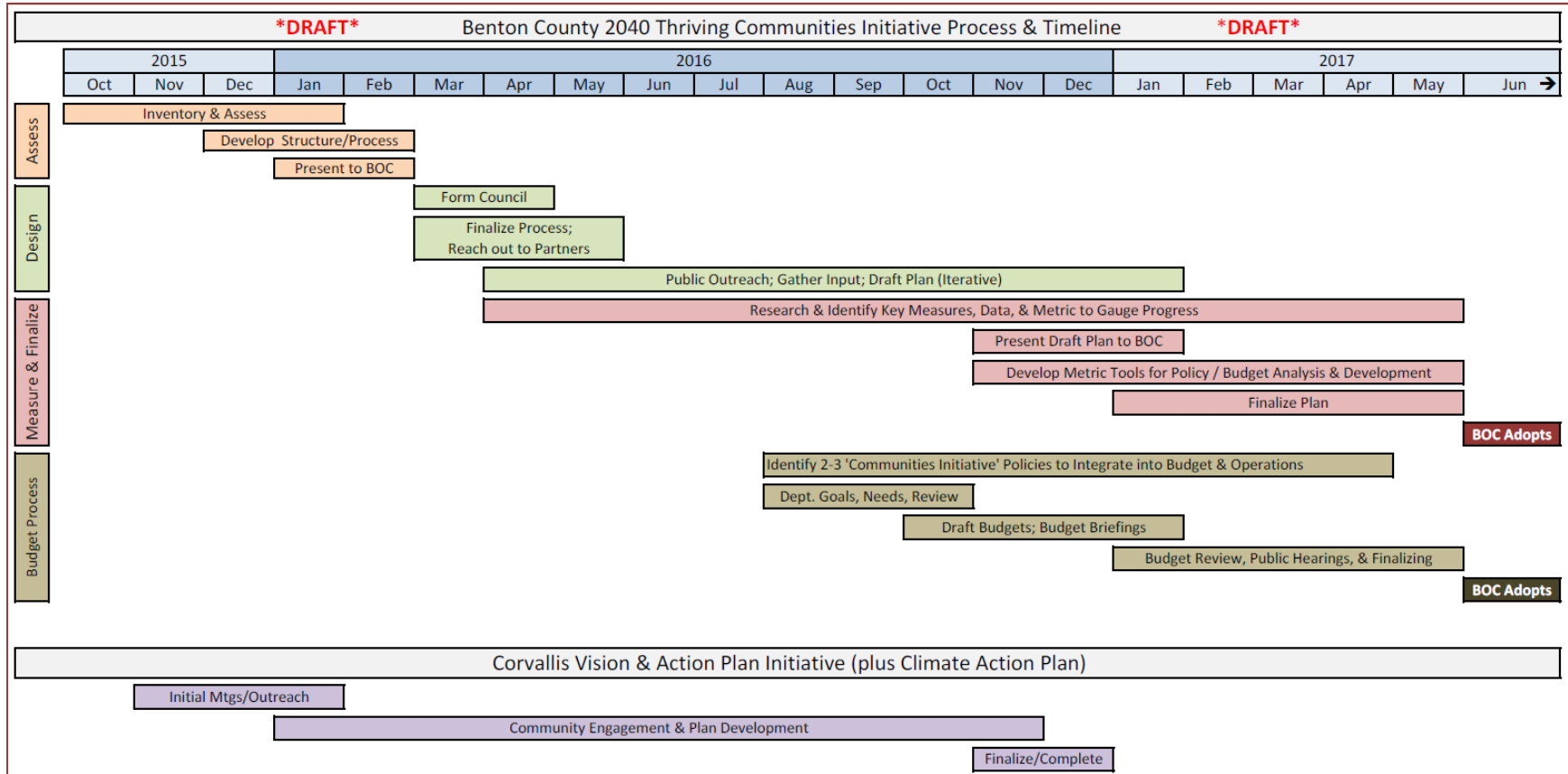
From a government perspective, institutionalizing the Vision & Actions is paramount. The key elements from the Vision and Actions must be fully integrated into future County budgets and departmental operations.

Continual Assessment, Data Publication, & Modifications; Leading to Full Implementation

Timeframe: June, 2017 – June, 2019

Constant assessment and adaptation will be core elements of the Action Plan. Further, data and reports will be publicly released and showcased. The 2040 TCI Workplan will be fully integrated into County government by the next biennial budget in June, 2019.

Draft Timeline & Schedule



APPENDIX A

“Benton County 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative”

People Thriving in Livable, Healthy, Equitable, Sustainable, & Resilient Communities

The following is the Benton County Internal 2040 Initiative Committee’s Draft Framework that was developed prior to the official 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative Council was formed. This text and themes were shared with the 2040 Council at the initial meetings and discussed.

Who is the ‘We’? Who are the ‘People’?

Everyone who lives, works, learns, and plays in Benton County, including our underserved and hard to reach populations. Not just the usual suspects that show up at meetings, and not only our friends, family, & neighbors. Rather, the most important Community members are the ones we may not see everyday. They are the hidden backbone of our community. By employing a systems approach with innovative, integrated metrics, our Community can create a dynamic infrastructure to prepare ourselves for an uncertain future. We – Benton County – can become the new benchmark for Oregon and beyond.

Draft Definitions:

Community: *Where & how do we live?*

A body of people; Feeling of identify & fellowship as a result of sharing common values, sentiments, & goals.

Livability: *Can we – and do we want to – live here?*

The human experience of Place, Connection, and Engagement; A community where people want to – and can affordably – live, work, and play.

Sustainability: *Can we keep doing what we’re doing forever?*

Living within environmental, economic, and social means, and not impeding future generations to do the same.

Resiliency: *Can we quickly & effectively rebound from adversities?*

Implementing safeguards to adequately react to & recover from sudden, unforeseen economic, societal, and environmental shocks.

Equity: *Who are we and how do we treat each other?*

Recognition that people’s race and ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, socioeconomic status, and geographic location all contribute to an individual’s ability to fulfill their potential.

Public Engagement Process

- Equity of Access: Active engagement of our entire population
- Contribution from & by Community; Identify & energize our individuals & partners (Private, Public, & NGOs) to implement community-driven initiatives; “Community-fueled”
- Strengthen, galvanize, celebrate, & utilize our Community’s sense of place & sense of connection
- Commitment to Building Trust: Inclusive, Engaging, Open, & Transparent
- Personally Relatable: Demonstrate how initiative is useful & beneficial to Community members
- Recognize Integration: Pursue solutions that address multiple challenges

Key Words & Ideals to Convey

- | | |
|---|--|
| ➤ Equity; Access; Transparency | ➤ Aspirational Vision with Tangible, Integrated Action |
| ➤ Connected Community that Understands Policy Conflicts | ➤ Long-Term Plan & Objectives |
| ➤ Shift Government Culture | ➤ Holistic, Systems Thinking |
| ➤ Institutional & Operational Realignment | ➤ Collaborative; Engaged |
| | ➤ Social Determinants of Health |

Plan

- Focuses on Long-Term Impacts & Efficiency; No ‘Quick Fixes’!
- Tells Our Story; Long-Range Endurance (Sticky); Actions are useful & relatable to public & staff in their everyday activities; People ‘see themselves’ in the Plan
 - ✓ Clearly explain why we are doing this
 - ✓ Clearly define Terms, Vision, Goals, etc.
- Recognize Limits, Pressures, & Trends; Exponential Growth of Challenges
 - ✓ Physical: Environmental, Social, Economic, Land Use, etc.
 - ✓ Operational: Budgets, Resources, Staffing, etc.
- Systems Approach: Focus on Societal Processes & Challenges; Not Projects & Individuals
 - ✓ Adaptable into future; Constant opportunity to include, alter, & act
 - ✓ Target underlying causes, not perceived symptoms
 - ✓ Integrated actions address multiple goals
 - ✓ Recognize & reinforce that ALL actions & policies affect Community members’ health & well-being
- Engaged Partners will Take Ownership; Assist in Implementation
- Provides Flexibility to Community Partners to Implement Actions & Achieve Goals
- Engagement of Staff & Utilization of Staff’s Expertise to Develop TCI Plan

Integrated Data, Indicators, & Metrics

- Annual Data Tracking & Updating
- Data are Trustworthy, Accessible, & Affordable
- Digestible Number & Understandable Use of Datasets, Indicators, Goals, etc.
- Meaningful: Connects Long-Term Vision to Goals to Innovative Indicators & Metrics