



Strategic Planning

Implementation Session Agenda

Focus: Tactical Take Off

9:00 am–12:00 pm Wednesday January 7th, 2025: Online

Building on our current momentum, how will we work together over the next 3-5 years to strengthen WCMA, deepen member value and connection, and ensure our long term sustainability and impact?

Session Goals:

- Align all board members on the strategic plan and implementation roles
- Develop implementation recommendations for each strategic direction, with success indicators and deliverables
- Establish a realistic first-year draft timeline
- Build board commitment and confidence in the plan's feasibility and value

	Segment Focus	Aims
9:00-9:15	Check In Review Agenda	Facilitator guides brief check-in, then reviews today's agenda, introducing the steps and process ahead.
9:15-9:30	Review the Strategic Plan: Ensure all board members understand the strategic plan and their role(s) in implementation	Review the planning journey to this point. Connect the work to the overall focus question. Create work teams.
9:30-9:50	Strategic Direction 1: What will be our specific, measurable accomplishments for the first year?	The group will do a quick Current Reality for each Strategic Direction, identify Success Metrics for 2-3 years, and then identify benchmark deliverables to bridge between the current situation and the success metrics.
9:50-10:10	Strategic Direction 2	
10:10-10:30	SD 3	
10:30-10:50	SD 4	
10:50-11:00	BREAK	
11:00-11:30	Developing a potential timeline What is our timeline for completion of the first-year accomplishments?	A detailed implementation timeline for the first year, including accomplishments by quarter with project leads and implementation teams named, deadlines articulated, and next steps clarified.
11:30-11:45	Coordination Discussion: Will these implementation steps achieve what we want to accomplish?	Review the compiled timeline and identify how plan will be monitored, coordinated, and evaluated.
11:45 -12:00	Closing & Reflection	Group reflects on their work and looks ahead to launching the plan.



In advance of the session, please use pages 2-5 to gather your initial thinking in each of the Strategic Direction Areas. Please print and bring any advance notes you make.

Board Implementation Worksheets

WCMA Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 7th, 2026

Strategic Direction 1: Enhancing Value to Drive Membership

In advance of the retreat, use this to gather your initial thinking around each strategic direction. Note 1-3 key items for discussion as a group.

<p>Good News</p> <p><i>What's already in place here? What's going for us? What are notable areas of strength, achievement?</i></p>	<p>Areas of Concern</p> <p><i>What's missing? Where are there gaps? What weaknesses or deficits come to mind?</i></p>
<p>Relevant Opportunities</p> <p><i>What opportunities are emerging that could be relevant here? What intersections do you see with other initiatives?</i></p>	<p>Relevant Threats</p> <p><i>What threats or challenges are you aware of here? What could become a problem if not addressed?</i></p>

Strategic Direction 2: Engaging with Members to Build Community + Connection

In advance of the retreat, use this to gather your initial thinking around each strategic direction. Note 1-3 key items for discussion as a group.

<p>Good News</p> <p><i>What's already in place here? What's going for us? What are notable areas of strength, achievement?</i></p>	<p>Areas of Concern</p> <p><i>What's missing? Where are there gaps? What weaknesses or deficits come to mind?</i></p>
<p>Relevant Opportunities</p> <p><i>What opportunities are emerging that could be relevant here? What intersections do you see with other initiatives?</i></p>	<p>Relevant Threats</p> <p><i>What threats or challenges are you aware of here? What could become a problem if not addressed?</i></p>
<p>Success Indicators</p> <p><i>In 2-3 years, what shifts or changes do you want to see? What evidence would demonstrate that this was a WCMA priority?</i></p>	

Strategic Direction 3: Strengthening + Supporting the CM/CA Career Cycle

In advance of the retreat, use this to gather your initial thinking around each strategic direction. Note 1-3 key items for discussion as a group.

<p>Good News</p> <p><i>What's already in place here? What's going for us? What are notable areas of strength, achievement?</i></p>	<p>Areas of Concern</p> <p><i>What's missing? Where are there gaps? What weaknesses or deficits come to mind?</i></p>
<p>Relevant Opportunities</p> <p><i>What opportunities are emerging that could be relevant here? What intersections do you see with other initiatives?</i></p>	<p>Relevant Threats</p> <p><i>What threats or challenges are you aware of here? What could become a problem if not addressed?</i></p>
<p>Success Indicators</p> <p><i>In 2-3 years, what shifts or changes do you want to see? What evidence would demonstrate that this was a WCMA priority?</i></p>	

Strategic Direction 4: Building + Maintaining a Highly Effective Board

In advance of the retreat, use this to gather your initial thinking around each strategic direction. Note 1-3 key items for discussion as a group.

<p>Good News</p> <p><i>What's already in place here? What's going for us? What are notable areas of strength, achievement?</i></p>	<p>Areas of Concern</p> <p><i>What's missing? Where are there gaps? What weaknesses or deficits come to mind?</i></p>
<p>Relevant Opportunities</p> <p><i>What opportunities are emerging that could be relevant here? What intersections do you see with other initiatives?</i></p>	<p>Relevant Threats</p> <p><i>What threats or challenges are you aware of here? What could become a problem if not addressed?</i></p>
<p>Success Indicators</p> <p><i>In 2-3 years, what shifts or changes do you want to see? What evidence would demonstrate that this was a WCMA priority?</i></p>	

WCMA Board Retreat & Strategic Planning Launch November 4, 2025



Focus: Launching Strategic Planning

Building on our current momentum, how will we work together over the next 3-5 years to strengthen WCMA, deepen member value and connection, and ensure our long term sustainability and impact?



Retreat Work Products

- Contextual Scan
- Practical Vision
- Contradictions & Blocks

Designed & facilitated by
certified Technology of
Participation Facilitator:



Una McAlinden, CTF



Practical Vision

3-5 years from now, as a result of our efforts, we will see in place:

**Clear Roles, Responsibilities, and Structures
Support Organization Continuity**

Support/resources for members to advance good governance, trust, and value of profession.

Dynamic Network of Peers, Engaged in Collaborative Learning + Mentorship

Active & Engaged Members in every WA City & County

Pathways to Local Government Management are Attractive, Obtainable & Diverse

Strong Partnerships that help Accomplish our Strategic Goals

Obstacles

We recognize that we are blocked from our vision by:

Unclear path - chasing squirrels without systems & structure

Few do most, many show up

Unbalanced focus on negative

Outdated view of the role & Outdated recruiting strategies

Failure to define and / or communicate value

Poor articulation of value means we don't compete well for money

Strategic Directions

We will address our contradictions and advance our vision by:

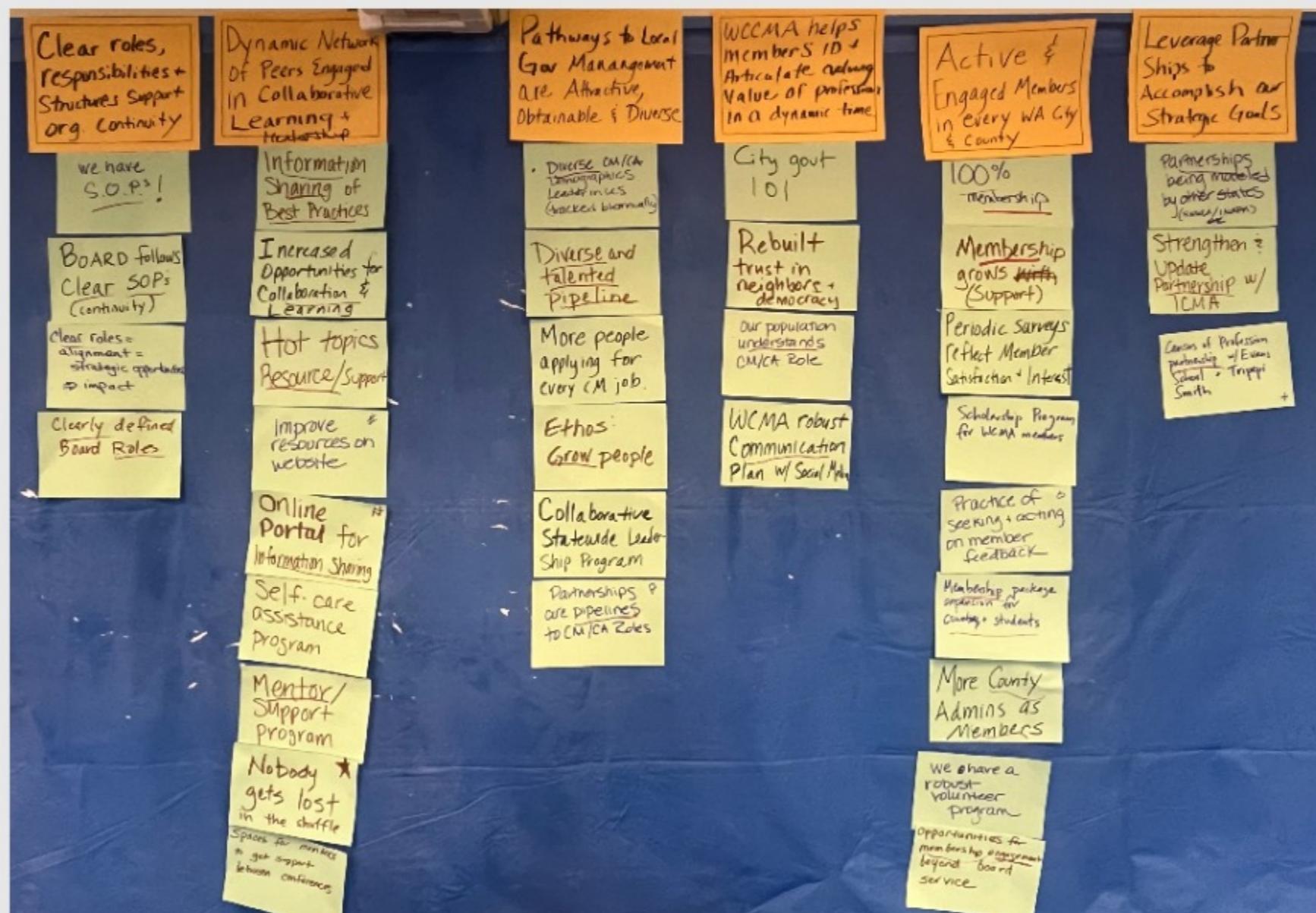
Enhancing Value to Drive Membership

Engaging with Members to Build Community + Connection

Strengthening + Supporting the CM/CA Career Cycle

Building + Maintaining a Highly Effective Board

In 3-5 years, as a result of our work, we see in place:

Clear Roles, Responsibilities, and Structures Support Organization Continuity	WCCMA Helps Members ID & Articulate the value of the Profession in a Dynamic Time	Dynamic Network of Peers, Engaged in Collaborative Learning + Mentorship	Active & Engaged Members in every WA City & County	Pathways to Local Government Management are Attractive, Obtainable & Diverse	Strong Partnerships that help Accomplish our Strategic Goals
<p>We have S.O.P.s!</p> <p>Board follows clear SOPs for continuity</p> <p>clear roles = alignment = strategic opportunities => Impact</p> <p>Clearly defined board roles</p>	<p>City Government 101</p> <p>Rebuilt trust in neighbors and democracy</p> <p>Our population understands City Manager / City Administrator Role</p> <p>WCMA Robust communication plan with social media</p>	<p>Information sharing of best practices</p> <p>Increased opportunities for collaboration & learning</p> <p>Hot topics resource / support</p> <p>Improve resources on website</p> <p>Online portal for information sharing</p> <p>Self-care assistance program</p>	<p>100% Membership</p> <p>Membeship grows (support)</p> <p>Periodic surveys reflect member satisfaction and interest</p> <p>Scholarship program from WCMA members</p> <p>Practice of seeking + acting on member feedback</p> <p>Membership package expansion for counties & students</p>	<p>Diverse City Manager / City Administrators demographics leader in US (tracked biannually)</p> <p>Diverse and talented pipeline</p> <p>More people applying for every City Manager job</p> <p>Ethos: Grow People</p> <p>Collaborative statewide leadership program</p> <p>partnerships are pipelines to City Manager / City Administrator roles</p>	<p>Partnerships being modeled by other states (NWWLA/INAPA)</p> <p>Strengthen & Update Partnership with ICMA</p> <p>Census of Profession partnerships with Evans School + Triepi Smith</p>
					
			<p>Mentor / support progam</p> <p>Nobody gets lost in the shuffle</p> <p>Spaces for members to get support between conferences</p>	 <p>WCMA Washington City/County Management Association A State Affiliate of ICMA</p>	

In examining our obstacles, we recognize...

We are blocked from our Desired Future by

Unclear path - chasing squirrels without systems & structure

Few do most many show up

Unbalanced focus on negative

Outdated view of the role & Outdated recruiting strategies

Failure to define and / or communicate value

Poor articulation of value means we don't compete well for money

Roles + responsibilities not clear

How to create meaningful networks with limited time?

It's a hard job! (Lack of civility, attacks, bad working conditions, etc)

Exclusivity in recruiting & hiring (outdated model)

Value is unclear

Limited budget

Partner criteria

Volunteer based - limited capacity

Pathways positive messaging (not all the war stories)

Tradition & Stereotypes

Lack of interest in organization

Limited city / county budgets, they don't prioritise the membership cost

Partnerships: How to evaluate shared values

System depends on volunteers

Isolation - geographics + of the roles

Targeted recruitment of diverse associate members

Limits membership

Flat revenues

Too many opportunities for partnerships, lack of clarity on what strategic goals are

Gap in systems / delayed progress

Need time and space to build org structures and policies

WA law makes it challenging to have "safe space" to share

Not Forward focus

No accountability Feedback loop

Lack of capacity to create peer network

Too many priorities

Board unaware of exec decisions

Clarify of purpose and priorities

Clarity + focus

WHAT IS BLOCKING US FROM MOVING TOWARD OUR VISION?

&

Creative Strategy Solutions



Strategic Directions

Over the next 3-5 years, and building on our current momentum, we work together to strengthen WCMA, deepen member value and connection, and ensure our long term sustainability and impact by focusing our energy on:

Designed and facilitated by
Una McAlinden
Certified Facilitator



A. Develop a pipeline for future board growth and expanded capacity

- Assign tasks to WCMA general membership to ensure the Board is not doing all the work.
- Establish student/Associate member role to post on social media about value of WCMA and profession - worth a free membership
- Develop pathways for new members to become Board members

G. Drive Membership

- Create 1-pager/business cards that can quickly be shared with other members
- Call all CM's and CA's to garner membership
- Launch monthly "subscription" for individuals to pay for membership

I. Offer trainings + resources for members

- Host conversation series on topics related to strategic goals
- Host quarterly lunch and learns.
- Provide more fee-based training or networking offerings
- Create conference features specific to City/Co.s/Role type
- Develop a Civics Academy Tool Kit
- Host a conference session to promote ethos of speaking about problems into positive stories

E. Build community and connection

- Create Opportunities for members to have fun together
- Create WIN stories to counteract WAR stories
- Create opportunities for members to be involved outside conferences
- Create more social opportunities for members to connect

C. Ramp up our presence and communications to members

- Advertise WCMA Listserv (or change model)
- Communication committee with guidelines
- Post two LinkedIn posts a month celebrating great work and sharing info/training.
- Create a communication plan that highlights the value of WCMA
- Profile practitioners who tangibly articulate the joys of the job and the 'why' in short videos to accompany each e-news

D. Elevate innovative recruiting practices/Provide CM perspective to improve recruiting

- Work with our partner orgs & recruiters to think differently about recruitment
- Launch webpage w/ Recruiting practices (borrow ICMA manual?)
- Create a best practices CM/CA recruiting tool kit/templates for city councils

H. Provide resources for effective career advancement

- Develop a practical job seeking tool kit
- Create a resource page with example CM/CA contracts
- Utilize WCCMA website member portal for exclusive resources

B. Align our work with our priorities

- Align committees to steward and drive delivery of strategic priorities
- Create committees based on board priorities.
- Limit the number of subcommittees for the board at any one time

F. Stay focused on delivery

- Commit to priorities - new idea added then something comes off the list
- Write a Board responsibilities handbook
- Create an annual work plan to identify tasks to focus on.
- Create shared resource of written roles for board & officers

Enhancing Value to Drive Membership

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Strengthening + Supporting the CM/CA Career Cycle

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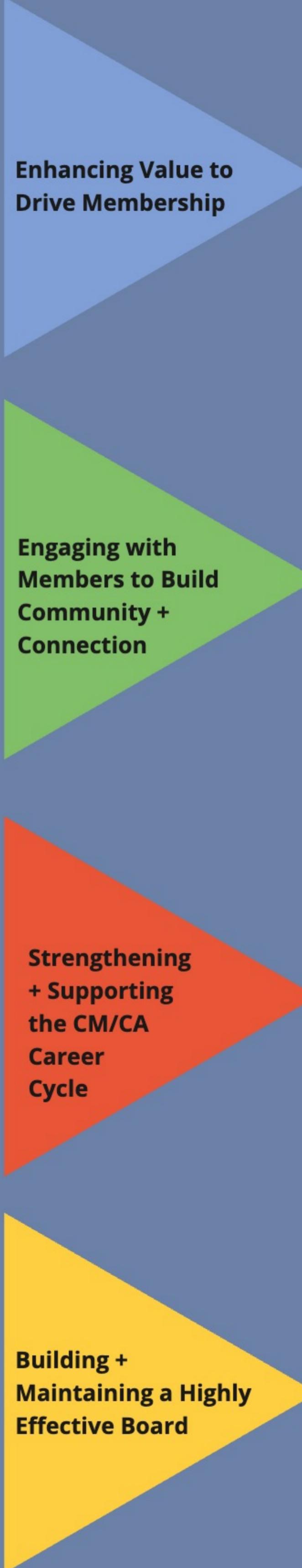
Strategic Directions Crosswalk

Over the next 3-5 years, and building on our current momentum, we work together to strengthen WCMA, deepen member value and connection, and ensure our long term sustainability and impact by focusing our energy on:

Drag a strategic direction dot to the 1-2 Practical Framework element it supports & advances.



Strategic Directions



Practical Vision

- ✓ Clear Roles, Responsibilities, and Structures Support Organization Continuity
- ✓ Support/resources for members to advance good governance, trust, and value of profession.
- ✓✓ Dynamic Network of Peers, Engaged in Collaborative Learning + Mentorship
- ✓✓ Active & Engaged Members in every WA City & County
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Contradictions

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