



Community Self-Assessment Training

KANSAS
COMMERCE

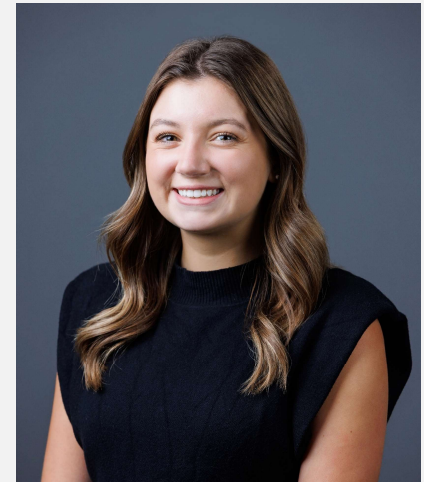
Overview

- Overview
- Today's Objective
- Background
- Community Self-Assessment Toolkit
- Goal-Setting and SMART Goals
- Wrap-Up

**emergent
method**



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1,000+ projects

400+ clients

200+ employees

LSU
ONE HUNDRED
fastest growing tiger businesses

Today's Objective

Strengthen confidence in identifying community needs and creating strategies to address those needs

OBJECTIVES:

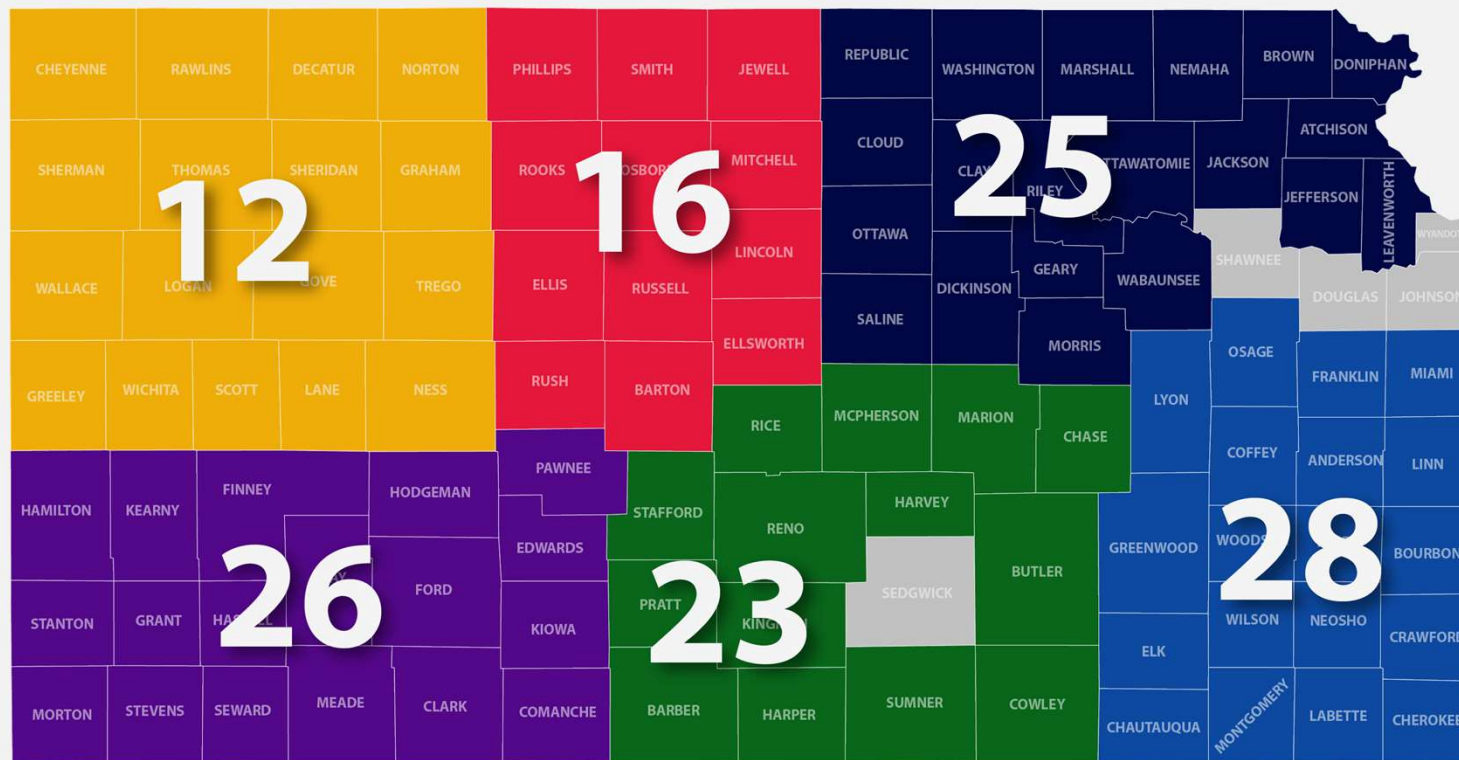
- Walk through Commerce's new community self-assessment guide
- Help you develop tailored, actionable goals that align with local needs
- Build your confidence in crafting compelling grant applications
- Share proven strategies for meaningful community engagement

Background

Objective: To better understand **the needs of Kansas rural communities and the barriers between rural communities and Commerce programs**

- Emergent Method conducted **20 in-person listening sessions** across Kansas's six regions that have received little to no Commerce funding
- **Two virtual sessions** were held later in the process to encourage broader participation
- Counties were selected in coordination with Commerce and characterized by low application rates, few awarded grants, and minimal total funding

Meeting Attendance



Key Findings

Commerce Interactions

- Regional economic development roundtables effectively promote Commerce programs
- Commerce's responsive approach to grant assistance is highly appreciated
- Communities find federal and state-administered grants more challenging in terms of application and reporting requirements

Barriers to Participation

- Lack of dedicated personnel
- Competition against larger communities
- Matching funds and upfront costs
- Lack of skilled tradesmen for infrastructure projects
- Federal program criteria
- Capacity concerns around grant administration post-award

Challenges and Needs

- Infrastructure needs not met by CDBG funding
- Limited access to quality housing
- Residential structures and vacant buildings in need of repair
- Insufficient health care
- Workforce retention
- Business support

Recommendations

- Broaden Commerce's grant program parameters
- Structure and administer grants in ways that highlight the equitability of how grants are distributed
- Personalize community points of contact
- Expand methods for publicizing grants
- Build knowledge/capacity in local communities



Community Self- Assessment Toolkit



Toolkit Components

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT?

Commerce's **community self-assessment toolkit** is a resource for community leaders to leverage their existing assets and identify opportunities for projects that can help build their communities

- Community Self-Assessment Tools:
 - Asset Inventory
 - Survey Instrument
 - Facilitation Guide
- Community Engagement Meeting Tips
- Survey Flyer Template
- Ideas for Building Community
- Community Action Plan Worksheet
- How to Engage Youth in Community

How to Conduct a Self-Assessment

Pull together a core team of community leaders to spearhead the initiative



Conduct a community self-assessment using one or more of the following tools:

- 1. Asset Inventory**
- 2. Survey Instrument**
- 3. Community Meeting Guide**



Develop a community action plan that outlines goals for your community and targeted projects

Asset Inventory

The **asset inventory** is intended to be completed by your core team of community leaders to understand and map out the assets in your community that can be leveraged for grant applications and potential projects

Benefits to your community:

- Creates a lasting record of community resources
- Helps identify gaps and opportunities
- Provides a foundation for future projects

ASSET INVENTORY

The following asset inventory can be completed by your core team of community leaders to understand and map out the assets in your community that can be leveraged for grant applications and potential projects. This inventory can be conducted by circulating a shared document, through a meeting, or by survey.

PLACES

Small-scale projects that enhance the quality of life for residents can result in meaningful impact in rural communities. Using the following questions, think through the places that are not only unique, but significant to your community's identity.

- Where is the place that is most representative of our community's identity?
- What spaces in our community best reflect our collective identity?
- Where are the places in our community that we bring our visitors to experience the best that we offer?

PARTNERSHIPS

Successful and sustainable community building efforts are driven by the collaboration of community leaders, elected officials, nonprofits, small businesses, and other stakeholders in the community – but most importantly those efforts are typically driven by people who love their community. Using the following questions, identify the stakeholders and partners in your community that can help you achieve your goals.

- Who are the partners involved in our small-scale and large-scale community projects?
- Who are our community champions or changemakers?
- Who are the individuals that are effective spokespersons for our community, find funding opportunities, and push for new projects?
- What organizations are the glue of our community?
- Who can be involved in this initiative as a partner, sponsor, or volunteer?

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

You don't have to start from scratch when it comes to community placemaking. Leveraging the strengths and assets already in place can be a great place to start for small-scale community building projects.

- What are the best things about our community?
- What are elements of our community that we want to preserve and maintain?
- What are some small-scale projects that could help enhance our community?

TIMELINE

When developing your goals, consider the following questions to assess a realistic timeline:

- What are specific activities that can be completed within one year?
- When do we want to have our goals accomplished?

OPPORTUNITIES

Based on your answers to the questions above, identify your opportunities:

- What are the gaps that we need to fill?
- What impact could we have, even with a small-scale effort?

Asset Inventory

CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Who will collect and maintain each section of the inventory?*
2. *What's the most sustainable way to store and update this information for long-term use?*
3. *How will we ensure the inventory stays current and useful over many years?*

BEST PRACTICES

- Assign clear ownership
- Make it easy to maintain
- Focus on quality and access

Survey Instrument

The **survey template** is designed to help you gather valuable feedback and insights from your community

Why use a survey tool?

- Makes collecting community feedback easier
- Saves time on counting and organizing responses
- Creates a record of community needs and opinions
- Helps tell your community's story with data

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

This survey template is designed to help you gather valuable feedback and insights from your community. The questions provided serve as examples, and you are encouraged to modify or add questions to better suit the specific needs and concerns of your community.

To facilitate the collection of responses, consider using free and low-cost online platforms such as Google Forms ([google.com/forms](https://www.google.com/forms)) and Survey Monkey ([surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)). These tools make it easy to distribute your survey and analyze the results, ensuring you can effectively engage with and understand your community.

The survey should be tailored to your community and could include information on ways to get involved. The responses should help you make the case for the project you are requesting funds for.

1. What is your age?

☐ 18-27 ☐ 28-43 ☐ 44-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐ 70-78 ☐ 79+

2. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other: _____ ☐ I prefer not to say

3. What do you believe are the biggest strengths of our community? What are you most proud of?

4. What places in our community need the most improvement?

☐ Downtown area ☐ Libraries ☐ Parks ☐ Schools
☐ Shopping areas ☐ Government buildings ☐ Other: _____

5. What are some small-scale projects that could help enhance our community?

☐ Main street beautification ☐ Signage ☐ Improvements to building facades ☐ Community garden
☐ Cleanups or trashcans ☐ Community branding effort ☐ Pedestrian lighting ☐ Benches
☐ Other: _____

6. Who are the community members who most need our attention and resources?

☐ Children ☐ Teenagers ☐ Parents ☐ Seniors ☐ Veterans
☐ Single parents ☐ Teachers ☐ Health workers (i.e., nurses, doctors, etc.) ☐ Law enforcement (i.e., police, firemen, etc.) ☐ Other: _____

Survey Instrument

CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Who can help organize the results?*
2. *Who can analyze results?*
3. *How do you want to distribute it?*
4. *What percentage of your community members prefer or need paper forms?*

BEST PRACTICES

- Offer both paper and online options
- Partner with trusted local places (libraries, churches, stores)
- Set clear deadlines that work for our community

Facilitation Guide

The **facilitation guide** can help you conduct an effective community meeting by outlining potential questions to ask to assess where your community is at and where you should focus your efforts moving forward

Why conduct a community meeting?

- Hear firsthand the needs of residents
- Build credibility
- Establish meaningful connections

COMMUNITY MEETING FACILITATION GUIDE

Community meetings are one of the most effective ways to hear firsthand the needs of residents, build credibility, and establish meaningful connections.

The following facilitation guide can help you conduct an effective community meeting by outlining potential questions to ask to assess where your community is at, and where you should focus your efforts moving forward. We encourage you to modify and add questions to better suit the specific needs and concerns of your community.

For more details and tips on how to conduct an effective community meeting, view Commerce's [How to Conduct an Effective Community Meeting](#) resource, included in the community self-assessment toolkit.

WELCOME AND MEETING OBJECTIVE

It's important to open your meeting with the facilitator introducing themselves, welcoming participants, and thanking everyone for attending. You should outline the objectives and the purpose of the meeting, provide context where needed, communicate expectations, and outline next steps/outcomes from the meeting.

Ground Rules and Expectations

Setting the ground rules for your meeting at the beginning can be a helpful way of ensuring you receive the outcome you desire out of your meeting and ensure the meeting stays on track.

Introductions

Depending on the attendance size, you can go around and ask for your attendees to introduce themselves and the organization that they represent (if any). This can help break the ice and produce a more productive conversation.

FACILITATION QUESTIONS

The following questions can help guide a productive discussion. We encourage you to modify or expand on these questions to tailor to your community.

Community Strengths

- What, in your opinion, is the most important part of our community?
- What existing community assets, resources, or programs do you think are working well?
- What are the unique cultural or historical features that make our community special?

Community Needs

- What are the biggest challenges or unmet needs in our community?
- What issues or problems do you think need the most attention or improvement?
- What barriers are currently holding our community back?

Opportunities

- If our community received a grant to fund a new small-scale project, what type of project would you most want to see implemented?
- What are some small-scale projects that could help enhance our community?

CLOSING

To close the session, thank everyone again for their time, and make sure to reiterate the next steps from the meeting. It's helpful to communicate actions that will take place following the meetings, as well as offer a point of contact for follow-up questions.

Community Meetings

CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Where do people in our community naturally gather?*
2. *What times work best for most community members?*
3. *What existing groups can help spread the word?*
4. *How can we make these welcoming and accessible?*

BEST PRACTICES

- Provide food and refreshments
- Use existing community networks to spread the word
- Document and share meeting outcomes

Goal Setting

“

HOW WE SPEND OUR
DAYS IS HOW WE
SPEND OUR LIVES

ANNIE DILLARD

”

Buffet's Two-List Strategy

1. Write down your **top 20** goals
2. Circle your **top 5** goals
3. How will you move **List A** and **List B** forward?
4. The Catch



PRIORITIZATION IS KEY



Kramski
@kramski

I love how being an adult is just saying "But after this week things will slow down a bit again" to yourself until you die





MOTION ISN'T MOVEMENT

Recap – Philosophies

- Start with “Why?”
- Prioritization is key
- An accurate description of the problem is 90% of the solution
- Motion isn’t movement

Benefits of Goal Setting

Clarity

Purpose

Motivation

Performance

Where are you going?



Three Types of Goals

Process

- Set entirely by the individual and 100% controllable
 - Example: Devoting a certain amount of time to a task

Performance

- Levels of performance based on a standard
 - Example: The standard you want to meet over time

Outcome

- Results you hope to achieve
 - Example: A target to work toward, the ideal outcome

The ideal goal is...

**SPECIFIC
MEASURABLE
ATTAINABLE
RELEVANT
TIMELY**

Specific

Can you answer the five “W” questions?

- **What** do I want to accomplish?
- **Why** is this goal important?
- **Who** is involved?
- **Where** is it located?
- **Which** resources or limits are involved?

Measurable

Quantify

- How much?
- How many?

How will I know when it's accomplished?

Bad example:

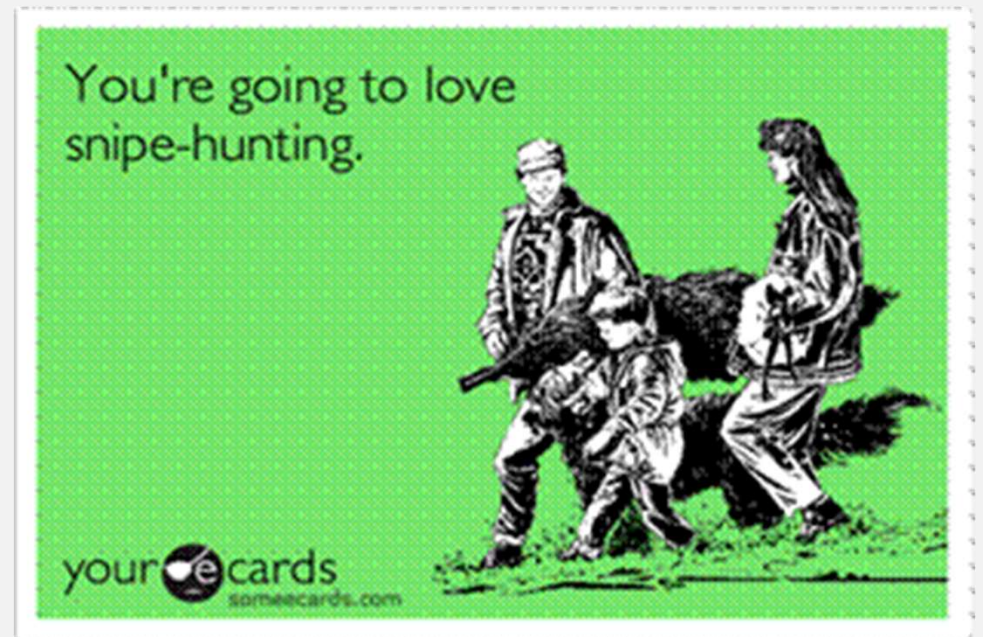
- “I want to improve our downtown”

Good example:

- “I will improve our Main Street by converting three vacant storefronts into active businesses”

Attainable

- Can I accomplish this goal?
- How?
- How realistic is the goal, based on constraints?
 - People
 - Time
 - Skill sets



Relevant

- Is the goal in alignment with other relevant goals or previous initiatives?
- Does it meet these questions:
 - Is it worthwhile?
 - Is this the right time?
 - Does this match my community's other efforts/needs?
 - Am I the right person to set and reach this goal?
 - Is it applicable in my current environment/context?

Timely

- What's the deadline?
- What do I want to have accomplished six months or one year from now?
- What would benchmarking progress look like?



Questions?

Thank You

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