



Strategic Plan 2022

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Introduction

Charter Township of Kalamazoo remains committed to fostering a vibrant, thriving, and welcoming community. To that end, the current board, staff, and township manager spent several days in July and August of 2022 updating our 2017 Strategic Plan. The full Strategic Planning Committee comprised staff leadership, the township manager, and the board of trustees. The full committee met on July 19 and 20 to review the previous plan and provide input. Following the July 19 and 20 discussions, a subcommittee was convened to revise the document. The Strategic Planning Subcommittee consisted of Supervisor Martin, Manager Mitchell, Trustee Leuty, and Trustee Glass. With the professional assistance of Peter Dams of Dams & Associates, the subcommittee held three writing sessions to revise objectives related to the following four goals we will focus on for the next two years:

1. Vibrant and Strong Neighborhoods
2. Strong Community Engagement and Identity
3. Effective Operations and Collaborations
4. Astute Financial Leadership

Kalamazoo Township strives to use good qualitative and quantitative data to govern our decisions. With a population consistently hovering around 21,000 for the last three decades, the township has seen a slight increase in population as of 2020 estimates. It currently rests at just over 22,000 people living in four unique neighborhoods, Lakewood, Northwood, Eastwood, and Westwood.

According to censusreporter.org (2022), our current median age is 35, with approximately 69% of residents under 50. In the last few years, we have seen increasing property and home values, young homeownership, and families with children. This data, combined with staff and board input, formed these priorities that we invite you to work with us on for the next two years. None of these goals are meant to be accomplished by one person alone, and we are committed to engaging the community in any strategies we implement. We will continue to engage the community throughout the implementation of this living plan.

**In service and solidarity,
Your Manager, Staff, and Board of Trustees**



Our Guiding Principles

Our Vision

We envision Kalamazoo Charter Township with enhanced

- Community identity and engagement
- Diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Respect for all human rights
- Openness and welcome to all populations
- Economic opportunity
- Intergovernmental collaboration

Our Mission

The mission of Kalamazoo Township is to provide government services that promote a safe, healthy, accessible, and economically viable community to live, work, learn, and play.

Our Core Values

As members of Kalamazoo Charter Township, our values guide our governance and our interactions with residents, visitors, and each other. We commit to being:

Ethical

Serving our community honestly, fairly, and justly

Respectful

Honoring the value of everyone we interact with

Transparent

Practicing openness in our decisions and actions

Responsive

Providing optimal service proactively and effectively

Competent

Continually building knowledge to best serve the people

Economical

Prudent with our community's precious financial resources

Our Strategic Framework

The strategic framework shows that the vision can only be achieved if Kalamazoo Township executes against the strategic goal and strategies.



Our Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Vibrant strong community and neighborhoods		
Strategic Objectives	Target Date	Owner
1. Board and staff have an enhanced understanding of diversity and inclusion	Mar 2023	Dexter Mitchell
2. Township beautification plan to create a better-looking township	Mar 2023	Dexter Mitchell
3. Decision whether to create a corridor improvement authority with a TIF district	Mar 2023	Don Martin
4. Police officers who are assigned to community policing (to improve relationship with the community to lower crime in the future)	Jun 2023	Bryan Ergang
5. Encourage the creation of new neighborhood associations and support existing neighborhood associations in all neighborhoods	Mar 2024	Don Martin
6. Collaborate with organizations to address affordable housing	Ongoing	Dexter Mitchell and Mark Miller

Goal 2: Strong community identity and engagement		
Strategic Objectives	Target Date	Owner
1. Develop a process for creating and/or participating in community events inside and outside of the Township (e.g., one event/neighborhood/year)	Jun 2023	Communications Committee
2. Internal and external communication plan that addresses	Jun 2023	Communications Committee
a. Consistent branding		
b. Reflects the Township's diversity		
c. Social media strategy		
d. Collect email addresses and cell phone numbers to enable free communication to residents		
e. Enhance webpage to provide more online information and services		
Note: 50% of homes were sold in the last ten year.		

Goal 3: Efficient and effective operations and collaborations		
Strategic Objectives	Target Date	Owner
1. Evaluation of township manager's performance on an annual basis	Dec 2022	Board
2. Facility needs assessment (draft)	Dec 2022	Dexter Mitchell
3. Staff members who report morale is high <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct an annual staff retreat to build morale b. Conduct a bi-annual morale survey 	Mar 2023	Dexter Mitchell
4. Decisions whether to hire additional positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. HR b. Parks c. Communications 	Mar 2023	Board
5. A comprehensive technology plan	Jun 2023	Rick Shaink
6. Wage analysis study in 2023	Jun 2023	PAC
a. Update Employee Handbook and the Policy Manual	Jun 2023	PAC
b. Master review calendar	Mar 2023	Ashley Glass
c. Streamline processes		
7. Succession plan	Oct 2023	Dexter Mitchell
8. Decision whether to have full-time elected officials	Oct 2023	Board
9. Policy and operations review	Ongoing	PAC
10. Communicate desired stakeholder involvement per stakeholder analysis (p. 24)	Ongoing	Dexter Mitchell

Goal 4: Financial stewardship

Strategic Objectives	Target Date	Owner
1. Annual review of service fee structure to reflect actual cost of providing services	Mar 2023	Nancy Desai
2. Financial reports that meet board's oversight needs	Ongoing	Board
a. Evaluate current reports		
3. Identify and pursue appropriate local, state, and federal grant opportunities	Ongoing	Dexter Mitchell
a. Develop a plan to identify opportunities to work with area resources to assist in researching and writing grants (e.g., Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo Community Foundation)		Board / Dexter Mitchell

Implementation Schedule

This schedule may be adjusted based on emerging priorities and budget amendments.

Strategies Sorted by target date	2022	2023				2024	Owner
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
3.1. Evaluation of township manager's performance on an annual basis	Dec 22						Board
3.2. Facility needs assessment (draft)	Dec 22						Dexter Mitchell
1.1. Board and staff have an enhanced understanding of diversity and inclusion		Mar 23					Dexter Mitchell
1.2. Township beautification plan to create a better-looking township		Mar 23					Dexter Mitchell
1.3. Decision whether to create a corridor improvement authority with a TIF district		Mar 23					Don Martin
3.3. Staff members who report that the morale is high		Mar 23					Dexter Mitchell
3.4. Decisions whether to hire additional positions: HR, Parks, Communications		Mar 23					Board
3.6.b. Master review calendar		Mar 23					Ashley Glass
4.1. Annual review of service fee structure to reflect actual cost of providing services		Mar 23					Nancy Desai
1.4. Police officers who are assigned to community policing			Jun 23				Bryan Ergang
2.1. Develop a process for creating and/or participating in community events inside and outside of the Township			Jun 23				Communic. Committee
2.2. Internal and external communication plan			Jun 23				Communic. Committee
3.5. A comprehensive technology plan			Jun 23				Rick Shaink

Strategies Sorted by target date	2022	2023				2024	Owner
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
3.6. Wage analysis study in 2023			Jun 23				PAC
3.6.a. Update Employee Handbook and the Policy Manual			Jun 23				PAC
3.7. Succession plan					Oct 23		Dexter Mitchell
3.8. Decision whether to have full-time elected officials					Oct 23		Board
1.5. Encourage the creation of new neighborhood associations and support existing neighborhood associations in all neighborhoods						Mar 24	Don Martin

Ongoing Objectives

1.6. Collaborate with organizations to address affordable housing	Dexter Mitchell and Mark Miller
3.9. Policy and operations review	PAC
3.10. Communicate desired stakeholder involvement per stakeholder analysis (p. 24)	Dexter Mitchell
4.2. Financial reports that meet board's oversight needs	Board
4.3. Identify and pursue appropriate local, state, and federal grant opportunities	Dexter Mitchell

Next Steps and Implementation

- Communicate the Strategic Plan to staff and external key stakeholders – clearly and often.
- Have internal conversations on how staff and elected officials can contribute to the mission and vision and live the core commitments.
- Develop and implement detailed tactical action plans as needed.
- Track progress and identify data trends.
- Focus on strategy throughout the year through strategy-based staff and board meeting agendas and annual progress reports.
- Regularly report updates and results to all key stakeholders.
- Use process and outcome metrics for continuous improvement toward service excellence.
- Celebrate success!
- Regularly review, validate, and update the strategies.

The Strategic Planning Process

This section of the Strategic Plan documents the planning process
and the results of the planning activities from the
July 19-20, 2022, retreat.

This record may be used to refresh the
strategies and to orient new staff and elected officials.

Planning Participants

We thank these participants for giving their time and expertise.

Donald D. Martin*	Supervisor
Sherine M. Miller	Treasurer
Mark E. Miller	Clerk
Ashley Glass*	Trustee
Steven C. Leuty*	Trustee
Clara Robinson	Trustee
Lisa Moaiery	Trustee
Dexter A. Mitchell*	Manager
Bryan Ergang	Chief of Police
David J. Obreiter	Fire Chief
Nancy Desai	Director of Finance
David Becker	Assessor

* Denotes member of the Steering Team



Strategic Accomplishments 2017 – 2022

The following strategies have been completed and are now part of the ongoing Township operations (Tier 2 operational priorities).

Goal 1: Vibrant strong community and neighborhoods

1. Develop a schedule for regular board member visits to businesses
2. Conduct an internal review of ordinances related to blight and make recommendations as needed with priorities and timelines
3. Develop recommendations for the creation of TIF districts, DDAs, and Corridor Improvement Authorities
4. Institute proactive community policing to prevent crime
5. Collaborate more with Southwest Michigan First
6. Increase awareness of and measure progress towards sustainability
7. Create a Township Climate Action Plan
8. Present options for improving the enforcement of ordinances related to blight
9. Attract more businesses
10. Educate residents and businesses on area resources

Goal 2: Strong community identity and engagement

1. Develop a process for creating and/or participating in community events inside and outside of the Township (e.g., one event/neighborhood/year)
2. Create and publish an annual event calendar
3. Provide regular opportunities for police and community to interact
4. Increase social and recreational opportunities to attract businesses
5. Create a "Trustee for a Day" program
6. Support neighborhood associations more intentionally
7. Provide relevant Township information to the neighborhood associations
8. Attending neighborhood association meetings/functions and report back to board

Goal 3: Efficient and effective operations and collaborations

1. Develop a process for conducting staff evaluations. The process should include external wage analysis study and pay scale review for employees
2. Implement a document management system
3. Create standard operating procedures to capture institutional knowledge, including task analyses
4. Regularly review job descriptions for all staff positions
5. Complete implementation of present Master Plan
6. Complete implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
7. Develop a Township dashboard of measures of success
8. Develop the next five-year Township Master Plan
9. Conduct an annual joint meeting with the Board of Trustees, Road Commission, Planning Commission, and the ZBA
10. Implement best practices as suggested by the MTA and other professional resources
11. Continue to pursue open communication with federal, state, county, and local elected officials and municipalities
12. Continue implementation of the Non-motorized Transportation Plan
13. Strengthen the morale in all Township departments
14. Conduct regular formal anonymous engagement surveys

Goal 4: Diverse and inclusive neighborhoods and governmental services

1. Broaden the scope of advertising job and committee opportunities with the Township
2. Youth academy with the Township's police and fire departments to get underrepresented youths interested in public safety careers (e.g., mentoring)
3. Develop a plan for working towards a police department that mirrors our community

Goal 5: Financial stewardship

1. Evaluate current financial reports to determine whether they meet board's oversight needs
2. Implement an aggressive road maintenance schedule
3. Develop a long-term maintenance plan for water and sewer
4. Explore collaboration opportunities with other municipalities
5. Hold quarterly meetings with Finance Administrator
6. Continue to seek solutions regarding water and sewer rates

Planning Calendar

Date	Event	Participants
April 15, 2022	<u>Kick-off Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare planning retreat • Determine with 2017 objectives to continue 	Steering Team
July 19-20	<u>Strategic Planning Retreat</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirm guiding principles • Review strategic accomplishments • Getting to know your personal style • Conduct SWOT and gap analyses • Brainstorm strategies to close gaps 	Board of Trustees Leadership Staff
August 09	<u>Create the Strategic Plan #1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review retreat results • Draft crisp objectives 	Steering Team
August 16	<u>Create the Strategic Plan #2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set target dates and identify owners 	Steering Team
August 23	<u>Create the Strategic Plan #3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check draft plan against planning activities and make final adjustments • Review next steps: Rollout and implementation 	Steering Team
	Dams & Associates submits draft plan	
	Board of Trustees reviews and adopts the final plan	

SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your current capabilities Capitalize upon these strengths to fulfill the mission and move toward the vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your current opportunities for improvement If not addressed in the strategic plan, weaknesses could impede fulfillment of mission and progress toward vision.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify trends that can become advantages for fulfilling your mission and vision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategic plan's goals and objectives must address threats so they do not impede progress toward your mission and vision.

After identifying major strengths and weaknesses, participants determined whether the trends and their impacts identified at the first planning retreat presented potential opportunities or threats to achieving your mission and vision.

Trends were defined as *(future) external events that may have a positive or negative impact on the organization's operation and services.*

Trends in the following four separate but overlapping environments and their *direct impact* on your internal operations were identified.

Social & Demographic



Economic



Political & Regulatory



Technological



These environments need to be continuously assessed and monitored.

Strengths

Participants' perception of the Township's *current* strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths 2022	Weaknesses 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard-working employees • Customer service • Flexibility in solving problems within departments • Good financial standing • Good planning for Township needs • Citizens who participate • Quality safety services • Stable tax base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff turnover • Low morale by staff • Trust in working together • Multiple expectations of staff • Communications to citizens • Outdated buildings • Lack of space • Unclear chain of command • Not enough funds for bigger projects • Lack of staff limits operational capacity

Strengths 2017	Weaknesses 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road infrastructure • Committed and engaged elected officials • Citizen involvement • Strong staff – skills, commitment • Not running a deficit • Township government is closest to the people • Variety of ideas, fresh eyes • Strong professional police and fire services • Diversity of housing stock • Centrally located within the county • Three options of school districts in the Township • Hospitals • Treating all four neighborhoods with equity • Transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and visitors don't know when they enter the Township • Residents don't know whether they live in the Township • Housing blight • Decaying housing stock – including commercial buildings • Lack of business investment • Lack of ability to get on/off 131 • Lack of proactive communication strategies (e.g., social media) • Low investment in parks – not enough parks • No venue for outdoor events • Low voter turnout • No community building • Four separate communities: No center or downtown • Running out of cemetery space • Poor relationship with MDOT • Bad street lights / non-LED street lights

SWOT Analysis: Opportunities

Opportunities are defined as trends and impacts that can become advantages for fulfilling your mission and vision. Opportunities do not have to be specifically addressed by the strategic plan's strategies, but strategies should be built upon these strengths.

Social & Demographic Trends	Impact on Kalamazoo Township
1. COVID > many people don't feel accountable for breaking the law	Demand for outside activities Work from anywhere
2. Aging population	Changing workplace support requirements Need for elder housing Need for walkable neighborhoods
3. Young people moving into the Township	Need for outdoor spaces Expectations for services Void (lack of knowledge) regarding the community

Economic Trends	Impact on Kalamazoo Township
1. Increasing entrepreneurship – Work From Home (WFH) businesses	Need for WFH ordinances and zoning Active support needed for non-traditional businesses Changing culture in the Township
2. Labor movement (wages, desire for more free time)	Need for green spaces and walkability

Technology Trends	Impact on Kalamazoo Township
1. Wide adoption of technology (e.g., Zoom meetings)	Expectations of broadband service Computer training for staff Changes in policies and procedures
2. Digital divide between older and younger residents	Continue services for the older residents (e.g., in person, mailings)

SWOT Analysis: Threats

Threats are defined as trends whose impact on the organization cannot be addressed without further intervention. Unaddressed threats can severely limit your ability to deliver results. Your strategic plan must address these threats so they do not impede progress toward your mission and vision.

Social & Demographic Trends	Impact on Kalamazoo Township
1. COVID > many people don't feel accountable for breaking the law	Operations affected in general Impact on public safety (people don't feel accountable for breaking the law) Stress for service jobs who cannot work from home (WFH)
2. Homelessness and drug use	No locations for people to go Hospitals overburdened More demand for public safety
3. Businesses close due to lack of staff > vacant spaces	More people out on the streets More demand for public safety
4. Climate change (fires, power outages)	More demand for public safety Resiliency planning (in progress)
5. Work-life balance	Different workplace expectations from younger generation Residents expect 8-5 services in person
6. Increased car ownership	Clogged parking Lower quality of life Safety concerns

Threats - continued

Economic Trends	Impact on Kalamazoo Township
1. Increasing income and wealth inequality	Mismatch between housing and resources Need to support people
2. Inflation and high gas prices	Increased costs to operate Longer times between repairs of assets (e.g., car repair) Long lead times (e.g., fire trucks) Increasing wages Smaller geographic talent pool Have to do more with less
3. Increased need for new revenue and millages	More opposition Budget constraints Impact staff time
4. Labor movement (wages, desire for more free time)	Attract workers is difficult (housing, quality workers) Higher wages
5. Recycling and waste removal	Impact on residents High need for communication to explain recycling

Threats - continued

Political & Regulatory Trends	Impact on Kalamazoo Township
1. Increasing preemption at the federal and state levels	Less local control More unfunded mandates
2. Rise of anti-democratic forces → More divisions and conflict	Staff have to deal with conflict Elections are being challenged
3. Mistrust / fake news	Staff have to explain a lot more which reduced productivity
4. Decriminalization of drug use → Increased homelessness	Increasing need for behavioral health services Uncertainty how to fund support services for residents
5. Upcoming elections	Uncertain impacts

Technology Trends	Impact on Kalamazoo Township
1. Increasing energy cost	Increased transportation costs Increased infrastructure costs
2. Wide adoption of technology (e.g., Zoom meetings)	Expectations for immediate responses Increased need for cybersecurity Increased infrastructure costs
3. Technology use	Loss of relationships between staff and residents ("community feel")

Challenges, Gaps, and Barriers

During the gap analysis, participants identified challenges, gaps, and barriers that could impede progress toward Kalamazoo Township's vision to the fullest extent possible.

Gaps are listed in the order discussed, not in the order of priority. Items within each category reflect participants' perceptions. The purpose of this activity was to show consensus and alignment with respect to the top gaps and barriers. *Therefore, duplicate or similarly worded items may reflect contributions from different participants.*

Vibrant strong community and neighborhoods	Strong community identify and engagement	Efficient and effective operations and collaborations
Connecting communities on non-contiguous land Create a welcoming Twp Economic and social opportunities/incentives to attracts residents and businesses Attracting more businesses	Weak community engagement Expectations 😊 versus reality 😞 Branding to identify our "neighborhoods"/community Reaching people Increase external communications and information Collaborate Not enough community engagement	Modernization of communication standards Modernization of technology standards Staff turnover Culture Morale Turnover / Hiring Establish means to increase trust and respect between employees Better communication needed to increase employee morale, welfare, and production Lack of staff to deliver quality services
Diverse and inclusive neighborhoods and government services	Financial Stewardship	
Affordable housing shortage	Township budgetary constraints Fiscal constraints	Retain and recruit staff Trust Building limitations Internal and external communication Working with staff Modernization of workflow parameters Communication transparency Communication Capacity Staffing shortages

Gap Analysis 2017

Identity and Engagement	Collaboration and Infrastructure	Funding and Financial Management
Community engagement Township identity Lack of community identity (K-Twp brand) Lack of resident awareness of township government Community identify township? Neighborhood associations Twp identity Exterior signage Understanding equity Open communication Improved community communication strategy (social media) Public Media Network not utilized enough Communication with every resident	Intergovernmental community Limits to collaboration Transportation Partnerships Maintaining infrastructure (conserving assets) Infrastructure Blight and brownfields	Limited financial resources to meet goals Decreasing revenue to meet goals likely Funding Money \$
		Board Priorities
		Board members losing focus (between terms) Limited time to deal with important issues (tyranny of the urgent) Goal setting
	Law Enforcement	Economic Development
	Pro-active (vs. re-active) policing (community policing) Police	Need for new / more industries and jobs Jobs

Desired Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholders are defined as *individuals, groups, or organizations who can exert substantial influence over your operations and outcomes.*

To be optimally effective in working with your stakeholders, we identified the *desired* level of their involvement.

Your strategic goals and objectives must help you attain this desired level of stakeholder involvement and make it an integral part of your operations.

Our Stakeholders	Desired Level of Involvement
Southwest Michigan First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare open rural land and brownfields for development
Kalamazoo County Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free up ARPA funds Make CDBG funds spending decisions with Kalamazoo Township at the table Hire a climate action coordinator as a shared position Involve Kalamazoo Township more actively in brownfield development
Kalamazoo County Road Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be an Act 51 partner for non-motorized plan (e.g., sidewalks) Communicate changes early (e.g., speed limits) Ensure a common goal (?)
Kalamazoo Regional Water and Wastewater Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on wastewater agreement with the City Implement the water contract
ISAAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other municipalities on quality housing ordinances Include Kalamazoo Township in gun violence discussions
Surrounding municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications strategy for collaborative opportunities

Strategy Execution Support Tools

To support the execution of your strategic plan, we are providing the following tools.

Worksheet for Implementing Objectives

Date Updated:	Enter date here
----------------------	------------------------

Goal:	
--------------	--

Strategic Objective:	
-----------------------------	--

Owner		Project Team	1.	4.
Target Date			2.	5.
			3.	6.

Criteria for Good	
How you will know the objective has been accomplished well?	
1.	
2.	
	3.

Implementation Plan Use work outputs for project milestones	Project Milestones	Target Date	Compl.
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	4.		
	5.		
	6.		
	7.		

Implementation Tracking Form

Kalamazoo Township Implementation Tracking Form	Date	Owner	Status	Current Update
Goal 1: Vibrant strong community and neighborhoods			automatic coloring	
1. Board and staff have an enhanced understanding of diversity and inclusion	Mar-23	Dexter Mitchell	2	
2. Township beautification plan to create a better-looking township	Mar-23	Dexter Mitchell	3	
3. Decision whether to create of a corridor improvement authority with a TIF district	Mar-23	Don Martin	1	
4. Police officers who are assigned to community policing (to improve relationship with the	Jun-23	Bryan Ergang		
5. Encourage the creation of new and support existing neighborhood associations in all ne	Mar-24	Don Martin		
6. Collaborate with organizations to address affordable housing	Ongoing	Dexter Mitchell and Mark Miller		
Goal 2: Strong community identity and engagement				
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2. Internal and external communication plan that addresses	Jun-23	Communications Committee		
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5. A comprehensive technology plan	Jun-23	Rick Shaink		
6. Wage analysis study in 2023	Jun-23	PAC		
a. Update employee and elected officials handbook	Jun-23	PAC		
b. Master review calendar	Mar-23	Ashley Glass		
7. Succession plan	Oct-23	Dexter Mitchell		
8. Decision whether to have full-time elected officials	Oct-23	Board		
9. Policy and operations review	Ongoing	PAC		
10. Communicate desired stakeholder involvement per stakeholder analysis (p. 24)	Ongoing	Dexter Mitchell		
Goal 4: Financial stewardship				
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2. Financial reports that meet board's oversight needs	Ongoing	Board		
3. Identify and pursue appropriate local, state, and federal grant opportunities	Ongoing	Dexter Mitchell		

Contact Information



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