



The Communications Continuum

Open House Discussion

Thursday, May 18, 2023





Local Government 2030

- 51 delegates from 23 states
- National Association of Public Administration (NAPA) Grand Challenges
- November 2022 Convening in Omaha

Our Team

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Alex Sanchez, Community Development Analyst, Pitkin County, CO

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Danielle Burke, Assistant City Manager, Garden City, KS

Derrick Stanford, Police Officer, Coppell, TX

Josh Morgan, City Engineer, Danville, KY

Lauren Rose, Assistant City Manager, Sachse, TX

Lisa Brown, Director of Strategy Management, Rock Hill, SC

Lisa Henty, City Administrator, Cortland, NY

Kevin Fitzgerald, ARPA Coordinator, Groton, CT

Krystal Lindberg, Deputy Finance Director, Providence, RI

Phil Green, Transportation & Long-Range Planner, Hoffman Estates, IL

Stephanie Prindle, Investigations Corporal, Warrensburg, MO

Taylor Galusha, Assistant to Town Manager – Communications Coordinator, Shrewsbury, MA

Trevor Hogan, Fire Captain, Rockford, IL

Aaron Deslatte, Assistant Professor, Indiana University Bloomington, IN

Craig Owens, City Manager, Lawrence, KS

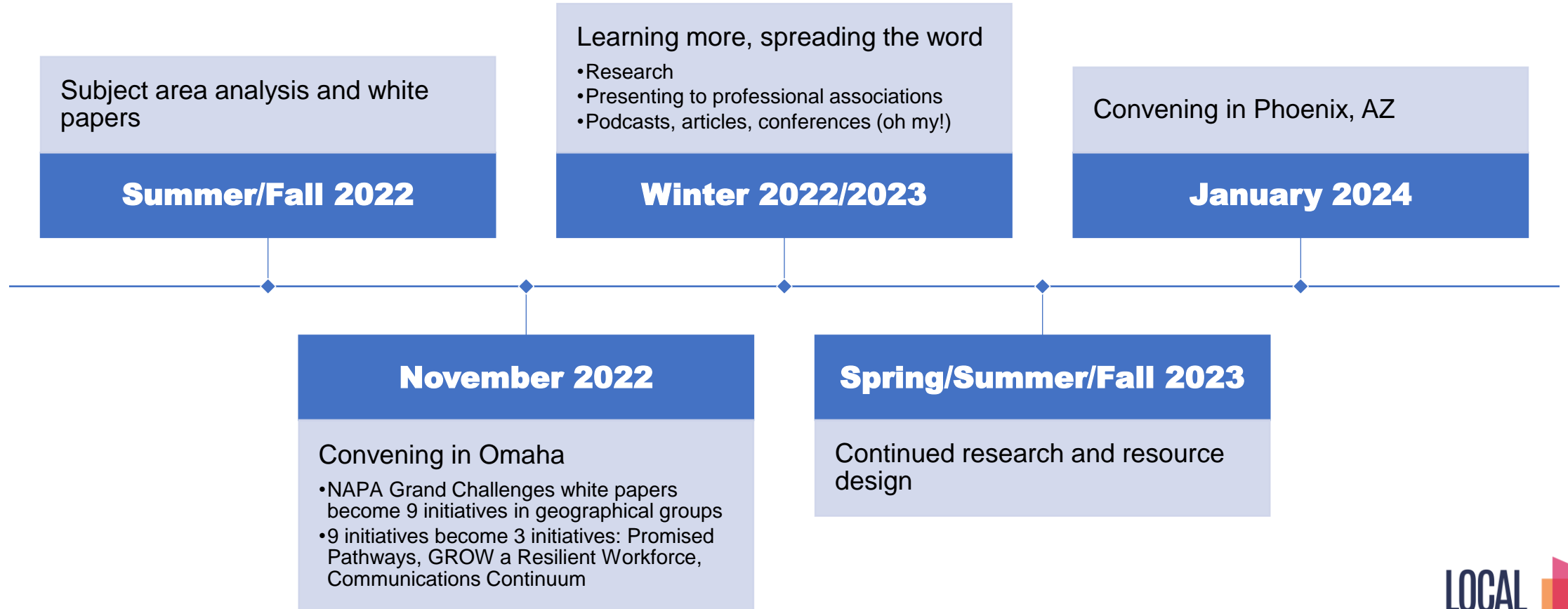
Sue Schwartz, Director of Planning, Greensboro, SC

Talia Lomax-O'dneal, Deputy Finance Director, Nashville, TN



LOCAL GOVERNMENT 2030

Local Gov 2030 So Far



The Problem

Local governments have and continue to struggle to:

- Connect authentically with residents
- Pivot from traditional administration practices to address modern problems
- Address burnout, fatigue, and rapid turnover among public service professionals



Initiative 3: The Communications Continuum

- Orientation towards communication – both internally and externally
 - Often transactional
 - Lacks emotional intelligence and/or social-emotional skill
 - Tends towards technical or bureaucratic rather than accessible
 - Fails to bridge generational differences
 - Has not kept up with public expectations



GENERATION GAP



Our Approach

Literature Review

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Expert Interviews

Create a toolkit

Beta test toolkit materials

Our Approach

Literature Review



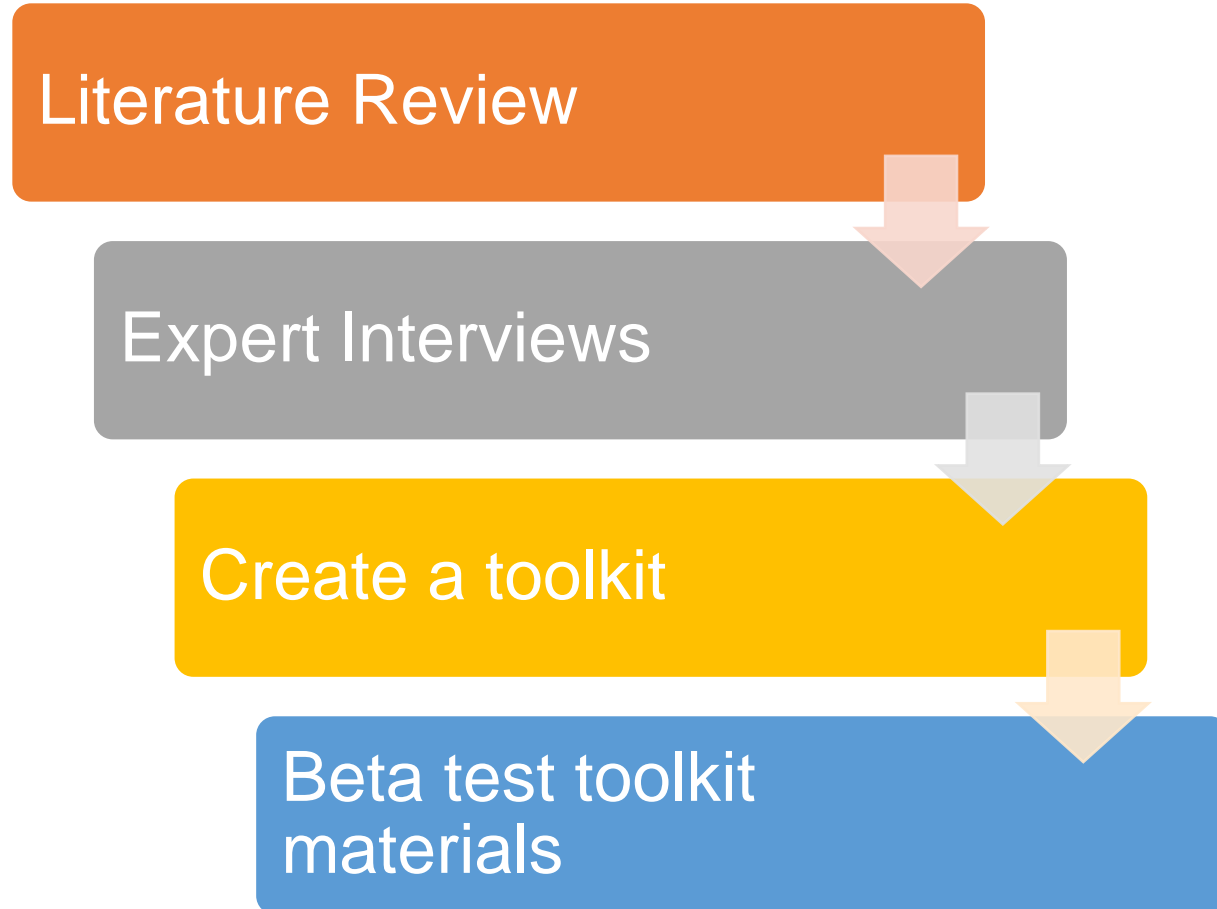
Expert Interviews

Create a toolkit

Beta test toolkit materials

- Paywalls
- Canned content – what to do, but not about the underlying orientation and skills
- Few local government professional associations or schools translating theory and research to practice and/or training
- Expertise from outside local government

Our Approach



- Conduct expert interviews
- Connect with cities that are
 - Running internal emotional intelligence training for all staff
 - Explicitly moving away from transactional engagement
 - Evolving successful citizens academies
- Need to determine the most effective product for scaling successes

Our Current Needs

- Interviews with leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors that are:
 - Attending to the social and emotional intelligence development of staff
 - Thinking about relational or wholehearted public engagement
 - Rethinking communications from a social emotional lens
 - Rethinking customer service through a relational lens
- Opportunities to see innovative approaches to engagement in action
 - 2.0 “Citizens’ Academies”
 - Equitable engagement strategies
- Cities open to “trying on” our toolkit and testing our resource(s)



Questions

In what ways do our observations resonate with you?

What do you perceive to be the root causes of the communication conundrum?



What are some examples of success related to community engagement and communication have you seen or experienced?

- What preconditions—staff orientations, relationships, context—supported those successes?




What do you think might be the differences in how this work could be approached different types of organizations and communities?

- Small vs. large
- Urban vs. rural vs. suburban
- Growing vs. declining/aging





From your perspective, what has been the impact of COVID-19 on emotional intelligence and community engagement?

- What do you think is here to stay?
 - What do you think may continue revert over time?
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Are we on the right track?

What tool(s) would be most helpful for this group to create and share?



What questions do you have for us?



Thank you!

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