UT | MTAS **Municipal Technical Advisory Service**

INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

# *2025–2027*
# MTAS STRATEGIC PLAN

## Goals

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*Employee Experience*

*Standards of Practice*

*Highest Quality Services*

# MISSION

We work with Tennessee municipalities to improve the lives of those they serve.



# VISION

Leading Tennessee municipalities to excellence in governance, innovation and community engagement.

# VALUES

Connection, Integrity, Trust, Innovation, Excellence, Service.

**Connection:** We foster authentic relationships with customers, partners and colleagues to achieve shared goals.

**Integrity:** We expect and uphold honest and ethical behavior in all our actions.

**Trust:** We build trust through accountability and transparency.

**Innovation:** We embrace change and encourage creative thinking to tackle challenges and leverage new opportunities in a changing world.

**Excellence:** We strive to be exceptional in all we produce and deliver.

**Service:** We ignite success by making powerful, positive contributions that elevate our customers, partners and colleagues.

*Goal 1*
# Improve the Employee Experience

By December 2027, we will achieve a minimum of 10% improvement on employee engagement survey metrics by accomplishing the following:

1. **Cultivate a culture of support, engagement and accountability at all levels of the organization.**
   A. Engage an organizational psychologist to identify gaps and opportunities to enhance agency culture.
   B. Improve internal communication and collaboration among teams and team members by identifying best practices and creating a set of behavioral expectations.
   C. Create a strategy to engage and grow relationships with IPS leadership and agencies, university leadership and university departments.

2. **Attract and retain a skilled, inclusive workforce that engages the communities we serve.**
   A. Ensure consistent and systematic posting of position vacancies on websites and in professional associations.
   B. Create and house a collection of resources, tools and templates to improve search, selection and onboarding practices.
      a. Through a firm, develop a standard package for MTAS positions.
      b. Shorten the hiring time.
      c. Provide a realistic job preview.
      d. Administer an assessment center for each consultant vacancy.
   C. Develop a comprehensive new employee onboarding process that emphasizes support, promotes relationship building and ensures consistency in agency processes and procedures.

3. **Improve the quality of leadership and communication with MTAS staff.**
    A. Create and promote opportunities for two-way communication, such as Q&A sessions, open-door policies and/or anonymous feedback platforms where employees can voice concerns and ask questions directly to leadership.
    B. Align leadership communication across all levels of the agency by conducting an annual employee evaluation of leadership communication for consistency, clarity and timeliness.
    C. Improve communication and collaboration between leadership and employees by identifying best practices and standardizing communication processes.
    D. The leadership team will complete annual training on leadership topics such as effective communication, active listening, empathy and the ability to convey complex information in an accessible way.
    E. Create and maintain a strategic plan dashboard to track progress on goals.

4. **Review and update agency performance measures and metrics.**
    A. Create a working group to evaluate current performance measures and metrics.
    B. Once performance measures are evaluated, identify appropriate measures and benchmarks for each position.
    C. Create position-based metrics and apply consistently across the agency.

# Recalibrate, document and maintain consistent standards of practice.

By December 2026, we will recalibrate, document and maintain consistent standards of practice by accomplishing the following:

1. **Establish a recalibration task force to gather information and identify gaps and inconsistencies in current practices and gain input from a broad section of employees.**
   A. Form a dedicated cross-functional team that will identify recalibration points, gaps and inconsistencies. Compile findings into a report that will be shared agency wide.
2. **Develop, maintain and annually evaluate standards of practice.**
   A. Identify a process to create, house and maintain standards of practice.
   B. Design a template to create and format standards of practice. Pilot the template for feedback.
   C. Train staff to implement the process and use the template.
   D. Create standards of practice at the agency, leadership team and program team levels.
      a. The leadership team, working with their team members, will identify a list of standards needed at the agency level.
      b. Program managers will work with their team members to develop a list of standards of practice needed at the team level.
      c. The leadership team will review team-level progress for feedback and/or approval.

# Deliver the highest quality services, products and information to our customers.

By December 2027, MTAS will deliver the highest quality services, products and information to our customers by accomplishing the following:

1. **Evaluate the current state of development of professional publications such as articles and information resources.**
   A. Update and expand the development process for professional publications such as articles and information resources.
   B. Proactively develop content for newsletters and publications in the different consulting areas.
2. **Improve customer outreach and external communication by actively promoting MTAS capabilities and services.**
   A. Hire a new position or contract with a firm to oversee and implement strategy for customer outreach and marketing, including recruitment efforts to promote open positions.
   B. Evaluate the efficacy of existing customer communication practices and types of information shared with customers.
      a. Identify and implement improvements to customer communication and outreach.
      b. Develop an annual report that effectively communicates our impact and accomplishments in support of municipalities.
      c. Provide internal training and resources on consistent agency branding and best practices in information accessibility across communication modes.
      d. Develop and deploy a customer-facing app to facilitate communication.
   C. Evaluate and improve the quality of MTAS website functionality and content.
      a. Work with a website design and implementation company to design, develop and launch an improved website to enhance customer experience.

     b. Determine key metrics for web analytics.

     c. Gather usage statistics and identify trends to guide information development.

     d. Optimize the search function to enable searching the entire website.

     e. Identify and implement best practices to maintain the most current city directories.

3. **Enhance and modernize services and products.**

    A. Identify and respond to customer needs by conducting: 1) an annual customer satisfaction survey and 2) a biennial training needs assessment.

    B. Provide municipal leaders with a template that outlines employment best practices and establishes benchmarks for excellence.

    C. Provide municipal leaders with a set of service quality assessment and improvement tools by researching the best methods for customer surveys and feedback.

    D. Provide municipalities with resources to assess workforce and community engagement.

    E. Offer training opportunities on emotional intelligence, civility and related topics that support municipal leaders in forging meaningful, productive relationships at work and with the public.

    F. Identify the needs of our customers as they relate to artificial intelligence (AI) and related technology and develop a responsive strategy to provide necessary resources.

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