Need for Instruction

Local jurisdictions in rural areas often do not have enough the resources or funding to provide needed services. Rural planning organizations (RPOs) can assist local jurisdictions, including applying for funding, but many local jurisdictions are unaware of these organizations or unfamiliar with their services. Therefore, a short, on-demand, introductory e-learning module would be helpful to help address this need. It would also help RPOs on-board staff who are new to the organization.

Topic of Instruction

Understanding the purpose and function of rural planning organizations.

Target Learners

The primary audience includes elected and appointed officials of rural counties, cities, villages, and townships in Ohio, along with their public service staff, in addition to new staff at rural planning organizations. The audience will typically be college-age and adult learners, age 18-65. The audience could be any gender, race or ethnicity. The audience could have any level of work experience as long as they are able to use a computer or other similar device.

For specific entry characteristics, all learners need to be familiar with using a computer or similar device and accessing the internet; many may already be familiar community-provided public services, engineering, planning, and development, and some may also be familiar with funding opportunities and/or RPO services. For academic information, learners will have a range of education attainment, from a high school diploma through graduate degree. For personal and social characteristics, most are mature learners. Being from rural areas with limited access to resources, many may think that applying for federal or state grants to fund projects is too challenging and/or too restrictive for their community to pursue, so planning for those projects is not a good use of their time. For cultural and ethnic considerations, all learners will need to be familiar with the spoken or written English language, but transcripts will be available for learners who only understand written English. For special needs and "able-ness"

considerations, transcripts will be available for hearing-impaired learners. The course will be offered on-demand, so learners can work at the pace that is most comfortable to them.

Lastly, all learners will need access to a computer or similar device that can access to the internet, but they will not need any specific software other than an up-to-date internet browser.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, learners will be able to:

1. Understand the basics of regional planning – what it is, why it is important, and what organizations are involved
2. Know what OMEGA is – background, mission, services, and staff
3. Understand the fundamentals of funding – types of funding, how it can be used, and requirements
4. Know the steps to get started with planning for a project and resources to help

Products

There will be two assets created for this project:

1. **Informational Handouts** – I will create informational handouts on four topics: (1) how to conduct a SWOT analysis, (2) planning for a project checklist, (3) funding opportunities list, and (4) OMEGA staff contact sheet. These handouts will contain content but will be as graphical as possible. They will be used in the "Getting Started" section of the module and then used for reference after the module when a community wishes to get started on planning for a project that needs funding.
2. **Interactive E-Learning Module** – I will create an on-demand interactive e-learning module. Each learning objective will be covered by a section in the e-learning module as outlined below:

Learning Obj	Task	Assessment	Activity & Materials

1	What is regional planning?
	• Definition
	• Importance
	• Agencies
	    ◦ Types
	    ◦ Origins
	    ◦ Differences
	    ◦ Ohio agencies
	    ◦ Ohio RPO core services
	    ◦ Ohio RPO specialties
	• Support
		Formative – knowledge check/quiz	Narrated slides, welcome video from OMEGA at the beginning

2	What does OMEGA do? • Overview • Service area • Services provided • Staff	Formative – knowledge check/quiz	Narrated slides
3	Funding opportunities • Main types • Importance • Funding examples • Specific funds • Eligibility • Project examples • Requirements	Formative – knowledge check/quiz	Narrated slides, OMEGA project examples
4	Getting started • Overview • SWOT analysis • Identify potential projects • Gain consensus • Discuss with RPO staff • Review	Formative – knowledge check/quiz + Summative – optional learner survey at end of module	Narrated slides, review informational handouts