A Futurist for the Small City
Sheila Shockey & Mike Scanlon
Founder & CEO  Management Consultant
Shockey Consulting Services, llc.

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Futurist Thinking

What is it? Why do I need it? What are the challenges?
What is a futurist?

A futurist studies long-term trends from a global perspective, identifying their implications for business and society.

A futurist’s work can range from creating industry forecasts and policy agendas to speculating about how our work, education, healthcare, and families are poised to change.

This is called Strategic Foresight.
What can Strategic Foresight do for my organization & community?

• While no one can predict the future, foresight allows us to mine the external environment for trends and issues and leverage those insights to create maps of the emerging landscape.

• These well-informed maps of the future will enable us to test our current strategy, develop breakthrough innovations, and create transformative change.
Why Think Like a Futurist?

• Telos Thinking – Greek means ultimate aim or purpose
• Are you Vision and Mission Driven?
• To What End?
• Authenian Oath
Why is it difficult for most people to think like a futurist?

- Permanent Present
- Nostalgia
- Cultural Life Script
- Extreme Positivity Bias
What Futures Are Coming Soon to You?

SOCIAL * ECONOMIC * POLITICAL * ENVIRONMENTAL * DEMOGRAPHICS * TECHNOLOGY * EDUCATION ETC
Look for Signals

2024 Trend Report for Planners

Act Now
The AI Era
Looming Climate Impacts and Adaptation Challenges
Climate Mitigation: Skilled Workers, Tech, and Policies
Housing Challenges and Solutions
Political Polarization and Societal Division
Persisting Transportation Inequities
The Value of Youth

Prepare
Global Dynamics and a New Economic Landscape
Immersive City for and by the People
Job Evolution and Revolution
Moving Toward a Polycrisis
Emerging Forms of Transportation
Continuing Changes in Work and Retail

Learn and Watch
Innovations in the Energy Sector
Mitigating Climate Change Through Geoengineering
Curiosities and Game-Changing Innovations
The New Space
TREND: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Our devices already take in information when requested. Computers are learning to perform more functions. Robotics and artificial intelligence are changing types of jobs humans do. Those that will do will likely change.

TREND: THE AMERICAN WORKFORCE IS BECOMING MORE DIVERSE

One in four today's workers in the USA will reach retirement age by 2030. The workers that replace them will be more racially and ethnically diverse. If current growth trends continue, the U.S. workforce will be majority minority by 2038.

TREND: RISING RATES AUTOMATION OR MANNING?

Some will put 47% of U.S. jobs at a risk of being automated by 2033, with more sales, office administration, retail, in greatest peril.

TREND: DECLINE OF HEALTH & LIFESPAN

It's often said that today's children will have shorter average life spans than their parents, because so many suffer from obesity. But there is another view that says they will live longer - at the risk of spending their twilight years in poor health. Studies suggest Americans are sicker than ever before.

TREND: HOMEOWNERSHIP DECLINING

Today's generation gap in homeownership may lead to tomorrow's housing glut. Millennials will own homes at a significantly lower rate than older generations. Even younger buyers who wish to purchase have more difficulty accessing the credit market because of extensive student loan debt. These factors have pushed the number of first-time homebuyers to the lowest levels since the 1980s. Baby Boomers are selling their homes and downsizing often into places that they rent rather than own.

TREND: AFFORDABLE STARTER HOMES

Rising costs, regulations, and neighborhood opposition have made the economics of an affordable home harder for builders. That's lead to many homebuilders focusing on the higher-end market to maximize profits making it more difficult for people to purchase starter homes or affordable homes later in life.

TREND: MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOMES

Demand for multigenerational housing is on the rise. Older people are choosing to age in place - stay in their homes as long as possible. We are seeing more "granny pads" - people building on to their existing home or as an accessory unit places for their parents to live or their children. As our communities become more diverse, many immigrant cultures have multiple generations living under one roof.
TR
CONTINUE
STAGE

In Greater Kansas City, earning about $26 per hour in 2012, the wages of full-time employees have continued to decline. The wages of full-time employees have continued to decline, on average, 70% of the time.

The driver for education and learning will never disappear; educational models and delivery will just take different forms. The future of education is will focus on collaboration.

Schools will have both traditional and virtual learning. E-Learning is already used where students use technology to learn and get their education. Virtual Learning, where teachers and students can communicate through course material and applications, is in its infancy.

Individualized learning technology is a new wave of interest-driven curricula around the specific interests of students. Skills will be assessed based on performance and student learning.

TRENDS
NEW MODELS
LEARNING

TRENDS
CHANGING
WEATHER
WESTERN KANSAS
WATER ISSUES

The western part of our state is facing water shortages and drought issues like never before, impacting agriculture and the livelihoods of many Kansans. As the “breadbasket” shrinks, more and more people from those regions will seek employment and housing here, in the more abundant eastern areas. This will potentially result in population growth, and increased demand for housing, jobs and other resources. Johnson County is already preparing for the steady growth its experienced during the past decade, but this eastward migration could pose a series of new challenges and issues to the community.

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Types of Futures

- Possible - “might” happen (future knowledge)
- Plausible – “could” happen (current knowledge)
- Probable - “likely to” happen (current trends)
- Preferable - “want to” happen (value judgements)
Trend Sort

- Focus on “Act Now” Quadrant
- Don’t put in between – decide – you are likely to be wrong so embrace the unknown.
- Come to consensus
Trend Analysis

- Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)
- Goal Setting
- Transgenerational Thinking
- Scenario Planning
SWOT To Analyze Trend

HELPFUL

TOWARD ACHIEVING VISION

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

INTERNAL

TO ORGANIZATION OR COMMUNITY

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

HARMFUL
Transgenerational Thinking

Put yourself in the shoes of others and think about what they need now and will need in the future!
Set Goals

GOAL STATEMENT  Writing Action Oriented Goal Statements

| ACTION VERB | ACTIVITY | DESIRED OUTCOME | HOW MUCH? | BY WHEN? |

TRENDS
AFFORDABLE STARTER HOMES

Rising costs, regulations and neighborhood opposition have made the economics of an affordable home harder for builders. That's lead to many homebuilders focusing on the higher-end market to maximize profits making it more difficult for people to purchase starter homes or affordable homes later in life.

Specific
Can the detail in the information sufficient to pinpoint problems or opportunities? Is the objective sufficiently detailed to measure real-world problems and opportunities?

Measureable
Can a quantitative or qualitative attribute be applied to create a metric?

Actionable
Can the information be used to improve performance? If the objective doesn't change behaviour in staff to help them improve performance, there is little point in it!

Relevant
Can the information be applied to the specific problem faced by the marketer?

Time-bound
Can objectives be set for different time periods as targets to review against?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies &amp; Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Education and Outreach}</td>
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<tr>
<td>What education and outreach needs to take place to implement the strategy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>\textit{Plan Development}</td>
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<tr>
<td>What other plans need to be developed to implement the strategy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>\textit{Policy and Code Adjustment}</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the policies that need to be enacted? What codes or regulations need revised?</td>
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<td>\textit{Partnerships and Collaboration}</td>
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<td>What partnerships need to be formed? How can we better collaborate with our partners to implement the strategy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>\textit{Facilities or Infrastructure Improvements}</td>
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<tr>
<td>What facilities or infrastructure investment is needed to support the implementation of the strategy?</td>
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<td>Enhanced Efficiency and Augmented Workforce</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>In this scenario, AI is used to augment the workforce in city government, leading to significant improvements in efficiency and productivity. Routine and repetitive tasks are automated, allowing city employees to focus on more complex and strategic activities.</td>
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<th>Strategic AI Integration</th>
<th>AI-Driven Community Interaction</th>
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<td>In this scenario, AI is integrated into the decision-making processes of city government, providing data-driven insights and recommendations to improve policy and management.</td>
<td>In this scenario, AI plays a central role in enhancing citizen engagement and participation in local government. AI-powered platforms facilitate communication, feedback, and collaboration between the government and residents.</td>
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Let’s Connect!

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