FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Pillar 1: ESTABLISH LONG-TERM VISION
Give people a reason to cooperate.

Pillar 2: BUILD TRUST AND OPEN COMMUNICATION
Create the conditions for cooperation.

Pillar 3: USE COLLECTIVE DECISION MAKING
Develop forums for participation.

Pillar 4: CREATE CLEAR RULES
Reinforce constructive behavior.

Pillar 5: TREAT EVERYONE FAIRLY
Promote and protect mutual trust and respect.
1. **ESTABLISH A LONG-TERM VISION**
   
   *Give people a reason to cooperate.*

   - **Promote Collaboration**
     The only thing better than an inspiring vision is an inspiring *shared* vision. Turn stakeholders into co-creators as you define the long-term vision.

   - **Balance Long-Term Goals with Short-Term Needs**
     In all things, seek balance. Advocate for both the big picture and day-to-day needs. Break long-term goals into shorter-term milestones to maintain momentum.

2. **BUILD TRUST AND OPEN COMMUNICATION**
   
   *Create the conditions for cooperation.*

   - **Create Open Lines of Communication**
     Communication is key. Create and promote two-way channels to connect elected officials and staff with the public.

   - **Cultivate Trustworthy Reputations**
     Trust is everything. Build trust through transparency—say what you mean, mean what you say and follow through.

3. **USE COLLECTIVE DECISION MAKING**
   
   *Develop forums for participation.*

   - **Engage Key Stakeholders**
     Building a sturdy financial foundation is a team effort. We must be proactive and responsive. Let people voice their concerns. Ask for their feedback. Adjust as needed.

   - **Collective Choice Arrangements**
     Give citizens a seat at the table. They’re more likely to support decisions when they have a say in how public resources are used. Prioritize public feedback.

   - **Networked Enterprises**
     We’re stronger together. Share services across local governments to save costs. Build collaborative, cross-sector networks to pool resources for addressing community challenges.

4. **CREATE CLEAR RULES**
   
   *Reinforce constructive behavior.*

   - **Well-Defined Boundaries**
     When the game has clear rules, everyone’s set up to win. Create and share expectations about how decisions get made, who has the final say, and timelines.

   - **Monitoring**
     Everyone must follow the same rules. Hold people accountable. When they understand their reputations are at stake, they’re more likely to play fair.

   - **Maintain Oversight**
     Cooperation is key to thriving communities. Reinforce the importance of cooperation through the power of the purse strings. Encourage a culture of shared values.

   - **Sanctions and Rewards**
     Incentives can encourage both good and bad behaviors. Know the difference and design institutions accordingly.

5. **TREAT EVERYONE FAIRLY**
   
   *Promote and protect mutual trust and respect.*

   - **Proportional Equivalence Between Benefits and Cost**
     People must get what they pay for and pay for what they get. Be proactive—make sure citizens know what they stand to gain for their tax dollars.

   - **Conflict-Resolution Mechanisms**
     We can’t please everyone all the time. Disputes around financial decisions will happen. Anticipate that. Prevent *destructive* conflict. Promote *constructive* debate.

   - **Minimum Recognition of Rights**
     Local governments must have autonomy. Use collective decision-making to develop policies and procedures for protecting local choices and addressing unfunded mandates and grants.