Planning for Success: Effective Resource Development of Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCS)

Presented by Sandra Breitengross Bitter and Larry Wanger

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>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. Welcome, everybody. Thanks for being here. I'm Tim Fuchs with the National Council On Independent Living and want to welcome you all to our latest webinar, Planning for Success: Effective Resource Development of Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCS). Today's presentation is brought to you by the IL‑NET training and technical assistant project for CILs and SILCs. IL‑NET is operated through a Partnership among ILRU, NCIL and APRIL with support provided by the Administration On Community Living at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We are recording today's call so we can archive it on ILRU's website. We're currently in presentation mode but we've got plenty of time set aside for you all to ask questions. We hope you will take advantage of that. There's a few ways you can do that. Let me go through that quickly now.

You can use the Q&A tab at the bottom of the screen. So that's on your Zoom menu bar if you're not familiar with Zoom. There's a menu bar probably at the bought many of your screen unless you have moved it already, that allows you to control things like your ‑‑ the Q&A, seeing other participants, using the chat, et cetera. And you can type questions out in the Q&A tab. The chat is available for you, too. We would prefer that if you ‑‑ prefer if you would use that for things like sending messages to other people, sending comments to us or feedback as opposed to content questions that we use the Q&A tab for. Don't worry if you submit something in the wrong place, we'll still see it and still respond to it. It just helps us organize our Q&A breaks.

A couple things I want to mention if you cannot see or use the Q&A tab for any reason. First of all, you're welcome to email questions to me during the call at any time. Tim@ncil.org. I’ll be watching my email. I will be sure to include any emailed questions I get in our Q&A breaks.

Second, there is of course, closed captioning available on today's call. If you haven't found that yet, you can turn it on by going to more options, or clicking the closed caption button in your menu bar. That will turn on the closed captions. Once the captions are up, you can manipulate the size of the caption box, basically a large and small. If you want to manipulate the font size, the contrast, color or anything else, I would really recommend that you use the full screen CART captioning that we have available on Streamtext. That's URL is a little too long to read out but what I'll do is I will put that in the chat ‑‑ oops, Sharon beat me to it. Sharon just posted that in the chat, and you can use that. That will allow you to have a full screen of CART captioning and you can manipulate the font size and contrast there.

The other thing that's available on Streamtext is there's a chat feature. I'm logged in there now. So if you're using that CART screen, and you want to submit a question through that chat, I'll be watching that as well and I'll voice those questions for you during the Q&A breaks.

Just a couple other things I wanted to mention. First of all, there is an evaluation form available, and so when we close the webinar, that evaluation form will pop up on your screen. So please do fill it out for us.

I think that's it for the open young presentations. I wanted to introduce our present herbs for today obviously before we begin. I'm excited to have Sandra and Brad with us. I imagine many of you know them. Sandra, of course, is the Executive Director of the Texas SILC where she's led partnerships with Texas DOT, Department of Transportation, council for developmental disabilities, and Centers for Independent Living that brought millions of dollars to the state to fill the mission of the SPIL.

Brad Williams, of course, is executive director of the New York state Independent Living Council where he has been for the past 20 years. Brad prior to that ran a Center in the state of New York. And Brad and Sandra both have done a great job of putting together some examples of programs they've been successful in building and also how they have related that strongly to their SPIL and working in concert with the Centers in their states. Brad and Sandra, thanks so much for being with us and putting the presentation together. I am going to go ahead to slide 3. I just want to cover these objectives quickly before we move on. So what we're going to learn today... first the regulatory requirements regarding SILC resource development. Second, strategies for aligning authorities with resource development activities. Ways the SILC can ensure consumer control of projects. Examples of creative approaches and strategies to SILC resource development in the states of New York and Texas.

And finally the purpose of raising additional funds, how to monitor fundraising activity and future growth, and other areas of consideration.

All right. We're going to go ahead and get started. I am going to go to slide 4 and turn it over to Brad. Brad?

>> BRAD WILLIAMS: Thank you, Tim. Well, we are going to start with a background, an understanding of the SPIL authorities. Specifically under section 705, SILC, (C) functions we have authorities. Okay? The council may, consistent with the state plan as described in section 704, unless it's prohibited in your state law, do the following. And we have three authorities. Now, I'm going to go over each one. There's A, to improve services provide to do individuals with disabilities when you're working with Centers for Independent Living in your network to coordinate services with public and private entities. That's the first one. Then there's B, to conduct resource development activities to support the activities described in this section, basically, to support the provision of Independent Living Services by the CIL‑NET work. And I like the last one. It's kind of like the all other provision, C, perform such other functions consistent with the purposes of the chapter. It's got to be comparable with the other functions in the section, and as the council determines to be appropriate.

So next slide. But, there always is a "but" or an exception. There is a limitation. The council shall not provide Independent Living Services directly to individuals with significant disabilities or manage such services. So when it comes to a process, if a SILC is going to engage in an authority, it must address it in an approved SPIL, your state plan. Typically for us this is covered in section 5 related to SILCs. I put down there this is before the new SPIL template came out. That might provide some clarity. I think we've all been able to check that out. It's very streamlined. It's nice. But I think we know that we're going to address that in our own way. It's probably going to be in section 5, maybe some reference, and section 1 related to objectives, but it all comes down to choice, a choice of which authority. One, some, all or none is up to each SILC. However, if a SILC selects none, they cannot engage in any of the identified activities.

Next slide. So we're going to talk about New York's resource development efforts. So, our SILC obtained approval for all three of the authorities that we just talked about, A, B and C, in our current state plan. So we're going to talk about Authority A first. That's the one that talks about improved statewide services for people with disabilities. And, as I talk about this, we've often had discussions. We've often attended other trainings and had the importance of having network just communication and relationships between all the partners in the network, and I don't think you can say enough about this. You know, so for us, this was addressed for coordination purposes. You know, it was important for us to be able to make sure it was provided. So in New York our state association, which is NYAIL leads its area and the SILC is supportive of their statewide grant efforts. So in your state and territory, it is important to have an understanding where roles and mutual support for the benefit of the network. Maintaining positive relationships and communication about negotiations, opportunities are essential. So, please, do not underestimate the importance of this in your network. Things such as communication, planning, roles and support are extremely important.

Next slide. Authority B identifies, for us, resource development guided by a council development committee. So this committee consists mostly of council members, a couple of former council members, a volunteer and staff, and the committee holds monthly conference call meetings, and staff follow through on work items and committee provides feedback, helps to acquire resources, and the council engages vendors for selected services for these development efforts, and then these vendors could assist in a variety of different ways. It could be like web services, special event or planning services. Like, one of our vendors provides support for what you'll hear as one of our annual events, or for like the web services. It's just extremely important to have some kind of protocol, and it's directed through the development committee. That is just how we found is the best way to direct our development efforts.

Next slide. So authority C, you know, the other functions consistent with the plan as appropriate per the council, identifies for us leadership development programs that the council promotes and seeks support for. The programs include the Pat Figueroa Young Adult Scholarships, the New York state disability rights Hall of Fame, and the Leadership Development and Civic Engagement Program called the LBCEP. This program is now in transition. So I've provided links to the scholarship program and Hall of Fame. But to do these programs they have to be in your state plan, right? Because it's under authority C. But that's what we have, and that's what allows us to do this activity.

Next slide. So I'm going to talk about resources, development efforts the council has pursued under authority B. You have to start somewhere. We work by committee. So for us it just was kind of natural that we would pursue donations, including annual giving, and so we worked in terms of identifying the fact that, well, we need to improve our website and our website platform and the donation portal in order to be able to do that. That was followed by a year‑round and year‑end donation drive. As we did that, we had to create messaging, and messaging in terms of what we were going to do especially like year‑round in terms of the council and its accomplishments and why someone would want to be giving to the council and also through social media, and it's something that you have to really work on and develop over time, and it's something that as a committee you have to really work with and spend some time and effort on, and some of it you develop and then you just improve and enhance over time, but it actually starts to improve and you see what works, what doesn't. Then the year‑end drive, we were able to then raise our goal 5% annually over time, and then we were able to also realize that this year ‑‑ this donation drive was able to improve from about 1400 to 6200 during a four‑year time period, and it was a solicitation made to known individuals and businesses. Eventually the donations are still accepted online. It's currently passive, and the donation portal now supports the council's annual event. I mean, it's become quite sophisticated. But it's transitioned. The same individuals and businesses are now approached to support that annual event along with a new base each year. It isn't like we lost the contact from these donors. You build support year after year, lose some, gain new ones, and get some back.

Next slide. Now I'm going to talk about our annual event. So as we've developed with the donations and what was annual giving, a committee member then proposed the New York state disability rights Hall of Fame annual awards event idea and that took more than a year to develop the details into a reality. So any time you have something ‑‑ well, even if it was the donation year‑end idea, it's going to take probably at least a year to develop that fully and to do it right, and so it's a matter of investing time and making sure that it's just done correctly. The Hall of Fame launched in the fall of 2018 accepting nominations. In the inaugural class, we have a link out there. Peers came out to celebrate the first annual event. Then we cycled it into 2019 inductees and had our awards ceremony. The event recognizes the lifelong achievements of our peers and colleagues. We found it to be a wonderful fit in terms of who we are and what we do. It's just been a wonderful match in terms of our efforts and supporting us as a network. Overall the event costs approximately $19,000 a year to support. Council was able to net 3,000 in its first year, and 10,000 this year, and when you look at the overall potential revenue that is generated versus all the various expenses shall I'd say the difference in terms of what was netted was increasing the level of sponsorships, quite frankly. That is the difference.

Next slide. So what is NYSILC and its development committee doing about the council's future development plans? Well, this year the council engaged a vendor, the Association Development Group, to create a Fund Development Plan, and they're going to look at what works, what doesn't, what can be improved. And we're going to look at our limited capacity. Let's be Frank here, a lot of us have limited capacity, and suggest additional development efforts and find ways to better engage councilmembers and partners over the next five years. I will point out that this costs $5,000. We thought that that was competitive. We put that out, and we've had a long list of vendors and potential vendors that we've been working with over the years. We got a very limited response. We then put it out again, and we were shocked that there really was a true lack of response. We did get a vendor in the end that was trusted and true and that we were very happy with, but as a committee we're like, hey, we really want to find out why we had such a limited response. So we pulled together a short Survey Monkey survey and sent it out to the vendor pool that we kind of sent it out to, and we did get some responses, and pretty much what we found out was that business is good and thriving for a lot of the vendors, including minority women enterprises. In fact, it's quite competitive and they're all quite engaged, and they said so. In fact, they're going for the more competitive opportunities. They also said that the $5,000 was not enough. So they gave us that frank feedback. I guess ‑‑ hope we're not putting ourselves out of market. So we're going to have to consider that in the future.

Next slide. Expectations. Okay. Whenever you're getting into ‑‑ and you're talking about development, or anything, you have to talk about expectations. We try very hard to talk about expectations with new members in the recruitment process, our new member orientation packet, and the session before each member's first meeting, but our development committee will be working on expectations related to philanthropic duties to make sure that the council can achieve fully engaged members in this area, because it's extremely important to get everyone informed and involved in your efforts, like our annual effort, like the Hall of Fame. I mean, everyone should be involved with that. Or any future effort. Just extremely important.

Next slide. Goals. So what are NYSILC's additional revenue goals? Everyone should have goals. If you are going to be developing, if you're going to be generating revenue, you shouldn't be generating revenue for the sake of generating revenue. You should have goals. So for us we actually have a goal with our DSE contract for all other sources. Currently it's at 3%, which sets the goal at 13,000, but it will increase 1% annually going forward. So based on our third quarter report, which is right before we did this PowerPoint, we have more than doubled this goal for this year, generating more than 28,000 in other revenue. Now, just keep in mind that some of these funds are offset by expenses. I mean, when you think of the Hall of Fame event, which results in a net, right, but when you raise funds, you should have goals, see how you do, adjust, and then set new goals.

Next slide. What is NYSILC planning to do with the funds it develops? What I'm going to talk about is actually that plus more. These are some things that you should always consider. So it's very important to have fund development efforts to kind of work separately with the assistance of your bookkeeper. You're already doing this anyways with all of your funds, but you should really make sure that it's accounted for separately. That's a given. And the funds are in a separate savings account accruing interest. And the finance committee is reviewing the most recent savings account monthly statement at quarterly meetings. You really want the development committee reviewing the progress of all efforts in their reporting it out to the full council. Because your committees do their work, and then they have their minutes, and then they're reporting out at the council meetings, right? So everyone is doing their work and they're doing their specialty and they're keeping track of their business for the council but reporting out to the full council. Regarding the use of funds, because, after all, why are you even doing this, right? If it's not for some purpose. Right? There has to be a purpose for doing this. While we haven't tapped these funds to date, two uses have been discussed. To support the programs. Remember, I talked about our leadership development programs earlier. The second would be to support our line of credit during cash flow cycles. EE GAD! Those cash flow cycles. For many of us we are on contracts where we have to constantly get ourselves through some difficult cycles until our advance or the next ACH payment comes through. I mean, that is certainly something to think about. Let alone to save on the interest that we pay to the bank. Some of these things are worth considering. Please, you know, make sure that you're accounting for all these things as well.

Next slide. Lessons learned. First one is mission fit. It is extremely important that your development efforts are consistent with your mission. Raise awareness and funds at the same time. Now, remember Michael Moore's "Roger & Me," that documentary? GM lost touch with its primary purpose, which was making cars, and focus more on investing and cutting expenses to improve the bottom line for investors at the expense of its operations. In the pursuit of fundraising, do not let it rule or dictate your purpose. This isn't a stretch for nonprofits. Do not lose touch with your mission, who you are, what you do when you raise money or seek funds from grants. I know of a statewide group that unintentionally changed its focus twice based on fundraising ‑‑ or funding it received from grants. What it does is it creates confusion and mixed messages to the public and consumers. Right? So at a minimum, the entity should at least rebrand itself. If not, it might even have to revisit its mission. So you really need to keep this in mind.

Next slide. These are lessons learned as a CIL director, which were many, many years, but apply to SILCs and all organizations. This first one is who do you know? Well, you create a list based on your council, former members, other committee members, volunteers, stakeholders, business, vendors, et cetera. You seek donations for events and programs based on the list. So everyone knows somebody, and more than just somebody, several people. So it's, like, how many people do you want to ask everyone who they know? Three? Six? Nine? 12? It's a matter of how many you want to make it in the beginning when you first start working with someone. Or do you want to make it like a solid three? How about three? You know, solid people. It's all up to you how many you want to make it your list, and you create this list. In fact, you might even have an annual drive of, all right, it's time for us to make our lists again this year of who do you know, and that is how you expand your list in your network. It's extremely important that we all help to make and expand our lists. If you just go back to our initial donation drive, that's how this all happened. I mean, how ‑‑ how do you get from 1400 to 6200 dollars in donations off of lists? I mean, it all starts here. But let me provide you with an example of someone who is on my local CIL board. Okay? This is huge. No assumptions. You must ask people who they know and make your lists. Okay? So I was at an upstate rural CIL. All right? This particular person was a lawyer, and this lawyer was engaged, and he basically did and provided anything that was requested, and we were engaged in a capital campaign for multi‑agency building project, and we had basically completed the building but we still had a certain amount still left on the capital campaign. At that point it became known I was going to be moving on to this career move to statewide SILC Executive Director. So this individual came up to me and said, hey, are you sure you're still going to make that move? Are you going to take this job? Because this is a really great thing you've done here and there's still so much that you could do at this job. It's, like, no, no, I'm still ‑‑ I'm pretty confident I'm going to stay here. And it's, like, too bad because I've been kind of holding back. If you're going to stay, I could ask my Uncle Bob. Like, my part of the family is from New York, and we're pretty much lawyers, but Uncle Bob is from Chicago and he is the head of, and his family owns hotels basically across the world. So what I didn't know, because I didn't ask, was that his uncle and family were billionaires. So lesson learned, if you don't ask, you don't get or you don't know, and if you don't know, you're going to make a huge mistake like I did.

Next slide. Who has the most wealth and where are the funds kept? Well, I also learned from this same capital campaign, I had a part‑time fund development person. Now, this person who was also someone who is very wealthy, he was someone who owned businesses, had investments, you know, at various places but here is someone who had a health issue and had to address it and as a result wasn't as wealthy and wasn't as involved as ‑‑ he cofounded a bank. He had all this business experience. And decided he wanted to do something like assist an agency like ours, and that's how it all ended up. It's quite interesting, because he wanted to assist us in this capital campaign. He was in his mid‑to late 60s. I was in my mid‑to late 30s. He respected me for my title and everything, but at the same time, when it came to one‑to‑one, we were learning off of each other, and he kind of would then say when we were alone, hey, kid, and he would kind of talk to me very frankly about wealth, we say, when it comes to wealth, you understand that there's a certain amount of wealth in terms of foundations, corporations, you can get these grants and that kind of stuff, but the vast majority of wealth comes from people. It's, like, okay, I guess you're right. I guess I can understand that. Of course, he's coming from the depression, World War II era, and he's, like, you don't really think that people still keep their money under their mattress, do you? No, Al, believe me, I understand that. Well, you know, you can ‑‑ if people believe in what you do, people have a certain amount of money that's liquid, and he goes, they would write you a check and you might get like $100, maybe 250, maybe $500, but, he goes, their money is all invested. It's tied up in their investments. So if you really want like a significant amount of money from people, what you really needed to is to have your organization get a corporation stock account with a broker. And I'm listening to him, and he's, like, yeah, you got to have ‑‑ so, like, your organization has a stock account and so in that your marketing you can be able to say, and you can receive gifts of stock in terms of donations, and so it's, like, okay. That way if they want to really give to you, because they believe in you and what you do, then they just have to tell their broker to give however many gifts or shares of a stock and make a transfer using your account number. I'm, like, okay. Now, as we talked about it, our board president was a rehabilitation doctor, and this wasn't new to him because of the hospital. So we talked, and then we realized you also need a policy to define how to manager, monitor, liquidate and transfer. So we worked through that. And so it took some time. It took some promotion. And we got a few gifts of stock until finally David and Janet Sheridan of Catheter fame transferred 5,000 shares of Avon stock. It was, like, whoa, and it continued. And we then had to utilize our policy related to the capital campaign. I then moved on, of course. But this is something to consider, especially if you as an entity have something of value, case statement‑wise, to present to the public. Again, it's a consideration, but it's a lesson learned.

Next slide.

>> TIM FUCHS: There we are. All right. Right on time. Thanks, Brad. Here we are at our first Q&A break. Let me just remind you all, you can type your questions in the Q&A tab or if you're focused on the full‑screen CART, you can type them in the chat feature there. We have plenty of time for the Q&A. So I hope you all take advantage. Let's just see if any questions come in for Brad. I'll give you guys about 15 seconds to do that.

Again, you can type your questions in the Q&A tab or enter them on the CART screen. Always welcome to email them to me, too. If you're on the phone and not using the webinar features, you're welcome to email questions as well.

We have over 20 minutes set aside for questions. I know Brad did a good job explaining something but I'm sure you all can come up with something for him. Let's not let him off the hook that easy.

I've always loved that story, Brad, about you don't know who you're missing. I remember you telling me that years ago and it's always stuck with me.

Okay. No questions, huh? That's surprising.

Well, look, we'll go ahead. That's fine. I'm not going ‑‑ I can't force you. And then we'll have another Q&A break at the end and you've another opportunity to ask questions then. So if that's truly the case, then I will go ahead to slide 20 and turn it over to you, Sandra.

>> SANDRA BREITENGROSS BITTER: Good afternoon, everyone. This is.

>> SANDRA BREITENGROSS BITTER: Bit. I'm Executive Director of the Texas SILC. Thank you very much for having me be a part of this discussion today. The Texas SILC has done things a little bit differently than Brad in New York has over the last couple of years, and we are steel finding our way through the resource development process, but today I'm going to talk to you a little bit about what our resource development looks like and how it impacts our SPIL and how it impacts the Independent Living network. So if you think of questions as we go along, like, Tim said, put them in the chat box or feel free to ‑‑ you can always email me later or give me a call as well. I'm open for any discussion on this.

Really quickly, we've been doing resource development in a couple of different ways over the last several years and I can't take all the credit for it. There was a lot of fantastic leadership in our state in the past and continues ‑‑ we continue to have a great board that really believes in this process. We do distinguish, in this first slide you'll see, that we've made a distinction between projects versus programs, and we have projects that we help fund through a series of grants and other type of cooperative agreements with various funders. But typically we do not fund programs. The reason why is we like to focus on the projects that are short‑term in nature, and some of the programs are typically done within an entity such as a Center that are focusing on long‑term overall benefits of wraparound services and things like that. Whereas some of the funneling we've been able to secure over the last several years are folk used on specific deliverables through a grant agreement or a cooperative agreement, and that allows us to then partner with specific entities on those deliverables.

We do help provide project resources for our IL Network, and we have 27 Centers in Texas, and so they ‑‑ it's a large network. There's a variety of programs. But we also have our SPIL that we're looking at, and we try to keep all of our resource development associated and tied very tightly within the nexus of the state plan.

Next slide, please. So what have we done at the SILC? I am going to just go over a quick overview of some of the projects that we have attempted and then successful at and that are ongoing here at the Texas SILC, and I can ‑‑ if you have specific questions about how we operationalized these projects and things like that, I can go into that in depth offline. But the first one I wanted to talk about was that we had a health and fitness project where we partnered with several Centers for Independent Living. We had a transportation voucher pilot we partnered with Centers for Independent Living. That transformed into a statewide assessment of accessible transportation. And then now we are working on a five‑year project on hosting accessible transportation summits every year.

So that is ‑‑ it's an ongoing project and it's evolved over the years, but we're very excited about that. We also have a virtual Independent Living Services pilot project. It is currently ongoing. And we have a project focused on housing where we have partners with two Centers for Independent Living, and that is housing education and advocacy for rural Texans, and we have a peer support and peer advocacy training projects that is a partnership with two Centers for Independent Living as well.

So, again, that's just a broad overview of kind of what we've done ‑‑ broad overview of what we have done over the last several years, and I'm sure if we look back at this over the next couple years we will be able to do an assessment and find out how effective we were at implementing these projects and seeing how closely they tied into our state plan, and if we were able to successfully engage the Centers for Independent Living, the IL Network partners and other things like that.

So I'm sure ‑‑ I'm hopeful this list will grow as we continue on.

Next slide, please. The Texas SILC has two types of projects that we've done of the projects they just went over in that slide, we have projects that we can separate into two different categories. One is projects that were focused on the SILC doing some sort of specific activity. So ‑‑ where we were responsible for a specific objective or a deliverable, and it was really focused on the work that we were doing as the SILC Board and staff and our role in the SPIL or the network, and those two projects were interestingly enough both focused on transportation. It's a broad topic that is a priority for our network and continues to be a priority in several of our state plans. So we had a statewide assessment of accessible transportation and now you on current project on accessible transportation summits.

Then we have another group of projects which is projects that are focused on partnering with the IL Network or other community‑based organizations to fulfill the deliverables or the objectives of those projects. That includes the health and fitness project, our transportation voucher project, the virtual Independent Living Services project, our housing and our peer projects that are currently ongoing. We've ranged from partnering with five Centers at a time to in some of these projects we're partnering with just one Center or two Centers at a time, and so it just depends on who really wants to be involved in the process and where their own individual priorities align with our timing and where we are in our process.

Next slide. So a lot of folks ask who are our current and past funders, and this is really just focusing on how the Texas SILC has been able to do resource development for project‑specific items and not so much more of the general type of revenue raising that Brad discussed. So this is specific to objectives in our state plan. So one source of revenue that we've been able to use quite extensively over the last several years is we have a pretty expensive Partnership with our developmental disabilities council. In Texas that's the Texas council for developmental disabilities, and as you know, they receive their federal funds through the Administration for Community Living, just from a separate area outside of the IL program. We've also been able to receive funds from our state transportation department, and as you may know, a lot of transportation funds originate from the federal government, and so there's been some various projects that have focused ‑‑ I apologize ‑‑ have focused on ‑‑ that have focused on providing transportation or providing assessments for people with disabilities or senior populations, and right now that looks like the 5310 funds, but those ‑‑ and it previously was the job accessory verse commute, which is JARC funding, J‑A‑R‑C. Those funds we were able to utilize through partnerships with our state Department of Transportation. And then right now we are in a cooperative agreement with ACL, Administration for Community Living, directly through the paralysis resource Center's pilot program to do the virtual Independent Living Services project.

Next slide, please. This slide is really on how we coordinate projects with our SPIL. We've decided to probably include this in more sections of the SPIL than is really needed, but we wanted to make sure that it was clear to all potential partners, future partners, as well as funders, and also to the general public where the ‑‑ where we could coordinate with Independent Living network to increase resources. So we have three goals in our state plan currently, and several of those goals have a couple of objectives underneath each goal. As part of each objective we have outlined indicators for how we're planning on determining success on the objectives as well as time lines and specific activities, but an important part of that also outlines the partners that will be involved in achieving those objectives, and they're specific objectives where the SPIL has listed the SILC as a potential partner. Now, this is important because we have listed several different types of entities that could be partners, but it doesn't tie any one direct entities to achieving all areas of that objective, all of the indicators, all the activities type of thing, but it gives us flexibility for the future if we were able to find a funding source or a grant coming up where we could be a little bit creative where we could look to see if it would fulfill a SPIL objective. Perfect example of this is that we have a goal and then an objective on expanding Independent Living resources for our network, including exploring the possibility of virtual services or a mobile Center for Independent Living. That was listed in our SPIL. When the paralysis resource Center pilot program RFP came out, we looked at it, and it wasn't typically something that we would normally think about, or it wasn't exactly black and white as this fitting the perfect ‑‑ the perfect SILC project but we decided to respond to the RFP and talk about how we wanted to pilot a virtual Independent Living services project in the state of Texas in order to reach consumers that were experiencing paralysis and that were also consumers that we had identified in our state plan as needing ‑‑ as being underserved or needing additional outreach. So we had identified that rural areas were underserved and that specific ‑‑ or specific issues that prevented individuals with disabilities in rural areas from receiving those services, including accessible housing, transportation, things like that. And so we decided to propose this virtual Independent Living Services project as a way to remove that barrier of a transportation barrier as well as potential housing accessibility barriers and see if we could reach that population in Texas through a virtual format based on the telemedicine platforms that were already out on the market and could we basically adapt the technology that was using telemedicine for Independent Living. And so that's our pilot. Again, it wasn't cut and dry. It wasn't black and white with regards to the project, but we decided that there was enough flexibility in the way that the SPIL was written and the way RFP was written that we could propose this pilot, and thankfully we were awarded that cooperative agreement.

Next slide. One of the things I had mentioned, this is just an overview, is that when we are coordinating our projects with the SPIL we listed SILC as a potential partner and important part of this is that there is acknowledgment and buy‑in and also authorship of this plan from the entire IL Network that the DSE is aware and the public is aware that the SILC has been identified as a potential partner. We also make sure that we list all of our SPIL objectives that we are identified as a potential partner in our contract agreement with our DSE every year, that's our Resource Plan contract agreement, to make sure that it's clear and it's understood to the DSE that we will be using some of our resources and funds to achieve those objectives in that capacity.

Next slide. One of the things that we wanted to ensure as the SILC was moving forward with expanding resource development and expanding the projects for the Centers for Independent Living is to make sure that these projects continue to be consumer controlled. So we do that in a couple of different ways. One, we ensure that the project has a clear and direct nexus to our state plan. You know, we know that the SPIL has outlined the state's focus and priority areas for the three‑year cycle, and so we want to make sure that it's clear, that this project fits exactly within that state plan. Ensure all our projects are voted on by our SILC Board. Of course, a majority of our SILC Board members are people with disabilities. And we have decided on ‑‑ to continue with the process of having all of our projects have a Project Advisory Committee, and this is a group of individuals outside of SILC staff and SILC Board that are ‑‑ the membership is made up of a majority of people with disabilities, and we always look for a broad range of disabilities and demographics, but that group also helps guide the project. So making sure that we are on track, that we are ensuring that consumer input throughout it, and also just reemphasizing that element of consumer control.

Next slide, please. So this is just an overview of the ‑‑ our five steps to ensuring consumer control. Again, making sure that consumer input is involved in the SPIL process, which that's easy. That's 101. And that we haven't forgotten about including the SILC's role in our SPIL and objectives. That our SPIL isn't written in a way that it looks like that the Centers are going to be responsible for achieving all of the progress on where we want to go and achieving those outcomes over that three‑year cycle. And so then we also make sure that our SPIL goals and objectives are identified in our SILC Resource Plan. Our SILC Resource Plan that's knots only in our SPIL but in the ‑‑ in our annual contract with our designated state entity. We also ensure that the SILC Board approves and accepts all the grants in the projects and that all the projects are led by Project Advisory Committee.

Next slide. One of the benefits of this multi‑step structure is that we are able to pursue funding opportunities as they arise. For example, we haven't specifically put in our state plan that the SILC will do X, Y and Z project because we don't know exactly if we're going to be able to find a funding source outside of the very scarce Independent Living funds that have already been designated to either Centers or specific SILC activities. So we like to make sure that there is some flexibility in the SPIL language that we can go after unique programs and projects and see if we can get them funded. We did this with the virtual Independent Living Services project but also the recent projects where there's additional peer support projects with two Centers and some housing education and advocacy with two Centers. I'm repeating ply self, but it's so important to ensure that consumer input and control is at the forefront and that also that the SILC projects are in line with the direction of the IL Network.

Next slide, please. So I want to talk a little bit about some of the benefits that we've seen with the resource development over the last couple of years. There's ‑‑ obvious we have been able to increase some of the resources for the IL Network but also we've had a couple of folks approach us and say, "You know, because you have tied this project or this new opportunity to the state plan, it really highlights the importance of the SPIL, that it's not just a document that we draft and put on the shelf and it loosely guides the IL Network over a series much years. There's active involvement from the Centers, there's active involvement from the SILC Board, and you're coordinating some of those opportunities with outside funding sources outside the IL Network." So when we talk about state wideness and Coordination of Services from other federal programs or other state programs, this is the perfect way that we can introduce ourselves to some of these other programs and say, hey, look over here, look at the awesome things that Centers for Independent Living are doing, and how can we coordinate on those projects? It also allows us to coordinate our state plan with the developmental disabilities council state plan, which they have their own process, very different from our SPIL process, but some of our priorities line up, and so it's neat to be able to see how we are able to create that synergy between the two councils, IL and developmental disabilities. We also use this as a way to reduce some of the administrative burdens of the CIL‑NET work we talk to a lot of Centers where they said, oh, that looks like a great grant opportunity but we just ‑‑ we just don't have the skill in house of grant writing or we don't have the capacity to do the fiscal management of this new grant, and we really are struggling with the way he can do that. This allows the SILC to take on those responsibilities, allows us to take on the grant writing and take on the financial burden with all the financial aspects and push out funds to them so that they can then do their great work with the funding provided, and we aren't directing it, we aren't managing those programs or services. We are just looking at the funding aspects and making sure that all of our I's are dotted and T's are crossed. It also gives us the opportunity to have multiple Centers coordinate on a common project or common objective. So we're in the great state of Texas, and it's a huge state there's a lot we can coordinate on, but this allows one Center in the Valley to coordinate with someone from West Texas or someone from East Texas. It's need to see how they have taken a common project and adapted it to their community and also gives us another example of showing how ‑‑ the beauty of the Centers for Independent Living is that they are adapting their programs and services to the needs of their consumers. And so being able to show what ‑‑ that they have been provided these funds and they're each doing something a little bit different, but they're both achieving progress on an outcome, an objective, is really kind of a beautiful thing.

Next slide. I would be remiss if I did not address some of the growing pains and challenges we've had over the years. One of the things we want to make sure that we're not doing is making sure that we're not managing the IL services. As Brad went over, we're prohibited from doing that. So our agreements with our partners ensure that we're providing administrative and fiscal support but we don't manage the services that are provided. One of the other growing pains that we have is just taking on the administrative expenses and the risk. So we have to ensure that we have the staff capacity and structure in place to manage that fiscal administrative aspects of the resource development, for example, the amount of revenue coming into the SILC increases, but it also ‑‑ we're pushing those funds out, but it puts us into higher audit brake he is for single audits. So making sure we have the funds to take on that administrative burden. We also have additional staff that we have to share the burdens of either project management or some of the financial aspects. So just making sure that before you undertake something that you have that all planned out so the other programs aren't suffering an undue burden through those projects.

Next slide. The other thing that we are constantly challenged with is match requirements. So as you know, some projects require, especially federal projects, require a local match or a non‑Federal match, and some projects have a higher match obligation than others, and typically you can't match federal sources to federal sources. Meaning, if our Resource Plan is funded by I&E funds or Part B funds, we couldn't use the in‑kind match derived from that ‑‑ from our Resource Plan to match DD council funds or ACL funds or something like that. So you have to be unique and look for additional ways that you can garner he that match through the process. So I can go over that in detail offline but you have to be a little creative. And then also choosing project partners. We use an open process for securing project partners and we invite all the IL Network to participate in potential projects. We basically send out a message to all the Centers saying, hey, who all wants to work on this with us. So it's not us telling Centers what they're going to be doing with these funds. They are telling us what their ideas are on moving forward.

That's it for me. I know that we're coming up for questions.

>> TIM FUCHS: That's correct. Great. Thanks, Sandra. Great job.

We're here at our final Q&A break. So I know we've got one question that came in while Sandra was talking. I hope you all will take advantage of this time. We have plenty of time left for questions. So please, I hope you'll take advantage of Sandra and Brad's expertise. Let's look at this question from Adonis. Adonis says Missouri SILC has dedicated funds every set aside each year to support youth development. Two, scholarships for students transitioning from high school to college or technical training. The more um grant and APRIL rural youth conference grant. We have developed our presence on Guide star. One of our program directives is to get these programs to be self‑supporting. How should we progress to reach this objective? We also need to increase our resources to support hiring staff.

Sandra any tips for Adonis as they look to make those programs self‑supporting and bring in some additional funds so that they're sustainable?

>> SANDRA BREITENGROSS BITTER: So I think one of the things ‑‑ I think it's great that you have a clear definition of ‑‑ a clear focus that youth is something you are going to be looking out for, but I think talking to some of the potential project partners in your state, so your developmental disabilities council, your ‑‑ the ‑‑ even some of the managed care organizations, things like that, that might be working on youth initiatives as well as your VR programs, that really talking to them about programs that might be up and coming and that where you could position the SILC and CIL partners to having a place at that table of any future design. You could also go to outside private foundations and funders, which I think Brad would be able to speak to a little bit more outside private foundations. Private foundations has not been my strength so far but I'm working on it. So I'm going to let Brad provide some additional information on that.

>> BRAD WILLIAMS: Adonis, I'm going to answer your question in kind of a roundabout way but I'll get there, and I'm going to start by saying, you need to have some conversations, first, and ‑‑ because obviously what you started is really good, and I want you to have some conversations, or have some people have some conversations with some people and connect maybe within your community, and if your SILC is kind of within ‑‑ at your state capitol, then that's the community I would say, unless in your network of your SILC, with your members, if they have connections, use those connections. I would first start with community foundation. Community foundations have great relationships. In many ways they're kind of like a SILC, a SILC has funding, it has to monitor and evaluate. We all have a certain amount that we have as an investment, but then they look at funding like we do, and then they look how ‑‑ at how things can be sustained. Okay? That might be part of the picture, and it might be a great thing to ask if you have someone in that community who has a connection to someone connected to a community foundation to ask that question for this particular question. I used to be a trustee on a local community foundation, and I know I used to get all this information as a member, and they used to have their ‑‑ it all was invested money. It was invested money, and they used to give out the interest on the principle, and so it's like that's kind of like what you want to ask them, is how their money is utilized, and it's kind of like you want to ask those people how they do it, and you want to get that information. And I think you want to also have a conversation with a school system/administrator, because let's face it, each year, near the end of year, they have scholarships, and they have the same thing going. Someone knows that they have, I don't know, 20, 30 ‑‑ I don't know how many scholarships a particular school system has. And that's the same type of thing. Some money is invested and each year X amount of dollars are available. Someone has to know the same type of thing. And whether that includes a broker or not, it's trying to connect with these types of people, because it seems like they might be able to have some information for you of how you can move your particular questions forward, how you can build your program. I would get some of that. Because some of these other people know how to build and sustain what they're doing, and it's somewhat similar, and these are people that have been doing it for a while. That would be my initial feedback.

>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. Great. Thanks.

All right. We got a question from Jeff. Jeff is wondering: Are funds raised through resource development restricted or unrestricted? So are ‑‑ and are they considered program income? Sandra, do you want to tackle that?

>> SANDRA BREITENGROSS BITTER: Sure. It's a multi‑part question actually. If you are creating a new revenue source to the SILC from a grant, first look to your funder to make sure that any rules that are applicable with regards to program income and how that will be an allowable use, make sure that you coordinate and work with them. But if our base funds are being used to help generate revenue, then that would be program income. It would only be unrestricted income if we were using unrestricted sources or something else. So it's pretty rare that we have unrestricted income. Most of our income is all designated for a specific purpose, and for all of our grants and projects, those are all coming in to the SILC with specific deliverables associated with them. So it's going to our shared expends as we've been in agreements with our ‑‑ under UDG and also expenses designated are CIL or community‑based partners. So it's not just ‑‑ at least for the Texas SILC it's not just going into an account for a rainy day fund. If there are additional ‑‑ if there is additional revenue, then it would be restricted or program income, depending on how you label it, and then we would go from there and spend it according to the funder directions.

>> TIM FUCHS: Great. Thanks, Sandra.

All right. Another question from Jeff wondering specifically, Sandra, if you have run into any conflicts in your state with the developmental disabilities council since they're under the federal developmental disabilities act in terms of coordination of funds? Jeff says I'm guessing they don't deal with the DSE, but if you have an example of any problems you worked through, we would appreciate it.

>> SANDRA BREITENGROSS BITTER: So, no, on that specifically we have not had any issues in coordinating with our DD council on that. They do have a DSA, which is their designated state agency, which is kind of like our version of a DSE, but they have, in Texas, they have actually welcomed the opportunity to coordinate with us. So they like that their funds are being used in a way that's outside of the traditional funder, and they've actually added it into their own goals and objectives to expand how they're coordinating those funds. So it's been a really positive experience with regards to that fund coordination. We do run into the issue with match in the sense, as I mentioned earlier, as we have the same originating sources of funds, so we have to be creative on how we generate match, because our projects with the DD council have had significant match obligations. So we have decided depending how steep those match obligations are to not pursue a project because we couldn't guarantee that we could get enough match. So that's unfortunate, but with regards to coordination, no, it's been a positive experience for us.

>> TIM FUCHS: Great. All right. We still have time left for questions. You can always type them in the Q&A tab or you're welcome to email them to me at tim@ncil.org. I don't believe anybody is on the CART captioning chat at this time, but if you are, you can submit them there as well.

I'll give about 20 seconds just to see if any additional questions come in.

Also on this slide you'll notice the link to the evaluation form. That's not a live link. But this link was included in your ‑‑ the confirmation email with the connection instructions. It will also come up on your screen when we close the webinar today.

Okay. I don't see any additional questions. I am going to go ahead to slide 33 where Brad and Sandra have been generous enough to offer their contact information. And just so you all know, you're always welcome to reach out to me. Again my email is really simple. It's just tim@ncil.org. If you have any questions that come up, if I can't answer them, I'll make sure you do get an answer. So let us know how we can help you as you all explore the topic.

And that is it for today. I want to thank Sandra and Brad for putting together the presentation. You all have taken the mystery out of this for us. You had some really good real world examples and we appreciate that. I love that you guys have really made clear how you circle this back to your SPIL and you make sure that all the projects you consider are mission appropriate from the beginning and you have included the network of CILs. Practical stuff. Appreciate that. Thanks to all of you who have joined us, too. Again whether it's a question for Brad Sandra about today or a broader question, let us know how we can help you. So stay in touch. Don't forget. This webinar was archived today, so whether you want to review it yourself or share it with a colleague, it will be up on ILRU's website within 48 hours. Usually much sooner than that. Hope you guys have a wonderful afternoon. Thanks. Bye‑bye.