



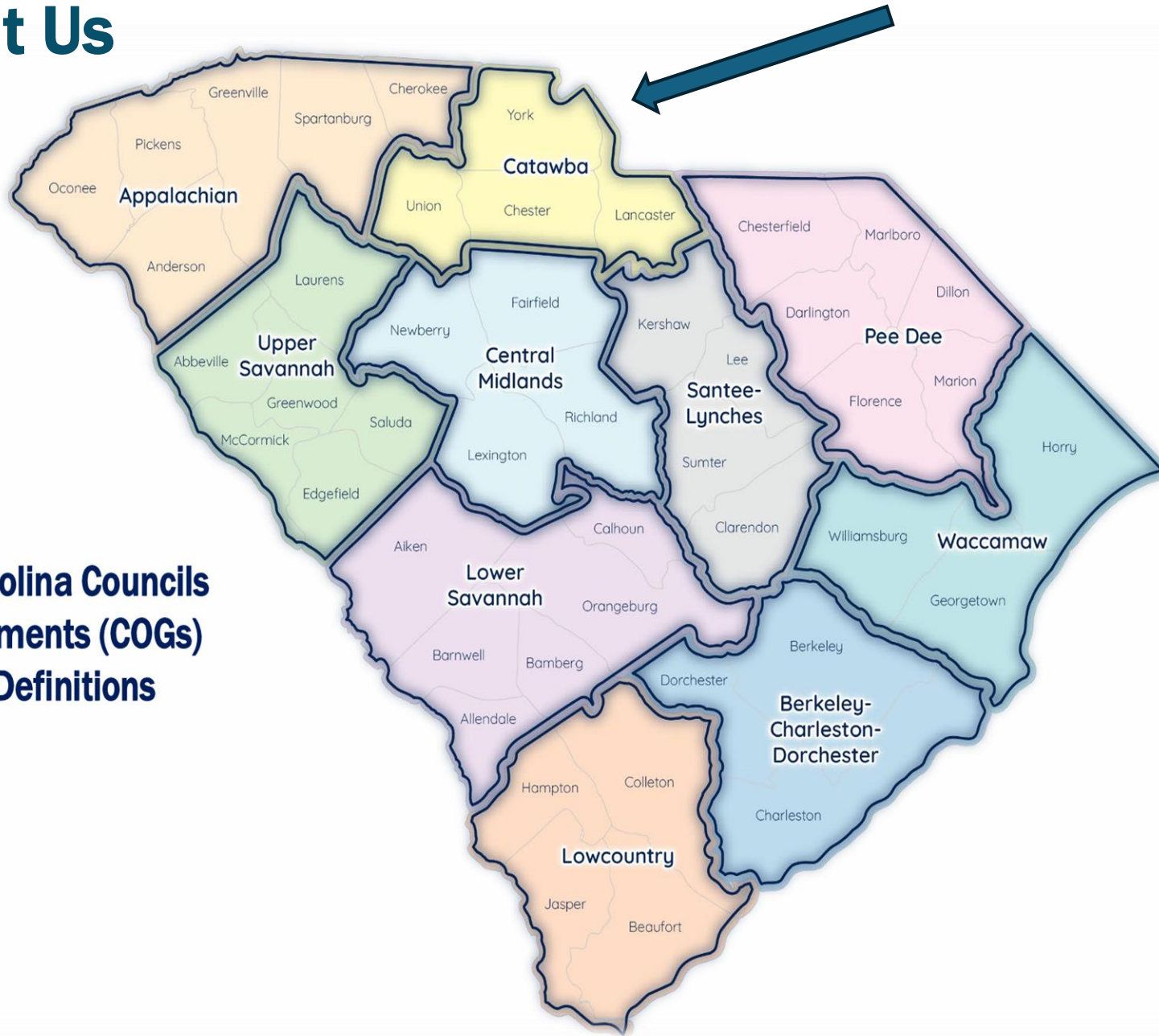
**Catawba
Regional**
Council of Governments

AI Adoption and Experience

NADO ATC – 10.20.26

About Us

South Carolina Councils of Governments (COGs) Regional Definitions

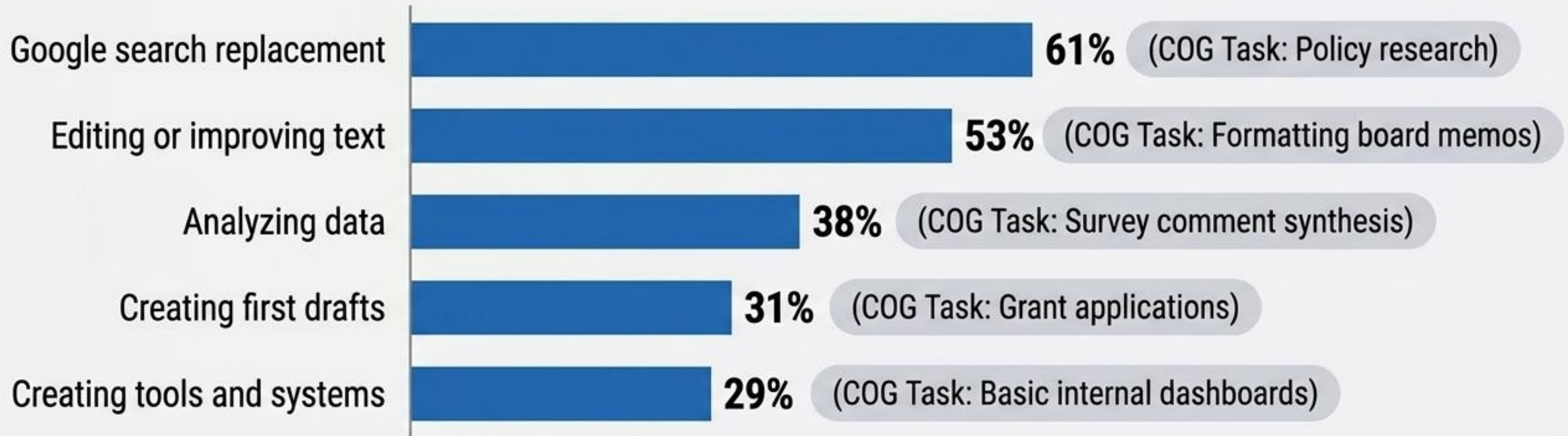


- **Catawba Region: Four counties and 22 cities/towns**
- **Located between Charlotte, NC and Columbia, SC metropolitan areas**
- **2nd fastest growing region in SC with 42% population growth (440,081 in 2020 to 624,298 in 2040)**
- **COG Staff of 21**
- **Program areas: Workforce Development, Planning, Business Lending, Community Development/Grants, Brownfields**
- **AI Use Policy adopted 9/2025**

Most Common Workplace Uses Are Practical, Not Exotic

The most common uses map directly to routine knowledge work.

- Immediate value lies in search, drafting, editing, and analysis.
- The risk is informal use occurring before the organization provides rules and examples.



CRCOG GovAI Usage:

- One half (1/2) of staff are using GovAI regularly to support their work
- One third (1/3) of staff are using it weekly, predominantly from Workforce Development, Business Lending, and Planning
- One third (1/3) of staff have taken a least one AI Academy course through UCPCOG AI Academy

Most Workers Remain Experimenters



The goal is not to make every employee an expert.

- Novice (20.9%)**
- Experimenter (73.5%)** – Uses AI for one-off tasks.
- Practitioner (5.3%)** – Uses AI for reliable workflows.
- Expert (0.2%)**

The objective is moving staff from isolated use to repeatable, reviewed workflows.

Key Insight Box

Only 5.5% of the workforce meets the proficiency threshold.

Departmental champions and shared regional examples are required to scale learning.

CRCOG Planning Department Uses:

- **Text editing:**

- edits grammar for comprehensive plans and other documents
- suggests changes to phrasing for a specific tone and audience (anti-growth/density, etc.)

- **Document summaries:**

- summarizes key points from reports
- identifies weak areas in arguments or analyzes positions from an argumentative POV to help prepare for “gotcha” questions
- identifies outliers in large data tables (school enrollment projections)
- provides a check on work (i.e., “here are the conclusions *I’m* drawing, did I overlook anything”)

- **Code searches:**

- searches ordinances for answers as ordinances are often daisy-chained and reference multiple parts for one topic
- searches online zoning codes for similar ordinance language and best practices for zoning text amendments

- **Coding:**

- creates GIS scripts and to find more efficient GIS workflows

Catawba Regional Uses GovAI as its Enterprise AI Foundation

Why the Platform Matters

- Generic consumer tools can create uneven access and limited oversight
- Personal-account use can increase privacy and governance risk
- Leaders need visibility into organizational use
- Staff need a supported and consistent AI environment



Government Workflows

-  • Drafting reports and memoranda
-  • Summarizing meeting minutes
-  • Explaining regulatory language
-  • Translating public communications
-  • Supporting planning, finance, human resources, legal, and operations
- 

GovAI gives Catawba Regional a governed foundation for broad staff access while allowing advanced assistants and workflows to be introduced as capability and oversight mature.

Why GovAI Fits Councils of Governments

A strong match for regional organizations serving many local governments.



Regional scale

Supports one organization serving many communities and partners.



Limited staff capacity

Helps small teams move faster on writing, research, and document work.



Safer AI access

Offers a more governed option than scattered consumer AI use.



Useful across functions

Relevant to planning, grants, aging, workforce, communications, finance, and administration.



Builds AI fluency

Pairs well with training, pilots, and practical use case development.



Grows over time

Can begin with everyday staff use and expand into custom assistants and workflows.



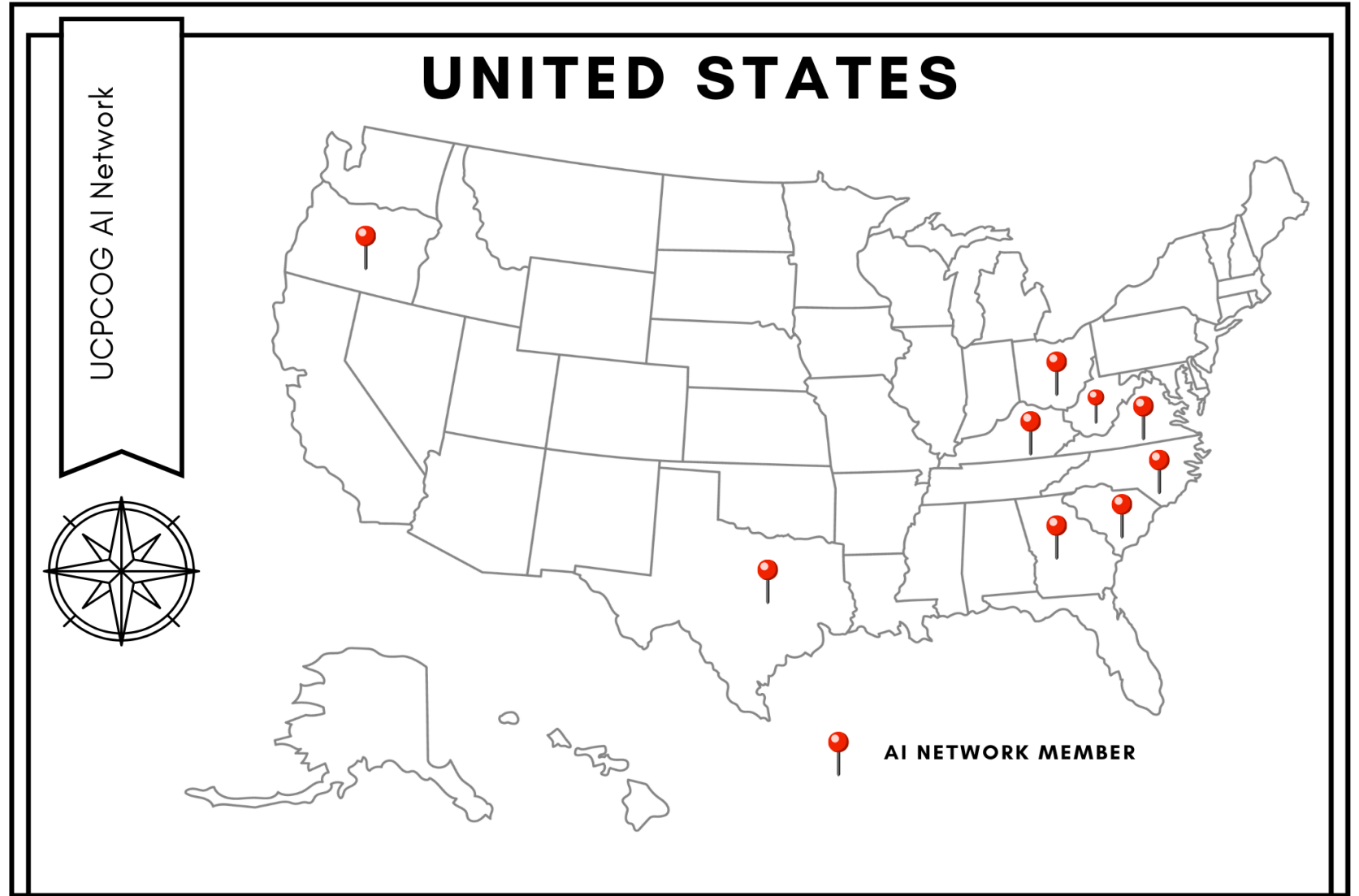
Best fit for COG priorities: shared services, governance, workforce training, and practical local government adoption.

Upper Coastal Plain COG in NC has created an AI Network

UPCCOG's AI Academy Offers:

- Topical training courses
- User group discussions
- Sample documents/
policies
- GovAI relationship
introduction

UCPCOG also has
worked with the Alabama
COGS to write their AI
Governance Policy and
provide training materials.



CRCOG Next Steps:

- By end of 2026, increase “regular” usage of GovAI to at least 75% of staff
- Focus on departments with latent experience/use: Grants, Finance
- Increase AI Academy course completion from 1/3 of staff to 75% of staff by the end of 2026
- Clarify AI policy on personal uses of GovAI/Other AI tools
- Continue to engage in peer learning and integration of AI tools into other aspects of the business (ie. PR, Communications, etc.)



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