

About Strategic Planning

What is Strategic Planning?

Strategic planning involves articulating a future vision and determining how you will move towards that future. It is a process of determining *what* your organization intends to be, *how* you will get there in light of your internal and external environment, *who* you need to be collaborating with, and *how* you will attract the resources you need (e.g., people, money, expertise, facilities, etc.). Planning involves working toward desired outcomes while also allowing for emergent opportunities. It is an ongoing process of envisioning the future, taking action, reflecting and adapting based on what is learned.

Benefits of Strategic Planning

- A systems perspective in which your organization's work is viewed in relation to its changing environment.
- A unified vision shared among board, staff and other stakeholders; a framework that sets the direction and guides governance, management and community partnerships.
- A shared basis for communicating about organizational change, establishing the context for change, and reducing resistance to change.
- An increased level of commitment to the organization and its mission, values, and goals among board, staff and other stakeholders.
- A foundation for fundraising and board development, and an improved ability to match resources to opportunities based on clear strategic priorities.
- Greater clarity in determining how your organization measures success.

Prerequisites for Planning

- A commitment by the organization's leadership to engage actively throughout the planning process and commit sufficient resources (time and money).
- Resolution of any major crisis or destructive conflict that may interfere with the organization's ability to focus on planning.
- A commitment to honestly assess the "current state" of programs, operations and governance.
- A commitment and ability to meet constituent needs.
- Willingness to question the status quo and look at new approaches to performing and evaluating your organization's work.

People support what they help create.