

HOW TO

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO STRATEGIC PLANNING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION & COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

KENTUCKY LEAGUE OF CITIES **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Kentucky League of Cities (KLC)
100 East Vine Street, Suite 800
Lexington, KY 40507
Phone: 800.876.4552 (toll-free)
Fax: 859.977.3703
www.klc.org

© Kentucky League of Cities Inc. 2020



Contents

Why Do Cities Need to Plan?	3
Elements of a Strategic Plan	3
City Identity	4
The Planning Process	4-5
Creating Strategies	6-7
Funding the Strategic Plan	8-9
Implementing the Strategic Plan	10
Monitoring the Plan	11-12
Comprehensive Planning	13-15
Glossary of Terms	16-17
Appendix A: Potential List of Community Constituency Groups	18
Appendix B: Strategic Planning Process Outline Example	19
Appendix C: Steering Committee – Sample Agenda for First Meeting	20
Appendix D: S.W.O.T. Worksheet	21
Appendix E: Goals and Objectives Sample	22
Appendix F: Immediate Project Implementation	23
Appendix G: Comprehensive Plan Proposed Time Line	24

Why Do Cities Need to Make Plans and Implement Them?

For the long-term success of any city, local elected officials should understand the various pieces that make up the community and how one may impact another. For example, how does one department affect the others? When will upgrades or improvements to city properties need to be made? How do operations, staffing and budgets impact the overall picture? This general understanding of the big picture is often accomplished through strategic planning.

Strategic planning is often best accomplished by engaging the public when setting forth goals and objectives. This citizen and government partnership encourages buy-in from tax payers and potential sweat equity for the work that will need to be accomplished.

With local elections occurring every biennium in Kentucky, local leadership within cities can change with frequency. Having the private sector as well as city employees as part of the planning process ensures continuity and institutional knowledge, particularly for long-range projects.

Further, all Kentucky cities that have planning and zoning are required by state statutes (KRS Chapter 100) to have a comprehensive plan. While not mandated by law, a strategic plan is a viable way for a city to address and implement concepts put forth within a comprehensive plan. A city's ability to carry out initiatives that support either a strategic plan or comprehensive plan will be largely dependent on the individual performance of its staff.

Comprehensive Plan	Strategic Plan
Typically encompasses a broad area or region.	Can be focused on specific area or divided into incremental sections.
Dictates public policy as it relates to land use and resources and typically requires community development specialists such as planners, architects and engineers.	Provides recommendations and strategies to address specific projects, issues or concerns.
Requires public input.	Typically involves public input.
Addresses a broad range of topics such as transportation, utilities, housing, safety and health.	May be broad to cover many topics, or relegated to a specific issue.
Provides a review of past and current conditions and seeks to project needs for the future. Typically covers a long-term time frame, perhaps 10 to 20 years.	May address past and current issues in terms of background information. Typically covers a three-to-five-year span of time.

Elements of a Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is a process where a strategy or direction is determined which then allows leaders to make decisions such as how a city's resources will be allocated most effectively.

Some cities choose to address potential problems, anticipated growth, and other development pressures by establishing a strategic plan. These plans may be focused on the city as a whole, or the plan may be specific to one area, such as a business district, an industrial park, an historic neighborhood, or a commercial strip leading to an interstate. Many cities find it easier to plan their budgets from year to year if they work within a structure that defines priorities and

incremental actions.

While plans do vary according to the scope of the planning area, traditional components of a strategic plan include:

- ◆ the city's vision (how we want to be; future state of the city)
- ◆ the city's mission statement (what do we do, why do we exist)
- ◆ values statement (shared beliefs of the organization; organizational culture)
- ◆ brand or logo (what is the visual representation of the city)
- ◆ review of past and current conditions (situation analysis)

- ◆ S.W.O.T. analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)
- ◆ goals and objectives (what do we want to achieve)
- ◆ strategies for implementation (how do we get what we want)
- ◆ measurement tools (how do we know if we're successful)
- ◆ time lines (what can we accomplish in three to five years)
- ◆ budgets (what revenue sources/options are available)

If a city does not already have a mission statement, leaders may wish to work towards establishing a statement before undertaking the planning process. Do not confuse the vision statement with the mission statement – there are distinct differences in the two.

City Identity

While not mandated by law, determining a brand or logo for the city may be accomplished during this planning process. At minimum, a positive brand for your city can establish the professionalism of city leadership, build trust in city services, and instill pride among the citizens.

To establish a logo, you may want to begin with the city's mission statement. Conveying the words into a visual representation may take some time, but be well worth the effort. Some things to consider:

- ◆ Look at logos from other cities. Does their logo match up to their mission statement?

Vision Statement	Mission Statement
A descriptive picture of a desired future state.	A statement of the city's rationale, applicable now as well as in the future.
Outlines how the city wants to be viewed by the world.	Defines the fundamental purpose of the city, succinctly describes why it exists.
Provides a long-term view and concentrates on the future.	Clearly describes what it does to achieve its vision.
It can be used as a motivator or a source of inspiration.	Guides the decision making actions of the city now and in the future.

- ◆ Focus on your message. What makes your city unique or different?
- ◆ Size matters. The image you decide upon should look great on a business card, the side of a garbage truck, or a banner hanging over the street.
- ◆ A good logo should be scalable, easy to reproduce, memorable and distinctive.
- ◆ Icons are better than photographs.
- ◆ Be sure the image can be reproduced in color or black and white.

Once you determine a logo, be sure to apply for a trademark at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office at <http://www.uspto.gov/>.

Begin using the logo on everything. For example, use on city stationary, the website, advertising or promotional materials, even city vehicles. By reinforcing the city's

mission, you continue to build trust and instill pride in the community over time.

The Planning Process Steering Committee/Task Force

When a city sets out to create a strategic plan, it is helpful to include citizens, particularly those that will be most impacted by implementing the plans. The city may wish to establish a steering committee or task force representing the broader community. The steering committee will need to make sure there are no conflicts with the work being done by any local planning commission, and consider ways in which the two groups can interact and share the same goals. Whether you invite the masses or strategically consider specific individuals, a broad representation of every socio-economic segment should be considered.

For a sample list of potential citizens groups to consider, see Appendix A.

The purpose of this committee is to guide the process from beginning to end. For best results, limit the number on the committee to 15 or less. Each of their meetings needs to be well managed with specific agendas, instructions, and time lines. Depending on how a steering committee is set up, they may be subject to Open Meetings and Open Records laws. For example, if they contain a quorum of the city legislative body discussing city business, or if the committee is created or appointed by the city. They could also be subject to Open Records laws if they receive a certain percentage of funds expended by them within the state, from state or local government funds. If either the OMA, the ORA or both applies, they will need to follow all requirements regarding meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, and recordkeeping.

The intensity of the plan and the amount of data already gathered will dictate how often the steering committee will meet. Determine who will lead the meetings and how information will be accumulated and disseminated throughout the process. Prepare for media interest and designate who will speak on behalf of the steering committee.

A sample strategic planning time line may be found in Appendix B.

A sample agenda is found in Appendix C.

Engaging the Public at a Town Hall Meeting

There are some strategic planning initiatives in which the general public may need to have input. We recommend an experienced, unbiased, meeting facilitator to lead this type of public engagement session. To assist in preparing for this type of event, the following checklist may be useful:

Before the listening session:

- ◆ Identify audience and invite them via personal invitation (in person, by phone, email, text, Facebook, and Twitter).
- ◆ Decide where you will meet and when (handicap accessible).
- ◆ Invite the media (it is a public meeting).
- ◆ Clearly state the purpose – set the expectations beforehand.
- ◆ Select a welcoming, non-threatening environment that is “familiar” to people (public school cafeterias are a great choice).
- ◆ Identify who will lead the meeting, who will take notes (have a clear and set agenda).
- ◆ Create an agenda not to exceed two hours (1½ hours if possible).
- ◆ Determine how the information will be disseminated after the meeting.

During the meeting:

- ◆ Meet/greet prior to the start – welcome folks and thank them for coming.
- ◆ Have a sign-in sheet to

obtain record of attendance and to get contact information for follow-up opportunities.

- ◆ Provide refreshments.
- ◆ State the purpose of the gathering.
- ◆ Set a tone of positive energy – don’t avoid negative issues. Acknowledge them and move on.
- ◆ Establish the fact that this is not a problem-solving meeting. It is a time to share information and gather data.
- ◆ Have someone on hand to address problems – announce who that individual is and ask attendees to present their problem to this person so it can be addressed.
- ◆ State the rules up front.
 - Each person is allowed to speak one time until everyone has had an opportunity.
 - Provide alternative ways to provide more input/feedback – personal visit, email, phone call – and FOLLOW UP!
 - We want your ideas and thoughts. Please be respectful of each other...and you will receive respect.
 - Please don’t verbally attack someone. Help us get to ideas and solutions.
- ◆ Record every idea – summarize as necessary, but be sure that the person agrees with the way you’ve stated the idea or comment - reword if necessary.

- ◆ State how the information will be used.
- ◆ State where the information can be found – online, printed report, etc.
- ◆ State when the information will be available.
- ◆ At the conclusion, thank people for participating and attending.
- ◆ Leave the door open for people to continue the dialogue and tell them how to do so.
- ◆ Encourage people to share more ideas and tell them how they can do so.
- ◆ Provide a contact name, phone number, or email address to everyone.

After the meeting:

- ◆ Post, print, or publish the information as soon as possible – usually no later than 24 hours after the event.
- ◆ In the posting, state where and when the meeting took

place and how citizens can still submit their ideas and comments.

- ◆ Summarize the comments by topic or theme – this becomes the launch pad for new ideas and strategies.
- ◆ Inform/update the public/participants on the action taken or not taken.
- ◆ Reengage – going through this process every 12 -18 months will have an incredible effect on the work itself and will identify how community trends are changing. It is necessary to adjust the goals as circumstances change. You want to be on the front end of the change – not playing catch-up.

Creating Strategies

To have an effective strategic plan, it needs to clearly lay out the existing challenges as well as viable opportunities. Current data and

analysis on demographics, culture and economic factors will be critically important.

Information, both subjective and objective will enhance the strategic plan. By conducting a S.W.O.T. analysis, an audit of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, with all constituencies that will be affected by the plan, or have a role in its implementation, the strategic planning process will be more successful.

A sample S.W.O.T. analysis is available in Appendix D.

Using a well-informed steering committee as a representative group to formulate strategies and help make decisions through the planning process will keep the process moving forward. The steering committee is used to oversee the planning effort from start to finish. They will review the scope of work, contribute input, track the progress and make regular reports to the governing body.

For a city to truly have a successful outcome in strategic planning, the elected leaders must be invested.

Questions to consider as you determine strategies and activities.	Yes	No	Not Certain
Are the goals specific, measurable, realistic and time-oriented?			
Can something be done to sustain the success, or to further improve on each goal?			
Are there barriers that can be identified?			
If no, consider what steps are necessary to obtain this information; these steps may be additional activities that can be added to the plan.			
Are there available resources (staff, budget, equipment, etc.) to accomplish each proposed strategy or activity?			
Do we know what a successful outcome looks like? Will we know that we've accomplished the goal?			

The leadership's buy-in is paramount to attaining success. Without their vision and commitment, and their ability to bring resources to the table, others will not believe the process is sincere, or the outcome attainable.

An effective strategic plan takes many things into account. In addition to facts and data, other elements that may need to be considered include historic context, past initiatives that may not yet be complete, projects that may be on the horizon, the vested interests of stakeholders, funding considerations, staff capacity, overall city operations and the political landscape. Neither the elected leadership or the city staff has the full grasp of all these areas, therefore it is imperative that both be involved and committed to the process.

Further, having a steering committee made up of diverse stakeholders provides additional certainty that all perspectives are represented. You may have to work at obtaining involvement from minority populations. Give this step the importance it deserves in order to have a well represented group of stakeholders. The planning efforts

should draw from the strength of each of these groups, the elected, the staff and the broad citizenry.

Each community has its own unique situation and the strategies that works for one may not work for another. Therefore, each community must carefully devise its own strategies, incorporating goals and action steps that are customized to its specific needs.

As you gain information about each strategy, some assumptions may change or shift, new ideas may emerge, old ideas may fade or be discarded, or be rethought and reimaged. The activity of developing each strategy in terms of goals and action steps will take time, but is very important in creating an implementable plan.

Once the strategies are developed, you must establish priorities. While it may seem easy to decide what should be accomplished first, without determining which is most important, it will be difficult to achieve your goals.

A template strategy, with goals and action steps may be seen in Appendix E.

Even though your community may spend a lot of time and effort on

developing a strategic plan, keep in mind that it will be effected by political changes, market conditions, and funding availability. As these elements shift, strategies need to be revisited regularly in order to fine-tune or in some cases, rethink the goals to be sure you're not missing opportunities. To remain effective and viable, the plan must have flexibility and the leadership should be prepared to change as conditions require it.

The benefit of having a strategic plan in place is that it serves as a blueprint. With the elected leaders, city staff and community stakeholders committed to implementing the plan, the growth and vitality of the community are greatly enhanced. The plan enables the city to evaluate where it is, establish a focus for the immediate future and chart a course for getting there.

Donor and sweat equity evaluation.	Yes	No	Not Certain
Can a particular goal or segment of an initiative be accomplished with volunteer manpower or skill sets?			
Are there others who care about this initiative that may be willing to participate via sweat equity? Who are they?			
Have we explained this goal to those that may care about this initiative and asked for their participation or contribution?			
Can we use sweat equity as a match to grant funds? If so, how do we calculate it?			
Are there any incentives we can offer in exchange for a donation or sweat equity?			
Are there any materials needed for this initiative that can be provided by donors?			
Are we prepared to document sweat equity labor as it occurs throughout the entire project?			

Funding the Strategic Plan

For any plan to have legs and meet with success there must be resources to back it. Keep in mind that alternative financial resources will help you further your efforts without leaning too heavily on the city's budget or one or two funding sources.

A strategic funding plan will detail each project and identify potential funding whether it be from private or public funding sources, loans or grants from nonprofit, foundation, or corporate entities. Further, the plan should provide information about application deadlines, what amount of money is available, if funds can be leveraged with other financial opportunities, and whether a match is involved.

Donations and Sweat Equity

Not every idea or initiative requires money, sometimes donations and a little sweat equity are enough to make significant progress. For initiatives that may only need volunteer manpower or skill sets, a few relatively easy steps can be taken.

Questions to consider as you seek potential funders.	Yes	No	Not Certain
Does my project align with their mission or stated area of giving?			
Is my project and/or organization eligible to apply for their funds?			
Has the granting agency funded projects similar to mine in the past?			
Will they provide enough funding to fully accommodate my project?			
Can I fulfill all their requirements based upon my initial review of the criteria?			
Do they expect last year's average grant amount to change?			
Does the grantor provide onetime-only support, or does it offer other funding opportunities in the future?			

Grant Funding

Another funding source you may wish to consider is grant funding. A grant proposal is a request from an outside source for financial assistance to create, develop or implement a project or specific initiative. Grant funds come from several sources including state or federal funds, private foundations, public grants and corporate foundations. Locating funding sources is commonly achieved by Internet and library research.

As you locate potential funding sources they will provide information about their particular interests. Agencies are looking for ways to supplement or expand existing activities in which they are already invested. They are also interested in how your proposal may help them address problems they have already identified. Most government agencies and private foundations have a proposal format you will need to follow. In some cases you may have to be preapproved to apply for funds. Instructions of how to apply, details about any approval processes, the

proposal format or application guidelines are typically found on the funders website.

For additional information and more details on grant writing, contact the Kentucky League of Cities for a copy of "A Step-by-Step Guide to Grant Writing."

Philanthropy

The term philanthropy generally refers to the concept of voluntary giving by individuals or groups to promote the common good. Philanthropic foundations are legal entities that are normally established by an individual, family, corporation, or community group to support a variety of social causes.

In most cities there is usually some community project that is of particular interest to an individual or a target audience within the community. By inviting the individual or target group into the conversation, philanthropic activity has the opportunity to advance.

For example, a city known nationally for their annual horse

show wanted to erect a piece of public art at one entrance to the city. City leaders approached a local resident, a horse enthusiast, and shared the community's goal for public art. The individual became a philanthropic donor by working with city leaders to develop plans for a horse sculpture made of bronze. Further discussion led them to add landscaping, lighting and a maintenance plan running in perpetuity. The project would have languished or perhaps never happened had the need not met with an interested party with resources to make it happen.

Other methods of philanthropy may be in terms of providing seed money in order to get an initiative off the ground.

When trying to fund elements of a strategic plan, give significant thought as to who can help you accomplish the goal. Whether it is in funding, volunteer labor, seed money or donations, every available resource should be investigated. Invite people to participate with the community – make them feel they are part of the bigger picture.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

Actually “doing” what is listed in the strategic plan may be easier said than done. Many strategic plans end up on a shelf and become outdated without anyone making the effort to actually implement the carefully crafted action steps. The problem usually lies in taking the plan established by leadership and conveying the steps that need to be done to those who will do the work.

There are a few specific keys to a successful outcome – communication, education and leadership.

Communication is Key

As you move from developing the plan to implementing it, remember the importance of communicating the plan to staff at all levels, as well as to the public. By widely sharing the goals, objectives, strategies and activities, individuals will come to understand the common direction

and the larger picture. Typically this will encourage people to have more interest in participating in the implementation process.

Individuals responsible for implementation, whether paid staff or volunteers, should be well-informed. They should understand the connection between their specific task or project and the long-term goals of the larger plan.

Conveying specific roles and responsibilities will create clarity among staff and provide buy-in. Encouraging staff and volunteers to ask questions, offer suggestions, and participate in discussions about how to implement the plan, will instill a sense of ownership.

Educating Participants

If implementation is to be accomplished by a group of employees or volunteers, they must understand what they are to do. By educating the group on the overall desired outcome, what the

priorities are, why the work is important or needed, who else is involved, how they fit into the plan and what is expected of them, the chances of a successful outcome are much greater.

The second part of this educational process is to clarify the specific steps that need to be accomplished. By detailing each step, identifying who is responsible, what partners or resources are available, time lines, and budgets, implementation becomes more of a certainty.

Leaders are Important

Even the best of plans may languish if the person in charge of leading is not able to gain interest or create and maintain enthusiasm among participants. The need to have someone in charge that has the ability, tools, contacts and resources to keep the project moving forward is extremely important.

Questions to consider as you begin to implement.	Yes	No	Not Certain
Is there a specific group identified to take on a part of the plan or project?			
Is there a designated leader? Are their employees or volunteers to assist?			
Does the leader or the others need any special training to help them accomplish their portion of the plan or project?			
Do they understand the big picture as well as what is expected of them in implementing their portion of the plan or project?			
Have the priorities of their portion of the plan or project been established? Do they understand the priorities?			
Does the leader have the capacity to lead those involved?			
Does the leader have the tools, contacts and resources necessary to implement the project?			

Selecting the Right Leader

Implementation is not a skill set that every individual has. Carefully evaluating what must be implemented and coordinating the most appropriate person for the task(s) will be paramount to a successful outcome.

The role of an implementer has four key characteristics:

- ◆ accountability for results
- ◆ results through people
- ◆ authority
- ◆ risk

The implementer is held accountable for meeting financial, operational and/or systemic objectives.

Even if the implementer is not in a management or leadership position, he/she must be able to get results through others.

An implementer's authority can be found in his/her ability to make decisions or changes without prior approval from upper management.

The implementer must be willing to manage significant risk to accomplish the desired end result.

An implementer should:

- ◆ be resilient – remain goal driven and objective, even in the face of adversity, personal criticism, or setbacks;
- ◆ be flexible – have the ability to quickly adapt to change, accept new ideas/approaches/methods, juggle multiple priorities and tasks, and adapt his/her personal style to different people; and
- ◆ have strong interpersonal

skills – communicate well with others by listening, showing a sincere interest in and respecting the differences and perspectives of others.

Developing an Implementation Plan

By creating an implementation plan, leaders will have the steps needed to get to the real work.

Step 1. Explain each strategy with a who, what, why, when, and resources needed. Creating this specificity to each goal will force you to define tasks, define the rationale, describe who is responsible, determine priorities, set deadlines and determine funding or other forms of needed resources.

An implementation worksheet is available in Appendix F.

Step 2. Establish a priority list of what can be accomplished in year one, year two, and so on. Being realistic about what is manageable within the short-term, mid-term and long-term will enable tasks to be budgeted more effectively.

Step 3. Continue to communicate the elements of the strategic plan. Post it on the city's website, repeat the information within newsletters or other communication tools. Make announcements at community meetings to continually keep the plan on the minds of citizens, elected leaders and staff.

Step 4. If something doesn't take place as originally planned, stop, regroup, and look at the goal in new ways. Volunteers don't always work out as anticipated and funds don't always come through. Rethinking may reenergize the

initiative – stay focused and be flexible in how to get to the desired result.

Step 5. Establish some way of determining progress. Having a method to regularly monitor your progress will help you determine when renewed focus is needed, or if additional resources need to be brought to a project. Whether it is a graph or matrix, keeping the project in front of everyone will keep it fresh. Connecting with staff or volunteers on a regular basis to monitor their progress will also keep the lines of communication open.

Step 6. As projects are underway or even near completion, be sure to say thank you. Acknowledge people for their efforts. Celebrate with them every chance you can. Even goals that don't quite finish in the manner originally anticipated may still move the needle in a positive way for the community. Giving thanks and acknowledgment will go a long way in encouraging others to step up and participate.

Monitoring the Plan

The pieces of a comprehensive or strategic plan are dynamic and constantly moving. Be prepared to monitor your progress and make changes as needed. Monitoring the plan is a tool to help you know if you're doing things according to the plan. This can be done on several levels:

Individual:

Is what I'm doing fitting in with the rest of the plan? What is working well? What is not working well?

Project:

Is the work taking place, and the

Questions to consider as you begin to monitor the implementation plan.	Yes	No	Not Certain
Is the monitoring plan well thought out and linked back to the implementation plan?			
Have we agreed upon what will be monitored? How frequently? When we will collect the data?			
Do we know who will collect the data and analyze it?			
Do we know how we will evaluate the results of the data?			
Are employees, volunteers and stakeholders informed about the monitoring and how the information will be used?			
Has a baseline been established of the current situation (before monitoring takes place) – enabling data to be effectively evaluated?			

resources being used, in line with the plan? What is working well? What is not working well?

Organizational:

What are we doing well as an organization to implement the plan? What is not working so well?

Establish a schedule for constant review, whether it is quarterly, biannually or annually. This helps people stay connected with what is happening with the activities and to know whether the activity is completed, in process, delayed, or no longer viable. These updates allow for more efficient review and monitoring of the plan.

Plans vary in terms of time lines. They may cover several weeks, months, or even years. During this overall time span, new deadlines, new activities, and even new priorities will impact the plan, and adjustments will need to be made. Document these changes accordingly, communicate the changes, and continue to monitor progress toward completion.

Determine early on what data you wish to monitor, how often and when. Think about how the data will be used as you decide. Determine how the data will be collected, who will collect it and how it will be processed, analyzed, and communicated.

Benefits of Monitoring

One of the best benefits of monitoring the implementation plan is that problems will likely be noticed sooner. It also provides a venue for keeping the conversation about the project alive, communicating what is working, what is not and what has perhaps changed.

By monitoring the progress of the project or plan, you learn from experiences which will assist you in evaluating the project as you go along. This monitoring process will require keeping records and analyzing what comes out of the work.

When Things Don't Go As Planned

All implementation strategies have bumps in the road. When you run into problems, there are several corrective actions that can be taken. Look at the things you can change:

- ♦ Due dates or deadlines;
- ♦ Tactics that you're doing to implement the strategy;
- ♦ The strategy itself; and
- ♦ The original goal or objective.

Be willing to look at each element of the work to see what can change to move the project or plan forward and get to completion. Don't be afraid to go back to the drawing board. Does the original goal or objective need to be revisited? Should the idea be shelved entirely?

Elements of a Comprehensive Plan

Just a few notes about planning units, commissions, and comprehensive plans.

First, there can be no planning and zoning within a community unless they first create a planning unit and follow the other requirements of KRS Chapter 100. Depending on the situation, cities may have independent units, commissions and plans, or may have joint agreements and work with the county or other cities, or both. In Jefferson County, because there is a consolidated local government, cities are required to have planning and zoning – for all other cities it is optional. So cities should be aware of how their planning and zoning is set up, and look to the ordinances, planning unit agreement and comprehensive plan in place to determine exactly what they are authorized to do.

Many cities work in conjunction with their local county government to create or update a countywide comprehensive plan. In Kentucky, governing bodies are obligated to update the plan at least every five years in accordance with KRS 100.197. Often, a city will have its own section within the larger countywide plan. To accomplish this task, there are several steps typically followed by planners.

One early consideration is to find out if there is already a plan in place that should be modified.

Kentucky law (KRS 100.187) indicates that the following elements should be included in a comprehensive plan:

1. goals and objectives
2. land use

3. transportation
4. community facilities
5. provisions for military installations if contained within the planning boundary
6. other areas of possible elements might include community renewal, housing flood control, pollution, conservation, natural resources, regional impact, and historic preservation

Identify the Issues to be Addressed

The governing body will usually involve various community leaders, organizations, businesses, and ordinary citizens of varying age ranges, perspective and interest to help establish the issues that need to be addressed. Often this input is obtained in a public meeting setting. The group will discuss current issues of concern as well as look to the future about emerging trends and opportunities.

Establish Goals and Objectives

As issues are determined, goals for each area can be established. As goals are discussed, priorities can be determined that will lead officials as they make future decisions about the community.

A summary of goals and objectives and plan element adoption:

After the goals and objectives are prepared by the planning commission, the planning commission must hold a public hearing and forward the goals and objectives for consideration,

amendment, and adoption by the legislative bodies in the planning unit. [KRS 100.193]. Notice of the public hearing must be given at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the public hearing to public officials in each city and county adjacent to the planning unit. [KRS 100.193(2)].

Once the legislative bodies have adopted the goals and objectives, the planning commission prepares and adopts the plan elements after a public hearing. [KRS 100.197(1)]. Actions on the proposed goals and objectives must be taken within ninety (90) days of receipt from the planning commission. If no action is taken within ninety (90) days, the goals and objectives are deemed approved by operation of law.

NOTE: In counties containing a city of the first class or a consolidated local government, KRS 100.137(3) requires all legislation implementing or amending the plan or amended plan which affects cities of the first through fourth classes to be enacted by such cities and all other legislation implementing the plan or amended plan to be enacted by the fiscal court or, in the case of a consolidated local government, by the consolidated local government.

Obtain Facts and Data

The commission will need to make sure it meets all of the research requirements in KRS 100.191.

All comprehensive plans must be built upon factual data in order for the current conditions to be understood and to predict future conditions. Ordinarily the data is obtained through census data and local or regional economic entities. The data usually includes

information about land use and traffic patterns, environment concerns, social and economic conditions, public services, utilities, and some may include health and safety components.

Once this data is collected it is analyzed and studied. Outcomes include population projections, economic condition forecasts, transportation, and future housing needs. This information often leads to projections for facilities such as sewer plants, libraries, schools and hospitals as well as services like police and fire protection.

Develop the Plan

Using the stated goals and collected data, an overarching plan may be developed. The plan usually begins with a discussion of the past and a reflection of current conditions based upon the facts and data. This information is followed by goal statements and detailed plans that will be used in order to implement those goals into the community. Some plans may also contain

separate sections for important issues such as transportation or housing which follow the same standard format.

Develop specific strategies that detail what you will do in order to achieve the goals that were outlined for each area.

Determine specific activities that outline the steps necessary to complete each strategy.

Consider each priority the plan is intended to impact when choosing strategies and the activities that will support them.

There are often several steps that will be needed to accomplish each specific goal. In this section, specific steps may be suggested, as well as providing alternative approaches, along with cost evaluations that should be considered.

During this planning stage each of these alternatives should be weighted and evaluated and the best approach determined to ensure the most efficient and cost effective

way to realize the community's goals.

As leaders discuss how they are going to work towards the goals, they should establish benchmarks for each in order to measure success. Time lines are often included as a way to keep on task.

Adopting the Comprehensive Plan

Upon completion of the plan, the community must adopt it as an official statement of policy in order for it to take effect, per the specific statutory requirements for adoption, including public hearings, that must be met by the planning commission and the legislative body or bodies that have formed the commission. Once the plan is accepted by city officials it is then a legal statement of community policy in regards to future development.

A proposed time line for a comprehensive plan is shown in Appendix G.

Questions to consider as you work on a comprehensive plan.	Yes	No	Not Certain
Does the plan focus on the mission of the city?			
Does the plan have clearly defined goals and objectives?			
Is the plan instructive about how to attain the goals and what resources might be used?			
Does the plan offer alternatives? Are there proposed cost analysis and time lines?			
Does the plan provide benchmarks in order to evaluate success?			
Does the plan set the direction for three to five years?			
Has the plan been formally adopted by appropriate governing bodies?			

Implementing and Monitoring the Plan

By using the implementation plan created during the process, city leaders have a road map by which to manage ongoing implementation. It is important to constantly monitor how the work is moving forward and if changes need to be made in order to accomplish the stated goals.

A comprehensive plan is not a permanent document. For a growing community, it is imperative that the document be relevant and remains current.

Final Thoughts

Creating a strategic or comprehensive plan, or having one on the shelf, does not mean it will happen. The best plan in the world is useless without a good execution. For help on implementing your plan, please see pages 10-12 and Appendix F of this document.

Glossary of Terms

Action Plan - A detailed description of the vision, goals, strategies and steps used to implement a strategic plan.

Benchmarking - Gathering information about best practices by other organizations engaged in similar endeavors in order to help establish project goals.

Buy-in - Obtaining agreement from key stakeholders that the proposed plan is acceptable.

Capacity - The development of an organization's core skills and capabilities in order to build the organizations effectiveness. This may include skills such as leadership, management, finance and fund-raising, program development and implementation.

Capacity building is often made possible by offering technical support such as coaching, training, technical assistance and networking.

Case Study - A study containing data about one subject. These studies are typically based on anecdotal evidence, typically from interviews and personal observations.

Collaboration - Work together with other stakeholders or partners to share ideas and resources, especially in a joint intellectual effort.

Community Facilities - A general term used for common public facilities such as utilities, housing, public safety and health.

Comprehensive Plan - A detailed community or regional plan that discusses land uses over a long period of time. This plan may include specific plans for areas such as transportation, utilities, housing, safety and health. The specific statutory requirements for creation and content of a comprehensive plan are located in KRS Chapter 100.

Constituency - A group served by an organization or institution.

Demographics - Statistical data about the characteristics of human populations and population segments.

Evaluation - A study to determine the extent to which a plan, program, or project attained its goals.

Facilitator - A person, often from outside the group, who makes it easier for other people to accomplish objectives. This is accomplished by offering assistance in communicating divergent thoughts, solving problems, either with technical issues or with other people.

Feasibility Study - An assessment to determine if something is capable of being accomplished or brought about; possible.

Goal - A desired end result.

Grant Funding - Mechanism made available for a specific purpose.

Logo - A graphic mark or image used to promote instant recognition of an organization.

Mission Statement - A brief, comprehensive statement of purpose of an organization, business or individual.

Monitoring - Assessing the inputs and activities of a project.

Needs Assessment - A structured process to determine the needs of a designated group or individuals, an agency, a system, etc.

Objectives - Specific and measurable targets for accomplishing goals.

Outcomes - A statement that reflects the actual results achieved, as well as the impact or benefit, of a program.

Philanthropy - The term generally refers to the concept of voluntary giving by individuals or groups to promote the common good.

Glossary of Terms

Stakeholder - Any person or group with a vested interest in the outcome of a project or plan.

Strategic Plan - A doable, action-oriented guide based on internal and external factors that directs goal-setting and resource allocation to achieve meaningful results over time.

S.W.O.T. Analysis - An abbreviation used to denote analysis of an organization's internal strengths, weaknesses, external opportunities and threats.

Time Lines - The time frame anticipated to complete any given project or plan. May be noted in terms of monthly, quarterly, annually, or biannually.

Values Statement - A statement reflecting the shared beliefs of the organization; organizational culture.

Vision - A concise statement of a conceptual image of the desired future.

Potential List of Community Constituency Groups

Rotary Club	U.S. Forest Service
Jaycees	Kentucky Forest Service
Optimist Club	UK Extension Service
Lions Club	Major Employers
Garden Club	News Media
Red Hatters Society	City Government
Men's Club	County Government
Women's Club	Other Cities in your County
Area Development District	City/County Fire Department
Economic Development Council	EMS
Industrial Development Authority	County Sheriff's Office
Chamber of Commerce	City Police Department
Main Street/Downtown Development	Kentucky State Police
Environmental Organizations/Recycling	Realtors Association
Arts Community – Theatre; Musicians; Artists; Sculptors	Home Builders Association
Sister Cities	Habitat for Humanity
Ethnic Organizations	Social Services – Housing; Homeless; Children's Advocacy; Rape Crisis; Pregnancy Center
Educational Institutions – Public and Private	Student Government – High School and College/University
Financial Institutions	County Officials
Recreation Board	City Officials
Airport Board	Public Defenders Office
Tourism	Judges
Veterans Associations	Post Office(s)
Historical Society	
Public Library	
Utility Companies/Franchises	

Strategic Planning Process Outline Example

Preplanning Phase

- ◆ Selection and approval of steering committee.
- ◆ Prepare and mail to steering committee all preliminary information related to the initiative.

Meeting One

- ◆ Review relevant economic, demographic, and any other data related to the initiative.
- ◆ Establish a formal definition of project area boundary.
- ◆ Determine desired outcomes and if needed, a vision statement.
- ◆ Prep the steering committee for next phase - invite the public.

Meeting Two

- ◆ Conduct a public meeting of all stakeholders to introduce the initiative and collect input.
- ◆ Additional public meetings may be needed to obtain enough information to formulate a plan.

Meeting Three

- ◆ Establish strategies and recommendations based upon the input obtained from stakeholders.
- ◆ Once the initial information is put into a manageable format, another public meeting should be held to present and obtain reactions to proposals developed around the public's input.
- ◆ Adjust the preliminary plan as needed based upon reactions and potential new input.

Meeting Four

- ◆ Steering committee meets to finalize the strategies based upon input from public meetings.
- ◆ Develop recommendations for each of the planning components.

Meeting Five

- ◆ Review with steering committee the final recommendations and implementation strategies.

Meeting Six

- ◆ Present plan to city council and/or planning commission as required.
- ◆ Adoption of final documents by city council.
- ◆ Determine next steps and implement.

Steering Committee - Sample Agenda for First Meeting

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Role of the advisory committee
3. Overview of the planning process
4. Overview of the planning initiative
5. Review of pertinent data
 - ◆ Demographic and economic information
 - ◆ Current land use and land use controls
6. Questions
7. Establish agenda items for next meeting
8. Work assignments, if any
9. Establish next meeting date

Potential Handouts to Consider

1. Contact information for steering committee members, city council members and pertinent staff.
2. Copy of any existing plans that may be pertinent to the discussion.
3. Outline of planning process (found in appendix B.).
4. Demographic and economic reports for the project area.
5. Maps showing aerial view, land use, zoning, form districts, flood plain, and proposed study area.

S.W.O.T. Worksheet

Strengths – List all of the positive attributes of the community.

Weaknesses – Describe the weaknesses of the community.

Opportunities – Envision the things that are possible.

Threats – What could cause the community to fail?

Goals and Objectives Sample

Goal: Establish and support a volunteer board to enhance the downtown area.

Objectives

1. Develop and implement a strategic plan for future development of the downtown that will be incorporated and adopted into the comprehensive plan.
2. Work with all partners within the community to determine activities for youth in the downtown. Note the suggestion of YMCA from the public hearing of April 2012.
3. Undertake a cleanup effort of the central business district.

Methodology

- Utilizing the community at large within the planning process, establish realistic goals regarding needs within the downtown.
- Work with existing local entities that currently deal with youth to discern appropriate activities for youth within the downtown.
- Organize a volunteer group of concerned citizens to plan for cleaning up the downtown over the next six months.

Proposed Action Plan

Strategy: Downtown Renewal

Time Line: Underway/ongoing

Establish a volunteer organizational structure and provide the funding mechanism.

- a. Establish a board of directors to manage the downtown efforts.
- b. Hire a part-time manager and provide office space.
- c. Identify funding in the annual budget by line item.
- d. Develop ongoing program of work by which the board will operate.

Strategy: Youth Activities

Time Line: One year

- a. Organize a collective meeting of the minds to conduct a S.W.O.T. analysis of the current youth situation and make recommendations.
- b. Develop and promote activities for area youth in the downtown.

Strategy: Implementation – Cleanup

Time Line: Six months

- a. Obtain input from a voluntary group of citizens and develop a plan of action to clean up the downtown.
- b. Review existing ordinances that pertain to the downtown improvement effort and update or change as needed.

Immediate Project Implementation

1. Identify your project/issue. Describe it in detail.
2. What needs to be done?
 - a. What does the end product look like?
 - b. How will you know you've been successful?
3. Who needs to be on board with the project? (Stakeholders)
4. How much will it cost? (Budget)
5. Who will pay for it? (Funding sources)
6. What is the first step? And then what?
7. Who will lead and do each step? (Take action)
8. When will it be done? (Time line and accountability)
9. How will you tell the story? Who do you want to hear the story? (Marketing)

Project	Planning Entity	Funding	Implementation
Parks and recreation plan	Advisory board, rec department and board	Grant requests, city match, fundraising	2 years
Remove outdated signs	Advisory board and public works leadership	n/a	6-9 months
Establish dialogue with business owners	Volunteer committee members	n/a	Ongoing
Tree ordinance	Advisory board	n/a	4-6 months
Streetscape design	Advisory board and volunteer committee	Grant, TEA-21, city	1 year plus
Blight control	Volunteer committee and code enforcement	Recycling funds	Ongoing

Comprehensive Plan Proposed Time Line

First Quarter

- ◆ Seek out background information and any previous strategic or planning documents.
- ◆ Determine the best methods for reaching constituencies:
 - survey instruments
 - briefings with individuals or groups
 - social media interaction
- ◆ Establish a steering committee of local citizens to monitor and guide the comprehensive planning process.
- ◆ Conduct research and meet as necessary to prepare for the public engagement process.

Second Quarter

Citizen Engagement and Strategic Planning

- ◆ First public meeting
 - explain the purpose of the comprehensive planning process
 - identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (S.W.O.T.) of the community
 - commit to work on a project team to implement strategies
- ◆ Second public meeting
 - report to the community
 - establish project teams to develop strategies and implement
- ◆ Continue to research and develop the comprehensive plan and keep the city, planning commission and public informed of the progress.

Third Quarter

- ◆ Third public meeting
 - provide the public with a draft of the work for feedback and to obtain additional input
- ◆ Project teams will continue to meet and work toward implementing additional projects.
- ◆ Finalize all data and establish dates for presentation to city council and planning commissions.

Fourth Quarter

- ◆ Fourth public meeting
 - public hearing before the planning commission
 - public hearing before the city council/commission

If no changes or additions are to be made and the plans are adopted, provide access to final documents to the public via Internet access or other physical locations such as city or utility properties and/or the public library.



Kentucky League of Cities

100 East Vine Street, Suite 800, Lexington, Kentucky 40507

Tel. 859.977.3700 or 800.876.4552

Fax 859.977.3703

klc.org

