

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN

2018 - 2022



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SWWRPC'S CORE ELEMENTS



VALUES

- Supporting communities in achieving their goals.
- Providing indispensable services.
- Believing in the knowledge of local community members.
- Having a thorough knowledge of the region.
- Promoting the uniqueness of the region.
- Working collaboratively with community members and clients.

MISSION

The Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission collaborates with communities and organizations to build capacity within southwestern Wisconsin, serving as advocates for its residents. We create opportunities and develop dynamic solutions to the challenges facing the region. We foster growth by supporting innovative endeavors that provide tangible benefits to those we serve. We believe in the bold vision of southwestern Wisconsin and work to build the region's future.

VISION

We envision a southwestern Wisconsin that has met its full potential. A place that is recognized for its resilient and diverse economy, high quality of life, and distinctive Driftless landscape. It will be a place where interconnected bonds between individuals and organizations form strong communities of inclusion and cooperation. Southwestern Wisconsin will be a place where the richness of the land contributes to the healthy lives of its residents and visitors — and the stewardship of our natural resources is a shared and valued responsibility. Our region will be a place that fosters innovation and creativity, inspiring and empowering thinkers and doers. With deep respect for the traditions that built southwestern Wisconsin, we strive to create the best possible region for tomorrow.

CORE QUALITIES OF STAFF

- Professional
- Credible
- Ethical

STRATEGY: Market SWWRPC (Services, Skills, and Successes).

STRATEGY DEFINITION: With the many organizations in the region, it is key that SWWRPC distinguishes itself for its unique array of high-quality planning services at an affordable cost. Based on the results of the Client and Partner survey, and staffs' first-hand experiences, it has become apparent that SWWRPC will need to start at the basics with marketing, focusing on creating a foundational understanding of SWWRPC's role.

DESIRED OUTCOME: Communities throughout the five-county region have a strong understanding of the role of SWWRPC and the value that SWWRCP can bring to their community.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: A growing percentage of proposals that materialize into contracts.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director and Commission

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: All staff

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Develop an elevator speech to be used by Commissioners and staff (15 seconds).	Executive Director and Commissioners
Write success stories of SWWRPC and their clients and post on SWWRP's website and Facebook, and provide to the press. The stories can have a particular focus on showcasing SWWRPC's local knowledge.	All staff
Create, distribute and promote engaging press materials such as press releases, articles, photographs and video.	Economic Development Specialist
Hold finished project events, like a "reveal," "ribbon cutting," and a "photo-op."	All staff
Build relationships with press (online and offline).	All staff
Write engaging press releases regarding SWWRPC's work and provide to the press for publishing.	All staff
Provide media training for staff.	Executive Director and Economic Development Specialist

STRATEGY: Expand SWWRPC Services.

STRATEGY DEFINITION: Given the wide range of skills existing within SWWRPC and the plethora of projects planning skills can be applied to, SWWRPC is expanding their role in communities by providing new services.

DESIRED OUTCOME: Increased and diversity of revenue.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Diversity of project types provided.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: All Staff

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Hire with the goal of increasing diversity of skills among staff.	Executive Director
Train and cross-train staff to continue to develop their skills.	Executive Director
Consistently seek new projects and types of work.	All staff
Provide mobility management services.	Executive Director and all staff
Provide housing supply and quality studies.	Executive Director and all staff
Provide technical review and public comment on proposed transportation design.	Executive Director and all staff
Promote the design/use of industrial development.	Executive Director and all staff
Provide regional marketing (could be a marketing cooperative.)	Executive Director and all staff
Complete studies on municipality viability.	Executive Director and all staff
Pursue more opportunities to share staff with other entities (for example, half the time with SWWRPC and half the time with another entity).	Executive Director
Provide information to communities on methods and potential funding for historic preservation.	Executive Director and all staff

STRATEGY: Retain Staff

STRATEGY DEFINITION: Having staff who have been with an organization long-term is paramount in building relationships with clients and partners, ensuring institutional knowledge, creating strong team dynamics, and more. Therefore, SWWRPC is focusing on methods to ensure staff feel valued, can grow at SWWRPC in order to retain staff for many years.

DESIRED OUTCOME: Increasing tenure of staff across years.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Average years from tenure for staff.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: Commission

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Get average tenure from other Regional Planning Commissions to define a reasonable metric to achieve.	Executive Director
Create a database of proven professionals willing to work short-term and temporary to fill-in when workloads are large.	Executive Director
Have a defined method for progression, including a formal salary structure and levels based on proficiencies in skills. (Study compensation packages of similar organizations.)	Executive Director
Expand work responsibilities of staff over time to allow staff growth.	Executive Director
Continue the use of interns to aid in workload.	All staff
Continue providing a flexible work environment, including the development of policies and practices to support flex time and working from home.	Executive Director
Continue to encourage autonomous decision-making and project management.	All staff
During staff annual reviews, ask about their ideas for methods to help retain staff.	Executive Director
Continue to consider the staffs' creative ideas, solutions, and projects.	Executive Director

STRATEGY: Expand the Diversity of Commission Members.

STRATEGY DEFINITION: Diverse partnerships lead to diverse ideas, discussions, and overall more thoughtful, vetted decisions. With this in mind, and with consideration of the increasingly diverse communities SWWRPC serves, it is critical that the Commission is composed of members that are diverse in age, ethnicity, gender, and planning specialty.

DESIRED OUTCOME: Unique ideas vetted by a diverse group of people.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Members diverse in age, ethnicity, gender, and planning specialty.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: Commissioners

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Develop a list of desired technical specialties for Commissioners (economic development, technology, agriculture, etc.)	Executive Director and Commissioners
Continue to create a welcoming atmosphere at the Commission, where all ideas and people are respected.	Executive Director and Commissioners
Inform elected officials and County Board Chairs of desired qualities, skills, and backgrounds of commission members.	Executive Director

STRATEGY: Build Collaboration Among Staff Members.

STRATEGY DEFINITION: Within SWWRPC, staff are at times busy with, and focused on, the projects they are managing, with little collaboration with coworkers. Eliminating these silos within the organization to ensure that all staff members are aware of each others' projects and are contributing to such projects, was stated by staff members to be a high priority. Doing so will allow staff to diversify what they work on, get to know their coworkers, use each others' strengths, and create more thoughtful projects.

DESIRED OUTCOME: All staff are contributing to another staff member's project, and are aware of all projects being completed by the team.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Number of staff members involved in a single project.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: All staff

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Create an organizational wide project Gant chart. Then look for ways for staff members to 'plug-in' to the projects based on skills and interest. Discuss this during staff meetings to look for opportunities to share workloads.	All staff
On a whiteboard, write tasks to give away, and what type of work you're interested in doing (to trade). This board can also include a list of strengths and needs per staff member, determined by the staff, themselves.	All staff
Shadow each other's work and assist at events.	All staff
Do small group cross-trainings, so that everyone has a base understanding of each other's work. (Trainings could include the use of EMSI, GIS, US Census data, etc.)	All staff
Create an individual Wiki page for types of software, websites, or other work programs used at SWWRPC (such as, OnTheMap, the basics of EMSI, etc.). The Wiki page could provide a basic overview with links to website/videos with more information.	All staff
Write proposals as a team.	All staff
Collaboratively peer review project outlines (and other documents determined at the beginning of the project), along with final documents.	All staff

STRATEGY: Ensure Staff Have the Skills, Training, and Confidence to do Their Job Effectively.

STRATEGY DEFINITION: With the diverse range of work that SWWRPC is asked to perform, staff are at times working on projects that are unlike other projects they have worked on. This can cause stress and burn-out if not properly trained and supported. Therefore, it is critical that the organization works to create a work atmosphere focused on learning, growth, and support.

DESIRED OUTCOME: High quality work and confident, supported staff.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Staff expressing that they feel supported during annual reviews.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: All staff

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
If a staff member is leading a project they have not done before, provide a training opportunity before the project begins (for example, a webinar or in-person training by a specialist organization).	Executive Director
Provide guidance and regular check-ins with staff on all projects.	Executive Director
Develop a project management schedule, which includes a kick-off meeting, progress meetings, and as-needed formal and in-formal communication.	Executive Director and all staff.
Staff speak freely about trepidations with completing a project, if such trepidations exist, and the Executive Director supports accordingly.	All staff
Ensure it is known that nobody is alone in the organization, and everyone is responsible for supporting each other's work.	All staff
Shadow each other's work and assist at events.	All staff

STRATEGY: Ensure Staffs' Work and Training Align with Their Desired Career Path within SWWRPC.

STRATEGY DEFINITION: SWWRPC must be seen as an outlet for staff to achieve their long term career path goals (not another employer). Therefore, it is important for there to be an understanding of each staff member's long term work goals and a collaborative effort to help each other achieve these goals through SWWRPC.

DESIRED OUTCOME: Staff feeling that they do not need to work elsewhere to achieve career path goals.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Upward trend of staff tenure across five years.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: All staff

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Discuss desired career path during Annual Reviews. (I.e. Where do you want to be in five years? What skills do you want to have? What job do you want to have?) Then discuss ways in which SWWRPC can help the staff member achieve desired path.	Executive Director and all staff
Proactively look for projects that align with desired career path and ask to be involved (if project is existing) or submit a proposal (if project is not yet existing).	All staff
Complete informational interviews with partners or clients during work time, to learn about their career path and advice.	All staff
Attend trainings that specifically tie to achieving one's career path and align with the needs of the organization.	Executive Director and all staff

STRATEGY: Celebrate Individual and Team Successes.

STRATEGY DEFINITION: SWWRPC is working to internally highlight the accomplishments of its team and individual staff members to create an atmosphere of encouragement and gratitude.

DESIRED OUTCOME: Staff feel valued and are encouraged to continue caring about their work.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Number of times staff or team accomplishments are discussed and number of team celebrations.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: Executive Director

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: All staff

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Send emails to all staff sharing good news and congratulating each other (for winning a new project, being featured in a newspaper, completing a project, etc.)	All staff
Have celebratory events for accomplishments. These events could include a picnic, canoeing, seeing a movie, playing board games, etc.	A self-chosen group of staff
Continue an atmosphere where staff thank and congratulate each other regularly.	All staff
Hang thank you cards, print-outs of thank you or congratulatory emails, and similar items on a wall in a frequently seen location.	Executive Director
Bring in treats on special days (like the last day of a project, etc.)	All staff

STRATEGY: Create a Caring and Upbeat Atmosphere.

STRATEGY DEFINITION: Workplace atmosphere is well-known as a contributor to a employee’s satisfaction with their job and the quality of their work products. With this in mind, SWWRPC is working to continue its focus on creating an engaging and positive work environment.

DESIRED OUTCOME: Staff feeling supported and happy to be at work.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: Staff expressing satisfaction with their job during annual reviews.

GOAL CHAMPIONS: All staff

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS: Not applicable

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Check in with staff members on how their projects are going, if they need any support, etc.	All staff
Continue to ask for staffs’ input on office décor and amenities.	Executive Director and all staff
Continue to write quotes and draw pictures on whiteboards in the office.	All staff

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TRACKING

The progress of this plan will be tracked quarterly through a supplemental Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet lists the Actions, Responsible Parties, Timelines, Estimated Financial Costs, and Progress.

EXAMPLE OF SHEET:

LAST UPDATE: [INSERT DATE]					
STRATEGY: Market SWWRPC (Services, Skills, and Successes).					
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	START DATE	END DATE (if applicable)	ESTIMATED FINANCIAL COST	PROGRESS
Develop an elevator speech to be used by Commissioners and staff (15 seconds).	Executive Director and Commissioners				
Write success stories of SWWRPC and their clients and post on SWWRP's website and Facebook, and provide to the press. The stories can have a particular focus on showcasing SWWRPC's local knowledge.	All staff				
Create, distribute and promote engaging press materials such as press releases, articles, photographs and video.	Economic Development Specialist				
Hold finished project events, like a "reveal," "ribbon cutting," and a "photo-op."	All staff				
Build relationships with press (online and offline).	All staff				
Write engaging press releases regarding SWWRPC's work and provide to the press for publishing.	All staff				