

Advancing Statewide Spatial Data
Infrastructures in Support of the National
Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI)

Strategic Planning Process Map

For use by all Stakeholders in the Geospatial Community



National States Geographic Information Council

Produced by NSGIC
for the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC)

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APPLIED GEOGRAPHICS, INC.

Empowering People with Spatial Solutions

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This document was created by Applied Geographics Inc. in cooperation with a
committee of diverse stakeholders from the Geospatial Community.

Foreword

The many natural disasters that occurred during 2005 provide a compelling reason why all members of the geospatial community must work together to build effective statewide spatial data infrastructures (SSDI) that serve and protect our citizens. Over the coming decade, diverse stakeholder groups will have to work closely together if we are to aggregate these SSDIs to complete the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). Just as the federal government relies on individual states to participate in national programs, the states must rely on all levels of government, academia, utilities, the private sector and non-profit organizations to contribute to statewide programs.

Strategic planning is a critical element for articulating a shared vision, and for building the partnerships that are necessary for disparate organizations to work together on common goals. The key is to identify geospatial needs that are shared by many stakeholder groups. For instance, it is easy to envision that statewide orthoimagery acquired on a routine basis would be useful to almost all stakeholder groups. Effective strategic planning is essential for moving collaborative programs forward and gaining the required support for investments in your SSDI.

This project is part of the Fifty States initiative from the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC). A core component of this Initiative is establishing more formal statewide geospatial coordination councils that will help to govern and complete the NSDI by enabling all stakeholders. The principal goals of this project are to:

- Encourage implementation of statewide spatial data infrastructures through effective strategic and business planning efforts.
- Provide guidance on planning activities.
- Encourage the formation of partnerships and alliances that will improve planning process.
- Provide a uniform national framework for strategic and business plans, so we can compare and contrast them to reveal national trends.

Effective planning is essential for moving collaborative programs forward and obtaining funding for your SSDI. Several documents have been created to support the geospatial community in these planning efforts, including:

- A **Strategic Plan Template** that provides a process for mapping a clear path from present conditions to a vision for the future.
- A **Strategic Planning Process Map** that divides the process of creating the strategic plan into five simple steps or phases that are each characterized by certain activities, tasks, and accomplishments.
- A **Business Plan Template** that provides a detailed description of how objectives will be achieved, along with the necessary justification for doing them.

The Strategic and Business Plan templates each include major section headings with key information and a series of questions that should be considered. The planning team will determine which questions are applicable for their activities and use the answers to these questions to help draft an effective plan. This structure was developed, because “one size does not fit all” for these plans. While the organizational structure can, and should be very similar, the specific content of each section will vary for a variety of reasons reflecting the differences in the organizations undertaking the plans.

Using these templates will help guide you through the entire process of preparing high quality and effective strategic and business plans. By simply substituting terms such as “countywide” and “citywide” for “statewide,” the templates should work well for most stakeholder groups.

The authors of these templates believe that the “process” of working with people to create these plans, including the partnerships that are formed, may be more valuable than the actual plans. Please make the process a valuable learning experience that leads to trust and new partnership opportunities.

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Introduction

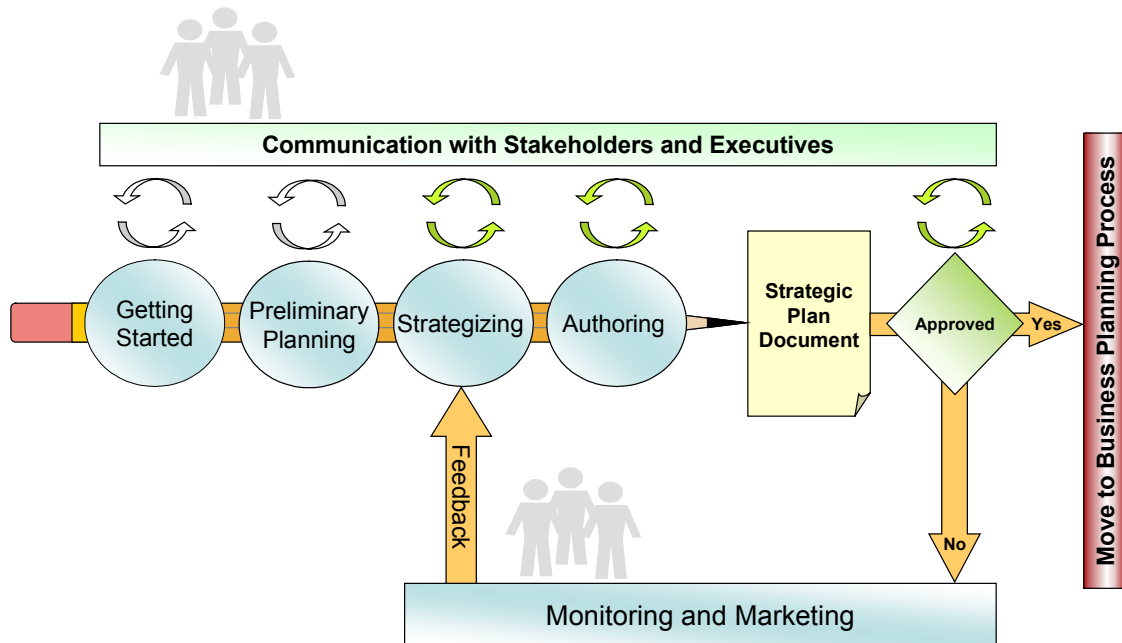
By using the **NSGIC Strategic Plan Template** any group of stakeholders in the geospatial community can develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan that will help them to implement their vision of a shared statewide spatial data infrastructure (SSDI). The Strategic Plan Template provides an overall structure and process for developing a strategic plan. It has a comprehensive list of subjects to be discussed, debated, and decided on by the group of stakeholders (Committee) that is tasked with authoring the Strategic Plan. During this process, your Committee will meet and work together to plan for, strategize, and author the Strategic Plan. Once the plan has been formally adopted by the Committee, its members will need to market the plan's adoption and monitor progress on its implementation.

This **Strategic Planning Process Map (SPP Map)** has been developed to help the Committee author the Strategic Plan. The SPP Map divides up the process of creating a strategic plan into five simple steps or phases. Each phase is characterized by certain activities, tasks, and accomplishments. Your Committee is encouraged to use the SPP Map to help it get organized, focused, and productive. Its simple format will help you get the job done quickly and efficiently.

As with the Strategic Plan Template, the SPP Map offers a structure and approach that should be appropriately modified to suit the needs of your Committee as you undertake the strategic planning task.

Good Luck!

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS MAP



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The Figure above shows the five phases of creating a strategic plan and managing the process. A feedback loop ensures that progress towards achieving plan goals is being monitored and that appropriate strategy adjustments are made to account for changing conditions. This diagram is intentionally meant to be a simplified view of the process. It is essential that you seek and incorporate management and stakeholder feedback during every phase of the planning process. Working through the planning process with all of the stakeholders can be a valuable bonding experience that leads to trust and improved cooperation. Try to create an environment that encourages bonding between the stakeholders.

Phase 1 - Getting Started

- Identify likely Planning Committee participants and determine their willingness to participate
- Establish a Strategic Planning Committee that is able to effectively identify the issues, develop practical solutions, and create clear objectives
- Define roles and responsibilities for completing the strategic planning process
- Assign roles and responsibilities
- Assign the role of Facilitator for the planning process
- Nominate a Committee Chair
- Specify the target audience for the Strategic Plan
- Determine the plan approval process

Phase 2 - Preliminary Planning

Logistics

- Schedule a kick-off meeting
- Determine future meeting frequency and dates
- Determine the venue(s) for meetings and if there is an appropriate budget for amenities such as food service.
- Establish Strategic Planning Committee tools for communication exchange

Resource Planning

- Determine what resources are needed to complete the effort
- Assess what resources are available and how any existing gaps can be bridged
- Document and understand the impact of any relevant constraints to the planning process itself (time, money, people availability)

Schedule

- Identify any timing considerations, such as grant application deadlines, or other planning efforts (such as statewide IT plans)
- Develop a schedule and establish milestone dates for completing the plan

Organization

- Establish a Strategic Planning Committee Charter
- Establish sub-committees as necessary and ensure that subcommittee chairs understand what is expected of them
- Identify factors that will ensure a successful planning process

Phase 3 - Strategizing

Scoping

- Review any existing Strategic Plan(s)
- Review Primary Strategic Goals
- Review other intra-organizational mandates and mission statements that impact the current activity
- Review other documents and materials that are relevant to this effort
- Understand the breadth and scope of the strategic plan
- Determine period covered by new Strategic Plan
- Review Strategic Template Questions and tailor as appropriate (Facilitator)

Goal Assessment

- Develop templates for capturing information in a structured manner, for example, develop a form for the Planning Committee to list strengths and weaknesses
- Identify preliminary programmatic sub-goals
- Itemize, prioritize, refine, and validate programmatic sub-goals
- Validate objectives with stakeholders, management, and executives
- Identify programmatic goals with a 'quick win' potential and use them to show early progress
- Develop strategies for realizing each programmatic sub-goal
- Identify any roadblocks or barriers and tactics for overcoming them
- Analyze Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)
- Iterate with stakeholders to establish consensus view

Generating Support

- Enlist political champion(s)
- Identify and generate consensus among involved stakeholders and executives to become advocates for the plan objectives
- Develop a marketing strategy to promote the plan's objectives

Phase 4 - Authoring

- Develop content aimed at the target readership in terms of style and presentation
- Draft a preliminary plan
- Identify external reviewers
- Solicit feedback from external reviewers
- Parse and incorporate feedback as appropriate
- As necessary, complete further review iterations
- Publish the Strategic Plan

Phase 5 – Monitoring and Marketing

- Determine the level of progress monitoring required for this planning activity and how feedback will be incorporated into the process
- Develop metrics to assess progress over time
- Identify those responsible for overseeing the status review process
- Determine the frequency of status review meetings
- Review emerging Opportunities and Threats and apply course corrections as necessary
- Identify and market to specific individuals whose support can further guarantee a successful planning outcome
- Identify appropriate forums for the active and broad marketing of the strategic plan goals and objectives, (these could be conferences, user group meetings or other similar gatherings)
- Determine how feedback from marketing efforts will be incorporated into the process

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