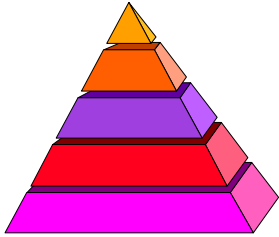


General Action Recommendations

A strategic plan focuses on how an organization responds to the issues it faces. The following recommendations are designed to help St. Louis County government align its organization, resources, policies, and practices with the issues raised during the strategic planning process. These recommended actions are overarching, intending to cut across all aspects of County government.



Organizational Structure of St. Louis County Government

St. Louis County's physical development since World War II has followed a path of new growth and development so that today there is a full range of land uses supporting the high quality of life in the County. However, St. Louis County government still retains most of the same organizational structure that facilitated the growth and prosperity. Maintaining that prosperity and finding new avenues of growth may take a different organizational structure.

Even the changing nature of the St. Louis region's transportation network may require a different organizational response from County government. County residents and businesses tend to view transportation as more than streets and highways. The public's interest in expanding MetroLink, finding alternatives to the automobile, and recognizing that transportation is related to job growth and revitalization, all point to a broader, more holistic view of the issue.

Providing local government services to County residents in unincorporated communities has long been a responsibility of County government. As unincorporated areas have become more established and matured over the years, their service needs have changed. Coupled with the impact of annexations and incorporations, St. Louis County government needs to be an organization that can maintain and deliver a flexible set of services and improve responsiveness to constituents.

Finally, as the most populous County in greater St. Louis and the location of the largest number of jobs, the region looks to St. Louis County for leadership,

guidance, stability, and creativity. The County's role in the region is vitally important to the quality of life in all jurisdictions in both states. St. Louis County government should be structured to reflect this external role.

Actions to Address County Government's Organizational Issues

Consolidation of departments and agencies

to better respond to the strategic issues identified in this plan should be examined. Shifting divisions or sections from some departments to more appropriate locations in other departments should be considered.

Creation of formal relationships of key departments and agencies

around the strategic issues should be explored. Short of consolidation, standing committees or work groups could address specific strategies identified in this plan.

Developing strategic plans within each department

of St. Louis County government is a logical next step. Department plans should be linked to this Strategic Plan and demonstrate how the four key strategic issues will be addressed. To date, the St. Louis County Economic Council, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and Department of Health have strategic plans.



Expanded Communications With County Citizens

Throughout the planning process, the need for greater links between citizens, businesses, municipalities, and other organizations and County

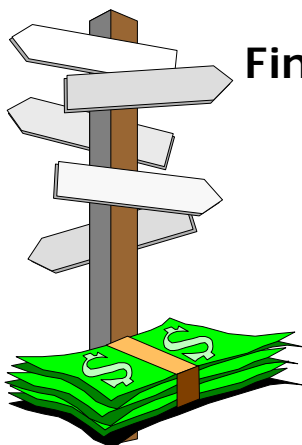
government was raised. Government officials discussed it during the retreat. Community forum participants voiced their desire for more information and ways to have input. Telephone survey and focus group respondents rated improved communications as very important. Clearly, this is an issue that cuts across all County departments. Given major enhancements in communications technology, links with the citizens should and can be readily expanded.

Actions to Address Communication

- ‘ **An overall communications plan for St. Louis County government** should be created to address the best ways to get information to County citizens, as well as how best to get their input. Such a plan should explore the use of newsletters, other direct mail options, surveys, new technologies and other creative means.
- ‘ **Responsiveness to citizens’ questions, concerns, and service requests should be improved.** Extensive customer training for employees, as well as better use of new technologies should be examined.
- ‘ **Continue to improve and expand upon St. Louis County’s current website**, www.stlouisco.com, with easy links to the various departments, services, and, very importantly, to other jurisdictions providing the services requested by citizens.



- ‘ **Access to information for citizens should be made easier.** Through the use of e-mail and voice mail, citizens could leave comments and questions at any time of the day while also receiving pre-recorded information on frequently asked questions. These options should complement, not replace, personal contact with the public.
- ‘ **A separate annual report on the progress of the Strategic Plan** should be published. The report would reinforce the value of planning in improving St. Louis County’s quality of life while also motivating County officials to follow through on the plan’s adopted policies and actions.



Financing Changes and Growth in St. Louis County

None of the general action recommendations or outcomes and strategies of the 2000-2004 Strategic Plan come free of charge over the next five years. Most will likely involve shifting resources within

County government and within departments in order to achieve the desired outcomes. Others will require new sources of funding, some of which are identified in the Strategic Plan. Linking departmental budgets to the Strategic Plan and its priorities is critical to implementation. This complex process can be expected to occur over the life of the 2000-2004 Strategic Plan.

Actions for Funding

- ' **Existing resources should be analyzed annually to determine if they support the desired outcomes of the plan.** Consideration should be given to reallocating existing resources to fund strategic priorities.
- ' **Additional resources needed to implement the Strategic Plan should be identified.** Possible sources of funding might include creating new taxes and fees, pursuing state, federal, and philanthropic grants, and, if necessary, raising existing taxes and fees. Continually enhancing the County's tax base, as well as improving efficiencies should be pursued as well.
- ' **Funding for capital improvements should be a priority.** The identified strategic issues raise the need for a countywide capital improvement plan, possibly funded by a bond issue. County voters last approved a general bond issue for streets, parks, and other improvements in 1986. With its AAA bond rating, St. Louis County is in an excellent position to evaluate this option.



Recognizing the Diversity of St. Louis County's Population

St. Louis County, like other parts of the country, has become more diverse in the last 25 years. The County's growth has included persons of all races and ethnic backgrounds, and the rate of increase appears to continue to grow. Given these changes, St. Louis County must become increasingly sensitive and responsive to the changing faces, cultures, and languages of County citizens.

Actions to Address Diversity

- ' **St. Louis County's ability to be inclusive will set an example for others.** Policies and practices to promote diversity should be reviewed, developed, and implemented.
- ' **Increase the level of awareness and expertise within County government to assist residents and neighborhoods** in addressing diversity issues. Additional training, partnering with organizations with the needed expertise, or designating community liaisons should be considered.
- ' **Engage regional organizations, community leaders, and citizens in round table discussions and other activities** to break down racial and ethnic barriers in the County's communities. Historic obstacles must be removed throughout the region to assure equal opportunity for every citizen.
- ' **Continue tracking and reporting minority participation in County Government** including the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of staff, as well as the appointment of representatives to County boards and commissions.