

# GES 678: Week 2

## Presentation of Strategic Plans

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## Presentation Notes

**Guiding Question:** Based on your research and discussion in class, identify the top 5 “must haves” in a strategic plan. Explain in a few sentences for each item why these are critical to the plan’s audience and the potential impact of not having these in the plan.

My five things:

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction/Background
3. Current or Existing Conditions
4. Challenges and Opportunities (or Needs Assessment)
5. Implementation Plan

Other things of note, seen in presentations:

### **Niki: Montgomery Parks**

Survey tables were provided, with LOTS of data

Common elements:

- Goals
  - Very clearly enumerated goals; made up most of the plan
- Analysis of Needs
  - Only available as a link to a secure file; not public
  - Petersburg, ON surveyed employees on what softwares they thought they needed
- Action Items
  - Under each goal, most of the report was made up by action items
  - Intended for internal use; not as useful as the intro sections (especially for the public)
- Schedule
  - Set up as a Gantt chart, laid out deadlines for action items and goals
- Staffing
  - For each action item, there was a discussion on if necessary staffing was available

Lacking elements:

- Skimpy text

- Not much discussion of why the plan itself was useful
- Metrics
  - No discussion of what metrics would be due by which deadline
- Budget/funding/resources
  - No discussion of necessary resources
- Acronyms
  - Too many, not defined

Best aspect:

- Scheduling, particularly how it was laid out in the Gantt-esque chart per action item

First action:

- Work to identify SMEs, learn their needs, and inventory their data

Questions:

**Any mention of external stakeholders?** No, just discussion of internal (within county) stakeholders and participants

**Was it appropriate to be shared?** Sometimes, it's required. Montgomery Parks specifically includes documents in their definition of open data.

Professor Schlee: This may be considered more of a “project plan” than a strategic plan; it wasn't really looking into the future with a vision or mission.

### **Angela: Wayne County, NY**

Common elements:

- Introduction
  - Why and how it's useful
- Mention of mission, vision, and goals
  - Goals contained tasks or objectives, depending on the plan
- Focus on community and transparency
  - Emphasis on open data
- Creates committees and subgroups

- Interdepartmental collaboration was emphasized
- Living document
  - Discussion of revisitation and updates, or creation of a progress report for information. This allows flexibility and pivoting as an organization

What set Wayne County apart:

- Phased approach, with multiple easy-to-access previous reports
  - DOI and EPA both just put the plan out on a bare bones website
- Wayne County used a consultant to carry out their plan, with 6 pillars of GIS sustainability
- Used SMART concepts when creating goals
- ROI and Cost Analysis
  - Broke down cost by year, which is useful in a phased plan
  - High-level and low-level explanation of tasks

What's missing:

- No explicit mention of GIS mission, just IT as a whole

First steps:

- Present to decision makers (steering/executive committee)
- Once budget is approved, meet with technical committee and user group to prioritize tasks and goals
  - Think of other guiding questions (living document)
  - Assign tasks to committees and user groups
    - \* Create subgroups if necessary
- Create a progress tracking tool
- Create SOPs and trainings for all GIS users
- Reassess, report, and repeat

Questions:

**Opinions on hiring a consultant?** If there was no GIS department (there was no mission statement in the plan!) then having a consultant could be useful due to minimal in-house experience.

**In the ROI analysis, where did they see the investment coming from and benefiting?**

It may not be in revenue, but they can save costs on contractors, time, or increase intelligence.

## Beth: Pennsylvania NextGen 911

NextGen 911 is a method to locate a caller using wifi/cell instead of landline.

Common features:

- Mission statement/Defining purpose
- Background/Current state
- Goals and Priorities
  - Strengths: action steps and anticipated outcomes
  - Each goal has background on current state of affairs
  - Outcomes allow for measurement and benchmarking success
    - \* *e.g.* all new addresses will be in accordance with NG911 standards statewide
- Timeline/Roadmap
- Appendix

Missing features:

- Equipment/resource information
  - They're getting information from 60+ counties statewide
- Not much of a discussion of the purpose and need for an updated GIS

First steps:

- Survey 911 call centers to see their GIS staffing needs
- Engage with PA counties regarding addressing standards
- Align PA layers with surrounding jurisdictions

Questions:

**Was there a timeline to the plan?** Yes, there was a chart included with years, but not specific dates

**Was there a section discussing necessary training?** Yes, there was mention of training employees in new processes and standards. They discussed a need for all reporting agencies to understand best practices.

## Emilia: USDA

- Nothing was missing from the strategic plan; all were addressed at least once
- Clear timelines were given for goals and tasks

### Common elements:

- Cost/ROI analysis
- Current state/tech baseline
- SWOT analysis
  - Largest threats were staffing and funding
- Want to improve and encourage community engagement through GIS
- Emphasize collaboration and support from higher-ups in relevant agencies

### Notable differences:

- No breakdown of org structure and capacity by department
- No discussion of “trends impacting GIS”
- No discussion of difficulty in acquiring and sharing data (internal and external)

### Highlights:

- Implementation Approach
  - Concise, maybe too concise
- Expansion of data access across USDA, building on existing business unit strengths
- The plan was very successful in explaining the purpose and need for GIS
  - Goal specifically dedicated to increasing understanding of value of spatial info and education/training that will be used to do so
  - Breaks into sections: Education, Adoption and Use, Funding and Staff
  - No discussion of how GIS can impact external stakeholders (public)

### First steps:

- Inventory of current GIS technology and understanding to establish resources and priorities
- Establish a baseline of software and hardware to be used across the organization

### Questions:

**Where there any benefits or challenges related to achieving their goals?** This was covered at a higher level in the SWOT analysis, but nothing specific.

## **Krishna: Indiana GIO**

Common elements:

- Executive Summary
- Current Situation
- Vision
- Goals, objectives, and recommendations
- Timelines

Missing elements:

- Mission Statement
- Guiding Principles
- Employee Development

Best and most useful parts of the plan:

- Used a tested and proven methodology for collecting info
- Created PDF and StoryMap
- Goals with rationale, benefits, and recommendations

Questions:

**Was there any mention of funding sources?** Not specifically.

## **Connor: Connecticut**

Similarities:

- Mission and vision statements
- Strategic goals
- SWOT
- Identification of stakeholders and impacts
- Evaluation of current status

What was missing:

- Budget/funding
  - Lacks funding flow, relies on one-off funding
  - Listed as a strategic goal
  - Important to maintain existing datasets and creating new ones
- Connection to private sector

- Scored low on internal and external review
- Good for outsourcing collection of data; identifies need for surveyors
- Employee development
  - Acknowledges lack of education
  - No concrete training plan, just a light touch

Best part:

- Goals
  - Specific and measurable, and had good justifications
  - Broken into sub-goals or tasks
  - Target previously identified weaknesses

The plan did a good job explaining the purpose and concept of GIS, and holds itself and outside parties accountable to making GIS effective.

- Highlights the community that benefits from state GIS
- Explains ROI on an accessible GIS database

It did not do a good job as a guide; it needed more definitive timelines and measurements.

First actions:

- Create deadlines and time targets
- Create a sustainable funding model
- Implement training for state employees

Questions:

**Does the plan discuss consultants they will rely on for implementation?** Yes, but there is no explanation of how the plan will continue to be followed.

**Would you want to reduce the dependence of the department on the consultants?** Yes, but it would go hand-in-hand with acquiring funding and staffing.

## **Drishti: New Bern, NC**

Common elements:

- Vision and Goal
- Governance Structure
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Data Strategy
- Implementation Roadmap



All three plans investigated relied on a consultant in some form.

Missing elements:

- Less detail on funding sustainability
- Less emphasis on citizen and public access tools

Most helpful parts:

- Clear purpose and integration with existing processes and systems
- Detailed governance and stakeholder model
- Practical and realistic funding models
- Needs assessment
  - Includes SWOT analysis
- Success stories
- Pillars of GIS framework

As a GIS manager:

- Get involved and not leave everything to a consultant
- Bring back governance groups that had already existed
- Invest in people and communication
- Balance quick wins with long-term vision
- See workflows and data

### **Lauren: KELT (Kennebec Estuary)**

Common elements:

- Introduction
- Mission and Vision
- Values
- Broad goals
- Sub-goals

Missing elements:

- A specific GIS plan (this is the GIS section of an overall strategic plan)
- The who
  - There is no specification of who is or will be responsible for GIS in the future after the implementation of the plan

Most effective parts:

- All goals tied back to the mission and organizational values
  - Why and how was always clear

Successes?

Explaining the purpose and need of GIS: **Low**

They could take the opportunity to discuss how GIS could further their value of community engagement and accessibility

Plan as a guide for implementation: **Low**

Questions:

**Where there any mentions of external agencies?** Yes, GIS could have been used to provide products to local municipalities.

**What softwares were mentioned?** Landscape Conservation software was mentioned, which is a lightweight, browser-based GIS.

**Liam: WVDOT**

Common Elements:

- Vision and Mission Statements
- Defined Goals and Objectives
- Stakeholder engagement/Needs assessment
- Data management and strategies
- Implementation roadmap, including timelines and deadlines

Missing elements:

- Limited performance metrics defined
- Weak funding and resource planning
- Minimal public engagement strategies
- Lack of training and workforce development
  - No specific information other than “expand employee training opportunities”

Best parts:

- Implementation roadmap
- Alignment with federal reporting and standards

Questions:

**Examples of previous GIS products?** No pictures. The roadmap was a flowchart, but that does not really demonstrate the utility of GIS.

Any discussion of ROI?

Who are stakeholders?