

GES 678: Week 3

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?