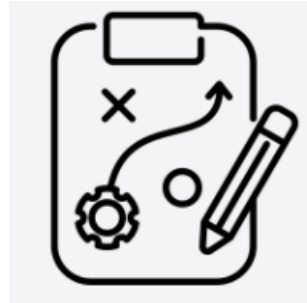


# STRATEGIC PLANNING FACT SHEET

## WHY BE STRATEGIC?



Many organizations lack a strategic plan; others create one only to let it gather dust. This oversight is common, but conservation districts should engage in ongoing strategic review and annual workplan development. So why is it important for a conservation district (CD) to be strategic?

CDs face many recurring and new natural resource issues, so determining and prioritizing what work needs to be prioritized and focused on is important. In addition to this, funding and human resources are limited. By going through the process of strategic planning, CDs can become more effective. It provides direction for staff and ensures that everyone is informed about the CD's future direction and how it plans to get there.

## WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Strategic planning is the process by which an organization engages in planning for the next 3–5 years. The process can be facilitated by someone outside of the organization. Essentially, the process goes like this:

1. **Determine current state.**
2. **Identify future goals.**
3. **Develop the plan (i.e. strategic plan).**
4. **Use your plan (i.e. annual workplan).**
5. **Revise and restructure your plan.**

## YOUR CD'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The result of strategic planning is a living plan. It is a framework for how the CD intends to meet its mission, and the work that the CD will do to accomplish its vision. Strategic plan documents can vary. However, in general the components include:

- **Mission Statement**
- **Vision Statement**
- **Values Statement**
- **Goals and Objectives**
- **Actions**
- **Performance**



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## NEXT STEP: ANNUAL WORKPLAN

Although a CD's strategic plan can be the guiding framework for the work the CD wants to accomplish over the next several years, it does not consist of the nuts and bolts of how to get there. Instead, that is the annual workplan and subsequent operational plan .

Essentially, the workplan comes from the strategic plan. If something is not in the latter, then it either needs to be revised or the former needs to be reevaluated to ensure that the CD is working towards its goals and objectives.



## AFTER STRATEGIC PLANNING

Once your CD completes strategic planning, you are done, right? The answer is no.

Strategic planning is an ongoing, continuous process. The reason that strategic plans are only good for 3–5 years is simply because things change including a CD's vision on how to accomplish it. This is especially true in the CD world, where past natural resource issues may no longer be a priority and where new issues and natural disasters arise frequently. This is why review and updating of a strategic plan is constant.

Another reason to engage in strategic planning every several years is supervisor and employee turnover. New supervisors and employees can benefit immensely from the process itself, and this can result in greater engagement, performance and effectiveness.

**Exercise:** Take at least 3 10-minute sessions to complete the template on the next page. Look at other DIY resources on CDB's website or consider hiring a professional.

Disclaimer: This information is provided for general information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. The information provided should not be used as a substitute for a legal opinion from your county attorney or otherwise retained and qualified legal counsel. If you need advice regarding a specific legal situation, contact your legal counsel.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING FACT SHEET

Conservation District: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Vision:**

*Why does your CD exist? What is its impact?*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mission:**

*How will your CD make its vision a reality? What will you be doing?*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Values:**

*How will your CD operate? What are your core beliefs of how you will act within your organization and in your community?*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Strategic Vision:**

*Where do you see your CD in the next 3–5 years?*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# STRATEGIC PLANNING FACT SHEET

**Priorities:**

*To achieve this vision, what are the key areas you need to discuss and outline actions?*

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**Strategies:**

*What will you do to meet each of the priorities you outline above?*

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**Goals:**

*For each strategy, outline corresponding goals/actions to meet that strategy.  
Goals should be specific, realistic, based on resources, and measurable.*

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