



STRATEGIC PLAN *Workbook*

Premise/Synopsis

Main Street programs play a crucial role in the sustainable growth of communities by revitalizing local economies and enhancing the quality of life. Structured around four key pillars—economic vitality, design, promotions, and organization—these programs often operate in isolation, facing key challenges due to limited support from municipal bodies and other nonprofit entities. This lack of external support, coupled with the constraints of limited financial and human resources, necessitates thoughtful resource management and strategic operational planning.

The isolation of Main Street programs not only limits their potential impact but also induces a cyclical pattern of growth and recession. This pattern may lead to a deviation from their core values and long-term objectives. The inconsistency in funding and volunteer support further exacerbates these challenges, making it difficult for these programs to maintain momentum and effectively execute their community-focused tasks.

To counter these challenges and ensure continuous, measurable, and anticipated growth, a strategic plan is essential. This plan serves to:

PURPOSE OF A STRATEGIC PLAN



Clarify long-term objectives

Setting clear, actionable goals for the future.



Outline actionable strategies

Providing a detailed roadmap for achieving these goals.



Allocate resources effectively

Ensuring optimal use of available financial and human capital.



Engage community and stakeholders

Enhancing visibility and support through targeted communication and engagement strategies.

What is a Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is a comprehensive document designed to outline actionable goals for an organization over a 3-5 year horizon. It involves a deep dive into the organization to identify available assets, review capabilities, and establish a systematic approach for programming organizational processes. This document not only charts a course for future growth but also aligns current resources with long-term objectives.

The strategic planning process is structured into several key phases, each pivotal in building upon the last to ensure a comprehensive and effective approach:



Strategic planning is more than just a sequence of steps within an organization; it is a vital process that shapes the trajectory of the organization's future. By undertaking a thorough review of previous plans and assets, the organization not only identifies its current strengths and challenges but also sets a solid foundation for future growth. This systematic analysis allows the organization to align its short-term actions with long-term goals effectively.

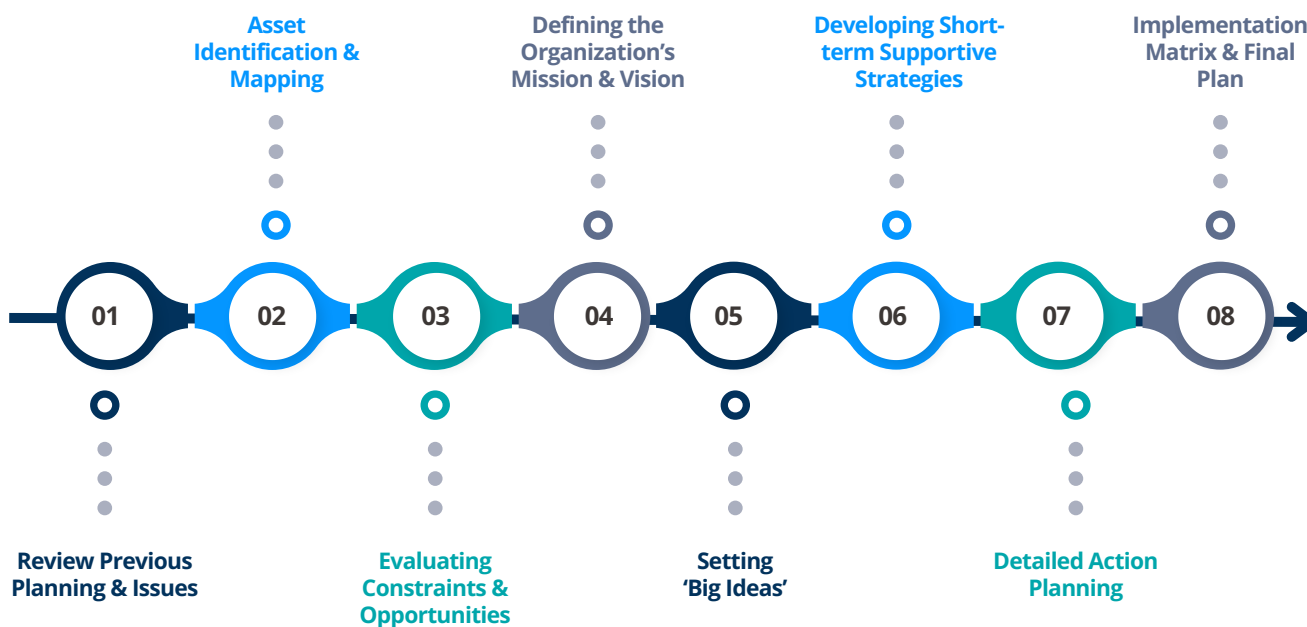
The process of defining the organization's mission and vision is central to ensuring that every strategy reflects and supports the core values and objectives of the organization. This alignment is crucial as it guides all subsequent decisions and initiatives, ensuring they contribute positively to the organization's overall development.

Setting 'Big Ideas' based on the aligned mission and vision helps the organization focus on strategic objectives that are not only ambitious but also achievable. These objectives serve as benchmarks for progress and success, pushing the organization to innovate and improve continuously.

Implementing these 'Big Ideas' through detailed action plans transforms abstract goals into concrete steps that the organization can follow. This transition from planning to action is critical for maintaining momentum and ensuring that strategic goals are met.

Finally, the strategic implementation matrix and the comprehensive strategic plan that results from this process are not merely documents but are fundamental tools that guide the organization. They ensure that everyone in the organization understands their role in achieving these goals, fostering a sense of unity and purpose. This clarity and structured approach are indispensable for the organization's growth, allowing it to navigate challenges and seize opportunities effectively.

Through strategic planning, the organization not only sets a direction for future growth but also integrates these plans deeply into its culture and operations, turning challenges into stepping stones for success and innovation.



Timing

The strategic planning process is an essential investment of time and effort for the Main Street program and its stakeholders. Recognizing the diverse needs and operational speeds of different organizations, the proposed planning process offers flexibility in its execution. This adaptability allows each Main Street program to customize the timing and preparation necessary to optimize the success of its strategic plan creation.

Two distinct tracks are available, catering to the unique dynamics and engagement levels of the board, staff, and stakeholders:

RAPID RESPONSE TRACK

Format

This fast-tracked option is designed for Main Street programs with an active and engaged board and stakeholder community. It consists of two intensive work sessions spread across two days, each session lasting approximately three hours. The split can be shortened to back-to-back days if desired.

Scheduling

It is recommended to space out these sessions, ideally over two consecutive Saturdays. This spacing allows for a brief but crucial period for reflection, discussion, and maturation of ideas and solutions that emerge during the first session, enhancing the productivity and creativity of the subsequent meeting.

SLOW & STEADY TRACK

Format

Tailored for newer Main Street programs or those with limited community engagement, this slower-paced track extends over seven months. It involves one 45-minute work session per month, making it manageable alongside regular program activities.

Scheduling

The extended duration between sessions in this track provides ample time for ideas to be seeded and gradually developed. This pace facilitates deeper contemplation and engagement with the strategic planning process, allowing participants to evaluate and refine their contributions thoroughly.

Both tracks, though differing in intensity and duration, are structured to yield the same comprehensive results. They provide the necessary framework for participants to thoughtfully engage with the strategic planning process without overwhelming them or disrupting the ongoing operations of the Main Street program.

As a local Main Street professional, it is imperative to assess the readiness, capability, and enthusiasm of your team and stakeholders when selecting a suitable track. There is no universally prescribed duration for a strategic plan; the most effective timing is one that aligns with the specific needs and pace of your organization. Choosing the right track will ensure that the strategic planning process is both effective and harmonious with your program's operational rhythm, leading to a more robust and actionable strategic plan.

Deliverables

This strategic planning process provides a comprehensive set of deliverables in various formats, including:



Educational webinars and lectures



Detailed, phase-driven workbook (available in PDF and print)



Interactive exercise materials



Forms for participant engagement



Dedicated portal with video answers to FAQ Final strategic plan template (available in PowerPoint format)

Costs

We offer three pricing tiers to accommodate various needs and budgets for the strategic planning process.

\$595	\$3,000	\$5,000*
SELF-PACED WORKBOOK <p>Available as a PDF, this workbook includes all necessary formats and materials lists. It is offered at \$595 for a lifetime license, allowing for flexible, self-guided learning.</p>	VIRTUAL MODERATING <p>This option includes virtual guidance for three one-hour meetings, assisting participants through the strategic planning workbook. It also includes the provision of meeting materials such as stickers, sticky notes, and a total of ten (10) sets of the document.</p>	ON-SITE STRATEGIC PLANNING <p>Tailored for newer Main Street programs or those with limited community engagement, this slower-paced track extends over seven months. It involves one 45-minute work session per month, making it manageable alongside regular program activities.</p>

* The price includes additional costs for travel and other reimbursements. Please note, this does not include venue rental for the sessions.

Process

The strategic planning process for Main Street programs is designed as a structured, multi-phase approach that meticulously guides participants through the revitalization efforts. Each phase builds logically on the previous, ensuring a comprehensive and integrated strategic plan. Here's an overview of how this process unfolds:



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