Office of Planning and Budget

Agency Strategic Planning Guidelines

Fiscal Year 2018

opb.georgia.gov
1-6-2017

Contents

FY 2018 Agency Strategic Planning Guidelines

Overview

In an effort to make the strategic planning process as useful to agencies as possible, OPB will again allow agencies the flexibility to create plans that best suit the needs of their individual agencies. In some instances, agencies may merely have to update their current plan, while others may need to do more work to develop their plans.

Agencies that already produce strategic plans may submit their updated plans to OPB, provided that the following statements are true:

- The plan has been updated to reflect current information and priorities
- The plan contains priority goals, strategies and measurable objectives
- Agency goals and strategies do not conflict with state goals
- The plan conforms to the criteria outlined in state code (see page 10)
- The plan meets the following format requirements:
    - Plans should be submitted as Word, Excel or PDF files. For any other formats, agencies should seek prior approval from OPB before submitting.
    - All plans should be presented in an easily readable and easily printable manner (on either letter- or legal-size paper). For instance, if Excel is used, all columns should fit on one page at a reasonable font size.

This flexibility will allow agency leadership to produce plans that provide clear direction for employees and other interested parties without requiring duplicative work. Agencies performing an annual update should review the "Updating a Plan" section below prior to submitting their plans.

For agencies that do not have a current plan or that wish to improve their plan design and content, the following guidelines and appendices provide assistance in creating meaningful agency strategic plans. However, as long as the plans meet the criteria listed in this section, agencies retain significant flexibility in the creation of their plans.

Ideally, agency plans should be four-year plans, which cover FY 2016-FY 2019 or beyond. Agencies following best practices would also include a mission statement, vision statement and environmental scan, which would address some of the statutory requirements for their plans.

All agencies will be required to submit the separate enterprise-supporting agencies (ESA) one-pager, which clearly lists any items related to enterprise support referenced within an agency's plan and which is detailed below in the "Clarified for FY 2018" section. Enterprise-supporting agencies (ESAs) are agencies in state government whose primary purpose is supporting the business functions of state government and whose primary customers are state agencies.

Updating a Plan

For many agencies, plans may merely require an update to reflect new information available, such as revising or adding strategies or goals, updating strategy cost information or technology specifications, and providing current target data for measurable objectives. As part of this annual update, the agency should reevaluate its operating environment based on funding received and any legislative or policy changes impacting the agency in the past fiscal year. The agency also should evaluate any relevant measures or other indicators to identify any emerging issues and then update its agency strategic plan accordingly. Remember to remove completed strategies and strategies that will no longer be pursued.

In addition, either in the environmental scan or strategy detail, progress updates should be provided on key strategies and objectives.

Clarified for FY2018

ESA one-pager: Last year, OPB required a one- to two-page document briefly summarizing the budgetary, technological, workforce and capital asset needs referenced within the plans. This will be required again this year, but wanted to provide some more clarification on what is expected. The description of needs should be short, though long enough to convey sufficient understanding, and include a page number for each item which references where further details and context can be found within the strategic plan. *This document should be a separate document from the plan itself.* This year we have added an example to further guide you.

If an agency has identified an obstacle or opportunity affecting multiple state agencies, this enterprise issue may be reported on the ESA page, as well, though it is not required.

The ESA document should also include contact information for the agency's primary strategic planning contact, who can be reached for follow-up information on the plan or regarding other strategic planning information in the future.

If your goals do not require any assistance from an Enterprise Supporting Agency, submit the page noting that no assistance is required. This is to ensure that the page was not omitted by accident.

Review process: In many cases, feedback OPB provides will merely need to be incorporated into the next year's plan. However, in some instances, plans may need to be adjusted for the current cycle. See "Submission" on page 9 for further information.

Please note that approval of strategic plans by OPB does not constitute approval of any funding requests. Please also note that OPB will not be reviewing for grammatical or language edits. The agency is responsible for proofing plans and for having approval from agency leadership prior to submission.

In addition, OPB will work to provide more consistent feedback to agencies regarding plan receipt and review.

Plan Development

When developing plans, consider the following questions. While not necessarily review criteria, these considerations can assist with the production of a complete and usable plan:

1. Does the plan have all of the primary elements and are all of the elements complete and appropriate for the agency?
2. Do the elements flow in a logical order, with each level supporting the plan appropriately?
3. Do the goals and strategies avoid contradicting the strategic goals for the state of Georgia?—this is a statutory requirement (O.C.G.A. 45-12-175 (b))
4. Does the plan cover multiple years?

See below for details on the above considerations.

1. Does the plan have all of the necessary elements and are all of the elements complete and appropriate for the agency?

The elements of an agency strategic plan typically include the following:

- Agency Mission Statement
- Agency Vision
- Environmental Scan/Challenges (e.g. SWOT analysis)
- Goals
- Strategies
- Measurable Objectives
- Summary ESA (Enterprise) Page

If needed, see Appendix C for detailed assistance in developing these elements, as well as Appendix B for a quick reference guide. Review the "Clarified for FY2018" section in this document for details on the ESA page.

Agencies should identify what current or anticipated needs are being addressed by their strategic plans. The plan should include enough narrative context or background to provide sufficient understanding to readers regarding these needs, as well as regarding the goals, strategies and measurable objectives addressing them and any pertinent updates on progress. The context may be included in the details of the strategies and the environmental scan. One common type of environmental scan is SWOT analysis, though other methods may be used. SWOT analysis looks at an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to help provide a comprehensive view of what is facing the organization going forward. More details on this analysis can be found in Appendix C.

Agencies should include around three to five high-level goals. The strategies should explain what the agency intends to do to achieve its goals. Each strategy should include a brief description that summarizes the strategy and then a more detailed description, which might include anticipated benefits,

budget implications, staffing implications, IT dependencies, and facilities or space implications. Workforce planning should be integrated into the agency plan; should help agencies develop strategies for closing staffing, diversity and competency gaps; and should include information about recruitment and retention challenges related to critical positions and job families.

For each applicable strategy (or, if appropriate, within the environmental scan), consider the relevant information from the following categories that might enhance the strategy detail:

- **Budgetary:** List any initial and/or ongoing annual operating or maintenance costs that might occur, any additional state costs (including capital outlay requests) that would be needed, whether the strategy can be performed using the base budget, or if it will be done with federal or other funds
- **Staffing Implications:**
  - Include staffing level increases or decreases, skills development needed, the restructuring of positions, and targeted recruitment
  - List workforce gaps, such as skill levels or turnovers; possible workforce strategies, including employee development or recognition for performance; and critical positions and job families which are difficult to fill, develop or retain
- **Facilities:** List any new construction, renovation or consolidation; any anticipated increase or decrease of office space (leased or owned) or other facility; and any land acquisition, as well as the county of location and number of people affected
- **Information Technology:** Identify any technology solution or IT support needed for the strategy to succeed, such as for improving customer access, workforce mobility or network connectivity. After plans have been submitted to OPB, early in Fiscal 2017, GTA will provide each agency's IT leadership with a short IT Strategic Planning questionnaire. GTA will use this information to better align enterprise IT efforts to agency strategic objectives. Please be prepared to share your strategic plan with your IT leadership.
- **Partners:** Identify governmental and non-governmental partners required to implement each strategy successfully (this is not a list of stakeholders)
- **Timeline:** List the intended fiscal year to begin working on the strategy, as well as any critical deadlines or needed explanations

These categories do not need to be itemized, but rather can be worked into the general strategy description.

If using an identical strategy for multiple objectives or goals, the details of the strategy only need to be listed once in the document so long as it is clear through numbering and a brief description to which original strategy each repeated strategy is referring. However, the strategy number and brief description should be included under each appropriate goal or objective, even if repeated.

In addition, strategies should be practical, with a reasonable chance of occurring as stated in the plan, and the magnitude of additional state funds needed should be factored into this reasonability consideration.

2. Do the elements flow in a logical order, with each level supporting the plan appropriately?

Each element should support another. Objectives should appropriately measure progress toward achieving the goals that they fall under; strategies should appropriately work toward meeting specific goals and objectives; and an agency's goals and vision should align with the primary purpose, or mission statement, of the agency.

3. Do the goals and strategies avoid contradicting the strategic goals for the state of Georgia?

While not every goal or strategy for each agency will directly support a state goal, no goals or strategies should work against or hinder the state goals. In addition, as much as possible, agencies should implement strategies that actively promote these state strategic goals.

The state goals can be found in Appendix A.

4. Does the plan cover multiple years?

The agency strategic plan is typically a four-year agency plan, geared toward the future. Ideally, current plans should cover FY 2016 - FY 2019. See the "Updating a Plan" section for agencies merely requiring an annual update.

A Note on Length and Design

The length and design of the plan should reflect the scope of the agency's work, while promoting the usefulness of the strategic plan.

There is no set length requirement, nor will every agency's plan have the same number of pages. While it is up to the discretion of the agency to determine the appropriate length, plans should fully cover the material outlined in the overview of these guidelines. The agency strategic plan is limited in scope. It should not cover everything the agency has to accomplish in a four-year cycle from an operational stand point. Rather, the strategic plan is focused on a limited number of goals and related strategies that the agency will concentrate on to improve services and customer experiences, with a particular focus on Governor-identified priorities. Ideally, the agency strategic plan highlights what the agency will pursue that is new or different that will ultimately influence achievement of its measurable objectives.

While well designed strategic plans are encouraged, OPB will not provide feedback on designs except in cases where the design could hinder readability or usefulness. All plans should be presented in an easily readable and easily printable manner, with a logical structure. Ultimately, the design should contribute to a better understanding of the material. For example, different font sizes can clearly separate the headers from the descriptions, and separate pages for each goal could make it easier to see which strategies and objectives align with which goals. In addition, page numbers are recommended to improve the navigability of the document.

By providing reasonable flexibility in designs and strategic planning models, OPB hopes to promote the production of plans which agencies can find useful internally. Appendix C provides assistance with developing agency strategic plans if needed. See Appendix D for information on the optional design templates.

A Note on the Differences between Goals, Strategies and Objectives

A goal should be high-level and outcome oriented but not overly specific (no targets). Measurable objectives ideally should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound. These objectives should be a reflection of the obtainment of a goal. Strategies typically start with a verb and should state the action steps the agency will take to achieve the goal and its measurable objectives. See Appendix C for more information and examples of each.

Plan Use

Agency strategic plans first and foremost should provide use to the agency by allowing agency leadership to communicate clear direction and priorities to its employees, customers and stakeholders. Second, the plans will be used by OPB and the Governor's Office as a point of reference when evaluating agency budget requests and agency legislative proposals, as well as alignment with state strategic goals.

Third, OPB and other enterprise-supporting agencies (e.g. GTA, SAO, DOAS, SPO) may utilize the plans to acquire a better understanding of the respective needs of the agencies, to make decisions regarding ways to assist agency or multi-agency initiatives, and to prioritize resource planning. Enterprise-supporting agencies (ESAs) are agencies in state government whose primary purpose is supporting the business functions of state government and whose primary customers are state agencies.

A Note on Performance Measures

OPB in the past has collected three sets of performance measures:

1. **Agency Plan Measures:** These reports monitor the progress of measurable objectives found within strategic plans. In the past, these measures were submitted semi-annually or quarterly via the software Horizon, which is no longer in use.
2. **Program Performance Measures:** These measures are specific to budgetary programs and are entered into BudgetTool each fall in conjunction with the submission of agency budget requests. These are the measures that appear in the Governor's Budget Report.
3. **Strategic Indicators:** Select agencies have been asked by OPB and the Governor's Office to track state-level performance indicators, which in the past have been submitted through an automated email form, which OPB then compiled into a separate database. This data was collected quarterly or annually, depending on the measure.

Regarding *Agency Plan Measures*, OPB does not intend at this time to require additional performance reports beyond what is contained in the annual update to the agency strategic plan. However, either in the environmental scan or strategy detail, progress updates should be provided on key strategies and objectives.

OPB is currently reevaluating how it tracks and collects *Strategic Indicators*, as well as other possible related changes. A separate email will be sent out at a later time with further details on any changes.

Program Performance Measures will continue as is. Agencies will be expected to enter these into BudgetTool around the beginning of September.

Submission

Completed agency plans and the separate ESA document are due June 30, 2017, and should be emailed to **plans@opb.georgia.gov**. OPB will accept agency strategic plans in the following formats: Word, Excel or PDF. For any other formats, agencies would need to seek prior approval from OPB before submitting. Regardless of the format, all plans should be presented in an easily readable and easily printable manner.

Prior to submission, please ensure that the agency senior leadership has consensus on the content and direction of the agency strategic plan and that plans have been proofread. Once submitted, agency plans are considered final, and OPB may rely on the information contained in them or share them with others, including the public. OPB provides a strategic plan Quick Reference Guide (Appendix B), which may prove useful in a final assessment of plans prior to submission.

In order to promote a smoother, more useful review process for agencies, OPB will attempt to limit the number of resubmissions it requires. In most cases when OPB provides feedback, agencies will simply need to incorporate the suggested improvements when updating their plans for the next fiscal year. In some cases, however, OPB may require that changes be made to the current year's plan update. In these instances, OPB will notify the agency to revise the plan and resubmit it.

Additional Assistance

OPB will host a voluntary spring meeting to answer questions on the FY 2017 strategic planning process. Information on this meeting has been provided via email.

Agencies can seek additional guidance from OPB upon request. Please email meaghan.ryan@opb.georgia.gov. The OPB strategic planning main line is 404-656-3800. Certain enterprise-supporting agencies can also provide assistance related to their areas of expertise. See Appendix C for additional details.

Statutory Foundation

State code lists the Office of Planning and Budget as the agency that coordinates the strategic planning process for the state and also requires state agencies to develop plans consistent with the state goals (see OCGA 45-12-73 and OCGA 45-12-175). This code section also outlines the specific content required for agency plans.

In addition, "each agency shall develop a work force plan as a component of the strategic plan." (OCGA 45-20-1 (e)).

Other pertinent code sections:

Technology: OCGA 50-25-4 (a 10 and 13)

State property: OCGA 50-16-35(a1) (A-E)

EXCERPT FROM OCGA 45-12-175

"[…] in the development of their [agency] strategic plans which specifically deal with their respective future directions and organizational missions. Each strategic plan developed by each department, board, bureau, commission, institution, authority, and other agency of state government shall contain a description of its future direction; a statement of its organizational mission; a description of the current and anticipated future needs being addressed by its preferred future direction and organizational mission; a description of planned actions designed to address these needs; a description of the goals for the program or services to be improved; a course of action for achieving the planned improvements, including an implementation timetable; a description of the evaluation system to be used to determine if the goals are being attained; an estimated annual cost for each planned improvement of a program or service; all efforts to decentralize its administrative and operational functions; and all other items as the Office of Planning and Budget may deem necessary. Each department, board, bureau, commission, institution, authority, and other agency of state government shall submit its own strategic plan to the Office of Planning and Budget as supporting information for the budget estimates required under Code Section 45-12-78."

Appendices

Vision:	A lean and responsive state government that allows communities, individuals and businesses to prosper

Governor's Strategic Goals for Georgia

Educated: Developing life-, college-, and work-ready students

- Increase percentage of students reading at or above grade level by the completion of 3rd Grade – a strategic benchmark for lifelong learning
- Increase percentage of Georgians who hold a postsecondary credential
- Improve and expand science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education
- Increase teacher and school leader effectiveness
- Increase the percentage of high school graduates who are college and career ready
- Empower citizens with public school options and local flexibility for the purpose of improving student achievement

Mobile: Transporting people and products in a 21st century Georgia

- Improve the movement of people and goods across and within the state
- Expand Georgia's role as a major logistics hub for global commerce
- Leverage public-private partnerships and improve intergovernmental cooperation for successful infrastructure development

Growing: Creating jobs and growing businesses

- Implement strategic tax and regulatory reforms that make Georgia more competitive
- Promote small business growth and entrepreneurship
- Maximize access to capital for startups and growing businesses
- Conserve and enhance natural resources, with an emphasis on increasing state water supplies and security

Healthy: Accessible care and active lifestyles

- Reduce childhood obesity in Georgia
- Increase access to health services throughout the state
- Increase consumer choice and personal responsibility in health care
- Improve access to treatment and community options for those with disabilities

Safe: Protecting the public's safety and security

- Implement alternative sentencing options to improve offender rehabilitation
- Promote successful offender re-entry and compliance
- Reduce injury and loss of life on Georgia's roads
- Promote safe communities and stable families where children thrive

Responsible and Efficient Government: Fiscally sound, principled, conservative

- Maintain Georgia's AAA bond rating
- Increase availability of state services through innovative technology solutions
- Build and maintain a quality state government workforce
- Focus state resources on essential services and employ enterprise solutions
- Enlist community support and public-private partnerships to leverage available resources

Quick Reference Guide

Mission:
Purpose of the organization and why the agency exists.

- Is the mission statement specific to the agency?
- Does the mission statement reflect the agency's purpose, services, clients, and functions?

Vision Statement:
An optimistic view of the desired future; should be realistic, but challenging.

- Is the vision statement specific to the agency?
- Is the vision statement consistent with the mission of the agency?
- Does the vision statement offer the employees a sense of purpose?

Environmental Scan/Challenges:
Analysis of external and internal factors and critical issues facing the agency.

- Does this section provide sufficient context for the rest of the plan?
- Are specific trends and critical needs identified?
- Does it provide an update on the agency's current environment and progress?

Goals:
Three to five high-level, priority goals to achieve in the time of agency's four-year strategic plan.

- Is each goal specific to the agency and what it wants to accomplish?
- Do the agency goals collectively reflect the agency's top priorities to be completed?

Measurable Objectives:
Each goal should have a measurable objective; they should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

- Does each measureable objective reflect achievement of the goal to which it is assigned?
- Is each objective framed around a quantitative value with a baseline and a target? (X as of date to Y as of later date)
- Does each measureable objective include an identifiable outcome (rather than an activity)?

Strategies:
The path of actions taken to improve results; articulation of what will be done to achieve the goal.

- Does each strategy directly contribute to the goal to which it is aligned?
- Does each strategy adequately describe the high-level work to be done to achieve the agency goal?
- Does each strategy include a completed strategy detail that includes any budget, staffing, IT, and facility implications?

ESA Assistance:
If any goals or strategies cannot be completed without the help of OPB, SAO, DOAS, GTA or SPO, please incorporate these needs into the strategy detail section and also in the separate ESA document.

Appendix C: How To Develop A Strategic Plan

Each state agency is required by law to have a strategic plan. This appendix provides assistance in developing that plan for agencies that would like additional guidance. _The information contained in this appendix provides an example of one path for creating an agency plan, as well as best practices to consider when developing elements of the plan. However, agencies retain a great deal of flexibility in the creation of their plans and may choose their own development method so long as the final plan meets the minimum criteria outlined in the overview section of the primary guidelines document._

The agency strategic plan is ideally a four-year plan and should align with the state goals, or at least not contradict them. Agencies may choose a strategic planning model that works best for the agency (e.g., Balanced Score Card, Baldrige, Result-Based Accountability, traditional approach, etc.). The agency strategic plan should explain the top three to five things that the agency is focusing on to improve operations, services and customer experiences.

The following guidelines provide general instruction to agencies that can help with strategic planning.

Focus on the Strategic Activities

The agency strategic plan focuses on specific strategies that will improve services and outcomes for the agency's customers and employees. A clear distinction must be made between ongoing operations and strategy. The Franklin Covey organization has coined the term "whirlwind" to describe the work done every day to keep the operations of the agency going. The whirlwind is the urgent priorities that come to you and demand your immediate attention.[1] For the purposes of this document, the "whirlwind" is the ongoing operations of the agency. "Strategy" means the energy used to achieve the goals for improving performance.

The strategic planning guidelines are designed to focus agency efforts in planning the time, energy and resources necessary to achieve the agency's strategic goals. Other state processes, such as the annual operating budget and budget program performance measures, focus on the overall management and resources related to agency operations.

General Guidelines for Agency Strategic Planning

The process should be participatory and use team consensus to arrive at decisions whenever possible.
While it is unlikely that every team member will totally agree with every decision, members should possess general support for the outcomes of the planning sessions.

---
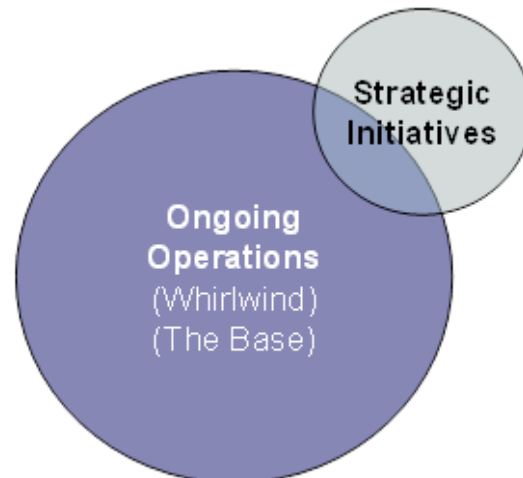
[1] Execution Essentials: The 4 Disciplines of Execution, FranklinCovey, 2006, p. 4

Getting Started

To get started, the agency must first address the logistics of the planning process, allowing time for specifying participants, process duration and location, and determining if a specific strategic planning model will be used.

According to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), "It is essential that the strategic plan be initiated and conducted under the authorization of the organization's chief executive (Agency Head), either appointed or elected. Inclusion of other stakeholders is critical, but a strategic plan that is not supported by the organization's chief executive (Agency Head) has little chance of influencing an organization's future."[2]

Preparing the Agency Strategic Plan

☐ Initial logistical planning

☐ Prepare mission statement

☐ Develop a vision statement

☐ Assess environmental factors

☐ Identify critical issues

☐ Establish strategic goals

☐ Establish measurable objectives

☐ Develop strategies for accomplishing the measurable objective(s)

☐ Identify impacts on IT, the workforce, budget and facilities/space

---

While employees at all levels can be included in the process, it is crucial that the head of the agency and the executive leadership team be committed and willing participants. They should agree with or take the lead in developing the agency's mission, vision, goals and strategies.

This phase may also include collecting and analyzing data and information that will be used as part of the environmental scan process. Helpful information may include: demographic trends, trends related to services provided, customer and employee satisfaction survey results, facility trends, and workforce trends.

Prepare a Mission Statement

Mission: The purpose of the organization; why the agency exists.

Statutory and regulatory requirements provide the foundation for the mission statement. The agency's mission statement should distinguish it from similar organizations and reflect the distinct focus of the agency. It should be a complete sentence that is precise, clear, and provides a framework that can be used to align the agency's vision and goals.

When developing a mission statement, keep the following attributes in mind:

1. Specificity to the agency and its core functions
2. Descriptive of the services the agency provides
3. Descriptive of the population the agency serves
4. Descriptive of the purpose and manner in which the agency provides their services

---

[2] Recommended Budget Practice on the Establishment of Strategic Plans (2005)
http://www.gfoa.org/establishment-strategic-plans

Use:	*The mission of the XYZ agency is to provide access to affordable, quality health care to Georgians through effective planning, purchasing, and oversight.*
Not:	*To assist our customers by providing leadership, and reliable business services.*

Develop a Vision Statement

Vision: A picture of a desired future, one that is both challenging yet possible to attain. It defines the optimistic view of where the organization wants to be in the future, focusing on its customers and desired outcomes.

The vision statement should be directly aligned with the mission statement. When read, the vision statement should provide employees with a sense of purpose that can serve to broadly guide decision making.

When developing a vision statement, keep the following attributes in mind:

1. Specificity to the agency and its ideal image
2. Alignment to the mission statement
3. Provision of a sense of purpose to employees

Examples:

Use:	*The ABC agency will be recognized as the guiding force for innovative public policy and sound fiscal management.*
Not*:*	*To be customer focused as we oversee agency finances.*

If an agency prefers, it may also separately define its core values, which are the ideas, beliefs, and enduring tenants that guide the work of the organization.

Assess Environmental Factors

Environmental scan: A thorough analysis of the organization's internal and external environment and relevant trends.

The environmental scan is a review of external and internal factors that affect the environment in which an organization operates. The environmental scan examines these factors and their impact on Georgia citizens, state agencies, and the services they provide. It may be as long or as short as the agency deems necessary to convey the needed information.

"A thorough analysis of the agency's internal and external environment sets the stage for an effective strategic plan. A frequently used methodology for conducting an environmental assessment is a "SWOT" (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. Strengths and weaknesses relate to the internal environment, while analysis of opportunities and threats focuses on the environment external to the organization.

"Local, regional, national, and global factors affecting the community should be analyzed, including (a) economic and financial factors, (b) demographic trends, (c) legal or regulatory issues, (d) social and cultural trends, (e) physical [infrastructure needs] (e.g., community development), (f) intergovernmental issues, and (g) technological change.

Agencies should develop mechanisms to identify stakeholder concerns, needs, and priorities. Among the mechanisms that might be employed to gather such information are (a) public hearings, (b) surveys, (c) meetings of community leaders and citizen's interest groups, [and] (d) meetings with [agency] employees…" (GFOA)

External scan: The external scan reviews information about events, trends and relationships in an organization's external environment that impact how the agency conducts its business. This information may include, for example, recent legislative mandates that alter the agency's mission. Information from the external scan assists agency leadership in planning the organization's future course of action.

Internal scan: The internal scan is a process of reviewing the agency's resources, assets and day-to-day operational structure, such as organizational climate or internal communications. Factors identified in the internal scan are more agency-specific than the broad, environmental factors identified in the external scan. This information should include employee feedback and may also include internal factors ranging from an assessment of appropriate resources to accomplish mission-critical tasks to the pending retirement of a significant portion of the agency's workforce.

An agency should also consider how future conditions may impact space, facility and other capital investment needs. In turn, the physical condition, functionality and location of current facilities may impact how well services are being delivered. This process demonstrates the relationship between the agency's strengths and weaknesses and the challenges the agency must address to develop its course of action.

Typical information sources that may be used in the agency's environmental scan include:

- Governor's state strategic goals (see Appendix A)
- New statutory, regulatory, and/or judicial mandates
- Governor's speeches and legislative initiatives
- Previous program results
- Employee and customer feedback
- State and national legislative trends
- Workforce trends
- Technology initiatives, needs and trends
- Comparisons to similar functions in other states
- Economic indicators
- Demographic data analysis, including workforce
- Information from conferences
- Internet or library research
- Budgetary and staffing data
- Internal and external audits
- Performance trends as shown by statewide indicators
- Facilities/Space needs and physical and functional condition and capacity

The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB), the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS), the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA), the agencies of the State Property Officer (SPO) and other enterprise-supporting agencies (ESAs) can provide valuable information and technical assistance that will help agency management in their planning process. Examples include:

OPB

> **Enterprise-Supporting Agencies (ESA):** Agencies in state government whose primary purpose is supporting the business functions of state government and whose primary customers are state agencies.

- Population projections
- State demographics
- Census data
- General guidance on Governor's intent and focus

DOAS

- Analysis of national and state workforce trends
- Analysis of job classes/compensation
- Analysis of turnover/turnover trends
- Analysis of diversity (generational differences & demographic)
- Analysis of competencies
- Assessment of enterprise procurement opportunities for statewide contracts

GTA

- Insight on emerging technologies
- Information on planned enterprise activities
- Examples of successful uses of technology in state business processes

SPO

- Assistance with analysis of the use of facilities and space

Identify Workforce Issues

Workforce planning is a systematic process for ensuring that the right people with the right competencies are in the right place at the right time. As part of the environmental scan, the agency should look at workforce trends and future business priorities. The first step in this process is the accumulation of data on the make-up of the workforce. Among the data included is information on turnover, diversity, learning needs, knowledge management strategy, and succession planning. The state's Annual Workforce Data issued by the Department of Administrative Services can assist agencies with this step in the process. Workforce planning uses these components to provide refined information on the changes to be anticipated, the competencies that retirements may take from the workforce, key positions that may need to be filled, and strategies to fill the gaps.

Agencies are no longer required to submit separate agency workforce plans. Rather, state personnel staff will use the agency strategic plans to supplement other state workforce data.

Identify Critical Issues and Challenges

"Once the environmental analysis has been completed, the next step is to use the resulting information to identify the most critical issues. Issue recognition should reflect stakeholder concerns, needs, and priorities as well as environmental factors affecting the community [and the clients the agency serves]." (GFOA)

The strategic planning process requires agencies to identify the critical issues or "challenges" facing the agency. These challenges are the foundation upon which the agency develops its strategic goals.

Agree on a Small Number of Broad Goals

Goal: A result or outcome one is trying to achieve.

Goals should be focused on outcomes. Apart from the state strategic goals, agencies may identify other outcomes that are of specific importance to the agency. An agency should align its goals to the agency mission for agency priorities.

Goals should be customer focused (derived from internal and external customer data included in their environmental scan) and should address "the most critical issues facing the agency and its customers. It may be necessary to define priorities among goals to improve their usefulness in allocating resources." (GFOA) The agency should prioritize its goals and select the top three to five goals for the plan.

When developing agency goals, keep the following attributes in mind:

1. Specificity to agency's activities and core functions
2. Alignment to state goals (does not conflict)
3. Reflection of the agency's top priorities

Examples:

Use:	*Improve the customer experience for licensing applicants.*
Not:	*Improve customer service.*

Develop Measurable Objectives

Measurable objective: "Specific, measurable results to be achieved." (GFOA)

For each goal, the agency should have measureable objectives that will be used to determine if the goal is being met. Objectives should not be another goal or strategy statement but a quantifiable measure or indicator. The agency tracks measureable objectives to help demonstrate performance improvements.

- Measurable objectives are typically stated as "X as of Date to Y by Date," where "X" is the baseline performance and "Y" is the target performance. Typically, the "by Date" is the last year of the four-year strategic planning cycle.

- Measureable objectives show how the customer will be better off.

- Measurable objectives strive to be "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound).

Any measurable objectives containing past dates need to be met, revised or deleted. When developing measurable objectives, keep the following attributes in mind:

1. Alignment to their respective agency goals
2. Consistency with the X as of Date to Y by Date format
3. Description of an identifiable outcome

Examples:

Use:	*Decrease call hold times from 20 minutes in 2014 to 5 minutes in 2016, based on monthly average.*
	Increase customer satisfaction scores from 65% satisfied in 2013 to 80% satisfied in 2016, using annual survey.
Not:	*Decrease call hold times by 75%.*
	Increase number of customers surveyed from 75% to 95%.

Identify, Develop and Refine Strategies to Achieve Broad Goals

Strategy: A coherent set of actions that has a reasonable chance of working to improve results.

Strategies ultimately describe what an agency will do to achieve its goals and measurable objectives.

"Strategies relate to ways that the environment can be influenced (internal or external) to meet specific measurable objectives. There should be a relatively small number of specific strategies developed to help choose among services and activities to be emphasized. Use of flowcharts or strategy mapping is encouraged in the design of strategies. To optimize the success of these strategies, opportunities should be provided for input from those who will be affected." (GFOA)

For each strategy, the agency should also consider the resources required and impacts on the organization. Questions include:

- What is the cost to implement? Are there ongoing maintenance costs? Will it require procurement?
- What are the benefits of implementation? … to the customer? …to the agency? …to the State?
- Will implementation of this strategy require a budget enhancement or will it be done with funds within the agency base?
- How will this strategy be funded (e.g., state, federal, grant funds, other)?
- Which budget programs are impacted?
- When will the agency do it? Are there any critical external deadlines?
- Who are the key partners?
- Who will do the work (workforce impact and resources required)?
- What are the technology implications and what IT projects (current, planned and proposed) support the strategy?
- What are the impacts on space and facilities? What additional capital asset investments are required?

When developing strategies, keep the following attributes in mind:

1. Alignment and contribution to their respective agency goals
2. High-level in nature and descriptive
3. Inclusive of a completed detail, which may describe budget, staffing, IT and facility implications
4. Is not phrased as a title; contains an action verb

Examples:

Use:	*Enhance website self-service options.*
	Implement interactive voice recognition (IVR) technology.
	Develop internal communication plan for complaint resolution.
Not:	*Decrease call hold times.*
	Use technology to answer more calls.
	Complaint resolution.

Obtain Approval of the Plan

The agency senior leadership should have consensus on the content and direction of the agency strategic plan. The agency head must approve the document prior to submittal to OPB.

Reassess the Strategic Plan

The plan is typically a four-year plan. Progress on the agency strategic plan should be monitored regularly. Each spring the agency reevaluates its operating environment based on funding received and any legislative or policy changes impacting the agency in the past fiscal year. The agency then updates the agency strategic plan to reflect any internal or external factors affecting the plan. The agency should evaluate any relevant measures or other indicators to identify emerging issues. While the direction of the plan may not change significantly from year to year, the pace and priorities may be adjusted based on resources, changing mandates and other constraints.

Templates

Sample Word and Excel templates have been provided separately as examples of what an easily readable, easily printable, well-organized document might look like. They in no way have to be used by the agency. Should an agency choose to use one of them, it is free to modify the template to meet its needs. The designs are meant to show basic possible structures. Plans can certainly contain more elaborate design elements should an agency wish to include them. The Word and Excel documents, while two different file types, also show two separate ways to organize the information contained in agency strategic plans.

Agencies are also free to design their own templates so long as they meet all of the criteria outlined in the overview of the guidelines.