



District 17

CapitolRiver Council

CapitolRiver Council
2016 - 2018 Strategic Plan

FINAL DRAFT

February 24, 2016

INTRODUCTION

“Saint Paul has a rich history of active and distinct neighborhoods. To support neighborhood participation in governance, the district council planning process was created in 1975.

Responsibilities of the councils include: planning and advising on the physical, economic, and social development of their areas; identifying needs; initiating community programs; recruiting volunteers; and sponsoring community events.”

- City of Saint Paul: <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=1859>

OUR MISSION

CapitolRiver Council, an official advisory group to the City Council, represents and works in partnership with all District 17 stakeholders to act on urban planning and community building efforts as part of a shared vision to support sustainable, safe, healthy, and vibrant neighborhoods.

CapitolRiver Council (CRC) is an organization in the process of transforming itself to seize the opportunities presented by the changing landscape in District 17. From the inception of the district councils, and throughout the history of the CRC, we have relied on our strong volunteer board to connect all stake-holders in our district, while remaining true to our mission and the primary functions of a district council.

District 17 remains unique among the district councils as it contains the capitol city, large businesses and small, as well as many residents. CRC responds to the needs and aspirations of many different constituencies including state, federal, county and city governments, large international corporations, small business, senior citizens, children, and young professionals, and men and women and children from a rich variety of races, religions, and cultures. Over the past decade, our resident population has grown rapidly and exciting development like the Green Line (light rail) and CHS Field have occurred. As a result, it is time for the CRC to re-examine its priorities and work to be an active agent for good in our changing landscape.

In response to this changing landscape, and grounded in an unwavering commitment to fulfill our mission, CRC has identified our Strategic Vision, Organizational Values, and Operating Principles. Our success requires a recommitment to our Mission, a reaffirmation of our Values, and a clearly articulated Strategic Plan.

Our Strategic Vision:

By the end of 2018, CRC will clearly be recognized as:

1. A resource of information for our residents and a way to connect with the city, businesses, other residents.
2. A leader in the community working toward increased safety, development, and information sharing.
3. A strong supporter of economic development and quality of life for those who live and/or work here.
4. In particular, a voice for the needs and aspirations of small business.
5. A preferred partner for our Councilmember and the Mayor, involved proactively in work occurring here.
6. An organization known for effective facilitation of conversation, collaboration, and building community.

Our Organizational Values:

1. Advocacy: to give voice to residents and small business owners as they seek to navigate the landscape we share with large corporations and the city government.
2. Inclusivity: to seek diversity and excellence in people, ideas and services.
3. Relationship focused: to build and nourish relationships in the community.
4. Accountability: to hold ourselves accountable for results.
5. Mutually supportive: to help each other succeed as members of a vibrant and diverse community.

Our Operational Principles

The following principles serve to guide the ongoing work of our organization and inform the creation of this Strategic Plan:

1. We will live our values, caring as much about *how* we do our work as *what* we do.
2. We will immerse ourselves in our community, aligning our work with the priorities of those we serve and those who support us.
3. We will continuously improve our operations to use the resources entrusted to us in the most efficient and effective way possible.
4. We will nurture and grow talent in the board of directors, intentionally developing the next generation of leadership for CRC.

The Strategic Plan is organized as follows:

- **Focus Areas** : three key Focus Areas serve to organize or work
 - **Destinations**: key deliverables define where we want to be at the end of 2018
 - **Strategic Initiatives** : bodies of work which will take us toward our Destinations
 - **Tactical Approaches** : specific actions that make up our Strategic Initiatives

Taken as a whole, this strategic plan is designed to directly guide the creation of annual work plans for every committee within CRC over the next three years. In all that we do, we will ask ourselves, “Does this action take us closer to our strategic destination, have no impact on our strategic destination, or move us away from our strategic destination?” We will establish our priorities and focus our efforts on those activities that move us clearly and definitively toward these goals.

Focus Area 1: CONSTITUENTS

Deepen and focus our services, making us indispensable to our constituents.

The CRC serves many different constituencies including federal, state, county, and city governments, large, international corporations, small business owners, local residents, men and women who work within the businesses of District 17, senior citizens, children, young professionals, and men and women and children of various races, religions, cultures, and socio-economic classes. While continuing to build on our strengths in connecting the various and differing constituencies of District 17, we recognize the need to focus our efforts more purposefully on certain constituents. The following Destinations and Strategic Initiatives drive us toward that goal:

1.1 Be THE effective organization for facilitating conversations and building community in District 17

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Ensure properly facilitated conversations occur by providing effective leaders of committees and meetings.
2. Develop a culture of respect, inclusivity and community at all organizational events and meetings.
3. Increase stakeholder participation by making meeting times and locations as accessible as possible.
4. Identify an effective forum for all stakeholders' quality of life issues including aesthetics, safety and crime prevention.
5. Maintain a stakeholder map or geographic and demographic data that encourages an inclusive approach to community engagement.
6. Develop outreach and engagement activities that engage underrepresented stakeholder groups.

1.2 Create spaces for conversation & collaboration among our constituents to attract their participation

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Ensure our stakeholders are informed and are allowed to provide input by hosting community input meetings when needs arise.
2. Create immersive experiences on our website & through social media to encourage & build participation.
3. Promote public input as part of all Board of Directors meetings.

1.3 Be proactively involved in City Planning and ensure that prior planning actions are respected and implemented.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. The Planning Committee should meet regularly to monitor, review and update existing plans(master plans, small area plans, etc...).
2. The Planning Committee shall advise the organization on implementation of new and existing plans.
3. The Development Review Committee shall review development proposals with an eye towards adopted plans.

4. The organization will provide input to the City Council as requested, but also proactively when the Board identifies such a need.

Focus Area Two: GOVERNANCE

Revitalize our organization, to ensure we remain forward looking and meaningful to our constituents and community partners.

Every organization has an internal persona (culture) and external persona (brand). When the internal and external personas are in alignment, an organization can achieve its greatest potential. Recognizing both the strengths and weaknesses of our current culture and brand, we have identified the following Destinations and Strategic Initiatives:

2.1 Create a Culture of Collaboration throughout our organization as well as with other organizations in District 17.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. This Strategic Plan will guide and direct the work of the Board of Directors.
2. Intentionally develop the next generation of board membership and leadership, drawing from diverse representation of District 17.
3. Cultivate an improved communication structure between the Executive Committee and standing committees.
4. Actively seek ways to partner with other organizations to strengthen our relationships with them, as well as work in partnership with them to ensure a robust community.

2.2 Clearly define, communicate, and measure performance to achieve our strategic goals.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Create meaningful metrics and reliable measurement systems for all goals.
2. Build a culture of personal responsibility among board members.
3. Establish and communicate clear expectations around responsibility for all goals.
4. Set annual work plans for each committee in alignment with the directives of this strategic plan.
5. Ensure all committees follow the same structure with regard to procedures, agenda setting and approval, and minute-taking and approval, so that there is consistent record-keeping for the organization.

2.3 Build Our Brand to increase awareness, improve public perception and enhance participation amongst our constituency.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Monitor public perceptions of the CRC brand.
2. Increase the organizations visibility in the community.
3. Create brand ambassadors, among board members and stakeholders.
4. Actively develop and employ methods to increase membership, committee membership, and overall participation.

Focus Area 3: RESOURCES

Build our financial and volunteer resources to support significant enhancement to our services.

As an organization primarily funded by the City of Saint Paul, and recognizing that the funding will decrease, CRC intends to find ways to increase our resources, both human and financial. To that end, we have identified the following Destinations and Strategic Initiatives:

3.1 Manage and Expand Our Resources through Exploring New Funding Opportunities.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Demonstrate excellent stewardship of current resources through best managerial practices and transparency.
2. Pursue growth from all current revenue sources: board members, residents, and sponsors.
3. Identify new sources of revenue: corporations, foundations, collaborative partnerships, and government sources.
4. Apply for grants related to the organizations current or future work.
5. Develop a more robust sponsorship program for our newsletter, website, and annual meeting.

3.2 Expand and Deepen Key External Relationships.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Expand our volunteer base and develop volunteer activities to inspire participation.
2. Define, prioritize, and develop key external relationships including specific individuals, corporations, foundations, etc.
3. Define methods for the Board to become *active* champions of the organization.