

Marina Coast Water District Five-year Strategic Plan Development

presented by

Olson Communications



**Creating a Vision for the Future
Setting Strategies to Make it Happen**

March 1, 2011

Marina Coast Water District
11 Reservation Road
Marina, CA 93933
Attention: Jean Premutati

Olson Communications is pleased to submit our proposal to assist Marina Coast Water District in its strategic planning endeavor. We are enthusiastic about our capability to build a framework for a productive process that will result in a workable blueprint to guide the District as the future unfolds.

The Olson Communications team brings extensive background and proven success in assisting California water districts, other public sector agencies, and private enterprise in developing strategic plans that establish organizational mission, vision and values; articulate goals and objectives; and set benchmarks for assessing results.

Merry Lee Olson, principal facilitator, has guided successful planning initiatives for some of California's leading public agencies, cities, counties, associations of governments, non-profits, educational institutions and corporations for more than 20 years. Also helping lead the process is Charles Gardiner who has worked on Monterey Peninsula water planning issues. Charles brings 25-plus years of experience in assisting federal, state, and local government and special districts with their planning and implementation strategies. Additional subject matter experts and senior facilitators will provide input and additional support if needed.

There are a vast number of strategic planners across California and numerous planning models. What sets us apart is 1) We have a depth of experience in your industry and with your District and can assist in articulating your program goals; 2) We are not locked into any one planning approach and instead we apply best practices from multiple approaches to tailor the planning process to your specific needs; and 3). We encourage the involvement of people from all levels of the organization.

Over time, we have witnessed that better results are achieved when the planning process involves not just leaders but also the people who are engaged in accomplishing the work to achieve the organization's mission (staff) and those who are most vested in its outcomes (stakeholders). A shared approach to identifying issues, establishing mission, vision and values, and setting goals and implementation tactics dramatically increases the probability for near- and long-term success!

Through our extensive planning experience and our solid background with water resources agencies we understand how to achieve your desired strategic planning outcomes within the time frame and budget you have allocated. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our approach with you. Please contact me via phone or e-mail if you have any questions regarding our proposal.

Sincerely,



Merry Lee Olson, Principal

mlo@olsoncommunications.com | 858.761.1249

Table of Contents

Introduction, PAGE 1

Experience Summary, PAGE 2

Planning Approach, PAGES 3 -11

Timeline, PAGE 12

Cost Estimate, PAGE 13

Bios, PAGES 14 -17

References, PAGE 18

Introduction

The Marina Coast Water District board and the District's 35 employees juggle numerous priorities, including providing water, wastewater and recycled water services to 8,000 customers, managing, conserving, and developing future resources and infrastructure for the Ord community, as well as leading design, permitting, and constructing the core elements of the Regional Water Project. Strategic planning is one of the most effective approaches to shaping the District's future course and ensuring maximum efficiency and effectiveness in reaching targeted District goals.

Through the strategic planning process, District activities and initiatives will take on a clear focus. Important goals will become more attainable through the development of strategies to implement the Marina Coast Water District's mission, build on its assets, and anticipate future challenges and opportunities.

Strategic planning creates a framework within which priorities can be set and gives coherent focus to implementation. It will provide guidance and direction for the staff and a tool for the board to hold everyone in the agency accountable. It offers stakeholders and ratepayers an opportunity to understand and therefore more effectively support the District's mission.

The District's desired outcomes of the strategic planning process include

- Developing a strategic organizational plan with five-year goals and objectives and mechanisms for benchmarking results
- Shaping the District's Mission, Vision and Core Values statements
- Outlining a comprehensive road map with guidance as to how plan will be implemented
- Defining roles and success measurements for the staff and Board

To this end, the Strategic Plan will be designed to serve as a blueprint for meeting the District's mandates and overall mission, and responding effectively to new situations as the future unfolds. We recognize the importance of walking your board and other participants through the planning process and mentoring them regarding role definition and implementation responsibilities. While we encourage the involvement of people at all levels in the organization, we are very aware that each individual has day-to-day responsibilities and time commitments. Our approach is streamlined and time efficient so everyone—from the board, to management, and all others who participate—can do so with minimal impact on their regular schedule.

The pages that follow highlight the context of who we are and what we can do, our proposed methodology, the proposed plan development and costs. Bios for our principal planning team are included as well.

Public Organizations find that Strategic Planning helps them

- Think strategically
- Clarify future direction
- Make today's decisions in light of future consequences
- Develop a coherent and defensible basis for decision making
- Exercise maximum discretion in the areas under organizational control
- Solve major organizational problems
- Improve performance
- Deal effectively with rapidly changing circumstances
- Build teamwork and expertise

*John M. Bryson
McKnight Presidential
Professor of Planning and
Public Affairs
Hubert H. Humphrey
Institute of Public Affairs
and Associate Director of
the Strategic Management
Research Center University
of Minnesota*

Olson Communications Team Experience

Capabilities

Olson Communications—a certified Woman-Owned Business Enterprise—has a 20-year background in strategic planning, organizational and team building, and change management for public agencies that focus on water, recycled water, wastewater, watershed management, water rights, renewable energy, transportation, education, climate change, sustainability, “green” initiatives, and other matters of public concern.

Merry Lee Olson is accomplished at organizing and facilitating strategic planning and brings an extensive background in prevalent planning models and tools. She has assisted some of California’s leading public agencies with strategic planning and change management for more than 20 years.

Charles Gardiner is trained in conflict mediation, facilitation, and public decision-making techniques and has more than 25 years of experience in program management and team and organizational capacity building. His technical background and policy training helps clients improve organizational capabilities and reach their goals. His broad areas of expertise include water resources and wastewater.

As a specialist in environmental policy and law, Bill Owens facilitates inter-organizational discussions regarding water resources and other environmental initiatives. Bill provides vital planning process support by helping to assess and clarify policy considerations.

Our key principals’ expertise is augmented by other highly experienced professionals in the areas of strategic planning, business planning, organizational and team development, communications, and change management.

Services



- Strategic Planning
- Consensus-Building Facilitation
- Interest-based Decision Making
- Collaborative Conflict Resolution
- Mediation and Facilitated Negotiation
- Mutual Gains Negotiation
- Regulatory Compliance
- Environmental Policy Analysis
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Communications and Outreach
- Community Relations
- Legislative and Agency Liaison
- Interagency Coordination

Affiliations

- International Association of Facilitators
- Association for Conflict Resolution
- Alternative Dispute Resolution and Environmental Law Sections, California and Sacramento Bar
- Water Environment Federation
- American Water Works Association
- Association of California Water Agencies
- APA Public Engagement Group
- International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)

Certifications

- Caltrans
- State of California Department of General Services

Contact

Merry Lee Olson
402 West Broadway, Suite 400
San Diego, CA 92101
858.761.1249

info@olsoncommunications.com

Clients

- State of California
- California Department of Water Resources
- California State Water Resources Control Board
- CALFED Bay-Delta Program
- California Energy Commission
- California Dept of Education, School Facilities Planning Division
- California Association of Sanitation Agencies
- California Public Utilities Commission
- Marin Municipal Water District
- Contra Costa Water District
- South Bay Water Recycling Program
- Otay Water District
- Yucaipa Valley Water District
- Rancho California Water District
- Sacramento County Water Agency
- San Gabriel Basin Watermaster
- Eastern Municipal Water District
- City of San Diego
- City of Escondido
- City of Oceanside
- City of Poway
- City of Temecula
- City of Barstow
- City of Thousand Oaks
- City of West Hollywood
- County of San Diego
- State of Idaho
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Interior
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- USDA Forest Service
- National Park Service
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- United States Air Force
- United States Navy
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- U.S. Department of Energy
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- State of Montana
- Montana Department of Transportation

Strategic Planning Process

Strategic planning is a facilitator-led process of discovery and assessment where participants answer important questions and make key decisions that will shape and guide the organization's future. And it is also a process of anticipating change, identifying new opportunities, and executing strategy.

Effective strategic planning requires broad-scale information gathering and a series of discussions among key decision makers. The answers to questions about the District's purpose, its current situation, the desired future, what needs to change, and how change will be supported are major components of the planning process. The group and team discussions are an equally important component of the strategic plan as structured communication and collaboration develop the creative ideas and alignment that make implementation timely and efficient.

The ultimate deliverable—the strategic plan—is a tangible, written document that serves as a comprehensive road map for activating the District's Mission, Vision and Core Values and a guiding statement of how the plan will be implemented with role and success definitions for the staff and the board.

A structured process is essential to helping planning team participants identify and develop an action plan for addressing the District's most critical issues. We have learned in our planning work for public agencies that the best approach is simple, direct and tailored to achieving the specific outcomes your organization seeks to achieve. We skillfully apply mixed methodologies and a variety of traditional and customized tools to facilitate open discussions and focused decision-making among the planning team.

Strategic planning does not have to be lengthy, complex or expensive process. However, a streamlined approach relies on the District

- Identifying a sponsor among District leadership who will serve as the process champion, inspire buy-in and commitment from the rest of the team, and obtain support for action and follow-through.
- Recruiting others for the Strategic Planning team who will assist with making decisions and obtaining consensus
- Being thorough in the pre-session discovery
- Providing timely approvals of the planning facilitators' deliverables

Methodology

The customized process that we propose for the District consists of five phases

1. Conducting pre-planning discovery
2. Shaping the District's mission, vision and core values
3. Establishing Strategic Elements
4. Defining implementation requirements
5. Presenting a final plan for approval and adoption



The following pages describe how we will work with the District through each phase and the deliverables that will result.

Phase 1. Conduct Pre-Planning Discovery

A thorough assessment prior to launching the planning process will serve to identify challenges that need to be addressed and also establish the guide points for creating a roadmap for the future based on six key planning questions: 1). Where does the District want to be in the future? 2). How will it know when it gets there? 3). Where is the organization presently? 4). How can the gap be closed between where it is and where it wants to be? 5). How will desired changes be implemented? 6). What external factors and change might influence this?

To guide the District through this critical first step we will provide a “strategic planning dictionary” defining terms and processes and also provide written assessment tools and questionnaires, conduct one-on-one interviewing and strategy sessions with the board, meet with departmental staff and talk with representatives of the District’s stakeholders. Evaluations will include:

Strengths

These are the factors that have contributed to the District’s current success —its staff, policies, procedures, assets, intellectual capital, and other resources that create value.

Weaknesses

These are the internal characteristics, conditions, or circumstances that restrict the realization of the District’s mission. They are not necessarily a reflection of the abilities or the intent of the organization, but represent deficiencies in current capacity or problems with prioritization.

District’s Mandates

The purpose of this step is to identify and clarify the externally imposed mandates placed on the organization. For most public agencies these mandates pertain to legislation, articles of incorporation or charters, regulations, and so on. Unless mandates are identified and clarified two difficulties are likely to arise: the mandates are unlikely to be met, and the planning team is unlikely to know what the District can and cannot pursue.

Stakeholder Analysis

Prior to development of a mission statement, we will assist the District in completing a stakeholder analysis. The District is certainly aware of its stakeholders and their concerns so the focus here will be to assess whether the District is adequately and appropriately communicating with and engaging its stakeholders and to define what criteria stakeholders’ use for judging the performance of the organization and how successful the organization is in meeting stakeholders’ criteria.

Internal Analysis

The District will be asked to identify whether there are situations relative to internal processes and operations including personnel, physical facilities and equipment, use of technology, financial conditions, management, programs and services that will adversely affect its ability to implement a strategic plan.

External Analysis

This examines the forces which an organization has little or no control, such as social, political, economic, demographic, technological, or educational trends. The external analysis predicts events and conditions that will occur during the strategic plan timeframe and identifies impacts that may occur as a result of those events and circumstances. The purpose of the external analysis is to prevent surprises that may negatively affect its ability or opportunity to accomplish its mission.

Critical Issues

Critical issues are fundamental policy or program concerns that define the most important situations and choices the organization faces now and in the future. Typically these situations must be dealt with expeditiously and effectively if the organization is to survive and prosper. A statement of critical issues should describe each issue succinctly, preferably in a single paragraph with details about how it affects mandates, the mission, and core values. The planning team should also state the consequences of failure to address the issue. A review of the consequences will reveal how important, various issues are and how the strategies that are formed must be shaped to address them.

Barriers

The planning team will be asked to further examine mandates, internal and external influences, and critical issues and identify any potential barriers to achieving its mission. This is essential to assuring that the strategies developed for achieving the District's mission are in fact achievable.

Organizational Objectives

Here the District will identify improvements it would like to make to internal functions, communications, systems, and aspects of accountability and authority.

Program Objectives

The District will identify its plans to maintain and expand its service offerings.

Phase 1. Pre-Planning Discovery Process Summary

Actions	Meetings	Tools	Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assess strengths/weaknesses▪ Review district mandates▪ Conduct stakeholder analysis▪ Clarify internal/external influencing factors▪ Identify critical issues and barriers▪ Identify organizational and program objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Kickoff Meeting▪ Board Meeting #1 (Strategic Planning Process Review and Discussion)▪ Planning Team Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Planning Process Dictionary▪ SWOT Analysis▪ Stakeholder Analysis▪ Organizational Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ SWOT Analysis▪ Stakeholder Analysis▪ Issues Analysis

Phase 2. Shape Mission, Vision and Values Statements

Mission, Vision and Value statements are key components of strategic planning. They act as benchmarks for an organization to measure objectives and goals.

Mission

The mission statement is a broad description of the organization's general purpose: what you do, for whom you do it, why you do it, and your distinctive competences. It needs to be developed as a clear and concise expression of the district's identity, purpose, and the means of action. A mission statement defines why the agency exists and provides a declaration of what the organization will be.

Vision

The vision statement describes what the District wants to look like in the future—the results that need to be achieved and the characteristics the organization will need to possess in order to achieve those results. The strategic vision statement provides direction and inspiration for goal setting.

Values

Core values tell how the agency wants to conduct business and identifies the values that the agency is committed to putting into practice such as teamwork, accountability, open communication.

In leading the District through the process of defining its mission, vision and values statements, we will ask that you select representative staff from all levels to participate in the process—people who are comfortable with active engagement in group situations.

Then we will engage the committee in brainstorming the development of the mission statement, asking them to focus on what the agency is dedicated to. For example: quality, customers, and achieving goals. The process will fine-tune the list and lead to a statement of purpose.

Once the group has defined the mission statement, we will facilitate the development of the vision statement. A vision statement is sometimes called a picture of the organization in the future but it's more than that. Your vision statement is your inspiration, the framework for all your strategic planning. Features of an effective vision statement include:

- Clarity and lack of ambiguity
- Vivid and clear picture
- Description of a bright future
- Memorable and engaging wording
- Realistic aspirations

With the mission and vision statements drafted, the planning committee can then address the development of the core values. Participants will be asked to list basic values that align with the organization's mission, vision and culture. The focus of this grouping should answer these questions: How do we conduct our business? How do we treat our stakeholders? What are our real concerns?

The final drafts of the mission, vision and values will be presented to the board for endorsement and approval. Once they are approved we recommend that they be communicated internally and externally through printed copies, the District's website, electronic mail and any other relevant channel.

Phase 2. Mission, Vision, Values Development Summary

Actions	Meetings	Tools	Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop Mission Statement to define why the organization exists ▪ Create Vision Statement to define what the organization wants to become ▪ Define Core Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning Team Meeting #2 ▪ Board Meeting #2 (Mission, Vision, Core Values Approval) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mission Vision Values Tree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approved Mission Statement ▪ Approved Vision Statement ▪ Approved Statement of Core Values

Phase 3. Establish Strategic Elements

Strategic Elements are the fundamentals that will allow the District to fulfill its mandates; mission and values; its service commitments, financial responsibilities, and organizational commitments. A core strategic planning goal is to develop strategies that are translatable into actions. Most strategic plans address high level initiatives and overarching goals, but fail to define the projects and tasks that will be required to achieve the plan.

Strategy Development

In the first phases of the strategic planning process the planning team addresses questions relative to “Where are we?” and “What is our purpose?” In this phase, strategies are developed to deal with the issues identified Phase 1 and to deliver upon the promises made by the mission, vision and values statements developed in Phase 2. The strategies begin to address “How will we get there?”

Without doubt, the most important part of the planning discipline is the development of the list of strategies. The strategies articulate the District’s stated objectives and are indicative of the organization’s basic operational emphasis, its priorities, and the standards by which it will measure its own performance.

An effective strategy must meet several criteria. It must be technically workable, acceptable to key stakeholders (both internal and external), and must be in accord with the organization’s philosophy and core values. It must also be within the District’s mandates and legal parameters.

Strategy development begins with our facilitating the planning team in its identification of practical alternatives and visions for addressing strategic issues. And then we will work with the planning team to revisit strengths and weaknesses and barriers that have been identified to assure that the goals, objective and action plans developed are achievable.

Five-year Goals

The next step in the planning process is the articulation of goals—the desired long-range outcomes for the District as an organization and for its programs. Prioritizing goals is an essential step in developing a meaningful strategic plan. We will assist the Board and the planning and departmental teams with goal identification and prioritization so the goals developed work synergistically to shape the District’s future.. We will also assist in assuring that the goals of one part of the organization mesh compatibly with those of other departments and with the Board’s overarching strategies.

Objectives

After determining goals, the planning team must address means of reaching their goals. This step involves the planning team and departmental teams articulating the objectives that represent the District's commitment to achieving specific, measurable results. The objectives will closely tie to the District's mission and vision statements. The specification of the mission and vision into measurable results means that the planning team is not just building administrative or operational objectives, but overall district objectives that represent a significant investment toward an expected significant return.

Milestones and Measurements

Addressing goal measurement involves articulation of success indicators and benchmarks. Indicators are quantifiable measures of progress; they provide numeric assessment of the desired outcomes. Benchmarks are target levels of performance expressed in measurable terms and specified time frames, against which actual achievement is measured.

Phase 3. Strategic Elements Development Summary

Actions	Meetings	Tools	Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Define and prioritize strategic elementsFormulate actionable 5-year goalsDevelop annual objectives for each goalOutline implementation milestones and measurements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Planning Team Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gap AnalysisStrategy MapGoals GridPlan to Action PyramidBalanced Scorecard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Five-year strategy map with delineated goals, annual objectives and implementation milestones and measurements

Phase 4. Define Implementation Requirements

Implementation Action Plans

The final component of the planning discipline is development of the implementation action plans—detailed description of the specific actions required to implement the strategies and make them operational.

Action Plan Development

After the strategic initiatives are drafted and reviewed, we will assist the departmental teams as they develop Action Plans, which will serve as the road map for implementing the strategies. Each strategy will be assigned to an Action Team made up of a cross-section of people who are affected by and involved in turning the strategy into reality. The individual strategies will be supported by several plans, each containing its own specific objectives, time lines and assignments of responsibilities. We will provide a planning template and guidelines to assist Departmental Teams as they develop Action Plans and coach them in creating plans that focus on the essential, core requirements of getting things done. The teams will identify the actions needed over the next five years to implement the District's mission including

- Estimates of financial, technology, and human resource requirements
- Descriptions of individual roles and success indicators/ benchmarks
- Specific policies needed to support implementation

Phase 4. Implementation Action Plan Development Summary

Actions	Meetings	Tools	Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop implementation action plans ▪ Estimate financial, technology and human resource requirements ▪ Outline individual roles with success indicators ▪ Specify policies needed to support implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning Team Meeting #4, with Action plan breakouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work Plan Template ▪ Performance Scorecard Matrix ▪ Outcome Measurement Matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation Action Plans ▪ Resource Assessment ▪ Summary of individual implementation roles/success benchmarks ▪ Policy analysis report

Phase 5. Adopt Final Plan

Prepare Final Draft

We will pull all of the elements developed in the previous four phases into a draft plan which we will review first with staff. Once staff input is integrated, we will present the preliminary final plan draft to the board for their review. Any requested revisions will be made and then the final draft will be published.

Board Approval

The general manager will submit the final draft of the Strategic Plan along with the schedule of action to the board for approval and formal adoption. At this point existing programs and activities outside the plan should be abandoned and all resources should be reallocated to new action plans. In the end, the strategic planning process includes not only developing the road map, but also making a commitment to taking action, to conducting periodic reviews to see if things are working the way the planning team intends, and if necessary modifying the plan and actions until desired outcomes are achieved.

Phase 5. Final Plan Adoption Summary

Actions	Meetings	Tools	Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generate Final Plan ▪ Submit for board review ▪ Revise ▪ Present final for adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Board Meeting #3 (Strategic Plan Presentation and Discussion) ▪ Board Meeting #4 (Strategic Plan Approval) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft Plan ▪ Final Plan ▪ Plan Publication ▪ Adoption

Marina Coast Water District Strategic Planning Overview

© Olson Communications 2011

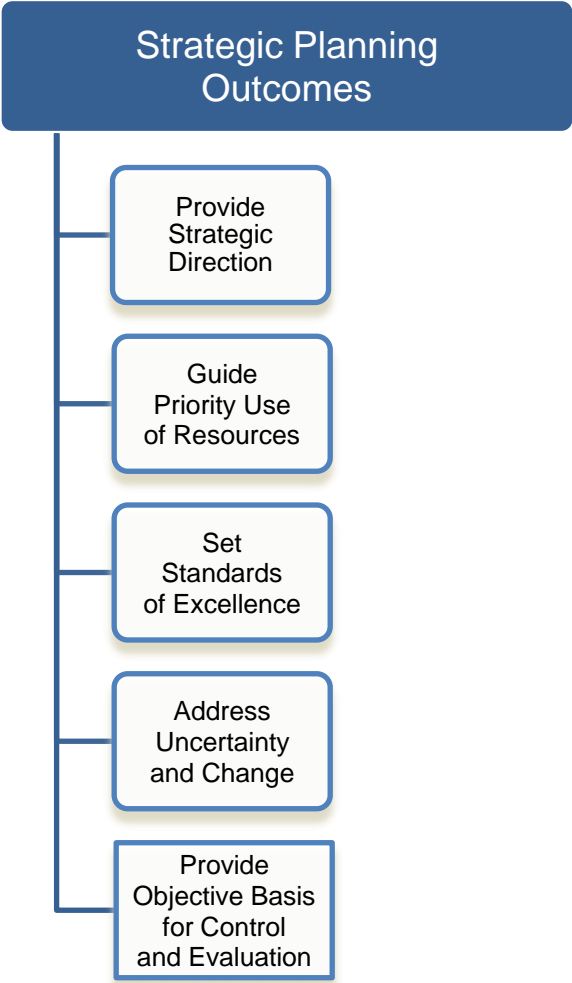
Phase	Actions	Meetings	Tools	Deliverables
<p>1</p> <p>Conduct Pre Plan Discovery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess strengths/weaknesses Review district mandates Conduct stakeholder analysis Clarify internal/external influencing factors Identify critical issues and barriers Identify organizational and program objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kickoff Meeting Board Meeting #1 (Strategic Planning Process Review and Discussion) Planning Team Meeting #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWOT Analysis Stakeholder Analysis Organizational Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWOT Analysis Stakeholder Analysis Issues Analysis
<p>2</p> <p>Shape Mission Vision Values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Mission Statement to define why the organization exists Create Vision Statement to define what the organization wants to become Define Core Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Team Meeting #2 Board Meeting #2 (Mission, Vision, Core Values Approval) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission Vision Values Tree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved Mission Statement Approved Vision Statement Approved Statement of Core Values
<p>3</p> <p>Establish Strategic Elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and prioritize strategic elements Formulate actionable 5-year goals Develop annual objectives for each goal Outline implementation milestones and measurements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Team Meeting #3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap Analysis Strategy Map Goals Grid Plan to Action Pyramid Balanced Scorecard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five-year strategy map with delineated goals, annual objectives and implementation milestones and measurements
<p>4</p> <p>Define Implementation Requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop implementation action plans Estimate financial, technology and human resource requirements Outline individual roles with success indicators Specify policies needed to support implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Team Meeting #4, with Action plan breakouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Plan Template Performance Scorecard Matrix Outcome Measurement Matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation Action Plans Resource Assessment Summary of individual implementation roles/success benchmarks Policy analysis report
<p>5</p> <p>Adopt Final Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate Final Plan Submit for board review Revise Present final for adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Meeting #3 (Strategic Plan Presentation and Discussion) Board Meeting #4 (Strategic Plan Approval) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation Software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Plan Final Plan Plan Publication Adoption

Outcomes

The overall approach that we will deploy while working with the District board and staff is shaped by four overarching professional principles

- 1. Providing guidance, direction, coaching and support throughout the process
- 2. Assisting with prioritization of goals and resources
- 3. Helping internal/external stakeholders understand and support the organization’s mission
- 4. Providing the clarity that individuals need to understand their roles and responsibilities and what success looks like.

In Jack Koteen’s 1989 work titled *Strategic Management in Public and Nonprofit Organizations* he summarized the fundamentals of strategic planning in the public venue. We believe he succinctly described the outcomes you can anticipate when Olson Communications assists the District with developing its Five-Year Strategic Plan.



Strategic Plan Timeline

Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline→	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Ongoing
	Actions↓					
Phase 1 Conduct Pre-Planning Discovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Assess strengths/weaknesses – Review district mandates – Conduct stakeholder analysis – Clarify internal/external influencing factors – Identify critical issues and barriers – Identify organizational and program objectives 		Task 1 Time Estimate 4 weeks ● ● ● ●				
Phase 2 Shape Mission Vision and Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Define Mission – Define Vision – Define Core Values 			Task 2 Time Estimate 2 weeks ● ●			
Phase 3 Establish Strategic Elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Define and prioritize strategic initiatives – Formulate actionable 5-year goals – Develop annual objectives for each goal – Delineate implementation milestones and measurements 			Task 3 Time Estimate 4 weeks ● ● ● ●			
Phase 4 Define Implementation Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop Implementation Action Plans – Estimate financial , technology and human resource requirements – Outline individual roles with success indicators / benchmarks – Specify policies needed to support implementation 				Task 4 Time Estimate 4 weeks ● ● ● ●		
Phase 5 Adopt and Implement Final Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Generate Final Plan – Submit for board review – Revise – Present final for adoption 					Task 5 Time Estimate 4 weeks ● ● ● ●	
Implementation Assessments and Plan Updates						● ● ● ● →

Cost Estimate

Our cost estimate is based on our understanding of the District’s desired outcomes, timeline and established budget per the information that is available in the Request for Proposal and is offered at this point merely as a guideline. The actual scope of work will be derived during discussion with District representatives.

In executing the scope, Olson Communications’ principal and our senior professional associates will conduct a series of meetings with the District Board and personnel and with representatives of the District’s stakeholders. Using a combination of customized and traditional planning tools and templates we will guide the District’s planning team and assist them in working through the processes of

- Pre-Planning Discovery
- Development of Mission, Vision and Values Statements
- Establishing Strategic Elements
- Defining Implementation Requirements

We will then generate a draft Strategic Five-Year Plan and submit it for Board review. The draft plan will be revised and resubmitted for final approval. We will assist the District General Manager in preparing a presentation for formal adoption by the board.

Our estimate for this process includes:

Professional Fees	\$15,000
Other Direct Costs	\$ 2,000
Project Total	\$17,000

While this is an extremely modest budget to cover all the aspects the Request for Proposal indicates it wishes to incorporate in the planning process and the strategic plan, we have the flexibility as a small firm to adjust billing rates and make scheduling allowances that will enable us to work with you to achieve these goals assuming the District planning team is committed to efficiently engaging organizational resources to assist with discovery, decision-making and approval of deliverables. Estimated involvement levels for our team are as follows

Planning Team Professionals	Roles and Responsibilities	Time Commitment
Merry Lee Olson Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Guide District planning team in conducting pre-planning discovery – Develop SWOT, Issues and Stakeholder Analyses – Guide District planning team in developing Mission, Vision and Values Statements; prepare statements for approval by Board – Guide District planning team in defining and prioritizing strategic initiatives, actionable goals, annual objectives, implementation action plans and milestones, estimating resource requirements, identifying individual roles and success benchmarks, identifying policy needs – Prepare draft and final plan and presentation – Overall project management 	80 hours
Charles Gardiner Senior Associate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Guide District planning team in conducting pre-planning discovery – Assist with developing SWOT, Issues and Stakeholder Analyses – Provide strategic support to the Mission, Vision and Values development process – Work with District planning team in defining and prioritizing strategic initiatives, actionable goals, annual objectives, implementation action plans and milestones, estimating resource requirements, identifying individual roles and success benchmarks, identifying policy needs – Assist with preparation of draft and final plan and presentation 	60 hours
Bill Owens Senior Associate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Assess and clarify legal parameters – Assess and recommend policy changes 	10 hours

Principal Planning Team Bios

Merry Lee Olson

Expertise

- Strategic Planning
- Communications Strategies
- Organizational Development
- Team Building
- Change Management
- Program Management
- Project Leadership
- Training

Education

- Graduate of Montana State University, B.S and Masters Program Studies in Communications
- MBA Program Studies in Leadership and Change Management

Affiliations

- International Association of Facilitators (IAF)
- International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)

Background

- 1989 - Present
Principal and President of Olson Communications a certified woman-owned business enterprise
- Strategic planning and communications leader in both corporate and public agency venues

Recent Articles

Managing Change
T+D Magazine

Achieving Excellence Virtually
Perspectives

Profile

Merry Lee Olson has served in management positions in both corporate and public agency venues and for 21 years in a consulting advisory role. She founded Olson Communications in 1990 and has since directed planning and implementation for private sector and governmental projects with combined budgets totaling more than \$2 billion.

Olson has led strategic planning, decision-making facilitation, communications planning, engagement and outreach, organizational development and team building, and change management for public agencies that focus on water, recycled water, wastewater, watershed management, water rights, renewable energy, transportation and education, climate change, sustainability and “green” initiatives, and numerous other matters of public concern as well as numerous private sector clients.

She brings an extensive background in most of the prevalent models for strategic planning, organizational development, team building, communications and change management including those developed by John Bryson, Dr. Robert Kaplan, Dr. Kenneth Blanchard, Dr. Patricia Zigarmi, John Kotter, William Bridges, George Steiner and William Pena. Planning and analysis tools that she engages include SWOT, PEST, and Stakeholder Analysis; Organizational Assessment; Mission Vision Values Tree; Gap Analysis, Strategy Mapping, Goals Grid, Plan to Action Pyramid, Balanced Scorecard, Goal-sequencing and numerous others. Olson is adept at tailoring strategic planning approaches to meet individual agencies’ needs and developing customized tools. She is an effective leader of team processes to development mission, vision and values statement—foundational elements of strategic plan development.

As a member of the International Association of Facilitators and the International Association of Public Participation, she follows a Code of Ethics that guides the actions of those who facilitate the inclusion of all parties involved in decision making.

- Serving as an on-call advisor to the San Diego Association of Governments to support its strategic planning and resource allocation over a five-year period between 2011 and 2016.
- Principal-in-Charge and Lead Facilitator for the development in 2011 of the inaugural Strategic Plan to assist a newly formed public entity in Kalispell, Montana shape its near-and long-term strategies
- Serving as co- Facilitator for the State of Idaho in its two-year planning initiative for 2010-2012
- Principal-in-Charge, Strategic Plan Development relative to the expansion of the City of San Diego Recycled Water Program
- Principal Facilitator and co-developer of a strategic plan for the development of a Regional Water Recycling and Wastewater Disposal Program, City of Escondido - lead agency
- Principal Facilitator and Strategic Plan Advisor for the Development of Mandatory Reuse, City of San Diego

- Facilitator for Strategic Plan Development Rancho California Water District a regional agency providing water, wastewater and recycled water services
- Co-Facilitator and Strategic Plan Developer for Recycled Water Master Plan and Urban Water Management Plan Updates Yucaipa Valley Water District
- Lead facilitator and strategic plan co-developer with USEPA, the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster and San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority to develop an approach to address the clean up the San Gabriel Basin—one of the nation’s worst underground pollution sites and the location of four EPA Superfund projects
- Facilitator in support of Strategic Plan Development for the Adjudication of the Mojave River Groundwater Basin, City of Barstow - lead agency
- Facilitator of Multi-Agency Involvement in Development of Master Plans and Water Resources Planning, Municipal Water District of Orange County

Charles Gardiner
Senior Associate

Expertise

- Organizational Capacity Building
- Stakeholder Facilitation
- Program Management
- Public Engagement
- Conflict Mediation
- Environmental Review

Education

- Graduate of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, B.A Chemistry and Political Science
- Mediation and Conflict Management Training, PennACCORD

Affiliations

- Water Environment Federation
- American Water Works Association
- Association of California Water Agencies
- APA Public Engagement Group

Background

- 1994 to 2010, Principal CirclePoint
- 1989 to 1994, National Manager for Public Involvement, CH2M HILL
- 1986 to 1989, Project Manager, Regina Villa Associates

Profile

A skilled practitioner, **Charles Gardiner** has more than 25 years of experience in program management, stakeholder facilitation, and team and organizational capacity building. Mr. Gardiner is trained in conflict mediation, facilitation, and public decision-making techniques. He facilitates program management teams, multi-agency coordination, public meetings, stakeholder workshops, advisory committees, and independent review processes. His technical and policy training helps clients integrate diverse issues and improve organization capabilities to reach program, stakeholder, and community goals.

His areas of expertise include water resources, wastewater, energy, hazardous waste, rail, transportation, climate change, and emergency preparedness. He has developed process improvement and program management plans, public engagement and education strategies, and community outreach and promotional projects throughout the United States.

Selected Project Experience

- Principal-in-Charge, Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project Public Outreach Program, Contra Costa Water District, Bureau of Reclamation, and California Department of Water Resources
- Project Director, Independent Review and Long-term Implementation Plan for the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Principal-in-Charge, Cal-Am Coastal Water Project Environmental Review, California Public Utilities Commission
- Facilitator, Design-Procurement Process Improvement, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- Lead Facilitator, San Joaquin River Restoration Program, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and California Departments of Water Resources and Fish & Game
- Project Director, Long-term Water Supply Plan Communications Strategy, Marin Municipal Water District
- Project Director, Recycled Water Marketing, South Bay Water Recycling Program

William Owens

Senior Associate

Expertise

- Strategic Planning
- Facilitation
- Stakeholder Outreach
- Government Relations
- Interagency Coordination
- Re-Use Analysis
- Training

Education

- University of Connecticut, BA, English
- Villanova University School of Law, JD
- Training in Facilitation, Mediation and Negotiation
 - Advanced Mediation Harvard Law School
 - Negotiation Strategy Institute Training
 - Facilitating Environmental Agreements

Professional Affiliations

- Association for Conflict Resolution
- Alternative Dispute Resolution Section, Sacramento County Bar
- Environmental and Real Property Sections, State Bar of California
- Explorit Science Center Board of Trustees

Background

- 1990-Present California-based Mediator-Facilitator, Policy Analyst and Attorney
- 1987-2003 Environmental Policy and Law Research Fellow, Virginia Tech and UC Davis

Profile

Bill Owens plans and facilitates effective communications and public outreach concerning the environment, infrastructure and energy. He also provides policy and legal advice to public agencies and private parties in these areas. A partial list of agencies and counties to which Bill has provided outreach, education and training support includes: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste and Office of Policy, Planning, and Evaluation; California Integrated Waste Management Board, Used Oil Program; California Department of Toxic Substances Control; U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Technology Development; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; California State Water Resources Control Board; California Department of Fish and Game; California Department of Education, School Facilities Planning Division; California Ocean Protection Council; California Coastal Conservancy; Sacramento, Orange, Placer, El Dorado and Yolo Counties

Selected Project Experience

- Lead facilitator for the multi-agency, public-private deliberations around the formation and organization of the *California Watershed Council*
- Lead facilitator for the *Interagency Coordinated Program for Wetland Water Use Planning*, a successful multi-agency effort to develop methods to ensure the effective use of water allocated to wildlife refuges in the Central Valley of California.
- Facilitator for multi-agency deliberations and decisions for the *Interagency Cooperative Water Quality Enforcement Program*, a collaborative effort of the California Ocean Protection Council, State Water Resources Control Board, Department of Fish and Game and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- Facilitated multi-stakeholder negotiations and public outreach for major infrastructure projects, such as the *Guadalupe River Flood Control Project* and the *South Orange County Transportation Infrastructure Improvement Project*, on which the project teams and stakeholders successfully addressed a complex array of interagency coordination, design, environmental and regulatory challenges.
- Designed and facilitated an effective public outreach program for the El Dorado County Lake Tahoe Storm Water Management Plan, which engaged and informed property owners, businesses and interested citizens.
- Facilitator of successful deliberations among three state agencies, six electric utilities, representatives of the state's school districts and other stakeholders on a California statewide project concerned with energy distribution and use at public schools.
- Served as a co-facilitator, deliberative process designer, and policy analyst for a portion of the *Tahoe Pathway Project*, a multi-agency, multi-year effort involving the concurrent preparation of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan Update, the U.S. Forest Service Plan, and water quality standards.
- Served as the lead or co-instructor in numerous professional seminars, such as History, Politics and Law of California Water and Facilitating and Mediating Effective Environmental Agreements

References

Diane Medler

Director
Kalispell Convention & Visitors Bureau
Kalispell Area Chamber of Commerce
15 Depot Park
Kalispell, MT, 59901
406.758.2808
dianem@kalispellchamber.com

Alex Ruiz

Interim Director of Public Utilities
City of San Diego
600 B Street
Suite 1150 MS911A
San Diego, CA 92120-4506
858.292.6401 [rings to Janet Bruce his executive secretary]
ruiza@sandiego.gov

Wendy Wong

Vice President of Marketing
The Ken Blanchard Companies
125 State Place
Escondido, CA 92029
800.728.6000 or 760-839-8070
wendy.wong@kenblanchard.com

Jeffrey Ebert, P.E.

District Administrator
Montana Department of Transportation
3751 Wynne Avenue
Butte, MT 59702-3068
406.494.9625
jebert@mt.gov

OLSON COMMUNICATIONS

- Certified Woman-Owned Small Business Enterprise
- Dedicated to Helping to Find Sustainable Solutions for 21st Century Challenges

Visit us online at www.olsoncommunications.com



OLSON COMMUNICATIONS

Overview
Services
Clients
Professionals
Certifications
Contacts

Creating Solutions for 21st Century Challenges

- infrastructure development and construction
- growth and diversification
- potable and recycled water
- transportation and telecommunications
- renewable energy and the environment
- sustainable communities
- and more ...

With Proven Expertise and Outstanding Client Support

- stakeholder coordination
- community outreach and public awareness
- public relations
- legislative, governmental and agency liaison
- issues management
- planning and meeting facilitation
- market development

402 West Broadway, Suite 400
San Diego, CA 92101

1300 Clay Street, Suite 600
Oakland, CA 94612

555 Capitol Mall, Suite 900
Sacramento, CA 95814

info@olsoncommunications.com