

South Central Assembly

Strategic Planning Retreat

December 5, 2008

Opportunities

Increased interest in regional planning
Recognition of need for regional cooperation – all levels of government
Economic challenges incentive for municipal cooperation
Regional transportation – rebuild voice
More local surveys and research
DCED interest in funding conference and training
Reintroduce housing, c.d., Main Street
Need for organization's mission exists

Strengths

Diverse membership with many years experience
Conferences - topical and well done
Diverse Board – experienced
Access to university resources
Bi-partisan
Expertise – planning, agriculture, housing, economic development, business
Potential for neutrality within often competitive region
Successful history - studies, summits, conferences
Executive Director and Board chair
State willingness to listen

Weaknesses

No steady revenue stream
Lack of powerbase
Lack of visibility
Lack of champions
Lack of Board commitment
No marketing plan
Trying to do too much
Weak local government support
Perception that we don't exist

Threats

Multitude of organizations, overlapping interests
Economy
Turf issues among regional groups
No regional planning focus/organization
Redundancy with County Commissioners' Caucus
Ongoing financial challenges
Two years lost momentum
Perception of being anti-local government
Other regional organizations taking projects

Top stakeholders

Municipal governments
County planning
Policy makers
Non-profits and community agencies
State agencies
Taxpayers
Business partners

Who are our Stakeholders? (in priority order by points received)

Municipal Governments – 33 points
County planning – 15 points
Policy makers – 14 points
Non-profits and community agencies – 8 points
State agencies – 7 points
Taxpayers – 7 points
Business partners – 6 points
Public services – 5 points
DCED – 4 points
Counties – 4 points
Volunteers – 3 points
PennDOT – 3 points
DEP – 2 points
Funders – 2 points
Citizens – 2 points (low-income, housing – 1 point, homeowners, renters, uninsured and underinsured)
Elected officials – 2 points
Academia/colleges & universities – 2 points
Board – 1 point
Private sector – 1 point
Other regional agencies – 1 point
Penn State Harrisburg/ISRA – 0 points
Tourists – 0 points
Emigrants – 0 points
Immigrants – 0 points
PHFA – 0 points
Healthcare agencies – 0 points
Media – 0 points
Project sponsors – 0 points
DCNR – 0 points
Housing Alliance of PA – 0 points
Engineers – 0 points
Farmers – 0 points
Lawyers – 0 points
Youth – 0 points
Special purpose authorities – 0 points

SCA Goals (strengths/opportunities)

Communicate new strategic plan and identity via news conference. Build on diversity of Board. Rebrand SCA.

Leverage state interest in funding training, use community interest in regional planning and access to universities.

Continue to build SCA-run regional health insurance and energy purchase programs.

Use conferences to provide CEU's for professionals.

Identify non-member sources of revenue.

Find two champions – one in House, one in Senate.

Consider sun-setting work groups in place of committees.

SCA Goals (weaknesses/opportunities)

Look at past successes and work of other organizations to identify SCA niches.

Produce an electronic newsletter for elected officials: recognize champions of local/regional planning, board members, recruit new board members.

Initiate quarterly news conferences.

Establish consistent way for members to participate via distance.

Look for more ways to provide services where lots of local governments can benefit.

Establish a program to recognize regional excellence.

Promote SCA's non-partisan, third party, balanced, objective image.

Promote past successes

Sponsor a Series of Educational Conferences

Energy

HealthCare

Transportation

Mobility

Long term Regional Planning

Host another DCED-Funded Summit

Energize Committees

Build and strengthen relationship with other regional groups (complementary)

Establish % of budget we strive to get from membership dues based on perceived value

Host a Housing Conference

Develop and implement an SCA marketing plan

Outreach program (1-on-1) with key regional contacts, interaction, clarify perception, and raise awareness

Communication Committee

EP and Audit Program promotion

Prioritize efforts to maximize effectiveness

Goals (W-O)

Improving internal weaknesses by taking advantage of external opportunities

- 1) Focus on core areas of past success to develop a base of success for future.
- 2) Strategically consider the work of other organizations to recognize open niches. For example, HHS needs assessment, Predatory lending program.
- 3) Use energy purchase/audit service as a marketing tool. It is a product to offer to constituents.
- 4) Create talking points to be used in one-on-one outreach program:
 - a. Identify key regional contacts
 - b. Mission and program focus.
- 5) Develop membership dues letter to help with fundraising – membership billing.
- 6) Regular newsletter (electronic) – local government, elec. Offering
- 7) Recognition of champions for regional planning – regional excellence.
- 8) Promote board members
- 9) Promote services: health care and energy consortiums
- 10) Accept resumes for board positions (Franklin County, attorney, CPA)
- 11) Standard place to meet to perfect phone system.
- 12) PR/Communications committee
- 13) Develop marketing plan to hold monthly or quarterly press conference: emphasize product
- 14) Need to discover services where the more involved, the better the benefit (like energy) to win local governments.
- 15) Marketing plan to get champions (2 step process):
 - a. ID who to visit face-to-face
 - b. Assign members to make personal visits
 - *Retail = direct, face-to-face*
 - *Grass roots = wherever they are*
 - *Have good info on website, constant drum beat, persistence*
- 16) Promote non-partisan image to be reliable to all sides with studies, research, etc.

Goals (S-O)

Improving internal strengths by taking advantage of external opportunities

- 1) Promote past success as it relates to regional planning
- 2) Secure stable state funding (DCED and PennDOT) to provide a series of education conferences to be determined at first conference. Post handouts to SCA web. Promote a conference, reap clients. Sample first 2-4 years:
 - a. Transportation (corridor 1 & 2, I-81, PA Turnpike)
 - b. Long term regional planning
 - c. Pedestrian & bike trails – mobility
 - d. Energy
 - e. Health care
- 3) Work with DCED to secure funding for a 2009 Summit and a 2010 Summit.
- 4) Use diversity of the board to build and strengthen regional partnerships and collaboration.
- 5) Raise percentage of budget from membership contributions based on perceived value (what we had)
- 6) ID revenue for additional budget.
- 7) Find two champions (1 house, 1 senate) to carry message.
- 8) Housing conference annually.
- 9) Reinvigorate committee structure.
- 10) The diversity of SCA in its board, membership, and mission is an opportunity to communicate, via a press conference, its new strategic plan and brand identity.
- 11) Conduct a conference on regional planning and transportation issues. Approach DCED for funding.
- 12) Ensure that conferences include continuing education credit element.
- 13) Maximize university resources in seminars.
- 14) Restart SCA assessment program – use university resources.
- 15) Partner with state agencies to offer training to their constituents.

Assignment for collection of emails for electronic distribution list:

County:	Name:
Adams	Mark Berg
Franklin	
Dauphin	Gail D'Angelo
Cumberland	Sherri Zimmerman
Perry	Ann Simonetti
York	Steve Snell
Lancaster	Deb Himes
Lebanon	JoEllen Litz