

Introduction

Every five years, St. Louis County government is challenged to create a general plan that will align resources to address the most critical issues facing St. Louis County. As mandated by charter, St. Louis County must review its general plan to ensure that the plan's goals and policies are consistent with the present conditions and issues facing the County. The last general plan was the *1990-1995 St. Louis County Strategic Plan: Shaping the Future Together*. Thus, in 1998, St. Louis County again embarked on a general plan update to guide the citizens and government of St. Louis County into the next century.

The culmination of committee work, citizen surveys, community engagement, trend analysis, presentations, expert task force recommendations; and numerous meetings between Department of Planning staff, consultants, the County Executive's Office, and department directors resulted in the 2000-2004 St. Louis County Strategic Plan.



What's Different About the 2000-2004 Strategic Plan?

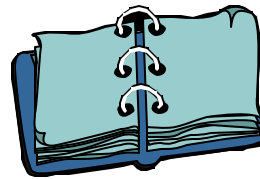
The 2000-2004 Strategic Plan builds upon the strengths of the previous plan and adds some new components as well. Historically, St. Louis County Department of Planning has placed great value on public involvement in planning processes, and the 1990-1995 Strategic Plan contained an unprecedented amount of citizen input. The 2000-2004 Strategic Plan also included a community engagement component, but utilized technology that was not available in past years to involve citizens. As examples, Strategic Plan information was placed on the County's web site, a special e-mail group was established to receive public comment, and a 24-hour Strategic Plan Hotline with voice mail recorded citizen comments.

The 2000-2004 Strategic Plan also places greater emphasis on implementation than past plans by introducing a formalized system to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Plan. With the County Executive's Office serving as an internal monitor, County departments will complete action plans that link outcomes and strategies of the Strategic Plan to annual budgets and work plans. Departments will also produce semi-annual progress reports updating the status

of achieving the outcomes and strategies. In addition, an external citizen based committee will monitor and provide feedback to keep plan implementation on track.

Another difference of the 2000-2004 Strategic Plan is the increased focus on effectiveness rather than consensus. While the 1990-1995 Strategic Plan resulted in a "laundry list" of 130 priority actions to be achieved by St. Louis County government, the 2000-2004 Strategic Plan focuses on addressing only the four most critical issues:

- ! **County's Role in the Region**
- ! **Reinvestment in Older Communities**
- ! **Transportation**
- ! **Services to Unincorporated Areas**



2000-2004 Strategic Plan Format

The 2000-2004 Strategic Plan was produced in two formats:

- ! **Citizen Friendly Pamphlet**
- ! **Comprehensive Workbook**

The citizen format highlights the strategic planning process, strategic issues, and outcomes and strategies. The comprehensive work book is designed for use by County government elected officials, department directors, and key staff. The Strategic Plan is a working document, and the design of the workbook reflects this in that pages can be added or removed as necessary over the course of the next five years. The workbook is meant to be a hands-on document that can easily and readily adapt to policy changes, staffing, and budget allocations.