

Southwest Oklahoma Impact Coalition Strategic Plan Development 2010

Background

SOIC's first strategic plan was developed after SOIC's Front Line Team conducted over 500 in-depth business surveys with southwest Oklahoma manufacturers, convention, retail, tourism and service business owners utilizing the e-Synchronist® Business Interview System. Although dated for the period of 2007-2010, the Plan was never intended to be static, rather it was designed to be a working document reflecting changing realities and progress achieved in the Plan's stated eight priorities.

The barriers to growth identified by the business community which constitute the eight objectives stated in the Plan include:

- 1) Quality, Quantity and Reliability of the Workforce;
- 2) Intermodal Transportation;
- 3) Health Care;
- 4) Water Quality and Quantity;
- 5) Broadband Services/Wireless Connectivity;
- 6) Electrical Service;
- 7) Childcare for Working Families; and
- 8) Workers' Compensation.

Each of the eight priorities were assigned to a specific SOIC partner organization to monitor and provide oversight.

2010 Plan

Due to many factors, to include the economic downturn, the Front Line Team recommended that the Plan be updated for new emphasis and focus. In the spring of 2010, Front Line Team members met to review existing priorities for current relevance and to discuss the process for updating the Plan. Much discussion occurred regarding Making Place Matter, the regional stewardship program sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and embraced by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. The question was, how can SOIC, in its diversity and mission, affect economic and community development as a region rather than its members and range of constituents acting as separate and disparate entities?

It was the Team's recommendation that the organization focus on no more than two primary work objectives, and that those objectives be embraced by the entire organization rather than being assigned to a specific institution for action and monitoring. It was the opinion of the Team that this practice would serve to unify the organization and its efforts.

SOIC Strategic Planning Session I August 18, 2010

On August 18, 2010, 27 members of the Board of Directors and Front Line Team convened in a “Futuring Session” facilitated by Dr. Michael Nealeigh to initiate the first of two phases of strategic planning. The meeting’s objective was to develop an internal vision that could be shared by all stakeholders. This vision would then create the basis or platform for creating future work objectives and initiatives. Asked to respond to the following question and then ranking the answers, the group created the following priorities for SOIC.

When I look 3 to 5 years into the future I prefer to see SOIC...

...as a strong regional organization being the voice/lobbying force for SW Oklahoma	—49 votes/41 %
...as a resource, organized to respond to regional issues	—36 votes/30%
...involved in education issues	—15 votes/13%
...engaged in economic development	—14 votes /12%
...facilitating population growth and strong communities	— 6 votes/1%

Wide consensus of the group is that SOIC should be a strong regional lobbying organization with a Southwest Oklahoma derived and focused legislative agenda. Increased participation from the private sector is highly desired.

The group believes that SOIC’s Front Line Team should serve as a regional resource and response team to address business and economic development issues and barriers to growth.

The group agrees that SOIC should be actively involved in education issues ranging from taking the lead in the development of a plan to reduce high school dropout rates to creation of seamless career pathways among all educational entities.

As a fourth and final priority, the group believes SOIC should engage in economic development, especially in the identification and development of niche markets and providing entrepreneurial support.

In attendance at the 8/18/2010 meeting:

Board Members:

Randy Beutler, SWOSU; Clif Corbin, WTC; Larry Devane, RCC; John Feaver, USAO; Gary Gorshing, SWODA; Ken Layn, RRTC; Cindy Ross, CU; Dennis Ruttman, CKTC; Blaine Smith, ASCOG; Tom Thomas, GPTC; Greg Winters, CVTC.

Front Line Team Members:

Gilmer Capps, REI; Jessika Davis, DAEDF; Marilyn Feaver, SOIC; Ray Friedl, SC WIB; Debora Glasgow, SWODA; Marvin Hankins, SWOSU; Corey Herndon, ODOC; Will Johnson, GPTC; Paul Lewis, FNB&T; CM Lin, SWOSU; Dick Lowe, CVTC; Sam Porter, RRTC; Kathie Price, SW WIB; Kelley Young, SOIC; Clark Southard, SOIC; Arun Tilak, CU.

SOIC Strategic Planning Session II September 15, 2010

On September 15, 2010, 25 members of the SOIC Board of Directors and Front Line Team reconvened for the purpose of developing work plan priorities. Dr. Nealeigh reminded the participants that the identified focus statements determined in the prior meeting should correlate with any action steps created by the work groups. The key words are:

- 1) Unified Regional Voice
- 2) Business Response Team
- 3) Education
- 4) Economic Development

At this meeting, however, the group was asked to respond to a slightly rephrased question. After votes were tabulated, consensus was easily determined.

*When I look three to five years into the future, I prefer to see SOIC **working on...***

...Reforming, impacting, improving and connecting education systems, especially K-20	— 52 votes/47%
...Organizing an effective political coalition with a unified legislative agenda	—18 votes/16%
...Facilitating comprehensive regional collaboration with more stakeholders, to include common education, business and industry	—14 votes/13%
...Obtaining grants to fund future workforce development initiatives	—13 votes/12%
...Addressing workforce development issues and Career Pathways	—11 votes/ 10%

With nearly fifty percent of the votes (and in subsequent discussion), education reform was readily agreed upon as the number one priority issue for SOIC.

Organizing an effective political coalition to focus on education reform and other regional issues was identified as the number two work priority. This priority relates directly to two of the key words identified in the first planning session – unified regional voice and education.

The third work priority - facilitating comprehensive regional collaboration with more stakeholders, including common education, business and industry ties to all four of the key aforementioned phrases – *unified regional voice, business response team, education and economic development.*

As workforce development is clearly related to all educational systems, the third and fourth identified issues of seeking grants to fund workforce development initiatives and addressing workforce issues and implementation of Career Pathways could clearly be tied to the first priority, education reform.

Participants included:

Jack Bryant, Cliff Corbin, Bill Cunningham, Kem Crowell, Christy Elkins, John Feaver, Marilyn Feaver, Shaun Freie, Lisa Greenlee, Erik Guzik, Marvin Hankins, Corey Herndon, Ken Layn, CM Lin, Dick Lowe, Glenna Lunday, Chrystal Overton, Kathie Price, Dennis Ruttman, Blaine Smith, Clark Southard, Tom Thomas, Arun Tilak, Greg Winters, Kelley Young