

Norwich Strategic Planning Invitation

Introduction – This is an invitation for established organizations in the Town of Norwich to suggest a direction for strategic planning, as outlined in Appendix A. This invitation covers the steps of identifying issues and goals pertaining to strategic planning in the area of expertise of each organization. We encourage public involvement to the maximum extent possible. **An example is found in Appendix B.**

Name – **Substitute your Name here**

Situation assessment – Describe the status quo or future circumstance of concern that merits planning for a more desirable outcome:

Enter your description of the status quo or items of future concern here.

Goals – Without worrying about how to achieve it, describe a desired end state that might be achieved through implementation of a strategic plan.

Enter your proposed goals here.

Next Steps – After the public has identified a proposed set of goals, the Selectboard will hold one or more public discussions. After Selectboard approval, the public will be invited to identify strategic issues, perform a SWOT analysis, an implementation plan and an evaluation process.

Appendix A: Norwich Strategic Plan Development Roles

Selectboard	Working Groups
Overall responsibility for Strategic Plan (SP) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies strategic and critical issues.• Identifies working groups and provides assignments.• Integrates proposed goals and strategies into SP.• Integrates strategies into SP.• Identifies evaluation process.• Assigns implementation responsibilities.• Adopts SP.• Monitors implementation of SP.	Responsible for individual strategic topics. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop situation assessments.• Identify strategic issues within topics.• Identify desired end state within topics and goals supporting each.• Perform SWOT analyses.• Formulate implementation plan to achieve goals, including who, what, when and what initial and continuing costs.• Prepare reports for each topic.

Definitions

Strategic planning – Strategic planning provides the means for a town to plan for the future it desires, rather than reacting to events as they unfold. Planning includes stakeholders to develop a vision for the future. It results in an implementation process that adapts to a changing environment.

Situation assessment – Answers where are we now with respect to strategic issues?

Strategic issues – May be either a quantum improvement to a better status than currently exists or to avoid suffering influences that may significantly worsen our current situation.

Goals – Goals reflect the desired end state, which should be arrived at through consensus and stakeholder participation. They should be held distinct from means, which address how to achieve goals. Goals should maximize good for the community and minimize harm.

SWOT analysis – Each goal should be compared with a “SWOT” analysis to develop an implementation plan. The components of the SWOT analysis are:

- *Strengths* – The positive things that we can do to improve the situation.
- *Weaknesses* – The things that we are less able to achieve to improve the situation.
- *Opportunities* – A favorable influence, originated outside our community.
- *Threats* – An unfavorable influence, originated outside our community.

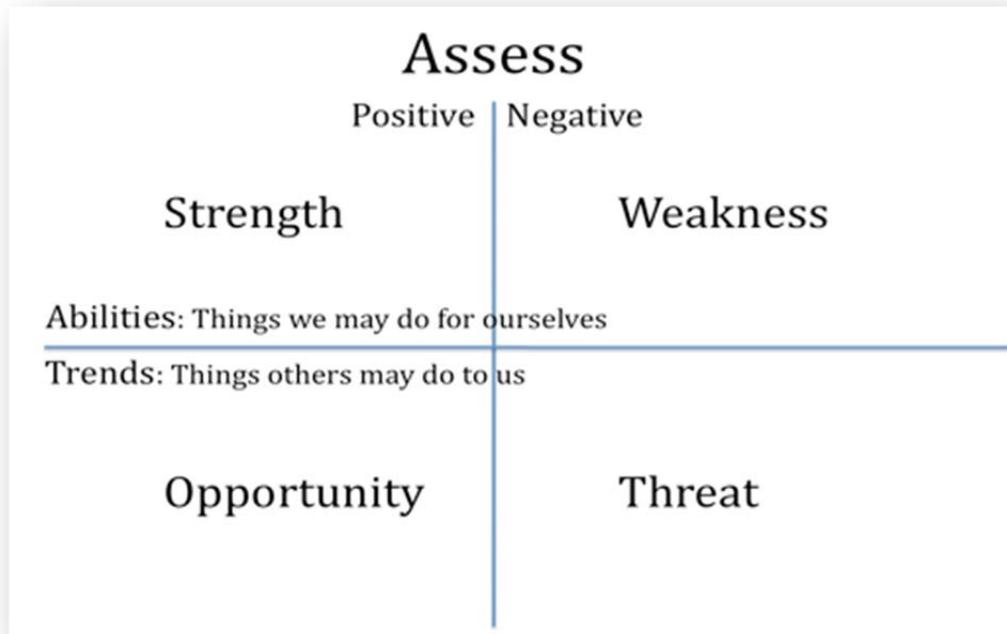


Figure 1. The four quadrants of a SWOT analysis to assess any Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, or Threat that pertains to an issue.

Implementation plan – Addresses means, metrics, strategies and tasks and obstacles, as follows:

- *Means* – Draw on strengths to take advantage of opportunities to identify a path to the stated goal.
- *Metrics* – Identify how to measure results and monitor progress towards the desired goal.
- *Strategies and Tasks* – Identify the individual steps and their timeframes necessary to transform the present conditions to the desired goal.
- *Obstacles* – Address weaknesses in the face of threats to overcome barriers to achieving the goal.

Evaluation process – Evaluation of implementation plans depends on what is being addressed, but should include such metrics as staffing required, implementation costs, continuing costs, the impact on economic or population growth, and the impact on demographics or the physical character of the Town.

Appendix B: Sample Response

Norwich Strategic Planning Invitation

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Name – **Norwich Trails Organization (Illustrative Example Only)**

Situation assessment – Describe the status quo or future circumstance of concern that merits planning for a more desirable outcome:

- Norwich has an active volunteer trails organization that can maintain its current, disjointed trail system and make modest improvements to that system.
- Norwich’s trails have limited signage, requiring users to become familiar with them through trial and error, supported by a map, sold locally.
- Norwich’s trail system includes Fourth Class Roads, purpose-built trails for hikers, bikers and skiers, and informal trails across private property.
- Norwich has a very limited set of trails that are designed to accommodate mountain bikes or cross-country skiers.
- Norwich has a very limited delineation of bicycle lanes.
- Norwich has very limited water access to the Connecticut River.
- Norwich’s Town Plan suggests that “Safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle paths connecting Norwich village, Hanover, playing fields and recreation areas, and outlying population centers would provide for alternative modes of transportation.” A stated goal is to “Provide and maintain an efficient and safe network of roads, sidewalks, bikeways and trails that incorporate rural aesthetics and encourage alternative modes of travel.”
- The Town Plan also discusses Norwich’s trails and Class 4 roads, which “are used for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing”. It notes that “many of these trails could be connected to create a network of recreational trails throughout the town with the cooperation of private landowners.”

Goals – Without worrying about how to achieve it, describe a desired end state that might be achieved through implementation of a strategic plan.

- A connected system of parks (including waterfront), well-signed all-season recreational trails and bicycle routes and paths throughout the Town.
- A legal framework for all trails in Town.
- The information, management, and budgetary support to maintain the Town’s parks, trails, and bicycle routes.

- *Next Steps* – After the public has identified a proposed set of goals, the Selectboard will hold one or more public discussions. After Selectboard approval, the public will be invited to identify strategic issues, perform a SWOT analysis, an implementation plan and an evaluation process.