

MEETING DATE: October 8, 2015

TITLE: Approval of process to evaluate and align District programs using strategic framework

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 15-XXX

PREPARED BY: Becky Christopher

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REVIEWED BY: Administrator Counsel Program Mgr. (Name): James Wisker
 Board Committee Engineer Other

WORKSHOP ACTION:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board mtg. Consent Agenda.	<input type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board meeting for discussion prior to action.
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to a future workshop (date): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to taskforce or committee (date): _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Return to staff for additional work.	<input type="checkbox"/> No further action requested.
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____	

PURPOSE or ACTION REQUESTED:

Approval of a process to evaluate and align District programs using a strategic framework

PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: N/A

PROJECT TIMELINE:

October–December 2015: Utilize framework to facilitate 2016 budget discussions
January–December 2016: Utilize framework to evaluate and align programs

PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: N/A

PAST BOARD ACTIONS: N/A

SUMMARY:

Background

In January 2014, the Board of Managers adopted the policy, *In Pursuit of a Balanced Urban Ecology in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed*, as a statement of the District’s fundamental philosophy and way of doing business. It established the goal of integrating the District’s work with the built environment using the guiding principles of partnership, focus, and flexibility. The Board directed that this policy guide the development of the District’s update to its Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan (Plan).

In early 2015, as part of the Plan update process, staff began a self assessment to evaluate the District’s progress and performance over the last plan cycle. This included a series of staff and Board discussions to identify past accomplishments and challenges, and to look forward at how programs can be organized to

support the Balanced Urban Ecology Policy and two-track approach. Findings included a need to improve focus, prioritization, clarity of mission and goals, and program alignment and coordination.

During the recent review of the 2016 budget and work plans, Managers raised a number of questions regarding the merit of particular program initiatives, prioritization of District activities, resource allocation, and measures of success. It was noted that, while all of the District's programmatic efforts are well intentioned and have value, it is unclear whether certain activities should be the focus of the District's finite personnel and financial resources.

These various discussions signaled a need to strategically evaluate and align the District's programs under a clear and focused mission and set of goals. Staff responded by developing a draft framework and process that could be incorporated into the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

Development of Strategic Framework

A draft strategic planning framework was introduced at the August 20, 2015 Planning and Policy Committee (PPC) meeting. At this meeting, the six attending Board Members expressed interest in advancing the framework proposed by staff as a means to: (1) evaluate existing programs to provide meaningful change, alignment and prioritization of resources, (2) establish a procedural framework to evaluate new initiatives and opportunities, as well as revisit existing work on a recurring five year basis, and (3) provide a valuable communication tool to engage constituents in the District's work.

Following the August PPC Meeting, the strategic framework was reviewed and discussed at an All Staff meeting and with the Management Team and Staff Collaboration group.

At the September 17, 2015 PPC meeting, staff facilitated further discussion with the four attending Managers focused on establishing a strong foundation for the program evaluation process including the identification of objectives, expectations, roles, timeline, and procedural steps.

Strategic Framework and Process

The framework provides a visual representation of the linkages between the District's mission, goals, strategies, tactics, outcomes, and resources. It is a tool to help the Board and staff evaluate existing programs and new initiatives in a broader context to ensure that the District is allocating its resources to their highest and best use. It is also intended to improve program focus and alignment under a common mission and set of goals.

The proposed process, as reviewed by the PPC and outlined below, involves analysis at four levels using a series of flow diagrams (attached):

1. Organization Strategic:
 - a. Review organization's mission and goals considering alignment with the Balanced Urban Ecology Policy and a desire for improved focus and clarity.
 - b. Review program missions considering the purpose and role of each program in achieving the District's overarching mission and goals.
 - c. Evaluate the primary strategies employed by each program and assign a priority level (high, medium, low) with respect to the District's mission and goals.
2. Program Strategic:
 - a. Evaluate each program's tactics (as identified in work plans) considering how they support program strategies and mission and the outcomes and metrics that will be used to measure success.
 - b. Assign a priority level for each tactic with respect to the program's mission, strategies, and projected outcomes.

3. Program Operational:

- a. Review allocation of resources within each program considering the assigned priority level and projected outcomes of each tactic.
- b. Consider whether a given strategy could be achieved in a more efficient/effective way (use of different tactics, redistribution of resources, external partnerships, improved technology, etc.).

4. Organization Operational:

- a. Review allocation of resources across programs and strategies considering the assigned priority level and projected outcomes of each strategy.
- b. Consider whether a given strategy could be achieved in a more efficient/effective way.
- c. Identify any areas where further information is needed or any program adjustments to be recommended for consideration by the full Board.

The PPC also discussed the roles and responsibilities of various groups that will be involved in the process. It was agreed that the process would be developed and facilitated by the Planning Department, in coordination with the District Administrator. It was also agreed that the internal staff process would be inclusive, transparent, cross-departmental, and would weigh equally input from all levels of the organization.

The Committee discussed that the PPC would be the appropriate venue for these strategic planning discussions and that consistent and clear reporting back to the Board would be needed to facilitate the Board decision making. The Committee recommended that a presentation be provided to the full Board along with a resolution approving the proposed framework and process.

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 15-XXX

TITLE: Approval of process to evaluate and align District programs using strategic framework

- WHEREAS, in January 2014, the Board of Managers adopted the policy, *In Pursuit of a Balanced Urban Ecology in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed*, as a statement of the MCWD's fundamental philosophy and way of doing business; and
- WHEREAS, the Board of Managers directed the Administrator to utilize the philosophy of this policy to guide the development of the District's update to its Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan (Plan) and to develop further recommendations for the implementation of this approach in the District's planning process; and
- WHEREAS, the District is in the process of developing its next generation Plan and conducted a self assessment to evaluate the District's progress and performance over the last plan cycle; and
- WHEREAS, findings of the self assessment included a need to improve focus, prioritization, clarity of mission and goals, and program alignment and coordination; and
- WHEREAS, through the review of the 2016 budget and work plans, the Managers raised questions regarding the merit of particular program initiatives, prioritization of District activities, resource allocation, and measures of success; and
- WHEREAS, through the self assessment, budget discussions and previously adopted policy, the Board has signaled a need to focus and align programs around the organizational mission to protect and improve natural resources through partnership, integrated planning, and innovation to support sustainable communities; and
- WHEREAS, in response to this need, staff developed a strategic planning framework (framework) as a tool to clarify mission and goals, and facilitate evaluation and reshaping of District programs to ensure that the District is allocating its resources to their highest and best use to achieve the organization's mission;
- WHEREAS, at the August 20, 2015 and September 17, 2015 Planning and Policy Committee (PPC) meetings, staff presented the framework and an associated process through which it could be used to evaluate program alignment, prioritization of strategies and tactics, measureable outcomes, and allocation of resources; and
- WHEREAS, the PPC supported the use of the framework and process as a means to: (1) evaluate existing programs to provide meaningful change, alignment and prioritization of resources, (2) establish a procedural framework to evaluate new initiatives and opportunities, as well as revisit existing work on a recurring five year basis, and (3) provide a valuable communication tool to engage constituents in the District's work; and
- WHEREAS, the PPC discussed that the process would be developed and facilitated by the Planning Department, in coordination with the District Administrator, and would be inclusive, transparent, cross-departmental, and weigh equally input from all levels of the organization; and

WHEREAS, the PPC recommended that these evaluations be conducted by the PPC with consistent and clear reporting and recommendations to the Board of Managers; and

WHEREAS, the PPC recommended that a presentation be provided to the full Board along with a resolution approving the process to use the framework for program evaluation; and

WHEREAS, the framework and process was reviewed by the Board of Managers at the October 8, 2015 Board Workshop;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers establishes the attached strategic planning framework and process to evaluate and align programs and to focus District resources towards common goals and mission; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the strategic planning process and program evaluation will be conducted by the Planning and Policy Committee with clear reporting to the full Board of Managers to facilitate Board decision making.

Resolution Number 15-XXX was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____.
Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: _____.

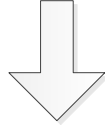
Secretary Date: _____

**DRAFT for discussion purposes only and subject to Board approval and the availability of funds.
Resolutions are not final until approved by the Board and signed by the Board Secretary.**

Program Evaluation Process

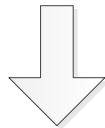
Organization - Strategic

- 1. Define District mission and goals:**
 - Note - This process is underway based on direction from PPC, and refined mission and goal statements will be brought back for review.
- 2. Review program missions:**
 - Consider the purpose and role of each program in achieving the District's overarching mission and goals.
 - Do the program mission statements accurately reflect the Managers' understanding of each program's purpose?
- 3. Evaluate strategies:**
 - Review the primary strategies of each program and how they align to achieve the District's and program's mission and goals.
 - Are these the right strategies for each program to be focused on?
 - For each strategy, identify priority level (high, medium, low) with respect to the District's mission and goals.



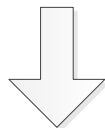
Program - Strategic

- 4. Evaluate Tactics:**
 - Review the program's current activities (tactics) as defined in the work plans.
 - Do the tactics all have a clear link back to the program strategies and mission?
 - Do the tactics have clearly defined outcomes and metrics that will allow for evaluation of program success?
 - For each tactic, identify priority level (high, medium, low) with respect to the program's mission, strategies, and projected outcomes.



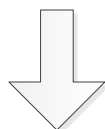
Program - Operational

- 5. Evaluate Resources Within Program:**
 - Review allocation of resources within program.
 - Is the distribution of resources across the strategies and tactics appropriate with respect to priority level and projected outcomes?
 - Consider whether a given strategy could be achieved in a more efficient/effective way (use of different tactics, redistribution of resources across tactics, external partnerships, improved technology, etc.).
 - Flag any areas that need further attention or more information.



Organization - Operational

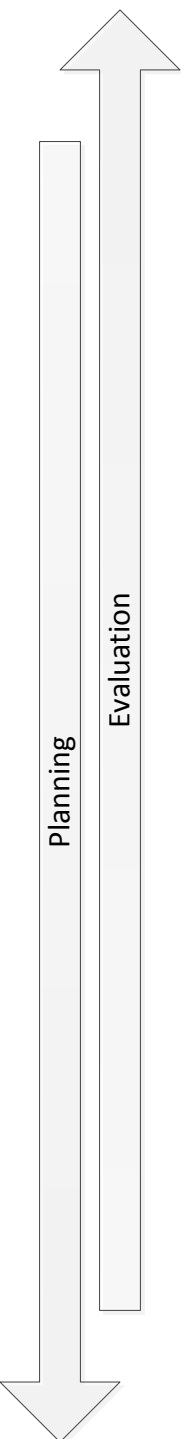
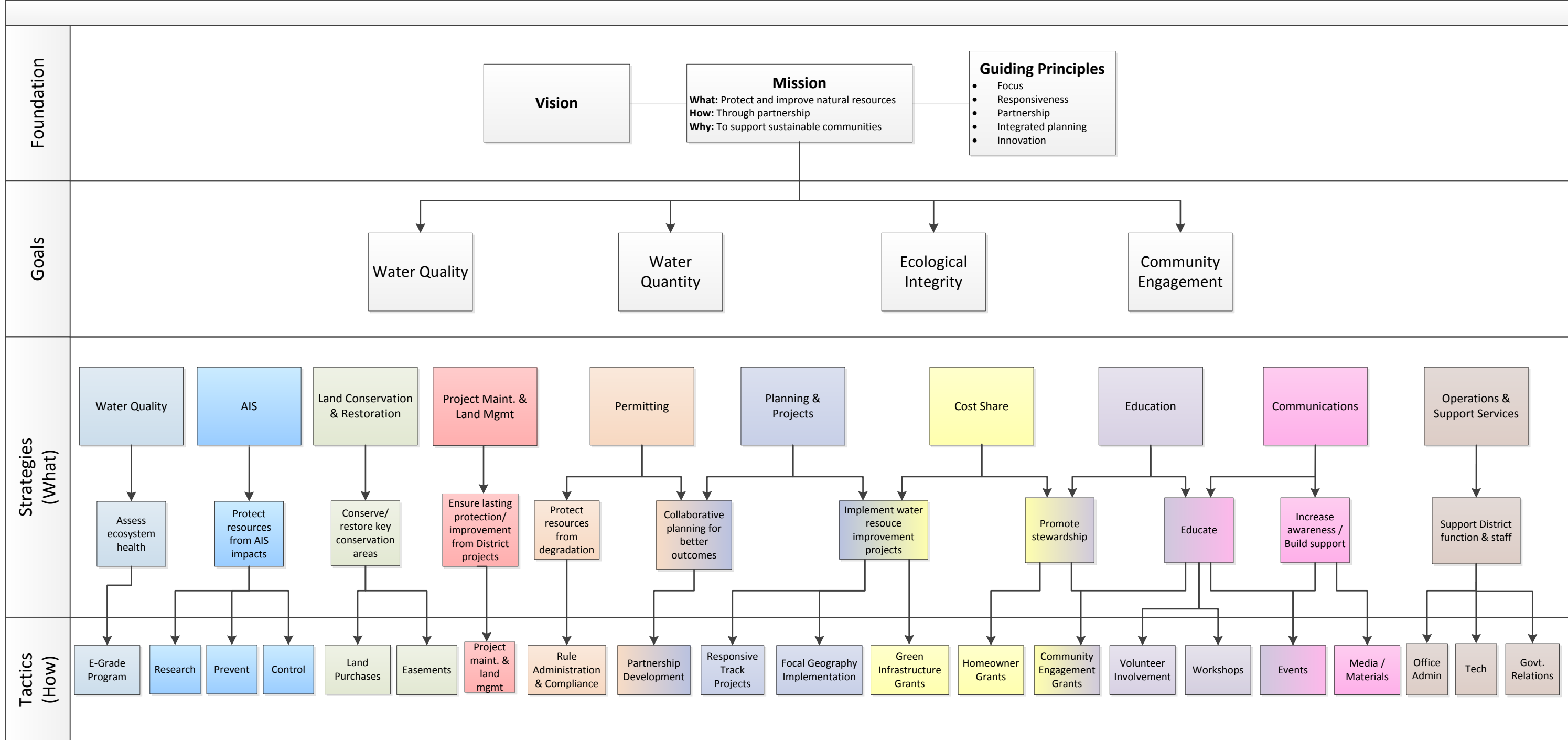
- 6. Evaluate Resources Across Programs:**
 - Review allocation of resources across programs and strategies.
 - Is the distribution of resources across the strategies and tactics appropriate with respect to priority level and projected outcomes?
 - Consider whether a given strategy could be achieved in a more efficient/effective way (use of different tactics, redistribution of resources across tactics, external partnerships, improved technology, etc.).



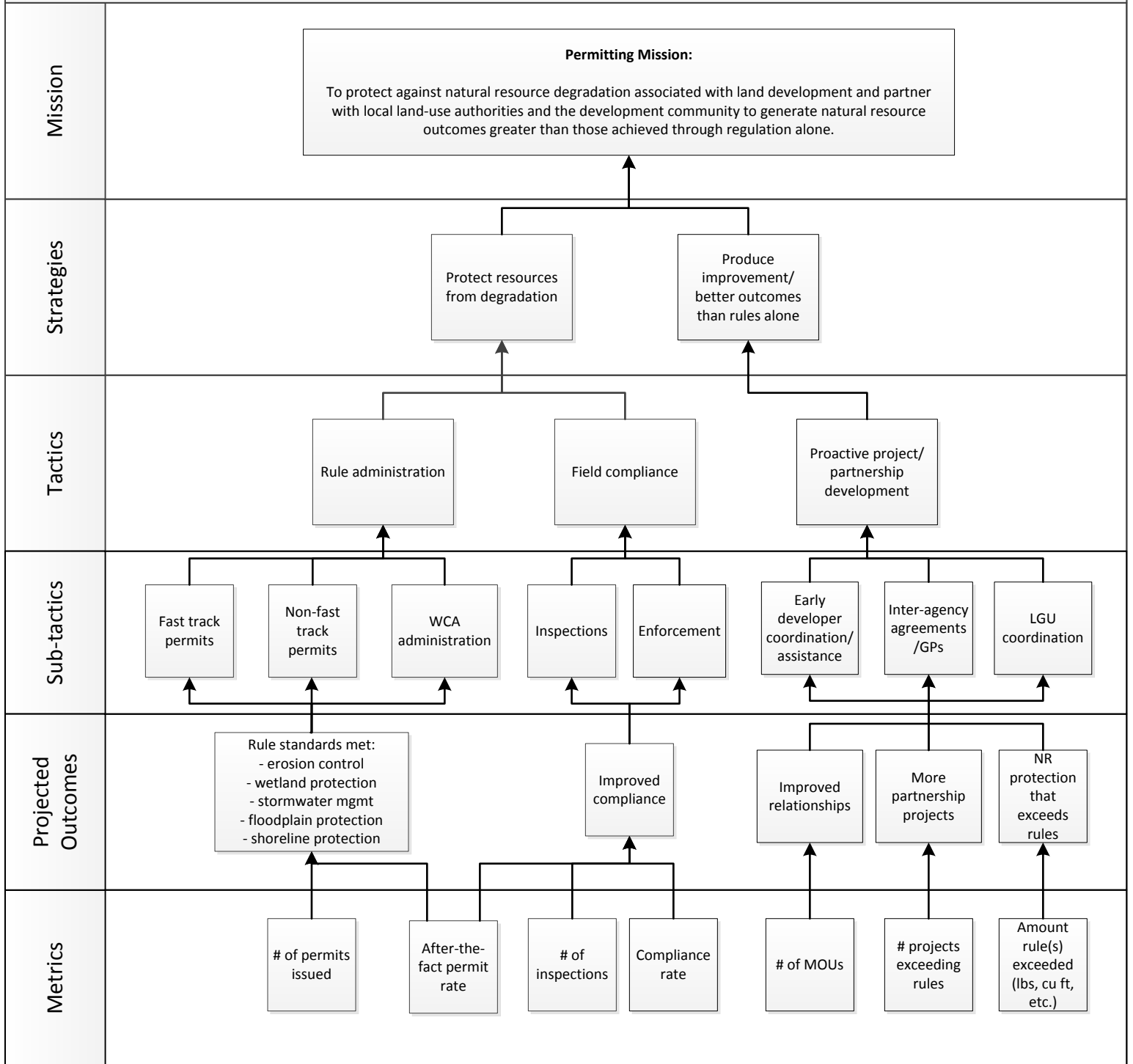
All

- 7. Identify Program Adjustments:**
 - Identify any area where further information is needed.
 - Identify any recommended program adjustments for Board consideration:
 - Elimination of activities
 - Increase, decrease, or reallocation of resources

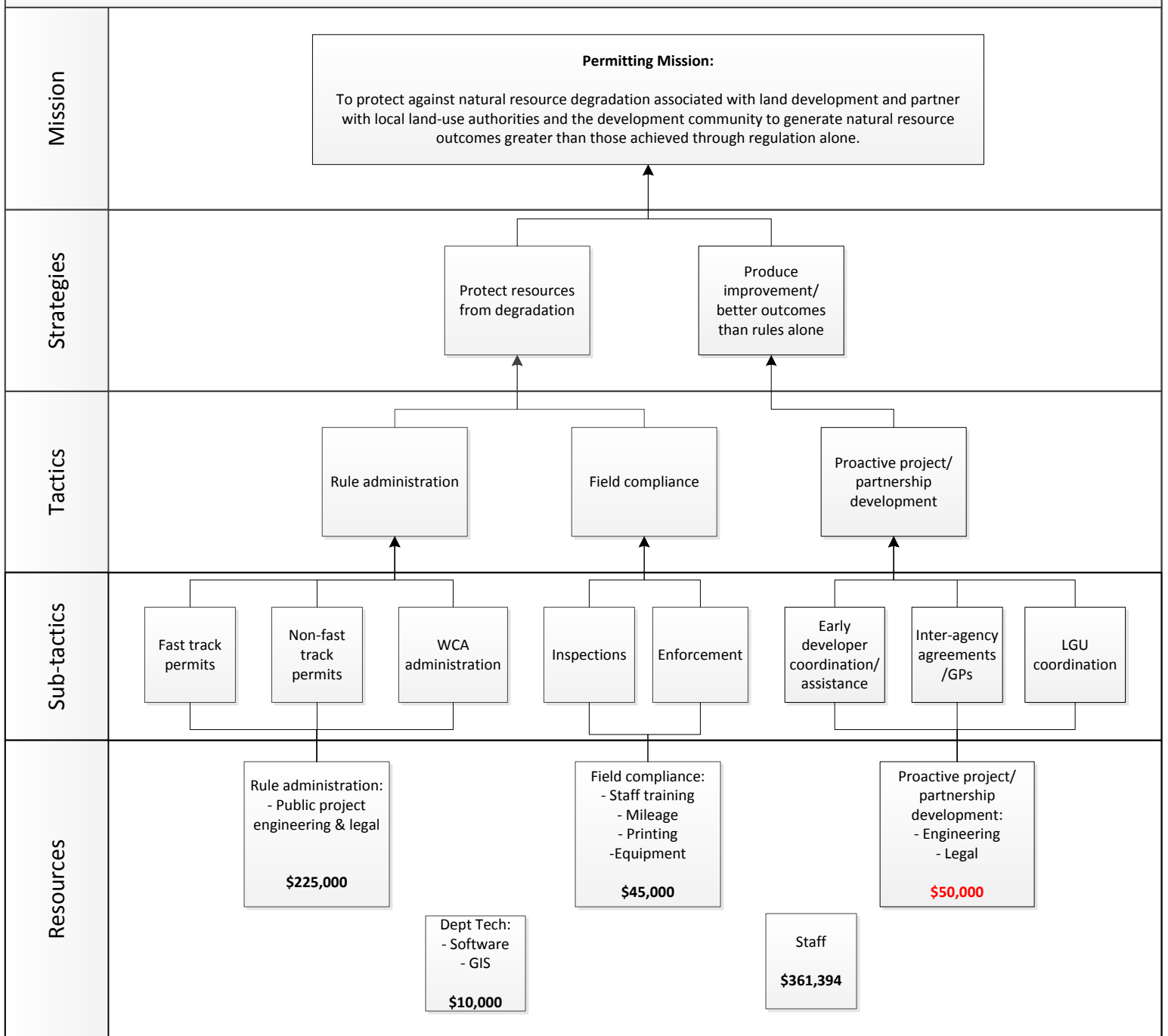
Organization Strategic Framework



Program Strategic Framework - Permitting



Program Operational Framework – Permitting [Total = \$691,394]



Organization Operational Framework

