



**Des Plaines Valley Council, BSA
Strategic Planning**

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Summary

Background

As the Boy Scouts of America enters its second century of service to youth, now is a good time to reflect on the past, to anticipate new challenges and opportunities, and to develop a vision and goals for the future. That is the essence of a council's strategic plan.

The *Local Council Strategic Planning* workbook was an aid to this planning process. Building on Scouting's Values, Mission, and Vision, it identified five pillars which formed a framework for Local Councils to more flexibly adapt to local circumstances. Those five pillars are:

1. Every youth has an opportunity to be involved in a quality Scouting experience.
2. Every council is fiscally sound.
3. The number of engaged, accountable volunteers is dramatically increased at all levels of Scouting.
4. Local, regional, and national chartered organizations and strategic alliances are identified and engaged.
5. Enough of the right professionals are identified, developed, and retained in the right positions at all levels, with a focus on inclusiveness.

Process

The Des Plaines Valley Council began the strategic planning process in 2006. By January 2007, chairs for the five pillars were recruited and became the nucleus for the Strategic Planning Process Steering Committee. The chairs were encouraged to involve a broad range of volunteer experience and perspectives in forming their committees. Those committees examined a wide selection of data; discussed strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in our future; debated ideas; and, recommended actions.

Each of the five pillar committees prepared a report that identifies the data reviewed, our council's current status with respect to that pillar, and the committee's vision of the future. The reports also state the methods, timetables, people, and costs needed to move from where we are to where we want to be.

The Strategic Plan was introduced at the Executive Board meeting on January 15, 2008. At that time, the Board decided to invite comments from the Scouters in the Des Plaines Valley Council. The full plan and a comment form was placed on the Council's web site from 1/25/08 through 3/14/08. A flyer was also distributed at various meetings.

During that seven week period, Scouters accessed the plan as shown below:

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<u>Document</u>	<u>Count</u>
Index	238
Pillar 1	180
Pillar 2	191
Pillar 3	89
Pillar 4	73
Pillar 5	73
Summary	119

Information that identified the sender was removed from the comments. The names of individuals identified in negative comments were also removed. No other changes were made to the comments, which were then sent to the appropriate Pillar committee. The Steering Committee reviewed the responses from the Pillar committees and prepared the final responses.

There were thirteen comments from twelve individuals. Responses to comments were emailed to the original sender.

Some comments lead to changes in the Strategic Plan. While some comments were not directly related to the Strategic Plan, responses were provided in the spirit of Scouting.

Membership

I wish to thank all who participated in this process, whether actively on a pillar committee or as a contributor in casual conversation. The results are stronger because of your dedication to Scouting and the future of the youth served by the Des Plaines Valley Council.

I especially wish to thank the pillar committee chairs. They recruited committees, organized their committee's work, coordinated with the professional staff to identify and acquire data, lead their committee meetings, served on the steering committee, and achieved the goal of a written set of recommendations.

In all, sixty-four people worked on the strategic plan. They are listed below. The members of the steering committee are listed in bold.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PILLAR</u>
Dan Babich	IV
Julie Bates	I
Robert Beck	Staff Advisor I, III
Tom Bennington	III
Cheryl Byrne	I
John Byrne	I
Diane Caroscio	I
Susan Castillo	II
Jill Collins	I
Roy Dames	III

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PILLAR</u>
Jean DiMonte	II
Mary Ann Doherty	I
Martin Drechen	II
Jim Durkan	IV
Cliff Egel	Chair I
Ken Fatz	II, III
Ron Fox	III
Cyril Friend	II
Clare Froemel	I
Ernest Froemel	IV

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>PILLAR</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>PILLAR</u>
John Gelsomino	Chair II	Chuck Pietri	IV
Howard Graening	III	Hadley Pihl	II
Barbara Gum	I	Gary Pitchford	SC
Wilson Gum	I	Thomas Podock	II
Michael Harkins	III	Bob Porter	I
Brian Harris	V	Bill Ramey	V
Russ Hartigan	Chair IV	Pat Rogers	IV
Sharon Hartz	Chair I	Ray Rogers	III
Jim Honan	Chair III	Anthony Roth	Staff Advisor I, V
Scott Jensen	I	Sheri Sauer	III
Bob Johnson	I	William Seith	IV
Ross Johnson	Chair V	Eva Serrano	I
Mike Kilgore	I	Charles Smith	Chair II
George Krempel	V	Vicki Spiel	Staff Advisor I, III
Robert Lannert	II	David Sundstrom	II
Ed Mack	III	Irene Szinavel	Staff Advisor II, IV
Bruce Marchiafava	II	Bruce Torgler	II
Irene McLinn	I	Salvatore Vallina	II
Kenneth Means	II	Joe Vucko	I
David Meilahn	III	Tom Wetzel	III
Ken Nagel, Sr.	I	Dennis Wolfe	III
Charles Petri	III, IV, V	Robert Wootton	II, SC

Recommendations

There are three recurring themes in these recommendations. All committees recognize that the demographics of our communities are changing, and that we must be proactive in responding to those changes.

One theme is the need to attract youth in underserved areas. In particular, there are many references to finding ways to include the Hispanic communities in Scouting.

Another theme is the need to increase the numbers of trained District Committee members and commissioners. The implementation of new programs and the development of successful units depend on adequate staffing in these areas.

A final theme is the need to find alternative sources for funding. As traditional sources of income dwindle, we need funds to develop novel program ideas that attract tomorrow's youth.

The recommendations from each pillar are listed below. The details for each recommendation may be found in the reports for each pillar.

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Pillar 1: Quality Program Experience

Membership

- Investigate ways to increase DPVC visibility in the Hispanic community and work to implement same.
- Pursue grant acquisitions to help support Hispanic/Latino outreach & engagement.
- Identify and pursue relationships with established leaders in underserved communities.
- Increase the number of Cub Scout packs throughout the council.
- Research and implement Scouting programs based on community demographics.
- Develop innovative Cub Adventure Camp family camping programs targeting diverse ethnic/racial groups.
- Implement financial aid program to support deserving families in Scouting program.

Quality Awards Standards Performance

- Institute Honor Roll of Centennial Quality Units on council website.
- Pack & Troop Centennial Quality Unit Award promotion.
- Venturing Centennial Quality Unit Award promotion.
- Initiative to provide Venturing unit specific support to commissioners assigned to crews.

Outdoor Program Delivery

- Investigate ways to increase DPVC visibility in the Hispanic community and work to implement same.
- Investigate new opportunities for expanded program, including winter programs.
- Set up regular opportunities for High Adventure through council contingents.
- Research summer camping offered by Central Region Area 3 councils.
- Pursue grant acquisitions to help support DPVC programs.
- Investigate high adventure opportunities for Mach-Kin-O-Siew and/or Shin-Go-Beek.
- Investigate ways to more effectively communicate with customers.

Volunteer Leadership and Training

- Audit training records of all adult unit leaders.
- Form task force to identify, motivate and train Top Unit Leaders.
- Identify, motivate and train Direct Contact Leaders.
- Form task force to identify, recruit and train motivated and caring adults to become unit Scouters.
- Target new leaders for NLT & Leader Specific Training.
- Publicity campaign to educate parents and chartered partners on benefits of fully trained unit leaders.
- Institute District/Council Honor roll of 100% Trained Units on council website.

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Commissioner Service

- Form task force to identify, recruit and train motivated and caring adult Scouters to become Unit Commissioners.
- Provide support for District Roundtable Staff. Promote Roundtable attendance by unit leaders & commissioners.
- Institute program to emphasize and promote Commissioner recognition awards within staff.
- Institute special recognition program for Quality Units.
- Promote attendance by Unit Commissioners at monthly District Commissioners Meeting.

District Committee Program Support

- Improve market share of traditional DPVC BSA programs.
- Address declining DPVC camping revenues.
- Provide improved opportunities and promotion for Cub Scout Day Camps
- Provide improved opportunities and promotion for Cub Scout Resident Camps.
- Explore innovative ways to implement exciting new DPVC summer camp programs.
- Identify, recruit and train motivated and caring adults to join District Committees.
- Form task force to identify, recruit and train motivated and caring adult Scouters to become Unit Commissioners.
- Focus at the council and district levels to rapidly develop programs at the new Cub Scout Adventure Camp.
- Improve Boy Scout overall attendance at summer camps/high adventure facilities.
- Improve Venturer overall attendance at summer camps/high adventure facilities.
- Conduct in depth review of all district and Venturing programs.

Advancement

- Provide curriculum for in-troop training of younger scouts by senior scouts.
- Provide method for on-line advancement reporting.
- Provide improved training for Eagle Mentors.
- Provide training for troop Eagle coaches.
- Reorganize Eagle Mentor/Eagle Coach Program to provide more structure.
- Provide structured guidelines to support Eagle Candidates.
- Provide improved unit support for Webelos working towards Arrow of Light Award.
- Provide improved unit support for younger Boy Scouts working toward rank advancement.
- Provide improved support for younger Boy Scouts working towards rank advancement through improved camp attendance.
- Provide improved support for Scouts working towards rank advancement through training of Direct Contact Leaders.

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Pillar II: Fiscally Sound – Building A Financially Sustainable Council

Fiscal Subcommittee

- Assure that, over time, our Council demonstrates, both internally and externally, a culture of “good governance.”
- Continue to develop strategies for the four key indicators of our Council's financial health.

Endowment Subcommittee

- Grow and fully invest trust assets to provide sufficient return to meet the Council's budgetary needs and maintain the endowment.
- Add new cash gifts beyond those needed to balance the operating budget.

Resource Development Subcommittee

- We recommend that the Camping Opportunities Committee obtain and review additional financial data, including detailed total cost of ownership for the camps and the costs for implementing the program recommendations from Pillar 1. The results of their review should be reported to the Executive Board.
- Retain the services of a professional fundraiser.
- The Council should annually evaluate the capability of the Council Service Center to meet our needs. When our needs clearly outgrow the Service Center and when it is fiscally reasonable, sell the current council center and use the proceeds to buy or lease a new facility.

Pillar III: Volunteer Leadership

Traditional Units

- Increase the total number of registered volunteers in the Council to at least 2,530 which is a 2% increase over 2006.
- Achieve a volunteer retention rate of 85%.
- Improve average youth to volunteer ratios to 2.5.

District Committee and Commissioners

- Fill all District Committee positions.
 - Increase total number of volunteers primarily registered at the District level to at least 78 which is a 50% increase over 2006 levels.
 - Achieve a retention rate of 85%.
 - Increase the number of COR's serving on the District Committees.
- Increase total number of Commissioners.
 - Achieve at least 68, a 33% increase over 2006.
 - Achieve a Commissioner ratio of 3.
 - Achieve a retention rate of 85%.

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Council and Executive Board

- Fill all Council Officer and committee positions.
- Increase number of Board members by 15, a 29% increase over 2006.
- Improve retention rate to 90%.
- Increase ethnicity representation on the Board to reflect our communities.

Pillar IV: Chartered Organizations and Strategic Alliances

Increase the Number of Chartered Organizations

- We should work with those new community groups whose objectives include developing citizenship, leadership, and fitness for the youth in their areas.

Reaffirm Relationships with Existing Chartered Organizations

- The partnership between the council and chartered organizations will be reaffirmed, resulting in stronger relationships.
- More chartered organizations will see the value of the full family of scouting and will charter the additional units.

Pillar V: Human Resources

Needs Assessment/Compensation and Benefits.

- Establish a Personnel/Human Resources Steering Committee to work with the Scout Executive and Council President to help with hiring, training, evaluations, retention, and compensation and benefits.

District Alignment

- With current membership growth projection relatively flat, the Council must consider various ways to reach more of the racially and ethnically diverse youth population.

Follow up

These reports are meant to guide the Des Plaines Valley Council's operations in the coming years. Upon approval by the Executive Board, it becomes incumbent on the officers to study the recommendations and implement them. Of course, circumstances change. If a recommendation becomes unfeasible, that needs to be raised and addressed by the Executive Board.

The Strategic Plan is an evolving document. Every year, the remaining four years of the plan should be reviewed and renewed or revised with the Board's approval. At the same time, a new set of goals should be developed for the fifth year. Hence, there will always be five years of goals to guide us.