

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Division of Fairs and Expositions

# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

### Overview

The Strategic Plan Summary Report is intended to address the fair organization's strategic direction from 2003 through 2005. The Strategic Plan is a practical action orientated guide based on an examination of the fairs internal and external activities (e.g., business partners, financial and operational viability) that direct goal setting and resource prioritization to achieve measurable results overtime.

The Strategic Plan 2003-2005 Summary Report must include:

- A cover page
- Mission statement
- Vision statement
- Values
- Long-term goals
- Description of the organization
- Assessment summary
- Board resolution

Each of the required elements noted above are described on the following pages. This document will be e-mailed to fairs and will be available on the Division of Fairs and Expositions (F&E) website, [www.cdfa.ca.gov/fe](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/fe), in the immediate future. An electronic report template (in Microsoft Word 2000) will be mailed to fairs without e-mail service.

### Deadline Date

**Strategic Plans are due to the Division of Fairs and Expositions (F&E) on November 20, 2002.** The completed Strategic Plan Summary Report should be e-mailed to David Preciado at [dpreciado@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:dpreciado@cdfa.ca.gov). A hard copy mailing with appropriate fair signatures should follow. Fair organizations also have the option to annually update their Strategic Plan Summary Report and submit it with their Proposed Fair Operating Budget.

# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

### Background

In 1994, the State Legislature and Governor approved the State Government Strategic Planning and Performance Review Act (Chapter 779, Statutes of 1994). In 1996, as part of the Chapter 779 report, the Department of Finance (DOF) recommended that all state agencies have a strategic plan. Subsequently, DOF Management Memo 96-23 was issued which mandates all state agencies have a strategic plan. Submittal and approval of the fair Strategic Plan 2003-2005 Summary Report is thus a “best business practices” element to be used as a fair performance rating criteria to be considered by F&E in determining eligibility for funding. Additional information on the Strategic Plan is located in the “Handbook Recommended Guidance for Fair Board Directors 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, November 2001”, Sections 101, 401, 701 and 801. Also refer to the “Network of California Fairs Board of Director’s Overview”, Tab 3, Board Roles and Responsibilities.

### Cover Page

The cover page of the Strategic Plan Summary Report (which is attached) must contain:

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- The title of the document (i.e., Strategic Plan 2003-2005 Summary Report)
- Name of the fair organization (common or legal name acceptable)
- A statement briefly describing the purpose of the document (“This document summarizes key components of our Strategic Plan, the components for which we expect to be held accountable as an organization, by our customers, constituencies and partners, and by each other.”)
- The name, address, fax, e-mail address and telephone numbers of a contact person for questions pertaining to the report
- A table of contents
- Signatures of the Chief Executive Officer and Fair Board President

### Mission Statement

The Strategic Plan Summary Report must include the fairs mission statement. It should state the purpose of the fair, its unique reason for existence, or, in other words: what it is, who it serves, how and why.

A mission statement is designed to:

- Clarify the fairs purpose and establish its long-term relevance.
- Indicate why a fair organization does what it does.
- Provide direction and significance to all members of the fair.

# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

- Assist in making decisions on the types of events and sponsors your fair will include.

Mission statements should be:

- Achievable
- Motivational
- Specific

Additionally, F&E encourages fair organizations to emphasize their commitment to public stewardship: the deliberate management of their resources to ensure the long-term success and viability of their organization, facility, and fair event through sound best business practices.

Fair Example: Orange County Fair

The Orange County Fair provides educational, entertainment and recreational opportunities for the general public and preserves the heritage of California agriculture. This is accomplished while promoting and showcasing the talents, interests and accomplishments of the citizens of California, especially Orange County residents.

## Vision Statement

A vision statement is a required element of the Strategic Plan Summary Report. It should describe the fair's image of the most ideal long-term future for itself. An image that reflects a natural outcome of fulfilling the mission statement. Optimally, it functions as a tool for implementation of the Strategic Plan by serving as the fair's directional compass. While the mission statement should justify a fair's goals and activities, the vision statement defines what is important about each of those activities and what they must accomplish.

A vision statement is designed to:

- Outline what the fair will look like as it successfully implements its strategies and achieves its full potential.
- Inspire members of the fair to implement the organization's goals and strive to fulfill its mission.
- Clearly identify for stakeholders what the fair envisions as success, so they may easily recognize ways to support its achievement.

# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

Additional considerations:

There are many approaches to developing a vision statement. Sometimes it makes the most sense to start the strategic planning process by identifying a vision for the organization. Ask yourself, “in the most ideal future, what would this fair organization accomplish? What would it be like to work here?” From this work, the fair can develop a “roadmap” through its mission, goals, objectives and performance measures for reaching that ideal destination. Many long-standing and governmental organizations, however, find that the mission statement of the organization is given to them either by statute or constituency demand. For these fairs, it may be easier to identify the vision.

On occasion an organization functions with a vision without explaining it. Sometimes the heart of organizational strife is the function of several unidentified and perhaps contradictory visions at work among staff, board members, or between the organization and its constituency. Developing a vision statement for such an organization requires identifying, or uncovering, the visions already at work, and bringing them into alignment. To identify its vision statement, some fair organizations may find that their planning process requires identifying mission, their proudest accomplishments, most deeply held values, and most sought outcomes for the future before it is clear where the fair is actually heading.

Fair Example: Marin County Fair

We strive to be the annual showcase for the many talents of our community.

## Values

Value statements are a required element of the Strategic Plan Summary Report. They should describe values the fair strives to demonstrate in its work and communications with customers, constituencies, and partners, as well as among the management, Fair Board and staff of the organization. Some fair organizations may find it difficult to keep to a short and concise list of the values they employ. For the summary report, it is only necessary to identify the three to five most important values of the organization.

Values are designed to:

- Define expectations for how members of an fair will conduct themselves.
- Identify the system of values the fair employs in decision-making.

# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

Additional considerations:

It isn't necessary for value statements to reflect only those values in use. Some fair organizations may find it more helpful to list the values they would like to adopt. However, whether the definitions are currently in use or only planned to be, both stakeholders and members of the organization are likely to find it helpful to develop working definitions of the values. In developing working definitions of value statements, consider:

1. How the organization already reflects the values in its mission, vision statements, and goals.
2. Examples of situations when embodying the values would require a specific course of action.

Fair Example: Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival

The Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival is committed to:

- Providing the highest degree of customer service
- Functioning as a team with integrity, excellence and professionalism
- Instilling a high standard of safety and well being
- Providing fiscally sound management and revenue generation

## Long-Term Goals

The summary report must include a minimum of three (3) and maximum of five (5) of the most important long-term goals of the fair organization that directly relate to fulfilling the fairs mission and achieving its vision. Collectively, the goals should present a roadmap for what the fair needs to accomplish in order to achieve its vision. For the purposes of the summary report, each long-term goal must represent a three (3) to ten (10) year organizational performance target or direction of development.

Long term goals are designed to:

- Provide the basis for decisions about the nature, scope and priorities of projects and activities of an fair. All fair activities should support its movement toward attainment of one or more of the goals.

Additional considerations:

Some fair organizations may find that what is best for them internally is to develop more than five (5) long-term goals. A good way to prioritize which ones to report in the Strategic Plan Summary Report is to consider which ones relate directly to how the

# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

community, constituency and other key stakeholders of the fair organization benefit from the fair. In general, these goals are most appropriate for the summary report. Goals that primarily address the fairs internal operations are most relevant to an internal audience. With this in mind, it may be helpful to prioritize long-term goals relating to the following areas for inclusion in the Strategic Plan Summary Report:

- Community Mobilization
- Opportunity Brokering
- Fair Programming
- Marketing
- Public Stewardship of the Facility

Though not required for the summary report, it is important to anticipate that implementing goals will require the following support functions:

- Projecting the resources available, as well as the necessary measurable results, needed to achieve each goal.
- Identifying and implementing specific objectives, strategies, or programs that will accomplish the necessary results, leading to the final achievement of the goal.
- Supporting the goals with dedicated budgets and other resources.
- Creating new policies that support “best business practices” principles and the implementation and/or revision of goals.

## Description of the Fair Organization

The Strategic Plan Summary Report must include a one-page (only) description of the fair that describes the fairs customers, community, constituencies, and/or partners; the major programs, services, and accomplishments; location and facilities; and its history and leadership structure.

The description is designed to help a reader unfamiliar with the fair to understand the context in which it operates; and, clarify how the historical and present-day purposes of the fair have been and are reflected in the fairs programs, activities, and facilities.

Additional considerations:

F&E encourages fair organizations to address the following questions specifically in its narrative description of the organization:

- How would you describe the fairs primary constituency in geographic and demographic terms?

# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

- How do the organization's programs relate to and reflect the communities it serves?
- How do they relate to and reflect the fundamental purposes of a fair organization?
- How does the fair organization contribute to the county or community public life?
- Who does the organization partner with to serve its goals and mission?
- What are the results of those partnerships?
- To what extent does the community, including the local private non-profit sector, depend on the fairground as a private and public event center? (Quantify, if possible.)
- How large a fair organization is it (in terms of permanent staff)?
- What is the leadership structure of the organization, including advisory bodies?
- How have all or any of these things changed since the organization's creation and how are they continuing to change?

## Assessment Summary (also known as Environmental Scan)

The summary report must include a one-page (only) assessment summary. A fair organizational assessment or environmental scan is an in-depth evaluation of the internal and external factors that affect the fair on a daily basis in its efforts to implement its plans and succeed. It helps to provide critical context for any fair developing a strategic plan. The assessment summary to be prepared for F&E should be a high level description of a fair's assessment findings: its major strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, and any other information pertinent to the fair's development and likely achievement of its long-term goals and vision.

The assessment summary is designed to:

- Clarify the conditions within which the fair operates.
- Supply an overall view of the fair and the factors that affect it.
- Provide valuable information in forming strategies, policies, programs, and decisions.
- Build on strengths and take advantage of opportunities.
- Minimize the likely effects of weaknesses and challenges through their anticipation.

Additional considerations:

A common organizational assessment is a Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats (S.C.O.T.) analysis. In a S.C.O.T. analysis, the organization evaluates the internal circumstances contributing to or impeding its success by considering its:

## **2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT**

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### **Preparation Instructions**

- **Strengths:** the resources or capabilities that help an organization accomplish its mission. (For example: the core business functions are those activities with the greatest potential to impact the fair's bottom line. Core business functions may vary between fairs. However, the following will assist in planning and evaluating. These include length of fair, grandstand entertainment, carnival, concessions, sponsorships, contracting, ticket pricing/complimentary passes and interim rental pricing).
- **Challenges:** the issues that impact a fair's ability to accomplish its mission or areas needing improvement within the fair (e.g., low employee morale or facility disrepair).

It also examines the external environment by considering:

- **Opportunities:** factors or situations outside of the fair's control that affect the organization in a positive way (For example, for facility rentals or a publicly-active and supportive community.)
- **Threats/Challenges:** factors or situations outside of the organization's control that affect the organization in a negative manner. (For example: a downturn in the local economy or local competition for the primary fair market.)

Important considerations in the external assessment are the political, technological, social, and economic forces or trends exerting or projected to exert influence over the way the fair organization functions or its constituency needs and expectations. Due diligence in the application of "best business practices" principals may have a significant impact in reducing external factors.

The relevance, usefulness, and meaning of an organizational assessment is directly related to the sources of information from which it's drawn. Many fair organizations have only the time to spend a day or a few hours brainstorming on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats/challenges facing the organization.

F&E encourages fair organizations to evaluate how reliable that information will be for uncovering constituency concerns or issues that may be very pertinent to the organization's ability to achieve its vision and goals. There are many resources available, from consultants to web-sites to publications, that provide or describe methods of organizational assessment that fair organizations may find helpful. Additional information on the Strategic Plan is located in the "Handbook Recommended Guidance for Fair Board Directors 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, November 2001", Sections 101, 401, 701



# 2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

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## Preparation Instructions

and 801. Also refer to the “Network of California Fairs Board of Director’s Overview”, Tab 3, Board Roles and Responsibilities. These resources are available on the F&E website at [www.cdfa.ca.gov/fe](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/fe).

### Fair Board Resolution

The Fair Board resolution must include:

- Name of the organization
- Date of the Board meeting
- Name of the Fair Director who made the motion to pass
- Name of the Fair Director who seconded the motion
- Statement that all of the members of the Board participated in the strategic planning process and/or explanation for any members that did not
- Names and roles of any additional stakeholders who participated in the planning process
- Statement that the Board has read and agrees that the summary report to be submitted to the Division of Fairs & Expositions truly reflects the strategic planning efforts of the board and any additional stakeholders
- Approval of the summary report to be submitted to the Division of Fairs & Expositions by November 20, 2002, as part of the requirement to receive local allocation funding in 2003, 2004, and 2005.
- Signatures and printed names of the Chief Executive Officer and Board President

If the resolution is not passed unanimously, the resolution must also explain the absence or cause for dissension.

### Contact Person

Should you have questions or need assistance regarding strategic planning requirements you may contact David Preciado at (916) 263-2957 or by e-mail at [dpreciado@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:dpreciado@cdfa.ca.gov)