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MALPH

KEY COMPONENTS TO A STRATEGIC PLAN

A Guidebook for Local Health Departments

Michigan Association for Local Public Health (MALPH) in partnership
with the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH)

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Michigan Association for Local Public Health

Lynda Horsley, BHA

Meghan Swain, BA

Tony Spagnuolo, BHA

Michigan Department of Community Health

Debra Tews, MA

Mikelle Robinson, MA

Mark Miller, MBA

Mary Grace Stobierski, DVM, MPH, DipACVPM

Brenda Lawson, RN, JD

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
DEFINE THE LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT	2
Vision	2
Mission	2
Guiding Principles/ Values.....	2
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES.....	3
External Assessment.....	3
Internal Assessment	3
IDENTIFY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	4
Key Stakeholders	4
Strategic Priorities	4
DEVELOP THE STRATEGIC PLAN.....	5
Goals	5
Objectives	5
Link to Health Improvement Plan and Quality Improvement Plan	6
IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC PLAN.....	6
Strategies	6
Action Plan.....	7
Track, Report, & Communicate Progress	7
Evaluate and Revise	8
CONCLUSION	8

APPENDICIES

[Appendix A: Strategic Planning Check Sheet](#)

[Appendix B: Characteristics of Effectively Worded Vision and Mission Statements](#)

[Appendix C: External Assessment](#)

[Appendix D: Local Health Department Services](#)

[Appendix E: Internal Assessment](#)

[Appendix F: Goal Grid Template](#)

[Appendix G: Action Plan Template](#)

[Appendix H: Planning Pitfalls](#)

[Appendix I: PHAB Standard 5.3](#)

“Strategic planning is a process for determining an organization’s roles, priorities, and direction over three to five years. A strategic plan sets forth what an organization plans to achieve, how it will achieve it, and how it will know if it has achieved it. The strategic plan provides a guide for making decisions on allocating resources and on taking action to pursue strategies and priorities. A health department’s strategic plan focuses on the entire health department. Health department programs may have program-specific strategic plans that complement and support the health department’s organizational strategic plan.” www.phaboard.org



INTRODUCTION

This guidebook is designed to be a reference for Local Health Departments (LHDs) to assist in developing an organizational strategic plan. The layout of the guidebook will assist in identifying key components to include in the organization strategic plan, categorized into five areas: define the LHD, conduct environmental analyses, identify strategic priorities, develop the plan, and finally implement the plan. The guidebook is not designed to be the only reference, but rather a supplement to the strategic planning process.

Where appropriate, Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Domain 5 Standards and Measure (Version 1.0) requirements are referenced for developing an organizational strategic plan. It is important to align your organizational strategic plan with national accreditation even if your health department does not intend to apply for accreditation. National public health accreditation standards define good public health practice. Achieving these standards will improve performance and ultimately public health outcomes.

There are multiple planning resources available to develop a strategic plan. The process chosen and utilized by your local health department should be focused on the nature and needs of the health department, the expertise of the people doing the planning, the extent of external research needed to complete the planning, and the personal preferences of the leader(s) and facilitator(s) of the planning process. It is important to remember that the strategic planning will need to become a routine process and is just as important as the plan itself.

National Accreditation Standard 5.3.1

“Documentation must include a summary or overview of the strategic planning process, including the number of meetings, duration of the planning process, and the methods used for the review of major elements by stakeholders.”

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) provide the following resources to assist in identifying the most effective process for a local health department:

[Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations](#)
[Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan](#)
[South Central Public Health Partnership \(SCPHP\) Training](#)
[Community Tool Box, Chapter Eight: Developing a Strategic Plan](#)

DEFINE THE LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Key Components

- **Vision**
- **Mission**
- **Guiding Principles/ Values**

Vision

The organizational strategic plan serves as the framework for stimulating change and providing focus on the health department's ultimate vision. To effectively communicate where the health department wants to be in the future, administration must formulate a vision statement that clearly and concisely conveys the organization's direction. The vision statement illustrates the path for the entire local health department. If it is not communicated to lower-level administrators and staff, it will add little value to the health department. A well conceived and effectively communicated vision statement will illustrate the health department's long-term direction, reduce aimless decision making at all levels, gain support from staff to make the vision a reality, guide independent departmental strategies, and assist the local health department in planning for the future.

Mission

To supplement the vision statement, a mission statement is developed to communicate the present essence of the local health department. The mission statement should clearly state the health department's purpose and concisely outline the activities the health department chooses in order to pursue its purpose. A clear vision and mission statement can powerfully communicate the intentions of the health department.

Guiding Principles/ Values

Another key component to defining the LHD is identifying the guiding principles and/or developing value statement(s) to describe how the health department will work to fulfill its purpose in pursuit of its vision and mission. Principles and values serve as guidelines for decision making and ethical behavior within the entire local health department. Leaders in local health departments should encourage and expect others to apply these guiding principles and/or values in their own individual decision making endeavors. Incorporating the principles and/or values into day to day activities will provide the foundation for smart decision making and serve as the model for ethical conduct.

The LHD must be visibly defined to ensure that the organizational strategic plan is comprehensible. The vision, mission, guiding principles and/or value statement(s) must clearly and concisely convey the future and present direction of the local health department and its beliefs. Developing an organizational strategic plan will create the opportunity to discuss where the organization wants to be in the future and how it intends to get there. (See [Appendix B](#) for characteristics of effectively written vision and mission statements).

Michigan Examples:

[Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency](#) (pages 2 & 3)

[Genesee District Health Department](#) (page 2)

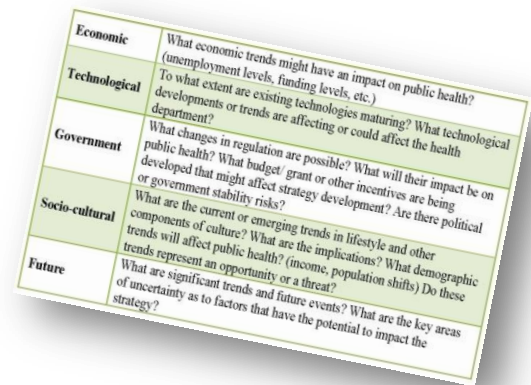


ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES

Key Components

- External Assessment
- Internal Assessment

The “strategic” part of the planning process is the attention to the current external and internal environment and the changes needed to improve the health of the Michigan citizens within a jurisdiction. There are two components to an environmental analysis: internal assessments and external assessments. Remember, a strategic plan must be realistic and attainable, so it is critical to understand the internal capabilities and how they are affected by factors outside of the health department. While there are multiple tools available to complete each of these assessments, this guidebook provides two environmental analysis tools: External Analysis (External Assessment) and SWOT Analysis (Internal Assessment).



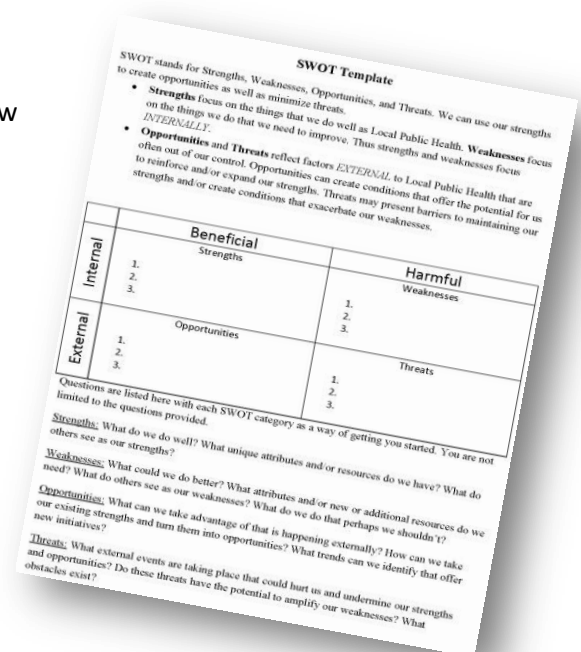
Economic	What economic trends might have an impact on public health? (unemployment levels, funding levels, etc.)
Technological	To what extent are existing technologies maturing? What technological developments or trends are affecting or could affect the health department?
Government	What changes in regulation are possible? What will their impact be on public health? What budget/ grant or other incentives are being developed that might affect strategy development? Are there political or government stability risks?
Socio-cultural	What are the current or emerging trends in lifestyle and other components of culture? What are the implications? What demographic trends will affect public health? (income, population shifts) Do these trends represent an opportunity or a threat?
Future	What are significant trends and future events? What are the key areas of uncertainty as to factors that have the potential to impact the strategy?

External Assessment

An external assessment is used to identify external trends, events, or factors that may hinder or support the decisions the health department ultimately makes about its direction, objectives, and strategies. To simplify the external assessment, it may be necessary to restrict the analysis to those areas relevant to the health department avoiding extensive surveys of trends, and focus on those more significant to impact the strategies. [Appendix C](#) provides an external analysis tool that is divided into five areas: economic, technological, government, socio-cultural, and future. The impact on elements from these five areas can be big or small, but it is important to be aware of these potential factors that may affect your health department’s direction and strategies. For example, the requirements related to LHD services specified in Michigan’s Public Health Code, elsewhere in state law, in contract, or in current appropriation boilerplate will have an effect on the direction of the health department. [Appendix D](#) briefly describes required, basic, essential, and allowable services and includes other statutory information and requirements for services that the health department would want to consider as part of its planning process.

Internal Assessment

Administrators often start their internal assessment with questions like how well is the current strategy working, what is the current situation, or what are the strengths and weaknesses of the health department. A popular internal assessment used by administrators to create an overview of the health department’s strategic situation is SWOT. SWOT is an acronym for the internal **S**trengths and **W**eaknesses of the local health department and the environmental **O**pportunities and **T**hreats facing the local health department. SWOT is a simple and powerful tool used for strategy development taking into consideration the local health department’s internal capabilities and key resources and using the results to shape strategic strategies. ([Appendix E](#) provides a SWOT template). When matched with an external assessment, the process of internal assessment provides the critical foundation for prioritizing strategies.



SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. We can use our strengths to create opportunities as well as minimize threats.

- **Strengths** focus on the things that we do well as Local Public Health. **Weaknesses** focus on the things we do that we need to improve. Thus strengths and weaknesses focus **INTERNALLY**.
- **Opportunities and Threats** reflect factors **EXTERNAL** to Local Public Health that are often out of our control. Opportunities can create conditions that offer the potential for us to reinforce and/or expand our strengths. Threats may present barriers to maintaining our strengths and/or create conditions that exacerbate our weaknesses.

	Beneficial Strengths	Harmful Weaknesses
Internal	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
External	Opportunities 1. 2. 3.	Threats 1. 2. 3.

Questions are listed here with each SWOT category as a way of getting you started. You are not limited to the questions provided.

Strengths: What do we do well? What unique attributes and/or resources do we have? What do others see as our strengths?

Weaknesses: What could we do better? What attributes and/or new or additional resources do we need? What do others see as our weaknesses? What do we do that perhaps we shouldn't?

Opportunities: What can we take advantage of that is happening externally? How can we take our existing strengths and turn them into opportunities? What trends can we identify that offer new initiatives?

Threats: What external events are taking place that could hurt us and undermine our strengths and opportunities? Do these threats have the potential to amplify our weaknesses? What obstacles exist?

IDENTIFY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Key Components

- Key Stakeholders
- Strategic Priorities

Key Stakeholders

Engaging key stakeholders in discussion to identify priorities and strategies for implementation of the plan is essential. A valuable strength of collaborative strategy development is that, in most cases, the team of people charged with developing the strategy will also be charged with implementing it. Giving people an influential role to craft a strategy they must later help execute not only builds motivation and commitment, but also heightens their accountability for putting the strategy into place and making it successful.

It is a mistake to view strategy development as a high administrative task limited to the top health department administrators. It is far more beneficial to view strategic planning as a team effort. Participants in the strategic planning process could include: county commissioners, health officers, program managers, program coordinators, medical directors, financial analysts, environmental health coordinators, representatives from the county health plan, healthcare consumers, healthcare providers, private citizens, etc. By involving a diverse group of participants, the plan will reflect views expressed by all those involved in the process. This is an essential piece to the success and sustainability of the strategic plan.

Michigan Examples:

[Calhoun County Health Department](#) (page 10)

[Kalamazoo County Health Department](#) (page 6)

Strategic Priorities

In an economic environment where budget cuts are being made, local health departments are faced to address multiple health issues such as obesity, infant mortality, access to care, etc. With limited resources, prioritization helps assure these resources are used effectively by identifying the magnitude of the problem, seriousness of the problem, and feasibility of a successful intervention.

To assist local health departments in prioritizing health issues and assuring input is gathered from multiple sectors of the public health community, NACCHO provides step-by-step instructions on the implementation of five prioritization practices including: multi-voting technique, strategy grids, nominal group technique, the Hanlon method, and prioritization matrix. The tools are available here:



<http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/accreditation/upload/Prioritization-Summaries-and-Examples-2.pdf>. In the document, NACCHO also addresses preliminary preparations that are needed to identify health issues such as the community health assessment and agency self-assessment, both of which are required in the PHAB National Accreditation standards.

Michigan Examples:

[Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency](#) (page 4)

[Calhoun County Health Department](#) (page 11)

National Accreditation Standard 5.3.1

"A list of individuals who participated in the strategic planning process and their titles must be provided."

DEVELOP THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Key Components

- **Goals**
- **Objectives**
- **Link to Health Improvement Plan and Quality Improvement Plan**

Once a priority area is identified, a health department is able to develop goals and objectives to reflect how the health department will address the health issue. Again, stakeholder input is important in developing goals and objectives; this gives a sense of ownership. Keep in mind that strategic plans are not designed to be a laundry list of goals and objectives, but should reflect the priorities of the health department. Have a realistic number of goals and objectives to prevent staff from being overwhelmed with the details of data collection and reporting.

Goals

Goal setting is one of the most prominent tools used by health departments that ultimately guides decision making to assist in meeting the vision and mission. It is best to write the goals first before the objectives allowing participants to brainstorm ways to address the health department priorities. Goals are less formal, and the more general the description, the stronger the advantage the health department will have in the long run. When participants are forced to develop specifics, creativity is hindered and participants can become discouraged, and innovation could suffer. [Appendix E](#) provides a tool that is designed to facilitate discussions by utilizing a goal grid that is broken down into four basic categories: what the health department wants to achieve, preserve, avoid, and eliminate.

Objectives

An objective's purpose is to convey what is to be achieved with specific performance targets to essentially meet the goal. The objectives are less general than the goal and should be written using the SMART method (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic,

Goal	Objective
Goals are broad	Objectives are narrow
Goals are general intentions	Objectives are precise
Goals are intangible	Objectives are tangible
Goals are abstract	Objectives are concrete
Goals are often difficult to measure	Objectives are measurable

and Time-phased). Ideally, it is best to develop challenging, yet achievable objectives that stretch the local health department to perform at its full potential. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed an Evaluation Brief on writing SMART objectives that can be found here:

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/pdf/brief3b.pdf>.

The health department's objectives should include both short-term and long-term objectives; short-term focusing attention on delivering performance improvements in the present period, while long-term targets enable the health department to consider how actions currently underway will affect the health department in the future. When deciding on a short-term objective versus a long-term objective, long-term objectives should take precedence (unless the achievement of one or more short-term performance targets has unique importance).

Michigan Example:

[Central Michigan District Health Department](#) (page 5-16)

Link to Health Improvement Plan and Quality Improvement Plan

PHAB Standards state that the Strategic Plan, Community Health Improvement Plan, and the Quality Improvement Plan should be linked to one another (PHAB Measure 5.3.2). The health department's strategic plan should include the specific roles and responsibilities of the health department for implementation of the health improvement plan that was adopted by the community. The quality improvement plan will support the strategic plan to identify areas of improvement within the health department. The Strategic Plan need not link to all elements of the Community Health Improvement Plan or Quality Improvement Plan, but must show where linkages are appropriate for effective planning and implementation.

National Accreditation

Standard 5.3.2

Health Department strategic plan dated within the last five years that includes:

- a) Mission, vision, guiding principles/ values*
- b) Strategic priorities*
- c) Goals and objectives with measurable and time-frame targets*
- d) Identification of external trends, events, or factors that may impact community health or the health department*
- e) Assessment of health department strengths and weaknesses*
- f) Link to the health improvement plan and quality improvement plan*

IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Key Components

- **Strategies**
- **Action Plan**
- **Track, Report, & Communicate Progress**
- **Evaluate and Revise**

National Accreditation

Standard 10.1

"Identify and use the best available evidence for making informed public health practice decisions."

Leading the implementation and execution of strategy is easily the most demanding and time-consuming part of the strategic planning process. A common result after developing a strategic plan is that it ends up collecting dust on a shelf. The health department must develop realistic and flexible implementation methods that include: identifying strategies, developing an action plan, tracking progress, and finally evaluating and revising the strategic plan.

Strategies

To translate goals and objectives into effective interventions, the health department will need to identify and develop effective strategies for implementation. To ensure that health department resources are being applied effectively, it is wise to utilize evidence-based practices. To assist in this process, the Michigan Association for Local Public Health (MALPH) developed the Practice Exchange that aggregates Michigan Local Health Departments' successful practices for prevention and intervention strategies along with providing links to national evidence based practices such as the CDC: Community Guide, making these resources available in one place. The Practice Exchange can be found on the MALPH website at www.malphp.org. An admirable strategy will take into account resources and elements such as existing barriers and strengths identified in the environmental assessment, all the while focusing on the overall health department strategic vision.



Action Plan

To hold participants in the strategic planning process accountable, a written action plan is beneficial to communicate and ensure the appropriate steps are accomplished. Development of an action plan will help break down the steps that must be taken to implement the strategy successfully, as well as identify critical components such as the timeframe to complete the action step.

[Appendix G](#) provides an action plan template that breaks down each action step into five columns: who, what, when, resources, and communication. An action plan illustrates completely and clearly to members of the community that there are dedicated staff assigned to action steps to ensure progress in meeting the organization's goals. The plan also helps prevent overlooking any details and increases the chances that people do what they need to accomplish in a set time frame. Remember, the action plan will always be a work in progress. It needs to remain visible, and as the health department changes and grows, the action plan will need to be revised to fit changing needs.



Track, Report, & Communicate Progress

Tracking, reporting, evaluating, communicating, and revising the strategic plan are all integral parts of a comprehensive performance management system. The first step is to track the performance of meeting the goals of the health department. Tracking the performance measures outlined in the objectives will illustrate how well goals are being met and provide insight on whether the strategy is working successfully as planned. Once the performance measurements are collected it is critical to communicate the progress with key stakeholders to determine whether corrective action is necessary.

Communication can be in the form of updates at meetings, annual reports, newsletters, etc. One popular growing method of communication is the development of a health department dashboard. Dashboards provide an easy way to access information to manage performance and make informed decisions. The goal of the dashboard method is not to look at everything available, but to gain insight into what is happening to anticipate issues that can be acted upon within an appropriate amount of time frame. Utilizing communication methods helps keep key staff informed, interested, and motivated and allows them to be proactive about issues or adverse trends.

National Accreditation Standard 5.3.3

“The health department must provide annual reports since the plan's adoption showing that it has reviewed the strategic plan and has assessed progress towards reaching the goals and objectives.”

Examples of dashboards in Michigan:

Ottawa County: http://www.miottawa.org/cogov/depts/planning/Dashboard/infant_mortality.htm

State of Michigan: <http://www.michigan.gov/midashboard/0,4624,7-256-59026---,00.html>



Evaluate and Revise

The purpose of evaluation is to achieve continuous health improvement. When the plan is evaluated it checks that the health department is following the direction established during the strategic planning process. Evaluation will provide a great deal of information about the impact of the strategies and improve the daily implementation of the strategies to be more efficient, less costly, etc. Dependent upon the activities and the health department, evaluation should be conducted at various intervals. Results from evaluation will be used to effectively guide changes in the health department strategies. A change in the external environment or the needs of the population may require the health department to revise the plan. It is acceptable to deviate from the plan, but participants must understand the reason for the deviation and the plan should be revised to reflect the new direction. Michigan's Quality Improvement Guidebook illustrates how to conduct a basic evaluation that can be found here:

<http://mphiaccredandqi.org/guidebook.aspx>

CONCLUSION

While there are various strategic planning processes, it is critical to include the key components identified in this guidebook to improve performance and ultimately public health outcomes. Strategic planning provides the framework for the health department to work collaboratively with key stakeholders to identify priorities within the community and develop interventions to meet the goals. Strategic planning is an ongoing process and when implemented appropriately will create health improvement.

Michigan Example covering all components (excluding vision and mission):

[Central Michigan District Health Department](#)



MALPH does not guarantee that local health departments who follow these guidelines will meet the PHAB requirements.

For specific questions and technical assistance regarding PHAB requirements contact:

Robin Wilcox, Chief Program Officer, to talk about interpretation and meaning of the PHAB Standards and Measures as well as the accreditation process. She may be reached at rwilcox@phaboard.org or 703-778-4549 ext. 106

David Stone, Accreditation Education Specialist, to talk about PHAB's education services including orientations and trainings. He may be reached at dstone@phaboard.org or 703-778-4549 ext. 105.

Strategic Planning Check Sheet

Did you:	
1. Provide an overview of the strategic planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Develop a vision statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Develop a mission statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Develop guiding principles/ value statement(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Conduct an external assessment? Method/ Tool(s) used: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Conduct an internal assessment? Method/ Tool(s) used: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Provide a list of stakeholders involved in the planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Identify Priorities? Method/ Tool(s) used: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Develop Goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Develop Objectives? Are they Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-phased ? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Identify strategies to meet the goals? Are they evidence-based? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Develop an action plan? Does it address What, Who, When, Resources, and Communication? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Identify/ develop a method for tracking data?	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Identify/ develop a method for reporting progress?	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Identify/ develop a method to evaluate the plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Identify/ develop a method to revise the plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Characteristics of Effectively Worded Vision and Mission Statements

The questions listed with each characteristic are offered as a way of evaluating your statements.

Vision Statement Characteristics	
Directional	Does it describe the future course that administration seeks to accomplish and the changes that will help the health department prepare for the future?
Focused	Is it specific enough to provide administration with guidance in making decisions and allocating resources?
Flexible	Is it not so focused that it makes it difficult for administration to adjust to changing circumstances?
Feasible	Is it within the realm of what the health department can reasonably expect to achieve?
Desirable	Does it indicate why the health department wants to go in the direction it outlined?
Easy to communicate	Is it easy to explain in 5-10 minutes?
Mission Statement Characteristics	
Purpose	Does it clearly state what the local health department seeks to accomplish (i.e., using an infinitive that indicates a change: to increase, to prevent, to eliminate, etc.)?
Outline Activities	Does it outline the activities the health department chooses in order to pursue its purpose (i.e., to construct, to educate, to develop etc.)?
Value	Does it communicate the beliefs the local health department puts into practice (i.e. a commitment to excellent services, diversity, creativity, honesty, integrity, etc.)

External Analysis

An external analysis is the focus on environmental trends, events, or factors that have a potential to affect the strategy. Identify factors related to each category and consider their likelihood.

The questions listed with each category are offered as a way of getting started as possible types of factors. You are not limited to these questions. The range of factors can be positive, negative, or both.

Economic	What economic trends might have an impact on public health (i.e., unemployment levels, funding levels, etc.)?
Technological	To what extent are existing technologies maturing? What technological developments or trends are affecting or could affect the health department?
Government	What changes in regulation are possible? What will their impact be on public health? What budget/ grant or other incentives are being developed that might affect strategy development? Are there political or government stability risks?
Socio-cultural	What are the current or emerging trends in lifestyle and other components of culture? What are the implications? What demographic trends (income, population shifts) will affect public health? Do these trends represent an opportunity or a threat?
Future	What are significant trends and future events? What are the key areas of uncertainty as to factors that have the potential to impact the strategy?

LHD Health Services

Designated Health Services – Part 22 of the Public Health Code (PHC) requires the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) to develop organized programs to promote public health and prevent disease, and it prescribes broad powers to carry out these duties, including authorization of a local health department (LHD) to exercise duties and the use of LHDs as the primary organization responsible for the delivery of services and programs established by MDCH. (MCL 333.2221, 2226, 2235).

Required Health Services – Defined as: A LHD service specifically required in Part 24 of the PHC or elsewhere in state law, unless specifically excluded. (MCL 333.2408(1)), a Basic Service identified under Part 23, designated for delivery through a LHD is a required service for the local fiscal year covered by the appropriation. (MCL 333.2321(2)).

Basic Services – Those health services which are appropriated on an annual basis from the list of proposed basic services proposed annually by MDCH related to the budget and based on recommendations as the result of broad participation under the State Health Plan (MCL 333.2310 *et seq*). Examples of services that have been typically listed:

- Immunizations
- Communicable Disease Control
- STD Control
- TB Control
- Prevention of GC eye infections in NB
- NB Screening
- Emergency Management Plan (Community Health Annex)
- Prenatal Care

(Note these requirements are subject to change based on annual executive recommendations.)

Essential Services – The typical budget includes a boilerplate provision related to the funding of “essential services” which requires funds appropriated in Part 1 for “essential local public health services” to be “prospectively allocated to local health departments” to support the following:

- Immunizations
- Infectious Disease Control
- STD Control and Prevention
- Hearing Screening
- Vision Services
- Food Protection (w/consultation of Dept of Ag)
- Public water and private groundwater supply (w/consultation of DEQ)
- On-site sewage management (w/consultation of DEQ)

(Note: these requirements are subject to change on an annual basis based on executive recommendation.)

Other Statutory Requirements for Services by LHDs:

- Family Planning for indigent women (MCL 333.9131 *et seq*, R 325.151 *et seq*)
- Health Education and Nutrition Services (MCL 333.2433)
- HIV/AIDS testing, counseling, partner notification (MCL 333.5114, 5114c, 5923)
- Serious Communicable Disease (including TB) (MCL 333.5117) (R 325.171 *et seq*)
- Free Hearing and Vision testing and screening (MCL 9301, R 325.13091)
- Public Swimming Pool inspections (MCL 333.12524, R 325.2111 *et seq*)
- Campground inspections (MCL 333.12510, R 325.1551 *et seq*)
- Wastewater systems (MCL 333.12751 *et seq*, R 299.2901 *et seq*)
- Food Protection (MCL 289.3105 –authorizes Dept of Ag)
- Pregnancy—Informed Consent (MCL 333.17015)
- Water supply and drinking water (MCL 333.12701 *et seq*, 333.1001 *et seq*, R 325.1601 *et seq*, R 325.10101)

Allowable Services – a health service delivered in a city, county, district, (or part thereof), which is not a required service but one which MDCH determines is eligible for cost reimbursement. (MCL 333.2403(1)).

Continuation of services – During the transition period, a city exercising its option to change its election to operate a local health department must continue “local financial support for affected services at a level considered by the department to be consistent with support previously provided by the city, or with the requirements of the approved plan.”

Contract for services – A city (county, or district) may enter into an intergovernmental contract necessary or appropriate to a reorganization or an assumption or relinquishing of a health jurisdiction or function authorized by Part 24 (and must include protections for transferred employees). (MCL 333.2448)

SWOT Template

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. LHDs can use our strengths to create opportunities as well as minimize threats.

- **Strengths** focus on the things that we do well as local public health. **Weaknesses** focus on the things we do that we need to improve. Thus strengths and weaknesses focus *INTERNALLY*.
- **Opportunities** and **Threats** reflect factors *EXTERNAL* to local public health that are often out of our control. Opportunities can create conditions that offer the potential for us to reinforce and/or expand our strengths. Threats may present barriers to maintaining our strengths and/or create conditions that exacerbate our weaknesses.

	Beneficial	Harmful
Internal	<p>Strengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3.
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	<p>Threats</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3.

Questions are listed here with each SWOT category as a way of getting you started. You are not limited to the questions provided.

Strengths: What do we do well? What unique attributes and/or resources do we have? What do others see as our strengths?

Weaknesses: What could we do better? What attributes and/or new or additional resources do we need? What do others see as our weaknesses? What do we do that perhaps we shouldn't?

Opportunities: What can we take advantage of that is happening externally? How can we take our existing strengths and turn them into opportunities? What trends can we identify that offer new initiatives?

Threats: What external events are taking place that could hurt us and undermine our strengths and opportunities? Do these threats have the potential to amplify our weaknesses? What obstacles exist?

Goal Grid Template

Priority Health Issue: _____

What is it we want and don't have? (Achieve)

What is it we have and want to keep? (Preserve)

What is it we don't have and don't want? (Avoid)

What is it we have and don't want? (Eliminate)

	NoDo You Have It?Yes		
YesDo You Want It?	Achieve	Preserve	YesDo You Want It?
	Avoid	Eliminate	
NoDo You Want It?	NoDo You Have It?Yes		NoDo You Want It?

Action Plan Template

Priority Area: _____

Goal: _____

- What: *What* actions or changes will occur?
- Who: *Who* is responsible to carry out these changes?
- When: *When* will they take place, and what is the deadline?
- Resources: What *resources* are needed to carry out these changes?
- Communication: How will the changes be *communicated*?

Objective #1: _____

Strategy #1:				
What	Who	When	Resources	Communication
Strategy #2:				
What	Who	When	Resources	Communication

Objective #2: _____

Strategy #1:				
What	Who	When	Resources	Communication
Strategy #1:				
What	Who	When	Resources	Communication

Planning Pitfalls

Strategic planning is as much about planning as it is about execution. Avoid these planning pitfalls and the strategic plan will be a living, breathing document.

Lack of Ownership	The most common reason a plan fails is lack of ownership. If people don't have a stake and responsibility in the plan, it will be business as usual for all but a frustrated few.
Lack of Communication	The plan doesn't get communicated to employees, and they don't understand how they contribute.
Getting Mired in the Day-to-Day	Owners and managers, consumed by daily operating problems, lose sight of long-term goals.
Out of the Ordinary	The plan is treated as something separate and removed from the management process.
An Overwhelming Plan	The goals and actions generated in the strategic planning session are too numerous because the team failed to make tough choices to eliminate non-critical actions. This makes staff members unsure of where to begin.
A Meaningless Plan	A Meaningless Plan: The vision, mission and value statements are viewed as fluff and not supported by actions or don't have employee buy-in.
Annual Strategy	Strategy is only discussed at yearly meetings.
Not Considering Implementation	Implementation is not discussed in the strategic planning process. The planning document is seen as an end in itself.
No Progress Report	There's no method to track progress. No one feels forward momentum.
No Accountability	Accountability and high visibility are needed to help drive change. This means that each measure, objective, data source, and initiative must have an owner.
Lack of Empowerment	While accountability may provide strong motivation for improving performance, employees must also have the authority, responsibility, and tools necessary to impact relevant measures. Otherwise, they may resist involvement and ownership.

Source: www.mystrategicplan.com

Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Standard 5.3

Standard 5.3: Develop and Implement a Health Department Organization Strategic Plan

The following information is an excerpt from PHAB standards and measures, Version 1.0, available at www.phaboard.org

Strategic planning is a process for determining an organization's roles, priorities, and direction over three to five years. A strategic plan sets forth what an organization plans to achieve, how it will achieve it, and how it will know if it has achieved it. The strategic plan provides a guide for making decisions on allocating resources and on taking action to pursue strategies and priorities. A health department's strategic plan focuses on the entire health department. Health department programs may have program-specific strategic plans that complement and support the health department's organizational strategic plan.

Standard 5.3: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A HEALTH DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN.			
	Measure	Purpose	Significance
5.3.1	Conduct a department strategic planning process	The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department's strategic planning process.	A functional and useful strategic plan requires that it be understood by staff and implemented by the health department. The development of such a plan requires a planning process that considers opinions and knowledge from across the health department, assesses the larger environment in which the health department operates, uses its organizational strengths and addresses its weaknesses, links to the health improvement plan that has been adopted by the community, and links to the health department's quality improvement plan.
	Required Documentation	Guidance	
	1. Description of elements of the planning process used to develop the organization's strategic plan:	1. The health department must document the process that it used to develop its organizational strategic plan. The planning process may have been facilitated by staff of the health department or by an outside consulting organization or individual. If the health department is part of a super health agency or umbrella agency, the department's process may have been part of a larger organizational planning process. If that is the case, the health department must have been actively engaged in the process and must provide evidence that public health was an integral component in the process.	
	a) Membership of the strategic planning group	a) A list of the individuals who participated in the strategic planning process and their titles must be provided. Participants should include the health department's governing entity members or representatives. Documentation could be meeting minutes, a report that presents the members of a strategic planning committee, or other formal listing of participants.	
	b) Strategic planning	b) Documentation must include a summary or overview of the strategic planning process, including the	

	process steps	number of meetings, duration of the planning process, and the methods used for the review of major elements by stakeholders. Steps in the planning process must be described, such as opportunities and threats analysis or environmental scanning process, stakeholder analysis, story-boarding, strengths and weaknesses analysis, or scenario development.	
	Measure	Purpose	Significance
5.3.2	Adopt a department strategic plan	The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department's completion and adoption of a department strategic plan.	A strategic plan defines and determines the health department's roles, priorities, and direction over three to five years. A strategic plan sets forth what the department plans to achieve as an organization, how it will achieve it, and how it will know if it has achieved it. The strategic plan provides a guide for making decisions and allocating resources to pursue its strategies and priorities.
	Required Documentation	Guidance	
		If the health department is part of super health agency or umbrella agency, the health department's strategic plan may be part of a larger organizational plan. If that is the case, the plan must include a section that addresses the health department and includes the required elements of the plan specific to the health department. Submitted documentation should include only the section(s) of the larger plan that addresses the health department and not the entire plan. If the plan of the super health agency or umbrella agency does not include the required elements for the health department, then the health department must conduct an internal planning process and adopt a health department specific strategic plan.	
	<p>1. Health department strategic plan dated within the last five years that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Mission, vision, guiding principles/values b) Strategic priorities c) Goals and objectives with measureable and time-framed targets d) Identification of external trends, events, or factors that may impact community health or 	<p>1. The health department must provide a strategic plan that is dated within the last five years. Some health departments may have shorter planning timeframes and, for example, may produce a strategic plan every three years. Some of the goals in the plan may be for a longer time period than five years, but the plan must have been produced or revised within the last five years. The health department may not officially call the plan a "strategic plan," but it must include the items listed in a through f.</p> <p>There is no required or suggested format for the strategic plan. There is no required or suggested length of the strategic plan.</p> <p>The strategic plan must include all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The health department's mission, vision, and guiding principles/values for the health department b) The health department's strategic priorities. c) The health department's goals and objectives with measurable and time-framed targets (expected products or results). Measurable and time-framed targets may be contained in another document, such as an annual work plan. If this is the case, the companion document must be provided with the strategic plan for this measure. d) The identification of external trends, events, or other factors that may impact community health or the health department. 	

	<div>the health department</div> <div>e) Assessment of health department strengths and weaknesses</div> <div>f) Link to the health improvement plan and quality improvement plan</div>	<div>e) The analysis of the department’s strengths and weaknesses</div> <div>f) Linkages with the health improvement plan and details on the health department’s roles and responsibilities for implementing the health improvement plan. It must also link with the health department’s quality improvement plan. The strategic plan need not link to all elements of the health improvement plan or quality improvement plan, but it must show where linkages are appropriate for effective planning and implementation.</div>	
	Measure	Purpose	Significance
5.3.3	Implement the department strategic plan	The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department’s implementation of its strategic plan.	A plan is useful only when it is implemented and provides guidance for priorities, activities, and resource allocation. A strategic plan sets forth what the department plans to achieve as an organization, how it will achieve it, and how it will know if it has achieved it. It is important to regularly review the implementation of the plan to ensure that the department is on track to meet its targets.
	Required Documentation	Guidance	
	1. Annual reports of progress towards goals and objectives contained in the plan, including monitoring and conclusions on progress toward meeting targets	1. The health department must provide annual reports since the plan’s adoption showing that it has reviewed the strategic plan and has assessed progress towards reaching the goals and objectives. The reports must include how the targets are monitored. Progress is evidenced by completing defined steps to reach a target, by completing objectives, or by addressing priorities and implementing activities. The plan may be revised based on work completed, adjustments to timelines, or changes in available resources.	