

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM**

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
JANUARY 1, 2008 - DECEMBER 31, 2012**

**REVISED FEBRUARY 28, 2008**

# REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

## Strategic Plan

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BACKGROUND: In May 2007, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPC) began a strategic planning process to identify the organization's future course. This may seem like a natural and appropriate business decision; however, RPC's position in 2006 weighs significantly on the context and milestones that were achieved prior to engaging in the planning process.

In 2006, the prior RPC executive director left after ten years. Unfortunately, the organization was also experiencing financial difficulties and a "crisis" of member confidence. The Board of Directors assumed the management role and appointed Mr. Bill Foisy as Interim Executive Director. With the Board's oversight, Mr. Foisy's leadership and the staff's dedication, the RPC regained member confidence and achieved financial stability. In December 2006, Mr. Charles Ball was hired as the Executive Director. He secured grant funding to begin planning RPC's future rather than dwelling on difficult past issues.

THE PROCESS: Guidant Consulting, Inc. was awarded a contract to assist the RPC in developing a strategic plan. From June through August 2007, internal and external data gathering tools from personal interviews to Internet based surveys captured member, board and staff insights. This data was summarized and prioritized by a follow-up electronic ranking process again distributed to members, board and staff for input. A planning day was held on September 11, 2007, to review and revise RPC's mission, vision and values to ensure that the plan goals and objectives were in line with the overall core beliefs of the organization. The planning day concluded with a Strategic Planning Committee being formed to lead and facilitate the remaining process.

The recommendations were sorted into larger categories (Revenue, Administrative, Service, Communications, Personnel and Governance) and then distributed to the members, staff and board to prioritize. The objective was to identify the top goals to be RPC's focus for the next five years with no more than two primary goals. Copies of the meeting summaries, surveys, ranking forms and PowerPoint presentations are available for review along with this report. The Strategic Planning Committee met several times and progressively reviewed, discussed and developed the following draft plan. In this document, "member" refers to an RPC government member and "director" refers to the Board of Directors.

NEXT STEPS: Review and revise the attached plan prior to endorsement and implementation. Where short or long-term committees are referenced, these should be formally established by the Board of Directors. Likewise, the policy recommendations of the various committees should be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. The **BOLD** dates refer to the tasks that need to be repeated on a regular basis as part of the five year strategic plan. The plan has been formulated in two versions: i) activity and ii) chronological order.

# REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

## Revised Strategic Plan

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### **MISSION**

*To serve as a catalyst for regional leadership, cooperation and sustainability  
in Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair and Walker counties  
of Central Alabama*

### **VISION**

The members of the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham will benefit from professional, innovative and high quality resources. Using our expertise, the RPC will collectively and progressively ensure that all localities have the capacity to fully participate in economic growth and development, respectful of each community's values and objectives. Ultimately, we are committed to creating a region with access to meaningful employment and healthy communities.

### **VALUES**

- We are dedicated to the betterment of our members, partners and communities.
- We are committed to collaboration and mutual respect.
- We uphold the diversity and identity of the natural, social and built environments.

# **SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>1. REVENUE</b>        | <b>4. COMMUNICATIONS</b> |
| <b>2. ADMINISTRATIVE</b> | <b>5. PERSONNEL</b>      |
| <b>3. SERVICE</b>        | <b>6. GOVERNANCE</b>     |

**JANUARY 1, 2008 – DECEMBER 31, 2012**

**REVISED FEBRUARY 22, 2008**

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM**  
**Revised Strategic Plan**

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**REVENUE GOALS:**

1. **RPC WILL SUSTAIN A 96% ANNUAL MEMBER RETENTION AND DUES COLLECTION RATE THROUGH JANUARY 2013.**

Objectives	Staff/Division	Target Date	Achieved
A. <b><u>Annually</u>, identify one non-member to attain as a member.</b>	Membership Committee	June 15, 2008	
B. <b><u>Annually</u>, review prior year membership and calculate retention level, draft a list of non-members and identify any new potential members.</b>	Finance Committee	Jan. 31, 2008	
C. <b><u>Annually</u>, track dues payments to plan RPC cash flow and projected member retention rate. Make recommendations on payment options, dues and potential fee increases.</b>	Finance Committee	Jan. 31, 2008	
D. <b><u>Annually</u>, review membership data to see if there are patterns among non-members (geographic area, population size, gender or race) to better address their needs.</b>	Finance Committee	Jan. 31, 2008	
E. <b><u>Annually</u>, review membership retention and participation to ensure target retention rate.</b>	Finance Committee	June 15, 2008	
F. <b><u>Annually</u>, evaluate the objectives needed to achieve the member retention goal for the coming fiscal year.</b>	Finance Committee	Dec. 15, 2008	

**2. RPC WILL BROADEN GRANT FUNDING RESOURCES AND INCREASE GRANT FUNDING BY 2% ANNUALLY THROUGH JANUARY 2013 TO DIVERSIFY REVENUE BASE.**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Staff/Division</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
A. Review and develop a plan to increase RPC's grant development and management capabilities.	Management	Feb. 28, 2008	
B. Develop a set of guidelines and procedures communicating RPC's responsibilities, capabilities and fees in assisting members in grant development and management.	Grant Staff	Feb. 28, 2008	
<b>C. <u>Annually</u>, calculate the prior year RPC grant revenue and project a 2% increase.</b>	<b>Management</b>	<b>July 31, 2008</b>	
D. Begin to offer Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) management to members.	Grant Staff	TBD	
E. Identify and submit grant applications to at least two new grant resources.	Grant Staff	May 31, 2008	
F. Evaluate the possibility/value for establishing a 501©3 to further RPC's ability to receive/manage foundation grants.	Grant Staff	May 31, 2008	
<b>G. <u>Annually</u>, review the mid-year projection of achieving the annual 2% goal.</b>	<b>Grant Staff</b>	<b>June 15, 2008</b>	
<b>H. <u>Annually</u>, evaluate the objectives needed to achieve the goal for the coming year.</b>	<b>Grant Staff</b>	<b>Dec. 15, 2008</b>	

**3. RPC WILL INCREASE PROGRAMMATIC AND SERVICE INCOME BY 5% ANNUALLY FOR PERSONNEL AND STAFF EXPENSES THROUGH JANUARY 2013 TO DIVERSIFY REVENUE BASE.**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Staff/Division</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
A. Develop an internal protocol to identify, document and capture all services provided by staff and devise appropriate fee schedule to capture lost revenue.	Finance Staff	Feb. 28, 2008	
B. Identify opportunities, services and programs that have value to the region and members and draft a plan to provide these services.	Staff	May 31, 2008	
C. <b><u>Annually</u></b> , review the mid-year projection of achieving the annual 5% goal.	Staff/Management	June 15, 2008	
D. <b><u>Annually</u></b> , calculate the prior year RPC program and service income and project a 5% increase.	Staff/Management	July 31, 2008	
E. <b><u>Annually</u></b> , evaluate staff time, cost of services and revenue generated to justify maintaining a program or service.	Staff/Management	Jan. – Nov. 2008	
F. <b><u>Annually</u></b> , evaluate the objectives needed to achieve the grant goal for the coming year.	Staff	Dec. 15, 2008	
G. <b><u>Annually</u></b> , evaluate all services and programs to ensure that they are aligned with RPC's mission.	Staff/Management	Dec. 31, 2008	

**4. RPC WILL HAVE SIX (6) MONTHS OF OPERATING REVENUE OR \$500,000 IN A RESERVE FUND BY JANUARY 2013.**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Staff/Division</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
A. Monitor reserve fund and annual goal to be included as part of every board agenda.	Board/Management	Jan. 1, 2008	
B. Identify potential income or non-budgeted revenue that could be allocated to a reserve fund.	Finance Committee	Jan. 15, 2008	
C. Establish an internal policy to commit all or a portion of unexpected revenue into the reserve fund.	Management	Feb. 28, 2008	
<b>D. <u>Annually</u>, review the mid-year projection of achieving the annual \$100,000 goal.</b>	<b>Board/Management</b>	<b>June 15, 2008</b>	
<b>E. <u>Annually</u>, evaluate the objectives needed to achieve the revenue goal for the coming year.</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Dec. 15, 2008</b>	
F. Generate \$15,000 in net revenue from special events.	Board/Staff	Jan. 31, 2009	

**5. ELIMINATE RPC'S OPERATING DEFICIT BY JANUARY 2011.**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Staff/Division</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
RPC has no real assets other than cash and will continue to reduce the long-term deficit based on the current rate.	Management	Jan. 31, 2011	

**6. REDUCE RPC'S DEBT BY JANUARY 2013.**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Staff/Division</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Continue to service the \$1.5 million long-term debt based on the terms of the loan at approximately \$180,000 per year.	Management	Jan. 31, 2013	



## REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

### Revised Strategic Plan

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#### ADMINISTRATIVE GOALS:

#### **1. REVIEW AND IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE RPC'S PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BY JANUARY 2009.**

Objectives	Staff/Division	Target Date	Achieved
A. A staff committee will be established to identify and review RPC's project management process.	Steve & Mary Grace	Feb. 28, 2008	
B. The Project Management Process Committee (PMPC) will draft a written set of operating guidelines and objectives for approval.	PMPC	Mar. 31, 2008	
C. The PMPC will ensure that staff and member recommendations are solicited and included in their deliberations.	PMPC	April 30, 2008	
D. The PMPC will provide written <u>quarterly</u> reports to Management on their progress and any short and long-term recommendations.	PMPC	April – Dec. 2008	
E. Evaluate current division structure to provide clarity of roles, engage staff in work plans and contracts, and ensure adequate supervision, management of projects and allocation of resources.	PMPC	April – Dec. 2008	
F. Establish organizational cost analysis of fee and service schedule regarding member or non-member; public requests/contracts are summarized, prioritized, assigned and invoiced.	PMPC	April – Dec. 2008	
G. The PMPC's technology recommendations will reviewed by the Technology Assessment Committee for their comment.	PMPC/TAC	April – Dec. 2008	
H. The PMPC will present their final report and recommendations to Management and the Board.	PMPC/Admin/Board	Nov. 30, 2008	
I. The revised procedures will be communicated to staff and members via the Board.	Board	Jan. 31, 2009	
<b>J. The PMPC will <u>continue to meet periodically to evaluate the plan and make adjustments and additional recommendations.</u></b>	<b>PMPC</b>	<b>Feb. 28, 2009</b>	

**2. A COMPREHENSIVE TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION WILL BE CONDUCTED TO ASSESS RPC'S HARDWARE, SOFTWARE AND DATA MANAGEMENT NEEDS BY JANUARY 2009.**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Staff/Division</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
A. A staff committee will be established to identify and review RPC's technology needs.	Ray, Cissy, Harry & Brett	Feb. 28, 2008	
B. The Technology Assessment Committee (TAC) will draft a written set of operating guidelines and objectives for Management to approve.	TAC	Mar. 31, 2008	
C. The TAC will ensure that staff recommendations are solicited and included in their deliberations.	TAC/Staff/Members	April 30, 2008	
D. The TAC will provide written <u>quarterly</u> reports to Management on their progress and any short and long-term budget implications.	TAC	April – Dec. 2008	
E. The TAC will present their final report including a prioritized list of recommendations, a timeline for implementation, detailed costs for each recommendation and possible revenue resources for Management and the Board to review.	TAC/Admin./Board	Nov. 30, 2008	
F. Management will act on the TAC recommendations submitted in November.	Management	Jan. 31, 2009	
<b>G. Based on the timeline the TAC will <u>continue to meet</u> periodically to evaluate the plan and make adjustments and additional recommendations as needed.</b>	<b>TAC</b>	<b>Feb. 28, 2009</b>	

**3. EVALUATE USE/FUNCTIONALITY OF CURRENT OFFICE SPACE AND BUILDING BY 2013.**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Staff/Division</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
A. A committee will be established to review RPC's office space and physical location.	Scott and Tom	Oct. 31, 2009	
B. The Office and Facilities Committee (OFC) will draft a written set of operating guidelines and objectives for Management to approve.	OFC	Dec. 31, 2009	
C. The OFC will ensure that staff recommendations, space and equipment needs are solicited and included in their deliberations.	OFC/Staff	April 30, 2010	
D. The OFC will provide written <u>quarterly</u> reports to Management on their progress in leasing or purchasing office space for RPC.	OFC	Apr. – Sept. 2010	
E. Management will submit their recommendation to the Board.	Admin/Board	Oct. 31, 2010	
F. RPC will execute the various logistics related to making a physical move or relocation.	Staff/Management	Oct. – Dec. 2010	

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM**  
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**SERVICE GOAL:**

**1. RPC WILL BE THE PRIMARY RESOURCE FOR MEMBER SERVICES BY JANUARY 2013.**

Objectives	Staff/Division	Target Date	Achieved
A. Establish a Quality & Value Committee (QVC) comprised of staff, members of RPC and at least one board member.	Tom, Robyn, Steve & Karen	Jan. 1, 2008	
<b>B. <u>Annually, the QVC will plan and present the Annual Member Conference highlighting state and national best practices.</u></b>	QVC	<b>Jan. 31, 2008</b>	
C. The QVC will use data or recommendations from the 2007 Member Survey, the Membership Committee and the Program Management Committee to frame its written objectives.	QVC	Oct. 31, 2008	
D. The QVC will develop a set of standards for all RPC services and programs, which will be reviewed by staff, Management and then approved and communicated to members.	QVC /Staff/Admin.	Jan. 31, 2009	
E. The QVC will develop an evaluation tool appropriate for each RPC program, service or project.	QVC /Staff	Mar. 31, 2009	
F. Gather Internet based evaluation after each project is completed to create a baseline for quality and to help evaluate staff or team performance, skills and member engagement.	QVC	April 30, 2009	
<b>G. <u>The QVC will randomly survey members in person or by telephone for comments and recommendations to identify member needs, areas for improvement and communications.</u></b>	QVC	<b>May 31, 2009</b>	
<b>H. <u>Bi-annually, the QVC will host member seminars and offer training programs to increase member awareness of RPC services.</u></b>	QVC	<b>Jan. and June</b>	
I. The QVC will provide written reports to Management on their progress, survey findings, evaluation data and recommendations.	QVC	Ongoing	

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM**  
**Revised Strategic Plan**

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**COMMUNICATION GOAL:**

**1. PROVIDE COMMUNICATIONS AND RESOURCES TO INCREASE MEMBER AWARENESS OF RPC SERVICES, STATE AND NATIONAL TRENDS, AND BEST PRACTICES.**

Objectives	Staff/Division	Target Date	Achieved
A. <b><u>Annually</u>, send RPC <i>member packet</i> from the Membership Committee chairperson to new and non-members. Engage existing members or directors to call or visit potential members to secure enrollment.</b>	MC	Feb. 28, 2008	
B. Develop RPC membership “packets” for new and renewing members.	MC	Feb. 28, 2008	
C. Evaluate, optimize, and maintain the RPC Website and revise accordingly.	MC	March 31, 2008	
D. Develop a fact-sheet about RPC services, projects and initiatives for staff, members, board and the public.	MC	May 31, 2008	
E. Develop print and web-based materials to communicate RPC services and programs and possibly have a printable PDF “brochure” for specialized or targeted services.	MC	July 31, 2008	
F. <b>Print and mail a member newsletter (<i>Connections</i>) on a <u>quarterly</u> basis addressing topics of regional and national interest to members.</b>	MC	Sept. 30, 2008	
G. Create media kits and press release templates to promote RPC and member achievements.	MC	Oct. 31, 2008	
H. Create a Membership Committee (MC) comprised of two finance staff, two RPC members and one board member.	Cissy	Jan. 31, 2008	
I. Draft Membership Committee guidelines for board approval.	MC	Feb. 28, 2008	

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM**  
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**PERSONNEL GOAL:**

**1. ENHANCE STAFF DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND MORALE.**

Objectives	Staff/Division	Target Date	Achieved
<b>A. Have one RPC team briefly present their main projects at the monthly staff meeting.</b>	<b>Staff/Directors</b>	<b>Jan. 31, 2008</b>	
B. Solicit staff recommendations on personnel, skills and resources needed for the work group.	Management	May 31, 2008	
C. Create opportunities/budget for professional development.	Management	July 31, 2008	
D. Explore alternative forms of non-monetary incentives for those that perform above and beyond for a task or job well done.	Management	July 31, 2008	
<b>E. <u>Annually</u>, review the Personnel Policies and Procedures.</b>	<b>Management</b>	<b>July 31, 2008</b>	
F. Enable RPC to have the human resources to catalogue and archive data.	Management	Sept. 30, 2008	
G. Establish space at RPC to house both a “physical” library/archive and “electronic” library/archive.	Management	Sept. 30, 2008	
H. Review current employee benefits and programs based on comparable positions and employment standards.	Management	Mar. 31, 2010	
<b>I. Update job analysis and pay plan every 5 years</b>	<b>Management</b>		

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**GOVERNANCE GOALS:**

**1. REVIEW AND REVISE THE RPC BYLAWS.**

Objectives	Staff/Division	Target Date	Achieved
A. Secure sample bylaws from other government planning commissions to evaluate current RPC Bylaws.	Cissy, Cynthia & Ray	Mar. 31, 2008	
B. Establish a Bylaws & Governance Committee (BGC) comprised of one staff person from Management, an RPC member and a board member.	BGC	May 31, 2008	
<b>G. <u>Annually, thoroughly review and update the strategic plan, mission, vision and values for the coming year.</u></b>	<b>Board/Management</b>	<b>June 15, 2008</b>	
<b>C. <u>The BGC will identify and plan the logistics for holding board meetings at various regional locations at least once per year.</u></b>	<b>BGC</b>	<b>July 31, 2008</b>	
D. The BGC will evaluate other bylaw samples and address the following primary issues: i) ensure that the Bylaws are current and functional, ii) define the appropriate number and duties of board members, iii) address diversity and composition needs, iv) clarify the status of members and nonmembers, and v) support RPC's overall governance needs.	BGC	Aug. 31, 2008	
E. The BGC will evaluate i) the need or frequency of board meetings, ii) the possibility of consolidating meetings together on common days, and iii) the value of having an Executive or Governance Committee.	BGC	Sept. 30, 2008	
<b>F. <u>The BGC will provide annual written reports to Management on their progress, survey findings, evaluation data and recommendations.</u></b>	<b>BGC</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	
<b>G. <u>The BGC will assist the Board in annually reviewing the Bylaws prior to the Annual Meeting.</u></b>	<b>BGC</b>	<b>Nov. 31, 2008</b>	