



Skyway Solutions

Strategic Plan Recommendations for the
Annual Meeting

Final Report
January 2016

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**Part I:
Context**



Introduction

Skyway Solutions has improved the quality of community dialogue in Skyway West Hill for the last five years with government and residents, championing new ideas and catalyzing projects. It has broadened the definition of public space by embracing a range of sites, issues and arenas. When Skyway Solutions was founded, it stood relatively alone in its field – though not without models and precedent – to provide think-tank-like planning services focused exclusively in Skyway West Hill. Transforming from a community group organized by Pomegranate Center and King County to create an agenda for revitalization, years went by with small projects but no deeper impact and or accountability. Founding Board Members, **Anthony Shoecraft, Ilonda Palacios, Michele Savelle, Klaus Liebetanz, Savina Montgomery, Paul Patu and Michael Majeed.**

Much has changed since Skyway Solution’s inception in 2009. Skyway has experienced the increase of organizations concerned with the quality of our health and access, many which have taken on similar issues and even adopted planning methods Skyway Solutions has brought forward. Skyway Solutions itself is a much different organization today than it was when it was founded into a nonprofit, with paid professional leadership of stature, a growing Board, and a track record that has set a standard for catalyzing projects. Yet Skyway Solutions’ impact and reputation is largely unknown.

It is now time to carefully launch Skyway Solutions’ continuing role in Skyway West Hill and we embarked on a Leadership retreat in 2012 to drive a Strategic Planning process in 2014 that plotted a course for its future at a key moment in its evolution. **Jennifer Moore and Michael Majeed** facilitated this process, building on earlier planning work by **Founding Board Members** , gathering a wide range of inputs that provide a platform for the Board and new staff leadership to make critical decisions about direction. What follows is an ambitious vision, embraced by a range of stakeholders, and a tactical roadmap for the organization to realize these aspirations.

An Engaged and Inclusive Process

Skyway Solutions: Agenda for Revitalization (2009) Members voted to become a nonprofit (2010)

7 Board
2 Staff
3 Funders
3 Potential Partners



Leadership Retreat

(January 2012)

Stakeholder Interviews

(Feb-June 2015)



Board & Staff

Vision Session

(June 2015)

Prioritization & Tactical Planning

(July-November 2015)

Drafted Business Plan



Board Endorsement

(January 2016)

Early Implementation & Fundraising
2016

Full Plan Implementation

2016-2020



**Part II:
Vision**



Vision Statement

Using a nationally recognized model, Skyway Solutions can transform Skyway West Hill to benefit and build better community through innovative solutions.

This Vision of this plan is rooted in the following core concepts, which were echoed by the Board, Staff and Key Volunteers throughout the years:

1. There is a healthy tension between Skyway Solutions mission, which emphasizes purpose, and the organization’s aspirational vision, which concentrates on the future and serves as a catalyst to Build Community and Honor Diversity.
2. The vision elements of our business and strategic plan emerged include “catalyst, transformative, impact, actionable, systemic change, to transform Skyway. Our community work focuses on sustainability, equity, culture and other efforts to strengthen our neighborhoods through housing, neighborhood schools and social enterprises.
3. Diving deeper into community development to identify properties, take on pre development activities and begin to shape and build a pipeline of investing in our community. Be committed to creating an equitable and sustainable Skyway.

The Board's Role

To achieve our vision, the Business and Strategic Plan calls for investments in talent, content, marketing and communications. The Board must play a central role in developing the resources to achieve these ambitious goals:

- The Board must **take responsibility**, together with staff leadership, **for meeting the goals** of this Plan. The Executive Committee will ensure sufficient funds are allocated in the annual budget for plan initiatives, assign responsibility for Board-driven tasks, regularly review progress and enable course corrections if necessary.
- **Empower and support the Executive Director** in assembling a team that has the in-house capacity and expertise to implement policy and deliver on projects, and effectively promote and steward the organization.
- The Board will **develop and steward the resources** needed to support Skyway Solutions and its vision. Board members will work with leadership staff to increase the impact of **fundraising**, collaborate with the Leadership Team on new partnership development and ongoing cultivation and stewardship of Skyway Solutions important institutional funders and partners.
- Undertake a coordinated and **strategic Board development and recruitment effort** to grow the voluntary leadership and bring new skills, expertise, resources and connections to develop Skyway Solutions.

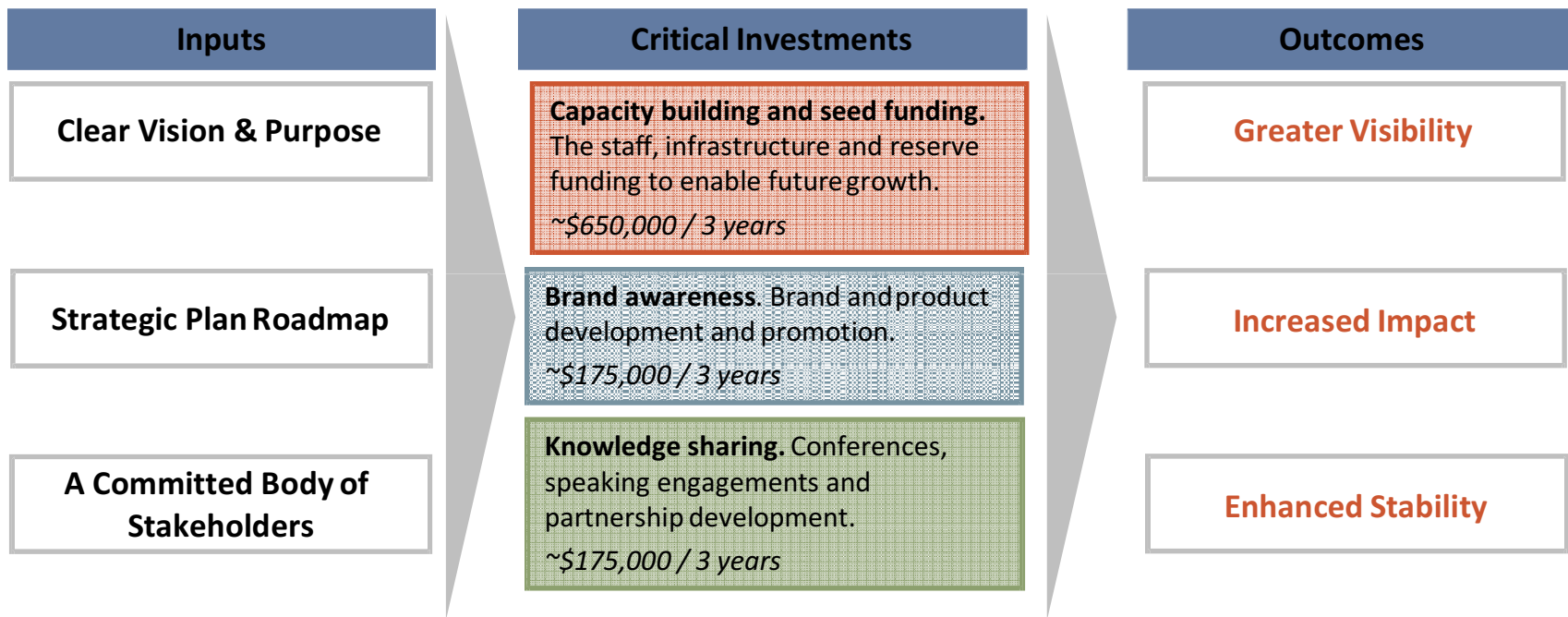
The Staff's Role

To achieve our vision, the Business and Strategic Plans calls for investments in talent, project management, real estate, housing, marketing and communications. To achieve the ambitious goals laid out in the Plan, the staff will:

- **Use work plans** as a tool for developing annual operating plans and to tracking progress. The Leadership Team will facilitate mid-year progress reviews, and integrate amendments or adjustments as needed.
- **Develop and add voluntary expertise** in the areas identified by the Executive Director as the most pressing issues in the community, around which primary projects are focused over a three-year period.
- **Add project management and coordination capacity** to support dual project approach and fee-based service delivery.
- **Drive community leadership and ownership** by building a core of residents as leaders.
- Benefit from additional **marketing, communications and branding expertise** to elevate Skyway Solutions profile, impact and sustainability.

Underwriting the Vision

Together, the Board and Staff will realize the Vision. A comprehensive **Fundraising Campaign** for Skyway Solutions is the proposed vehicle, raising approximately **\$3.5m over three years** (\$1m in new funding) to support operating expenses along with targeted investments in strategic initiatives, special projects, and financial security.





**Part III:
Strategic Goals**



Goals & Strategies

Five major goals came from our Strategic Plan process January 2014, and from extensive interviews with Board, staff, funders and other stakeholders throughout 2015 for this process. A unifying message that articulates who we are and what sets us apart from others in the community.

1. **Build Community Leaders to focus on mission.**
2. **Build Community Ownership - acquire, develop, preserve and manage property for community ownership.**
3. **Financial Security. Fiscal stability through a broader range of funding streams, e.g. earned income, philanthropic funding, etc.**
4. **Internal Capacity. Build thought leadership to enhance local and national recognition for creative and effective approaches to solving our community challenges.**
5. **Organizational Effectiveness. Operational best practices to optimize Board, Staff and Community collaboration and effectiveness. (Building a Collective Impact)**

Prioritization and planning sessions were then held with the staff and Board representatives to develop the strategies and tactics that support each of these five strategic goals. These goals are outlined on the following pages.

Mission Focus

- **Ensure Skyway Solutions' Mission and core values reflect our purpose and organizational priorities and present a simple, unifying message that articulates why we exist and what we do to achieve our vision.**
- **Clearly and consistently promote the Mission, distinguishing its value relative to other organizations concerned with similar issues, and as a national model for best practices in community planning.**
- **Refresh Skyway Solutions brand and identity to reflect our impact locally, and regionally.**

Financial Security

- Use a project selection process to promote advanced fundraising initiatives and secure multi-year funding commitments.
- Develop an earned income platform to leverage our talent and methodology for new technical assistance and revenues as well as fee-based services.
- Develop and grow major donor engagement through: (1) a campaign that celebrates community through arts while raising resources to underwrite strategic plan initiatives, (2) increased volunteers projects, and (3) a revised annual benefit strategy.
- Expand fundraising using the Strategic Plan as a tool for resource development, identifying prospects whose priorities align with multi-year projects and deepening relationships with potential partners.
- Explore partnership opportunities through the lens of equity and greater financial security.

Internal Capacity

- **Develop universal project framework, metrics/performance indicators, evaluation tools and a process that allow Skyway Solutions and its partners to measure program performance and impact.**
- **Establish clear, impact-oriented goals for each project that help Skyway Solutions measure and prove project success.**
- **Introduce and learn a new approach to project selection and a complementary strategy for housing and mixed use projects.**
- **Explore institutional and organizational partnerships that potentially expand Skyway Solutions housing development impact.**

Increased Visibility & Thought Leadership

- **Design a locally-focused strategy that educates a broad range of constituencies about specific accomplishments and our long term impact in Skyway West Hill and also leverages volunteers and project partners as ambassadors to increase visibility.**
- **Build Board and staff with necessary marketing and communications expertise to raise awareness of our work.**
- **Develop and implement a strategy to increase the organization's profile locally and regionally through speaking engagements, promotional opportunities featuring residents and a conference or symposium that is tied to our Project Work.**

Organizational Effectiveness

- Focus the Board on best practices in governance including empowering the Executive Director, supporting and overseeing Strategic Plan implementation, attracting resources and generating connections.
- Launch a Board Development work plan and learning to optimize the role of the Board in advancing the plan and securing the resources needed to underwrite the vision.
- Focus on learning Governance, Real Estate Management, Project Management and Fundraising.
- Reallocate staff responsibilities and revisit organizational structure to support enhanced external relations efforts (marketing, communications, fundraising, strategic partnership development).

Founding Board

- Working Board
- Mostly comprising friends and colleagues of the founder
- Heavy on program expertise

Planning/Board Development

- To achieve scale and sustainability
- Focus on balancing board/staff roles
- Activate a strong committee structure
- Expand voluntary leadership with diverse skills, expertise and reach

Best-Practice Organization

- Board hires a strong ED, approves budgets/policy, sets direction, secures/stewards resources
- Work done by engaged committees
- ED empowered to assemble team that implements policy and delivers service, and to create the optimal board/staff relationship for successful fundraising

*It's vastly easier to attract and retain solid Volunteers and a highly qualified staff with **balanced Board/staff roles***



**Part IV:
Implementation**



Implementation Process

- We need to hire and or develop a Project Director responsible for implementing, maintaining and updating the Strategic Plan spreadsheet; initiating mid-year progress reviews, and integrating amendments or adjustments.
- All staff and the Board will use the Strategic Plan spreadsheet as a working document to develop annual tasks and to track progress.
- Refer to Business Plan for reference
- Refer to Strategic Plan for reference