**SW REAP Strategic Plan - 2016**

**Objective #1: Increase Job & Business Opportunities**

1. Continue to enhance participation in our fund programs
   * 1. Clarify guidelines for microloans.
        1. Historical model – gap financing with high risk.
           1. Proposed future models

Gap financing with high risk

Gap financing with lead lender in place

Gap financing with no lender attached (Character loan)

* + 1. Action item: Survey SW REAP key informants to identify desired model.
       1. Who: Carie Boster, appointed
       2. Timeline: Survey Monkey. Results reported at August meeting.
       3. Budget: No cost for survey and report. May want to increase funds available.
    2. Educate new members on all available funds.

1. Encourage partnerships for Community & Economic Development
   1. Explore new microloan for support of distressed businesses
      * 1. Proposed future model – aligned with high risk gap financing (above)
        2. Action item: Include in survey
           1. Who: Carie Boster, appointed
           2. Timeline: Use Survey Monkey so report is available for August meeting.
        3. Budget: No cost for survey and report. May want to increase funds available.
      1. Support local projects such as community facilities, value added enterprises, local foods, infrastructure, business supports, and education, leadership and cooperative ventures. This can be done through the benchmarking system.

**Objective #2 - Strengthen Board Members**

1. Roles & Responsibilities
   1. Develop a Board Member orientation manual
      1. Start with Board Handbook and build from there. (Identify if these are going to be separate or the same – “orientation” items could be a section of the handbook.)
      2. Include an example for each loan fund available.
      3. Updated periodically.
      4. Include a short bio of members and their areas of expertise
   2. Attend bi-monthly meetings/conference calls
   3. Review materials prior to the meeting
   4. Develop Succession Plan for board and partner members
      1. Recommend that members identify their replacement on the board. This should be someone that they believe would work best for the group.
      2. Develop a position description for board members or invite County Commissioners to a meeting
   5. Formal mentor network
      1. Identify those willing to serve – Board member mentor board member, partner mentor partner, and RIB member mentor RIB member
      2. Mentor new members for the first year. Meet together before/after the meeting for one on one interaction.
2. Very important to have mentor working close with new members.
   1. Update organization documents including by-laws.
3. Communications
   1. Visit county commission meetings
      1. Use written general report about board/progress/accomplishments plus add detail about any specific county impacts/loans (add short stories to the website plus a welcome to new microloan businesses.)
      2. Recommend Semi-annual or annual meeting with commissioners.
      3. Attend renewal/appointment commission meeting.
   2. Annual Report
      1. Coordinate report with the REAP Investment Board
         1. Not necessary for audited report each year but need to do one occasionally.
         2. Simple recap for bookkeeping service
   3. Improve wherever possible – mail/email/meetings
      1. Use free technology to include remote attendees with budget constraints – video or teleconference

**Objective #3 - Marketing Plan**

1. SW REAP has identified the need to further tell it’s story and share how it is a valuable resource to the communities, counties, and region it serves. A variety of methods were identified for helping to create a message that are further outlined below. With a strong, unified message from SW REAP partnerships can be strengthened and success can be shared to further indicate the impact that this program creates in our region.

**Target Audiences:**   
Key Partners identified by the SW REAP Board:  
Lending Institutions within the region  
State and federal government offices  
County Commissions  
City Councils  
Economic Development Organizations

Identify specific partners and contact information. **FACILITATOR: DEADLINE**:

1. **Tools Identified (in order of implementation):**
2. ***Marketing Message/Elevator Pitch*** – **FACILITATOR: DEADLINE**:

Create a specific and concise message about who SW REAP is and what they do. Maybe previously developed, but need to share with Board and Key partners to create a unified and knowledgeable message to share when speaking about SW REAP.

1. ***Templates –*FACILITATOR: DEADLINE:**

Press Release: distribution and knowledge of how to use the press release template that is available and identify marketing partners to create a quick reference for distribution.

1. ***Newsletter –* FACILITATOR: DEADLINE:**Bi-Annual newsletter that outlines:  
   Featured Program  
   Success Stories  
   Note From Board Member  
   County Highlight  
   Financial Info – Snapshot  
   CONAC Highlight  
   Recognition  
   Newsletter will also act as a reporting tool for reporting back to county commissions.
2. ***Facebook*** – **FACILITATOR: DEADLINE:**  
   A social media platform could be created as a quick reference for SW REAP activity and drive interested parties to the website. Use a closed Facebook group for members and/or a public Facebook page – easy to maintain but would need someone to be responsible for (a Facebook page but not the group)
3. ***Rack Card*** – **FACILITATOR: DEADLINE:**  
   Specifically developed to deliver the message we want to share with our lending partners.

**Objective #4 – Explore the Options for the Sustainability of REAP (includes both zones and RIB)**

1. Identify Duplication
2. Identify Inefficiencies (audit, meetings, communications, etc.)
   1. Compare Pros and Cons of Alternate Forms of Organization
   2. Explore a “business plan” for REAP that incorporates strategic plan outcomes
3. New Funding Sources
   1. Statewide Economies of Scale – do bigger projects get funded?
   2. Funding from current emphasis areas like Strike Zones, etc.
   3. Explore USDA Foods emphasis for grant projects – community kitchens, grocery supports, etc.
4. Operating supports – identify long term funding for operating costs of administration support such as audit reports, insurance etc.
5. Include zone information or emphasis areas for new USDA RD Multi-jurisdictional Grants in strategic planning documents
6. Gage support for the Developer Station