

# Strategic Plan



## State of Washington PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

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September 19, 2013

TO: Commission Members  
FROM: Andrea McNamara Doyle, Executive Director  
SUBJECT: 2013-15 Strategic Plan – Continued Discussions

### **Agenda Item**

Scheduled for discussion at the September 26, 2013 Commission meeting is a continuation of the strategic planning conversation you began at the retreat in August. Staff has prepared a draft 2013-15 Strategic Plan for your review based on your discussions to date (attached). At the meeting, we will be seeking confirmation that the six new goals adequately capture the strategic goals you would like to see in the new plan. We will also be asking for your direction on the priority action items to include in the plan and to confirm whether the proposed performance measures and targets are acceptable. Based on your feedback, staff anticipates making necessary revisions and bringing you a proposed final draft plan at the October Commission meeting for your approval.

### **Background**

A summary of the facilitated “environmental scan” discussion you had at the retreat is attached for your reference. You may recall this wide-ranging discussion generated many of the ideas that were later suggested for inclusion as either goals or action items in the 2013-15 Strategic Plan.

### **Goals**

The draft plan for 2013-15 proposes to change the overarching strategic goals of the agency, based on your discussions at the August retreat. The new proposed goals are underlined and the prior goals are shown in strikeouts. You may recall there was considerable discussion, but not a clear consensus, about the resource-related goals (Goals 5 & 6) and whether they were more appropriately included as goals or strategies/action items. We have attempted to capture your ideas as best we could, but expect you may have additional guidance to provide.

### **Action Items**

The draft plan includes 24 possible new action items, and six possible holdovers from the 2011-13 plan. The items are listed under the relevant goals and are labeled based on where they originated (as a recommendation from staff, Commission retreat discussions, a combination of staff/Commissioner discussions, or holdover from

previous plan). On page 7 of the draft, you will see listed three items that have been identified that do not neatly fit within any of the currently proposed goals. All three of these would involve a re-examination by the Commission of the substantive legal requirements related to certain reporting obligations (both personal financial affairs and campaign finance). If you would like them included in the 2013-15 Strategic Plan, they could either be incorporated into one or more of the existing goals, or a new goal could be added along the lines of: "Modernize reporting requirements to better balance current filer and disclosure interests."

On page 8 of the draft is a list of eight on-going or incomplete action items from the 2011-13 plan that are not recommended for inclusion in the 2013-15 plan for a variety of reasons. Some of the items are fully underway and will be completed regardless of whether they are listed in the plan (1-2, 4-2, 4-4), some have been subsumed into new goals and action items (1-4, 4-8), and others no longer seem as high of a priority, or as feasible, as they originally did in staff's view (1-1, 1-3, 4-3). Because we did not have time at the retreat for the Commission to specifically discuss possible carry-forward items, you may have other views about which incomplete action items from 2011-13 should be included in the 2013-15 plan.

### ***Performance Measures***

At the end of the draft plan is a list of proposed performance measures and targets for FY 14. You received the FY 13 year-end performance data in advance of the August meeting, but there was not much time to discuss it at the retreat or to consider whether you would like to include new/different performance measures or targets for FY 14. We can continue that discussion as part of the September meeting if you have additional thoughts on the best way to evaluate the effectiveness of strategic plan action items.

Attachments: Draft 2013-15 Strategic Plan (September 2013)  
Summary of Environmental Scan discussion from August retreat



**Public Disclosure Commission**  
40 Years of Shining Light on Washington Politics

**Public Disclosure Commission**  
**2013-15 Strategic Plan**  
**DRAFT September 2013**

**Mission Statement**

The Public Disclosure Commission was created and empowered by Initiative of the People to

- provide timely and meaningful public access to accurate information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates, and
- ensure compliance with and equitable enforcement of Washington's disclosure and campaign finance laws.

**Vision Statement**

We are dedicated to building public confidence in the political process and government.

**Statutory Authority**

The Public Disclosure Commission is created pursuant to RCW 42.17A.100. The Commission's powers and duties are set forth in RCW 42.17A.050, 42.17A.105, 42.17A.110, 42.17A.755 and other provisions of Ch. 42.17A RCW.

## Goals

- ~~1. Identify and implement strategies to make prevention and enforcement efforts more effective; evaluate results.~~  
Increase the effectiveness of educational and prevention efforts.

### COMMISSION RETREAT DISCUSSIONS

- Seek out opportunities to coordinate/collaborate with partners who support PDC's educational efforts to improve compliance with disclosure requirements.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF RETREAT

- Create an online virtual learning center with content for campaigns, lobbyist, and others filers to gain immediate, on-demand access to answers for the most common questions.
- Re-engage with County auditors to provide immediate, automated notification of PDC requirements to candidates upon submission of declarations of candidacy.
- Locate videos in areas of website that are easier for users to find and access.
- Update printed materials (manuals & brochures) to make more inviting and easier to use for all audiences.
- Promote electronic filing even when not required.
- Begin targeted outreach to potential lobbyist employers to let them know of lobbyist filing requirements.

### POSSIBLE HOLDOVER FROM 2011-13 PLAN

- Implement reference manual task force to discuss its use, audience and expansion in order to improve staff's ability to provide timely and consistent guidance based on prior research and advice. Determine new indexes, and grouping schemes.  
Who: Communications and Training Officer, Administrative Officer, General Counsel  
Timeline: April 2013

## **2. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of enforcement efforts.**

### COMMISSION RETREAT DISCUSSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF RETREAT

- Develop and adopt guidance for alternative responses to non-compliance (e.g., technical assistance, warning/advisory letters, notices of correction, etc.) and amend regulations accordingly to allow for their use.
- Create a Compliance and Enforcement Manual.
- Prepare an informational brochure to better inform Complainants, Respondents, and the public about the complaint investigation/enforcement process.

### POSSIBLE HOLDOVER FROM 2011-13 PLAN

- Streamline process for conducting formal investigations and bringing cases to conclusion, including use of subpoena, preparation of Reports of Investigation and Notice of Administrative Charges, preparation of "Minor Action" letters or formal dismissals, and recommendations for enforcement actions.  
Who: Director of Compliance, Executive Director, Senior Assistant Attorney General.  
Timeline: January 2013

~~2. Provide quick and easy public access to information; evaluate results.~~

3. Adapt the Commission's methods of receiving and distributing data to the changing technological environment in which we and our customers operate.

#### COMMISSION RETREAT DISCUSSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF RETREAT

- Overhaul/modernize the agency's website using responsive design to improve usability across a range of mobile platforms.
- Explore options to modernize the signature card process in a way that provides secure verification of filer identities without the need to mail a physical signature card.
- Create online applications and specialized widgets to push data out to the public without users needing to come to our website.
- Create smarter online forms and/or smarter applications and make them available through more platforms.
- Evaluate, through a pro-active stakeholder process, whether the Commission should begin posting on-line some or all information from candidate and annual F-1 forms and, if limited information from F-1s is to be, how to accomplish that in an technologically feasible manner.

#### POSSIBLE HOLDOVER FROM 2011-13 PLAN:

- As resources allow, modify current online filing systems for Lobbyists and Lobbyist Employers to parse L-2 and L-3 detailed information into searchable database.  
Who: Chief Technology Officer, Application Developer, Solutions Developer, Quality Assurance Manager  
Timeline: June 2013

~~3. Promote external communications; evaluate results.~~

4. Expand the size of the audience that is aware of the PDC's mission and that accesses PDC data and information.

#### COMMISSION RETREAT DISCUSSIONS

- Develop partnerships with existing civics education and voter registration efforts to include information about the PDC in relevant activities/curriculum/publications.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF RETREAT

- Create more opportunities for consumers to get information and education about the PDC.
- Expand the agency's use of social media to reach new, younger audiences.

#### POSSIBLE HOLDOVERS FROM 2011-13 PLAN

- Produce public service announcements, op-ed articles, and advertising material, and utilize social networking mediums like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogs, etc. to increase public awareness and use of the PDC's website and data.  
Who: Communications and Training Officer, Chief Technology Officer, General Counsel, Executive Director  
Timeline: February 2012 (Carry forward from 2009-11 Strategic Plan)



~~4. Increase Commission and staff capacity to meet organizational challenges; evaluate results.~~

5. Restore Commission and staff capacity to meet core functions.

COMMISSION RETREAT DISCUSSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF RETREAT

- In the short term, identify staffing and resources needed to restore lost IT, audit, investigative, outreach, policy, and oversight functions.
- Submit a maintenance-level supplemental budget request for currently unfunded IT maintenance expenses (e.g., expired licensing/support agreements).

6. Adopt a long-range plan to achieve a state-of-the art system that meets our customers' evolving expectations.

COMMISSION RETREAT DISCUSSIONS

- Develop a six-year plan for investments in IT infrastructure (hardware and software capital, O&M, and replacement) that will support a robust, user-friendly interface with our filers and the public.
- Develop a forward-looking list of technology projects that recognizes the changes in campaign practices and the ways in which the public seeks and consumes data.

POSSIBLE HOLDOVERS FROM 2011-13 PLAN:

- Secure remote disaster recovery services and seek stable funding for retention of same.  
Who: Commission, Executive Director, Chief Technology Officer.  
Timeline: December 2012 through summer 2013
- Commissioners meet with legislative leaders and policy and fiscal committee members.  
Who: Commission Chair and/or Vice Chair, Executive Director, General Counsel  
Timeline: As warranted.

***Other Action Items Identified for Possible Inclusion in 2013-15 Strategic Plan:***

- Review F-1 requirements to consider changes to laws and rules concerning: reporting thresholds (\$2,000 & \$10,000 thresholds); type and manner of reporting investments (stock values & mutual funds, short-term vs long-term holds, highest value vs snapshot in time); and the nature and extent of reporting business ownership interests.
- Evaluate the feasibility of using a short form for certain local F-1 filers.
- Review mini-reporting rules, procedures, and related outreach in order to reduce the number of campaigns that seek to switch from mini to full reporting (because incorrect or inappropriate reporting option was originally selected) and improve the process for those that do.

***On-going or Incomplete Items Proposed to NOT Carry Forward Into 2013-15 Plan:***

1-1 Review sampling of personal financial affairs statements to gauge overall compliance rate with key reporting provisions. Report results to Commission.

Who: Chief Technology Officer, Compliance Officer, Quality Assurance Manager, Compliance Staff.

Timeline: March 2011 and 2013

1-2 Streamline process for review and triaging of incoming complaints to include initial review, preparation of "Complaint with Minor Action" letter, and initiation of formal investigation.

Who: Director of Compliance, Compliance Officer.

Timeline: August 2012

1-3 Create a document summarizing sections of law that have been enforced by the Commission in order to provide context on how facts of a current case compare to facts in other cases where violations were found.

Who: General Counsel, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Director of Compliance, Executive Director.

Timeline: Ongoing (Initial document scheduled for June 2011)

1-4 Develop a two-year audit plan for campaign, lobbying and personal financial affairs filers.

Who: Executive Director, Director of Compliance, Compliance Officer.

Timeline: September 2012

4-2 Standardize computer drives and Email for all agency employees.

Who: Administrative Officer, Chief Technology Officer, General Counsel, Executive Director

Timeline: December 2012

4-3 Design and provide basic, intermediate, and advanced training for commissioners and staff.

Who: Communications and Training Officer, General Counsel, Executive Director

Timeline: Ongoing

4-4 Research and consider drafting legislative proposals to address emerging case law.

Who: General Counsel, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Executive Director

Timeline: August 2012

4-8 Explore options for obtaining a more stable, dedicated funding source for agency operations than exclusive reliance on state General Fund (GF-S) appropriations. Identify target funding/staffing levels and rationale for each, potential revenue sources, and feasibility of replacing portion of GF-S appropriation with alternative funds.

Who: Executive Director, Commission

Timeline: On-going

### Performance Measures – FY 2014

<b>GOAL 1:</b>			
<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 13 Actual</b>	<b>FY 14 Target</b>	<b>FY Actual</b>
Percentage of candidates, political committees, lobbyists, and public officials who meet statutory filing deadlines.	98.42%	100%	

<b>GOAL 2:</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>FY 13 Actual</b>	<b>FY 14 Target</b>	<b>FY Actual</b>
Percentage of candidates, political committees, lobbyists, and public officials who meet statutory filing deadlines.	98.42%	100%	
Percentage of complaints that are triaged within 2 weeks of receipt ( <i>i.e.</i> , returned, acknowledged for additional info, or opened as formal investigation)	36%	90%	
Percentage of routine investigations completed within 90 days.	n/a	85%	
Percentage of moderately complex investigations completed within six months.	50%	90%	
Percentage of complex investigations completed within 12 months.	33%	90%	

<b>GOAL 3:</b>			
<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 13 Actual</b>	<b>FY 14 Target</b>	<b>FY 14 Actual</b>
Number of paper pages scanned for Internet access	40,943 (19%)	Percentage of report pages processed manually vs. electronically for Internet access (15% / 85%)	
Number of e-filed pages processed for Internet access	180,104 (81%)		
Average number of days from receipt of electronically filed campaign reports to posting on web site	<1	<1	
Average number of days from receipt of paper filed campaign reports to posting on web site	<1	<1	
Percentage of lobbyists filing reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronically</li> <li>• On paper</li> </ul>	65% 35%	70% 30%	
Percentage of lobbyist employers filing reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronically</li> <li>• On paper</li> </ul>	23% 77%	25% 75%	

Percentage of state agencies filing lobbying reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronically</li> <li>• On paper</li> </ul>	40% 60%	Effective Jan 2014, all state agencies are required to file electronically	
Percentage of local agencies file lobbying reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronically</li> <li>• On paper</li> </ul>	23% 77%	30% 70%	

<b>GOAL 4:</b>			
<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 13 Actual</b>	<b>FY 14 Target</b>	<b>FY 14 Actual</b>
Number of unique visitors to PDC website & number of visits	93,228/ 286,310	125,000/ 300,000	
Number of references to PDC website/data appearing in on-line news publications	414	500	
Number of web-users who "like" PDC Facebook page	325	500	

## Environmental Scan – Public Disclosure Commission meeting, 8-22-13

- Technology, and the way people use it, are both evolving rapidly
- Would be great to not just catch-up, but get ahead of trends
- Rise of social media is increasing negativity (e.g. anonymous complaints)
- Legal requirement to disclose personal finances is outside many people's comfort zone, requires a user-friendly approach to potential candidates
- First-time elected officials don't know the rules; more political newcomers need help understanding requirements (what and why)
- We have opportunities to improve how users interact with web site, e.g. organize information so it's easier to find (e.g. interpretations)
- Mobile computing (smart phones, tablets) is exploding, along with apps (e.g. ability to make payments by swiping a card).
  - Next election cycle, expect many more campaigns to be processing payments at events. How to deal with that, given public expectation that the PDC will deal with it?
  - Process of mobile payments: could it make process of filling out C-3's easier?
  - If data is sent to credit card company, and the campaign, why not PDC?
  - More people doing all their work with small devices (iPad, tablet, phone)
  - Accessing the PDC website via small device is a challenge. User-friendly web design would make it easier, more accessible
- Public (and legislature?) assumes PDC has tools to keep up, yet budget cuts mean limited ability to do so.
- Changes in law:
  - Attacks on spending limits
  - Challenges to disclosure at all
  - Nature of litigation has changed.
  - Transparency suggests being aware of changes.
  - Changes in mission from initiatives
- Speed of communication is transforming political campaigns.
  - Past 2 campaigns have seen big changes in how money is raised, spent
  - Commission sees trends, how to communicate to legislature?
  - To succeed in our mission, the PDC must adapt to deliver information faster.
- Public is not aware of the extent of national challenges to public access to information
  - If the public is not aware of challenges, yet supports principles of disclosure and limits, they should be made aware
- What's role of PDC to advocate?
  - Legislature looks to PDC for trends, how to communicate? (= art)

- What about Commissioners' ability to write opinion/editorials?
  - Past Commissioners wrote articles
  - May need guidelines for op/ed messages (e.g. facts, not lobbying)
- Upcoming U.S. Sup. Ct. decision, *McCutcheon*, a spending-limits case, may have bigger impact than *Citizens United*
  - Could provide an education opportunity, why Washington has limits.
- Are we communicating effectively with key audiences?
  - One key audience is legislators. Would be good for individual legislators to know about the issues, especially if there were to be request legislation, since PDC issues are not a topic of common knowledge or awareness
  - For a broader audience, consider outreach about technology changes
  - Local government elected officials are another key group to reach. Consider routinely checking in with organizations whose members are affected (cities, counties, ports, etc.)
  - AWC, WSAC, WACO etc. have annual conferences. Two topics of interest for members might be technology change and how to file with the PDC.
  - AWC, political parties hold "candidate schools" = venue for education
- State budgets have been dwindling, and resources are likely to be constrained. How to cope with flat funding?
  - Prioritize work?
  - Needed technology infrastructure?
  - Capacity challenges?
  - Alternative funding models (e.g. fees, grants, etc)?
- Coalition building:
  - Identify target audience, identify possible solutions, get message out
- Could we build partnerships with groups that employ lobbyists? Partner organizations could help support proposals that would make it easier for their members, e.g.,
  - Commercial firms and organizations employ lobbyists
  - Lobbyists struggle to file
  - Fees that are directly related to improving technology or services (e.g. by making it easier for lobbyists to file) might get support
- Cooperation is important in building partnerships
- Budget issues:
  - Operating
  - Capital (IT) – need specific proposals
  - Capital budget plan: get an idea of where we'd like to be in 2 years, "What's the next thing or two we need", take it to the legislature.
- Need for Civics education being recognized = outreach opportunities, partnerships with other organizations, possible grant funding