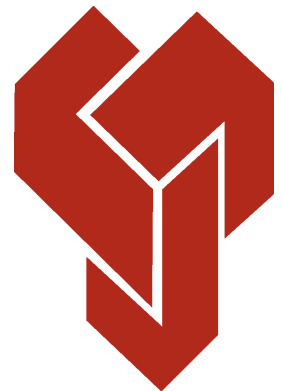


Applied Research Public Finance Initiative MIDAS

PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

Point-of-View Photography Project Community History Research & Design Services

Strategic Plan 2006 - 2011



PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH CENTER
University of Missouri - St. Louis

Strategic Plan 2006-2011

Public Policy Research Center

INTRODUCTION

The University of Missouri-St. Louis Public Policy Research Center (PPRC) undertook a strategic planning process in mid-2006 that included an environmental scan and a full-day workshop with both University and community stakeholders. A core planning team worked with a consultant to develop the strategic planning process and a writing team evaluated the outcomes of the workshop. This report states PPRC's strategic direction for the next five years.

The University of Missouri - St. Louis Action Plan includes priorities for improving the quality of research and enhancing civic engagement. As will be described in this strategic plan, PPRC shall play a significant role in contributing to these two campus priorities in the years covered by the Action Plan.



MISSION STATEMENT

The Public Policy Research Center produces and disseminates methodologically rigorous and unbiased applied analysis and evaluation of public policies and programs and theoretical research on public policy issues.

VISION STATEMENT

The Public Policy Research Center will advance the public research university mission of the University of Missouri-St. Louis by becoming the preeminent applied policy research resource for the civic and public communities of metropolitan St. Louis and the State of Missouri.



STRATEGIC GOALS

1. RESPOND TO THE RESEARCH NEEDS OF CIVIC AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS, PARTICULARLY INTERMEDIARY ORGANIZATIONS, IN METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS.

Current status – PPRC engages civic and public organizations by responding to competitive requests for proposals and to sole-source solicitations.

Five-year goal – PPRC shall emphasize building relationships with intermediary organizations in metropolitan St. Louis.

Measurable outcome – PPRC shall annually work with multiple organizations on sponsored research projects responding to client-driven needs.

2. EXPAND THE GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS FROM METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS TO THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Current status – PPRC has in recent years focused its engagement of civic and public organization in the metropolitan St. Louis area. As the St. Louis campus of the University of Missouri, PPRC has focused its efforts on building relationships with the civic and public sector communities in the metropolitan area.

Five-year goal – PPRC should both respond to opportunities for research and actively work to develop relationships with civic and public sector organizations in the State of Missouri. This goal directly acts on the second goal of the civic engagement priority in UMSL’s Action Plan. That goal states, “Promote opportunities to contribute more to public policy development across the state.”

Measurable outcome – All PPRC Divisions shall develop sponsored research projects with civic and/or public sector organizations in the State of Missouri.



3. SEEK OPPORTUNITIES FOR PPRC-DIRECTED POLICY RESEARCH

Current status – PPRC has developed expertise in a number of subject areas and occasionally has responded to a federal notice of funding availability. These research opportunities have been episodic and not systematic in defining research issues and deliberately seeking funding. PPRC has not received research support from any foundation resources.

Five-year goal – PPRC shall work with the Office of Research Administration to pursue opportunities for federal funding that are appropriate for PPRC’s research agenda and meet campus priorities. PPRC shall pursue foundation and similar sources for research resources that support PPRC’s research agenda.

Measurable outcome – PPRC shall annually secure funding for one PPRC-directed research project.



CORE APPROACHES

Collaboration

PPRC shall pursue active collaboration both internally at the University of Missouri-St. Louis and externally in metropolitan St. Louis.

COLLABORATORS	CHARACTERISTICS
Internal	
Inter-divisional	PPRC's three divisions shall work collaboratively on the development of PPRC research infrastructure, including personnel, technological equipment, software, and databases.
Faculty	PPRC shall actively seek collaboration with faculty through joint appointments, participation as subcontractor on faculty sponsored research projects, opportunities for consultation. This collaboration will include working with other campus research centers such as the Center for Transportation Studies, the Center for the Humanities, the Regional Center for Education and Work, the E. Desmond Lee Technology & Learning Center, and the Center for International Studies, among others.
External	
Community Partners	PPRC shall engage community partners not only through contract research project, but also opportunities for discussion of regional metropolitan issues. In this capacity, PPRC shall serve as convener through conferences, seminars, and workshops.
University Partners	In addition PPRC shall engage St. Louis area Universities in applied research development projects such as the Metropolitan Data Alliance and the St. Louis Metropolitan Research Exchange.

Research

The core work of the Public Policy Research Center is applied policy research. PPRC conducts the majority of this research as sponsored projects. Responding to the need of civic and public organizations in metropolitan St. Louis and the State of Missouri, PPRC enters into contracts that define the scope and timeframe of the research project. These contracts are critical because they expand the rate support PPRC receives from the campus, which allows PPRC to expand its research infrastructure.

PPRC shall expand upon its core applied research mission by working with faculty to in-



corporate theoretical research. While faculty can contribute in many ways to PPRC's applied research projects, PPRC can enhance the work done through those projects, as well as through its own research agenda, but incorporating appropriate research questions, data collection, and dissemination that contribute to theoretical research.

PPRC is most effective in serving both the University of Missouri-St. Louis and the St. Louis civic and public sector community by maintaining a multidisciplinary

PPRC Initiatives

In addition to applied research, PPRC can serve the campus and the community through a number of education and service opportunities. PPRC shall continue to support these initiatives, and to seek external funding sources for their expansion.

Photography Project

Each year PPRC Gallery's Photography Project teaches participants from three volunteer community groups to take high quality photographs of the work they do to make St. Louis a better place to live. A selection of their photographs is shown in Point-of-View exhibitions simultaneously at two locations: the PPRC Gallery on the UMSL campus and in the neighborhoods where the participants live or work.

Community History Research and Design Services (CHRDS)

An outgrowth of the Community Outreach Partnership Center project implemented in the Old North St. Louis neighborhood, CHRDS channels University resources — faculty expertise, student energy — to individuals and groups seeking stronger, richer communities through the practical application of historical research. CHRDS also aims to enhance the educational experience of students at University of Missouri—St. Louis by providing them training through hands-on history projects. The core of the program revolves around collaboration between students and faculty in history, museology, and urban archaeology.



STRATEGIC OPERATIONS

Public Policy Research Center/Public Policy Administration

Public Policy Administration (PPA) incorporates research, service, and teaching missions in the area of public policy. While there have been various forms of contact and cooperation between PPRC and PPA, the full potential for the benefit to the campus and to the community of a strategic partnership has never been explored.

PPRC shall meet regularly with the key personnel in PPA during the 2006 – 2007 academic year to establish full communication of activities in both groups and to develop a strategic direction for collaboration among the project, programs, and publications of PPRC and PPA.

Communications PPRC shall use effective communications to build upon the collaborative relationships it establishes with internal and external partners and to disseminate information from its applied research. These efforts shall include periodical newsletters and organizational publications; annual reviews; media relations; and implementation of the PPRC website as an active and useful public engagement tool.

Advisory Committee The strategic goal of responding to community-directed research and the strategic approach of collaboration can be furthered by renewing the PPRC Advisory Committee. At the strategic planning workshop a number of models were proposed. One model would structure the Committee with members who have the capacity to provide keen insight into PPRC's research mission, identifying research opportunities/gaps, assisting with public engagement issues that are controversial, review and comment on documentation in PPRC research study reports.

The other model would emphasize the linkage to the community. There were two variations on this theme. One would structure the Committee to represent various constituencies and the role of members would be to serve as a linkage to those constituencies. The other would select Committee members for their ability to link PPRC to resources to conduct research projects. Some thought these two roles could be effectively balanced on the Committee.

PPRC shall in 2007 propose to the Provost a revised membership for the Advisory Committee. The Committee shall include approximately 25 members with representation from both the campus and the community. The purpose of the Committee will be to provide PPRC staff strategic analysis of its current and proposed research projects and agenda.



Organizational Efficiency PPRC will consider how to produce the proposed program or service as efficiently as possible and continually use quality improvement principles to our work.

Peer Institutions PPRC is one of many applied research centers serving urban-based public universities.

The strategic planning consultant as part of the environmental scan conducted interviews with the director of four similar research centers at other public universities. The interviews documented that the primary difference between those centers and PPRC are in the areas of scope of activity and engagement with university faculty.

PPRC shall identify a comparison group of five applied research centers that can serve as effective models of both university and community engagement.

Core Competencies

Critical to PPRC’s future success is maintaining and improving its competency in defined areas of operation. PPRC staff met with a University consultant to identify the following core competencies. While PPRC shall not limit its activity or interests to this list, these competencies are the base from which it must build over the next five years.

Communications

Meeting, conference logistics

Publications

- Policy briefs
- PPRC Website
- Research Reports
- St. Louis Metromorphosis book series

Point-of-View Photography Project

Research

Applied Research

- Asset Mapping
- Demographic Analysis
- Needs Assessment
- Policy Analysis

Program Evaluation

- Spatial Analysis
- Survey Research

Database development

Subjective competencies

- Community History
- Culture
- Early Childhood Education
- Education Finance (PreK – 12)
- Housing
- Regional Economy
- State and Local Tax Policy
- Urban Revitalization
- Workforce Development

