

Next Steps in the Strategic Planning Process
Virginia Mennonite Conference
July 2020 through June 2025

Background:

Conference Council authorized the formation of a Strategic Planning Task Force at its March 15-16, 2019 meeting. The mandate of the task force was as follows:

The Strategic Planning Task Force's mandate is to design and implement a strategic planning process with input from all key stakeholders. The strategic planning process will build on VMC's mission and vision, and develop strategic initiatives for the next three to five years.

Task Force members were James Akerson, Deb Horst, Moriah Hurst, Armando Sanchez, and Clyde Kratz, with David Brubaker serving as consultant to the process. (Pearl Hartman and Aldine Musser served on the task force during the spring sabbaticals of both Deb and Moriah.) Members of the task force met with all eight districts in the conference, as well with partner agency heads and business leaders. After coding the input from the listening sessions, the task force presented five themes to delegates at the Winter Delegate Session on February 1, 2020.

Based on additional feedback from delegates and further discernment, the task force drafted a strategic plan and presented it to Conference Council on May 16. With additional comments from Conference Council, members of the task force revised the document and presented a final draft to Conference Council on June 30, 2020.

On July 18, 2020 meeting in a virtual Conference Assembly, the delegates of Virginia Mennonite Conference met in random breakout groups to discuss the Strategic Plan. Following the discussion, delegates voted to receive the Strategic Plan. Districts were given the task of reviewing the Strategic Plan and provide written feedback to the Executive Conference Minister by November 30, 2020. The Executive Conference Minister reviewed the feedback and made some edits based on district feedback. David Brubaker received the feedback, the proposed edits, and validated the edits as being consistent with the district feedback.

Conference Council members received the edited Strategic Plan and briefly reviewed at their December 17, 2020 meeting. At the January 21, 2021 Conference Council meeting, the members affirmed the edits and recommended the Strategic Plan be presented to the delegates of Virginia Mennonite Conference.

Future Timeline:

The proposed Strategic Plan for the next five years is coming to the delegates on February 6, 2021, with a recommendation to the delegates from Conference Council to adopt it.

March to May 2021: VMC Staff and District Ministers develop an Action Plan to implement the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

July 2021 to June 2025: Strategic Plan implemented according to the timeline in the Action Plan, with annual monitoring and an evaluation at the end of the implementation period.

Summary. The delegates of Virginia Mennonite Conference are being invited to take an action to adopt the Strategic Plan. During the virtual Winter Delegate Session on February 6, 2021, there will be opportunity to hold a discussion concerning the Strategic Plan. The primary discussion in breakout groups will focus on the ways in which the Strategy Plan elicits excitement, and an opportunity to discuss ways to imagine living into the plan. The delegates will not be given opportunity to make additions or edit the Strategic Plan, but their action is to adopt it as presented.

While members of Conference Council recognized that our Strategic Plan process occurred during the coronavirus pandemic, there is excitement that our Strategic Plan provides a framework for launching our faith communities into a strategic effort to be the people of God. We anticipate congregational leaders will find ways to implement the Strategic Plan and assist our Conference to fulfill its desires to serve God and our communities in faithful and intentional ways.

Clyde G. Kratz
Executive Conference Minister