

# Strategic Operations Steering Group Charter

## Purpose

The Strategic Operations Steering Group provides a stable infrastructure to launch task forces in support of sustainable business practices, application of technology to improve and advance business operations, work-life integration, and reduction of NEIWPC's environmental impact. The Group provides a mechanism to solicit task force recommendations, select task force projects, provide overall guidance to the task forces, and ensure task forces complete projects.

## Context

The Strategic Operations Steering Group evolved from the Sustainability Committee and the Digital Strategy Committee. The most recent iteration of the Sustainability Committee began work in 2014. The committee's objectives were to investigate NEIWPC's day-to-day work and determine how the organization can reduce its environmental impact. Issues investigated by the group included water conservation, energy conservation and emissions reductions, recycling, reusable products, and green purchasing, vendors, buildings, and meetings. Launched in 2016, the Digital Strategy Committee's objective was to develop a digital strategy for NEIWPC centered on improved digital engagement, increased digital efficiency, and improved ability to understand and make organizational decisions around technology.

Following multiple staffing changes and organizational fatigue within the two committees, the committees were placed on hiatus in 2016. Newly designated committee chairs reviewed the Sustainability and Digital Strategy Committee charters, conducted staff surveys and interviews, and researched committee and task force best practices and trends. The review revealed multiple overlapping committee objectives, staff's uncertainty of committee priorities, and an interest in meaningful engagement through bite-sized tasks to address specific projects or issues. The research into committee and task force best practices and trends confirmed our findings from the charter review and staff feedback. As a result, the chairs recommended a Strategic Operations Steering Group, combining the efforts of the individual committees and the deployment of task-based groups to address specific projects (issues, events, etc.) via the Steering Group.

## Responsibilities

The Steering Group is responsible for selecting and approving task force topics. Members of the Steering Group, senior management, and all NEIWPC employees may introduce task force topics to the Steering Group for their consideration. The Steering Group will approve no more than three task forces per quarter. Approval of task forces by majority vote of the Steering Group members. Leadership of and membership on each task force is not limited to members of the Steering Group. Task force leads encouraged to solicit members for their respective task forces from all NEIWPC employees, both internal and external to the Lowell headquarters.

The Steering Group is also responsible for monitoring the progress of task forces, ensuring task forces bring their projects to completion and submit final reports.

## Objectives

1. Provide a formal mechanism to launch task forces to address specific projects related to sustainable business practices, application of technology to improve and advance business operations, work-life integration, and reduction of NEIWPCC's environmental impact.
2. Provide overall guidance to the task forces and ensure task forces complete projects.

## Deliverables

1. Conduct four meetings per year, once per quarter. Recommend meetings held at the beginning of each quarter.
2. Solicit ideas for task forces, review proposed task forces, and approve no more than three task forces per quarter.
3. Monitor progress of approved task forces, ensure project completion, and submission of final reports by each task force.
4. Communicate status of task forces to Steering Group, senior management, and all NEIWPCC employees on a routine basis.

## Members

Recommend 5-7 total members, including the co-chairs. Chairs and members

Cambria Happ, Business Operations – Co-chair

Drew Youngs, Wastewater & Onsite – Co-chair

Name and Affiliation – Member

Name and Affiliation – Member

Name and Affiliation – Member

Prior to October 1 of each year, the Group will issue an open call for employees interested in serving as a co-chair or member. The co-chairs and members will be confirmed on October 1 of each year. Service on the Steering Group is on a volunteer basis.

## Meeting Times and Locations

Once per quarter, meetings generally scheduled the first week of the new quarter.

If using teleconference line, include phone number and participant codes.

Meetings will be conducted in two sections:

1. Open: In addition to the Steering Group chairs and members, members of approved task forces and interested NEIWPCC employees may attend the open section of the meeting. During this section, task force proposals will be presented the Steering Group. Previously approved task forces will provide a brief update on their progress. Finally, the Steering Group will report out on task forces who have completed their work, submitted final reports, and are now dissolved.
2. Closed: Attendance restricted to the Steering Group chairs and members. During this section of the meeting, the Steering Group will deliberate and select approved task forces. The Group may also discuss the status of previously approved task forces.

## Communication Channels

- Distribute proposed charter and solicit participation from current members of the Sustainability Committee, the Digital Strategy Committee, and NEIWPC employees.
- Announce approved task forces, task force progress, and the completion and dissolution of task forces in Steering Group meetings, senior staff meetings, within other relevant team meetings, and via the Current Connections newsletter.
- Create a folder on the COMMON drive within [Folder Location TBD] for agenda, notes, and additional information.

## Agendas and Notes

- Solicit agenda items from Steering Group members 7 days before meeting.
- Prepare agenda and distribute no less than 24 hours before meeting.
- Post meeting notes and agendas to the COMMON drive at [Folder Location TBD].

# Task Force Charter Template

## Status

Each task force charter will have a status box like this one, at the top of its page, **at all times**. The status can be "forming," "active," "finishing," or "completed". Completed task forces will be archived in the Task Force Archive.

## Final Report

Provide a link to the task force's final report once complete. Do not include this section until task force work completed.

*Example:*

*Final report of the task force is available on the COMMON drive: Bike to Work Day 2017 Final Report (hyperlink).*

## Purpose or Context

Provide a brief description of why the Task Force is being proposed. Include sufficient background information to allow the reader to understand how the work fits into the purpose and context of the Strategic Operations Steering Group. Only 2-3 bullet points or sentences are necessary.

*Example:*

*In 2017, National Bike to Work Day is on Friday, May 19. As an environmental organization, NEIWPC is committed to supporting healthy, sustainable, and economic transportation options. Promoting and participating in this event reconfirms our efforts to reduce NEIWPC's carbon footprint and to support our employees in their efforts to reduce individual carbon footprints.*

## Objectives

Provide a bulleted list of the Task Force objectives.

*Example:*

- 1. Educate and inform NEIWPC employees on Bike Month and Bike to Work Day.*
- 2. Celebrate NEIWPC employees who bike to work on Bike to Work Day.*

## Deliverables

Provide a bulleted list of deliverables.

*Example:*

*The goals is to inform and educate about and celebrate Bike Month and Bike to Work Day.*

- 1. Secure proclamation from the City of Lowell's mayor naming May 2017 Bike Month.*

2. *Write brief article on Bike Month and Bike to Work Day for May issue of Current Connections newsletter.*
3. *Organize potluck breakfast on May 19, 2017 in celebration of Bike to Work Day.*

## Suggested schedule

Action	Estimated Time	Deadline
Develop charter	1.5 weeks	YYYY-MM-DD
Solicit members and schedule first meeting	1 week	YYYY-MM-DD
Develop action items, assign to team members	2 weeks	YYYY-MM-DD
Accomplish deliverables, preliminary review	3 weeks	YYYY-MM-DD
Revise deliverables, final review	2 weeks	YYYY-MM-DD
Close out task force, issue final report	2 weeks	YYYY-MM-DD

Task forces are strongly advised to complete their work and publish a final report within six months of approval. Once the task force work is complete and a final report is published, the task force will dissolve.

## Members

Recommend 3-5 members.

Name and Affiliation - task force lead

Name and Affiliation - member

Name and Affiliation – member

All NEIWPC employees may propose a task force, lead a task force, or serve on a task force. However, employees should speak with their direct supervisor about their ability to take on additional responsibilities related to a task force. Employees must also comply with all NEIWPC policies when participating in a task force.

Task forces are an opportunity for employees to take on leadership roles, to learn new skills, and to interact with co-workers in a new setting.

Service as a task force lead or a task force member is on a volunteer basis. Coworkers, supervisors, and senior managers may make recommendations for service, however participation is on a volunteer basis.

When forming a task force, the task force lead should consider the number of members required to address the task force deliverables and timeline, as well as the technical skills and institutional knowledge required to complete the task force deliverables.

To propose a task force, a task force lead and members must be identified. Submissions without a team assembled will not be reviewed by the Strategic Operations Steering Group. Individuals with

task force proposal ideas who are not able to serve as the lead or a member are encouraged to circulate their idea to generate interest surrounding the proposal and to assemble a team to bring the proposal forward.

## Meeting Times and Locations

TBD

If using teleconference line, include phone number and participant codes.

## Communication Channels

- Distribute proposed charter and solicit participation from NEIWPCC employees via appropriate mailing list.
- Following approval of the new task force by the Strategic Operations Steering Group, announce task force creation and progress within relevant team meetings and communication channels.
- Create a shared workspace for agenda, notes, and additional information.
- Communicate status of task force to Steering Group during quarterly Steering Group meetings, submit final report to Steering Group.

## Agendas and Notes

- Solicit agenda items from task force members 3 days before meeting.
- Prepare agenda and distribute no less than 24 hours before meeting.
- Post meeting notes and agendas to the shared workspace.

## Guidelines and Notes

- Once a task force is dissolved, its work will cease and its membership will disband. Should a similar initiative, event, or issue come forth, a new task force proposal should be presented to the Strategic Operations Steering Group for review and consideration.
- Task forces are temporary groups assembled to address a specific task or mission.
- A task force not approved one quarter may be brought forward again in a future quarter for consideration and decision.
- The Strategic Operations Steering Group is not required to approve a minimum number of task forces each quarter.
- The task force will decide amongst themselves how best to organize their work and how to communicate, so long as they comply with all NEIWPCC policies.

# Task Force Charter—NEIWPC Online Forums

**Status:** Forming

## Final Report

*To be completed*

## Purpose

Many of NEIWPC's programs are designed to exchange information and ideas among decision-makers, academic institutions, the private sector, and other groups. The internet provides a great opportunity for sharing high volumes of information in a timely manner. Creating a sample online forum and providing instructions for forum development will provide another tool for NEIWPC's program staff to collaborate with partners and promote their work online.

## Objectives

1. Educate staff on how an online forum can forward their work
2. Research current market for affordable, easy-to-use online forums
3. Solicit feedback from staff on which forum option is best for NEIWPC staff/programs
4. Select preferred forum format (e.g. fb, LinkedIn, Google,) and provide tools for staff to use in creating forums for their programs

## Deliverables

1. Internal training to discuss: benefits of online forums, how to develop a forum, and sample forum walk-through
2. Create a sample online forum for staff to use as a template
3. Package set of instructions for forum development. Store in accessible location with hyperlink to sample forum

## Suggested schedule

Action	Estimated Time	Deadline
Develop charter	1 week	YYYY-MM-DD
Solicit members and schedule first meeting	1 week	YYYY-MM-DD

Develop action items, assign to team members	1 week	YYYY-MM-DD
Accomplish deliverables, preliminary review	5 weeks	YYYY-MM-DD
Revise deliverables, final review	3 weeks	YYYY-MM-DD
Close out task force, issue final report	1 week	YYYY-MM-DD

## Members

Recommend 4 members.

Task Force Lead: Harry Styles, Lowell

Liam Payne, NBEP

Niall Horan, LCBP

Louis Tomlinson, Lowell

## Meeting Times and Locations

Harry has booked the Small Conference Room twice a month for the quarter. Will schedule additional meetings as necessary.

## Communication Channels

Harry will:

- Distribute proposed charter and solicit participation from NEIWPCCC via appropriate mailing list.
- Following approval of the new task force by the Strategic Operations Steering Group, announce task force creation and progress within relevant team meetings.
- Create a shared workspace for agenda, notes, and additional information.
- Communicate status of task force to Steering Group during quarterly Steering Group meetings, submit final report to Steering Group.

## Agendas and Notes

Harry will:

- Task
- Solicit agenda items from task force members 3 days before meeting.
- Prepare agenda and distribute no less than 24 hours before meeting.
- Post meeting notes and agendas to the shared workspace.



# Strategic Operations Steering Group (SOSG)

## Task Force (TF) Proposal Submission and Approval Process

