

Strategic Planning / Future of the WSC

Session Goals:

- Update on Strategic Planning Process
- Update on the Future of the WSC
- Understanding about changes to the conference cycle from the 2023 WSC and Interim WSC 2025

Session Materials:

- Vision Statement
- Strategic Planning handout

Introduction

5 minutes

This session we hope to cover the current Strategic Planning Process and where we are at. We will also spend some time talking about the Future of the WSC by looking at where we have been and where we are now, including changes that impacted the conference cycle during the last in-person WSC and the interim WSC.

Strategic Planning

25 minutes

Slide: 2004 Strategic Plan in the CAT – image pg 14?

World Services has been engaged in strategic planning processes for more than 20 years. Each cycle, the World Board has presented the strategic plans to the conference and gathered information that would help carry out the Vision of NA Service based on the needs of NA as a whole.

Slide: Strategic Planning Process (circle diagram) - Why plan?

Although we all try to live “Just For Today,” we all do some level of planning in our day-to-day. Whether in our personal lives or for our jobs, many of us are making plans for our future—perhaps life or career goals, vacations, retirement, or simply which conventions or service symposiums to attend. While some of this planning is basic or routine (paying bills or planning a trip), much of what we plan for our future can be viewed as strategic, meaning that we consider the internal and external factors that impact the vision of our goal for the future. For instance, if we want to buy a house or a car, we might consider our personal needs (internal) and then look at current market conditions and options (external) before we decide how to proceed.

The idea of planning can be off-putting for addicts. We can mistake it for projecting or trying to control. In reality, planning allows us to live in the present while we prepare for what is to come. Planning allows us to proceed step by step, and to check our direction and our progress. *(February 2025 planning report)*

Strategic planning is a process by which we can identify and respond to the changes that will impact our success in achieving our vision. This planning process provides us a roadmap for achieving long-term goals.

It is one of our hopes that by expanding to a more collaborative planning process we create more opportunity to build toward consensus about the factors that affect NA and the work we want to do to continue to grow. Which could in turn improve our decision-making process and how we use our resources.

Slide: A Vision for NA Service

[Have someone read the Vision statement.]

Slide: Parts of the plan (2026-2029 Strategic Plan Diagram)

Key Result Areas (KRAs) are major areas that require change in order to realize a Vision for NA Service. These four KRAs were identified based on conference participants' assessment of external and internal factors. They are the four pillars of the plan we build together and will change very little, if at all, from cycle to cycle.

The identified Key Result Areas are Public Relations, Service System Support, Fellowship Support, and World Service Structure and Operations.

Issues are the factors that conference participants collectively decided are most important to address this cycle. These internal and external factors were identified through a process of discussion and prioritization in sessions at the 2023 WSC. Following the WSC, the list was further honed via online survey.

Objectives are results—*what* we want to achieve by the end of the planning cycle, as opposed to *how*. They give us a goal to aim for and help us develop solutions that make sense in our current circumstances.

Solutions are a path to achieving our objectives—*how* we intend to reach our goals. Solutions have not been drafted yet; they will be part of the next steps. The August CP Webinar will be dedicated to reviewing solutions for each of the Objectives.

Slide: Issues

For the 2026-2029 Strategic Plan the issues are:

- Public Relations (KRA)
 - Credibility of NA
- Service System Support (KRA)
 - Safety and Belonging
 - Impact of the Rise of Virtual NA
 - Lack of Cohesion in the Service System
 - Development and Organization of Trusted Servants
 - Disruption in the Flow of Funds
- Fellowship Support (KRA)
 - Harm Reduction
 - Generation and Cultural Differences
- World Service Structure and Operations (KRA)
 - Three-year Conference Cycle

- Future of the World Convention
- NAWS Sustainability

Slide: Objectives (4 slides for showing the objectives)

These objectives sprang from the Zonal planning sessions held in the first part of 2024. The World Board drafted these objectives as a result of those sessions and the information that was collected. At the Interim WSC, conference participants spent the second day in small groups reviewing these draft objectives and offering their insight on whether these objectives needed any adjustments. And again, with the information collected from those small group sessions, the World Board made changes to the objectives based on the input. It is possible that these objectives may change again, as we move forward with the next phase, Solutions, and prepare for the 2026 CAR. This is our (all conference participants) best thinking so far.

Slide: Roadmap

Based on the roadmap, we are now entering Part 6. After the World Board refines the objectives, we will begin looking at the solutions. As we mentioned earlier, the solutions are the *how* and will likely be more concrete in terms of specific actions for project plans during the next cycle. Many solutions were suggested at both the zonal workshops and the interim WSC. That will give us all a good starting place.

Slide: Questions

[take a few minutes to answer any questions about the planning process]

Future of the WSC – Brief History

5 minutes

Slide: WSC History

How we got here, can be just as important as where we are. Change at the WSC is a very slow process and can sometimes take decades. One member once said that the decisions we make today at the WSC will likely impact the Fellowship for the decades that follow.

The first World Convention was held at La Mirada Country Club (Los Angeles) in November of 1971. The invitation sent out by the Board of Trustees said, “in addition to an official business meeting for delegates from all NA Groups, we will have speaker and participation meetings, general discussion sessions...” This was our first effort to hear the voice of the Fellowship. The first several World Conventions had a business meeting or “General Service Conference” attached to the celebratory event. During the 1976 World Convention in Ventura, CA, the first official meeting of the “World” Service Conference took place. This was the beginning of a true World Service Conference, with 14 states and 2 countries reflecting the growth of our Fellowship. We would adopt the NA Tree, and the WSC would become the point of decision-making for our self-guided Fellowship. The agenda also included a “Planning Session” which would cover any new business. In 1978 the WSC was held in Van Nuys in April and the World Convention was being planned in Houston, Texas later that year, creating the official separation of the two events.

The WSC met annually from 1976 to 2000; while there were attempts to change the frequency, annually seemed to work best. From 1984 to 1996 we would operate under the “Temporary” Working Guide to our Service Structure. The late 90s would bring about significant changes to the structure of World Services. Several motions were adopted to bring us closer to where we are today. The unification of the World Board from the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees; no longer having standing committees; changing the frequency of the WSC from annual to biennial; world service funding of delegates; and separating out items for decision-making from the Conference Agenda Report to create the Conference Approval Track, and on a related note, creating the distinction between Fellowship-approved and Conference-approved materials. These motions also led to the desire for a more “discussion” based WSC.

Large Group Discussion

5-10 minutes

What experience do you have at the WSC that is different than how we do things today?

- Some Examples
 - Standing Votes vs. clickers
 - Old Business Discussion/Decision Making vs. CAR/CAT Discussions and Decisions
 - New Business Motions
 - Alternates not being able to speak unless Delegate was not on the floor
 - Amendments due at the WSC vs. in advance
 - Initial Straw Poll timing

[take responses from the attendees, surely someone has attended more than one conference]

And these are all changes with business processes. Prior to 2002, there weren’t even round table discussion sessions at the conference. The whole week was taken up with presentations and business.

Future of the WSC – Continued

30 minutes

Slide: Seating

In the early 1990s, the WSC had about 60 seated regions. By 2008, there were just over 100 seated, nearly doubling the size of the conference. From 2008 to 2014 there was a moratorium on seating new regions resulting from a split, which was thought to help slow the growth of the WSC. The conference had grown substantially, and trying to navigate the size of the conference and the growth of our Fellowship along with this new idea of being “discussion based” was complex. While the moratorium did stop the seating of new regions from inside the United States, many more regions were seated from around the world. Today the conference has 128 seated regions and 6 zones. While still somewhat disproportionate to our Fellowship as a whole, for the first time in our history the number of seated regions outside the United States is greater than the number of regions in the US. It

is important to note that roughly 1/3 of the Fellowship is in the United States, 1/3 is Iran, and 1/3 is the rest of the world.

Slide: Zonal Delegates

At the 2016 WSC, a motion was adopted to allow for a delegate from a Zonal Forum to be seated as a non-voting participant. In 2018, several motions were presented and supported to allow seating of Zonal Delegates from Zones that have 2 or more member regions or communities that are not seated at the WSC. This was the motivation in 2023, to pass motions to change the FIPT to include Zonal Delegates.

Slide: Previous Workgroups

The Service System Project was formed as a result of motions at the 2006 WSC. One of the results of this project was the unanimous approval of A Vision for NA Service in 2010. The Service System Project attempted to revitalize the way our structure works, with a portion of the recommendations being project-based service, annual planning sessions on a local level, and geographic boundaries for service bodies. Ultimately the work of this project was placed as an addendum in *A Guide to Local Service*.

Planning Our Future was the name of the 2014–2016 project created to “to continue to evolve the ideas about the future of the WSC generated at WSC 2014.” The following cycle, 2016–2018, the Future of the WSC Project was created to discuss the effectiveness and sustainability of the Conference, and the size and shape of the WSC.

At the 2014 & 2016 WSCs, participants had a series of sessions in breakout rooms about the future of the WSC and how to best meet the needs of an ever-growing Fellowship. In each of these rooms, much of the discussion highlighted the possibility that the way forward rests, in part, with our use of zones.

The 2018 WSC approved the WSC of the Future project. Some of the results of that project included the Virtual Meeting of Zones, input to the Role of Zones project plan, new Zonal reports (resulting in the Zonal Snapshots) and ongoing discussions on what is an effective and sustainable WSC.

Slide: Future of the WSC

During the 2020-23 cycle, the World Board functioned as the workgroup for the Future of the WSC project, and made recommendations that included trying a three-year cycle on a trial for two cycles, an interim virtual WSC, posting the CAR 30 days sooner, making CP funding opt-in rather than opt-out, and forming a workgroup for the following cycle with zonally selected members.

Slide: 3-Year Cycle trial

With those recommendations from the board, the 2023 WSC passed a motion to intentionally try a 3-year conference cycle for 2 cycles through 2029. This came with the decision to post the CAR 30 days sooner, now 6 months prior to the WSC. Opt-in funding for conference participants was also adopted.

Slide: Interim WSC

Following the recommendation of trying a 3-year cycle, the WSC adopted a motion to hold a virtual interim WSC. The idea was that the Interim WSC would be used for making decisions that were legally necessary and decisions that conference participants chose to address. While, the purpose of the Interim WSC is still taking shape as we continue to pave the path for the 3-year cycle and planning process; we do see that it has benefit in the steps to collaborating on the strategic plan, while also using some of the time to make legally necessary decisions and those decisions that change processes at the WSC. The first intentional Interim WSC was held just a couple of months ago. As mentioned earlier, it included a day dedicated to small group discussions on the objectives in the strategic plan. The WSC also adopted several decisions including approving a one-year budget, extending the reimbursement policy for the cycle, and many motions that had to do with process and decision-making. Of those adopted decisions:

- Motion 1 approved how discussion was handled on items that had consensus in an initial straw poll.
- Motion 5 adopted a new process to create the CAR survey and consider project ideas.
- Motions 6 & 7 changed the timeframe for amendments to have earlier deadlines.
- Motion 8 refined the language defining amendments in *GWSNA*.
- Motion 9 clarified who can offer amendments in discussion.
- Motions 10 & 11 were from the Human Resource Panel and focused on accepting candidates only through the RBZ process and repurposing the world pool.
- Motion 12 allowed for there to not be a seating workgroup this cycle.

Motions 6 through 11 would have been business handled at the WSC 2023 in the Moving Forward session; however, time constraints prevented this, so they were presented in the interim WSC. Motions 1 and 5 both grew out of the collaborative discussions held since WSC 2023 with conference participants and the current Future of the WSC workgroup.

Slide: CAR Survey Timeline

Since 2016, the CAR Survey has been part of the process used to help conference participants prioritize ideas for project plans for new and revised recovery literature, service material and issue discussion topics. Motion 5 approved a revision to this process. In short, the CAR Survey ideas will begin with a clean slate. Currently there is a form posted on na.org/conference to submit ideas for the CAR Survey. Ideas for the CAR Survey can come from a member, group, or service body and from CPs. Conference participants have been encouraged to submit any of the ideas from the previous CAR surveys that they would like to see carried forward. The motion also asked regions and zones to refrain from

submitting motions to create project plans for new or revised recovery literature or service material and instead submit their ideas to be included on the survey. The deadline to submit ideas is 20 May 2025. After all the ideas are sorted, the next steps will be for the CPs to review the total list of submissions and refine the list through prioritization, probably via survey. Then the *CAR Survey* will be posted at the same time as the *Conference Agenda Report* and any member can complete the survey.

Slide: Current Project Plan Process

You can also review the current project process and status. This document gives some background on past motions for project plans and helps everyone understand how some of the process for project plans works. You can find it under planning on na.org/conference.

Slide: New Timeline graphic

After all of that information, here we are—this is the timeline for the current conference cycle. You can find this in *A Guide to World Services in NA*, which is posted on the Conference page. As you can see, there is much to keep track of and lots happening. For current conference participants, almost all these dates affect them. They have reports and deadlines to read and track, webinars to attend, and this helps give them an expectation of when to be ready for all the items coming their way leading into the 2026 World Service Conference.

Slide: Questions

[take a few minutes to answer any questions]

Slide: Closing

Thank everyone for attending.