

Preliminary Results of the Strategic Plan for the Osage Nation

In the tables that follow the six major planning areas, their respective themes with examples and the number times mentioned and the percent are presented. **Total times mentioned and the percentages should be looked at as a preliminary approximate indication of how much interest was generated for a particular theme relative to other themes within each area. Comparing percentages in one theme to another in the same area is appropriate, while comparing across areas is not and will be misleading.** These results should also be seen as the first step in research toward a more thorough and accurate understanding of what the Osage people want. Even though they are very important and much can be learned from them they cannot be taken as representing the views of the majority of Osage people. Further research is planned by Paradox to further this aim and is described in the Conclusion and Future Research portion of the Qualitative Analysis section.

Table 1

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Themes and Examples	Time - % Mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism & Travel Related Enterprises This category includes A1 hotels, restaurants, resorts, develop lakes for tourism, golf courses, outdoor recreation, guided tours of reservation historic sites, convention center, more cultural activities for outsiders, parks, art colony, festivals, concerts, recitals, upgrade Whitehair Memorial, etc. 	119 (30%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal & Individual Small Business This category includes starting or helping to finance small businesses like bowling ally, marina and bait stands, putt-putt golf, office supply stores, gas stations, gift shops, car dealership, grocery clothing and hardware stores, etc. It also includes having programs available to help get small businesses started. 	76 (19%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banks, Financial Institutions & Investment This category includes starting a tribal bank, credit union, investment groups, tribal IRA & retirement accounts, and other financial products. 	55 (14%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure (Transportation, Telecommunications, Beautification) This category includes public transportation, wireless communication reservation wide, cell towers, well maintained public buildings, parks, dance grounds, beautification of communities, etc.) 	43 (11%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create more jobs • This category includes attracting industry that can employ Osages, pay wages comparable to other industries and governments, etc. 	21 (6%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaming, Gaming Expansion & Enhancement This category includes bigger and more attractive local casinos, more Las Vegas style, a lottery, floating casino, etc. 	13 (3%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous (Mentioned Fewer Than 2 Times) This category includes green industry/recycling, service corps of retired executives and professionals, corporate style benchmarking, hiring professional analyst for feasibility studies, encourage degrees in business, marketing research, buy TV station, sell tribal stocks and bonds, hospitality training, rainy day fund from gaming dollars, etc.) 	68 (17%)

For economic development, in Table 1 above, it is clear that the most responses were in the category of travel and tourism. Osage citizens on the reservation as well as off reservation responded to these questions with much interest. A place to stay during the dances was mentioned many times, as were places to eat, tours of the area, beautification of our small towns and villages, and providing amenities through tourism related business. A welcome center for Osages was one of the interesting ideas, with information about local attractions available.

Particularly highly rated by Pawhuska, Hominy and Fairfax citizens was the area of small business. Aid in starting businesses, support for business and attracting small businesses were all mentioned.

Many were interested in having the tribe start a bank or a credit union. Other financial services were mentioned, such as having a tribal IRA, developing our own stocks and bonds, and helping with low interest loans.

The importance of developing our infrastructure included improving transportation systems. These ideas ranged from a toll road through the reservation to stopping the Tulsa to Wichita highway, having an airport, and having railroad transportation.

Gaming mentions were mostly in the area of improving or upgrading existing casinos.

The miscellaneous category includes items mentioned only once or twice. Some of these included hiring a professional analyst for feasibility studies, encouraging degrees in business related areas, have a business development council for the aerospace industry, and developing an Osage business directory.

Citizens see the tribe as having many business competitive advantages, including our location near Tulsa with access to its riverport and airport, our reservation status, the low cost of living and doing business in the Osage, and the untapped tourism possibilities.

Table 2

EDUCATION	
Themes and Examples	Time - % Mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better Schools (Existing) This category includes setting education goals, having more Osages on school boards, providing money to public schools on reservation, ACT preparation, distance learning for advanced placement classes, more help with pre-school and headstart, support local career tech schools, GED classes, mentoring programs, improve quality of schools, teach trades in school, more college prep, etc. 	41 (22%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarships This category includes establishing working relations with college grant and financial aid offices, fully funded scholarships that are not need based, workstudy, paid tribal internships and externships, scholarships for on and off reservation students, full ride scholarships for those pursuing degrees that the tribe needs, more support for higher education, tuition help for out of state colleges, loans for those willing to come back and work for tribe, etc. 	39 (21%)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal College This category includes developing a University of Phoenix type college, having a virtual tribal college using multi-media, having a fully accredited Osage college/university, create junior college, build trade school, and extension classes from OSU and OU, etc. 	11 (6%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Teachers This category includes that teachers should be role models, we should recruit and hire high quality teachers, reward teachers for quality with money, provide housing for good teachers, provide teachers with in-service training to insure cultural competency, form association for teachers on reservation sponsored by tribe, develop more Osage teachers etc. 	11 (6%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal K-12 Schools This category includes starting a tribal K-12 school, local/tribal charter school, Osage prep. School, 	6 (3%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous (Mentioned fewer than 2 times) This category includes providing more educational opportunities, many mentions of specific college majors that should be pursued, research facilities, summer education programs for youth, get Osage and Indian history required in public schools, more science courses, better athletic programs in public schools, mentor youth, write our own history for use in public schools, parents insure youth are getting the education they need, teach healthy living in schools, doctoral program funded by tribe, education in gaming management, life skills training, internet in schools, vouchers, traveling Osage teacher corps, improve communication to educate, make schools welcoming, partner with school boards, arts in schools, etc. 	77 (42%)

In Table 2 above within the area of education, the most comments were about improving existing schools. Ideas were varied, with citizens commenting that we need to encourage youth in the educational arena in a multitude of ways. Improving education from pre-school through doctoral degrees was mentioned. Having the tribe provide financial support to schools, having more Osages on school boards, and having an Osage on the Oklahoma State School Board were other ideas presented.

Another area of interest was scholarships. Working with universities and collaborating with them to help provide more funding was an idea. Having scholarships more readily available to all and not requiring scholarships to be need-based was important to several citizens. Others wanted better teachers including having more Osages as teachers and encouraging more to be teachers, also encouraging current teachers to be better role models.

Having a tribal college was mentioned. Ideas included using the model of the University Learning Center in Ponca City, using the University of Phoenix model, and using multi-media. Others suggested having a trade school or a career tech school.

The miscellaneous category for education is very large as people had many ideas about ways to improve education. One idea was to write our own Osage history for usage in the public schools. It was also large due to long lists of college majors deemed important for the Nation's future.

Table 3

HEALTH	
Themes and Examples	Time - % Mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellness This category includes encouraging exercise and good nutrition, education on mental health and drug abuse, early education on diabetes prevention, weight loss programs for youth, youth counseling, healthy living promotion on and off reservation, health education in the home, birth control education, parenting skills classes, wellness centers in all communities staffed at all times, training for elderly independent living, alcohol abuse prevention, recreation and exercise programs and facilities, sex education, handicap accessible buildings, screening for all types of cancer, swimming pools, subsidize health club memberships, well baby and immunization services, transportation for health care and promotion activities, heart screening, diabetic screening, walking trails and sidewalks, youth groups, childcare, respite care, day care for elderly, visiting nurses in schools, activities for seniors, etc. 	84 (22%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Population Focus This category includes special groups such as infants, elderly, children, etc. More support for well baby clinics, prenatal classes, childhood immunizations, more health services for elders, well women clinics, health and rehab services for disabled, etc. 	51 (14%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific Disease Focus This category includes mentions of services for specific diseases. Diabetic screening, education and treatment; screening for all types of cancer, screening for cardiovascular problems, dialysis on reservation, provide access to more medical specialties, services for dental, vision and hearing services, etc. 	42 (11%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted Living-Nursing Home This category is about providing long term nursing care, assisted living centers on reservation, help with assisted living on/off reservation, nursing home with qualified staff, continuum of long term care for elders and disabled, etc. 	27 (8%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health (Mental Health & Substance Abuse) This category includes providing better quality mental health and drug treatment services on reservation, state of art residential drug rehabilitation, support for mental health and drug treatment off reservation, screening for and treatment of depression, special services for youth, abuse victims and elders, etc. 	25 (7%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Medical Insurance This category includes tribal self-insurance to cover on and off reservation, insurance to include dental care, group health type insurance plan, long term health care insurance, affordable comprehensive health insurance, etc. 	25 (7%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinics This category includes building or improving health clinics in all three reservation communities, and having a new clinic in Pawhuska, etc. 	16 (4%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitals This category includes all mentions of a reservation based hospital with comprehensive services. 	12 (3%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplemental Health Insurance This category includes having the tribe provide low cost supplemental health insurance, provide Medicare supplemental insurance, provide dental insurance, etc. 	12 (3%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prescription Drugs This category includes having the tribe provide no or low cost prescription 	5 (1%)

drugs, assistance to pay for high priced prescription drugs, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous (Mentioned 3 or fewer times) This category includes support traditional Osage healing, provide alternative medicine like herbs and natural medicines, provide free regular medical check ups, educate medical providers on Osage culture, train medical staff to be friendlier, encourage better attitudes in clinic, provide medical field scholarships to Osage youth who will come back and work, art therapy and music therapy, health research institute, ambulance service, tribal hospice, streamlined referral system for Pawhuska clinic, etc. 	75 (20%)

As a hopeful sign for the future, Osage citizens’ ideas within the health arena were most focused on wellness activities. In Table 3 above it can be seen that these ideas ranged from low cost solutions to wellness like walking trails in communities, to having wellness facilities available to all. Outside of the reservation, citizens wanted help with access to wellness facilities.

Prevention of alcohol problems, drug problems, obesity, and diabetes were seen as important. Providing education on healthy living, parenting, nutrition and other health education and wellness were ideas mentioned repeatedly. Screening for various illnesses was also seen as important.

The next most important category in health was in the area of providing services to specific groups: infants, children, women, and elderly. Health care services for specific diseases including diabetes, cardiovascular, and Alzheimer’s was the next most commonly communicated interest. Help with dental, vision and hearing services were also included.

Developing nursing homes or assisted living centers were each mentioned several times.

25 comments related to behavioral health care, including mental health services and substance abuse services were mentioned. Developing state of the art services and improving current services were mentioned. 25 of the people commenting also wanted the tribe to provide health insurance for its citizens.

As a hopeful sign for the future, Osage citizens’ ideas within the health arena were most focused on wellness activities. In Table 3 above it can be seen that these ideas ranged from low cost solutions to wellness like walking trails in communities, to having wellness facilities available to all. Outside of the reservation, citizens wanted help with access to wellness facilities.

Prevention of alcohol problems, drug problems, obesity, and diabetes were seen as important. Providing education on healthy living, parenting, nutrition and other health education and wellness were ideas mentioned repeatedly. Screening for various illnesses was also seen as important.

The next most important category in health was in the area of providing services to specific groups: infants, children, women, and elderly. Health care services for specific diseases including diabetes, cardiovascular, and Alzheimer’s was the next most

commonly communicated interest. Help with dental, vision and hearing services were also included.

Developing nursing homes or assisted living centers were each mentioned several times.

25 comments related to behavioral health care, including mental health services and substance abuse services were mentioned. Developing state of the art services and improving current services were mentioned. 25 of the people commenting also wanted the tribe to provide health insurance for its citizens.

A new hospital, new or improved clinics, supplemental health insurance and prescription drug help were of interest to some citizens.

Reflecting the variety of ideas held by citizens, the miscellaneous category included suggestions ranging from using alternative medicines to having a medical research facility.

Table 4

MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES	
Themes and Examples	Time - % Mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Concerns This includes: insure clean and safe environment, clean up the reservation, protect water-air-soil, train Osages in environmental fields, very strict environmental laws to protect natural resources, prosecute people who damage land, focus on preserving land-water and other natural resources, oil and gas producers should be held accountable for damage to environment, leave our land better than we found it, manage our land for ourselves, make reservation truly green, work with universities on resource preservation, leases go to responsible oil and gas producers, tribal regulation of landfills and hazardous waste, practice good stewardship, preserve rivers and grassland, promote environmentally friendly business, etc. 	78 (19%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oil This category includes: prevent fraud in reporting oil production, stop oil theft, sliding scale so royalties go up when oil prices go up, encourage new production technologies like stripper wells or flow power, produce more oil, ensure guagers know what they are doing, make sure no one is getting our oil, monitor oil production-now, develop our own production company, own oil transport company, own oil refinery, oil main resource to preserve, weigh stations for oil transport trucks, etc. 	71 (16%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative Energy This category includes: tribe should encourage and develop wind, solar, biodiesel, ethanol energy, support research on renewable alternative energy, too dependent on oil and gas, develop comprehensive energy plan to include alternatives to oil and gas, etc. 	61 (14%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water This category includes secure reservation water rights, develop rivers, streams and lakes, protect water resources, develop water resources for profit, protect water ways, water free to Osages on reservation, secure Arkansas River rights, etc. 	46 (11%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land This category includes: buy back land on reservation, develop tribal 	41 (10%)

land use policy, get our land back, develop grazing land, develop land preservation plan, develop grassland be fair to land owners, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Gas This category includes: develop liquidation process for natural gas, engage in own gas exploration and production, develop gas resources, gas processing plant, monitor gas extraction, make sure gas is being gauged right, etc. 	31 (8%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Protection This category includes: develop own wildlife preserves, regulate hunting and fishing on reservation, preserve fish and game, develop wildlife management policy, train wildlife biologists, etc. 	22 (5%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous (Mentioned 3 or fewer times) This category includes: develop and preserve stone-timber-soil, establish natural resources inventory, only shareholders should be asked about what resources need developing and preserved, protect all minerals, need professionals to manage natural resources, penalize drillers who flare gas from wells, develop traditional Osage uses of resources, produce own food, keep mineral rights in tribe, stop in fighting among Mineral Council, Congress and Executive, remove mineral management/control from BIA, etc. 	73 (17%)

In Table 4 above, another encouraging sign for the future is Osage citizens’ interest in the environment. This includes preserving and protecting the environment, ensuring a healthy environment for future generations, making sure oil leases go to environmentally responsible firms, having stricter environmental laws, and having a truly “green” reservation.

Most of the ideas relating to oil production were centered around managing the resource better. Citizens were concerned about fraud and theft, managing our own oil, and making sure gaugers know what they’re doing. A handful of people mentioned an oil refinery.

Natural gas ideas were similar to oil: make sure we are gauging properly, manage the resource better. This might include engaging in gas exploration and production and a gas processing plant.

Wildlife protection included the ideas of regulating hunting and fishing on the reservation as well as developing policies for wildlife protection.

Miscellaneous comments varied widely. Comments about past management of minerals were typical, with a few innovative ideas like developing a natural resources inventory.

Table 5

GOVERNANCE	
Themes and Examples	Time - % Mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics This category includes: codes of ethics with meaningful enforcement for violations, high integrity, accounting accountability, government accountability, no closed sessions for interpreting the constitution, accountability to the people according to the constitution, don't be greedy, encourage responsibility and accountability for leaders to 	30 (19%)

build trust with the people, no favoritism, honesty and truthfulness, respect one another, accountability at all levels of government-elected officials and tribal services, more professionalism, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with the People This category includes: Communicate and include the people on all major decisions, inform the people on budgets-spending-new departments, seek the people's views and listen, make sure all Osages know they are welcome to participate in their government, establish communication for all Osages using all media sources, develop good current web site with all resources and services described, independent newspaper from Congress and Executive, communicate and represent the people, more complete up to date minutes of meetings, etc. 	24 (14%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairness This category includes: represent all Osages no matter where live, fair and formal way to resolve disputes -not courts, problem resolution, credible people treated fairly and with respect, curb corruption, make fairness central to policy making, treat everyone fairly-shareholders and non-shareholders alike, etc. 	23 (13%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws & Codes This category includes: Need for commercial and business codes, contract law, judicial codes, dispute resolution codes, historic preservation code, etc. 	15 (10%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law Enforcement This category includes: Good court system, establish justice task force, public safety and security, good law enforcement, legal assistance for Osages, etc. 	9 (5%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Incentives This category includes: establish guidelines for tax breaks and exemptions for business and individuals on reservation, offer tribal tax advantages to recruit 8a and other businesses and investors, etc. 	9 (5%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous (Mentioned 3 or fewer times) This category includes: trust and support the 3 branch government, Osage preference for employment, more professional behavior-manners,, representation by districts, follow the constitution, protect sovereignty, don't mess with head rights, stop in fighting, define what Mineral Council does, no micro-managing of programs and business, less conflict, don't overlook off reservation Osages, etc. 	56 (34%)

As can be seen in Table 5 above, the highest comment area was ethics, with citizens calling for an ethics code, openness in government, ethics for all levels, employees, administration and congress.

The next most important area identified was communication. Citizens encouraged including them at all levels and at all times. Many expressed the idea that using multiple methods of communication would be useful.

Fairness was somewhat rated similar to ethics above, with citizens expressing the desire for equal treatment whether they are shareholder or non, a desire for policies to be implemented fairly and the like.

Some citizens expressed the need for specific codes: those that would aid in business development were mentioned most often. Other needs were for a court system and for an

historic preservation code. The tax incentives area also spoke to the need for policies which would aid in developing and maintaining business on the reservation.

Law enforcement included the need for more and better enforcement on the reservation, as well as the need to provide for elders in order for them feel more secure.

The miscellaneous category was mostly further calls for people to quit bickering and start behaving more professionally in the management of tribal resources.

Table 6

CULTURE	
Themes and Examples	Time - % Mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education in Culture This category includes: teach songs and dances, classes in cooking-ribbon work, teach culture in Native American Church-Schools, teach traditional crafts, put cultural education material on internet, culture class in public schools, produce DVDs-CDs, reinforce Indian identity in dominant society, encourage family teaching of culture, support cultural activities with money, live it-model it, summer culture camps for youth and adults, invest in our children so they learn Osage values, more frequent social-cultural events everywhere, teach pride in being Osage regardless of residence or degree of blood, change Presidents Day to Chiefs Day, story telling, support 3 traditional districts, teach ceremonies, cultural outreach to Osages off reservation, etc. 	68 (25%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osage History This category includes: teach family histories to youth, Osage history taught in public schools, history classes for off and on reservation Osages, support publication of Osage history books -articles, put history on web site, children's book of Osage history, publish tribal and family histories, history classes, develop timeline of Osage history, require Osage history for employment with tribe, lose your history lose your identity, support Osage historians, etc. 	54 (20%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osage Language This category includes: Start language immersion program, support and enhance current language program, start teaching young children, interactive language class on internet, language DVDs and CDs, encourage use of language at meetings, teach language in public schools, more qualified language teachers, expand to radio-cable TV, teach in Headstart, etc. 	51 (18%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities: This category includes: Promote and encourage all Osages to participate in cultural activities, sponsor more social dances - handgames -social gatherings on and off reservation, fund traditional arts and crafts events, develop traveling Osage show, sponsor art shows, involve children in Osage activities, etc. 	47 (17%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities This category includes: Insure cultural facilities are top notch, Osage visitor's center, culture-history camp facilities, art studios, cultural centers, etc. 	13 (5%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum This category includes: make history material available in museum, get tapes of J.J. Matthews in museum, expand our museum and make more accessible, museums in each community, etc. 	11 (4%)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous (Mentioned 3 or more times) This category includes: survey cultural and historical knowledge of people, promote traditional values of honor-respect-dignity, put articles in newspaper about history and culture on consistent basis, encourage Osages to register as members, practice traditional agriculture, start elders council, 	<p>31(11%)</p>
---	----------------

In Table 6 above, it can be seen that this area elicited many citizen ideas about improving education for tribal citizens both on and off reservation in culture. Many suggested using multi media sources, trying to ensure that all know about the culture, and instilling pride in being Osage.

Highly correlated with this was a profound interest in learning about and having available history of the Osages. Once again, multiple ways of having this available were mentioned.

Language instruction was also of great interest both on and off reservation. “Support and enhance the current language program” was often repeated.

Activities included the idea of having a summer camp for youth to learn the Osage culture, having more social activities and having them off reservation, and encourage all Osages to participate.

Facilities included the novel idea of having an Osage visitor’s center on the campus, have art studios, cultural centers and the like.

Several commented on upgrading the current museum, having more museums, and having more history available in them.

Conclusion and Future Research

These preliminary results can be taken as a strong indication of the interest that Osage people both on and off reservation have in bettering the future of the Nation and as a call for the Nation's leaders to find a way to have a bright future. Over 2000 Osage citizens participated in numerous meetings held throughout the country to "weigh in" on their hopes and desires for a better future.

These results suggest that interest is strong in the areas of building a strong economy by making the reservation a wonderful place to live and visit with improved quality of life amenities. There is also considerable interest in improving existing schools; having many ways to get and stay healthy; preserving the environment; strengthening the culture through education in our history and language and having a government that is both ethical and fair. In addition these interests are backed up by numerous ideas on how to get started toward these goals and visions.

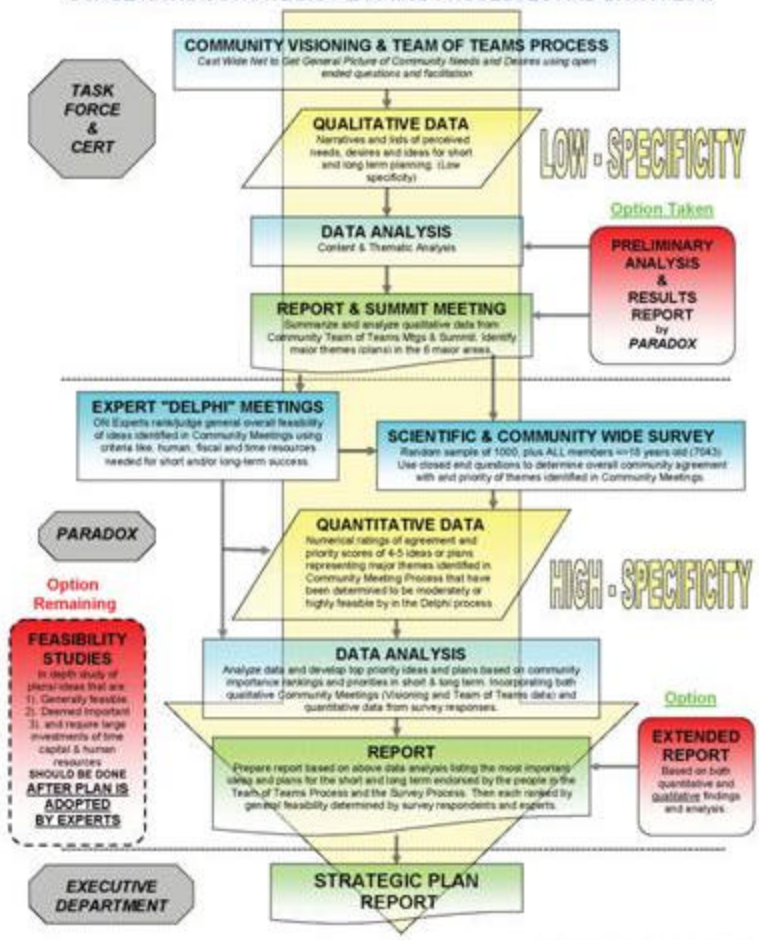
Although important and significant, these results should be considered only preliminary in that more Osages need to be heard from and a more thorough understanding of the realities and priorities of these heartfelt ideas need to be had.

In Phase 5 and 6 of the Osage Nation Strategic Planning Process, Paradox has been contracted to conduct a survey of Osage members to further the understanding and to clarify the direction and priorities of the people for eventual feasibility studies and finally implementation.

Paradox will conduct both a survey of all adult Osages on the membership role as well as a scientifically selected sample of 1000 to get their views on how important the ideas put forth in the community meetings are to accomplishing a better future for the Nation. The membership will be asked to rate the priority of different ideas in each of the major areas and then will be asked to rank the importance of the ideas.

The Paradox research approach incorporating the work that has been done thus far including the community meetings and this qualitative study and analysis is graphically displayed in the following chart titled, "Osage Nation Strategic Planning Process and Data Flow". The chart features a large yellow arrow pointing toward the bottom or strategic plan report. The process moves from lower to higher specificity in the results and conclusions. The blue boxes represent processes or actions in the research process, the yellow boxes represent what kind of data is collected, the green boxes represent the outcomes or products of the research, namely report of findings and recommendations for the plan. Finally, the red boxes are recommended additions to the research process.

OSAGE NATION STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESSES AND DATA FLOW



Prepared by Paradox Consulting LLC

Using the Participatory Research Model which we developed under a National Institutes of Health Small Business Innovative Research project, (Mail, Conner and Conner, 2004) we have formed an advisory group of respected and knowledgeable Osages to help guide our efforts. Our advisory group is made up of citizens who represent the various villages, urban areas of Oklahoma, outside of Oklahoma, research knowledge and experience, as well as experience with Osage government.

Research Advisory Group

Joanne Revard-Grisham
Pricilla Iba
Romain Shackelford
Tony Daniels
Mary Jo Webb
Edward Lookout
Charles Redcorn
Andrew Gray
Deidre Bigheart

This group recently met for an introduction to the development of Phases 5 and 6, prioritizing and getting Osage comments.

Paradox will use a formalized and structured method of gathering information from Osages, primarily a scientifically designed questionnaire. This will be mailed to all adult Osages. Upon completion and return, the results will be statistically analyzed so that the requirements of Phase 6, confirmation of priorities, can be met.

Paradox welcomes questions about the research process that is now underway and can be contacted by phone at 918.642.3162 or by email at paradox@valornet.com

Next Steps

Community engagement will continue to play an important role as strategies are developed into a final draft Plan using the initial data gathered from the various communities of Osages and then reflected back to the Osage people for confirmation. Overall feasibility of ideas identified in community meetings will be ranked using criteria such as human, fiscal and time resources to determine short and/or long term strategies. A scientific and community wide survey is presently being finalized to formalize the strategies by considering the vision and values of the Osage people offered for the six areas targeted for the strategic planning process. Every Osage citizen, 18 and older, will have an opportunity to respond to the survey and the responses will be tabulated in aggregate and form the basis of a draft Strategic Plan. This quantitative data will be used to determine overall community agreement with and priority of themes identified in the community meetings allowing completion of Phases 5 and 6.

Continued professional development and development of policies and procedures within the governmental Departments as part of Phase 3 will continue in an effort to build the infrastructure necessary to successfully implement a 25 year Strategic Plan. Phase 7 calls for all Osage Nation Departments, Agencies and boards to meet, discuss, and confirm objectives and performance measures capable of supporting final Strategic Plan priorities. Instituting a strategic approach will require a shift in the way the Osage Nation Government operates from within. Our Departments, Agencies and Boards have to develop the capacity to shift from reactive thinking to proactive thinking, not just responding to crisis but trying to gain some control over the future; from short-term thinking to long-term thinking; from opportunistic thinking toward systemic thinking, from a narrow problem focus to a broader societal focus, fixing not just problems but our society. This sort of shift requires determining long-term objectives, identifying priorities and concerns, and taking a hard look at the assets the Nation has to work with and the constraints it has to deal with. Completion of Phases 3 and 7 are critical to the successful implementation of a final Strategic Plan.

Phase 8 is the actual implementation phase of this important initiative. The completion of a written strategic plan document marks an important milestone in the planning process, but major benefits accrue to our Nation only when the plan is put into operation. Achieving the established goals will require effort and attention from every part of our government.

In order to complete the tasks outlined in the Strategic Planning Act, the immediate release of the remaining appropriated funds to the Task Force is crucial. On behalf of the Osage citizens, members of the Task Force respectfully ask all Congressional leaders to consider the achieved objectives to date and the remaining work still necessary to realize the vision. Our future depends on such thoughtful action