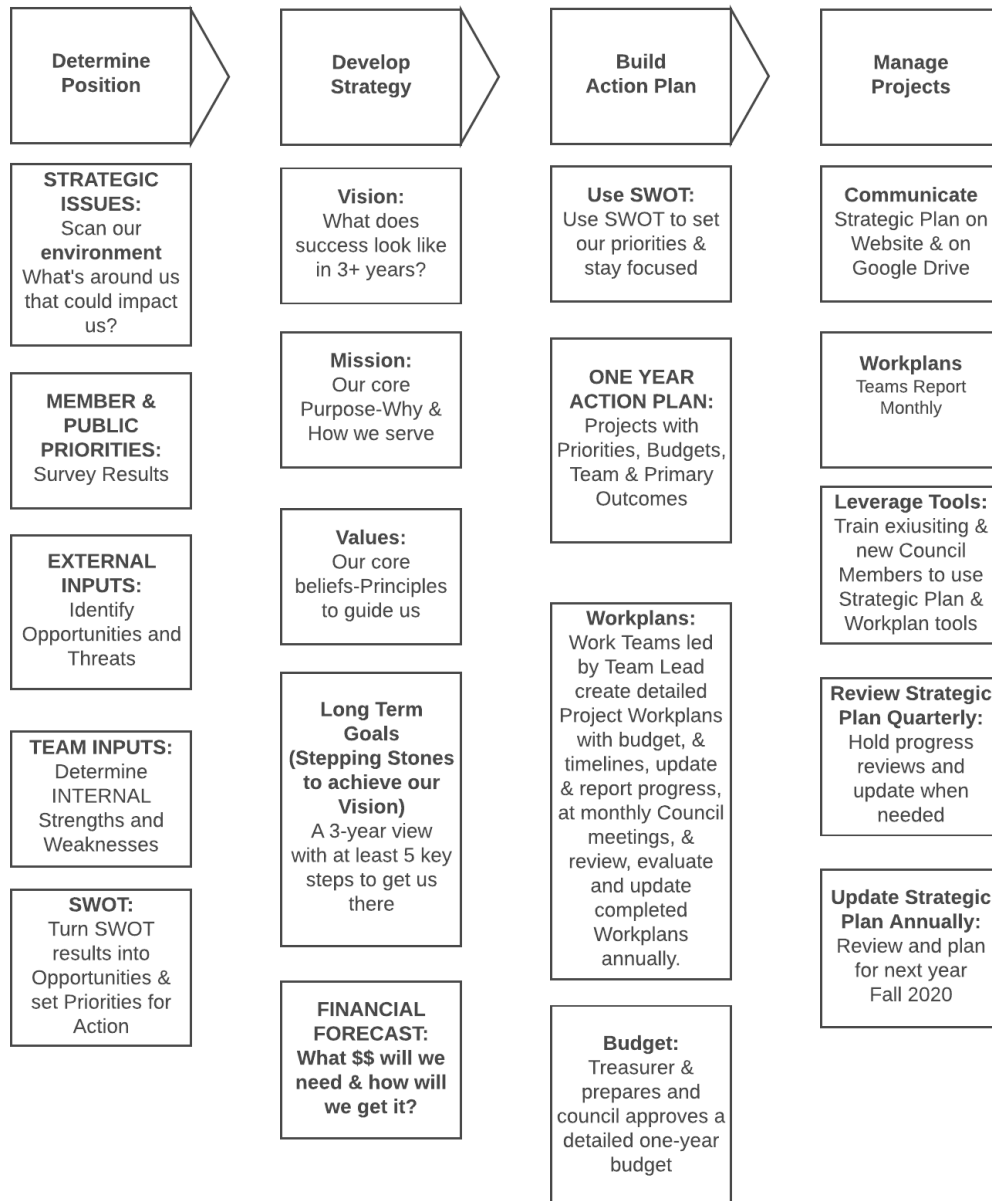


ABoT Strategic Plan 2019-2022 (Draft)

(Note: a more detailed version with full Environmental Scan & full SWOT process was prepared to develop this document)

Our Strategic Planning Road Map - Overview

ABoT Strategic Planning Process Roadmap 2019



Prepared with LucidChart

ABoT Situational Analysis (SWOT and Environmental Scan) Results

(Note: sorted from SWOT and Environmental Scan results - reviewed at October 15, 2019 ABoT Strategic Planning Session)

Potential Goals and Initiatives

Board Development

Succession Planning:

- Attract new Council members with broad experience, skills and energy - We are always searching for new Executive members and Council members
- Secure better funding to **delegate the time-consuming administrative and bookkeeping functions** that hold back attracting quality board members

Improve Project Management:

- Continue and improve current Project Team and Work Plan reporting and accountability system, i.e. Designate Leads and Supports for Project Teams for reporting purposes

Team Development

- **Enlist Members to serve on Specific Project Teams** - A lot of work is getting done between Board meetings- due to workplan Teams-are flexible, task-oriented and nimble, can work well without process
- Mix of new people and longer term provides broad knowledge and insight
- Solid business experience and diversity on team
- Lots of networks among team that we can build on
- Good technical skills- computers, finance, grant-writing,
- **Need to attract larger businesses** not currently represented on Council
- **Volunteer recruitment** – for Council seats and Project teams
- Attract more seniors to volunteer

Update By-laws

- culturally bureaucratic, Rigid by-laws. Need to modernize
 - Some Council members not showing up at all -Secretary not reporting on absences & by-laws don't address this
- Meetings go on too long – Council needs to develop process to make advance preparation easier
- Address Complacency among members & Council

VIC

- Find out from senior NSPI staff what will happen to our space at VIC
- Be prepared to create new VIC location if we lose current location
- VIC Grant applications – need succession plan process in place
- Hiring & training process needs new team Leads

Access broader funding opportunities

- We have enough money to invest in modest strategically planned investments in critical / priority Projects
- Become more financially self-sufficient - We're mostly dependant on government funding for our programs so we could get better at accessing a broader range of programs
- Look for other funding sources & revenue streams for ABoT
- Can we sell things at the VIC?
- Improve fee Structure: Our fee structure is a challenge for some who feel penalized and don't get more for paying more.

Partner more

- **Trigger /support shoulder season activities** – i.e. like Keg and Cask -September to Thanksgiving and from Easter to May 24

- **Use and promote facilities at People Worx-** laminate, printing, for local business
- Can we **partner with innovation Lab** -to enhance opportunities for home-based businesses?
- **Get more involved in Town:** We missed getting involved in Town's planning update that affects business

Big Economic Development-Tourism partnering project

- Get Larry Peach in –Economic Dev officer for Clare – to learn how they did it.
- Trigger / initiate & partner in economic development / historic & other tourism initiatives
- grab money that is out there—not be the doer.
- Invest Nova Scotia Funding -partnership needed
- Annapolis River needs to be used- & marina developed
- Could we come up with funding to hire Economic development person – possible under Invest Nova Scotia ?? and address
- silos around economic development.
- Develop and better understanding of Explorer Guide –
- Use NS Guide to Community Tourism Planning to develop partner initiatives
- Support Revitalization of not-for-profit amusement park
- Could we attract business to come here that serve residents on full-time basis?
- Capitalize on getting on the map like Mahone Bay and Lunenburg – importance of our history to the Nation and Province – both Annapolis Royal history and Acadian and Mi'kmaq
- Improve local signage –too many signs that mean nothing & we need to make them more effective to drive traffic into historic business district.
- Lack of recognition of significance of Town from Provincial and federal viewpoint – marketing compared to Lunenburg -we should be on that list
- Improve customer service skills & standards in A-R – stop rude employees/owners, visitors brushed off, turned away
- Program to prevent some historic building deteriorating due to absentee owners – affecting tourism image of Town. Help Town to find ways to address and enforce
- Capture New businesses -prevent it from going toward Digby-Clare-Yarmouth
- Create development opportunities in Town
- Add more public garbage cans in Town – & develop culture of using them, and programs to empty them. Solve that very few government initiatives support behaviour change in youth- I.e. Not littering
- Encourage & support economic development in areas around the Town.
- Success leaves clues:
- Look to Clare development as an example of what can be done when you rally people –need to broaden our thinking to serve a bigger area and develop Valley as a tourism destination
- Valley needs a Vision for creating a destination

Improve 2-way Communication/Website, electronic tools etc.

Communication with members needs improving & communication more broadly to larger businesses

- Be more inclusive with a better 2-way communication channel initiate more feedback from members
- Communicate that our meetings are open and inclusive
- Offer **member to member discounts**

Technology

- **Website** Modernize & update the website & make it a source of revenue,
- **Improve Mail chimp function** for more e-mails to employees of larger businesses
- Improve **News You Can Use** with interactive functionality to get feedback

Advocacy

- We could get better at advocacy on behalf of Members -seek input on their concerns (via 2-way communication on website?)
- Communicate that we have a team structure and Members can get involved & work on specific projects

Member Education and Networking Programs

- Marketing education for our members more- and/or teach them marketing – bring in training for them
- Hold **meet and greets** – with a few business showcases, aimed at networking and building connections
- Re-address holding **Business Luncheons / evening events**
- Rebrand or develop **Business Expo**, it worked as a networking event to create alliances and new business – I.e. Business-to-Business Expo, have more tables to increase connections
- Continue and improve **Business Awards Program**

Youth programs

- Foster Youth involvement in economic development-& entrepreneurship, business mentoring, student volunteers through a funded ABoT program

Trigger Accommodation Association (Note: deleted after discussion-Responsibility of Accommodation businesses, not ABoT. Could they come later, under an ABoT Work Team?)

Remain Aware of:

What could prevent us from reaching our Vision?

- Capacity – for achieving many of our goals
- Lack of money –
- losing grant writers
- Lack of new Executive members
- Volunteer burnout – attrition
- Aging volunteers – no young people around here
- Myth of AR as retirement community – younger people are here 1/3 population- not involved

External Influences outside ABoT Control

- Loss of NSPI Tax by Town 19%
- Regional internet -problem is a barrier to population growth and in-migration
- Poor availability of goods for year-round residents
- Lack of government commitment to preserve natural resources & environment

Our 2019 ABoT Vision

We are an active, innovative, trusted business organization, known for influencing decision-makers, and educating, connecting with and engaging our members and communities to support and improve the economy in our area.

(Note: Mandate from ABoT By-Laws: The objectives of the ABoT is to promote and improve trade and commerce and the economic, civic and social welfare of the district.)

Mission

The Annapolis Board of Trade is a membership organization of businesses, trades, associations, professions & individuals that supports, promotes and encourages trade and commerce, through partnering, educating, networking and collaborating for the economic, civic and social well-being of the Annapolis Board of Trade district.

Values

Principles to guide us: Key success Factors – **Amery to provide descriptors**

(Note - refer to TQM – study on TQM benchmark)

Focus on the client

Description:

(Note: Related ABoT 2015 Values: **Respect, Optimistic, Communication**

We are pro-active in communicating with both our members and other audiences, raising awareness of ABoT and enhancing economic opportunities.)

Management by Fact

Description:

Note: Related ABoT 2015 Values:

Accountability

We make evidence-based decisions and report on our actions and outcomes.)

Integration of Effort:

Description:

Note: Related ABoT 2015 Values:

Cooperation

We strive to work cooperatively with other organizations in our region in order to achieve common goals.

Community

We understand our mandate involves the civic and social welfare of our community and work to provide programs that enhance it.)

Continuous Improvement

Description: We focus on improving as we grow and learn

Note: Related ABoT 2015 Values:

Competence

We strive to provide competent management of our programs within the capabilities of a volunteer organization.

Empowerment

Description:

Note: Related ABoT 2015 Values:

Optimism – Positive Attitude

We are optimistic about the future of Annapolis Royal and district and operate on the basis of its ongoing success.

Respect

We work for all members, recognizing the diversity within our district.

DRAFT

BIG PICTURE LONG -TERM GOALS – Our Stepping Stones to Success

In 1-3 Years, by 2022 ABoT will be proud to have achieved the following as an organization:

Big Goals – (Beyond 1 Year)	OUTCOMES – How will we measure success?
<p>High Priority CREATE NEW ECONOMIC / BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN ABoT & SURROUNDING AREAS.</p> <p>Big Economic development / tourism partnering project Trigger, initiate & partner in creating new phase of economic development, historic, cultural & tourism initiatives for the ABoT area Initial ideas of what is needed:</p> <p>Encourage & support economic development initiatives & activities in and around the ABoT area. Support attracting new businesses to come here that will serve residents on full-time, year-round basis Attract new businesses and families for our area, too instead of having them go mainly toward Digby-Clare-Yarmouth)</p> <p>Develop broad government and public awareness of historic and cultural significance of ABoT area Lack of recognition of significance of Town from Provincial and federal viewpoint – marketing compared to Lunenburg -we should be on that list. Capitalize on getting on the map like Mahone Bay and Lunenburg –gain recognition for the significance & importance of our rich multicultural history to the nation and province & internationally –le. Annapolis</p>	<p>By the end of 2022–25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Vision has been created • Project initiative has been launched, funded and has delivered the following (to be refined and developed further through effective partnerships): • Research & develop measurements, indicators, benchmarks for items below have been established • Improved business and tourism opportunities in ABoT district and beyond • We have achieved strong international, national, & provincial recognition for our historical, cultural and tourism significance • We are marketing broadly & effectively to support Historic, cultural, tourism and lifestyle awareness and attracting more tourists and more year-round residents & businesses. • Our historical assets have been leveraged to become nationally & internationally recognized • The number of viable, growing year-round small businesses has increased • More existing businesses are growing & being retained • More and better attractions are extending tourism season & drawing more tourists & residents to the area.

Royal, Acadian and Mi'kmaq history & culture.

Promote and support our extensive, vibrant and high-quality arts and crafts community as part of our cultural & tourism attractions

ACCESS FUNDING SOURCES

Research finding sources/opportunities and apply for start-up grants within current application deadlines for we don't miss the 2019-2020 funding cycle

Conduct Broad Economic & Tourism Development:

Research:

- Get Larry Peach in –Economic Dev officer for Clare – to learn how Clare did it. Look to Clare development as an example of what can be done when you rally people –we need to broaden our thinking to serve a bigger area and to develop and market our area and those surrounding at as a tourism destination.
- Invite Harry Jost, Pody Hamilton to discuss and get input on our partnering ideas and vision, possibly through a special meeting – or special event /luncheon.
- **Use existing Reports:** “NS Guide to Community Tourism Planning” report, Annapolis Royal Development Commission Report (ARDC) 1978-88, “ Now or Never Call to Action Nova Scotia” report, “We Choose Now” (NS Tourism website) Report and others as background resources to developing applications for partnering initiatives & projects

DEVELOP LOCAL COMMUNITY BUY-IN

ABoT area, Valley need a common a Vision to build buy-in for tourism & economic development

IMPROVE ATTRACTIONS

Capitalize on Upper Clements Park (150 employees) to support its revitalization of not-for-profit amusement park

BROAD TOURISM IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

Develop use of Annapolis River & Basin

Support development of infrastructure and creation of local & tourism activities like boating and canoeing

Marina needs to be developed

Signage:

Improve local signage to highlight and improve recognition of historic & cultural significance of area and draw attention to local attractions. Currently there are too many unmeaningful signs. We need to make signage more effective to drive traffic into historic business district & other local attractions.

Research & Build Successes Elsewhere

Look at Tourism programs in Port Hawkesbury in Cape Breton as an example <http://www.townofporthawkesbury.ca/> as well as Lunenburg, Mahone Bay, Cape Breton etc.

Research upcoming & new trends in national and international tourism and capitalize on them

IMPROVE LOCAL TOURISM BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

Employee and Tourism Operator Customer Service Skills Development

Improve customer service skills & standards in ABoT area to compete successfully with

other destinations and create lasting positive experiences for visitors. Stop rude employees/owners, visitors being brushed off, turned away

Historical, Cultural & Attraction Marketing

Raise broad awareness of history & cultures of Annapolis Royal area internationally, nationally, provincially and locally significant.

- Develop a better understanding of and support to improving the Explorer Guide as a Tourism resource.

Historic Preservation

Support to owners of local historic business and residential buildings to access preservation and maintenance funding.

Program to prevent historic building deteriorating due to neglectful, absentee owners – affecting tourism image of Town. Support Town to find ways to address and enforce this.

Local Services /Improvement

Add more public garbage cans in Town – & develop culture of using them, and programs to empty them. Solve that very few government initiatives support behaviour change in youth- I.e. Anti littering campaign

- Improve Internet and Wifi downtown & in surrounding ABoT area to support tourism and immigration of new year-round businesses needing top level internet access.
- Improve local amenities – washrooms, better access for all abilities, evening restaurants & activities for adults and kids

<p>SUPPORT ENTREPRENEUR IMMIGRATION Support migration of Canadians, RETURNING Nova Scotians & foreign immigrants to become entrepreneurial permanent residents of NS and ABoT area</p>	<p>Marketing in place to attract migration and immigration of viable small business operations</p> <p>Letters of support for proponents of viable year-round businesses</p> <p>Note: 2-way communication with Provincial NSBI program</p>
<p>Partner more (High Priority) Trigger /support shoulder season activities – i.e. like Keg and Cask -September to Thanksgiving and from Easter to May 24</p> <p>Get more involved in Town decisions & activities: i.e. We missed getting involved in Town’s planning update that affects business.</p> <p>Use and promote facilities at People Worx- laminate, printing, for local business</p> <p>Enhance opportunities for home-based businesses by partnering with Innovation Lab at Library</p>	<p>Existing and new mutually beneficial events partnerships are improved and increased, list developed, and plan for specific support in Place through Events Work Team and Plan</p> <p>Partnership with Town in place for economic development, planning and other initiatives relevant to ABoT long term goals and membership interests.</p> <p>Designate an ABoT representatives to attend Town Economic Development and Planning committee meetings and report back, foster 2-way communication and collaboration.</p> <p>People Worx partnership is explored, and if appropriate, facilities are promoted to and being used by ABoT members</p> <p>Explore partnering with Innovation Lab and initiate if appropriate</p>
<p>Medium Priority FOSTER YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN ABoT AREA Support on-going customer service skills training for youth to improve customer experiences (i.e. hospitality industry training)</p> <p>Support business development initiatives for youth</p>	<p>Available training resources researched, initiated & delivered – by end of April 2020, and are available through an on-going calendar.</p> <p>Determine ways to support individual youth & high school-based and other youth</p>

	<p>economic development initiatives and then create plan and initiate.</p>
<p>IMPROVE ABoT REVENUE</p> <p>We need to increase fee revenues from our Membership base</p> <p>Our staggered fee structure (based on number of employees) is perceived as a barrier to joining by some to smaller businesses with only a few employees. They feel penalized by higher fees with no obvious additional benefit, and therefore don't see the ROI from joining.</p>	<p>Have increased our membership fee revenue by 200%</p> <p>ABoT fee structure is no longer perceived as a barrier to membership</p> <p>More businesses see the benefit of membership and join (See Communications Plan section: "improve benefits and raise awareness")</p>
<p>Explore development of retail and web-based revenue opportunities for ABoT</p> <p>Attract more businesses that use Atlantic Chamber employee/owner health benefits and owner insurance – to earn ABoT revenue</p> <p>Develop ABoT business-to-business membership benefits/discounts program through Atlantic Chamber</p> <p>Determine interest in and feasibility of offering ABoT business-to-business discounts program by our members</p>	<p>Add Maureen notes on retail here</p> <p>Ideas explored, feasibility and priority for action determined and launched, where ideas are deemed feasible.</p> <p>Increase awareness of and use of Atlantic Chamber insurance and employee benefits to 10%</p> <p>Awareness of Atlantic Chamber business-to-business discounts increased</p> <p>ABoT member business to business program initiated and section/page added to ABoT website after member consultation to determine interest.</p>
<p>IMPROVE 2-WAY COMMUNICATIONS WITH MEMBERS</p>	<p>Communication Plan draft in place by January 2020 with implementation schedule</p> <p>One Year Communications Plan implemented end of 2020 and updated annually (includes Marketing Plan included for new member campaign & retention)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure better funding to delegate the time-consuming administrative and bookkeeping functions that hold back attracting quality board members <p>Improve Project Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue and improve current Project Team and Work Plan reporting and accountability system, i.e. Designate Leads and Supports for Project Teams for reporting purposes <p>Team Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlist Members to serve on Specific Project Teams - A lot of work is getting done between Board meetings- due to workplan Teams-are flexible, task-oriented and nimble, can work well without process Mix of new people and longer term provides broad knowledge and insight Solid business experience and diversity on team Lots of networks among team that we can build on Good technical skills- computers, finance, grant-writing, Need to attract larger businesses not currently represented on Council Volunteer recruitment – for Council seats and Project teams Attract more seniors to volunteer <p>Update By-laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> culturally bureaucratic, Rigid by-laws. Need to modernize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Council members not showing up at all -Secretary not reporting on absences & by-laws don't address this Meetings go on too long – Council needs to develop process to make advance preparation easier Address Complacency among members & Council <p>Develop ABoT Member Code of Conduct to support positive, ethical business behaviour by our members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Code of Conduct ready for Members by April 2020 AGM (See BNI - Business Networking International Code of Conduct as a resource)
<p>CONTINUE TO OPERATE VIC ON BEHALF OF ABoT AREA</p> <p>Manage Location Risk</p>	<p>ABoT leverages federal, provincial funding to operate VIC on behalf of area and regional tourism each year.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out from senior NSPI staff what will happen to our space at VIC Be prepared to create new VIC location if we lose current location <p>HR Management is timely and effective</p>	<p>Funding applications completed on schedule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VIC Grant applications – need succession plan process in place Timeline TBC and prepared by Byron and Amery. <p>New VIC Work Team is in place by January 2020 with clear roles & responsibilities, develops and implements effective work plan for annual hiring, onboarding, supervision, reporting, operations.</p> <p>Hiring & training process in place with timelines for grant writing, advertising positions, interviewing, offering position, onboarding and training, planned supervision, employee acknowledgement at end of season and evaluation at end of season</p>
<p>Find ways to improve promotion of ABoT members at VIC as a priority over non-members- eg binders</p>	<p>Accommodation & food & attraction (tourism) operators perceive the benefit of being an ABoT member and are satisfied with level of promotion at VIC</p> <p>Local accommodation & tourism operators perceive value and are more engaged in ABoT</p>
<p>High Priority ADVOCACY We advocate to government on locally relevant community & economic development, immigration, & environmental issues</p>	<p>We are perceived as proactive on advocating for issues important to the local community</p>
<p>High Priority TECHNOLOGY We use the most appropriate current technology</p>	<p>IT Team in place, with workplan and collaborates with Communications Team on requirements.</p> <p>Annual technology needs assessment and update takes place, and ABoT invests in hiring skilled contractor/s to get the required work done to meet ABoT Communications Plan and member needs.</p>

<p>H High Priority</p> <p>Member Networking Education and Programs</p>	<p>We have a Member Education/Networking Work Team, with annual Work Plan & calendar for Networking events and Member education and an approved & scheduled list of events is taking place at least quarterly throughout the year.</p> <p>Sources of Business Education Lunch & Learns, seminars, workshops etc. are researched and scheduled that meet identified member interests.</p>
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FINANCIAL FORECAST (Treasurer)

What money will we need (ballpark estimates) and how could we get it?

Federal and Provincial funds

- Tourism Funds
- Economic Dev funds
- Invest Nova Scotia
- Other funding sources – investigate what’s out there

ABoT ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN Fall 2019 to Fall 2020

See Separate document