

Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

Strategic Plan 2020-2025



Focus on
influence &
impact

Engaged
members

Image &
brand
awareness

Fiscal growth
&
sustainability

THE
CHAPMAN
GROUP



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Introduction

This five-year Strategic Plan is presented to the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce after considerable examination and analysis of environmental trends, self-reflection, and discussions in the winter, spring and summer of 2020. This document represents an intention to advance the Chamber's reputation by developing goals and measurements that are ambitious but attainable, are fiscally responsible yet continue to improve on the quality of policy and advocacy on issues facing business and the community at large and the impact to the community. The strategic priorities contemplated herein will be developed within the capacity and capability available currently within Chamber of Commerce, and as required, using outside resources. This plan will also build on the many strengths of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce and focus the energy and resources of the organization on the issues it's positioned to address.

The document provides guidance on the implementation and management of the strategy using action planning and risk mitigation techniques to achieve the overarching vision and stay true to the mission.

This strategic plan has the support of the Chamber of Commerce board members and staff regarding these goals and strategies to advance the Chamber over the coming three-year period.

History

With a history dating back to 1874, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce has an influential and respected voice in the community and province. This foundation provides an ideal position to effectively advocate for their members and the business environment as a whole. Relying on the breadth and depth of experience and expertise of an extensive network of business and community leaders, we work with all three levels of government, various economic development entities and other partners to ensure the voice of business is heard at a local, regional and national level.

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is an award-winning organization that continually strives to meet and exceed the needs of our members. With more than 1,000 members, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is New Brunswick's largest chamber of commerce. The chamber is nationally accredited and is an active business organization engaged in policy development and advocacy that affects the competitiveness of its members and the Canadian business environment.



Purpose of the Strategic Plan

The purpose of this strategic plan is to guide efforts in the advancement of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce. Recognizing that the world around us is constantly changing, the Chamber has developed this three-year strategic plan by setting clearly defined goals and measurements, and a strategic agenda/operating plan to anticipate and respond to the environmental forces and seize opportunities to advance the Chamber.

The process began with discussions with the Chief Executive Officer, who identified priorities and key areas that may impact the Chamber in the coming three years. The Executive and management team got together and participated in a facilitated process. It was then validated by bringing the entire Chamber Board and management team to participate in another facilitated process that included appreciative inquiry and analysis through strategic priority identification, Environmental Scanning, strategic priority and Action Planning that led to the development of a strategic plan centered on four strategic themes; (1) **Focus on influence and impact** (2) **Engaged members** (3) **Enhance image and brand** (4) **Fiscal growth and sustainability**.

This strategic plan reaffirms the essential role the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce and its commitment of the Board and staff to work together to achieve the strategic priorities identified in this plan.

Vision

Stronger Community Through Business Prosperity

Mission

Help business improve, innovate and grow through networking, shared services, advocacy and events.

Values

The operations and decision-making processes of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce are guided by a set of organizational values. The chamber's board of directors and staff members are expected to exhibit each of these values while acting in their capacity as a representative of the chamber.

The values listed below are not to the exclusion of other values, traits, responsibilities and expectations of staff and board members. The values are meant to provide a framework to achieve organizational vision, mission and goals.



Our Values

Integrity

- We work for the greater good in building our community
- We are transparent and make decisions that we are proud to stand behind

Responsive

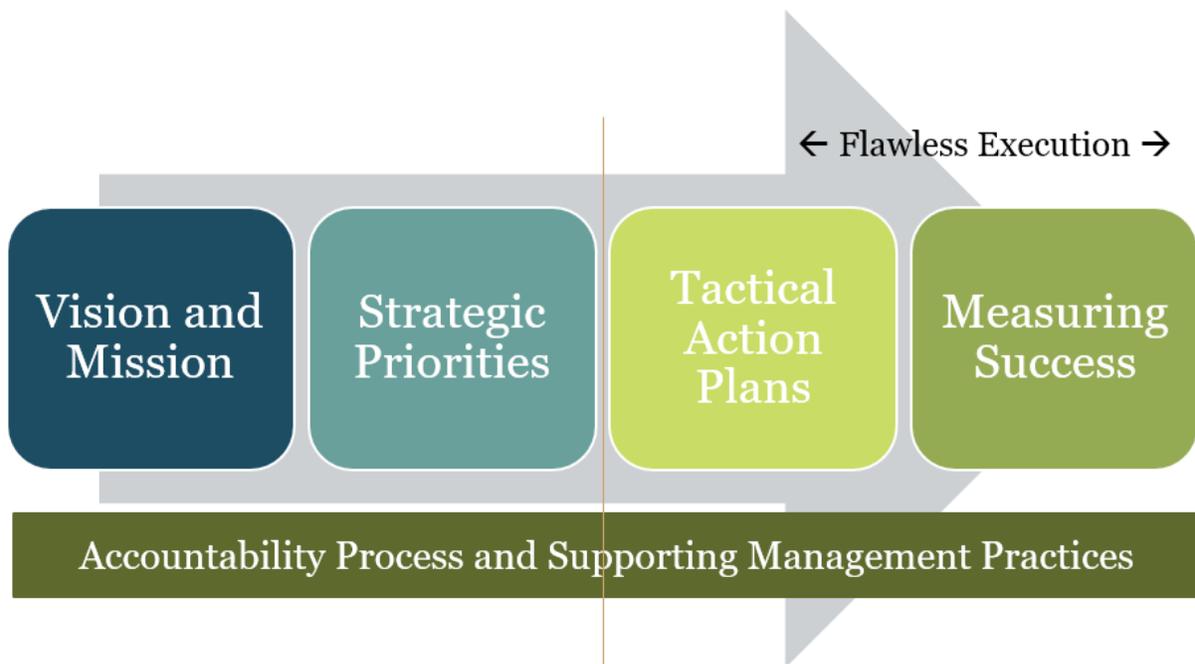
- We are an action-oriented, member-centric organization
- We act with a sense of urgency to meet member needs and expectations

Openness

- We are an organization for the entire community
- We embrace new ideas, exemplified by a spirit of inclusiveness, diversity and transparency

Collaborative

- We build strategic relationships, help make connections, and actively seek new partners
- We value the ideas and input of our members and other partners as much as our own





Building on our past as we move into the future

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce has a reputation for being subject matter experts, advocates and the united voice for its members and the wider business community on policy and issues that affect the competitiveness of its members and the Canadian business environment. The Chamber is known for its strong commitment to the business community through engagement and strong connections within the Fredericton area and the province of New Brunswick. Appreciating accomplishments enables a focus on the positive and easy identification of attributes, behaviours, and achievements that can be leveraged in moving forward. These include but are not limited to:

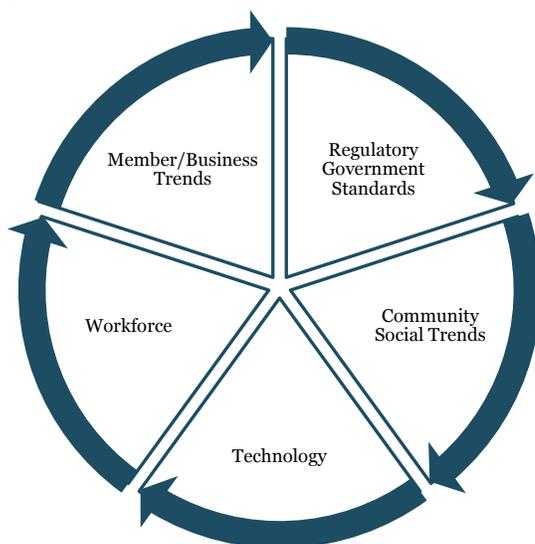
- Advocacy work on issues such as work safe and tax
- Consistent messaging to government
- Diversification of Board – leveraging to make it permeate with stakeholders

For a complete list of accomplishments can be found in the Appendix.

Our Environment

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is a key contributor to the economic development of the Fredericton region. One of the defining characteristics, and strengths of the Chamber, lies in the strong connections it has with business, all levels of government, and with its members.

The strategic pillars outlined in this report, are influenced by the changing environmental factors that surround The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce. The organization must intentionally scan the environment to respond to the changes within the business environment, the regional economy and the community. The environmental analysis focused on the following key areas:





Regulatory Government Standards

- Frequent Changes in government – resources being moved
- Red tape
- Labour law changes
- Environmental policies and legislation
- Timely consultation

Community Social Trends

- Members greatly affected by societal changes, beliefs
- Chamber itself – affected by polarization of society – which will affect how we communicate to all members – challenging as issues became politicized – makes job difficult for what the chamber does
- Trying to get agreement on policies from chamber across Canada
- Environmental/climate change concerns
- Ethically sourced
- Inclusivity and diversity
- Supporting global economy vs supporting local (buy/support local)
- Population growth of community (size) migration/immigration

Physical Assets/Equipment/Technology

- Ever changing technology
- Ways of communication changing
- Cyber security issue – as technology changes
- Technology disruption – changes way people work, what a business looks like, bricks & mortar, marketing
- AI
- Training on future technology and how to adapt



Workforce

- Aging
- Multigenerational
- Technology – remote ability
- Skills gap - education
- Training for jobs that might not exist
- Immigration – population growth
- Retention & turnover
- Mobility - Urbanization
- Expenses of HR issues

Member/Business Trends

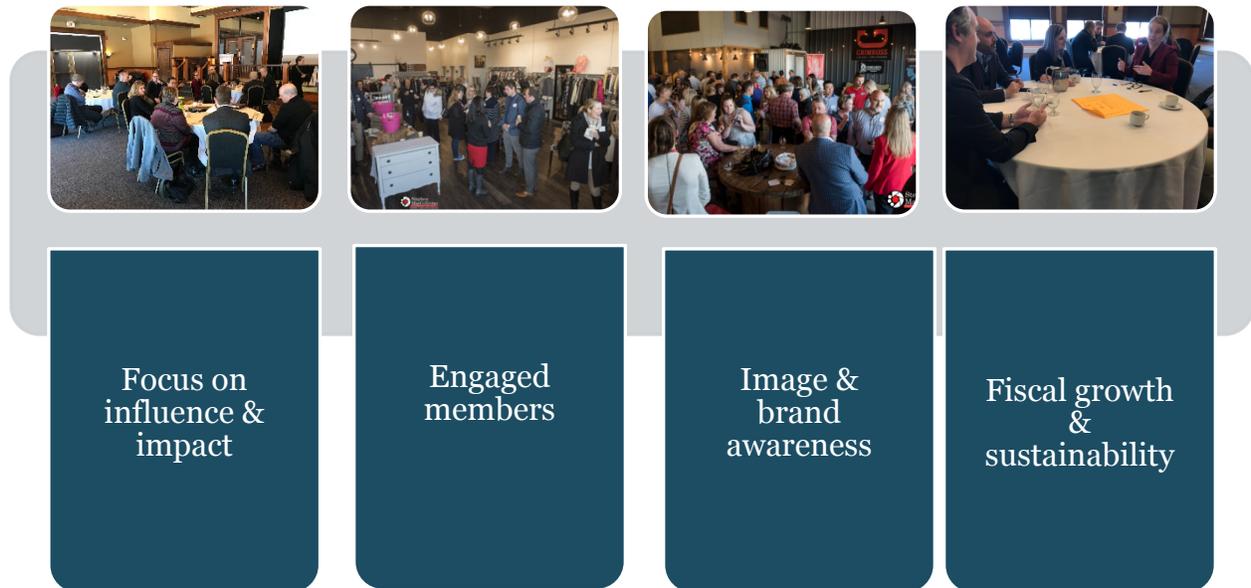
- Apathy from clients
- Competition – competing for people’s time & attention
- Members understating value and what we do
- Slow growth environment
- Labour force – skills gap
- Retail is trending down
- Cost pressures
- Ghosting – clients/employees not showing up
- Decline in business etiquette
- Members believe they are bombarded with messaging at all times

A full environmental analysis can be found in the Appendix.



Strategic Themes

Throughout the Strategic Planning process, key themes arose through the consultative process. These themes have provided the base by which the strategic operating plan and action plans have been developed.



Focus on influence & impact

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce has a long track record of successfully having a strong voice on issues that impact its members by building partnerships and working in cooperation with all levels of government and organizations across the community to encourage consensus and bring about positive change.

The goal has always been to influence issues that are most relevant to the Chamber members and where the organization could have the greatest impact. Going forward, the Chamber will look to increase its interactions and engagements with municipal, provincial and federal governments and develop new relationships with other key stakeholders in order to continue to widen its view on issues. Continuing to build upon these relationships and collaborating with other organizations and chambers on mutually relevant issues only increases the influence and impact of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce.



Engaged members

The ability to consistently engage members, provide a positive experience, and provide them value that meets their needs and expectations is crucial to building the basic foundation of the Chamber. This basic building block supports the ability to grow membership and rise above the competition.

As a member-driven organization, the Chamber's strength is predicated on how effectively it communicates to its members, its ability to attract new members and remain relevant. The focus of the Chamber will be to connect, engage and create value for its membership through communications and initiatives developed to maximize member experience and engagement and grow the network.

It will be important to ensure membership engagement activities reflect the profile and needs of business and community members, that the Chamber is maximizing communication activities and channels to effectively inform and engage with members, decision makers and the community, and creating exciting and inspiring connections for members.

Enhance image and brand awareness

As one of the largest and most influential business groups in Atlantic Canada, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is respected and visible with a "brand" that is strong within the business community. The Chamber recognizes that they need to grow and extend the Chamber brand beyond its membership to be more community focused. Brand awareness is the degree to which people are familiar with your brand, including its distinctive qualities and features, as well as the products or services offered. Brand awareness beyond membership is important for business success because it fosters trust. Trust in what you say and trust in what you do.

Enhancing the current visibility of the Chamber's brand over time can increase membership numbers, increase the awareness of the Chamber and its reputation as the go to organization, and reap considerable business benefits from credibility, reputation and member satisfaction. It will also ensure its mandate is known and understood by the business community. It's about creating a consistent, emotional connection with members and the community.

Fiscal growth and sustainability

Fiscal growth and sustainability are crucial for any organization. The desire to obtain income and maintain what has already been built is engrained in everything we do. It is essential that the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce maintains strong, stable revenue sources and a sound financial base.

Financial stability will allow the Chamber to carry out its vision & mission and present goals. Financial integrity will be assured through budget transparency. By establishing a sound financial basis, the Chamber will have the capacity to produce programs that deliver member value and create and maintain reserves for the future.



Conclusion

As the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce considers its future, it must reflect on its values and draw upon current resources to execute this strategic plan and continuously assess and demonstrate the effectiveness of addressing issues and concerns of businesses. The Strategic Plan focuses on the major themes that were identified throughout the process as keys to continuing the quality work the Chamber prides itself on. Execution of this plan will require actions to be facilitated by leadership team and the management team. Critical to the success of this plan will be the accountability process (follow-up and follow through), the transparency of communication, and the celebration of success by the entire team as goals are achieved.