



**SOUTH
SHUSwap**
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

2023-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN



Prepared for the South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce
NAJDA Consulting
July 2023

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This project was made possible by funding from



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INTRODUCTION



BACKGROUND OF THE SOUTH SHUSWAP CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce was incorporated in August 1992 as the Sorrento District Chamber of Commerce. The chamber operated for many years serving the communities of Notch Hill, Eagle Bay, Sorrento and Blind Bay. In more recent years, the chamber's membership has included businesses in Tappen, Skimikin, Sunnybrae and White Lake.

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce closed its doors in 2012 after a board of directors failed to form at its Annual General Meeting. In late 2013, resident Karen Brown approached the Columbia Shuswap Regional District about resurrecting the chamber, one that would include all areas of the South Shuswap. This chamber would be the first in the province to run virtually, without a brick and mortar office, thereby saving costs to re-open and operate.

Eight local residents and business owners representing many types of businesses in all areas of the South Shuswap formed the first board to reopen the chamber, in 2014. In its first year, the chamber went from 0 to 95 members, receiving special recognition from the BC Chamber of Commerce at its 2014 Annual General Meeting in Prince George.

The chamber continued to grow in membership and through the formation of committees; each tasked with supporting local businesses and not-for-profits in one way or another. The chamber has promoted sustainability and growth in the region since inception. Today, the chamber experiences steady growth and can proudly say it represents over 160 not-for-profits and businesses in the region.

BACKGROUND OF SSCC STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce (SSCC) was resurrected in 2014, after two years of inactivity. Now, after nine years of successful leadership within the business community, the board of the SSCC has decided to perform an environmental scan of the business landscape, and to develop a road map for the next several years.

The board extends a warm thank you to the Economic Trust of the Southern Interior for their belief in this project and the financial contribution they provided to make the strategic plan a reality. Other funders who have contributed to our success over the years include the Government of Canada, the Province of BC, Shuswap Tourism, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, and the Columbia Shuswap Regional District.

After an open call for proposals, the board embarked on a journey of exploration, consideration, and examination. The result of their vision and work, over the past four months, is a new five-year strategic plan, which encompasses community building, economic development, and social advancement.

The strategic planning process included a series of board workshops, online member surveys, and stakeholder interviews led by the SSCC strategic planning consultant, Nicholas Najda, of the research and planning firm NAJDA Consulting.

From April 2023 to July 2023, participants were asked to share their ideas, concerns, and vision about the role of the South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce, and how it can grow to be more meaningful over the next five years. Further, they were asked how the work of the SSCC should support a growing business and not-for-profit sector.

Strategic planning participants represented the diverse business community of the South Shuswap. For example, we heard from trades, builders, tourism operators, hospitality providers, realtors, photographers, not-for-profits, and more. The board attempted to allow everyone's voice to be heard, so that the strategic plan is a true reflection of the needs and desires of their community.

Several key themes within the strategic plan are a direct result of what was heard from outreach in the community. In fact, the new Vision, Mission and Values of the SSCC ensure that both the needs of members, as well as the broader community, are reflected in our work and decision-making processes moving forward. The common desire to nurture a sense of belonging and togetherness, as well as advocating for the long-term health of our local assets such as lakes and water sources, will help us achieve our goal of a sustainable business ecosystem.

In the coming years, you will see an SSCC which is focused on promoting local enterprise, facilitating collaborations, and improving resources for member businesses. The outcome of our efforts will be a dynamic business culture and an increase in local opportunities.

BUSINESS LANDSCAPE IN CANADA AND THE SOUTH SHUSWAP



STATE OF BUSINESS IN CANADA

To set the stage for discussions, the board reviewed key findings from the Canadian Survey on Business Conditions Report Q4 2022, published by the Business Data Lab at Canadian Chamber of Commerce. At the time of strategic planning sessions, this was the most current report available.

Below is a brief summary of key data pulled from the report.
For detailed information from the Business Data Lab, see Appendix A.

Business Obstacles

Top near-term obstacles from Canadian companies in 2023 are rising costs of doing business. Persistent inflation is the biggest pain point, cited by well over half of all businesses (58%), followed by rising input costs (48%) and debt costs (39%).

Inflationary Pressures

Due to rising inflation, approximately 33% of businesses plan to increase their prices in the coming quarter to offset cost pressures.

Debt Constraints

Smaller firms and businesses owned by underrepresented groups have limited ability to take on more debt. Of all businesses, 75% do not plan on taking out a loan mainly due to rising interest rates and uncertainty in the economy.

Labour Challenges

Major issues for businesses continue to be recruiting and retaining employees.

Supply Chain Issues

The implementation of management strategies and improved ability to receive inputs are easing supply chain issues, although they have not been fully resolved.

Technology/Digital Adoption

Across all businesses, there is low adoption of emerging technologies, including automation (6%), Artificial Intelligence (6%), and robotics (1%). Key obstacles are the need to hire workers with technical skills (40%), have access to financial resources (35%), and ability to retain employees (26%).

Growth Outlook

Over the past year, business optimism has dropped across industries. The most optimistic firms are in arts, entertainment, recreation, healthcare and wholesale trade.

STATE OF THE SOUTH SHUSWAP

The board considered key demographic and labour data related to the South Shuswap during their sessions. It was helpful to understand how the community is changing, and to compare local metrics against the rest of the province.

Some of the key data sets reviewed are below.

For detailed information on South Shuswap demographics and labour data, see Appendix B.

Population

The population of the South Shuswap, based on 2021 Census, is 8,919. This represents a 12.6% increase from 2016. The average age of the population is 52 years old, compared to 43 years old for BC as a whole.

Income

The South Shuswap enjoys significantly higher average full-time income than BC as a whole, with average earnings of \$64,900 and \$56,751, respectively. However, there is a significant gender gap in South Shuswap full-time average incomes, with men earning \$70,800 and women earning \$55,800.

Employment

Given the South Shuswap's population age profile, it may not be surprising that only 48% of the adult population is in the labour force, meaning 52% of adults are retired or otherwise not working, nor looking for work. Of those participating in the labour force, there is a 90.7% employment rate, with 9.3% being unemployed. The top three fields of occupation in the South Shuswap are Trades (approximately 1,200 employed), Sales & Service (approximately 800 employed), and Business & Administration (approximately 400 employed).

INFORMING THE PLAN



The SSCC board used several reports and sources to frame their strategic thinking. In order to plan for the South Shuswap's business future, it was important to understand some of the economic and wellbeing data that contributes to the sustainability of communities. It was also valuable to look at what is going on within allied organizations who share a common vision of economic strength and business opportunity within the South Shuswap. As such, the board reviewed the strategic priorities of local economic and tourism development agencies, as well as the strategic goals of chambers of commerce from surrounding communities.

ALIGNED STRATEGIES

The board considered other organizations and initiatives while creating their own vision and goals. It is essential to the SSCC board, that they find synergies and alignments with potential partner agencies and allied organizations. A scan of "who is doing what", in and around the South Shuswap, resulted in the identification of four organizations with aligned strategies and goals: Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD), Shuswap Economic Development Society (SEDS), Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA), and Shuswap Tourism.

Below are short summaries of the aligned strategies from each organization.
For detailed information about each strategy, see Appendix C.

Columbia Shuswap Regional District

The Columbia Shuswap Regional District is the local government for the South Shuswap. Within their strategic plan, Economic Development is a priority. To achieve this goal, the CSRD is committed to working with the South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce, among others, in the pursuit of joint economic and service initiatives.

Shuswap Economic Development Society

The Shuswap Economic Development Society is a CSRD funded not-for-profit whose purpose is to promote and develop the South Shuswap (as well as other Electoral Areas) economic zone.

The eight main objectives of SEDS are:

1. Maintain our rural character
2. Diversify our economic base
3. Promote four-seasons of business
4. Enhance quality of life for all ages
5. Strengthen the local labour market
6. Promote vibrant community centres
7. Increase access to housing
8. Build climate change resiliency

Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association

The Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association is an industry leader which is tasked with promoting and developing the regional tourism sector. The three key outcomes of TOTA's 10-year Regional Tourism Strategy are:

1. Create jobs
2. Support community development
3. Adhere to principles of economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability

Shuswap Tourism

Shuswap Tourism is a community-based destination marketing organization focused on visitor attraction, destination development and other marketing and promotional services in support of tourism businesses and operators within the geographic boundaries of Salmon Arm, Sicamous, Enderby and CSRD Electoral Areas C, D, E, F & G.

Shuswap Tourism's goals are to increase visitation to the Shuswap region for recreation, leisure and business purposes, and to support the development of both industry and visitor experiences.

NEARBY CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

To understand what other chambers of commerce are doing in the region, the board looked at four local chambers: Chase, Sicamous, Armstrong, and Kicking Horse (Golden). By comparing what others are doing, the South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce was able to reflect on what is important to them, and weigh the perceived value of their goals based on what other jurisdictions have decided to focus on.

Below are excerpts from each chamber's promotional materials and strategies.
For detailed information about nearby chambers of commerce, see Appendix D.

Chase

The Chase Chamber of Commerce works to improve local business, build stronger community and enhance pride within Chase and District. The main focus in Chase is developing tourism experiences and providing frontline visitor services at the Visitor Information Centre.

Sicamous

The Sicamous Chamber of Commerce serves their membership through education, promotion and advocacy. They work to develop the economic, commercial, industrial and social growth of Sicamous and the surrounding area, mainly via advocacy, newsletters and workshops.

Armstrong

The Armstrong Chamber of Commerce is “the voice” of Armstrong Spallumcheen business. They encourage growth and prosperity of the whole community, and they watch out for everyone. Advocacy is highlighted as one of their main activities.

Kicking Horse (Golden)

The Kicking Horse Country Chamber of Commerce helps business thrive in Golden. They are the hub of the wheel and need good working relationships with any group or organization in town. They primarily focus on ways to save businesses money, and providing a support network when issues are bigger than one individual business.

DEMOGRAPHICS, BUSINESS DATA AND COMMUNITY VOICES INFORM OUR PLANNING

The South Shuswap is a growing region. Our population has grown steadily, with certain segments of the population outpacing others, specifically seniors. We have also had a recent influx of younger, working families to the area. This combination provides many opportunities for entrepreneurs and business owners.

In contrast to the good news of a growing population, businesses in the South Shuswap are facing challenges that are not isolated to this area. Rising costs of materials, higher interest rates, lingering tightness in supply chains, and a shortage of skilled workers, are at the forefront of many business decisions. There is a silver lining for the last challenge. As the population grows, and kids become young adults, more of them will be looking for entry-level service and retail type jobs, while others will be looking to increase their skills at challenging and rewarding companies.

Feedback from our business community surveys indicated that the chamber can play an important role in assisting businesses with marketing and advertising, in providing learning and education opportunities for staff teams, and we can play an important role in advocating for the long term health of the region’s lakes, and water security in general.

Below is a summary of the member survey results.
For detailed member survey information, see Appendix E.

MEMBER SURVEYS AND FEEDBACK

Overall, a low number of responses were received compared to the number of members within the organization. This is an indication that, for this group, anonymous online surveys are not a strong method of gaining valuable information, nor are they particularly useful for the chamber to deepen its relationship with members.

Member Survey Results

The online survey was sent to 165 members. Responses were received by 17 businesses, and 9 not-for-profit organizations. Respondents represented a mix of sectors including: Health and Wellness, Service and Hospitality, Accommodation, Building and Trades, Retail and Grocers, Realtors and Insurance, Arts and Artisans, and Not-For-Profits.

Overall, respondents replied that they see value in the chamber providing the following:

1. Individual business listings on chamber and other websites
2. Complimentary posts on Facebook, Instagram and other social media
3. Digital marketing training and education opportunities

4. Networking with others to promote their business
5. Advocating for lake health & wellbeing

The least popular program that the chamber offers is the Chamber Benefits Program. Almost no members indicated that they use it, or, indicated an interest in it.

In general, there are three tiers (Tier 1 = most important, Tier 3 = least important) of activities that members think the chamber should be focussing on:

Tier 1

Marketing, Education Opportunities, Tourism & Visitor Services, Economic Development

Tier 2

Networking, Advocacy

Tier 3

Membership Benefits

THE SSCC ORGANIZATION



As part of the strategic planning process, the SSCC board created a vision and mission for the organization. Based on a broadened understanding of what chambers of commerce do, and what this organization is working towards, a full set of corporate values was also established. These guiding statements and values will be cornerstones of decision-making and resource allocation over the coming years.

VISION

Our Vision describes the ultimate long-term result of our work. It describes what we hope for our organization, our stakeholders, and our community. This is what we are trying to accomplish.

South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce Vision

The South Shuswap is a vibrant, resilient community with diverse businesses and residents, creating unique, memorable and inclusive experiences.

MISSION

Our Mission describes what we do and how we are working towards our Vision.

South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce Mission

To inspire and support local businesses in creating a welcoming environment that strengthens the regional economy.

VALUES

Our core values define how we act, who we work with, and what others can expect from our board and our staff. When interacting with us, you will find that the SSCC lives our values.

South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce Values

Adaptability/Resiliency

Adaptability/resiliency means embracing change and being innovative.

Advocacy

Advocacy means taking action to help businesses secure their rights, represent their interests, and obtain resources or services they need.

Collaboration

Collaboration means supportive cooperation, engagement and long-term relationships among the business community, rights holders and stakeholders.

Community

Community means cultivating a comprehensive ecosystem of partnerships, systems and networks that provide maximum value and long-term relationships across people and businesses.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity means valuing, respecting and supporting diverse people and businesses in equitable, meaningful ways.

Integrity

Integrity means being accountable and trusted through genuine, professional, ethical actions.

Leadership

Leadership means a commitment to being a strategic influencer and a trusted, knowledgeable resource in the community.

OUR BUSINESS STREAMS

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce is a diverse and nimble organization that strives to meet the needs of existing members, potential new members and the community at large (from a business perspective). As such, we have organized our work into seven streams of activity. The seven streams are, in alphabetical order: Advocacy, Community Impact, Education and Training, Marketing, Networking, Resources for Businesses, and Visitor Services.

Advocacy

Our advocacy includes actions taken to influence government policies, regulations, and programs that affect the business sector. We focus on informing the decisions of politicians, policymakers, planners, and other public officials. We also advocate on important community issues that impact our members' ability to live, work and play in the South Shuswap.

By listening to our members, we identify barriers and constraints in the business environment, formulate proposals for change, advocate for business-friendly policies and regulations, and engage government and others in constructive dialogue.

To promote excellence in the local business sector, we also advocate for improved, responsive business practices and initiatives.

Community Impact

Sometimes we participate in, or otherwise support, non-business-related initiatives within the community. This elevates our image and helps create a community where our members can live, work and play.

Playing an active role in the community provides a competitive advantage as it helps acquire new members and customers, increases retention of existing members and customers, and creates a sense of connectedness and belonging.

Education And Training

Our education and training activities help align our members' employee skills and knowledge with their own goals. By engaging members, we are able to identify gaps in their teams and deliver training opportunities to bridge those gaps.

By participating in our training and education events, members can boost productivity, recruit and retain talent, increase job satisfaction and morale, and hopefully, earn more profit.

Marketing

Our marketing plan is divided into two streams. The first stream is marketing for chamber events and initiatives, the second stream involves marketing for members and the community. Our marketing activities help create and maintain demand, relevance, and reputation.

We engage businesses and community by telling compelling stories and creating good content around events, activities and members. This enhances our reputation and builds the brand of the chamber.

Networking

Networking is an important activity that is enjoyable and critical to business development. Our networking events help businesses thrive as they grow together and build relationships.

Our networking events are great for sharing ideas and knowledge, asking for feedback or discussing different points of view. Our events often result in referrals, potential collaborations or requests for products and services.

By attending our business and social events, members get noticed and have a chance to increase levels of trust from others and to create mutually beneficial relationships.

Resources For Businesses

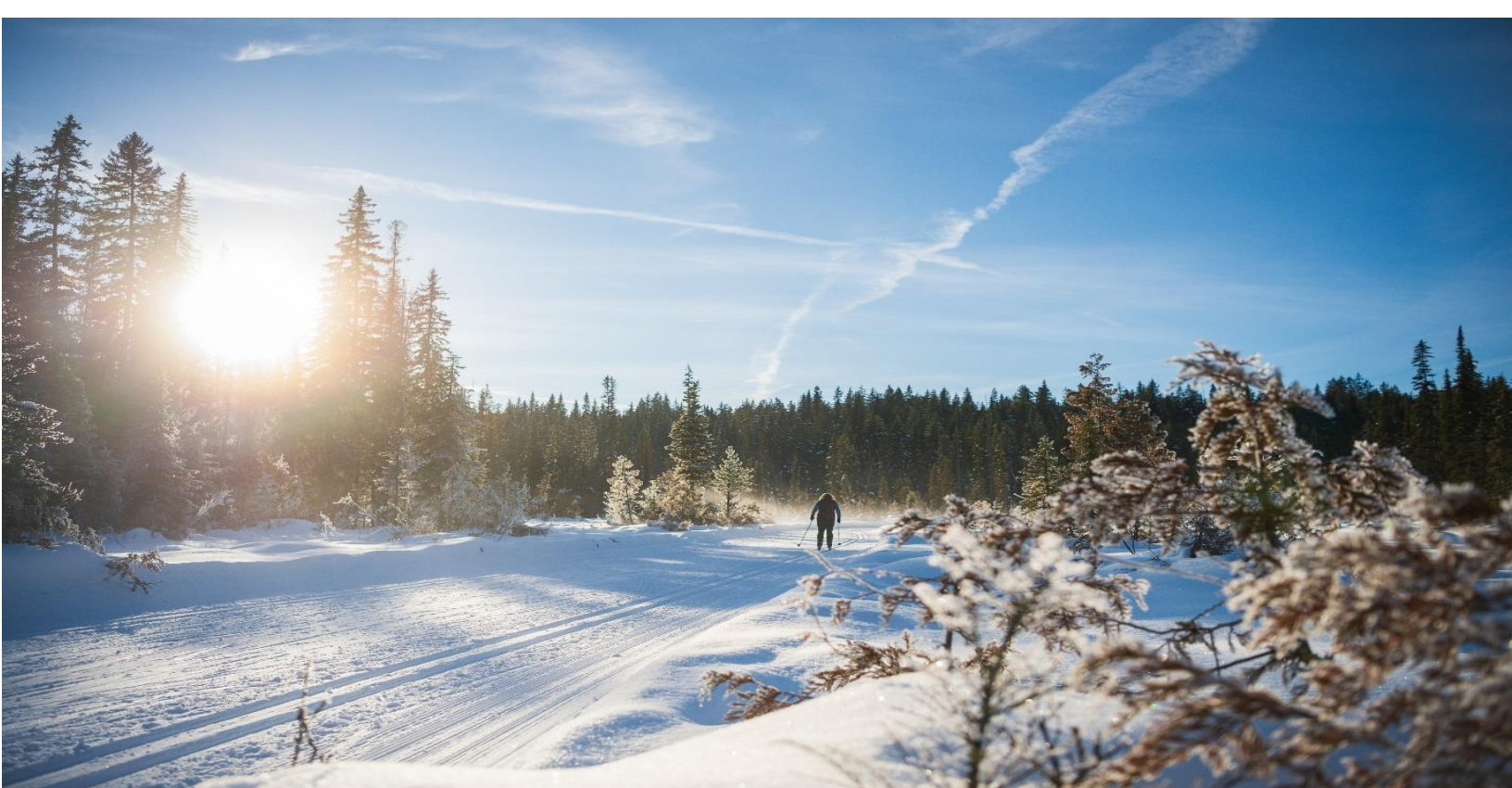
We strive to provide valuable resources for our members. A business that wants to be successful in today's economy needs access to resources that are relevant, affordable and timely.

Our resources are designed to be accessed quickly and efficiently by our members, while maintaining high quality and reducing the need for them to have internal expertise on all fronts.

Visitor Services

We are proud to provide visitor services once tourists and guests arrive in the South Shuswap (ie. information on activities, events, local shops, accommodators, food and beverage, etc.). When it comes to face-to-face engagement with area visitors, we are the 'boots on the ground'; the goals and initiatives brought forth by Shuswap Tourism are supported by our strategic and effective visitor services.

OUR EIGHT STRATEGIC PILLARS



The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce represents a diverse range of businesses and not-for-profit organizations. We are adaptive and creative in our work to best meet the needs of our member community as well as the broader community. We have organized our strategic objectives into eight pillars. Each pillar is led by a committee chair and a dedicated group of volunteer committee members and/or staff. Committee chairs must be a board member who is appointed to oversee the strategic direction, and, ensure progress, of each committee.

Our eight Strategic Pillars are:

- Membership Recruitment and Retention
- Visitor Information Services
- Shuswap Not-For-Profit Network
- Marketing and Communications
- Economic Development
- Education and Training
- Chamber Events
- Organizational Development

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce focusses on membership recruitment and retention because our members are the lifeblood of our organization. By attracting new members, and keeping existing ones, we are able to grow the South Shuswap business community, and we make sure that we are relevant and representative.

Some of our work in this category includes:

- Attracting new members each year
- Having representation on various boards and committees
- Promoting the chamber benefits program
- Exploring a group buying opportunity (ie. insurance, office supplies, accounting software, etc.)
- Publishing the chamber's membership directory
- Eventually providing access to the chamber facility/business centre as a member benefit

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Roll out a member ambassador program where existing members help new members actively use the organization's services, and connect to the business community
- Increase membership to 200+ members
- Strike a Membership Committee to assist in projects that build our membership
- Launch a new member recruitment campaign; one that rewards existing members
- Continue to promote the chamber benefits program

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Explore group buying power

Long Term Plan (Year 5+)

- Continue to build and monitor membership numbers

VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce provides high quality visitor information services to support a growing and diverse tourism sector. Our work, in this space, is overseen by the local Destination Marketing Organization, Shuswap Tourism. We ensure that visitors can easily access information on the area's attractions, lodgings, culture and other items relevant to tourism.

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Take a leadership role in the planning for wayfinding signage to create and expand our community brand
- In collaboration with Shuswap Tourism, the CSRD and our local First Nation neighbours, begin exploring South Shuswap gateway signage that identifies our region
- Refresh Visitor Information Kiosks throughout the South Shuswap in collaboration with Shuswap Tourism
- Strike a Visitor Information Services Committee to assist in projects, campaigns and initiatives that support our tourism-related sector
- Begin to explore Regenerative Tourism in collaboration with Shuswap Tourism
- In collaboration with Shuswap Tourism, work to expand our sub-region into a four-season tourist destination
- Collaborate with specific groups to create a "Best in Shu" event in the South Shuswap (ie. dogs)
- Create familiarization tours for locals and front-line workers to build cross-promotion and collaborative itineraries that increase visitorships
- In collaboration with the Arts Council for the South Shuswap, assist in maintaining the DotheShu Community Events Calendar
- Continue to manage DotheShu website
- Continue providing DotheShu Tourism Ambassador Training
- Continue to host annual Tourism Launch event
- Continue to have representation on the Shuswap Tourism Advisory Committee

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Develop or co-develop a local Visitor and Cultural Interpretation Centre
- Look for collaborative opportunities and supporting grant monies to create or enhance community gathering and event spaces

Long Term Plan (Year 5+)

- Continue to look for collaborative opportunities and supporting grant monies to support the prosperity of the tourism-related sector in our region

SHUSWAP NOT-FOR-PROFIT NETWORK

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce supports a wide range of not-for-profit organizations in the area. Our local not-for-profits foster civic engagement and leadership, contribute to local economic growth, and strengthen the fabric of our communities.

Some of our work in this category includes:

- Partnering with local organizations to help bring awareness to local needs
- Supporting, advertising, funding, and participating in local celebrations and gatherings
- Getting involved with various local non-business issues that can positively impact the community
- Spearheading initiatives that are business related yet spill over to community benefit

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Develop a Volunteer Shuswap program
- Host at least one annual meeting of the NPO Network
- Explore annual NPO surveys with the membership
- Continue to host and coordinate the NPO roundtables
- Continue to advertise/promote local non-business events of significance
- Continue to provide governance training to NPO staff and boards of directors

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Explore a program to provide community events sponsorships

Long Term Plan (Years 5+)

- Continue to find ways to support our NPO community

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce uses modern marketing, communications and advocacy to represent our members. Our messaging highlights business and community, and we get involved in issues that impact the business sector or the public's general wellbeing.

Some of our work in this category includes:

- Publishing newsletters, maintain social media pages, and running websites
- Sharing business stories and events
- Championing the workplace as a healthy, inclusive and productive environment
- Providing communication or marketing services that support advocacy to all levels of government in order to secure the rights and interests or to obtain resources that our members may need
- Providing communication or marketing services to support community-led initiatives for improved infrastructure, services and resources that bring benefit to our members
- Providing a media point person to speak on behalf of our business network

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Review our marketing plan
- Develop a winter video series / low season promotion (ie. winter ATV'ing)
- Explore joint marketing initiatives with other entities throughout the region
- Through increased membership, create a sustainability plan for DotheShu
- Publish a monthly Chamber Newsletter to our membership
- Continue to ensure brand continuity for DotheShu website & "Ask a Local" series
- Continue to report on the activities of the chamber through local media
- Continue to manage chamber of commerce website
- Continue to manage chamber social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- Continue to promote the member highlight series
- Continue to provide new member marketing exposure
- Continue to provide event and workshop marketing
- Continue to offer members reduced rates for promotions
- Continue to act as a central and first point of contact for businesses

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Fund larger ad spends to reach more people
- Refresh our chamber website
- Create a featured employers / success stories campaign
- Continue to support a sustainability plan for DotheShu

Long Term Plan (Year 5+)

- Collaborate with other chambers and organizations to broaden the buy local brand throughout the region/BC Interior

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce operates and supports programs, policies or activities that improve the economic well-being and quality of life of residents. In particular, we are committed to working with other community economic development groups such as neighbouring Chambers of Commerce, Shuswap Economic Development Society, Salmon Arm Economic Development Society, Community Futures Shuswap and the CSRD.

We believe that economic zones with more resources and activities are better equipped to provide jobs and opportunities for their community. Some of our work in this category includes:

- Providing referrals to businesses
- Expanding buy-local markets
- Creating and marketing Shop Local campaigns
- Helping to address local labour shortages
- Helping to address the local lack of affordable housing
- Helping to address the local lack of transportation issue
- Opening the doors of business to under-represented groups
- Broadening regional business opportunities

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Strike an Economic Development Committee to create, oversee and report back on economic development-based initiatives and projects
- Diversify community-based markets
- Look to create campaigns and possible infrastructure to support a strong agri-tourism hub in our region

- Create a Christmas Show
- Seek out collaborative working relationships and co-mentoring programs with our local First Nation Bands
- Increase our influence on external policies and bylaws to better support businesses
- In collaboration with the Visitor Information Services Committee, work with community partners to improve wayfinding and gateway signage to better represent the businesses of the region
- Continue to oversee and explore opportunities to grow "Market by the Bay"
- Continue expanding the "Ask a Local" series, other content to promote "live here, work here" and business listings
- Continue to develop seasonal campaigns for businesses (winter "Shop the Shu")
- Continue to support tourism-based and visitor servicing initiatives as part of our overall economic development plan
- Continue to support job recruitment efforts throughout the community
- Continue to seek grants from economic development organizations such as Economic Trust of the Southern Interior, Government of Canada, Province of BC

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Develop a Women In Business show
- Explore a Youth Entrepreneur program

Long Term Plan (Year 5+)

- Increase our influence on external policies and bylaws to better support businesses

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce offers a broad array of opportunities for personal and professional development. By embracing a lifelong learning approach, our members develop and improve their expertise and abilities.

Some of our work in this category includes:

- Providing information on regional, provincial, federal government and other programs and initiatives that support businesses
- Hosting lunch and learns, and meet n greets, presenting seminars and workshops
- Host focus sessions on targeted issues and topics to provide up to date, credible information from subject matter experts
- For a list of education and training topics for future consideration, as proposed by the board and members, see Appendix G

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Expand how we engage with and learn about local business needs and interests
- Create "Resources" tab on website
- Develop a business contact forum/FB group for businesses to ask for help
- Roll out more workshops (ie. how to use AI/ChatGPT)
- Develop low cost/no cost courses to upskill employees (ie. Foodsafe, First Aid, Serving It Right)
- Co-host Indigenous relations training
- Collaborate on education series with community partners (ie. Okanagan College, TOTA, Indigenous bands)
- Co-host agri-tourism based workshops in collaboration with industry partners
- Host presentations by regional, provincial, national researchers/analysts to our local business community
- Publish open-source local data (environment, economy, community)
- Integrate Indigenous 2-eyed seeing into local business thinking

- Continue to host all-candidates forums for Area C and Area G during local, provincial and national elections
- Continue to host meet n greets for local government directors and school trustee

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Develop a Speaker Panel program (ie. inspiration, living, technical)
- Publish reports and briefs for local businesses (done locally, or provide links to Canadian Chamber and other sources)

Long Term Plan (Year 5+)

- Publish business data: commission or purchase business reports relevant to our members
- Create demographic dashboards: related to our area for business development and planning
- Provide survey insights: related to our members' key obstacles, expectations for the future and views on emerging issues
- Develop charts and tables on key data releases and their implications for local business
- Coordinate a youth advisory group and/or a youth mentoring program

CHAMBER EVENTS

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce nurtures camaraderie and professional relationships through a series of networking activities, events and fundraisers. By building connections between members, we develop a stronger support network and we foster business growth opportunities.

Some of our work in this category includes:

- Hosting socials and mixers
- Presenting exposure opportunities to businesses and the community
- Creating events and fundraisers

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Strike a committee to revitalize the chamber golf tournament
- Host a bi-monthly coffee meet-up for local entrepreneurs, business owners, and freelancers
- Strike a committee to continue to host annual Snowball fundraiser
- Provide familiarization tours and socials for new business operators
- Continue to host periodic chamber socials
- Continue to coordinate the AGM social

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Seek opportunities for new events
- Initiate collaboration with Indigenous partners to co-host an event

Long Term Plan (Year 5+)

- Consider developing a new annual event or fundraiser

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce embraces a continuous improvement lens when it comes to internal growth and capacity building. Our efforts improve our offerings, talent, brand awareness and customer service.

Some of our work in this category includes:

- Overseeing excellence in our governance
- Administering our policies and procedures

- Administering duties to meet the needs of our membership and board
- Managing our monthly, quarterly and year-end financials
- Continually seeking grant writing opportunities
- Developing and nurturing collaborative working relationships with our community stakeholders and Indigenous rightsholders
- Seeking out highly qualified individuals or groups who can assist in the achievement of our goals and objectives

Short Term Plan (Years 1-2)

- Implement Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system
- Implement a new accounting system to integrate with CRM system
- Establish working committees to plan, implement and report back to the board in certain areas to ensure our strategic goals are met
- Review compensation and staffing model (ie. Executive Director, PT Admin, Marketing)
- Review our staff team capacity to ensure organizational needs are met and prioritize / pause projects or initiatives in order to stay within the team's capacity
- Launch the creation of a policies and procedures manual
- Look for alternative funding sources to grants (ie. service contracts, collaborative MOU's)
- Continue to find grant writing opportunities to fund initiatives
- Continue to seek out and nurture collaborative community relationships to assist in achieving our goals

Medium Term Plan (Years 3-4)

- Periodic review to ensure our staff and contractor team is sufficient to meet our needs

Long Term Plan (Year 5+)

- Periodic review to ensure our staff and contractor team is sufficient to meet our needs
- Keep systems and IT infrastructure up-to-date to meet growing needs

OUR FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN



The SSCC five-year plan is a long-term plan of action designed to move us towards our ultimate Vision. From year to year, it builds on the successes of previous years and it adjusts to the challenges of previous years. It also requires adaptation to the evolving political, social and economic realities of our environment.

Below is our strategic plan, broken into three phases, Short Term, Medium Term, Long Term, using our Strategic Pillars as sub-groups within each phase.

SHORT TERM (Years 1-2)

Membership Recruitment And Retention

- Roll out a member ambassador program where existing members help new members actively use the organization's services, and connect to the business community
- Increase membership to 200+ members
- Strike a Membership Committee to assist in projects that build our membership
- Launch a new member recruitment campaign; one that rewards existing members
- Continue to promote the chamber benefits program

Visitor Information Services

- Take a leadership role in the planning for wayfinding signage to create and expand our community brand
- In collaboration with Shuswap Tourism, the CSRD and our local First Nation neighbours, begin exploring South Shuswap gateway signage that identifies our region
- Refresh Visitor Information Kiosks throughout the South Shuswap in collaboration with Shuswap Tourism
- Strike a Visitor Information Services Committee to assist in projects, campaigns and initiatives that support our tourism-related sector
- Begin to explore Regenerative Tourism in collaboration with Shuswap Tourism

- In collaboration with Shuswap Tourism, work to expand our sub-region into a four-season tourist destination
- Collaborate with specific groups to create a “Best in Shu” event in the South Shuswap (ie. dogs)
- Create familiarization tours for locals and front-line workers to build cross-promotion and collaborative itineraries that increase visitorships
- In collaboration with the Arts Council for the South Shuswap, assist in maintaining the DotheShu Community Events Calendar
- Continue to manage DotheShu website
- Continue providing DotheShu Tourism Ambassador Training
- Continue to host annual Tourism Launch event
- Continue to have representation on the Shuswap Tourism Advisory Committee

Shuswap Not-For-Profit Network

- Develop a Volunteer Shuswap program
- Host at least one annual meeting of the NPO Network
- Explore annual NPO surveys with the membership
- Continue to host and coordinate the NPO roundtables
- Continue to advertise/promote local non-business events of significance
- Continue to provide governance training to NPO staff and boards of directors

Marketing And Communications

- Review our marketing plan
- Develop a winter video series / low season promotion (ie. winter ATV'ing)
- Explore joint marketing initiatives with other entities throughout the region
- Through increased membership, create a sustainability plan for DotheShu
- Publish a monthly Chamber Newsletter to our membership
- Continue to ensure brand continuity for DotheShu website & “Ask a Local” series
- Continue to report on the activities of the chamber through local media
- Continue to manage chamber of commerce website
- Continue to manage chamber social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- Continue to promote the member highlight series
- Continue to provide new member marketing exposure
- Continue to provide event and workshop marketing
- Continue to offer members reduced rates for promotions
- Continue to act as a central and first point of contact for businesses

Economic Development

- Strike an Economic Development Committee to create, oversee and report back on economic development-based initiatives and projects
- Diversify community-based markets
- Look to create campaigns and possible infrastructure to support a strong agri-tourism hub in our region
- Create a Christmas Show
- Seek out collaborative working relationships and co-mentoring programs with our local First Nation Bands
- Increase our influence on external policies and bylaws to better support businesses
- In collaboration with the Visitor Information Services Committee, work with community partners to improve wayfinding and gateway signage to better represent the businesses of the region
- Continue to oversee and explore opportunities to grow “Market by the Bay”
- Continue expanding the “Ask a Local” series, other content to promote “live here, work here” and business listings

- Continue to develop seasonal campaigns for businesses (winter “Shop the Shu”)
- Continue to support tourism-based and visitor servicing initiatives as part of our overall economic development plan
- Continue to support job recruitment efforts throughout the community
- Continue to seek grants from economic development organizations such as Economic Trust of the Southern Interior, Government of Canada, Province of BC

Education And Training

- Expand how we engage with and learn about local business needs and interests
- Create “Resources” tab on website
- Develop a business contact forum/FB group for businesses to ask for help
- Roll out more workshops (ie. how to use AI/ChatGPT)
- Develop low cost/no cost courses to upskill employees (ie. Foodsafe, First Aid, Serving It Right)
- Co-host Indigenous relations training
- Collaborate on education series with community partners (ie. Okanagan College, TOTA, Indigenous bands)
- Co-host agri-tourism based workshops in collaboration with industry partners
- Host presentations by regional, provincial, national researchers/analysts to our local business community
- Publish open-source local data (environment, economy, community)
- Integrate Indigenous 2-eyed seeing into local business thinking
- Continue to host all-candidates forums for Area C and Area G during local, provincial and national elections
- Continue to host meet n greets for local government directors and school trustee

Chamber Events

- Strike a committee to revitalize the chamber golf tournament
- Host a bi-monthly coffee meet-up for local entrepreneurs, business owners, and freelancers
- Strike a committee to continue to host annual Snowball fundraiser
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Organizational Development

- Implement Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system
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- Review our staff team capacity to ensure organizational needs are met and prioritize / pause projects or initiatives in order to stay within the team’s capacity
- Launch the creation of a policies and procedures manual
- Look for alternative funding sources to grants (ie. service contracts, collaborative MOU’s)
- Continue to find grant writing opportunities to fund initiatives
- Continue to seek out and nurture collaborative community relationships to assist in achieving our goals

MEDIUM TERM (Years 3-4)

Membership Recruitment And Retention

- Explore group buying power

Visitor Information Services

- Develop or co-develop a local Visitor and Cultural Interpretation Centre
- Look for collaborative opportunities and supporting grant monies to create or enhance community gathering and event spaces

Shuswap Not-For-Profit Network

- Explore a program to provide community events sponsorships

Marketing And Communications

- Fund larger ad spends to reach more people
- Refresh our chamber website
- Create a featured employers / success stories campaign
- Continue to support a sustainability plan for DotheShu

Economic Development

- Develop a Women In Business show
- Explore a Youth Entrepreneur program

Education And Training

- Develop a Speaker Panel program (ie. inspiration, living, technical)
- Publish reports and briefs for local businesses (done locally, or provide links to Canadian Chamber and other sources)

Chamber Events

- Seek opportunities for new events
- Initiate collaboration with Indigenous partners to co-host an event

Organizational Development

- Periodic review to ensure our staff and contractor team is sufficient to meet our needs

LONG TERM (Year 5+)**Membership Recruitment And Retention**

- Continue to build and monitor membership numbers

Visitor Information Services

- Continue to look for collaborative opportunities and supporting grant monies to support the prosperity of the tourism-related sector in our region

Shuswap Not-For-Profit Network

- Continue to find ways to support our NPO community

Marketing And Communications

- Collaborate with other chambers and organizations to broaden the buy local brand throughout the region/BC Interior

Economic Development

- Increase our influence on external policies and bylaws to better support businesses

Education And Training

- Publish business data: commission or purchase business reports relevant to our members
- Create demographic dashboards: related to our area for business development and planning

- Provide survey insights: related to our members' key obstacles, expectations for the future and views on emerging issues
- Develop charts and tables on key data releases and their implications for local business
- Coordinate a youth advisory group and/or a youth mentoring program

Chamber Events

- Consider developing a new annual event or fundraiser

Organizational Development

- Periodic review to ensure our staff and contractor team is sufficient to meet our needs
- Keep systems and IT infrastructure up-to-date to meet growing needs

SSCC PLANNING PARTICIPANTS



The South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce is sincerely grateful to the following people who gave their time and energy to participate in, and support, our strategic planning process.

SSCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Corryn Grayston, President
 Andy Schlamp, Vice-President
 Cory Barker, Director
 Mandie Belle, Director
 Barbra Fairclough, Director
 Dean Henry, Director
 Ashley Jager, Director
 Taleen Kazanjian, Director
 Michelle Mackay, Director
 Dawson McMullin, Director
 Chris Whittaker, Director

SSCC CONTRACTED STAFF

Karen Brown, Executive Director
 Jacquie Middlekoop, Administrator

SSCC ALLIES

Natalya Melnychuk, CSRD Area G Director
 John Reed, Shuswap Economic Dev't Society
 Morgen Matheson, Shuswap Tourism
 Member Businesses of the SSCC
 Not-For-Profit Members of the SSCC
 Government, Industry, and Other Funders

APPENDIX A

STATE OF BUSINESS IN CANADA

See master hardcopy or FULL file

APPENDIX B

STATE OF THE SOUTH SHUSWAP

See master hardcopy or FULL file

APPENDIX C

ALIGNED STRATEGIES

See master hardcopy or FULL file

APPENDIX D

NEARBY CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

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APPENDIX E

MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

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APPENDIX F

2022 SSCC ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT

See master hardcopy or FULL file

APPENDIX G

EDUCATION AND TRAINING TOPICS OF INTEREST

See master hardcopy or FULL file

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