



**Didsbury & District
Chamber of Commerce**

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August 2005

Strategic Plan
2005—2007

Didsbury and District Chamber of Commerce
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Past President - Penny Lind

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Ron Boyko
Margo Ward
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Greg Poirier

Administration Staff

Bill Windsor, Chamber Manager

Dear Current and Future Chamber Members:

What an incredible process, formulating and executing a strategic plan for the Didsbury and District Chamber of Commerce. This is an exciting time to be involved with the Chamber, a group of Didsbury businessmen and women clearly thinking progressively.

This document represents the results of our strategic planning process. It defines our goals and objectives and provides direction for our immediate future. The collaborative efforts of all involved in this process have identified a specific vision and mission for your Chamber of Commerce. These will guide the Chamber Council in making decisions for its membership through the first decade of this new millennium, a tremendous accomplishment for the Chamber and its members.



Sincerely,

Joanne Braun

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1.0 Introduction

Didsbury had a Board of Trade in the early years, a merchant's organization that promoted the business community. The first Chamber of Commerce meeting was held in January of 1962, organized to represent all interests in the Didsbury area, including industry and business, tourism and economic development, as well as the social well-being of the community. A member of the Central Alberta Economic Partnership program (CAEP), the Didsbury Chamber has an active membership of about 75 businesses. In an effort to provide services that enhance the community, the Chamber strives to provide a resource base to businesses and citizens within the Didsbury community.

In recent years the Chamber has become involved in many activities: hosting the increasingly successful Didsbury Trade Show, the Didsbury Country Christmas, the Small Business Week Gala, and various other events intended to raise awareness of the Chamber and increase membership. As our prominence in the community grew, so too did the requests to accept administration of even more events and activities. The magnitude of the projects being undertaken by the Chamber, with limited human resources and the realization that the Chamber had no clear mandate to continue to expand its project base, led to the process of conducting a strategic planning session for the Didsbury and District Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber needed to determine its role in the community and its service commitment to its membership. The environment the Chamber operates in has evolved and so too must the Chamber.

In the weeks leading up to the Strategic Planning Workshop, the Chamber endeavoured to conduct a survey of all businesses in the community to acquire a clear picture of the expectations of business and the role the Chamber might play in assisting business meet those expectations. The results of that survey played a key role in the Strategic Planning process, as business representatives examined the Chamber's position and responsibilities today and its focus for tomorrow.

1.1 *Products and Services*

- Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance
- ATB Financial MasterCard Merchant Discount Rate
- TD VISA Merchant Discount Rate
- Scotiabank VISA Merchant Discount Rate
- Online payroll services through PayWorks
- ESSO Fleet discount program
- Husky/Mohawk discount program
- Petro-Canada discount program
- Purolator volume discount program
- Adtel On-hold InfoPacs

- Chamber Trust Seal
- Subscription to 'Profile' magazine
- Upcoming sales and promotions listed
- Your business name listed on the Chamber's website
- Your business listed on the Central Alberta Business Internet Directory
- Networking with the Didsbury business community
- Access to informative guest speakers and training opportunities
- Member homepage program
- Discounts for the Didsbury Trade Show
- The bi-monthly newsletter, TGIT

1.2 Strategic Plan Components

This strategic plan includes the following components:

- Mission – A statement identifying an organization's reason for existence.
- Vision – A statement describing the desired future state of an organization.
- Core Values – The underlying principles used to guide decision making within an organization
- Success Indicators – Key measures used to assess and monitor progress made towards fulfilling an organization's mission, vision and core values.
- Goals – The end results which an organization sets out to achieve.
- Strategies – Provide direction and processes for achieving organizational goals.

Core Values, Success Indicators, Goals and Strategies are aligned with both the mission and vision; ensuring that the mission is achieved while efforts to fulfill the vision are also taken.

Annual Operating Plans, or ongoing action plans, will be created over the next three years, as a result of this Strategic Plan.

1.3 Mission

Creating an environment that supports and attracts business, Didsbury & District Chamber of Commerce is a community-based volunteer organization whose purpose is to support, promote, nurture, and educate for the improvement of the business community.

1.4 Vision

Didsbury & District Chamber of Commerce... A key resource unifying Didsbury's thriving business community.

1.5 Core Values

Integrity
Fiscal Responsibility
Commitment
Leadership
Reliability
Accountability
Diversity
Excellence

2.0 Success Indicators

<p>2.1 Mission</p>	<p>2.1.1 Members utilize Chamber member benefits</p> <p>2.1.2 Majority of Didsbury businesses are members</p> <p>2.1.3 Chamber functions are well attended</p> <p>2.1.4 Sufficient volunteer base to carry out Chamber functions</p> <p>2.1.5 Sufficient revenues to support Chamber programs</p> <p>2.1.6 Members credit Chamber for increased business</p> <p>2.1.7 Member utilize Chamber website to stay informed about Chamber initiatives</p> <p>2.1.8 Chamber partners with Town on mutually beneficial initiatives</p>
<p>2.2 Vision</p>	<p>2.2.1 Members utilize the Chamber as a key resource</p> <p>2.2.2 Community utilizes the Chamber as a key resource</p> <p>2.2.3 Members work together to attract new business</p> <p>2.2.4 Members work together for mutual benefit</p> <p>2.2.5 Chamber efforts increase growth in business</p> <p>2.2.6 Increase in downtown activity</p> <p>2.2.7 Members support and benefit from the Chamber's buy local initiatives</p>

2.3 Core Values	<p>2.3.1 Members speak highly of the Chamber</p> <p>2.3.2 Board members speak with one voice</p> <p>2.3.3 Members see themselves as stewards of the Chamber</p> <p>2.3.4 Members readily volunteer to share workload</p> <p>2.3.5 Members fulfill commitments</p> <p>2.3.6 Members are well informed of Chamber activities</p> <p>2.3.7 Chamber conducts its business in an open and transparent manner</p> <p>2.3.8 Chamber embraces new and innovative ideas</p>
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3.0 Goals

<p>3.1 Mission</p>	<p>3.1.1 To increase Chamber membership by 50% by 2007</p> <p>3.1.2 To achieve higher involvement in Chamber activities</p> <p>3.1.3 To ensure member involvement is time well spent</p> <p>3.1.4 To heighten awareness of Chamber programs</p>
<p>3.2 Vision</p>	<p>3.2.1 To be perceived as a key resource for the business community</p> <p>3.2.2 To unify Chamber members</p>
<p>3.3 Core Values</p>	<p>3.3.1 To see Chamber membership embrace core values</p> <p>3.3.2 To develop members to take on leadership roles</p> <p>3.3.3 To ensure the long-term financial viability of the Chamber</p> <p>3.3.4 To communicate the strategic direction of the Chamber</p> <p>3.3.5 To partner with others to create an economic development strategy to attract new business to the community</p>

4.0 Strategies

4.1 Mission

Goal	Strategies
4.1.1 Goal (3.1.1) To increase Chamber membership by 50% by 2007.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a membership recruitment plan • Create a social atmosphere at events • Partner with the Town to provide Chamber information packages to those who purchase a business license • Develop a strategy to attract County businesses • Develop membership incentives
4.1.2 Goal (3.1.2) To achieve higher involvement in Chamber activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the 'fun' concept • Promote the benefits of membership • Promote the 'fun' concept • Survey past members and non-members to determine why they are not currently members • Foster a culture to encourage members to actively participate in the Chamber
4.1.3 Goal (3.1.3) To ensure member involvement is time well spent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent agenda for all committees of the Chamber • Develop clear roles and responsibilities for volunteer tasks • Acknowledge Chamber successes
4.1.4 Goal (3.1.4) To heighten awareness of Chamber programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a marketing strategy and material • Maintain Chamber website • Develop a program evaluation process

4.0 Strategies

4.2 Vision

Goal	Strategies
4.2.1 (Goal 3.2.1) To be perceived as a key resource for the business community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host guest speakers at meetings and activities • Maintaining the event calendar • Maintain a business reference library for rental • Build an alliance with the Municipal Library • Target training sessions to meet the business community needs • Identify and communicate programs and services • Develop a communications strategy using multiple mediums
4.2.2 (Goal 3.2.2) To unify Chamber members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage members to make known and share their resources • Encourage collaborative marketing efforts amongst members • Encourage attendance at Chamber functions • Develop and launch a “buy local” campaign

4.3 Core Values

Goal	Strategies
4.3.1 (Goal 3.3.1) To see Chamber membership embrace core values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies and procedures are aligned with the core values of the Chamber • Develop and conduct board and new member orientation sessions
4.3.2 Goal (3.3.2) To develop members to take on leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize learning and development opportunities • Provide resource materials • Conduct new member interviews to identify skills and strengths • Recognize not only leadership positions but also leadership activities • Foster a culture to encourage members to assume leadership roles
4.3.3 Goal (3.3.3) To ensure the long-term financial viability of the Chamber.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an annual budget following generally accepted accounting principles • Ensure initiatives stay within pre-determined budgets
4.3.4 Goal (3.3.3) To communicate the strategic direction of the Chamber.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communication strategy • Ensure members understand how each decision made supports the Chamber's overall strategic direction
4.3.5 Goal (3.3.4) To partner with others to create an economic development strategy to attract new business to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate discussions with other economic development organizations and government • Develop a shared focus for economic growth within the Town and District

5.0 Summary

The goals and strategies included in this Strategic Plan will guide the efforts of the Board and Chamber staff over the next three years. Progress toward achieving these goals will be monitored by the Board on an ongoing basis. Annual reviews of this document will also ensure that this Plan remains a living document. This Plan can be used to assist existing and future Board members in continuing the strategic planning process.

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