



# Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce

## Strategic Plan

2016-2018

Final Plan 5.27.2016

## Executive Summary

The Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors with leadership from the Executive Director created a strategic plan for 2016-2018 that provides future strategic direction for the governance, leadership and operations of the ELCOC.

This plan ensures a clear focus on member value and guides the alignment of resources to ensure satisfaction among its members. The plan is designed to provide a roadmap for the Chamber's ultimate goal of becoming the leading, unified voice in advocating for local business and fostering business opportunity and growth.

This plan first identifies the Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce's mission, vision, values and goals.

## **Mission Statement**

The Elkhart Lake Area Chamber of Commerce will support local businesses as a partner by promoting economic growth and development opportunities that serve to enhance economic vitality.

## **Strategic Plan Vision**

Over the next three years, the Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce will...

- Deliver focused leadership
- Provide excellent, innovative benefits and services
- Offer business expertise
- Champion stewardship among its member businesses

# Guiding Values & Core Competencies

The Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce will accomplish our mission through...

- Focus, unity, rules of engagement and one voice = By adhering to our vision and goals.
- Progress = By taking risks and being innovative
- Stability and teamwork = By relying on intention and ability
- Ownership and commitment = By continually investing in our course of action
- Understanding, balance, and integrity = By being fair to our business members

## Goals & Objectives

The Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce will...

- Be an advocate for local business on critical issues, affecting positive change in order to support success in our area.
- Become the leading, unified voice for business in the region through advocacy and partnership.
- Foster opportunity for business outreach and engagement.

To set a path to achieve its goals, the Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce did a self assessment through a series of situational analysis exercises.

# Situational Analysis

The Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce first identified areas of strength and weakness related to the internal environment of the Chamber and generated opportunities and threats related to the external environment of the Chamber through a SWOT analysis.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presence &amp; involvement in community</li><li>• Financial strength</li><li>• Strong core membership</li><li>• Member expertise</li><li>• Full staff</li><li>• Strong annual &amp; community events</li><li>• Depot Dispatch/news source</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timeliness of communications</li><li>• Lack of committee participation</li><li>• Lack of member involvement</li><li>• Lack of outreach/ambassadors and volunteers</li><li>• No measurements, assessment of</li><li>• Negative perception of the Chamber</li></ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approachable</li><li>• Engagement</li><li>• Ambassadors</li><li>• More referrals</li><li>• More networking</li><li>• Establish stronger channels of communication</li><li>• Drive better fundraising through events</li><li>• Better focused events</li><li>• Assessment of events</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unknown value of membership</li><li>• Not adaptable</li><li>• Lack of available employees and housing in the community threatens community economic growth</li></ul>

# Situational Analysis

The Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce then gaged how external political, economic, social, and technological factors affect activities and performance of the Chamber by conducting a PEST analysis.

Political	Economical
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Village relationship</li><li>• Village ordinances, liquor laws, etc.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seasonal</li><li>• Minimal employee base</li><li>• Not enough housing</li></ul>
Social	Technological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not a diverse ethnicity in the village</li><li>• Older age set/older population</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of technological knowledge</li></ul>

# Situational Analysis

Next, the Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce evaluated its current programs and initiatives through a portfolio exploration based on the following criteria:

- Income potential
- Access to members/unique visitors
- Increased business potential for members

<b>Star – Strong projects with potential for growth</b>	<b>Question Mark – New or innovative projects but not yet proven</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time Out Newsletter (reaches 450 recipients)</li> <li>• Web site (member marketing opportunities)</li> <li>• Lodging Program (\$11,330 income – need data)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events – Schnee Days (\$3,300 income)</li> <li>• Events – Golf Outing (\$1,100 income)</li> </ul>
<b>Foundation Stone – Reliable projects that provide financial security or credibility</b>	<b>Dead Ducks – Take up management or financial resources and provide little or no value</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events – Downtown Night (\$4,000 in income)</li> <li>• Events – Hauler Parade/Boat Ride (no income)</li> <li>• Farmers Market (\$16,100 income – need data )</li> <li>• Depot Dispatch (\$15000 income )</li> <li>• Chamber Cash (\$1,800 income )</li> <li>• Membership dues (\$19,000 income )</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual (Awards Dinner) &amp; Quarterly Meetings (no income,\$500 in expenses, little networking)</li> <li>• Lack of technological knowledge</li> </ul>



# Situational Analysis

In its final program evaluation, the Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce rated its portfolio based on the following rating criteria:

A = Programs we would never stop doing

B = If revenue dropped by 50%, which programs would we stop doing?

C = If revenue dropped by 75%, which programs would we stop doing?

## Programs with an A rating

- Depot Dispatch
- Farmers Market
- Major Events
- Web site/Marketing
- Membership Dues

## Programs with a B rating

- Lodging Program
- Chamber Cash

## Programs with a C rating

- Workshops/Member Meetings
- Networking Events

## Stakeholder Interviews

To set a precedence for achievable tasks to support realistic goals, the key stakeholders were first asked a series of questions about their ‘blue-sky’ prophecy for the Chamber. Their answers were:

- Overcome the negative perception of no clear benefit to join the chamber or that the Chamber is too complacent
- Obtain many volunteers
- Have great membership outreach
- Have a clear mission, strategy and goals
- Overcome lack of data and timeliness
- That the “ELCOC is the ‘go to source’ for business benefits
- Overcome sense of ‘duty’ or ‘have to’ mentality for the reason to join the Chamber
- Everyone will know the reason to join the Chamber
- Hold more events
- To be vibrant and an engaging Chamber

# Action Plan

As a final step to support it's goals, the Elkhart Lake Chamber outlined the tasks, timeframe, resources and metrics for key programs summarized in an action plan. The plan is as follows:

Objective	Tasks	Timeframe	Resources Needed
Be an advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ambassador program</li> <li>Marketing (web, DD articles, time out)</li> <li>Membership recruitment packets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 years</li> <li>Now</li> <li>6 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers</li> <li>Exec Director, staff &amp; Delta's time</li> <li>Vendor (Sun Graphics) time and \$</li> </ul>
Be a unified voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DD articles on the Chamber/Directors report</li> <li>Relation building with community orgs</li> <li>Chamber PR role/definition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 months</li> <li>3 months</li> <li>6-12 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee, board notes</li> <li>Board, Exec Director time</li> <li>Time, staff, releases, presentations</li> </ul>
Foster opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committees</li> <li>Engagement opportunities</li> <li>Talent match</li> <li>Member kick off event/Chamber open house</li> <li>Business elevator pitches/spotlights</li> <li>Meet-and-greet/Meet the Board</li> <li>Village member spotlight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 months</li> <li>6 months</li> <li>6 months</li> <li>6 months</li> <li>6 months</li> <li>6-12 months</li> <li>1 year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers</li> <li>Board members</li> <li>Lakeland school services</li> <li>Chamber staff time, \$ for event</li> <li>Tap businesses to present</li> <li>Board member time, \$ for event</li> <li>Resident time, \$ for event</li> </ul>

## Metrics

Members	Count of active members vs. non-active, members outside of area vs. inside area
Lodging Program	List of facilities (# and type of facilities, log of # of rentals and costs for each)
Farmers Market	# of vendors, % of filled and sales capacity each week, attendance of patrons
Events/Member Meetings	Attendance at each event/meeting, survey vendor or member value at each
Marketing	Web stats, CTRs, Eblast opens, hits, shared links & posts

## Summary

The Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan is intended to be a “living document” providing direction for the organization and will serve to guide the ELCOC in their governance, leadership and operational activities for 2016-2018. The Chamber board and staff are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this strategic plan in the future.

This strategic plan will be reviewed at least annually by the Elkhart Chamber Executive Director and the Board of Directors to ensure that it supports the organization’s core ideology and inspires both staff and the business community to support it.