

BRIDGEWATER

DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

2015 to 2017 STRATEGIC PLAN



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1.0 Executive Summary

The Bridgewater Development Association (BDA) came into existence in 2002 to help promote the Town of Bridgewater and help improve Social and Economic base in the Bridgewater area.

The BDA is registered as a non-profit organization and operates at arms length from the Town of Bridgewater. The work of the BDA is overseen by a volunteer board of directors with a complement of 10 to 13 members and a manager. The Board of Directors sets policy for the BDA and the BDA manager carries out the work of the BDA within the policy and approved Strategic Plan and annual budget.

The BDA's work has been carried out by Project Teams and resulting sub-committees, comprised of BDA Board of Directors and community volunteers.

The BDA has sold commercial and residential land to generate operating money for the BDA since its inception. However, 2014 was not a good year for land sales and the BDA needs to consider other funding means in order to have a new beginning for the 2015-16 fiscal and future years.

During 2014, the BDA board began discussing the potential of revisiting the structure of the BDA, how projects are carried out and the possibility of re-imagining the work of the BDA.

Following discussion by the BDA board about this topic, several strategic planning sessions, with BDA Board members and the BDA manager, led by an outside facilitator, were held. The outcome of those sessions form the foundation of the BDA’s Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is the road map for setting the 2015-2016 and future year’s Budgets and work of the BDA. It is understood that some projects will continue beyond the 2015-2016 year.

During the development of the Strategic Plan, the BDA Board members created a new model for BDA work. The Action Team model was dispensed of and a Project Team model was introduced.

The Project Team model would give a more concerted effort and direction to the project being undertaken, rather than placing a number of initiatives under one Action Team. A strength of the BDA is the commitment by volunteers and the knowledge they bring. The Project Team model lends to more involvement by volunteers.

2.0 Purpose of the BDA

“To help position Bridgewater as a community of choice for business and individuals to reside and grow.”

It was agreed upon by the BDA Board of Directors, that the Purpose of the BDA would be the guiding light for the BDA in its work.

3.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS of the BDA:

1. Shared Vision by BDA, Town of Bridgewater & Partners
2. Downtown Core Improvement & Revitalization
3. Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion
4. Branding
5. Marketing

The BDA has the following Project Teams and sub-committees to help carry out its work. Other Project Teams and / or sub-committees will be established as needed.

3.1 Project Teams

3.1.1 Business Improvement District (BID) Steering Committee.

3.1.2 Showcase Bridgewater Project Team (includes marketing, branding and broader topics relating to promoting and showcasing Bridgewater, Showcase Bridgewater event, celebrating community successes, ambassador program, creating pride within the community).

3.1.3 Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Task Force.

3.1.4 Incubation/Innovation Centre Project Team.

3.1.5 Bridgewater Marina Association

3.1.6 River Restoration Project Team

➤ **Outdoor Classroom**

3.1.7 Board Governance

3.1.8 Sale of Residential and Commercial land Project Team

3.1.9 Business Attraction Package Project Team

3.1.10 Arts and Culture Project Team

➤ **Art Happening**

➤ **Afterglow Festival**

➤ **Arts and Culture as an Economic Driver**

4.0 BDA involvement:

- Downtown Master Plan Implementation (DPAC).
- South Shore Work Force Committee.
- Events Lunenburg County.
- BREI (Business Retention and Expansion International).
- Now Lunenburg County.
- Why Here Steering Committee.

5.0 Overall goal of the Bridgewater Development Association’s Board of Directors:

Action items:

1. Continue to have a shared Vision with Town of Bridgewater and other partners and work toward this vision.

Goal # 1 – Continue to have a shared Vision with Town of Bridgewater and other partners and work toward this vision.

OBJECTIVE 1 - TO Share Strategic Plan with Town of Bridgewater and other partners, such as the South Shore Regional Enterprise Network.

Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. Meet with Town Council of Bridgewater and Senior Staff to share Strategic Plan and seek input and clarification.	1. Set meeting with TOB and another with partners to share strategic plan and goals and to get input and support.	Start May 2016 and On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDA Manager. • Showcase Bridgewater Project team. • BDA Board of Directors. 		
2. Fine tune a Strategic Plan, which was shared and supported by the BDA and the Town of Bridgewater.	2. Periodic discussions between the BDA and Town of Bridgewater to ensure everyone is in agreement with the direction and plan and to adjust as needed.	Start May 2016 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDA Manager. • Town Senior Managers. • BDA Board of Directors. • Town Council of Bridgewater. 		Do regular check-ins to determine if BDA and TOB are aligning work toward common goals.

6.0 Grow Bridgewater

The following Project teams will help Grow Bridgewater:

Showcase Bridgewater Project Team.

BID project team.

Incubation/Innovation Centre Project team.

BRE Project Task Force.

Action Items

1. Develop pride in our community and promote our passion.
2. Assist the Town as needed to support and promote a brand for the Town.
3. Redefine and revitalize downtown – beautify, bring alive with excitement and arts and culture and partnerships.
4. Business growth downtown.
5. Help establish a Business Improvement District downtown Bridgewater.
6. Explore the feasibility of establishing an Incubation/Innovation Centre.
7. Set up and drive a Business Retention and Expansion program for Bridgewater.

Action Items driven by:

- ✓ Our pride in our community.
- ✓ Our passion for our community.
- ✓ Beautifying our community.
- ✓ Being optimistic about the future.
- ✓ Inclusive, vibrant, sustainable community.

Goal # 1 – Develop Pride in our community and promote our passion.					
OBJECTIVE 1 - To help build community pride					
Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. Hold public discussions about what creates community pride and how to show community pride.	1. Work in partnership with other groups such as BACC, Art Happening, Afterglow festival, LQ Volunteer Partnership, TOB departments to reach out to community members about creating and showing community pride.	Start May 2016 and On-going	a. BDA Manager. b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. c. BDA Board of Directors. d. Community organizations.		Help citizens understand and appreciate what they can celebrate and how they build pride in their community and how they can pass this along to people they meet.

Goal # 1 – Develop Pride in our community and promote our passion.

OBJECTIVE 1 - To help build community pride

Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
2. Create an Ambassador Program for Bridgewater	1. Meet with Service Groups and ask for help in building an Ambassador Program 2. Hold public discussion meetings to form levels of Ambassador and what Ambassadors can do to help promote the pride and confidence in Bridgewater.	Start June 2016 and on-going.	a. BDA Manager. b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. c. BDA Board of Directors. d. Service Groups.		Create different levels of Ambassadors, encourage citizens to sign on and give them the tools needed to become a natural and large promotional tool for the Town. Use information gathered during the community picnic to create ambassador packages.
3. Celebrate Success	1. Engage the community in celebrating success.	Start June 2016, to hold during summer or fall of 2016	a. BDA Manager. b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. c. BDA Board of Directors. d. Service Groups. e. Community organizations. f. TOB.		Hold another community picnic to celebrate success. Outline what the community has to celebrate and celebrate success. Call upon Service Groups to help provide the food for the community picnic.

Goal # 2 – Help support and promote a brand for the Town.					
OBJECTIVE 1 - To work with the Town of Bridgewater in creating a brand for Bridgewater					
Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. To share with the TOB, input from the Community about what is building pride in the community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hear what the community members are saying gives them pride in the Town. Learn from the community what they want to promote about the community. Work closely with the TOB and what they have heard through their previous projects: Imagine Bridgewater and the Downtown Master Plan process. 	May to August 2016.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> BDA Manager Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. BDA Board of Directors. Community organizations. TOB. 		Help citizens understand and appreciate what they can celebrate and how they build pride in their community and how they can pass this along to people they meet.
2. Support and promote TOB’s brand, which sells the town as a community of choice for business and individuals to reside and grow.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote what the Town has to offer, which attracts people to live in a community. Get input from community members, as to what keeps them in the Town and what attracted them to the Town. 	July and August 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> BDA Manager. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. BDA Board of Directors. TOB. 		Work closely with the TOB in supporting and promoting the brand for the Town.

Goal # 3 – Redefine and revitalize downtown Bridgewater

OBJECTIVE 1 - To work with the Town of Bridgewater in the implementation of the downtown master plan

Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. To assist the Town in any way possible to implement the downtown Master Plan.	1. To work on projects, such as helping create a Business Improvement District and a façade program, which compliment the downtown Master Plan. 2. To continue work on River Restoration projects which enhance downtown Bridgewater.	May 2016 and ongoing.	a. BDA Manager b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. c. BDA Board of Directors. d. Downtown businesses. e. TOB.		Help citizens and businesses understand and appreciate the impact of downtown revitalization.

Goal # 4 – Help create business growth downtown

OBJECTIVE 1 - To understand the needs of business and promote to businesses the availability of commercial space downtown and to help enhance business growth downtown Bridgewater.					
Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. To develop and host a “Showcase Bridgewater” event.	1. Organize a Showcase Bridgewater event and invite developers and businesses to attend and learn about the positive aspects of Bridgewater and the opportunities for growing and expanding a business.	September 2016	a. BDA Manager b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. c. BDA Board of Directors. d. Community organizations. e. TOB.		Showcase Bridgewater in a way which helps businesses make a decision to set up or expand in Bridgewater.
2. To help establish a Business Improvement District in downtown Bridgewater.	2. To continue to work on establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) in downtown Bridgewater.	Spring 2016 hold a vote by property owners and businesses in the proposed BID area.	a. BDA Manager. b. BID p/t coordinator. c. BID Steering Committee. d. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team.		To continue visits and discussions with property owners and businesses in the proposed BID area to learn their concerns re: establishing a BID and to learn what they want from a BID. Budget is to provide toward hiring p/t BID coordinator for 8 weeks, for advertising and projects.

Goal # 5 – Help create business growth in all areas of Bridgewater					
OBJECTIVE 1 - To provide help to attract, retain and help businesses expand in Bridgewater.					
Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. To work toward establishing an Incubation/Innovation Centre which will service attract and serve businesses from Hubbards to Yarmouth.	1. To determine the feasibility of establishing an Incubation/Innovation Centre in Bridgewater.	February to July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. BDA Manager b. Incubation/Innovation Project Team c. BDA Board of Directors. d. CABI (Canadian Association of Business Incubation. e. Innovacorp. f. ACOA. g. Department of Business. h. TOB. 		Commission a feasibility Study. Seek funding for the study from other sources. Use the model created for the establishment of the Collaborative Health Centre.
2. To continue a BRE (Business Retention and Expansion) program.	2. To continue with the TASK FORCE to run a BRE program based on the format used in 2006-2007, for which the BDA won an international award for best practices.	November 2015 to April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. BDA Manager. b. BRE Task Force. c. BDA Board of Directors. d. Department of Business. e. BACC. 		Through the BRE program, interview a large sample of local businesses to determine obstacles to their retention and expansion in Bridgewater.
3. Marketing the Town of	3. To promote the Town as	May 2016 to	a. BDA Manager.		Promote to developers,

Goal # 5 – Help create business growth in all areas of Bridgewater					
OBJECTIVE 1 - To provide help to attract, retain and help businesses expand in Bridgewater.					
Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
Bridgewater.	a place to live, visit and to establish a business.	March 2017	b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. c. BDA Board of Directors. d. TOB. e. MODL. f. Region of Queens. g. NSBI. h. SSREN		site selectors and businesses outside of Nova Scotia. Continue to support the Why Here project. Partner with adjacent communities in marketing.
4. Continue to improve the Business Attraction Package	4. To distribute an electronic and hard copy Business Attraction Package which can be marketed to Businesses, developers and site Selectors.	May 2016 March 2017 & ongoing.	a. BDA Manager. b. Business Attraction Project Team. c. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. d. BDA BOD's.		Continue to improve, refine and distribute the Business Attraction Package.
5. Develop a visitor and resident attraction brochure or rack card and companion information piece.	5. To develop a brochure which can be placed in Visitor Information centres and can be sent to people interested in learning more about Bridgewater.	February to April 2016. Ongoing to distribute.	a. BDA Manager. b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. c. Business Attraction Project Team d. TOB. e. NSTA		An information package should be available to send to people upon request. In addition, a brochure or rack card should be available for display at

Goal # 5 – Help create business growth in all areas of Bridgewater					
OBJECTIVE 1 - To provide help to attract, retain and help businesses expand in Bridgewater.					
Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
					the Visitor Information Centres and other places which visitors frequent.
6. Marketing and Business Development.	6. To hire a part-time person to help with the work of Marketing and Business Development.	April 2016 to March 2017.	a. TOB b. BDA		To hire a person for 12 months @ 10 hours a week + mandatory Employer costs.
7. Create and implement a buy local campaign and a Business to Business campaign	8. Create a simple economics case for community members and businesses to appreciate the value of buying local.	April 2016 to March 2017.	a. BDA b. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team		

7.0 River Restoration

Action Items

1. Continue with projects, which enhance downtown Bridgewater and bring the LaHave River to the forefront.
2. Work closely with the Town of Bridgewater to align BDA efforts with Town efforts for downtown development and revitalization.
3. Help encourage the use of the LaHave River.

Action items driven by:

- ✓ *Redefining and revitalizing downtown Bridgewater.*
- ✓ *Working and partnering with the Town of Bridgewater to align work to achieve common goals in the downtown Master Plan.*
- ✓ *Helping create a vibrant and exciting downtown.*
- ✓ *Improving foot traffic and increasing shopping in downtown Bridgewater.*

Goal # 1 – Work with the Town to align goals for enhancing the downtown and LaHave River.

OBJECTIVE 1 - To continue work on River Restoration.

Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. To continue with River Restoration projects on and near the LaHave River.	1. To complete the outdoor classroom project and start another River Restoration project, which aligns with the downtown Master Plan.	August 2016 to complete the outdoor classroom and ongoing for new projects.	a. BDA Manager. b. River Restoration Team. c. BCAF. d. Various Environmental funding partners.		River Restoration Team will complete the outdoor classroom project. The completed project will be taken over by the Town of Bridgewater as a Town Park. The Town will be responsible for ongoing maintenance costs.
2. Continued improvements to and self sufficiency of the Bridgewater Marina.	2. The BDA will continue to assist the Bridgewater Marina, with board members and the BDA manager participating on the Board of the Bridgewater Marina Association until the Marina becomes self sufficient.	April 2016 to August 2018	a. BDA Manager. b. BDA Board of Directors. c. Bridgewater Marina Association.		The BDA has been the driving force behind creating the Bridgewater Marina. The BDA will remain involved until the Marina has repaid financing for the Marina, expected to be in August 2018 to 2020.

8.0 Arts and Culture Project Team

Art Happening and Afterglow Festival help the Arts and Culture Team carry out its work.

Action Items

1. Encouraging the success of the Art Happening Society.
2. Working with Afterglow Festival to help the festival grow beyond our expectations.
3. Help create and / or grow other festivals in Bridgewater.
4. Helping downtown Bridgewater businesses realize the economic benefits of creating an Arts culture in downtown Bridgewater.

Action Items driven by:

- ✓ Redefining and revitalizing downtown Bridgewater.
- ✓ Bringing more business to downtown Bridgewater.
- ✓ Creating a community, which is vibrant and exciting.
- ✓ Creating a festival for downtown, which survives and thrives and becomes well recognized.
- ✓ Helping create a community which people are proud of, want to be part of and help to create, a community where enthusiasm is contagious.

Goal # 1 – Creating a downtown, which has been redefined and revitalized, is exciting and vibrant and attracts business and customers through Art and Culture.

OBJECTIVE 1 - To work with existing organizations to bring more arts and culture to Bridgewater, in particular to downtown Bridgewater.

Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. To continue work with the Art Happening project to help bring forward the benefits to Economic Development of having an Arts Culture in downtown Bridgewater	1. Support and contribute to the work of the Art Happening project, bringing Economic Development principles to the project so that the downtown grows, becomes vibrant and becomes an attraction to and destination for visitors to the Town.	April 2016 to March 2017	a. BDA Manager. b. Arts and Culture Project Team. c. Art Happening and Afterglow Festival Project Team.		\$1,500 ask has been made by the Art Happening Society under the Town’s grant to organizations budget.
2. To support the continued development of the Afterglow Festival.	2. Help the Afterglow Festival organizers learn from other successful festivals in Lunenburg County. Support the work of the Afterglow festival and where possible support funding applications.	April 2016 to March 2017	a. BDA Manager. b. Arts and Culture Project Team. c. Art Happening and Afterglow Festival Project Team.		

Goal # 1 – Creating a downtown, which has been redefined and revitalized, is exciting and vibrant and attracts business and customers through Art and Culture.

OBJECTIVE 1 - To work with existing organizations to bring more arts and culture to Bridgewater, in particular to downtown Bridgewater.

Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
3. To support initiatives of Events Lunenburg County.	3. To continue to support initiatives of Events Lunenburg County. To help with projects as needed. 4. To help attract events, conferences and concerts to the Bridgewater area.	April 2016 to March 2017	a. BDA Manager.		
4. To demonstrate to Business and the community the economic benefits of creating an arts culture in downtown Bridgewater	5. Hold a discussion with Town and another with businesses to demonstrate the economic successes of communities which embrace an arts culture and support the creation of artist businesses.	April 2016 to March 2017	a. BDA Manager. b. Art Happening Society. c. Downtown businesses. d. Youth Art Connection. e. Afterglow Festival. f. BID Team. g. TOB.		Will also draw upon the knowledge and learnings of neighboring community festivals and events.

9.0 Sale of Residential and Commercial Land Project Team

Action items

1. To establish a Sale of Property Project Team, in order to give high priority to the sale of BDA owned land. It is through the sale of BDA owned land that the BDA generates revenue to operate.
2. To develop a marketing plan and promotional package for sale of residential and commercial land owned by the BDA.
3. To develop a marketing strategy to provide a Business Attraction package, developed by the Business Attraction Project Team, to identified site selectors, developers and businesses.

Action items driven by:

- ✓ Creating more businesses in Bridgewater.
- ✓ To help position Bridgewater as a community of choice for businesses to establish and grow.
- ✓ Establish a BID for the Bridgewater Business Park.
- ✓ Marketing the Town of Bridgewater as a place for business.

Goal # 1 – Develop and implement a marketing strategy to sell residential and commercial BDA owned land.

OBJECTIVE 1 - To develop a marketing strategy for sale of BDA owned land.

Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
1. To use the Business Attraction Package which has been developed by the Business Attraction Package Project Team to send to identified site selectors, developers and businesses.	1. Add to the site selector, developer and business database and distribute the link to the electronic Business Attraction Package and / or distribute the hard copy of the package to this list.	April 2016 to March 2017	a. BDA Manager. b. Sale of Land Project Team. c. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team. d. Business Attraction Project Team. e. BID coordinator.		
2. To use the promotion brochure or rack card and supporting information package to attract people to live in Bridgewater and hopefully purchase residential land.	1. Promote to people in other communities in NS and in Ontario the benefits of relocating to Bridgewater. Provide local people with promotional material for family and friends.	April 2016 to March 2017	a. BDA Manager. b. Sale of land Project Team. c. Showcase Bridgewater Project Team.		Through past work by the BDA and in particular with Welcome Wagon, it was learned that most people relocating to Bridgewater and Lunenburg County came from #1. Other parts of Nova Scotia and #2. from Ontario. The #1 reason people relocated was to be near family and friends.

Goal # 1 – Develop and implement a marketing strategy to sell residential and commercial BDA owned land.					
OBJECTIVE 1 - To develop a marketing strategy for sale of BDA owned land.					
Action Items	How to achieve	Timelines	Who is responsible		Comments
3. Send to Site Selectors, Developers and businesses links to specific Why Here videos.	2. Using the database of site selectors, developers and businesses, send the link to specific Why Here videos.	April 2016 to March 2017.	a. BDA Manager.		
4. Work toward establishing a BID for the Bridgewater Business Park.	3. This would help develop a plan to beautify the Bridgewater Business Park and make it more attractive for businesses to locate there.	April 2016 to March 2017.	a. BDA Manager. b. BID Steering Committee. c. Sale of Land Project Team.		

10.0 BDA Structure and Board Governance

Action Item	Timeline	Comments
1. The BDA Board has determined that the best structure to achieve the goals and objectives set out in this Strategic Plan is the setting up of Project Teams as outlined in this plan, with sub-committees as needed.	Completed	The BDA Board of Directors did consider the best structure and use of staff and volunteers in achieving the goals and objectives of this strategic plan. The role of Board members and BDA manager will also be considered in the Board Governance Package.
2. The BDA board will review and approve a Board Governance Package for the operation of the BDA.	February to April 2016	The BDA manager will prepare the DRAFT Board Governance package as agreed upon by the Board Governance sub-committee. This will be presented to the BDA Board of Directors for approval.