



Strategic Plan 2023-25

Introduction

The Whistler Chamber of Commerce (“the Chamber”) has updated its strategic plan to more clearly identify its unique value proposition to its members, better reflecting the current post-Covid and Whistler resort contexts. The strategic plan update involved a survey with board, staff and Chamber business members, a review of the Whistler Scenarios (a community engagement initiative led by the Resort Municipality of Whistler to identify four potential future scenarios), and a scan of seven other Chambers of Commerce in BC to understand their strategic plan focus areas.

Whistler
Chamber

Current context

The Whistler Chamber has approximately 700 members in 2023, in line with pre-pandemic levels. There is a mix of long-standing members (10+ years) and newer ones across different sectors ranging from accommodation and food service to business and professional services, and construction. Members indicated they joined the Chamber for a number of reasons, the top ones being business communications (e.g., news and updates) and opportunities to connect with other businesses (e.g., through events), followed closely by the Whistler Experience and Chamber advocacy initiatives. Members indicated strong satisfaction with their Chamber membership.

As identified in many B.C. communities, members indicated that the biggest challenge facing businesses is the lack of affordable housing, including for seasonal staff. The next biggest challenges are the cost of labour/wages, the cost of doing business, and the challenges in finding and retaining labour. The lack of affordable housing was cited as a main reason for the challenges in finding labour. The lack of regional transit also remains a challenge for getting employees to work, guests to businesses and residents to services.

A scan of other business organizations in B.C. showed that the training programs previously delivered by the Chamber are being offered – potentially more cost-effectively and/or with government funding – by other organizations (e.g., GoToHR and Small Business B.C.), which raised the need for the Chamber to clearly identify where it can provide the best value in offering training to its members.

In developing this strategic plan, the Chamber has strengthened its commitment to applying an equity, diversity and inclusion lens in its work. The Chamber board and staff identified that, while the Chamber team is strong, it is a smaller team than pre-pandemic. Given a limited budget and staff, the Chamber board recognized the need to clarify the Chamber’s value proposition to its members and focus on delivering the services and products that it is best positioned to deliver. This strategic plan reflects the Chamber’s clear focus on re-building a solid foundation to deliver on its value proposition and key pillars to meet its mission and provide the best value possible to members, while considering the best strategies to weather potential future scenarios.

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VISION Thriving businesses in a resilient mountain resort community

MISSION To help our members achieve business success

KEY PILLARS	PROVIDE BUSINESS SUPPORTS	ADVOCATE FOR BUSINESS	CREATE CONNECTIONS	STRIVE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE
VALUE PROPOSITION	We provide the resources, services and programs to support talent development and successful business operations.	We provide a unified voice for business on issues within our influence that help enable business success.	We make it easy and fun to create strong and meaningful B2B and community relationships within Whistler and beyond.	We are an exemplary organization and strong leader and partner.
STRATEGIES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide the best tangible benefits possible to Chamber members. 2. Provide service-based training and professional development offerings that are focused on the Whistler brand identity and enhanced resort experience. 3. Provide targeted business skills training opportunities for business and community leaders. 4. Provide a business hub to support existing businesses and attract new ones. 5. Encourage and connect members to leading EDI practices. 6. Support employers to attract, retain and nurture talent. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Execute a strategic and targeted advocacy role within local and provincial government on priority issues for business. 8. Utilize our position with the BC and Canadian Chamber Networks and tourism industry to address Whistler business concerns at a provincial and federal level. 9. Leverage resort partner connections and partnerships to champion businesses. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Provide regular fun and casual social networking opportunities. 11. Deliver educational and informative activities that also strengthen member connections. 12. Facilitate connections between the business community and Indigenous partners to increase cultural awareness and support Indigenous community goals. 13. Showcase excellence of our member network. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Continuously enhance our systems and processes to service our members more effectively and efficiently. 15. Create and maintain robust data that enhances services. 16. Provide learning opportunities for the Chamber staff and board team. 17. Build long-term, sustainable financial contributions to ensure delivery of strategies.
MEASURES OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business confidence • Visitor satisfaction • Number of Chamber members • Member satisfaction (with Chamber programs and services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage (or number) of fully-staffed businesses • Satisfaction with ease of doing business in Whistler • Member satisfaction (with Chamber advocacy initiatives) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction (with Chamber offerings related to connections) • Member participation rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction (overall as a member) • Board satisfaction