



Strategic Framework

A Plan for Evolving Amherst Island

Outline

- High Level SWOT
- Broad Vision Statements
- Structure
- Strategic Thrusts
- Project Initiatives Matrix
- Next Steps

The intent today is to get your feedback and confirmation on each of these elements.



High Level SWOT

- Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats
 - Tool for assessing a situation and identifying the elements
 - Useful way to ensure everyone is understanding the same picture, the same way
 - Does not list everything, just major components
 - It is a starting point for the discussion



SWOT

• Strengths

- Scenic; nice beaches and watersports areas
- Heritage and unique features (eg dry stone walls)
- Relaxed, rural atmosphere
- Some good agricultural land
- Owl Woods and other nature abounds
- Some established events (Emeraldfest, Waterside, Woolly-Bully Run, etc)
- Some available labour; excellent work ethic
- Privacy and security
- Community spirit

• Weaknesses (Limitations)

- Ferry service – frequency and cost limit number of visitors
- Internet service – lack of high speed availability impacts business opportunity and the island as a desirable home
- Cell phone coverage can be restrictive
- Limited services available (Year round restaurant, gas, shopping, banking)
- Venues for events/conferences (beyond what is available at the Lodge)
- Condition of the roads
- Limited available land for purchase/building
- Restrictions due to sanitation/water well regulations inhibit new development
- Availability of medical services on the island



SWOT Continued

- Opportunities

- Tourism related
- SOHO business related
- Many others were suggested in the census survey
- Others present themselves from the list of weaknesses
- Partnerships with other local areas & organizations (eg Bath, UEL, etc)

- Threats

- PE County – established and well marketed
- Retirement thrust from the GTA – more older people; will drive up real estate prices on the island
- Lack of support/complementary direction from Loyalist – are we an anchor or an asset to them? We could become isolated
- Lack of brand – what are we known for? If not known then we become forgotten



Structure

- Consists of Vision, Thrusts and Initiatives
- Vision defines, in general terms, the desired ultimate state
- Thrusts define the broad direction and set some basic goals
 - Focuses our efforts
 - Build synergy through their initiatives
 - Collectively must be complementary
- Initiatives are the tactics and projects that will help us achieve the goals. They usually will impact more than one Thrust. The best initiatives have the biggest impact.



Vision Statements

- We aspire to be a vibrant, growing community, supportive of each other, powered by a strong base of volunteers, always maintaining our high levels of satisfaction in island living
- We will respect our environment and celebrate our unique heritage
- We will foster opportunities that provide employment potential, especially for younger islanders, as well as those that improve the quality of life for all residents
- We will welcome visitors to our island who wish to partake of the peace, tranquility and culture that we know is island life
- We will become known as the jewel of Lake Ontario



Thrusts

- Five basic Thrusts to guide our efforts:
 1. Assist the island community
 2. Create the brand and boost awareness of the island
 3. Drive business & customers to the island
 4. Broaden tourist appeal
 5. Network effectively & build partnerships



Thrust #1

- Assist the island community
 - Improved infrastructure
 - Roads, ferry, internet
 - Library, Community Center
 - Public washrooms
 - Better services especially for seniors
 - Transportation on the island & connections on the mainland
 - Meals on wheels, etc
 - Do things which improve the quality of life for the entire community

- Goal: Be a community where anyone would want to live



Thrust #2

- Create the brand and boost awareness of the island
 - Make our island better known and therefore better able to compete
 - Need to define who we are otherwise others will do it for us
 - If we aren't known we are forgotten
 - Ensure we are seen as an asset not an anchor
 - Increased awareness will help tourism and business (Common Logo usage)
 - Maintain a high value social media and web presence

- Goal: Become as well known as our competitors (eg The County)



Thrust #3

- Drive business and customers to the island
 - Increased jobs on the island, especially for younger islanders
 - Foster new business opportunities, especially SOHO & entrepreneurs
 - Provide support to existing businesses, especially agri-business
 - Increased visits will support new and larger businesses
- Goal: Be growing and self sustaining so that our island economy is strong and healthy



Thrust #4

- Broaden tourist appeal
 - Encourage visits by growing arts, culture and conservation activities
 - Focus especially on eco-tourism and agri-tourism opportunities
 - Find approaches to make it easier to visit
 - Generate revenue for the island from visits thereby creating additional jobs and business opportunities
- Goal: Make Amherst Island a 'must visit' location



Thrust #5

- Network effectively and build partnerships
 - With all levels of government
 - Making sure we get our fair share
 - We need to maximize the impact that our local Councillor can have in building these networks by keeping him in the loop and by having him positioned to reinforce everyone's efforts when reaching out
 - Success for many of our activities depends on the cooperation of others; we need to bring more people to the table to achieve our goals; we must reach out to neighbouring communities and organizations to build broader support networks
- Goal: Generate cooperation at all levels as evidenced by successful projects



Initiatives Matrix

- Based primarily on the results of the survey
- Demonstrates possible projects/initiatives and how they match against multiple Thrusts
- Currently none of these projects is active
 - We are hoping that today or in the weeks to come various groups or individuals will decide to take on one or more of these or other projects
- List is not exhaustive – many other projects can/will be added



Next Steps

- AICA Actions

- Apply for a RED grant to begin branding and logo development
- Host a meeting, similar to today, for businesses and others groups – date tbd
- Begin to engage Loyalist Township and L&A County with the work so far

- Actions by Other Groups

- TBD
- AICA is prepared to assist in developing grant applications and getting resources

