

STRATEGIC PLAN PROJECT UPDATE

We are delighted to share the progress we have made with our Strategic Plan so far. We have accomplished a variety of actions to advance our industry and support your needs.

You spoke. We listened.



NOVEMBER
2019

WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED

Advocacy

Prioritize advocacy initiatives that align with members needs.

- Hired a lobbyist in December in 2018 who works in Queen's Park
- Developed new relationships with key policy and regulation makers
- Successfully lobbied for a reduction to the 200m bear baiting restrictions
- Enhanced NOTO's role in regulation and policy development with MNRF
- Successfully lobbied Ministry of Finance for a reduction in red tape in the application process for Gas Tax Rebates for non-road accessed tourism businesses and continue to work on road accessed application processes
- Raising the profile of NOTO and the Northern Ontario tourism industry at Queen's Park
- Positioning NOTO as a capable organization that will work with Government to find solutions
- NOTO Executive Director has been appointed to the Ontario Parks Board

Collaborative Partnerships

Work to build and strengthen relationships and collaborative partnerships.

- Partnered with TIAO to participate in the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference
- Provided information and invitation to all Northern Ontario Municipalities
- Continuing to look for ways of working together on issues that impact our northern economy as they relate to tourism, job creation, business development, and our natural resources

Member Engagement

Work closely with members and provide opportunities for participation and involvement.

- Researched every Local Citizen Committee for each forest in the North and making every effort to find members who will fill vacant tourism seats
- Recommended two NOTO members to sit on the Big Game Management Advisory Committee
- Reaching out to members to fill tourism representative seats on Fisheries Management Zone councils, NOTO Task Forces and other external committees as they arise
- Volunteers understand and are committed to keeping NOTO abreast of any developments that could present challenges to tourism when possible

Communication Prioritize and strengthen communication channels and processes.

- Revamped member eNewsletter to make it more attractive and user friendly and established a monthly schedule
- Created online surveys and polls to engage members and to help move items forward for industry
- Created a private members group on Facebook to engage members in discussions and share important information in a timely manner
- Staff attended a social media conference for professional development
- Introduced "Feature Friday" on Facebook and Instagram accounts to help promote members and the importance of tourism to the economy
- Developing funding proposals to offset costs to making major website changes

Value-Added Services Support members by enhancing and developing value-added services.

- Enhanced NOTO's Employee Manual template for tourist operations to include policies on cannabis use and working around water in the workplace
- Updated all existing exclusive benefit offerings
- Provided new savings for members
- Conducted a survey to discover additional products or services NOTO can potentially seek out for exclusive rates
- Reached out to preferred suppliers to offer them the opportunity to take advantage of the free email spotlights

Sustain & Revitalize

Work toward achieving financial stability and organizational effectiveness.

- Board and staff are currently reviewing NOTO financials
- Engaged in discussions with tourism organizations about other revenue generating services and value that are being offered directly and indirectly to organizations
- Limiting services to non- members and encouraging them to join to receive more information and assistance from NOTO

Rebrand

Reflect organization's vision and goals and build rapport with members.

- Board is considering a name change that would better reflect NOTO's northern roots - The Northern Ontario Tourism Operators Association is under consideration to reflect brand and align with acronym

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

Other recommended actions that will be explored in the upcoming years:

- Membership cancellation policies/late fees
- Board governance process
- New initiatives and partnerships to increase revenue
- Succession planning
- Resources for tourism operators to assist with overcoming barriers to growth
- Advocacy initiatives that align with members' needs
- And more...

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