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## Strategic Plan

### **Introduction:**

Lombard Town Centre (LTC) was founded in 2005. We began as a small grassroots, Main Street, organization with fundraising and operations shaped by our founding members and the perceived needs of the Village.

**Lombard Town Centre mission: *To promote and preserve the historic downtown.***

Since our inception, LTC has relied heavily on TIF funds from the Village of Lombard. Memberships, events, sponsorships and donations have provided additional revenues, but in order for LTC to remain sustainable in the long-term, strategies need to be built and implemented to remove reliance on Village funding. The object of this plan is to identify the current state of the organization, identify opportunities for growth and sustainability, create strategies for long-term viability, and to put in place the processes required to successfully execute the plans.

### **Situational Assessment:**

This first section of the plan provides an understanding of the current situation and the context with which the organization is operating. This section will cover three key areas:

1. Marketplace Assessment
2. Organizational Assessment
3. Financial Assessment

### **Marketplace Assessment:**

While overall charitable giving hit a record high in 2014, the majority of charitable dollars went to religion, education, human services and health. Arts, culture, and the humanities experienced the largest giving increase during that same time. As in the past, individual giving is the largest source of all donations at more than 72% of total giving, followed by foundations and bequests. Corporate donations remain steady year over year at around 5% of all donations.

As with all Main Street organizations, Lombard Town Centre does not fit into the typical 'high-giving' categories. While most individuals cite 'giving back to the community' as the chief motivator for donating, community based organizations still struggle for those dollars.

Within the Village of Lombard, LTC faces competition from the Chamber of Commerce and Historical Society for dollars, not just in donations, but memberships. This presents an opportunity for collaboration, as well, but there have been no formal partnerships as of yet (see strategies later in this document).

LTC also is challenged by our past. There have been changes in Board and Staff over the years, as well as strategies and events, that have not been communicated effectively. Businesses and individuals have left the organization due to conflicts with the organization and our leadership.

Residents and businesses alike are confused by the Mission and responsibilities of the organization. Overall, residents are very pleased with the downtown, and would like to

see more shopping and dining options. Businesses are happy with the higher occupancy rates, but would like to see more marketing and traffic. While both would certainly help, neither falls squarely on the responsibilities of Lombard Town Centre.

There is plenty of good news too. Since our inception, LTC has helped facilitate tremendous change to the downtown historic district. Occupancy is at an all-time high, and increased collaboration with the Village helps attract new businesses to the community. This has resulted in a 92% retention rate for businesses in the historic district. The number of new businesses continue to grow, as well as the number of volunteers and the hours we donate.

The overall challenge facing LTC is answering to a wide array of constituencies. The business community has different needs and wants than the residents. Furthermore, there are 'blurred lines' over where LTC's role ends and the Village's begins. While LTC does operate as an extension of Village services to some degree, we are autonomous from the Village operating as an independent nonprofit organization. Development of relationships with businesses and entities outside of Lombard will be critical for bringing in new businesses to the Village.

Overall, the first few years of the Plan are focused on the re-alignment of strategies, communication of the LTC mission and vision, and clearly defining our role to the Village, the businesses, the property owners, and the residents. As LTC leadership (Board and Staff) is in the community, a focus on education about 'who we are' and 'what we do' is critical.

More importantly, rebuilding the trust of the business community and showing a true value to the being a member of the organization is key to building success in the future.

As a business resource, LTC needs to provide not just value, but relevance. There are direct and tangible benefits to LTC, but the indirect and intangible effect of LTC on the community is easily forgotten. Without a strong organization, the historic district languished. Today, with LTC leading the charge, occupancy and retention are high. While many businesses won't easily attribute this to LTC, the impact on their business has been tremendous.

Once LTC is able to effectively communicate and build trust and value, the strategies can make a stronger shift towards increased revenue. This will be a natural progression of events.

### **Organizational Assessment:**

#### Staff:

The organization still functions operationally, for the most part, as a grassroots business. There are minimal formalized or institutionalized processes, procedures, and policies. The Board has taken steps to put policies in place, however, as with many organizations of this size, there are not enough people to effectively separate duties and implement process controls. With only one (1) part-time Staff person, the Board must have close oversight of financial and accounting controls and practices. This setup isn't unusual, per-se, but requires a more active and involved Board to ensure that appropriate policies are implemented.

Beyond the financial controls, it is important to develop systematic database management to have more targeted and effective invoicing and fundraising. Incorporating ongoing metrics measurements and reporting would allow the organization to better assess performance.

As with many small organizations, there are limited resources and skill sets to achieve operational and strategic goals. Volunteers play a large part in the organization, but a structured system to manage, organize, and engage them is required.

## Board:

The Board of Directors currently has 7 members. There is an opportunity to develop the Board into a higher performing, greater productivity Board and to better engage and utilize every Board member. Ongoing Board Operations and Board member assessments need to be put in place, as well as formalizing clear roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities. Additionally, since this is a working Board with real work deliverables, the Board size needs to be expanded to provide the necessary talent and resources. Fundraising will need to be a required capability of all potential candidates. Recruiting members will also be key to this role.

## Volunteers:

LTC recruit's volunteers through a number of informal channels including word of mouth, referrals, social media and our website. Volunteers, too, will need to have clear and documented roles and responsibilities, as well as an honest expectation of time required.

## **Financial Assessment:**

Lombard Town Centre receives the majority of our funding from the Village of Lombard. Until 2016, those funds came solely from the TIF and were restricted to use only within the TIF. In 2016, funds were allocated from the TIF and from the Hotel/Motel Tax. This freed up some funding to be used to expand the geography and services of LTC beyond the TIF, but also required an increase of benefit to the hospitality industry which funds the remainder. Furthermore, in past years, the Village has required LTC to annually spend down their funding, and not save or invest for the future. While the expectation to spend monies on benefiting the community is realistic, it is prohibitive to not strategically allocate a percentage of revenues towards sustainability.

Based on the current financial situation, LTC operates without much money in reserve. There is a general budget in place for the fiscal year, and spending matches revenue very closely. There are no allocations for unexpected expenses or a drop in revenue

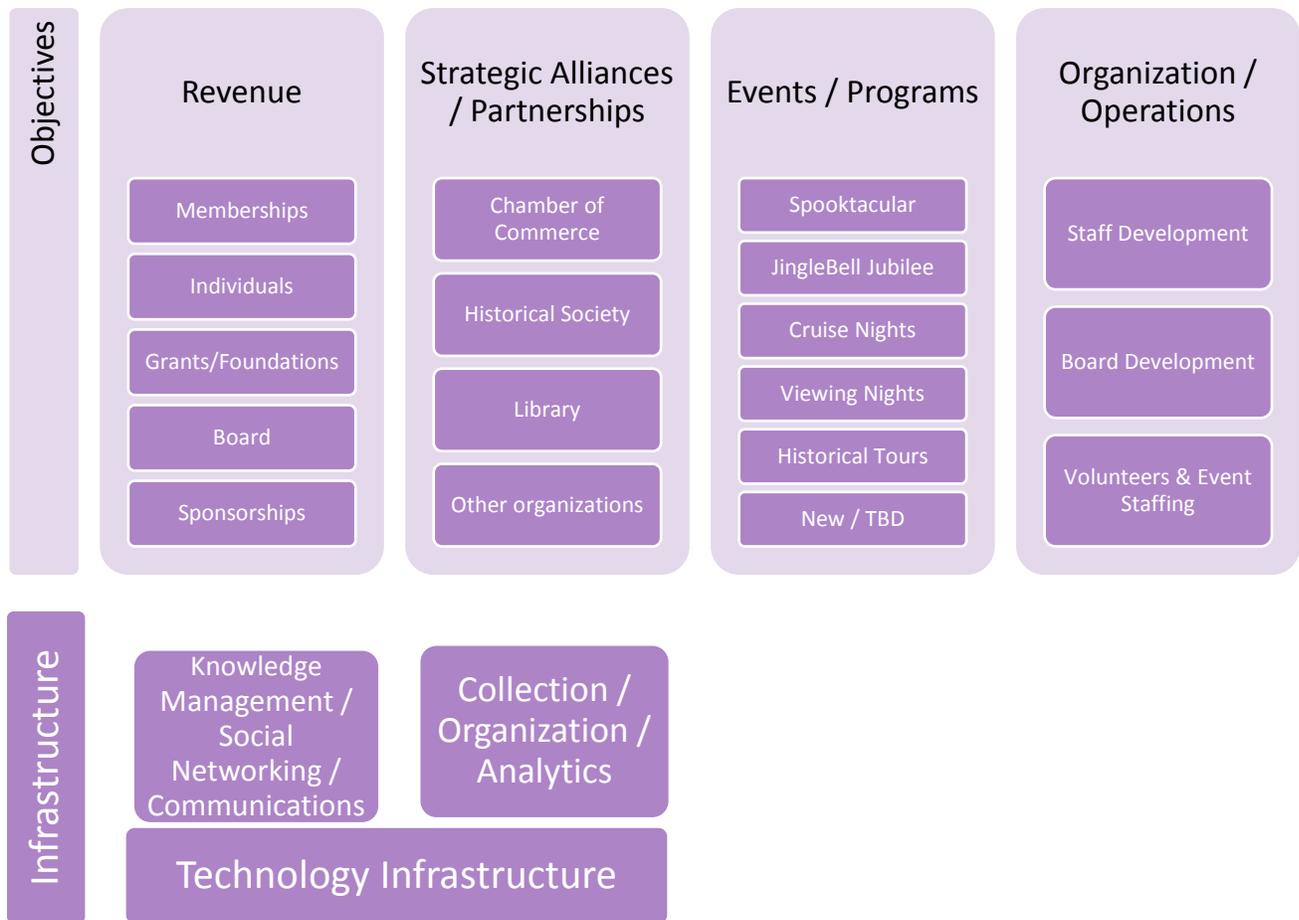
With the State of Illinois operation without a budget, the Village is preparing contingencies for a decrease in Village funding from the State. Without full funding from the Village today, Lombard Town Center would have to cease operations, or rely solely on volunteers. LTC recognizes this is not a sustainable model, and is taking steps to remedy this. Unfortunately, it will take time to increase non-Village revenues to a sustainable level for operations. Over the next two (2) years, LTC remains vulnerable to Village funding decreases and significant loss of revenue and the associated services LTC provides to Lombard.

## Plan for the Future

### **Overview:**

This section of the strategic plan identifies the critically important platforms that will be the focus of LTC's energy and resources over the next 5 years to continue our Mission and ensure our sustainability.

These strategies came out of multiple sessions with Executive Leadership and the Board, collectively and individually. We also take into consideration the results of surveys to businesses and residents of Lombard, as well as conversations with individuals from each.



The plan is split into two sections: Infrastructure and Objectives.

Infrastructure consists of the systems, structures, processes and procedures needed as the foundation for the organization. Among these are knowledge management, communication and social networking, technology and analytics.

Objectives consist of the executable goals for sustainability. These include fundraising/revenue, strategic alliances/partnerships, events/programs, and organization/operations.

**Details for the components of each of these are on the following pages. For each, there is a defined key strategy, short term (2 years or less) goals, and long-term (5 years and beyond) goals. None of these can operate on their own, we are all part of the larger strategies of building a solid foundation for long-term sustainability. Each strategy requires a combination of people, information, and processes to be successfully executed.**

### Technology Infrastructure

Key Strategy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a strong and flexible infrastructure to support the entire strategic plan</li> </ul>
Short Term	Web Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redefine and rebuild website</li> <li>Add social networking feeds and links</li> <li>Determine who and how the website will be maintained</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine ways to monetize site from members and sponsors</li> <li>• Integrate with internal databases for memberships and donations</li> </ul>
	Email and documentation management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent usage of domain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Ensure communications from LTC is to/from the proper LTC address</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consistent email signatures and messaging</li> <li>• Budget items for hosted services and applications</li> </ul>
	Database Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build or license a secure, scalable, and accessible database for donors, members, sponsors, etc.</li> </ul>
Long Term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that procedures / policies are followed for database entry</li> <li>• Training for volunteers, staff, Board, etc. that may have access</li> <li>• Add volunteer management to existing database</li> <li>• Ensure relationships are managed properly within the database</li> <li>• Incorporate emerging technologies to engage the constituencies</li> </ul>

### Data Collection/Organization/Analytics

Key Strategy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop capabilities for ongoing capture, analytics, and information on all constituencies to gain insight and understanding to develop compelling approaches for any/all types of support (programs, fundraising, partnerships, etc.)</li> </ul>
Short Term	Chart of Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the Chart of Accounts in QuickBooks to align with funding and expense requirements, as well as the budget.</li> <li>• Segmenting donor data would be a benefit, as well.</li> <li>• Managing event income vs. expense</li> <li>• Defining TIF and non-TIF revenue and expenditures</li> <li>• Time allocation according to categories</li> </ul>
	Donor Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent donor information gathering and input standards</li> <li>• Internal controls for managing membership information, including membership periods, date and amount paid, etc.</li> <li>• Consistent invoicing and account of membership dues and data</li> </ul>
	Data – Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and track linkage (what donor brought in other donors, what Board member brought others/sponsors/revenues/etc.).</li> <li>• Data protection and privacy policies</li> <li>• Credit card processing – privacy and protection. Automatic renewals.</li> <li>• Grants: identify, contact, tracking, and results</li> </ul>
Long Term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard reporting readily available real-time</li> <li>• Data Definitions maintained and updated</li> <li>• Develop methods/metrics for measuring effectiveness of programs and events.</li> </ul>

### Knowledge Management / Social Networking / Communications

Key Strategy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capture and formalize all key learning, institutional knowledge, brand identity, and effective communications tools</li> </ul>
Short Term	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share and explain new Mission/Vision</li> <li>• Show new geographic boundaries for LTC</li> <li>• Document 'who we are' and 'what we do'</li> <li>• Eliminate confusion of roles by changing title to Board Chair from President.</li> </ul>

	Social Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn defined usage and consistent brand approach. Educate Board and Volunteers on messaging and monitor sites.</li> <li>Monitor use of the brand and have pre-defined statements to respond to incorrect usage or misinformation.</li> </ul>
Long Term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue communicating to core constituencies: businesses, residents, owners, Village officials</li> <li>Institutionalize knowledge</li> <li>Continue monitoring and leveraging social network sites to gain visibility, donors, sponsors, and volunteers</li> </ul>

**Communication**

Below is the revised Mission and Vision Statements for Lombard Town Centre based on the Strategic Planning sessions.

**Mission Statement:** *Lombard Town Centre is dedicated to preserving and promoting our historic downtown as the heart of Lombard and a vibrant commercial destination.*

**Vision Statement:** *The vision of Lombard Town Centre is to create and sustain a flourishing downtown business district that preserves the history of our Village for the benefit of residents and visitors, now and in the future.*

**We dedicate ourselves to:**

- Enhancing a downtown business district with successful retail niches and quality restaurants, attractive to prospective businesses and consumers.*
- Documenting and preserving the historic buildings in the downtown district; sharing their stories to educate residents and visitors about these architecturally unique and precious structures.*
- Educating and assisting property and business owners regarding possible design enhancements to existing structures that would improve the esthetic value of our downtown.*
- Creating a maintaining a positive and cooperative working relationship with downtown merchants and being a resource for them; fostering collaboration and facilitating engagement with other interested parties.*
- Continuing our strong relationship with the Village of Lombard elected officials, staff and committees, and other community organizations.*
- Recruiting a strong membership and volunteer base, committed to the core values of Lombard Town Centre and Illinois Main Street*

In addition, the Board agreed to an increased geographic scope that defines the Downtown Historic District as follows:

- St. Charles Road from Elizabeth to Grace and 2 blocks east and west**
- Main Street from Grove to Washington and 2 blocks north and south**

**Revenue**

Identify and develop ongoing revenue opportunities around existing events, partnerships, individual relationships and new sponsors, grants, foundations, and businesses

Key Strategies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While maintaining existing relationships and programs, expand the reach to new individuals and organizations</li> <li>Develop a plan to identify and engage with highly connected individuals who support Downtown Lombard.</li> <li>Prioritize fundraising opportunities and develop plans for specific events.</li> <li>Identify high potential/highly receptive foundations to secure grant awards and develop a plan for pursuit.</li> <li>Adopt a Board Effectiveness Plan to formalize financial expectations and other Board roles and responsibilities.</li> </ul>
Short Term	Identify existing and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memberships</li> <li>Sponsorships</li> </ul>

	potential revenue sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants</li> <li>• Events</li> <li>• 'Shop Local' revenue share</li> <li>• Gift Cards</li> </ul>
	Board Donations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalize the Board commitments and agreements. This can be a direct give, sponsorship assistance, relationship building, etc.</li> </ul>
	Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize the exposure and opportunities around existing events like Spooktacular.</li> <li>• 'Piggy-Back' onto the events of others to enhance the event, increase LTC exposure and generate/share more revenue.</li> </ul>
	Memberships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incremental fee increases annually</li> <li>• Tiered memberships – pay for additional services/benefits</li> </ul>
	Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify foundations that offer grants for programs similar to ours</li> <li>• Potentially modify programs to better comply with grant requests.</li> </ul>
Long Term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest a percentage of revenue for the unexpected</li> <li>• Analyze the effectiveness of campaigns and events and adjust accordingly.</li> <li>• Institutionalize the use of technology/apps to increase engagement in the community, and generate ongoing revenue from sales and growth</li> <li>• Continue to identify other opportunities and partnerships to increase exposure to Downtown Lombard and our businesses.</li> <li>• Apply for grants from entities that support community based organizations, historic preservation and education.</li> <li>• Encourage different levels of memberships and engage the business community</li> </ul>

### Strategic Alliances / Partnerships

Increase the number, size, depth of sponsorships, co-marketing, in-kind, etc. through forming mutually beneficial, ongoing alliances and partnerships with corporate businesses and synergistic organizations.

Key Strategies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put in place a formal plan/process for recruiting and retaining strategically aligned partners</li> <li>• Engage the Board and Committees to help identify partners and engage through their connections</li> </ul>
Short Term	Current Alliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review any current agreements and measure effectiveness of the partnership</li> </ul>
	New Alliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical Society</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Businesses/organizations with an interest in Historic Preservation or in Lombard</li> </ul>
Long Term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop reporting to ensure the mutually beneficial results of the partnerships</li> <li>• Continue to identify other potential organizations/entities, and work on ways to strategically engage.</li> <li>• Develop a deeper, further reaching networking system.</li> <li>• Make connections within a wider range of businesses/groups.</li> </ul>

### Events

Review current and prior events, and build a portfolio of events/programs that will efficiently and effectively support financial growth and awareness.

Key Strategies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a comprehensive assessment of all programs</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit and focus resources to only those that are highly performing and have increased potential</li> <li>• Be opportunistic with other organizations and 3<sup>rd</sup> party events.</li> </ul>
Short Term	Create Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a matrix to measure every event/program against key metrics such as audience reached, revenue generated, costs associated, resources required, etc.</li> </ul>
	Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a template for tracking key metrics for events and measure success/fail against those measurements. Develop standard reporting to share with stakeholders, and allow for proactive adjustments to improve efficacy.</li> </ul>
	Volunteer Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure there is a formal process for volunteer management to communicate requirements, expectations, time commitments, etc.</li> </ul>
Long Term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start, add, evolve, eliminate events based on the feedback from the community, as well as internal measurements of success.</li> <li>• Identify other successful events to partner or mimic.</li> <li>• Maximize reach and minimize resources.</li> </ul>

### Operating / Organizational Development

Structure operations, align resources, capabilities, and accountabilities to support the Plan.

Key Strategies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redefine roles/responsibilities to focus on the Plan Objectives.</li> <li>• Identify talent, skill, experience gaps and develop a plan to fill those gaps.</li> <li>• Align volunteer recruitment to support the Plan.</li> <li>• Adopt a Board Effectiveness Plan to formalize performance assessment and feedback/correction of LTC leadership</li> <li>• Create an Advisory Board to increase effectiveness and reach into the community, and to keep former Board members engaged while mentoring potential candidates for the Board.</li> </ul>
Short Term	Executive Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align the roles/tasks and time allocation to support the Plan</li> </ul>
	Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and cultivate new members to fill gaps in resources, as well as for succession planning.</li> <li>• Initiate a Board Effectiveness plan that includes Board Giving.</li> </ul>
Long Term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify organizational needs to determine adequate staffing requirements to fulfil strategies.</li> <li>• Hire a part time employee to assist the ED, if necessary.</li> <li>• Potentially increase the number of hours for the ED to a full-time role.</li> <li>• Utilize contract and temporary help for specific needs that do not require hiring of employees.</li> </ul>