COMPASS

## Waterfront District BIA – Strategic Objectives: Action Framework

The sample framework below translates the approved Waterfront District BIA Strategic Objectives into specific, implementation-ready initiatives with defined outcomes and concrete measures of success. It's intended to guide annual work planning, budgeting, and Board oversight.

### Objective 1: Strengthen the Waterfront District's Daily and Seasonal Vibrancy

| Priority Activity | Activity Description | Intended Outcome | Measures of Success |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. **Establish a core annual signature programming calendar** | With partners, design and deliver three recurring, branded Waterfront District signature events with fixed timing and identity. | Predictable foot traffic growth and stronger district brand recognition. | •3 signature events delivered annually in partnership with others<br>• 10–15% year-over-year attendance growth<br>• 70%+ business-reported traffic increase |
| 2. **Implement shoulder-season activation pilots over 3-5 years** | Deliver targeted programming in April–May and October–November focused on arts, food, and culture. | Reduced seasonal drop-off and increased off-peak activity. | • Minimum 6 shoulder-season activations, beginning with one activation in 2026<br>• 150+ average attendance<br>• 60% business request repeat |
| 3. **Expand placemaking and pop-up initiatives** | Introduce temporary patios, seating, pop-up retail, and performance spaces in underused areas. | Improved public space quality and testable activation models. | • 4 placemaking pilots<br>• 75%+ public satisfaction<br>• 2 pilots made recurring |

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| 4. **Develop and Deliver an Annual Marketing and Awareness Program** | Regular, consistent, multi-media promotions of the Waterfront District, as well as strategic awareness/advocacy communications – local/regional/MN? | Improved profile and a known high-quality destination for friends, families, and tourists.<br>Improved profile and reputation as a place to invest in and grow a business | • Increased multi-season day and evening use/traffic<br>• Reduced building vacancy<br>• Increased WBIA membership |

## Objective 2: Improve Safety, Cleanliness, and Public Realm Quality Through Coordinated City Partnership

| Priority Activity | Activity Description | Intended Outcome | Measures of Success |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. **Formalize City–BIA safety and maintenance protocols** | Develop written response, communications, and escalation protocols with City departments. | More consistent and timely responses to district issues. | • Protocol approved<br>• 25% faster response times<br>• Improved member survey scores |
| 2. **Implement rapid graffiti/damage/trash and blight response** | Coordinate reporting and removal of graffiti/damage/trash and minor blight. Develop an online/app based reporting system. | Cleaner streetscapes and improved safety perception. | • 80% graffiti/damage/trash removed within 48 hours<br>• Fewer repeat locations |
| 3. **Advocate for visible safety and outreach presence** | Participate and support the City of Thunder Bay's Ambassador Program | Improved comfort for businesses and visitors. | • 3 advocacy meetings annually<br>• The CoTB Ambassador Program Launches<br>• Improved safety perception |
| 4. **Expand and maintain beautification of the Waterfront District** | Install and maintain improved street and storefront lighting. | Improved appearance, maintenance, comfort and appeal of | • Increase in daytime and evening activation and foot traffic |

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| | Expand and fund flower installation and maintenance.<br><br>Research, assess, and initiate façade improvement support program and funding. | streetscapes and storefronts. | • Improved visitor and member feedback and experiences<br>• Reduced property vacancies |

### Objective 3: Modernize the BIA's Funding and Boundary Model

| Priority Activity | Activity Description | Intended Outcome | Measures of Success |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. **Develop levy modernization proposal** | Prepare evidence-based levy and funding scenarios for City consideration. | Pathway to financial sustainability. | • Proposal submitted<br>• 60%+ member engagement on proposed changes<br>• City response received |
| 2. **Increase non-levy revenue by 25% in 3 years (this needs research, strategy, resources, etc.)** | Secure sponsorships, grants, and earned event revenue. | Reduced levy dependence and increased capacity. | • 15–25% non-levy revenue growth<br>• 3 new funding partners |
| 3. **Complete boundary review** | Assess boundaries against business and growth patterns. | Alignment with current and future district realities. 75% of building owners in the district agree to being part of the BIA and being taxed on the additional levy. A clear 'what is in it for them' argument and business rationale to be developed. | • Review completed<br>• Stakeholder consultation<br>• Recommendation submitted |

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| 4. **Property assessment and value review** | | Ensure fairness and alignment with current conditions. | |

### Objective 4: Drive Residential Density and Mixed-Use Development Within the District

| Priority Activity | Activity Description | Intended Outcome | Measures of Success |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. **Convene developer–City–BIA coordination sessions ensuring alignment with the City of Thunder Bay's Smart Growth Action Plan** | Host structured sessions to align stakeholders around residential development. | Improved coordination and development momentum. | • 2 convenings annually<br>• Developer participation<br>• Concepts advanced |
| 2. **Advocate for zoning and incentive tools** | Provide formal input on zoning, incentives, and policies. | Improved conditions for residential investment. | • Submissions made<br>• Policy changes considered |
| 3. **Complete a commercial gap analysis, or, advocate for the completion of a commercial gap analysis in the District** | With the gap analysis create a 'best case scenario' for mixed use development in the District. | A self-sustaining and strong mix use development plan. | |

### Objective 5: Build Organizational Capacity to Deliver Long-Term Impact

| Priority Activity | Activity Description | Intended Outcome | Measures of Success |
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| 1. **Implement ED retention and workload** | Introduce workload prioritization and retention supports. | Leadership continuity and reduced burnout. | • ED retained<br>• Improved workplan completion |

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| **sustainability plan** | | | |
| 2. **Secure additional operational support** | Engage part-time or contract support for delivery. | Improved execution capacity. | • Support role secured<br>• Reduced delayed initiatives |
| 3. **Strengthen governance and member engagement** | Clarify Board roles and practical engagement mechanisms. Develop a revised Board meeting agenda format that ties directly to the strategic plan. | More effective governance, transparency, and participation. | • Board self-assessment<br>• Improved engagement metrics |
| 4. **Develop systems and standard operating procedures** | Create operational documentation for ED guidance and organizational success. Data report from current ED to inform this activity. | Support continuity and succession planning. | • Ensure measures of success are realistic, meaningful, and aligned with member expectations. |