

Strategic Plan

2009 – 2012 and beyond



Executive Summary

Ballina Chamber of Commerce and Industry was formed in 1914. During this time the Chamber has grown to over 200 members and presents a strong voice for businesses operating within the Ballina Shire to local, state and federal decision makers.

The Ballina Chamber of Commerce and Industry Strategic Plan 2009 - 2012 and beyond will establish an ambitious agenda over a rolling three year period to lead the organisation and the Shire into a promising future.

The Chamber exists to serve its members and to help promote a positive Ballina culture for business enhancement and prosperity whilst preserving the natural assets of Ballina's environs.

The Strategic Plan will continue with some of the Chamber's prior objectives as well as incorporate fresh ideas and provide a real focus for the Board and will guide the utilisation of its resources. The Chamber will clearly articulate to members its purpose, value and direction which will assist to enhance the value of the local business community.

The Strategic Plan is a working document therefore feedback is welcomed and can be directed to the Chamber office.

Note that each point within the document is important in its own right. There is no order of importance or priority.

Mission

The Ballina Chamber of Commerce is the peak business body in the Ballina Shire and is made up of leaders in the civic community. The Chamber will provide value for members through advocacy, representation, communication, promotion and camaraderie.

Vision

To position Ballina Shire as the region's leader for business, industry and services, whilst protecting its natural assets.

Values

1. Integrity
2. Leadership
3. Support
4. Advocacy
5. Communication
6. Commitment
7. Achievement
8. Sustainability

Summary of Objectives

1. Ensure Ballina develops into a busy, diverse and vibrant commercial hub with strong links to all businesses within the district.
2. Improve the profile of members within the community to promote business growth, collaboration and the supply of local goods and services.
3. To be an effective Representative Body for Member Businesses, advocating on their behalf in areas of public policy.
4. Keep members updated with news relevant to the local business community and provide opportunities for professional development.
5. Strive for continued growth of member numbers to ensure the achievement of our objectives.
6. Operate a productive and proactive Chamber office.
7. Conduct a professional events schedule.
8. Develop multiple opportunities for members to be actively involved in the progress and promotion of Ballina as a great place to do business, live, work and enjoy the unique lifestyle it offers.

Strategy, Major Goal and Plan (by Objective)

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Ensure Ballina develops into a busy, diverse and vibrant commercial hub with strong links to all businesses within the district.

Strategy

- 1.1 To continually review the Ballina CBD Development Control Plan and to lobby Council to allow greater density in the Ballina town centre.
- 1.2 Pursue the completion of the Ballina CBD upgrade project in conjunction with providing sufficient parking facilities.
- 1.3 Assist members to plan for and assess the impacts of the Ballina Bypass on their business.
- 1.4 Pursue the establishment of a commercial marina and the upgrading of foreshore facilities in accordance with the Master Plan together with dredging of the Richmond River Entrance and North Creek.
- 1.5 Monitor ongoing commitments made by local governments and promote appropriate discussion and input on draft master plans and policies.
- 1.6 Influence Council on local traffic management and parking policies.
- 1.7 Lobby Council to improve major gateway and village signage, including tourist information. Ensure that the signage is regionally consistent, displaying current information, mounted in prominent positions and accessible to visitors.
- 1.8 Lobby Council to ensure that the land surrounding the airport is used to provide maximum benefit for the aviation industry and general community so that Ballina airport will cater for future expansion of airline services and infrastructure.
- 1.9 Support the Economic Development Unit with funding of special projects and work in partnership with Ballina Shire Council on economic development initiatives.

Major Goals

- 1.1 To have included in Ballina Shire's LEP variable building height limits on Ballina Island, allowing greater density and design flexibility.
- 1.2 (a) Obtain a commitment from Council to complete the CBD upgrade by January 2012, well before the opening of the by-pass.
(b) Lobby Council to start the multi level Wigmore Centre Carpark during 2009.
(c) Lobby Council to provide at least a further 250 car parking spaces in the CBD by 2013.
- 1.3 Provide case studies of similar sized towns on the coastline that have been by-passed in recent years. Hold information, planning and strategy workshops for members during the period 2009 to 2011.

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Improve the profile of members within the community to promote business growth, collaboration and the supply of local goods and services.

- 1.4 Obtain a commencement date from the Department of Lands and Council for the development of the Ballina foreshore and the construction of a Marina.
- 1.5 Monitor local government commitments and prepare submissions on draft proposals and master plans as they are advertised for comment.
- 1.6 Ensure Council provides adequate local traffic management and signage to areas of congestion and provides sufficient parking facilities for peak times around the airport and beaches.
- 1.7 Obtain a commitment from Council to have the Gateway and tourist signage design confirmed by the end of 2009 and replace all existing signage by mid 2010.
- 1.8 Obtain the appointment of a BCCI endorsed representative on the airport committee representing a cross-section from local business by the end 2009.
- 1.9 Lobby Council to increase the role of the Economic Development Manager to a full time position.

Strategy

- 2.1 Enhance the Chamber Website to be an effective promotional tool for members to attract customers, to identify opportunities for collaboration and to source goods and services locally.
- 2.2 Facilitate high-quality, structured networking opportunities for members that will foster profitable business relationships.
- 2.3 Implement and promote a member benefits scheme and provide materials for Chamber member identification.
- 2.4 Implement a business and education program designed to facilitate knowledge transfer amongst members and the broader business community.
- 2.5 Encourage members to participate in the Ballina Shire Business Excellence Awards program.

Major Goals

- 2.1 Introduce a 'health check poll' to the website home page. Results from poll drive browser to list of members offering related services/products.
- 2.2 Introduce two 'structured' networking functions per year.
- 2.3 Provide each member with a Membership Window Decal and incentive to display.
- 2.4 Set up a blog exchange for members.
- 2.5 Establish a Business Awards Web Page showcasing all entrants in the Business Awards

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To be an effective Representative Body for Member Businesses, advocating on their behalf in areas of public policy.

Strategy

- 3.1 Maintain open lines of communication and enhance the Chamber's relationship with local, state and federal government representatives.
- 3.2 Disseminate regular press releases and continue the productive working relationship with local media.
- 3.3 Create and implement an advocacy alert mechanism to communicate ongoing local, state and federal policy issues, and to provide the collective response from our members to the relevant legislators.
- 3.4 Represent the interests of our members on infrastructure issues such as electricity, water, roads and telecommunications.
- 3.5 Maintain active membership of the Regional Chamber of Commerce NSW.

Major Goals

- 3.1 Schedule periodical contact with appropriate representatives from all tiers of government, to be updated on relevant issues and policy.
- 3.2 Issue press releases to local media to publicise BCCI projects and achievements as appropriate.
- 3.3 Include updates or links to information on policy issues effecting members in e-blasts.
- 3.4 Keep Council updated with the impacts infrastructure quality has on member businesses and lobby for upgrades as required.
- 3.5 Be in a position to accept the Executive role of the Regional Chamber of Commerce should the opportunity arise.

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Keep members updated with news relevant to the local business community and provide opportunities for professional development.

Strategy

- 4.1 Develop a method of delivering a snap shot of news and business updates for members.
- 4.2 Co-ordinate periodic workshops and seminars sourcing specialist speakers.
- 4.3 Enhance the Chamber's Website to make it a compulsory vehicle for doing business.
- 4.4 Position BCCI members as leaders in the community on waste reduction and environmental impact.

Major Goals

- 4.1 Make better use of the eBlast software for member updates, provide links and referrals to the Chamber website.
- 4.2 Engage one DSRD endorsed speaker each year to run a workshop or program.
- 4.3 (a) Provide a conduit via the Chamber website for possible funding and grant opportunities available from all levels of government.

(b) Include updates from business education seminars, legislation forums and "industry specific" fact events.
- 4.4 Provide education to members about corporate environmental responsibility and provide opportunities for them to lead the community by example. Lobby Council to provide adequate facilities and services for members to reduce their environmental impact.

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Strive for continued growth of member numbers to ensure the achievement of our objectives.

Strategy

- 5.1 Implement a strategy to attract and retain membership and continue a trend of membership growth.
- 5.2 Implement periodical member satisfaction survey to determine feedback on Chamber activities.
- 5.3 Provide clearer benefits of value for becoming a member of the Chamber.

Major Goals

- 5.1 Maintain a membership of 200 or more and strive towards a membership of 250.
- 5.2 Conduct a member satisfaction and feedback survey annually the survey to be distributed periodically via email and attached to all Membership Renewals
- 5.3 Define the benefits of Chamber membership by industry and promote to target markets.

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Operate a productive and proactive Chamber office.

Strategy

- 6.1 Explore collaborative working relationships with other Chambers and industry groups within the Ballina Shire.
- 6.2 Review the responsibilities, job description and key performance indicators of paid employees. Identify gaps and potential risks to achieve the Chambers objectives based on available resources.
- 6.3 Streamline the operations and available tools to support the Chamber office and improve its efficiency.
- 6.4 Effectively manage the relationships of external service providers for support services unable to be carried out in-house, such as website maintenance and secretariat duties.
- 6.5 Actively promote the Chamber as a local grass roots organisation by clearly communicating the benefits for members to belong to a local Chamber for local business.
- 6.6 Pursue the possibility of co-locating with the Ballina Economic Development Unit and various other government business support agencies with a view to provide business support benefits and opportunities to members and potential new business to the region.
- 6.7 Increase the BCCI corporate sponsorship.
- 6.8 Employ a main street co-ordinator for Ballina Town Centre.

Major Goals

- 6.1 Form an Alliance committee and host one joint function with Lennox Head and Alstonville Chambers annually.
- 6.2 Document the responsibilities, job description and key performance indicators of paid employees and formalise a Procedures Manual.
- 6.3 Purchase a Relationship Management Database which can be accessed by Profsec and BCCI via the internet.
- 6.4 Formalise arrangements with external service providers i.e. terms of engagement and committed service levels.
- 6.5 Conduct a mail out to all Business & Industry in Ballina regarding the benefits of BCCI membership.
- 6.6 Table a proposal to the Economic Development Unit Board of Management or Ballina Shire Council proposing same.
- 6.7 Strive to achieve an annual increase of corporate sponsorship by 15% per annum.
- 6.8 Submit a funding application to the Department of State and Regional Development to employ a main street co-ordinator for Ballina Town Centre.

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Conduct a professional events schedule.

Strategy

- 7.1 Co-ordinate monthly Chamber Breakfast Before Business meetings with high quality speakers of interest and create specific opportunities for members to network.
- 7.2 Co-ordinate monthly Chamber Business After Hours at members' business premises, creating a marketing opportunity for the host business and a networking opportunity for members.
- 7.3 Pursue funding from Council to co-ordinate cluster groups for the Home Based Business Network and the "Made in Ballina" Manufacturing group in the event the EDU discontinues same. Introduce Tourism and Trade Services cluster groups.
- 7.4 Arrange and host annual revenue generating events such as the International Women's Day Luncheon, the CEO's Forum and the Chamber's annual premier showcase event, the Ballina Shire Business Excellence Awards dinner.

Major Goals

- 7.1 Hold a Breakfast before Business on 3rd Wednesday of each month.
- 7.2 Hold at least one Business After-hours event each month.
- 7.3 Obtain funding from Council and DSRD to further develop cluster groups.
- 7.4 Host a range of revenue generating events each year.

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Develop multiple opportunities for members to be actively involved in the progress and promotion of Ballina as a great place to do business, live, work and enjoy the unique lifestyle it offers.

Strategy

- 8.1 Co-ordinate and manage the Ballina Shire Business Excellence Awards program.
- 8.2 Make known to Chamber members the different opportunities available for them to be actively involved in the growth of the Chamber and Ballina as a business hub.
- 8.3 Promote the Junior Chamber project and encourage members to participate.
- 8.4 Encourage members to nominate for selection to the Chamber Board and provide an opportunity for candidates to promote themselves to members prior to the election.

Major Goals

- 8.1 Conduct a program of workshops assisting members with their submissions for the awards, from two months prior to the closing date.
- 8.2 Regularly communicate opportunities for members to actively participate in sub-committees and on special projects if they feel capable of making a contribution.
- 8.3 Promote the concept of the project to members and communicate any opportunities for member businesses to become involved. Have the Junior Chamber members present the progress of the project each quarter.
- 8.4 Provide more information about the activities and commitment required from the board so members understand the position. At the breakfast event prior to the election, Invite candidates to introduce themselves and explain what they would bring to the board should they be elected.