

OLD TOWN TRIANGLE ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROJECT

ASSESSMENT REPORT

**SUBMITTED BY JOHN D. ENGMAN, CONSULTANT
DECEMBER 10, 2022**

BACKGROUND

Old Town Triangle Association (OTTA) is a community-based 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents who live in the area of the City of Chicago bounded by North Avenue, Clark Street, and the former Ogden Avenue ("The Triangle")¹.

Since its founding in 1948, the purpose(s) of the organization are: To improve conditions of life, work, recreation, health and safety; to foster and develop a neighborhood plan; and to aid and assist and sponsor neighborhood activities in the area.

The current goals of the OTTA are to:

- Preserve the architectural and historical integrity of buildings in the Triangle
- Develop and maintain the physical environment of the Triangle, including improvement of open spaces, green areas, sidewalks, and parkways.
- Promote cultural enrichment in the Triangle
- Improve educational opportunities for the children of the Triangle and surrounding neighborhoods
- Encourage social interaction among neighbors and involvement in the Triangle
- Ensure that city services are kept up to the highest standard
- Ensure the safety of residents in the Triangle
- Provide assistance to organizations and groups that serve the needs and interests of the Triangle residents
- Maintain a record of OTTA activities, decisions, and events to serve as a history of the Triangle for future generations and a reference for current residents

OTTA owns and operates:

1. A nationally-known art fair that provides most of the organization's annual revenue.

¹ See Maps-1 Attachment for boundaries.

2. A facility that is used as an art center / school.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

At the January 2022 annual meeting, the membership assigned a high priority to preparing a strategic plan to best serve the community. This includes:

- A. Preparing an objective analysis of where we are now (using an independent consultant to get confidential unvarnished responses)
- B. Soliciting input from members, nonmembers, business owners and government officials
- C. Defining who the community is and their most pressing needs (e.g., safety, streets and sanitation, parks, facilities)
- D. Identifying the most critical organizational issues
- E. Developing a lower risk, less divisive, and more effective advocacy strategy including planning and zoning issues
- F. Identifying other opportunities for meaningful cultural, economic and social improvements
- G. Ensuring effective, transparent, democratic, and representative governance promoting knowledge of and involvement in the Association

PROCESS

The OTTA contacted the Compass organization which referred John Engman (Consultant) to assist them in an organizational assessment on a pro bono basis.

The Consultant gave an overview of the strategic planning process to the OTTA Board of Directors at its August meeting. The Board approved the strategic planning project.

Subsequently, the OTTA created a Strategic Planning Committee that includes Brad Neuman (Chair), Board President Dorothy DeCarlo, President-designate Raymond Clark, Zac Bleicher, Diane Fitzgerald, Phil Graff, Rick Rausch and assisted by the Consultant.

Additionally, four sub-committees were formed to focus on key organizational functions.

Community Development: Planning, Development, Improvements - Chair: Phil Graff, Gene Brockland, Karl Hjerpe, Steve McClellan, David Raino-Ogden, Jennifer Yengoyan.

Stakeholders: Constituency, Community Engagement, Membership, Events, Programs, Marketing - Chair: Dee DeCarlo, Sandy Bredine, Vi Daley, Jacob Ringer

Governance: Setting Policy, PR, Continuity/Leadership/Training, Bylaws, Advocacy - Chair: Zac Bleicher, Beth Burk, Chris Nelson, Darius Tandon

Finance and Operations: Art Fair, Fundraising, Grants, Art School - Chair: Diane Fitzgerald, Shel Beugen, Claire Leaman, Rick Rausch, Ericca Reavis, Claire Leaman, Leah Marshall

Definition of Strategic Planning

Strategic Planning is a process used by the key stakeholders of an organization to agree on their essential mission and where they want the organization to be in the near- and long-term future.

After assessing their current situation and the challenges they face, the organization determines their strategic, measurable goals and agrees on a set of actions that will take them to these goals. This Action Plan and Organizational metrics become a management tool for the Board of Directors and Staff to measure their progress.

Thus, strategic planning amounts to a process in which the organization asks and answers four questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to be?
3. What stands in our way?
4. What can we do about that?

Nonprofit organizations usually plan 3-5 years out, although they may have a “Vision” -- an ultimate ideal state -- to be achieved “someday”.

Organizational Assessment

The starting point in strategic planning is a clear understanding of the current status of OTTA. The Consultant reviewed written material provided by OTTA, including bylaws, financial statements, Board minutes, membership numbers, material found on the OTTA and other websites, census data and information and research from other neighborhood associations.

The Consultant conducted more than 20 personal interviews with OTTA Board members, staff, volunteers, current and former alderpersons and city agency staff.

OTTA created and disseminated an online survey, about which a notice was sent to every mailing address in the Triangle neighborhood, to gauge both member and non-member sentiment regarding OTTA.

Eight Essential Elements for Excellence

The Consultant evaluated the collected data against **Eight Essential Elements for Excellence** (Appendix C) that form the core capacities of successful nonprofits. These elements are:

- **Leadership** - How well does the Board and senior staff lead the organization, plan for the future, make decisions, and implement plans?
- **Governance** - How well does the Board carry out its responsibilities? Are the members fully engaged? Does it work efficiently?
- **Programs and Services** -- Does the client deliver the right services? How efficiently? What is their impact?
- **Support Operations** - How well are the staff and volunteers organized and managed? Does everyone have what they need to carry out their responsibilities?
- **Financial Management** - How well does the client manage its money? How financially healthy is the organization?
- **Membership Development** - How well does the client attract and retain membership?
- **Market** -- Who / what competes with the client for members and Members? What demographic, political, or economic trends or changes are occurring?
- **Communications** - How well does the client communicate its message to staff, its target audience, its supporters, the community?

OLD TOWN TRIANGLE OVERVIEW

HISTORY

The Old Town Triangle neighborhood, built around St. Michael's Church survived the Chicago Fire of 1871.

The Old Town Triangle Association was founded by residents who wanted to preserve the charm of the neighborhood and to promote improved living, working and recreational facilities. In 1956, the OTTA opened the Old Town Art Center which served as an art school, gallery and gathering place made possible by the proceeds from the Old Town Art Fair, then called the Old Town Holiday.

In 1977, The Triangle was named a Chicago Landmark and an historic district². In 1983, the OTTA purchased its current home on the first level at 1763 N North Park. In 1984, The Triangle was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

² See Maps -2 Attachment for boundaries

DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the Statistical Atlas³, the Old Town Triangle has a population of about 7,500 people in 4,228 households. 77.1% are white, 8.5% Asian, 5.3% Black, 5% Hispanic and 4% Mixed and 1% Other.

The population broken down by age:

- Children: less than 18 years old - 11.16%
- College: from 18 to 21 years old - less than 1%
- Younger Adult: from 22 to 39 years old - 50.14%
- Older Adult: from 40 to 64 years old - 28.85%
- Senior: more than 64 years old - 9.19%

Almost one-quarter of the population (24.4%) is 25-29 years old.

The median income is \$99,700 which is twice the median income in the City of Chicago.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

An analysis of the responses to the interviews, online survey, organizational documents and market and environmental research yielded the following observations:

Leadership

- The Mission and Purpose Statements are broad and generic and have not been changed since the inception of the organization seventy years ago. People inside or outside the organization cannot readily recall them.
- The Mission is generally understood primarily by those who have a long tenure with the organization and is not used as a decision-making guide. There are nine stated “goals” although there is no alignment on the goals and outcomes the organization should accomplish. There are no organizational Vision or Values/Guiding Principles. There is no process for regularly reviewing the mission as circumstances change.
- There is no strategic plan or annual operating plans for the organization. The key metrics are the net proceeds from the Old Town Triangle Art Fair and the number of members.
- OTTA is dependent on a core group of passionate and committed volunteers who recycle through the organization. Decision-making resides at various levels of the organization - Board, committees, staff and often depends on opinion rather than data.

³ <https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/Illinois/Chicago/Old-Town-Triangle/Overview>

- Leadership has very short terms of one year, making it almost a lame-duck situation for making meaningful change and OTTA lacks a formal leadership development and succession plan to address the issue.
- History is the primary planning mechanism. Many have the sense that leadership “checks the boxes” that were previously developed in an unknown manner in the past. Organizational change “is desired by some but loathed by others”.

Governance

- The Board is a hands-on “operating board” with 11 board members who also perform staff functions which can produce confusion in roles, level of authority and support depending on the personality and energy of the board member rather than goals and repeatable processes.
- The Board meets regularly and has a high level of participation.
- Board processes and policies are not clearly defined and not written down. OTTA apparently uses its By-Laws as the policy / procedure manual.
- Board members, particularly those who have a shorter tenure with the organization, often do not have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Since Board members also act as staff members, board meetings are focused on operations, not policy or strategic planning.
- Board committees mirror the stated organizational “goals” with a board member chairing each committee. Each committee has a charter and a budget but no approved operating plan or goals that stem from an overall organizational plan or strategy.
- Committee chairs have broad authority over their committees. They choose the members of their committee and are encouraged to choose outgoing board members for continuity.
- There is no process to approve or evaluate committee membership. Committee productivity depends on the energy, vision, time and personality of the chair together with the amount of support provided by the committee and the organization.
- Informal and inconsistent knowledge transfer from one committee chair to the next negatively affects momentum and morale.

- The board / organizational structure contributes to “siloeed” operations and culture that do not act synergistically with each other - ie. events and membership.
- There is no Board Development plan or process in place to guide the recruitment, orientation, assessment and retention of board members.

Programs - Cultural

Art Fair / Art Classes

- OTTA is in the enviable position of having the long-running, highly successful Old Town Art Fair (OTAF) that brings national and local visibility and visitors to the Triangle and 84% of OTTA's revenue annually.
- OTAF is operated essentially as a stand-alone business entity with the connection to OTTA being an ex-officio position on the OTTA board.
- OTAF is operated proactively. Its planning, operations, leadership succession and marketing policies and procedures should be reviewed for the potential to replicate them in the OTTA's ongoing program, marketing and leadership development processes.
- The Art Classes at the OTTA facility are also considered successful as a self-contained, near break-even program.
- There is a perception, though, that the classes are expensive and cater primarily to older participants. Interest was expressed in expanding the program to expand the offerings to accommodate a broader range of ages and art forms.
- The success of OTTA's cultural programs contributes to the perception that the organization is primarily arts-focused.

Programs - Historic Preservation / HD-PZ

- “OTTA largely has been focused on issues, reactively...except for The Art Fair, which it handles proactively. Because of the focus on issues, there is often a negative, contentious cloud over The Triangle”.
- OTTA's reputation was severely damaged by the litigation it recently pursued over the installation of a garage in the historic district. There is concern that the

aftermath of the lawsuit may set a precedent that could lead to people not wanting to work with OTTA on improvements, fearing how OTTA will respond.

- OTTA's change of leadership and the pursuit of a more balanced approach to urban living and historic preservation has repaired its reputation in the eyes of city agencies, officials and other stakeholders and positioned OTTA as a reasonable agency to work with.
- Decision-making power in the City regarding landmarks and planning issues is diffused among the Landmarks Commission and staff, other City agencies and Alderpersons. Previously OTTA, as a recognized neighborhood organization, played a quasi-official role to vet and rule on developments / changes in the Triangle. Due to a court case, there is no longer an official role for a neighborhood organization in planning / zoning / historic district matters.
- OTTA lacks an Advocacy planning process that proactively develops policy goals and means to communicate them to targeted constituencies so they understand the positions OTTA may take on HD/PZ, safety or other neighborhood issues.

Programs - Grants

- There is confusion over the goal for the program. Some felt it was a good outreach effort but others felt OTTA funds could be better spent elsewhere or that it was given to organizations that were connected to board members.
- Others felt that OTTA should be more proactive in setting what it wants to fund. Such as concentrating the grants with larger amounts to fewer organizations to actually make a difference. Younger respondents wanted to concentrate efforts in surrounding neighborhoods that "need it more than ours".

Programs - Neighborhood Improvements

- Neighborhood Improvements are recognized as important but it's not widely known outside of the OTTA membership what they are, where they are or who maintains them.
- There is no process that evaluates the impact and long-term cost for which improvements to make.

Programs - Events

- Events are considered to be important for engaging the neighborhood with OTTA but they are time and resource intensive and need more volunteer support.

- A regular program of events throughout the year will require a higher level of staffing and volunteer support but could be used to build membership and OTTA image in the neighborhood.
- Oktoberfest was well-received and felt to be an important way to reach out to younger residents.

Support

- OTTA has one full-time and one part-time employee. There is an administrative manual that outlines tasks and a calendar timeline for performance.
- There are job descriptions but no employee handbook that specifies personnel policies and procedures. There is no current organization chart in place.
- There is no written emergency plan in place for loss of facilities and key personnel.
- “There's just so much work to be done for such a volunteer based organization”. The organization is highly reliant on committed, hard working volunteers. Pursuing any growth strategy will require continuity and skill levels that may not be available with only volunteer support. “Every committee is struggling”.
- There is no comprehensive, written program that governs the volunteer development cycle (recruitment, training, retention, rewards).
- Follow-through by volunteers is inconsistent which engenders anger and disengagement from those who are charged with or want to get something done.
- OTTA should upgrade its technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Financial Management

- Income and expense over the past five years, except during the pandemic, was relatively static.
- OTTA has a strong financial management system in place to manage reporting, bookkeeping, budgeting, audit, tax returns and other compliance matters.
- OTTA should codify its financial system by creating a manual that contains current financial policies and procedures including policies on investment, conflict of interest, gift acceptance, purchase authority, risk management and surplus / deficit policies.

- OTTA has a strong balance sheet and sufficient reserves to underwrite current operations and targeted investments to build organization capacity.
- OTTA should create a 3-5 year budget plan to use as a means to foster longer-term financial planning and evaluate different scenarios.

Membership / Stakeholder Development

- Membership numbers dropped 37% in 2020 compared to 2018. 2022 membership is projected to improve but still is down 27% from 2018.
- The Net Promoter Score in the online survey indicates that 42% respondents would highly recommend membership in OTTA and nearly 36% would not. The net results of 6% is barely a positive recommendation.
- According to the survey, only 80% of current members recommend becoming a member and those outside of the organization appear to be neutral or negative towards membership. That result tracks with several respondents who are members, even board members, who do not believe that membership has value.
- Growing membership was the recommendation of everyone interviewed as the measure of how much OTTA represents Triangle residents.
- Many respondents wanted to drive participation from a wider range of people, including younger residents and those from different economic backgrounds.
 - “We are not doing well in terms of reaching out to a younger population, in terms of the programs, the culture of the organization. They have art classes, too, which are cool, but the art classes are full of old people”.
- Several respondents felt that “we serve members first before the community”. There is “broad thinking that we are a club and we're not welcoming to new thoughts, new people”.
- There is no approved membership plan. Membership growth is in the hands of one committed board member with no committee or organizational support.

Marketing / Communications

- OTTA gains visibility in the market primarily through word-of-mouth. The OTAF generates significant recognition and support but that doesn't appear to transfer to OTTA.

- OTTA has a communications program that sends weekly information-based emails, called Weekly Posts, and high quality quarterly newsletters that are distributed to members but the reach could be greater, to a wider audience.
- OTTA but no written, formal marketing plan that segments and targets customers, outlines goals, the strategies, tactics and metrics to generate greater visibility for the organization in those targeted segments and the community.
- OTTA's should consider making a substantial investment in brand development to "right the ship" and create a positive image that would support organizational goals.
- Website and Social media presence exists today but there is no formal media / marketing plan on what content should be posted and when throughout the year.
- A Marketing Calendar would help show how the tactical pieces fit together in the communication mix (program/facility level / social media / brand level)
- An internal communications plan should be in place and carried out to keep staff and volunteers current.

SWOT ANALYSISa

<u>Strengths:</u> <i>Positive factors within the organization that support efforts to implement our mission.</i>	<u>Weaknesses:</u> <i>Challenges within the organization that may impede efforts to implement our mission.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unique community with historical and architectural significance ➤ Proud, engaged residents ➤ Well-known and respected cultural programs ➤ Passionate volunteers / strong participation of core group ➤ Owns its building, provides sense of stability and permanence ➤ Dedicated staff ➤ Solid financial base, strong fiscal management ➤ Art Fair well managed, model for OTTA ➤ Improved relationships with city agency staff / aldermen ➤ Board recognizes need for change ➤ Alignment of all factions around growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complacency, inertia, fear of change, internally focused ➤ Lack of internal and community understanding and alignment on OTTA's mission ➤ Identity is confused - perceived as an arts club for older people not a community center ➤ Perception that membership does not have value, has little to engage younger residents ➤ Tactically oriented, no effective strategy / goal setting beyond the budget ➤ Siloed structure, operations, culture ➤ Performance depends on personality not process ➤ No leadership / board development plan / process ➤ Few written policies / processes, poor knowledge transfer ➤ Weak governance processes
<u>Opportunities:</u> <i>Factors in the external environment that may support our efforts to implement the mission.</i>	<u>Threats:</u> <i>Factors in the external environment that may impede our efforts to implement the mission.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Large pool of residents to reach for participation ➤ Build new identity out of damaged reputation ➤ Building systems can make the organization more sustainable / reduce contentiousness ➤ Investment in technology can improve relationship development / management (SEO, Slack) ➤ Leverage local / national awareness to develop community pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Crime (real / perceived) ➤ Wedge issues around historic preservation ➤ Residents will avoid OTTA with neighborhood issues ➤ Reduced City agency staffing / resources ➤ Regulation cost and complexity ➤ Trend towards online art sales / artists are more cost focused ➤ Social media replaces interaction and information

STRATEGIC ISSUES

The Consultant used the SWOT analysis and all the information gathered to draft several strategic issues which will form the agenda to develop specific objectives and tasks, with time lines, to address these strategic issues over the next 2-3 years.

OTTA is a successful but aging organization that is at a crossroads. It needs to agree on what it wants to be - an arts club, a community center, an historic preservation organization or ?.

OTTA needs to prioritize whether it should use its financial resources to invest for growth or, in the words of one interviewee, continue to “trod a very well worn path with these things that we do every year, and because we know that works and this is comfortable, we've always done it, and we have memories of doing it.”

These strategic issues for OTTA are:

1. Review and gain alignment on its mission / vision - should it grow, maintain or shrink? What are the priorities over the next five years?
2. Create a strategic plan and, moreover, a strategic mindset that honors the past but continually looks to achieve future goals.
3. Define and communicate a re-established “brand” to promote a better understanding of how it serves and supports the Triangle community.
4. Review the Board structure and terms of office to provide better continuity and support for Board work.
5. Create a Board / leadership development / succession plan to build its bench strength and avoid leadership / volunteer burn-out and recycling.
6. OTTA needs to improve and diversify its programming and marketing capacity to increase the participation and membership from a broader range of residents.
7. OTTA needs to determine the role of paid staff and volunteers in its business model and organization and build a volunteer development program that will ensure that it can build a future corps of volunteers as committed and talented as the current group.
8. OTTA needs to make targeted investments to improve its organizational infrastructure and systems (facilities, policies & procedures, technology, training, management, communication, etc) to assure the organization operates efficiently and effectively and can support future growth.

APPENDIX A

Steps in Strategic Planning Process

Step 1: Get Ready

- Consultant Reviews Available Client Information
- Align on Strategic Planning Outcomes, Process, and Requirements with Client
- Assess Client Readiness
- Clarify Roles and Responsibilities, Set Expectations
- Determine Client Executive Champion and Planning Committee
- Onboard Planning Committee

Step 2: Assess the Situation

- Review Internal Documentation
- Interview Stakeholders
- Conduct Online Surveys
- Review Market and Environment
- Analyze results
 - Leadership
 - Governance
 - Programs & Services
 - Support Operations
 - Financial Management
 - Member Development
 - Market & Environment
 - Communications
- Conduct SWOT Analysis
- Report Findings

Step 3: Create Mission, Vision, Values

- Review/Revise/Create Mission
- Review/Revise/Create Vision
- Review/Revise/Create Values

Step 4: Determine Key Strategic Issues

- Discuss and align on findings and SWOT
- Consolidate Findings from Diagnostic Report and Weaknesses and Threats from SWOT
- Prioritize to Determine Key Strategic Issues

Step 5: Develop Goals and Actions

- Prepare for the Retreat
- Work Groups Create Initial Goals and Actions
- Planning Committee Aligns and Prioritizes

Step 6: Implement, Measure and Manage

- Create Implementation Management Infrastructure
- Create Action Plan Tracking Sheet
- Create Dashboard
- Support Client in Implementation

APPENDIX B

OTTA Interview Questionnaire

GENERAL INTERVIEW TOPICS

All Interviewees

Interviewee Background

1. How long have you lived in the Triangle?
2. When did you first become acquainted with OTTA?
3. When did you become a member and why?
4. Has your relationship to XXX changed since you became involved? If so, how?

Mission

5. What is your understanding of the mission of OTTA?
6. What do you see as the primary functions of the OTTA?
7. Do you believe that OTTA is fulfilling its mission? If not, what would help it better fulfill its mission?

SWOT

8. What are the Strengths within the organization that OTTA can build on?
9. What are the Challenges within the organization that OTTA should address?
10. What external trends or opportunities that may open for OTTA over the next 1-3 years?
11. External threats that should be considered strategically?

Customers

12. Who is the OTTA focused on serving? How well are they being served?
13. Should the OTTA try to serve other groups in the Triangle or neighboring areas?

Programs / Culture

14. What is the OTTA doing well and not doing so well?
15. Are there programs / services that should be expanded? Curtailed or eliminated?
16. Are there unmet community needs we should be addressing instead?
17. In your opinion, does the HD/PZ committee reflect the views of the residents? (some, many, or most)
18. Is OTTA a friendly, welcoming organization?
19. What would enable you to take a more active role (volunteering)?
20. How could the OTTA better serve you?
21. Would you recommend joining the OTTA to a friend? (0 = No, 10 = Definitely)

Future Planning

22. From your perspective, what are the top 3-5 major organizational issues that OTTA needs to address in its strategic plan?
23. How would you define “success” for OTTA? Measure it?
24. How do you envision the organization in 2026? How should it be different than it is now?
25. What else needs to be on their radar screen as they look to the future?
26. Anything else you would like to add?

Board Members Additional Questions

1. Is the Board working on the right issues?
2. How effectively does the board function?
3. What board processes work well and not so well?
4. What changes would you like to see?
5. How are decisions made in the organization?

Government and Planning/Zoning

1. How has the criteria for modifications to Landmarked properties changed over time?
2. How has the alderman’s role and influence changed?
3. Given the many stakeholders & regulations, how meaningful is the OTTA to a decision?
4. Do you believe the OTTA represents the position of some, many, or most residents?
5. How frequently does the OTTA position match the PRC decision?
6. How does this compare to other neighborhood organizations?
7. What is the OTTA’s reputation?
8. How could the OTTA work better with Landmarks’ staff?
9. Any other suggestions?

APPENDIX C

Assessment Elements

OTTA was evaluated against these best practices.

Priority	LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS
1	The organization regularly meets its established Key metrics. These measure the impact of the organization's activities on the community's needs described in the Mission.
2	Program and service results, including key metrics, are reported to the Board and leadership team on a regular basis.
3	Board members and key staff members are actively involved in the activities of the organization and monitor the programs and services provided to insure that their quality is as high as possible.
4	The decision making process is clear, effective, and includes the appropriate people
5	The roles, level of authority, and interactions between the Board and staff are clearly known and effective.
6	The Board and key staff members establish, continue or revise the direction of the organization through an annual Strategic Planning process.
7	The mission, vision, and strategic plan are compelling, clearly understood, and drive the decisions of the organization
8	The board and key staff members periodically assess the Mission and Vision of the organization for relevance with the organization's current status, the current environment and the needs of the community.
9	The Board uses a formal recruitment and evaluation process, using clear performance objectives, for managing the CEO.
10	There are board approved contingency, emergency and succession plans with action steps.

Priority	GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS
1	The board operates within the bylaws of the organization, which are reviewed periodically to ensure currency.
2	Board members are recruited specifically for their skills in representing stakeholders, for participation in Member development, for managing the organization and as representatives of the community served by the agency.
3	New Board members go through a formal orientation program with a written board manual.
4	Board roles and responsibilities are documented, updated when necessary, communicated regularly and clearly understood.
5	Board meets regularly (at least quarterly) with average attendance of at least 90%. (See Metrics)
6	Board meeting agendas and materials are distributed at least 7 days prior to the meeting. Minutes of the meetings are distributed no later than three days after the meeting.

7	Board meetings are efficient and productive, with most time spent on policy matters rather than details of management.	
8	All board members have access to a board manual containing all policies and procedures, past meeting minutes, financial statements and formal committee reports.	
9	The status of the strategic plan goals is reviewed at every board meeting.	
10	The Board has standing and ad hoc committees appropriate to its needs. All committees have a clearly stated purpose, are fully staffed, meet and report to the board regularly.	
11	The Board conducts a Board Self-Assessment at least every two years.	
12	The Audit Committee has a post-audit review with the board-selected auditor to discuss results and management recommendations of the auditor.	

PRIORITY	PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	
1	Programs/services are aligned with the mission and meet ongoing community need(s). Programs are reviewed periodically to determine their continued alignment with the mission	
2	Key Metrics for services show a trend of increasing impact on the population being served.	
3	A quality assurance program is in place to monitor the effectiveness of service delivery, including feedback from clients and staff.	
4	The organization shows positive trends in Turnover, Efficiency and Operating Reliance, Cost per Client/Member, and meets benchmarks for Program Service Ratio (See Metrics).	
5	Cost of each program and impact are measured and utilized to improve and streamline programs/services.	
6	Processes and roles are clearly defined and understood for each program/service	

PRIORITY	SUPPORT OPERATIONS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	
1	Physical facilities are adequate to support the organization.	
2	Technology equipment and software are up to date and maintained.	
3	The organization has a formal, written, effective volunteer management program.	
4	Organization has clear and effective recruitment, onboarding, performance feedback, pay, retention, employee development policies and processes.	
5	The organization shows positive trends for employee and volunteer turnover, Average Salary, and Average Volunteer Hours per Year (See Metrics).	
6	The organization meets benchmarks for Personnel, Facilities, Management and Administrative Ratios (See Metrics).	

7	There is an emergency plan in place anticipating loss of facilities or key employees. The plan is reviewed and updated annually.	
8	Organization has implemented a plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for employees, volunteers, and clients. An annual review is conducted.	

PRIORITY	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	
1	All Board members understand their legal responsibility for oversight of the agency's financial affairs.	
2	There is a current financial policies and procedure manual, which includes policies on investment, conflict of interest, gift acceptance, and purchase authority.	
3	Financial plans are in place for the long-term sustainability of the organization's work.	
4	Every board and key leadership team meeting includes review of clear financial statements that inform the board of key financial metrics.	
5	The Treasurer or another Board member reviews the financial statements with the accounting staff and explains financial results at each Board meeting.	
6	Program managers receive financial statements sufficient to monitor their program's income and expense vs. budget and forecast.	
7	The organization has appropriate processes and controls to minimize risk of financial malfeasance, including separation of financial duties and authority commensurate with staffing levels.	
8	The organization meets benchmarks for Days Cash on Hand, Current Ratio, Operating Reserve Ratio, Savings Indicator, and shows positive trends for Change in Net Assets and Revenue Distribution (See Metrics).	
9	The accounting staff is properly trained and experienced.	
10	All bank records are reconciled monthly.	
11	The agency has a written chart of accounts.	
12	Accounts are maintained on an accrual basis.	
13	Annual reports to the State and Internal Revenue Service (990) are filed on time.	
14	The annual cash budget includes capital expenditures as well as operating expenses.	

PRIORITY	MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	
1	A Membership Development Plan is part of the Strategic Plan and includes specific goals for revenues from all Member segments	
2	The organization meets benchmarks for Membership Development Ratio, Member Raising Efficiency, Contribution ratio, Member Retention Rates, Membership Source Conversion Rates, Conversion Rates by Type, and Average Income Ratio (See Metrics).	
4	There is an adequately staffed and active Membership Development Committee.	
5	There are adequate resources – financial and staff – to support Membership development efforts.	
6	The Board regularly reviews Membership development efforts, successes and failures, and recommends appropriate corrective actions. Evaluation includes net Membership, including hard and soft expenses such as staff time.	
7	An effective Membership database exists containing Member names, contact information, dates and amounts of donations. The database syncs with the financial system.	
8	Board and staff are trained in cultivation, stewardship and communication with Members,	
10	The Member Development Plan includes “friend raising”, identification of volunteer resources and potential new Members.	
11	A Membership Development Calendar is used to coordinate all Member events and efforts.	
12	All communications contain a well-written, polite and convenient request for membership.	
13	All Members receive receipts as required by law.	
14	Reports which meet Member 's requirements are provided to Members on time.	
15	The "Become a Member" button on all sites connects to a secure site with convenient payment options.	

PRIORITY	MARKET ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	
1	Organization has a clear understanding of their market environment, including competitors delivering services to the organization's target clients group. Comparative strengths and weaknesses have been analyzed.	
2	Organization has a clear understanding of their market environment, including competitors for consignments / inventory. Comparative strengths and weaknesses have been analyzed.	
3	Other organizations have been evaluated for their potential as partners or collaborators in service delivery.	
4	Where appropriate, board members support and participate in public relations activities.	

PRIORITY	COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	
1	Organization has a clear external communications plan, including public relations, website and social media to reach and inform Member s, funders, clients and the community.	
2	The Mission Statement, Marketing Plan and Fund Development Plan all identify and target specific groups of clients, stakeholders and potential Member s. Contact information is maintained in a database and is current.	
3	The Mission statement is clear, concise and uniformly displayed in written materials, website, and social media platforms. It states clearly the purpose of the organization, who is served by the organization, and how they benefit from the services of the organization.	
4	Communication to past, current, and potential Members is carried out with the most effective and appropriate methods – digital, social media, mail, telephone and personal contact. Members are thanked promptly and sincerely. Members are recognized appropriately.	
5	Organization meets its Key metrics for frequency and quality of social media and website postings.	
6	Organization meets its Key metrics for frequency and quality of internal communications.	
7	A current, uniform and consistent “elevator speech”, literature, website, social media, bank of success stories and testimonials exists for use in communications.	
8	An internal communications plan is in place and carried out to keep staff and volunteers current.	

MAPS - 1

OLD TOWN TRIANGLE

MAPS - 2

OLD TOWN TRIANGLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

