

Brant Waterways Foundation

Strategic Plan

2025-2027



Brant Waterways Foundation

Established in 1988, Brant Waterways Foundation is a charitable non-profit organization dedicated to leading, funding, and advocating for projects that protect and enhance the Grand River and its surrounding areas in Brant County, Brantford, and the Six Nations of the Grand River.

Vision - We envision a community where everyone benefits from a connection to our healthy waterways and trails and works collaboratively to protect and preserve our natural resources.

Mission - Brant Waterways Foundation seeks to provide leadership, funding assistance and advocacy to projects in Brantford, Brant County and Six Nations of the Grand River that enhance, restore, protect and preserve the natural heritage of the Grand River, its waterways and adjacent lands to provide active recreational opportunities, a healthy environment and sustainable use.

Our values

Accountability—We are honest and transparent in all our activities and accountable to our partners, donors, supporters, and the communities we serve.

Collaboration - We strive to build and strengthen community partnerships to share ideas and resources and achieve common goals.

Inclusivity - We respect the strengths and sentiments of diverse groups and individuals in our local communities and value their efforts to further our mandate.

Guardianship - We are committed stewards of our natural resources and actively work to create positive change that will protect the environment.

Sustainability: We focus on worthwhile, viable projects that will benefit the community long-term and promote enjoyment of the local Grand River watershed now and for future generations.

Guiding principles

Brant Waterways Foundation relies on the generous support of our donors and the generous time commitment and expertise of our volunteer Board of Directors and other volunteers. With the support of a board coordinator, our board actively participates in the Foundation's operation and follows the following guiding principles.

1. **Transparency:** Ensure all operations, financials, and decision-making processes are open and accessible to stakeholders and the public.
2. **Accountability:** Be accountable for our actions and outcomes, regularly evaluating and reporting on impact.
3. **Integrity:** Maintain high ethical standards in all activities, ensuring honesty and fairness in dealings with donors, beneficiaries, and partners.
4. **Sustainability:** Focus on long-term goals and strategies that ensure the Foundation's work can continue to benefit future generations.
5. **Inclusivity:** Promote diversity and inclusion within the foundation and in its programs, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected.
6. **Commitment to Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation:** We must learn about Indigenous histories, cultures, and perspectives in our communities. We must support initiatives that promote truth and reconciliation and work towards building respectful and meaningful relationships with the Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations.

Our Goals

1. **Building capacity:** Grow our organization while looking for efficiencies in the way we work
2. **Fundraising:** Diversify our fundraising to fund projects in a sustainable manner
3. **Granting:** Fund projects that protect, preserve, restore and enhance our natural areas
4. **Partnering:** Work with our partners and community to achieve common objectives
5. **Community awareness and advocacy:** Promote awareness of Brant Waterways Foundation

Our Strategies

1. Building capacity: To grow our organization while looking for efficiencies in the way we work

We will continue to build our organizational capacity and implement a more efficient working model to fulfill our mission and retain passionate board/staff.

Objectives	Strategies and Actions
Operations. To improve our efficiency as a Not for Profit / Charity Board and how we work to achieve our goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish regular reporting from Committees ● Standardized Committee Reports for regular reporting to the Board. ● Update the format for Board meetings to improve efficiency by January 2025 ● Implement a Client Relation Management (CRM) software by March 2025 ● Implement a collaboration platform (e.g., updated Google Suite or Microsoft 365) by March 2025
Operations. To explore governance models to support a more effective organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board will explore governance models by June 2025, and a desired Board Governance approach will be decided by December 2025.
Operations. To assess current staffing capacity in support of BWF operations, board coordination and communications and develop a staffing plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff capacity assessment was completed, and recommendations were made to the board in February 2025.
Leadership. To explore the option of taking more of a leadership role in projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment and recommendations to the Board for taking on leadership of projects by December 2025. ● The new approach to move projects forward in place by June 2026.

2. Fundraising: Diversify our fundraising to fund projects in a sustainable manner

We will develop a revenue-diverse fundraising plan and raise funds for projects that protect and promote the sustainable use of natural areas.

Objectives	Strategies and Indicators
Operations. To create and execute a revenue-diverse fundraising strategy and plan for 2025-2029 to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● improved fundraising capacity and capabilities as an organization● focused efforts on seeking grants, outreach to corporate partners and events● defined fundraising campaign(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop a fundraising strategy and plan by December 2025 with considerations for corporate sponsors/funders.● Host an annual spring gala as a key fundraiser for BWF● Annual fundraising training of Board members in January/February of each year● Fundraising expertise included in the staffing assessment in February 2025

3. Granting: Fund projects that protect, preserve, restore and enhance our natural areas

We will contribute funds to projects that protect, preserve, restore and enhance local waterways, adjacent trails and natural areas while exploring new ways to drive projects.

Objectives	Strategies and Indicators
Operations. To update the BWF Granting Strategy and develop a Granting Plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● criteria for which BWF will support community-based projects,● performance indicators to measure our success and● communications plan to promote the Granting strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The updated Granting Strategy and implementable Plan will be finalized by March 2025

4. Partnerships/Connections: Work with our partners and community to achieve common objectives

We will build and strengthen relationships with our partners and community members to achieve common goals.

Objectives	Strategies and Indicators
To develop a Partnership Strategy that includes the identification of key partners that align with BWF's vision and mission for building and establishing relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Partnership Strategy developed by June 2025
To build and strengthen partnerships and meaningful relationships with Six Nations of the Grand River	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify and implement a project in support of trails or waterways that benefit the Six Nations of the Grand River by 2029

5. Community Awareness and Advocacy: Promote awareness of Brant Waterways Foundation

We will promote awareness of our role in supporting land and water stewardship that balances active recreation and conservation.

Objectives	Strategies and Indicators
To update the Communications Strategy and refine the Communications Plan to increase our presence and reach in the community by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identifying local community associations, user groups, and champions for active engagement through communications channels to amplify our reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Revised communications plan in place by June 2025● Social Media activity is tracked and reported in quarterly reports to the Board● Website analytics is tracked and reported in quarterly reports to the Board● Organize an annual educational event (speaker series?) to engage and educate, promote the organization
To develop BWF's Advocacy role for local land and water stewardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● BWF's Advocacy role is defined by June 2025 and guides our response when promoting land and water stewardship

Definitions

Vision: An organization's vision describes what the organization hopes to become in the future.

Mission: a concise explanation of an organization's reason for existence and describes its purpose, intention and overall objectives

Organizational Values are statements organizations use to help communicate its purpose and direction.

Goal: a broad statement describing a desired long-term outcome.

Principle: a concept or idea that guides measurable actions.

Objective: a statement describing desired outcomes for measurable short-term actions that help achieve a goal.

Active Recreation is defined as activities for relaxation, health and well-being, or enjoyment. The primary activity requires physical exertion, and the primary focus is on human activity.

Land and water conservation: Actions and activities that support the protection of forests, wetlands, such as bogs, fens and swamps, moraines, e.g., Paris-Galt moraine, grasslands and other natural features in Brant, Brantford and Six Nations.