



# Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation Director Application Package

Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation proudly operates on the traditional unceded territories of the Anishnaabeg/Anishinabek, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Huron-Wendat/Huron-Wendat, Attawandaron (Neutral), Lenape, Ojibway/Chippewa, and Wendat Indigenous Peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties. We recognize and deeply appreciate the First Nations' historical connection to and stewardship of this place. We also recognize the contributions of Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening these communities, our province, and our country. We are grateful for the opportunity to live and work here and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land.

Learning to be a better ally is important to Ontario's Southwest, and board and staff recognize we thrive when we are inclusive and appreciate the opportunities to come together through tourism.

## Introduction

Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation (SWOTC), referred to hereon as Ontario's Southwest Regional Tourism Organization (OSW), is a non-profit organization funded through the provincial Ministry of Tourism Culture & Sport and governed by an independent Board of Directors. The provincial mandate is to build and support competitive and sustainable tourism to help attract more visitors, generate more economic activity, and create more jobs in Southwest Ontario. The organization's strategic plan can be seen in Appendix A. The OSW region covers Windsor-Essex Pelee Island, Chatham-Kent, Sarnia-Lambton, Middlesex County, Elgin County, Oxford County, Norfolk County, Haldimand County, City of London and City of St. Thomas. The Board meets approximately 7 times per year with a mix of virtual and in-person meetings throughout the region.

## Director Recruitment

The Board of Directors is currently recruiting new Directors to join the Board. The Board provides direction to the organization to achieve its vision, reflect its key values, maintain accountability, and fulfill responsibilities to the community and other stakeholders. Appendix B, Director Job Description, contains a full list of board responsibilities. The Board is supported in its work and decision-making by Board Committees that consider selected items in depth before the items come to the Board for discussion or decision. Committees include Executive Committee, Governance Committee, Planning & Evaluation Committee, and Finance & Audit Committee.

Directors serve a three-year term and are eligible to be elected for two consecutive terms. A majority of Directors must be tourism business owners or employees in the tourism industry and generally will have no more than three directors from any one destination management area or tourism sub-sector. Directors will be selected based on expertise aligned with the organization's strategic priorities, and skills and knowledge as outlined in Appendix A.



## Recruitment Key Dates

**March 4, 2024** OSW Director application intake opens

**April 5, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.** Deadline for applications

**April 22<sup>nd</sup> to May 3 2024** Shortlisted applicant interviews

**June 11, 2024** Annual General Meeting when new Directors are voted in

**July/August, exact date TBD** Strategic planning retreat (1.5 days)

# Ontario's Southwest Strategic Plan 2022 – 2024+

## Guiding Principles

1. We preserve our environment and places while balancing the needs of our local communities and businesses, and their many unique identities
2. We thrive when we are inclusive, diverse and equitable
3. We unite the entire tourism industry and its supporters through open communication, collaboration, and partnerships
4. We make deliberate decisions that are rooted in evidence and we remain adaptable to change by constantly keeping a pulse on the situational context
5. We are innovative and bold, moving with intention and confidence, going where we may not have been willing to go before

## Vision

Ontario's Southwest is a year-round destination offering highly sought experiences for visitors and residents.

## Mission

Creating a vibrant and inclusive tourism sector that balances the needs of our visitors, tourism partners, communities, and environment

## Objectives

1. Accelerate resident, community, and tourism operator economic wealth and well-being sustainably
2. Enable the development of responsible and desired tourism products and experiences
3. Provide more opportunities for (new) operator development through funding and support programs and learning experiences
4. Foster increased communications, collaborations, and partnerships
5. Drive awareness and entice visitation
6. Solidify position as a unifying tourism leader

## OSW Pillars

1. **Tourism Leadership:** Establish OSW as a regional tourism leader.
2. **Tourism Supply Support:** Optimize tourism potential & set up supply for 2022+.
3. **Tourism Demand Attraction:** Increase visitation over next three years.

## Appendix B

# OSW Director Job Description

## Purpose

To clarify the responsibilities, expectations and qualifications applicable to all Board members of OSW.

## Policy

The OSW Board will collectively govern the organization, on behalf of residents, consumers and members, towards achieving its vision and fulfilling its mission in an ethical and legal manner.

## Board Responsibilities

The Board of OSW is responsible for the overall governance of the affairs of the corporation and to ensure the long-term health of the organization.

## Outreach

- Engage stakeholders in the region, including tourism businesses, municipalities, destination marketing organizations and sector associations.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of regional issues, challenges and opportunities.
- Identify initiatives where OSW can provide leadership in growing the tourism industry of the region.
- Communicate OSW priorities, programs, partnership opportunities and events to regional stakeholders.

## Set and Monitor Strategic Direction

- Develop and periodically review the Vision, Values, Mission and strategic priorities of OSW in consultation with stakeholders.
- Identify the human, financial & other resources needed for mission achievement
- Ensure the necessary human and financial resources are available to achieve the strategic priorities.
- Delegate implementation of the strategic plan to the Executive Director.
- Monitor progress towards achieving the strategic priorities.
- Oversee the responsible stewardship of financial resources and ensure the ongoing financial health of OSW.
- Ensure the Board is governing the corporation effectively.
- Identify risks to the corporation and ensure a plan is developed to manage the risks.

## Duties and Expectations of Individual Directors

Each director is responsible to act honestly, in good faith and in the best interest of OSW and, in so doing, to support the corporation in fulfilling its mission and ensure it meets all its obligations. It is recognized that it may take new directors several months to become familiar with the scope of operational details of OSW.

### Duty of Care

- Directors are expected to apply their skills, knowledge and judgment that may be reasonably expected of them by the public.
- Directors are expected to always act in the best interest of OSW, exhibiting good faith, honesty and loyalty to the corporation.
- Directors will keep confidential any information, discussions and any other matters that come before the Board of the Corporation or Committees of the Board unless specifically identified as non-confidential. All directors are required to annually sign a confidentiality agreement.
- Directors will identify when they may be in a conflict of interest when the Board is dealing with specific policy matters and will not participate in any discussion or decisions relating to the issue.
- Directors will become knowledgeable on issues related to the mission of the organization and about topics relevant to governing a not-for-profit tourism organization in Ontario.

### Expectations

- Attend all board and committee meetings and functions, such as planning retreats
- Attend the Annual General Meeting whenever possible, and make reports to the members if appropriate
- Actively and positively represent the organization in the community, striving to enhance its image
- Actively participate on a committee or task force as required.
- Come prepared to all meetings having reviewed the circulated meeting materials in advance.
- Actively and constructively participate in all meetings and contribute to the group decision-making.
- Actively support resource generation by identifying prospective sources of funds, volunteers, members, sponsors, partners and other resources for the organization and promoting its services

### Terms & Conditions

- Directors will serve in a voluntary capacity but may be reimbursed for eligible expenses incurred.
- Directors may serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms plus any lesser initial term. A lesser term may have resulted from a staggering of director terms when OSW began as a



corporation or when a director completed a term for a director who resigned before his/her term had expired.

- OSW will secure and maintain Directors & Officers Liability Insurance coverage on behalf of the Board.

### Time Commitment

The number of meetings that directors are expected to participate in varies. The following is an estimate of the number of meetings and events..

- Approximately 8 board meetings per year, each up to four hours, plus travel to varying locations within the region. Most meetings will be held virtually.
- A monthly committee or task force meeting of up to four hours, plus travel and preparation.
- Four hours per month in online discussions and document review.
- An Annual General Meeting of members.
- A day or more annual retreat for planning and in-depth discussions.
- Periodic community events at which a Director will represent the organization.
- Occasional attendance at regional, provincial or national events relating to tourism.

### Qualifications

Generally, directors are expected to exercise the degree of integrity, care, diligence and skill required of a board member of a non-profit corporation. They are expected to contribute to the fiduciary oversight of OSW and ensure the ongoing success of the organization.

### Skills

The OSW Board strives to have a complement of directors that bring a diversity of skills to the organization. The following is a list of skills that the Board strives to have collectively among the directors. As new directors are sought, the Board will look for candidates with specific skills to fill gaps in the current skills base.

- Governance
- Strategic planning
- Success measures/performance metrics
- Audit/financial oversight
- Legal framework for non-profits
- Communication with stakeholders
- Revenue generation
- Organizational ethics and integrity
- Community engagement
- Membership and/or volunteer recruitment and retention
- Internal policy development
- Advocacy in public policy development

## Knowledge

The following are the areas of knowledge under consideration when recruiting new directors. It would be great if you had experience in some of these areas but if you don't and still think you have a skill set that is useful, please let us know, we would love to hear from you.

- Familiarity with a significant part of the geographic area and its tourism/economic drivers.
- Familiarity with diverse aspects of the tourism industry as a participant, supplier, avid consumer or academic.
- Experience in leading non-profit organizations.
- Financial literacy.
- Experience in dealing with elected officials and public servants on matters of public policy, funding and legal matters.
- Professional or work experience directly related to the development and enhancement of tourism products such as accommodations, attractions and events.
- Active membership in a tourism-related organization with a wide geographic scope.
- Formal education or equivalent relating to tourism, hospitality, event management or related subjects.