



Organizational Review

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2019

NOVA SCOTIA ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS (“NSAA”) ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NSAA commissioned this organizational review in order to answer five questions:

- What administrative, staff and volunteer resources are required to effectively operationalize the priorities of the Strategic Plan;
- Whether the organizational capacity, required to meet the strategic priorities are realistically achievable;
- How that capacity can be allocated among staff, retained external resources and volunteers;
- Whether there are real limitations in the Association’s capacity that need to be built into an organizational model based on size, provisions of the Act, the economic issues affecting the profession or otherwise;
- How to communicate the results of a review to the membership.

These five questions arise out of the NSAA’s experiences since adopting a five-year Strategic Plan in 2015. Half way through the five year timeframe of the Plan, in 2018 NSAA assessed progress to date in implementing the Plan. NSAA sought member recommendations related to the Plan, and reported on implementation progress. Out of that process, it became apparent that differences of opinion existed within NSAA with respect to the direction set by the NSAA Council related to completing implementation of the Plan. My goal in completing this review and answering the above questions has been to provide actionable recommendations so that NSAA can:

- Identify priorities and activities that should be reconfirmed, modified, or abandoned; and
- Identify and align resources to those priorities and activities.

In order to complete the review, my work has been carried out in phases. First, research was undertaken to ensure I fully understood the status quo and the external environment. The research included a thorough review of NSAA’s existing governance structure and resources, its legislative context, and a scan of the external environment to compare NSAA to other self-regulatory organizations.

The second phase was devoted to interviewing thirteen individuals, including the current Executive Director and President, former Presidents and a variety of volunteers representing a cross section of leadership and experience within NSAA and the profession. The interview questions were developed with the assistance of the Organizational Review Steering Committee. All of the interviewees were highly cooperative and interested in assisting with the review. A great deal of information and feedback was obtained, and provided me with an opportunity to reflect and synthesize the interview results to highlight emergent themes, strengths, weaknesses and areas of least consensus, which are summarized in this Report.

Using all of the information gathered in the first two phases, it was possible to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to NSAA related to its efforts to achieve the Strategic Plan. I have also examined the Strategic Plan and have made recommendations to improve its clarity and chances of success.

This Report is organized to address the Deliverables identified in my response to the RFP for this Organizational Review. I have set out my overall conclusions and key recommendations at the front of this report. In support, I follow with the findings of the research phase and a synthesis of the information gathered during the interview phase, and then close with more detailed commentary on:

- the work that must be performed by NSAA to satisfy statutory obligations; this is the work that is non-negotiable with members;
- the balance required between the regulatory and professional representation mandates of NSAA and possible approaches to fulfil both;
- the approaches taken by comparator organizations and suggest adaptations that might be useful to NSAA;
- resource requirements to fulfil NSAA mission; analyzes existing, necessary, potential resources, and suggest solutions to gaps;
- the capacity of NSAA to achieve the Strategic Plan and addresses possible solutions to misalignments, gaps, and organizational limitations;
- the governance structure of NSAA, and the capacity of Council, committees and staff;
- other issues deemed to be relevant as a result of the project; and
- a communications strategy to NSAA members.

HIGH LEVEL CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Strategic Plan

The five questions posed by NSAA are based on the assumption that the Strategic Plan is a sound and viable plan. Unfortunately, my work leads to the conclusion that the Strategic Plan is flawed to the extent that it should be shelved until more fundamental structural changes are considered and implemented. The Strategic Plan was based on the NSAA pursuing some activities that are not sufficiently aligned to the statutory purposes of the NSAA. Further the Plan was not formulated based on a realistic assessment of the capacity and resources available to support the Plan.



2. The mission of NSAA

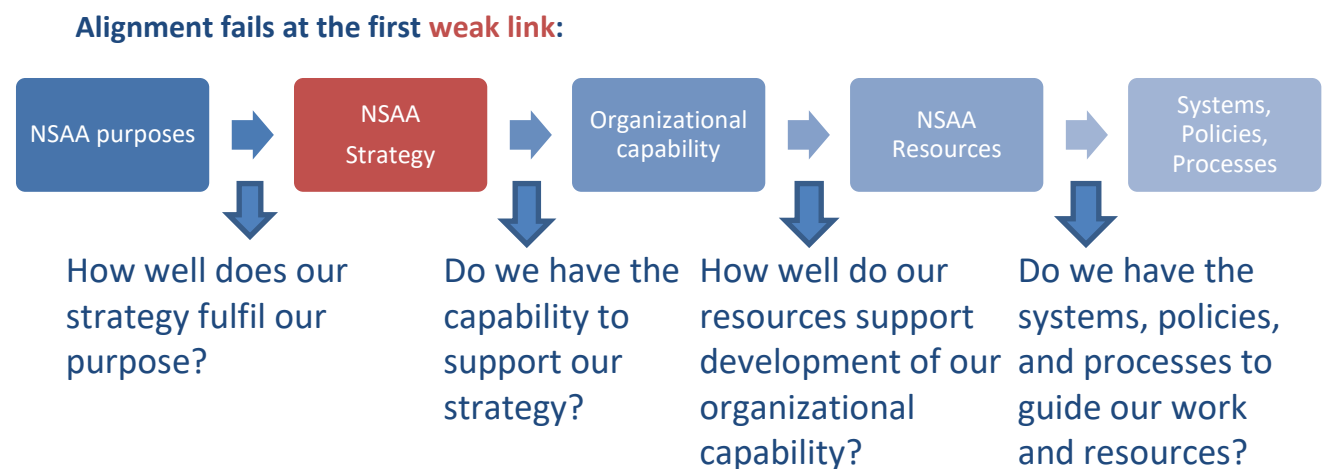
The NSAA is a regulator. The law applicable to self-governing organizations is premised on one fundamental principle: that a self-governing body must at all times conduct itself so as to protect the public within the scope of its regulatory mandate. This makes sense if one remembers that governments exist to make laws that are in the best interests of society overall. The creation of a self-governing profession by an act of the legislature is a delegation of that power. Governments are not interested in the individual well-being of members of a profession, except in the event that individual action or inaction of a professional is contrary to the public interest. Over time, NSAA has interpreted its purposes too broadly and has acted as though it is both a regulator and a professional association (i.e. a promoter of architects in the interests of individual architects). The NSAA needs to realign its organizational structure and its operations to the only legitimate statutory purpose of regulating the profession.

3. Organizational capacity

The NSAA should align its employed and volunteer resources to the regulatory purpose. Compared to peer organizations, it is apparent that NSAA is understaffed, and the burden on volunteers under the current business model is likely too great. Building a structure based on the Strategic Plan has created an unsustainable and overly-complicated organization that requires too many volunteers and too much work that is not sufficiently aligned to the role of regulating the profession of architecture.

The NSAA must re-orient its work to regulation. The Strategic Plan diverted attention from this work and gave rise to conflicting opinions about how the regulatory work could be performed. Specifically, the question of whether core work related to registration and licensing of architects could be out-sourced or subcontracted was debated. The core mission of NSAA is to regulate the profession of architecture and this work requires professional expertise, the exercise of professional judgment, and institutional knowledge. The NSAA is accountable to the legislature to fulfil a role that is otherwise the privilege of government. It is not recommended, and probably not legally possible, for NSAA to “outsource” its core mission.

Aligning NSAA to its legislative purposes:



4. Key Recommendations

There are many suggestions in this Report to address the identified issues. However, some recommendations deserve more attention than others in the short term. Therefore, I have categorized recommendations into those that must be attended to within the next year, those that should be attended to as soon as those of higher priority are completed, and those that would improve organizational effectiveness but are not critical to success.

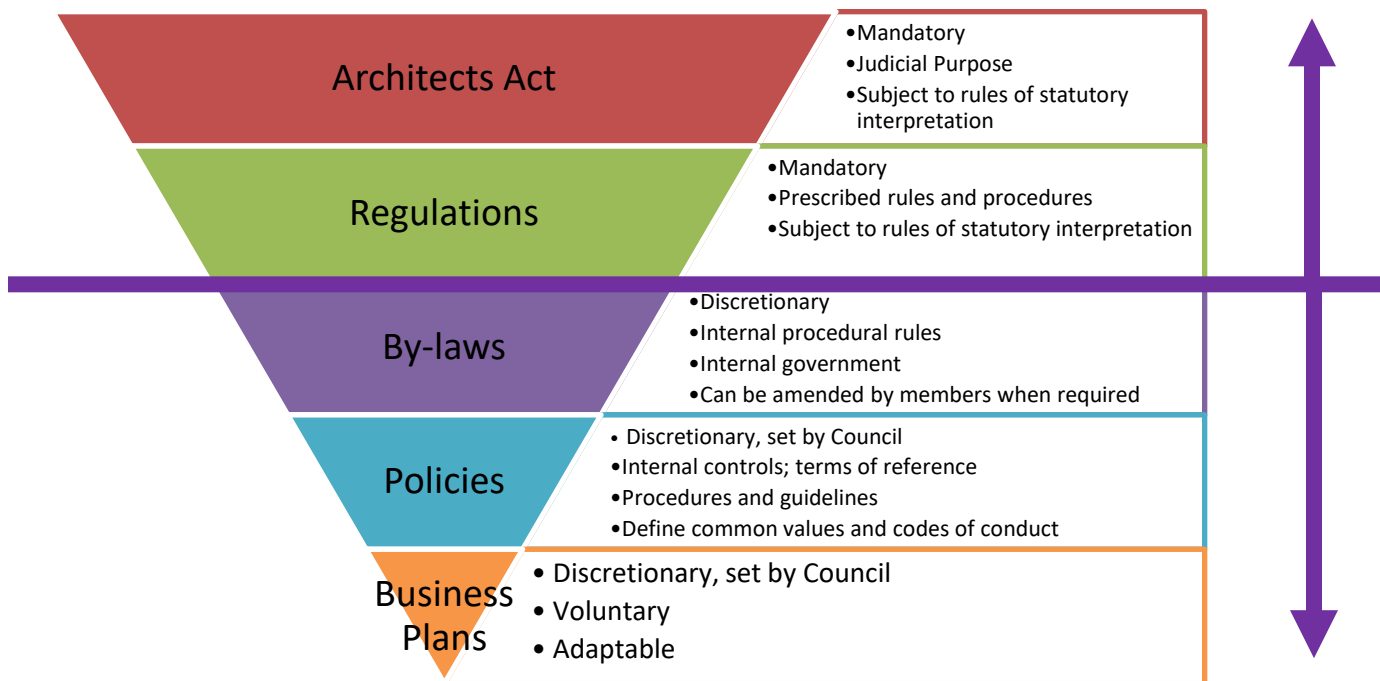
First Priority	Second Priority	Good, but not critical, to do
Re-orientation of Council to statutory purposes	Assess whether property ownership is in the best interests of NSAA	Consider whether external expertise can expedite the development and implementation of an external relations strategy to promote architecture <u>in the public interest</u>
Review and restructure Committees of Council to align to statutory purposes	Website: consider retaining external expertise to achieve objectives identified in the FRPA Review; decide whether the potential of the website deserves external advice and professional support	Allow staff to determine and recommend the best technology platform for the operations of NSAA
Document Terms of Reference for Council and its Committees	Conduct a dedicated annual Council priorities and planning session to set business objectives for both Council and Staff, consistent with statutory purposes. Measure annual performance.	Engage in Strategic Plan Renewal so that strategic initiatives can be specific and connected to the statutory purposes and the renewed Vision, Mission and Values Statements
Review and confirm Terms of Reference for Board of Registration and its Committees	Review by-laws to ensure that they reflect the revised governance structure	
Complete Job Descriptions for Councillors; President; Vice President	Revisit the Vision, Mission, and Values Statements to clarify what NSAA aspires to be or do consistent with statutory purposes	
Complete Job Description for Executive Director	Conduct policy gap analysis to complete policy framework in addition to policies identified as first priority	
Review and confirm appropriate staffing structure; retention of appropriate personnel		
Establish governance policy framework and develop and adopt policies arising out of preceding work		
Provide governance orientation to Council and Committees		

B. WORK LEADING TO THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PART ONE – RESEARCH and CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

For the purposes of understanding the internal and external context of NSAA’s operations, I reviewed the legislation (Act and Regulations) that creates and governs NSAA, all internal NSAA governance documents as provided to me during the course of the Review, the Strategic Plan, and all of the materials identified in Schedule A.

In order to properly answer the questions posed by NSAA, it is important to conduct an analysis based on one fundamental premise: the governance structure of NSAA is based on a legislative hierarchy that makes certain activities mandatory and others optional. The hierarchy looks like this:



The governance documents above the purple line are essentially inviolate. They can be changed, but not without legislative intervention. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that they are fully complied with and amended only if there is a compelling policy reason. These documents set the parameters for the work that must be done by the Association, but do not specify how that work is to be done.

The documents below the purple line are internal documents that are entirely within the control of NSAA, but which must be consistent with the Act and Regulations. While they can potentially expand on the purposes and rules set out in the legislation, they can never be in conflict with the legislation. It is important to keep in mind that the Strategic Plan under examination in this review is at the bottom of the inverted pyramid. **It is the least binding and the most adaptable document in the NSAA governance structure.**

Architects Act (Nova Scotia) (the “Act”)

Section 9 of the Act defines the NSAA purposes as:

- (a) the protection of the public through
 - (i) the maintenance of professional competence and ethical conduct of its members, and
 - (ii) the enforcement of this Act with respect to illegal practice;
- (b) the advancement of the knowledge, skill and proficiency of its members in all matters relating to the practice of architecture; and
- (c) the promotion of the architectural profession and architectural services in the public interest.

These are the three things that the Association is created to do in order to carry out a regulatory mandate delegated to it by the provincial government. Self-regulatory bodies are subject to a body of law that interprets legislative purposes based on a fundamental premise: that the privilege of self-regulation is extended in return for the expectation that protection of the public interest will be of paramount importance. Therefore, the three purposes in Section 9 are in order of importance.

The protection of the public takes precedence over matters of self-interest to architects as a profession. The second and third purposes set out above are not intended to be self-interested; they are intended to be ancillary to the primary purpose. In other words, advancing competency is directly related to the primary purpose, and promoting the profession is expressly stated to be for the public interest. This context needs to be front of mind when discussing the validity of some parts of the Strategic Plan.

The other function of a “purposes” clause is to set the parameters for all activities of an organization. The purposes are, in other words, the boundaries or the limits of jurisdiction. An organization needs to “stay within the lines” of its purposes clause and not venture into lines of business that are not reasonably connected to the purposes. For example, if the Association decided to open a bookstore to sell publications related to “advancement of knowledge relating to the practice of architecture” with the objective of raising funds to support the promotion of the architectural profession in the public interest, the business activity may well be authorized. However, if the Association decided to open an ice cream shop on Barrington Street to supplement declining revenues from membership renewals, it would clearly be outside the scope of the purposes clause.

The Act also prescribes the composition of the Council and grants authority to Council to carry out the NSAA purposes. The Act requires the Council to appoint a Board of Registration, a Complaints Committee, and a Discipline Committee. The Act is focused on enabling the primary purpose of protecting the public by requiring the Council to put in place the infrastructure to oversee admission to the profession, maintenance of professional competence of members, and the discipline of members who do not adhere to the legislative requirements. The business of operating the Association is not addressed in the Act.

Regulations

The Regulations made pursuant to the Act are also largely limited to prescribing procedures to carry out the primary purpose of the Act in relation to licensing, competency, and discipline. The Regulations address the composition of the Board of Registration and its mandatory duties. The Regulations prescribe classes of membership and provide the procedural details related to admission to and ongoing maintenance of membership. There is virtually no content in the Act or the Regulations that sets out how

the Association should carry out the second and third purposes set out in the Act. This is because the concern of the legislature is protection of the public. The Council is given by-law making powers that do not require approval of the legislature because, generally speaking, the legislature is not interested in internal management matters.

By-laws; Policies; Business Plans

Bylaws

I will not spend time parsing the existing Bylaws of the Association. They are, in my opinion, not the source of the challenges that at present confront the Association. They adequately set out the rules applicable to internal operations of Council and the Board of Registration. Two things are noteworthy: (i) the terminology used in the Bylaws should be consistent with the legislation. For example, the Bylaws introduce the term “Board of Examiners” in the place of Board of Registration. This is confusing. (ii) Section 11.2 makes it clear that management of the day to day business of the Association is vested in the Council. I will refer to this point in my recommendations.

Policies

To the extent I have been able to determine, the Association has adopted very few internal policies. This results in a lack of standards or clarity of expectations with respect to respective roles and responsibilities and internal controls. Information gleaned from interviews suggests that this has resulted in unnecessary conflicts and frustrations.

Existing Policies (as posted on NSAA website)

Spokesperson Policy - Revised November 2015

Policy on Resignation and Reinstatement - Revised December 2016

Policy on Retirement and Reinstatement - Revised December 2016

Policy on Hardship Request - Revised December 2016

Policy on Corporate Permit Extensions - Revised December 2016

For the most part, these policies are related to the regulatory purposes. Policy gaps exist with respect to managing the operations of NSAA, with respect to internal controls for example, and recommendations are addressed in the final section of this report.

External Environment and Comparator Organizations

An examination of NSAA’s peer regulatory organizations across Canada confirms that the issues confronting NSAA are shared concerns across the country. While the legislation is not uniform, peer regulators are established to carry out very similar purposes and they appear to be working on the same key issues:

- Protecting the domain of licensed architects and finding the resources to identify and challenge unauthorized practice;
- Advancing professional competence of members through relevant and accessible continuing education;
- Advocating and influencing in procurement and project management to protect the value and role of architects and to deal with emerging imbalances (insurability, for example);

- Engaging with government and the public to build the profile of the profession as stewards of the built environment;
- Membership development and diversity, including attracting younger members to volunteerism.

Some peer organizations have also recently adopted strategic plans, or have at least adopted key strategic initiatives. At a high level, these plans are comparable to the NSAA Strategic Plan in terms of themes and areas of focus. Some of them have only a regulatory purpose, in that their legislation does not include purposes related to “advancement of the profession”.

A snapshot of the national context is attached as Appendix A. Those peer organizations that have a dual mandate similar to the NSAA related to “advancing the profession” express this mandate in a variety of ways, but in all cases the peer organizations frame this mandate in relationship to the primary mandate to protect the public interest, similar to the Nova Scotia Act.

PART TWO: INTERVIEWS

I was able to interview all of the individuals suggested by you over the course of the last few weeks: Rayleen Hill, Mike Cook, Basma Sahib, Gregory MacNeil, Ron LeLievre, Dean Dumaresq, Eugene Pieczonka, Therese LeBlanc, Ron Burdock, Troy Scott, Beth MacLeod, and Leif Fuchs.

All of the interviewees were generous with their time and were pleased that NSAA is undertaking this work. The Interview Guide is attached as Schedule B. The overall areas of common thought can be summarized as follows:

- The NSAA’s primary purpose is to regulate the profession; the purposes of continuing education of members and the promotion of the profession are important, but secondary, and relate to the primary purpose.
- The majority of interviewees did not agree that out-sourcing regulatory administration would be wise or popular with members. They see the regulatory mandate as the core mission of NSAA that needs to be supported by knowledgeable and committed staff. The qualitative aspects of overseeing interns needs to be done by architects, although more efficiency in these processes is required.
- A lot of work has been accomplished since adoption of the Strategic Plan. The NSAA has committed volunteers who do great work. It is normal to have to adjust strategies and reflection is healthy. There is some sense that there are too many initiatives – that the Plan is too ambitious and not sufficiently focused on the primary purposes of NSAA. The majority of interviewees do not support amendments to the Plan that were introduced at the 2018 AGM.
- The committee structure is complicated. It requires too many volunteers and oversight is burdensome on staff. Some committees are not active. It needs to be reviewed and made more efficient. There is concern about the use of an executive committee. The overly complicated committee structure means that staff do not have adequate time to spend on meaningful work.
- Succession of volunteers may be an issue. More should be done to attract younger members to volunteer and serve. Younger members have not had positive experiences as volunteers.
- Clear job descriptions and limits on authority of individual council members, particularly the President, is required. It should be clear that the President does not have individual decision-

making authority about major issues or about day to day management decisions that are best made by staff.

- There is concern about NSAA’s ownership of Stoddard House. Resources should be allocated to the NSAA’s purposes, and it is important not to allow property management concerns to deplete or divert resources. Some members asked that serious consideration be given to selling the property, or ensuring that it is used as a resource aligned to core purposes. For example, one person suggested that the upstairs space should be used for continuing education and advancement of the profession activities and that NSAA should not be a landlord.
- Advocacy on behalf of the profession should focus on promoting the value and necessity of using architects in support of protecting the public interest; and on influencing decision making in government. Most interviewees define “advancement of the profession” in terms of collective advancement and not at the level of the success of individual architects.
- Several interviewees spoke of the need to address the role of architects in relation to other project management professionals (engineers, in particular, and procurement staff), and that NSAA can do more outreach and advocacy to ensure architects “keep a seat at the table”.
- With two exceptions, interviewees do not believe it is the role of NSAA to teach business management skills. The market should sort this out. Individuals are responsible for their own careers. Interviewees were consistent in believing that the direction articulated in the 2018 Strategic Plan Update was not appropriate, representing a departure from the original Plan, and not consistent with the legislative purposes.
- The Council should be setting clear annual objectives for Council and staff and should be conducting more formal performance evaluations. Objectives should be based on priorities developed in alignment with the Strategic Plan.
- The NSAA needs to devote more resources to dealing with unauthorized practice matters. Sending off cease and desist letters may not be the right approach and time should be devoted to identifying problems and enabling resolution.
- There was some interest in exploring opportunities for outsourcing non mission critical work. Areas for possible external advice and support include technology and public relations.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

Interviewees were asked the following questions:

1. What does the Association do well?
2. What does the Association do that it should NOT be doing?
3. What does the Association not do that it SHOULD be doing?

From the answers to these questions, it was possible to put together the following “SWOT” chart:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Committed volunteers	Too many initiatives	Outreach and partnerships	Competition
Institutional knowledge	Overly complicated governance	Process improvement	Devaluation
Staff	Small membership base	Technology	Member engagement
Board of Registration	No diversity of skills or experience on Council		Public procurement trends
	Timeliness of intern reviews		

Answers to the three questions included the following thoughts:

1. What does the Association do well?
 - The Council is focused on building a good governance structure
 - Regulatory – the Board of Registration – deep institutional knowledge
 - New regional Chapters
 - Architecture Awards program and Architecture Week
 - Spring Forum
2. What does the Association do that it should NOT be doing?
 - Landlord/property management
 - Members should not have to pay to go to an AGM; AGM should be a priority
 - Too many initiatives in the Strategic Plan/introducing new initiatives not aligned to Strategic Plan
 - Overly complicated committee structure
 - Executive Committee – should not supplant Council
 - Operating with MAC instead of PC technology
3. What does the Association not do that it SHOULD be doing?
 - Optimize the website and use technology to better advantage for member communications and engagement; professional communications strategy; get external help
 - Community outreach – more public engagement on value of architecture to society
 - Proper budgeting and financial oversight
 - Clearly define roles and responsibilities of Council vs. staff
 - Governance training for Council members and better orientation
 - Partnerships with other professions, i.e. Interior Designers
 - Task Force on Procurement – address RFP issues; insurability issues; valuation issues
 - Annual objectives and performance management
 - Active Intern Committee and engagement of newly licensed architects
 - Continuing education workshops
 - Leverage relationships with RAIC and peer regulators (don't reinvent the wheel)
 - More assertive on contraventions of Act

THEMES DISTILLED FROM INTERVIEW RESPONSES

- The regulatory pillar is primary. NSAA has deep institutional knowledge in this area. However, there are opportunities to improve processes and practices to lessen volunteer requirements and improve efficiencies. There are no clear advantages to considering outsourcing this work. It would not be supported by the membership and would not result in significant savings. Staff costs at NSAA are not unreasonable (see peer assessment below). There is little support for the direction articulated at the 2018 AGM.
- Roles and responsibilities have not been sufficiently defined. This is particularly true with respect to the Committees and to the role of President. This has caused dissension and has diverted Council's attention from its priorities.
- With the help of independent advisors, Council should decide whether it continues to make sense to own Stoddart House.
- Renewal of the volunteer base needs to be a strategic priority, particularly for the Board of Registration and Council. This requires open-minded consultation with younger members.

PART THREE: THE STRATEGIC PLAN

I have been asked to answer the following questions with respect to the NSAA Strategic Plan:

- What administrative, staff and volunteer resources are required to effectively operationalize the priorities of the Strategic Plan;
- Whether the organizational capacity, required to meet the strategic priorities are realistically achievable;
- How that capacity can be allocated among staff, retained external resources and volunteers.

Answering these questions needs to be preceded by an assessment of the Strategic Plan itself in the context of the earlier discussion on the legislative purposes of the Association. For example, the first question assumes that the priorities of the Plan have been sufficiently defined. I have concluded that they are not.

NSAA adopted the Strategic Plan in 2015. It is a sparse document that sets out mission, vision and values statements and defines four areas of strategic focus: Governance, Membership, Practice, and Community. At the 2018 iteration, "governance" was identified as a foundation, and the area of focus was redefined as "regulatory". It was recognized at adoption that further work was required to agree on specific initiatives that would be pursued in each area.

A good strategic plan should include:

- A clear vision: a statement of the desired destination
- Core values to guide action
- Clearly defined outcomes – so you know when you have arrived
- Accountability – assignment of responsibility to individuals – without it, things don't get done
- Metrics (KPIs; deadlines; milestones) – to allow measurement of progress

In my view, the original Strategic Plan does not sufficiently or compellingly set out a vision for NSAA. Without definition of what “value for members” or “benefits to community” look like, it is not possible to understand what it is that NSAA aims to achieve. For the people involved in developing the Plan, these definitions may have been discussed or commonly understood, but without articulating them clearly in the Plan, there is no way for future readers or members not involved with developing the Plan to be engaged or energized by the vision. Furthermore, at face value “value for members” has nothing whatsoever to do with NSAA’s legislative purpose, which is to regulate the profession in the public interest.

To contrast, the vision statement in the AIBC 2019-2023 Strategic Plan is “Inspiring architectural leadership and excellence through progressive regulation”. This statement anchors the strategy in the primary regulatory purpose of AIBC and signals that the focus of strategic initiatives will be continuing improvements in the regulatory model. In another example, the SAA Strategic Plan uses a mission statement instead of a vision, as follows: “The mission of the Saskatchewan Association of Architects is to provide regulation, leadership, and guidance in the practice of architecture for the benefit of the public and the membership”. These statements much more clearly set a direction for the body of the plan consistent with self regulation.

From another profession, the Vision of the Nova Scotia Barristers Society is: “The Society is the independent, trusted and respected regulator of the legal profession. Acting in the public interest, we provide leadership, value and support to a competent, ethical, inclusive and engaged legal profession. We enable the legal profession to enhance access to justice and uphold the rule of law.” As an illustration of how definitions and phrases improve the clarity and intention of vision and values statements, see Appendix B from the Society.

A simple example of how a vision statement is linked to organizational strategy is provided by the Walt Disney Co. Its vision is to “create happiness by providing the finest in entertainment for people of all ages, everywhere.” If this vision was replaced with “make movies and theme parks”, who would get excited?

The Mission and Values sections of the Plan also should be revisited. Single words are usually only impactful when accompanied by images or narratives that convey a clear message to the reader. The Mission and Values sections of the Plan make it challenging to define precise strategic initiatives, arrange them in priority, and agree on what activities are aligned to the Plan. For example, a mission to “develop excellence” is more or less meaningless without a clear idea of the realm in which you intend to develop excellence.

The Plan does provide more definition with respect to the four identified strategic pillars. These statements were a good start in defining specific initiatives. The missing pieces are the desired outcomes, the tasks or activities that will be deployed to achieve the outcomes, and metrics for performance management. To illustrate, I attach the one page summary in Appendix C from the AIBC plan that includes specific outcomes and the initiatives to achieve them. It is also questionable whether two of the pillars, Membership and Community, are defined in a way that sufficiently connects to the statutory purposes.

Recommendation: It would be beneficial for NSAA to revisit the Vision, Mission, and Values Statements to clarify and add detail to what NSAA aspires to be or do so that strategic initiatives can be specific and connected to the statutory purposes.

As noted above, it was recognized at the time of adoption that further work was required to develop specific strategic initiatives under each of the four pillars of the Plan. To that end, an external consultant was retained to review the governance structure of NSAA. That work formed the basis of the committee structure that is in place today, and also resulted in lists of initiatives or ideas for initiatives that would be carried out under the headings of Regulatory, Governance, and Advancing the Profession (Membership, Practice and Community). However, the exercise does not appear to have resulted in decisions as to which specific initiatives would be actioned and what measurable outcomes would be used for measuring implementation. For example, it was suggested that NSAA “develop and support a design culture”, but the next step of identifying the “how and what” was not taken. This means that it has been almost impossible for Council to oversee and measure implementation. To use cliché: “if you don’t know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?”

Another consequence of not having clearly defined objectives is conflict. In 2018, it became clear that internal conflict, centering on disagreement over adjustments to the Strategic Plan, would seriously impede any further progress in implementing the Plan. The 2018 Strategic Plan Update delivered at the 2018 AGM contained some significant adjustments to the original Strategic Plan, and in fact added initiatives to an already long list of initiatives, few of which have been completed. The Update represents a fundamental change in direction that was not supported by the membership. Throughout the interviews, it was apparent that the change in direction is perceived as being inconsistent with the Act, and with only two exceptions was not supported by those interviewed.

The Update suggested that there was a Strategic Planning and Implementation Committee. I was not provided with terms of reference for that committee or any information about how it conducted its work. The Update begins by suggesting that the Governance Pillar represented the “major goal” of NSAA, although I was provided with no evidence that Council made a decision at some point that the initiatives under the Governance Pillar were more important than those under the other pillars of Membership, Practice and Community. As well, the first initiative under the Governance Pillar was amended in a significant way by adding the underlined words:

“Align our resources to create a structure that supports and facilitates effective volunteerism and staff performance, and knowledgeable, prosperous membership”.

The Update continues with a high level summary of accomplishments and suggests that member feedback leads to the conclusion that the Strategic Plan should be reoriented to a focus on member business education:

“The NSAA must focus its energy and resources in a fashion that will empower our members to be successful business practitioners. Simply stated, if we have successful business practices, we will have a successful profession. A reflection on our past reveals that the history of professional development has been sporadic and without a central focus. The Association’s future success and strength will depend on the success and strength of its members.”

The Update also addresses the purposes of NSAA and states:

“The higher purpose of the NSAA is to enhance the professional knowledge and capability of its members through education; to enable the sustainability of architectural practices through improving business acumen; and to elevate the perception of the value of architecture through public education.”

Unfortunately, this statement is not consistent with the Act, and at worst is in contravention of the Act. The higher, or primary, purpose of NSAA is professional regulation. This cannot be controverted. The last phrase with respect to elevating the perception of the value of architecture can be interpreted to relate to the statutory purpose of advancing the profession, but it cannot be said that “improving business acumen” of individual members is sufficiently connected to the statutory purposes. It must be remembered that the second and third purposes set out in the Act are ancillary to the primary purpose of protection of the public. The point of the second purpose is that maintaining professional competence is required in the public interest, not in the self-interest of individual architects. The competence must be related to the professional activities of architecture.

The Update shifted focus from the Governance, Membership, Practice, and Community Pillars, and added a whole new Pillar called Business Practice Empowerment. The Update does not set out specific initiatives related to Business Practice Empowerment but does suggest that NSAA will have to find resources, money and people, to undertake them.

Of note, I could find no reference in any peer organization discussion of strategy or business planning to a role for the regulatory body in business education. I do not suggest that NSAA could not offer continuing education in subject areas related to business management. For example, the Ontario Association of Architects offers a three day workshop in Starting an Architectural Practice and the program covers a lot of business management content. It would not be inconsistent with the statutory purposes to offer education of this nature, but it should not be a primary focus. It would be more efficient to explore access for NSAA members to the Ontario program, i.e. do not reinvent the wheel. Improving business acumen should not be elevated to a strategic pillar of NSAA, and **I recommend that it not divert attention and resources away from those initiatives that are more closely aligned to the statutory purposes.**

The Update also created confusion in articulating initiatives that are not reflected in the original Plan. For example, Appendix A to the Update refers to a Regulatory Pillar that is not in the original Plan. It is not possible to discern from the documents provided to me exactly what Council approved in terms of specific initiatives. However, I have attempted to piece together the information provided to me in a format that allows for assessment.

Recommendation: Council should reorient the Strategic Plan to its regulatory purposes and complete a capacity and resource assessment; initiatives identified for each Pillar must be restricted to regulatory purposes; and unrelated initiatives should be abandoned. Council should complete the following tasks:

- Review the work done to date in defining specific initiatives and identify those that are aligned with the statutory purpose and the Plan. Determine the relative importance of initiatives that you want to keep, and cull those initiatives that no longer resonate;
- Define specific outcomes for each retained initiative;
- Assess required resources for each initiative;
- Assign accountability for each initiative;
- Set timelines for achievement;
- Regularly monitor progress.

Here is a framework to tackle that work. I have attempted to synthesize all of the materials I have reviewed on the Strategic Plan, including the original plan, the November 2015 update document prepared by Fairwinds Consulting, and the 2018 Update delivered at the AGM. Priority should be categorized as near-term, medium-term, or long-term. You can decide what the ranges are for those categories. For example, near-term = within 1 year; medium-term = 2-3 years, long-term = 5 years. For the purposes of this exercise, do not be limited by the stated term of the Plan. Words in red italics are my comments; or if I have converted text to red italics I am highlighting that the initiative may not be sufficiently connected to the regulatory purposes and should be considered for amendment or removal. If a table box is blank, it is because I could not identify relevant content in the materials provided or because it is something that I should not pre-determine.

GOVERNANCE PILLAR							
Goal	Cultivate a responsive, progressive and sustainable association						
Alignment to purpose	<i>If this goal is intended to enable the statutory purposes of self-regulation and advancement of the <u>profession of architecture</u>, then yes. However, you may want to consider adding a “why” statement to the goal to make this more clear.</i>						
Strategic Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align our resources to create a structure that supports and facilitates effective volunteerism and staff performance 	Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable members to navigate the administrative processes of the Association quickly and easily 	Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a culture of transparency and proactive information sharing 	Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Define initiatives that fulfil the primary purpose of self-regulation</i>
Specific Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-establish the organizational structure Establish committee structure and terms of reference Delegate responsibilities throughout the association Financial stewardship (<i>not specific enough</i>) 	Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign of the NSAA’s Website Implementation of Online services for membership renewals Add information to the website helpful to members <i>and to the public</i> 	Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve member communications Boards and committees looking for members- info should be available to members- links to organizations to work on volunteer committees 	Priority	
Outcomes	A defined governance structure that will acknowledge the governance responsibilities of the NSAA to ensure efficient management and fiscal responsibility.	Priority	<i>Successfully address the FRPA recommendations</i>	Priority		Priority	<i>Outcomes should be clearly related to improving the way NSAA regulates the profession.</i>
Account-ability	Council						

MEMBERSHIP PILLAR				
Goal	Foster an environment where members mentor, collaborate and engage			
Alignment to purpose	<i>If this goal is intended to enable the statutory purpose of maintaining professional competence and advancement of the <u>profession</u> of architecture, then yes. However, you may want to consider adding a “why” statement to the goal to make this more clear.</i>			
Strategic Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust and comprehensive mentoring program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Acknowledge and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of current and past members [this is outside scope of regulatory purpose]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and maintain a shared space where all members feel welcome <i>[how is this connected to regulatory purpose?]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate effectively and create opportunities for information sharing <i>[how is this connected to regulatory purpose?]</i>
Specific Tasks (assign priorities to retained tasks as in first table)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of member engagement Enhance the role of member continuing education and professional development <i>These are not specific tasks. Answer the “how” question.</i> Adoption of a professional development schedule and format Establishing specific educational subject areas for individual professional development Continuing Education partnership program Enhance the relationship between committees and council with respect to retired members <i>[not related to statutory purpose]</i> Re-establish intern membership committee Identify clear guidelines and desired outcomes for a mentoring program that is responsive to needs, write terms of reference for program Identify potential mentors and match them to new or younger architects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Establish a Spring Forum to include the AGM</i> <i>Design Awards, Fall Social, and New Year’s Levee</i> <i>Get the keystone awards on track</i> <i>Find award sponsors</i> <i>Broaden the scope of recognition beyond design- i.e. heritage, more inclusive, honour volunteerism, best practices, legacies</i> <i>[All of the above are likely not sufficiently connected to statutory purposes]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop shared intranet space for member to member sharing of concerns, design challenges and innovative or creative thinking Consider web and internet as part of “shared spaces” Communicate external use of Stoddard House space- easy access, security etc.), Advertise space options <i>[All of the above are likely not sufficiently connected to statutory purposes unless they can be linked to professional competency]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign of the NSAA’s Website Implementation of Online services for membership renewals <i>Survey of members for continuing education areas of interest.</i> Explore platforms/ applications for a communication portal beyond email Have communications person actively seek input from members Develop template for regular newsletters to enable members to access information in a structured and less intrusive manner Bulletin every month- ads pay for it, promote conferences etc. <i>(Saskatchewan has good one)</i>
Outcomes				
Accountability	Practice Committee	<i>Awards & Recognition Committee</i>		

PRACTICE PILLAR				
Goal	Facilitate the advancement of knowledge and skills			
Alignment to purpose	<i>Aligned to the purpose of maintaining professional competence, but could be improved with “why” statement.</i>			
Strategic Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information and education for practice advancement and enhancement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create opportunities for sharing best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Expand and diversify practice opportunities [not connected to statutory purposes]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Protect the franchise of the profession by identifying and investigating unauthorized practice [only so far as it relates to compliance with the Act]</i>
Specific Tasks <i>Note: some of these initiatives were added in the 2018 Update and therefore should be filtered in light of findings with respect to adding the Business Practice Pillar</i> (assign priorities to retained tasks as in first table)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing specific educational subject areas for architecture <i>related to maintenance of professional competence</i> <i>Market correction for architectural service compensation</i> <i>Library/ resource Centre (design) for members and public</i> Communicate, promote, use and maintain ongoing calendar of upcoming professional development, events, opportunities <i>Create small group discussions in person i.e. lunch and learns</i> <i>Digitized RAIC, ALA (and other) conference presentations, Library at NSAA</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Build relationships with NS building officials</i> <i>Interrelationships between firms with respect to best practice and mentorship</i> <i>Completion of the Critical Client evaluation of architectural service in Nova Scotia</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Facilitating an entrepreneurial attitude among members</i> <i>Developing business oriented professional development</i> <i>Inform the membership about the opportunities to expand client-base to national and international clients through Mutual Recognition Agreements.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate sources of information-experts
Outcomes				
Accountability	Practice Committee	<i>Education Committee</i>		

COMMUNITY PILLAR				
Goal	Promote a generosity of spirit between architects and their communities <i>Note: the 2018 Update reframed the goal as “To expand the community’s awareness of the importance of architecture in shaping the social fabric, cultural experience and the built environment in Nova Scotia.”</i>			
Alignment to purpose	<i>The reframed statement is aligned to the purpose of advancing the profession in the public interest, but activities aligned to this purpose must focus on the public interest and not on the interests of architects.</i>			
Strategic Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the broader social value of architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with organizations that are aligned with the NSAA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Facilitate connections between members</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Contribute to a community-based initiative annually</i>

			<i>and their communities</i>	
Specific Tasks (assign priorities to retained tasks as in first table)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Enhancing the recognition of architectural achievement in Nova Scotia – how?</i> • <i>Additional categories for award recognition</i> • Relationship building with municipal leaders and provincial MLAs including cabinet ministers • <i>Developing historical record of Nova Scotia Architecture</i> • <i>Communications strategy for communicating with community- maybe this is a budget item for a PR firm</i> • Public talks by local architects , societal values, societal design issues • BOMA/APENS/IDNS-Joint practice committees • Make sure Council is involved in local associations (Halifax Business, Heritage) Represent Professional benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify areas of the community including municipal and government departments to form partnerships and alliance in advancing architectural practice in Nova Scotia • Representation of the NSAA on other boards and linkages with related groups • <i>Develop partnerships to create architectural tourism opportunities</i> • <i>Hold events in partnership with like-minded organizations</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establishment of NSAA chapters</i> • <i>Relationship with media – how?</i> • <i>Community activities provided by chapters</i> • Recognition for service to the community by NSAA members • <i>Develop architectural related subject matter for Nova Scotia school curriculum</i> • <i>Architects booth at Home expo (promoting the grass roots level)</i> • <i>NSAA to develop Speaker list for expert information-member profile and list of expertise who is knowledgeable within NSAA</i> • <i>NSAA to endorse member specialties and be able to generate list</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of annual Architecture Week in October • <i>Enhancement of the Design Awards program to an annual event</i> • <i>Promote or devise Design competitions</i>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sponsorship for awards by the City of Halifax</i> • <i>Additional ongoing sponsorship by the Premier's office</i> 			
Accountability				

PART FOUR – CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

As part of the validation exercise, NSAA must assess feasibility in light of available resources. I was asked to answer the question as to whether NSAA has the resources and capacity to fully implement the Plan. I have concluded that it is premature to attempt to answer this question until NSAA has completed the above exercise. However, I can provide some context and advice to assist in answering this question. The goal of revisiting the Plan using the above framework is to ensure that the Plan is scaled to the purposes and capacity of NSAA, is mission-centric, realistic, and achievable.

Strategic plans that are not accompanied by capacity assessment and resource allocation are doomed to fail. The visionary nature of strategic planning exercises can result in very aspirational goals. When it becomes apparent that lofty goals are beyond the capacity of an organization, it results in a sense of defeat or failure. This negatively impacts volunteer and member engagement. If an

organization determines that a goal is important to achieve but requires resources in excess of what at present exists, then the plan has to incorporate a strategy for resource generation. For example, if NSAA decides to increase continuing education offerings, then it will have to make decisions about how those offerings will be paid for.

Once NSAA has clarified its strategic priorities, the question turns to whether the capacity exists to implement them. The NSAA is highly dependent on volunteers, but at present has two full time employees. It is therefore important to clearly differentiate between work that will be done by volunteers and work that will be completed by staff.

Some basic principles should be kept in mind when making this determination:

- The governance of NSAA should be vested in Council. The Council governs, controls and administer the affairs of the Association and has the power to delegate authority.
- Council should exercise its power to govern from the perspective of “oversight”. To the extent that it is possible with available resources, Council should seek to delegate day-to-day management to staff.

STAFF

The NSAA drafted role descriptions for the Executive Director and a position entitled Program Coordinator, but it is not clear that these descriptions were approved by Council. Completion of these descriptions should be a priority. The draft descriptions contemplate that these two employees will carry out the following responsibilities (These are not verbatim reproductions of the actual drafts):

Executive Director: Reports to the President and Council, represents the Association and its members publically and is responsible for overall and day-to-day operations. The general functional areas are:

- Administrative support to Council. Act as the Council Secretary (coordination of meetings, minute taking, etc. Orientation for new members.
- Policy Development: Propose, develop and make recommendations on association policy as necessary, seek Council approval and distribute policy information to members. Ensure all existing policies are current and accurately reflect the Act.
- Committee Support: Sit as Council Liaison and work with all committees; Lead, promote, and manage as Council Liaison by sitting with Council Committees to coordinate and manage multiple programs and projects including continuing education, policy development and practice affairs in accordance with the Act.
- AGM: Lead, promote, and manage all aspects of the Annual General Meeting including report preparation, invitations, registrations, event activities, speakers and Trade Show
- Meetings: attend all Executive, Council and Committee meetings as well as the National Annual Conferences and AGM. Attend other conferences and meetings at the discretion of the Council.
- NSAA Representative: Represent the Association in external relationships. On behalf of the NSAA, develop and maintain meaningful and effective relations with stakeholder groups

such as with Legal Counsel, APENS, Landscape Architects, Interior Designers, Architects Schools, etc or publically and in media as requested by Council.

- Association Standing: Develop and maintain good standing with all government and non-government agencies such as Joint Stocks and any other applicable associations.
- Develop and maintain knowledge of issues and challenges facing Nova Scotia's Architects and Nova Scotia's Construction Industry, in general.

With respect to the specific responsibilities of NSAA in regulatory matters, the ED is expected to monitor violations of the Act and Bylaws, manage the Intern Process, review Licensing Applications, coordinate examinations, and provide administrative support to the Board of Registration. With respect to day-to-day operations management, the ED is primarily responsible for budgeting, financial management, human resources, and stakeholder relations. The ED supervises the Program Coordinator and any other staff.

Program Coordinator: This position reports to the ED and is stated to be responsible for membership relations, with its primary function being to provide programs and support for members. The general functions are stated as follows:

- Member Relations: Establish and maintain ongoing relationships with members and their designated contact personnel. Ensure open and effective communication with all members.
- Data Management: Oversee and maintain related databases to ensure membership information is current and complete. Lead and manage the implementation and migration process of NSAA documents* to relational cloud-based content system. (*Archival minutes, annual reports, policies, regulatory information, awards, and photos.)
- Membership Registration: Receive and record annual membership registrations. Manage renewal reminders and collections of past due fees.
- Communications Plan: In conjunction with Council and the ED, develop and drive the Communications Media Plan of the NSAA by executing the strategic direction established by the Community Outreach Committee.
- Members Communications: Develop and maintain meaningful and effective relations with Members by providing timely and effective communication to all members using a variety of media including direct mail, Website, email, phone and publications. Answer and respond to incoming calls and emails from members in a timely manner. Provide creative and meaningful social-media communication messaging via Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Update and maintain the website through the content Management System (CMS) seeking approval of the Council and Executive Director where appropriate.
- New Member Development: Work with the Executive Director to attract and register new members for the association.
- Work with ED and Council in promotion and renting of NSAA meeting space and display windows.

- Program Management: Provide ongoing leadership and support to various standing committees paying specific attention to the Committee(s) goals, priorities, details, budgets, desired outcomes and deadlines of to meet project objectives.
- Volunteer Coordination: Work with volunteers and committee members to ensure maximum participation and compliance in all NSAA programs provide leadership, imagination, and diplomacy so as to build consensus and ensure effective participation by Committee Members. Assist in preparation of reporting to Council.
- Financial Administration: Ensure all revenue and expenses are tracked and coded properly for each program
- General Administration: Batch update of financials; Make bank deposits; Collect, open and disperse correspondence; Order and maintain office supplies, equipment leasing, computers and software, maintenance and repair; Book and organize use of meeting space; Arrange basic catering for on-site meetings; Assist ED in coordinating and executing social, educational, and membership events.
- Continuing Education: Work with Education Committee to determine which courses will be made available to the membership and when; Advertise courses to membership through website and mass communication; Receive registrations and enter registrants in the database to ensure CEUs are accounted for; Manage logistics for courses provided by the NSAA including booking rooms, ensuring audio/video is available and room set up
- Database Management: Work with Executive Director to validate transcripts and course information for both internal and external courses and document in database
- Financial Administration and Bookkeeping: Responsible for the daily posting of accounts payables, receivables, general ledger and monthly bank reconciliations; Create and send invoices to members for all fees due to the Association; Manage the annual renewal fee process; Receive mail, post payables, create cheques for payment and present to Executive Director for signing; Collections: Review aged receivables report monthly and send email reminders and/or make calls to collect outstanding fees
- Building and Property Management: Arrange for all building cleaning and maintenance for the NSAA and arranging on behalf of the condominium corporation; Hire, evaluate and manage the payment of any fees due to outside contractors
- Provide effective leadership and assistance to Premises Committee on planning, organizing, budgeting, and executing planned changes and physical upgrades to premises; Advise ED and Premises Committee on progress payments and close-out of project contracts; Act as primary contact for the NSAA for outside Contractors seeking direction, approvals, and payments.
- Assistance to the Executive Director: Licensing: Assist Executive Director in reviewing application, maintaining application, and licensing process for members and interns; AGM

and Event Management: Assist Executive Director in preparing for and coordinating the AGM and Trade Show, National Association Meetings and Conferences, Stakeholder meetings and events. May require work outside of regular work hours.

Between the two descriptions, the range of operational work that needs to be done to support the activities of the Association are covered, not including the accounting work that is now outsourced to an association management company. Whether it is more work than can be managed by two full time individuals depends on factors such as volume and frequency of different types of activities, but compared to peer organizations I suspect that it is bordering at or over capacity. At present, the Program Coordinator is on a contract. Consideration should be given to converting status to permanent and assessing the reasonability of one person fulfilling the described responsibilities.

Here is a peer assessment based on available 2017 information:

Province	Membership (all classes)	FT Staff/ Salaries & Benefits	Ratio Staff to members	Annual Revenue	% of annual revenues
British Columbia	4,424	22 \$2.4 million	1:201	\$4.2 million	57%
Alberta	1340	11 \$1 million	1:122	\$2 million	50%
Saskatchewan	475	3 \$360 thousand	1:158	\$764 thousand	47%
Manitoba	686	3	1:229		
Ontario	5,747	30 \$2.4 million	1:192	\$5.9 million	41%
Nova Scotia	450	2 \$106 thousand	1:225	\$470 thousand	22%
Engineers NS	7,000	12 \$836 thousand	1:583	\$1.7 million	49%

Nova Scotia Barristers Society	1,989	31 \$3.4 million	1:64	\$5.1 million	67%
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The higher member to staff ratios in larger organizations are to be expected, due to economies of scale. It does appear based on this information, however, that NSAA may want to re-assess its staff complement, but only once it has completed the Strategic Plan analysis and considered the other recommendations in this report.

VOLUNTEERS

The current structure of NSAA relies heavily on volunteer engagement. I estimate that populating the Council and the Committees established under the existing governance structure requires at least 60 and potentially 75-80 volunteers. This represents close to 50% of the resident licensed architects in Nova Scotia and a higher percentage of those who reside in or close to HRM. In contrast, Ontario reports that its activities are supported by 300 volunteers, representing less than 10% of members.

In interviews, concern was raised about the level of volunteer engagement required to support the activities contemplated by the governance structure. Members expressed a need for succession planning and the prevention of “burnout” and there are a high number of volunteers who have many, many years of service. These volunteers are contemplating professional retirement or are simply ready to “pass the torch” to new volunteers that have not been identified.

Recommendations related to redesigning the Committee structure, if implemented, will reduce the number of volunteers required to sustain it.

PART FIVE – DELIVERABLES: ANSWERS TO THE KEY QUESTIONS

1. What is the work that must be performed by NSAA to satisfy statutory obligations; this is the work that is non-negotiable with members.

Based on the earlier discussion with respect to the statutory purposes of NSAA, the work of the Board of Registration is clearly mandatory. Also, work related to the maintenance and development of the competence of members, such as monitoring compliance with the continuing education requirements related to licensing, is mandatory. NSAA does have a mandate to advance the profession, but this must be carried out insofar as it is in the public interest, and therefore there is much more scope within this mandate to scale activities to the capacity of NSAA.

2. What is the balance required between the regulatory and professional representation mandates of NSAA and possible approaches to fulfil both?

This question must be answered in the context of the discussion in this report of the NSAA’s statutory purposes. The balance is manageable if it is accepted that the second and third purposes set out in the Act are aligned to the primary professional regulation mandate. It is not the job of the

NSAA to promote architecture and architects in the interest of architects. The intent behind the purpose of advancing professional competency is to protect the public from incompetence, and the intent behind the purpose of promoting the profession of architecture is to ensure that public and social policy decision making about built environments includes architects. If NSAA is successful in fulfilling these representation purposes, it should result in elevating both the profession and the fortunes of individual architects, even though the latter is not the responsibility of NSAA. Recently, NSAA has viewed the professional representation mandate from an “industry association” perspective in terms of the self-interest of architects. This has resulted in “mission creep” and a desire of some members to add responsibilities and activities that are likely not within the capacity of NSAA to assume. Other organizations exist to fulfil the advocacy mandate; for example, RAIC is an advocacy organization. NSAA should not be duplicating the mandate of such organizations.

3. What approaches have been taken by comparator organizations and are there adaptations that might be useful to NSAA?

Examining NSAA’s peer organizations suggest that there is much similarity in terms of governance structures and a requisite dependence on volunteer engagement, particularly in similarly sized organizations. Saskatchewan would appear to be closely comparable. Its revenue is disproportionately higher in relationship to membership size, but the organization has been collecting a levy to contribute to the establishment of an architectural school. This levy expires in 2019 and then annual revenues would be comparable to those in Nova Scotia. The strategic plan adopted by Saskatchewan is firmly rooted in the statutory purposes, and it is a useful resource for the purposes of reviewing the NSAA plan to clarify strategic initiatives, priorities, and outcomes.

Other organizations have accomplished key, project-based initiatives by using contractors. For example, a website overhaul is short-term in nature and requires non-resident skills. Hiring the right contractor to develop and implement a website project plan may be the only way to accomplish such an initiative. Another organization hired a professional communications firm to develop a strategy related to promoting the profession in the public interest. The mandate was to plan, execute, and train employees to maintain the momentum achieved during the term of the contract.

4. What are the resource requirements to fulfil the NSAA mission? Does NSAA have existing, necessary, or potential resources, and what are the solutions to resource gaps?

For reasons explained in this Report, it is premature to answer this question in depth. NSAA needs to revisit its understanding of mission, and should complete the recommended exercises to revisit the Strategic Plan and then conduct the capacity and resource allocation analysis.

At present, compared to peer organizations, NSAA is potentially under-resourced on staff and over-stretched on volunteer demands. Completing the validation exercise should allow NSAA to “right size” its staff and volunteer complement.

In examining potential resources, it will be important to observe the mantra “do not reinvent the wheel”. Due to the small size of the NSAA in terms of members and revenues, there should be opportunities to access programs and services already available. For example, continuing education programs related to the practice of architecture are widely available through other organizations. The NSAA can identify these programs and facilitate access for its members without trying to

duplicate them or devote disproportionate resources to them. The website and communications plans can be used to ensure members are aware of opportunities and paths to access.

5. What is the capacity of NSAA to achieve the Strategic Plan and what are the possible solutions to misalignments, gaps, and organizational limitations?

The answer to this question is similar to the answer to question 4. The current capacity of NSAA to achieve the Strategic Plan is unknown, because the Strategic Plan is flawed, as noted in detail earlier in this report. The most obvious misalignment based on the work discussed in this report is the 2018 addition of the Business Practice Empowerment category to a Strategic Plan that did not include measurable outcomes or identify required resources. No initiative should be added to the Plan unless it is accompanied by an assessment of how the initiative will be achieved. This does not preclude aspirational ideas. However, thought must be devoted to both sides of the equation: if an idea requires money, time, or effort to realize, then consideration must be given to how the money, time and effort will be factored into budgets, staffing, and operations.

6. Comments on the governance structure of NSAA, and the capacity of Council, committees and staff:

The existing governance structure of NSAA is overly complicated, and results in a need for more administrative and volunteer support than may be currently available. This means that some important work is not getting done in a timely way. For example, the Human Resources Committee is not active and therefore the personnel manual and job descriptions are not yet complete. The Intern Committee is not active and its mandate has not been clearly defined or aligned within the organization. There is disagreement about whether this Committee is under the auspices of the Board of Registration. This has had an impact on relationships and NSAA's reputation amongst younger members. In my view, the Intern Committee should be enabling a constructive introduction to the profession and building a succession pipeline for future engagement in the NSAA. Although the interns may be supervised by the Board of Registration, the purpose of the Committee is more aligned to the Membership Pillar.

The standing committee structure should be based on the mandatory purposes of NSAA and the fulfillment of the appropriate oversight responsibilities of Council. The use of sub-committees should be scrutinized, and where there is overlap or no alignment to mission, consideration should be given to consolidation or disbandment. Sub-committees should not be used to carry out the primary oversight responsibilities of Council. For example, the Finance Committee should be a direct standing Committee of Council. All standing committees should be chaired by Council members, and the majority of members should be Council members. The mandates of the Human Resources and Nominating Committees can likely be merged and should also be a direct standing Committee. As long as NSAA owns Stoddard House, it may be necessary to have a Property Committee, but now that there is no co-owner it may be time to merge the Property Realty Management Committee and the Premises Maintenance and Renovation Committee.

The "Advancing the Profession" category must be examined for alignment to statutory purposes. I recommend merging the Membership and Practice platforms, using one Practice Committee. The need for a Communications Committee should be reassessed. The Practice Committee should oversee matters related to the maintenance of professional competence and ethical conduct of

members. The whole area of awards and recognition and the Spring Forum should be re-examined. The Practice Committee can develop practice standards and other matters that are aligned to maintaining professional competence. If a Communications Committee is to be maintained, it can collaborate with Practice to manage practice bulletins and publications, oversee development and use of the website, and develop a membership engagement strategy (with respect to volunteer succession).

All Committees must have clear terms of reference approved by Council. Based on information provided to me, it appears that these documents are in various stages of development. Reviewed drafts are not in standard format and do not adhere to best practices. This is work that needs to be made a priority. Once decisions are made about the Committee structure, terms of reference should be job one.

All of the bodies under the Community Pillar of the organization chart are not committees of Council. The role of the regional chapters should be re-assessed. If they are to operate as regional industry associations with primary responsibilities for advancing the profession within territories, then it is likely that they are not sufficiently connected to statutory purposes. Such regional associations should be independent of NSAA and will survive if there is collective will of their memberships. The Community Pillar of the Strategic Plan must be re-assessed to ensure it is sufficiently connected to the purpose of “promotion of the profession in the public interest” to align with the third statutory purpose. Outreach activities and involvement in public policy making must be limited to this purpose.

To fulfil mandatory self-regulatory purposes, the NSAA must have:

- Board of Registration
- Complaints Committee
- Discipline Committee
- Licensing Committee (I understand that the Board of Registration is de facto the Licensing Committee)

NSAA has added a “Contraventions of the Act” Committee to deal with unauthorized practice matters. Terms of reference for this Committee do not appear to have been completed or adopted by Council. Further, in the Organization Chart, this Committee has been placed under the Regulatory Pillar and appears to be a sub-committee of the Board of Registration. The provisions in the Act with respect to unauthorized practice do not fall within the purview of the Board of Registration or the Complaints Committee. Preventing unauthorized practice may intuitively appear to be a regulatory issue, but it is also related to the second and third purposes of the legislation. Consideration should be given to placing the mandate of this Committee under the Practice Pillar and firmly under the purview of Council.

In addition to the need for clear terms of reference, job descriptions will bring clarity to respective roles and responsibilities, and policies are required to make it clear what authority Council retains, and what authority it has delegated to either Committees or individuals (staff or officers). Although

the officers of Council hold titles of President and Vice President, titles do not come with inherent responsibilities or scope of authority. Some misunderstandings have arisen with respect to the authority of the President. During interviews, some members made it clear that the role of President should be more like the role of a board chair rather than a person who oversees day to day management. Job descriptions are used to clarify these matters and should be a priority.

Consideration should also be given to adopting policies to establish rules for authorizing transactions to clarify who needs to be involved in decision making of different types. For example, approval of a change in technology platforms or entering into procurement contracts should be addressed in policy, so that ad hoc decisions do not cause conflict or misunderstanding.

In summary, the following work should be completed in relation to governance:

- i. Review and streamline Committee Structure;
- ii. Document Terms of Reference for both mandatory and optional Committees
- iii. Complete job descriptions for President, Vice President and other Council positions
- iv. Complete job descriptions for staff.
- v. Consider what portions of the draft Personnel Manual should be applicable to Council and volunteers; complete and approve the Manual
- vi. Fill Policy Gaps: Transaction Approvals; Code of Conduct for Council members.

7. Other issues deemed to be relevant as a result of the review:

Based on observations during the review period, I recommend that the following issues be addressed by Council:

- i. Assess whether property ownership is in best interests of the Association
- ii. Website: consider retaining external expertise to achieve objectives identified in the FRPA Review; update Resources; improve Communications; decide whether the potential of the website deserves external advice and professional support.
- iii. In addition to regular Council meetings, conduct a dedicated annual Council priorities and planning session to set business objectives for both Council and Staff. Measure annual performance;
- iv. Consider whether external expertise can expedite the development and implementation of a public relations strategy to promote architecture in the public interest.

7. Recommend a communications strategy to NSAA members.

Council is concerned with how it should communicate with membership with respect to the outcome of the Operational Review. Transparency is an important component of good governance, and the Association will soon be holding an annual general meeting. It is interesting that Council sought membership approval of the Strategic Plan, and therefore assumes that it will have to report to membership on any decisions taken with respect to the Plan. From a governance perspective, it was not necessary for Council to seek the approval of the general membership to the Plan. The Council has the legislative authority to govern the affairs of the Association. Council does have the authority to adopt and amend and amend a strategic plan without membership approval.

However, based on practice and in the interesting of validating the direction of any strategy, it is appropriate to consult and inform membership with respect to strategic direction.

Before finalizing a communications plan, it will be necessary for Council to decide what to do with this Report. Once it is determined whether all or some of the recommendations are to be accepted, Council can update membership. Members who were involved in developing this Report are clearly interested in outcomes. An update to members should be focused on answering the following basic questions:

- Why did we undertake an Operational Review?
 - It became clear that we were not making progress with implementation of the 2015 Strategic Plan, and questions were arising about perceived changes in strategic direction
- How did we conduct the Operational Review?
 - We developed a request for proposals and retained an objective external consultant with governance expertise to help us clarify our mission and analyze our operations
- What did we learn from the Operational Review?
 - Provide a high level summary of key recommendations adopted
- What will we do going forward:
 - Outline Council's priorities, near, mid and long term, based on the recommendations in this Report.

Presentation of this material can be followed with an invitation for member feedback.

Respectfully submitted.

SCHEDULE A

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED DURING RESEARCH PHASE

- Architects Act (Nova Scotia)
- Regulations under the ACT
- Bylaws of the Association (2016)
- Minutes of Council January 2016 – June 2018
- Annual Financial Statements 2014 – 2017
- NSAA Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020
- NSAA Governance Review – Fairwinds Training & Development Inc. November 2015
- 2018 AGM Strategic Plan Update
- NSAA Canon of Ethics
- NSAA Policies on NSAA website
- Draft Terms of Reference for Committees
- Internal Organization Chart
- Pathfinder Contract
- Personnel Policy (Draft)
- Legislation for peer regulatory organizations

SCHEDULE B – INTERVIEW GUIDE

NSAA – ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

LEADERSHIP CAPACITY and GOVERNANCE

1. Does the organization have a clear vision and mission?
2. Is it well-recognized by the membership?
3. Do leaders have a clear grasp of the organization's purpose, as mandated in the Act and Regulations?
4. Are there effective governance structures in place that:
 - a. Clearly define roles and responsibilities
 - b. Ensure accountability for performance
 - c. Engage the right people in the right activities
5. Does the organization have effective relationships with external partners, e.g. government, other professional organizations?
6. Does the Council hold effective meetings?
7. Is the Board functioning effectively and in accordance with the Act?

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Is there a Strategic Plan?
2. Is the Plan consistent with the Act and Regulations?
3. Are there clear goals and targets in place for the purposes of Strategic Plan implementation?
4. Are there resources in place to support Plan implementation?
5. Does the Plan guide decisions?
6. Is there a leadership succession plan to ensure continuity of the Plan?
7. Has the Plan been reviewed and updated to adjust to internal and external forces?

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

1. Are staff resources in place to support strategic and business plans?
2. Is there a budget development process that is aligned to the Strategic Plan?
3. How are volunteers recruited and developed for the purposes of carrying out:
 - a. Mandatory activities;
 - b. Strategic Plan initiatives

OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

1. Does the organization have the capacity to effectively communicate with:
 - a. Members
 - b. Stakeholders
 - c. Community
2. Does the organization have appropriate technology?
3. How does the organization evaluate performance?

GENERAL

4. What does the Association do well?
5. What does the Association do that it should NOT be doing?
6. What does the Association not do that it SHOULD be doing?

APPENDIX A – NATIONAL CONTEXT – PEER ORGANIZATIONS – PURPOSES

Province/ Territory	Statutory Purposes	Mission, Vision, Values	Strategic Plan
British Columbia (Regulatory only)	Regulation of the architectural profession	<p>Mandate: In the interest of the public, the Architectural Institute of British Columbia regulates the profession of architecture through a responsive regulatory framework.</p> <p>Vision: Inspiring architectural leadership and excellence through progressive regulation.</p> <p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive: Providing equal opportunity and supportive of diversity • Proactive: Providing collaborative and innovative leadership • Open: Supporting responsibility, accountability, and transparency • Ethical: Behaving with integrity and professionalism • Service-Oriented: Providing responsive, resourceful, and effective service 	<p>The following four key goals set the direction for the AIBC for the next five years.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulatory Framework Alignment Align and improve the regulatory framework to better protect the public. 2. Registrant Competency and Professionalism Foster competent, professional, diverse, and engaged registrants who continue to adapt to meet the evolving needs of the public and public policy. 3. Public Confidence and Education Take a leadership role in advancing public confidence in and understanding of the architectural profession as stewards of the built environment, and the AIBC's regulatory role. 4. Institutional Excellence Demonstrate a sustainable commitment to leadership and excellence in our governance and operations.
Alberta (Dual)	To regulate and advance the professions of architecture and interior design in Alberta	<p>Mission: To represent the public interest in the administration of the Alberta Architects Act</p> <p>Mandate: To fulfil our core purpose and mission by regulating, supporting and advancing our profession</p> <p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability - Demonstrated by informed, transparent decision making, resulting in responsible governance in the public's best interest. • Integrity - Demonstrated by an earned reputation for honest, ethical and fair behaviour, resulting in an organization-wide climate of dignity and respect. • Professionalism - Demonstrated by our forward thinking and collaborative culture, resulting in 	

		competent and supportive leadership.	
Saskatchewan (Dual)	(a) to ensure for the public the proficiency and competency of members who practice architecture; (b) to promote and increase the knowledge, skill and proficiency in all things related to the practice of architecture.	Mandate is to ensure the protection of the public interest, and regulate and advance the profession of architecture in the Province of Saskatchewan. Mission: The mission of the Saskatchewan Associations of Architects is to provide regulation, leadership, and guidance in the practice of architecture for the benefit of the public and the Membership	Strategic Goals 2017-2019 Business: To administer and enhance the understanding of the regulatory role and duties of the Association by Council and the membership (including measurable outcomes). Membership: To increase practice support and learning opportunities for members, interns and students, i.e. skill proficiency and competency. Advocacy: To engage and promote literacy regarding architecture and the role of architects. To maintain and enhance relationships with government, industry, organizations and other Associations.
Manitoba (Dual)	The objects and powers of the association are to promote and increase, by all lawful means and in the interests of the public and safety, the knowledge, skill, and proficiency of its members in all things relating to the profession of an architect; and, to that end, to establish classes, lectures, and examinations, and prescribe such tests of competency, fitness, and moral character as may be thought expedient to qualify for admission to membership, and to grant diplomas to the members as certificates of their membership.	The MAA serves to protect the public interest and advance the profession of architecture.	
Ontario (Regulatory)	2.(2) The principal object of the Association is to regulate the practice of architecture and to govern its members, holders of certificates of practice and holders of temporary licences in accordance with this Act, the regulations and the by-laws in order that the public interest may be served and protected. (3) For the purpose of carrying out its principal object, the	Vision An Ontario in which architects are valued contributors to society, by creating a safe and healthy built environment that performs at the highest levels and elevates the human spirit. Mission To serve the public interest through the regulation, support, and	

	<p>Association has the following additional objects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To establish, maintain and develop standards of knowledge and skill among its members. 2. To establish, maintain and develop standards of qualification and standards of practice for the practice of architecture. 3. To establish, maintain and develop standards of professional ethics among its members. 4. To establish and maintain or to assist in the establishment and maintenance of classes, schools, exhibitions or lectures in, and to promote public appreciation of, architecture and the allied arts and sciences. 5. To perform such other duties and exercise such other powers as are imposed or conferred on the Association by or under any Act. 	<p>promotion of the profession of architecture in Ontario.</p> <p>Mandate To regulate and govern the practice of architecture in Ontario in the service and protection of the public interest in accordance with the Architects Act, its Regulations and By-laws; to develop and uphold standards of skill, knowledge, qualification, practice, and professional ethics among architects; and, to promote the appreciation of architecture within the broader society.</p>	
Quebec (Regulatory)	The Order of Architects of Quebec (OAQ) controls access to the profession of architect and regulates the exercise of the profession in the province.	<p>Mission Dans une perspective de protection du public, l'OAQ valorise l'acquisition et le maintien d'un haut niveau de compétence de ses membres en vue de la réalisation d'un environnement bâti distinctif et de qualité qui soit source de fierté et d'identité collective.</p> <p>Vision Être un leader incontournable en matière de valorisation de l'architecture et de la profession d'architecte.</p> <p>Valeurs L'influence Intervenir sur toutes les tribunes pertinentes afin d'agir sur le cours des événements et d'influer sur les orientations politiques et l'ensemble des enjeux qui touchent l'exercice de la profession d'architecte et la qualité de l'environnement bâti.</p> <p>La proactivité</p>	Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Au service de l'intérêt public et de la qualité de l'environnement bâti

		<p>Prevoir l'évolution des enjeux qui touchent la profession et répondre en conséquence aux attentes du public.</p> <p>L'inclusion Valoriser, au sein de l'Ordre et de la profession, l'altruisme, la coopération, l'ouverture et l'intégration harmonieuse des différences.</p> <p>L'innovation Rechercher constamment des solutions innovantes et efficaces dans nos façons d'être et de faire. Promouvoir, dans l'intérêt du public, la recherche d'innovation afin de contribuer à l'amélioration de la pratique de l'architecture et de la qualité de l'environnement bâti.</p> <p>Mission From a public protection perspective, the OAQ values the acquisition and maintenance of a high level of competence of its members with a view to achieving a distinctive and quality built environment that is a source of pride and collective identity.</p> <p>Vision To be an unavoidable leader in the promotion of architecture and the profession of architect.</p> <p>Values Influence Intervene in all relevant forums to influence the course of events and influence the political orientations and all the issues affecting the practice of the architectural profession and the quality of the environment frame.</p> <p>Proactivity Anticipate changes in the issues affecting the profession and respond accordingly to public expectations.</p> <p>Inclusion Valorize, within the Order and the profession, altruism, cooperation, openness and the harmonious integration of differences.</p> <p>Innovation</p>	
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		Constantly search for innovative and efficient solutions in our ways of being and doing. Promote, in the interest of the public, the search for innovation in order to contribute to the improvement of the practice of architecture and the quality of the built environment.	
New Brunswick (Regulatory)	The purpose of advancing and maintaining the standards of architecture in the Province, for governing and regulating those offering architectural services and for the safeguarding of members of the public and the profession		
Prince Edward Island (Dual)	<p>The objects of the Association are</p> <p>(a) to promote and advance the knowledge, skill and proficiency of its members in all matters relating to the practising of the profession of architecture and to this end</p> <p>(i) to assist in the establishment and maintenance of exhibitions or lectures in architecture,</p> <p>(ii) to collaborate with educational institutions in the advancement of knowledge, skill and research in all aspects of architecture; and</p> <p>(iii) to facilitate interchange of professional knowledge among its members;</p> <p>(b) to ensure the general public of high standards of technical competence and ethical conduct by the members in the practice of their profession and to this end</p> <p>(i) to regulate admission to the practice of architecture, and</p> <p>(ii) to regulate standards of professional conduct by its members;</p> <p>(c) to do all such other things as may be necessary for or conducive to the advancement of architecture in the province</p>		
Newfoundland & Labrador (NL has a separate industry association)	The objects of the association are (a) to promote and increase the knowledge, skill and proficiency of its members in all things relating to the profession of architecture;	Mandate: The Architects Licensing Board of Newfoundland and Labrador (ALBNL) is mandated by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to regulate the offering and the provision of architectural	

	<p>(b) to advance and maintain a high standard in the provision of architectural services; and</p> <p>(c) to promote public appreciation of architecture and the allied arts and sciences.</p>	services for projects located in the province.	
Northwest Territories (Regulatory)	<p>The objects of the Association are</p> <p>(a) to regulate the practice of architecture and to govern the profession in accordance with this Act and the bylaws,</p> <p>and</p> <p>(b) to establish and maintain standards of knowledge, skill, care and professional ethics among authorized practitioners, in order that the interests of the public may be served and protected.</p>		