**[INSERT LOGO]**

**[INSERT ADDRESS]**

**[INSERT CHAPTER] Strategic Plan**

**[INSERT DATES]**

**Vision and Mission Statement**

A Vision statement tells the whole world “what” your Chapter wants to achieve and for why it exists. A Mission statement clarifies “how” your Chapter wants to achieve its Vision.

As an example, VMBA’s are:

*Vision: To inspire a Vermont filled with individuals reinvigorated by the beauty and challenges found in natural places in a manner that promotes community, ecological awareness and transcends the distractions of our time.*

*Mission: Through a family of 27 unified Chapters, the Association carries out its mission, which is to ensure the sustainable future of mountain biking in Vermont and to thoughtfully promote the best riding in the Northeast by serving as the central hub for advocacy, education and event support.*

**Values** *(optional)*

Clarity around what your Chapter values makes the decision whether or not to support easier for potential partners. A list of Chapter values might include:

* Open access, multi-use trails
* Providing access to natural places
* Representing and protecting the interests of private landowners
* Working with State and Federal land managers to secure expanding access for trails

For example, VMBA’s values are:

* *Sustainably constructed open access trails*
* *Playing a key role in protecting Vermont’s landscape through building an aware and connected riding community*
* *Maintaining excellent working relationships with riders, chapters, sponsors and partners*
* *Representing the interests of riders through working in concert with public and private land opportunities*

**Goals, Objectives, and Activities**

Next, your strategic plan should articulate what as a Chapter you want to accomplish in the next 1-3 years. A method to outline how you’ll work towards achieving your mission is to identify goals, objectives, and activities.

This section informs everyone, including VMBA, with what the Chapter is working towards in the current planning period and in the period immediately following. These goals, objectives, and activities are a crucial input in how the office prioritizes our collective resources to best support your efforts.

**Definitions:**

Goal:Goals are overarching, often broad statements on what you intend to accomplish. This should be long-term and fit into your overall mission and vision

Objective:Objectives should further break down a goal into specific, measurable, tangible actions that fit underneath an overall goal. Ideally, objectives have clear metrics which can be used to assess progress.

Activities: Activities further break down an objective into specific actions - what your chapter will be doing - and should identify any resources needed to meet the objective. These spell out specifically how your Chapter will achieve each objective.

In setting goals, a Chapter could consider the primary areas it intends to develop. For example, this could be: its Board, trails, private landowners, fundraising, public land managers, and events.

As an example:

* **Goal 1:** To create an inclusive board of directors that accurately represents the interests of the local riding community
	+ **Objective 1:** Develop Bylaws through which the Chapter will be governed
	+ **Objective 2:** Ensure the composition of our board represents the riding community through an advertised and open election process
		- **Activities:**
			* Share with your network that you are assembling a VMBA chapter and are seeking to add expertise to your board
* **Goal 2:** To build 5 miles of new trail in the next three years
	+ **Objective 1:** Fundraise $XX to purchase additional tools and equipment
		- **Activities:**
			* Assemble a fundraising committee
			* Reach out to the office and other Chapters to get input
	+ **Objective 2:** In year one, identify our most likely private landowners.
		- **Activities:**
			* Take stock of what trails currently exist and learn about the culture of local stewardship, building, maintenance, etc.
	+ **Objective 3**: In year one, generate maps and investigate required permits

After completing the list of goals, members of your BOD should carefully review them to ensure that they’re closely aligned with the Chapter’s mission, vision, and values, and that the underlying objectives and activities provide a clear, manageable, and measurable path to achieving them.

**Challenges**

What are the biggest challenges that your Chapter expects to face to accomplish your 1 year goals? What is your plan to navigate these challenges?

**Plan for Neighboring Chapters**

Does your Chapter have any goals or plans for working with your neighboring Chapters, both near and long-term?If not, what are some potential ways to collaborate with your neighboring Chapters?

Examples: *STP & WATA did a virtual scavenger hunt, several Chapters have a rotating women’s group ride (Maple Queens).*

**Annual Major Dates**

What are some big dates (that you are aware of) for the upcoming season? These can include kickoff parties, membership drives, trailhead sits, special events, trail days, etc. Listing months if exact dates are not yet set will suffice. Please make note if you’d like a VMBA representative there to assist and support, which helps ensure we adequately resource these events.

For Example:

*March - Host Kickoff Party (VMBA Presence Requested)*

*April, May, June, July, August - Trail Days & Trailhead Sits*

*June - Host Landowner Appreciation Party*

*November - Season Ender Celebration*

**Assess Your VMBA Resources**

Many strategic plans outline the resources that will be employed to achieve the objectives. Below is a list of services that the VMBA office provides Chapters. Please indicate the services you plan to utilize over the next three years, which ensures the office provides you with all the necessary materials and support in a timely fashion. The list below is the comprehensive set of resources most Chapters utilize:

ADMINISTRATIVE:

* Umbrella 501(c)3 status
* Tax preparation services through VMBA’s accountant
* Insurance covering: directors & officers, riders, trail day volunteers, landowners and events
* Membership services: database maintenance & management, facilitate add-on member revenue and services, facilitate financial transactions, and acclimate rotating chapter board members to all systems
* Manage membership mailing and postage, on base and add-on Chapters’ behalf, that includes inserts from two dozen Chapters
* Provide ongoing Chapter member support
* Provide ongoing Chapter BOD member support on all administrative systems
* Annual development of member benefits on Chapters’ behalf
* Access to the VMBA office’s payroll services
* Access to Workers Compensation coverage for Chapter-hired builders (not contractors)
* Event promotion on vmba.org, social channels and newsletter.
* Onsite support for events (per request)
* Promote chapter on social channels, newsletter & website
* Major storm recovery operations **(currently under construction)**

ADVOCACY

* Access to a united consortium of VMBA Chapters
* Consistent and effective advocacy on behalf of private landowners
* Ongoing relationship management with public land managers
* Legislative and land statute representation
* Representation on the VT Trails and Greenways Council & The Vermont Trails Alliance
* A clear path to public funding channels
* Representation to the Advisory Council, which is comprised of all the Chapter presidents

TRAILS

* The annual VMBA Trail Clinic
* The VMBA Trail Grant
* Naming Grants
* Access to Recreation Trail Program (RTP) funding
* Access to the Chapter Resource Library

Any additional services you’d like the office to offer that are not presently available:

**Assess Your Board of Directors (BOD)**

Beyond the services provided by the office, each Chapter brings its own expertise. In this section, we recommend listing what your board thinks are the best indicators of a successful board regarding work tasks, sharing expertise, fundraising, event planning/management, etc. Here is a list of questions to work through to help guide you through this section.

* How many BOD members do you have currently, and how many do you aim to have?
* What are the signs of a successful BOD?
* What are the signs of a ineffectivel BOD?
* What bylaws, if any, do your BOD members abide by?
* Has your BOD thought about programming for the upcoming year?
* Does your BOD review and approve the Chapter’s annual plan?
* What are some areas of strength of the Chapter’s BOD?
* What are some areas for potential growth for your Chapter’s BOD?

**SWOT Analysis** *(optional)*

The most successful Chapters have taken a moment to consider the broader landscape of opportunities and concerns they face. A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis can provide an honest look at how a Chapter can leverage its strengths and mitigate weaknesses to thrive . For a typical Chapter, its people and/or cause should be a pillar of strength, whereas its fundraising opportunities might be considered a weakness. The SWOT Analysis includes not only the listings of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats but also how they are going to be managed.

Definitions:

* Strengths are positive assets *within* your organization. Examples might include a highly respected [board member](https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/building-nonprofits-board-30046.html), a talented group of volunteers, or a strongly supportive community
* Weaknesses are shortcomings or negative aspects *within* your organization. Examples might include a shortage of volunteers or outdated technology.
* Opportunities are positive elements *outside* your organization. Examples might include a high demand for your services or availability of a grant in your area.
* Threats are negative elements *outside* your organization. Examples might include a competing nonprofit, hostile landowner, or the loss of a major funder.

**Financial Projections**

This section can be a great tool for your Chapter to outline realistic financial projections, including membership numbers, income, and costs, over the next 1-3 years. The office has done a substantial amount of financial modeling and is always more than willing to assist Chapters in building projections, if helpful.

To aid in projecting your financials, outline your Chapter’s plans to generate funds from the following:

* Membership including add-ons
* Events
* Raffles
* Annual campaign
* Sponsorship
* Donors
* Other (e.g. merchandise)

It is also important to note any major expenses your Chapter envisions taking on over the next three years, even if these are only potential future costs.

**Private Landowner Relation Plan**

Private landowners are critical for riding in Vermont. Over 80% of trails are on private land, so managing these relationships are critical. Chapters do a phenomenal job of maintaining strong relationships with landowners. A robust private landowner plan ensures that your board and most active members are all on the same page when working with private landowners. The office can assist with this in a few difference ways:

1. The Private Landowner Agreement
2. Assisting with communications between the landowner and the riding public
3. Grants that help keep the trails on their land in great shape
4. Lobby for legislations that prevents landowners from experiencing undi regulation

It is strongly recommended that your Chapter has a plan, one that is easily accessible to anyone in contact with private landowners hosting trails that includes:

1. A communication schedule - who will be reaching out to whom, when and for what?
2. A plan to announce closures
3. Agreements on signage, parking, trail days, etc.
4. An appreciation plan
5. A signed Private Landowner Agreement from each landowner (shared with the office for internal records)

**Desires for Public Land Access (w/ maps if possible)**

What are your desires for public land access? If you could build anywhere, where would it be? Include maps if possible. This section should help us understand where we should be advocating for land access and how we can engage departments like the USFS.

**Trail Development**

How many miles of trails does your Chapter plan to maintain in the upcoming year? How many miles does it intend to build?Detail ontrail development plans helps the office plan for grants and other trail building resources.

**Board Authorization of Strategic Plan**

To ensure all members are aware of the current plan, we suggest having the [strategic plan](https://www.forbes.com/sites/davelavinsky/2013/10/18/strategic-plan-template-what-to-include/#14d3ecb047e1) signed by at least the President/ED/Chair, VP, Treasurer and Secretary.

*Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Name & Title \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name & Title \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Date Signed* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *Date Signed* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Name & Title \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Date Signed* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Next Steps**

We highly recommend sharing your Strategic Plan with the VMBA office. These plans help our staff and board of directors make informed decisions that best support our Chapters and utilize the office bandwidth. All Chapter’s Strategic Plans will be compiled in the Chapter Resource Library to continue to share our combined knowledge and expertise. Your Strategic Plan can help inspire other Chapters to grow their networks and continue to have Vermont be a destination for mountain biking.

**Resources**

This template was developed with the assistance of -

[Create a Strategic Plan for Your Nonprofit](https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/create-strategic-plan-nonprofit-29521.html)

[Strategic Planning for Nonprofits](https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/strategic-planning-nonprofits)

[Sample Strategic Plan Template for Non-profit Organizations](https://www.iplanner.net/business-financial/online/how-to-articles.aspx?article_id=non-profit-strategic-plan)

[Framework for a Basic Strategic Plan Document for a Nonprofit](https://managementhelp.org/freenonprofittraining/strategic-plan-framework.htm)