

REPORT

As part of the ongoing activities to improve Northumberland County's tourism competitiveness, the Northumberland Destination Development Committee has identified five key recommendations for a county-wide tourism destination development action plan for 2011.

Background

Potential tourism development and growth opportunities were revealed through recommendation made in Northumberland County's Premier-ranked Tourist Destination (PRTD) project completed in August 2009. These recommendations were approved by County Council in September 2009 and have paved the way for the destination development process. In October 2009 the tourism industry, in partnership with Northumberland Tourism, formed the Northumberland Destination Development Committee (NDDC) with private and public sector representation. Using the insights gained through the PRTD process, the NDDC created the 2010-2013 Tourism Destination Development Action Plan which was presented to County Council in May 2010

The NDDC has since elicited industry cooperation to identify the following tactics for 2011:

- i) Tourism Awareness Communications Plan
- ii) County-wide Tourism Ambassador Program
- iii) Creation of a Northumberland Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB)
- iv) Sports Tourism Workshop
- v) County-wide Cultural Mapping/Planning

The Destination Development Committee has committed a considerable amount of time exploring key strategies. With a vested interest for tourism growth, both private and public sector in-kind partnerships will support the implementation of the 2011

destination development action plan. Refer to *“Northumberland Destination Development- 2011 Action Plan”* on page 3.

Objective

Each of the recommendations will provide outcomes which will positively impact the growth and prosperity of Northumberland County through increased visitation, tourism revenues and jobs. As part of a 3-year action plan, the objective is to ensure long-term economic growth.

Financial Implications

Proposed cost to implement the action plan shall be identified by staff and NDDC and this will be presented to County Council as part of the 2011 tourism budget. This is a county-wide initiative so partnerships and funding which support the action plan are currently being explored.

Investment through Regional Tourism Organization 8 (RTO8) will help offset some of the costs associated with the 2011 action plan. RTO8 is a provincially-recognized tourism partnership which includes the counties of Northumberland and Peterborough and the cities of Kawartha Lakes and Peterborough and it is govern by a private sector industry board. The Ministry of Tourism and Culture’s recent announcement to fund RTO8 regional marketing and destination development projects for the next 2 years will provide partnership opportunities which will support Northumberland’s destination development 2011 action plan.

Next Step

A detailed action plan for each of the recommendations to be established and presented to County Council for approval.

Northumberland Destination Development - 2011 Action Plan

Recommendation	Tactics and Objectives	Partnerships: In-Kind or Financial Resources
<p>Tourism Awareness Communications Plan</p>	<p>Create and implement a communication plan that identifies strategies designed to raise awareness of the importance of tourism on the local economy with business, elected officials and general public. Industry and tourism organizations will provide in-kind support to implement the plan which will include tourism week launch, media campaign, communications and community and business outreach.</p> <p>Objective: Build an understanding of the importance of tourism and create community awareness of tourism’s contribution to the region’s health, vitality and economic prosperity. Ensure ongoing county-wide tourism efforts and investments receive support from local community as well as foster community pride and ambassadorship.</p>	<p>Municipal tourism organizations, chambers of commerce, tourism associations, industry</p>
<p>County-wide Tourism Ambassador Program for Industry and Residents</p>	<p>Establishing a certified Northumberland customer service training program for front-line staff and businesses to foster a culture of hospitality excellence. Also develop a Northumberland Ambassador campaign e.g. "Locals Know or Ask me I Live Here" and engage community and residents to make visitors feel welcome. Potential partnership with Chambers Northumberland to develop and possibly administer a customer service training module specific to Northumberland’s needs. Municipalities, businesses and local tourism organizations to participate in the development and promotion a community Local Knows campaign which may include marketing communications through various media outlets, design & material costs, launch of campaign, etc...</p> <p>Objective: Improve visitor service and experience. Increase visitation</p>	<p>Chambers of commerce, municipal tourism organizations, tourism associations, RTO8, industry, community</p>

	and length of stay in Northumberland.	
Meeting & Conference Strategy and creation of a Northumberland Conference and Visitor's Bureau (CVB)	<p>Develop a Meetings & Conferences strategy that identifies opportunities to increase the Meetings & Conference market in Northumberland. Involves industry stakeholder collaboration to develop a strategy and determine how to support a CVB function that will work with meeting planners, and venues, oversee marketing and sales targeting corporate market and provide one stop shopping for business, conference & meetings market seeking appropriate venues for events.</p> <p>Objective: Increase the average spend in our region through the corporate market; increase the number of groups booking in the region; and increase opportunities for the attraction of groups during needed periods i.e. mid-week, spring, fall and winter season; and encourage widespread economic benefit e.g. communicating upcoming functions and events to local retail/service providers and then facilitating the forwarding of value added opportunities/coupons/product samples as part of lure promotion or welcome bags to host conveners. CVB can also support the activities of spousal program, group tour, and sports tourism.</p>	Industry, municipal partners, business/trade associations
Host a Sports Tourism Workshop with Canadian Sports Tourism Alliance (CSTA)	<p>Engage local sports organizations, municipalities and businesses to develop a long term regional sports tourism strategy. Initiate dialogue and planning through a regional sports tourism workshop facilitated by CSTA.</p> <p>Objective: Engage local sports organizations to attract regional sports events and work collaboratively with municipalities and local businesses to increase economic opportunities for community.</p>	Local sports organizations, industry, municipalities, tourism organizations, chambers of commerce, RTO8
County-wide Cultural Mapping/Planning Project (MCP)	<p>Create an economic development plan focused on cultural assets that reinforce Northumberland's unique cultural identity. The first stage produces a comprehensive inventory of assets such as history; landscapes; streetscapes; creative artists; cultural spaces; built heritage;</p>	RTO8, municipal partners, art/culture/heritage associations and organizations, industry

	<p>agricultural, commercial and industrial business; public outdoor spaces and facilities; museums; festivals and events. A second phase generates a plan to leverage those assets to increase visitation and tourism revenues.</p> <p>Objective: To identify cultural assets having potential for growth, development and clustering to increase their appeal and marketing value. Support collaboration, sharing and tourism development decision making throughout the County. Support destination development and marketing decisions at the County level. Support application for federal and provincial assistance funding from the public and private sector.</p>	
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