

# Bruce County



## Premier-ranked Tourist Destination - Strategic Plan

This report has three separately bound components,  
together forming the final report of  
Bruce County's Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Study (2008):

1. Main Report
2. Appendices
3. Strategic Plan

Additional support materials and reference documents can be found in the three binders (and accompanying CD) submitted in May 2007 with the final PRTD workbook.

"You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going, because you might not get there."

Yogi Berra, New York Yankees. Quoted in Bryson. (2004). Pg. 102.

**Prepared for:**

**The County of Bruce Tourism Department**

Prepared by:

tourism INK  
Lead Consultant

**David I.M. Clark**

MA, BES, BA (Hon), MAd (Diploma)

+

harrison research design corporation

Associate Consultant

**John A. Harrison**

+

**Stephen L.J. Smith, Ph.D.**

Associate Consultant

University of Waterloo



**The County of Bruce gratefully acknowledges the financial support from the Ministry of Tourism's Industry Development Office (IDO) toward this project.**

**© 2007 The Corporation of Bruce County and Bruce County Tourism**  
All rights reserved. Not to be reproduced without the written permission of Bruce County or Bruce County Tourism

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

1. Introduction	4
1.1. Premier-ranked Tourism Destination: The Process	4
1.2. Premier-ranked Tourism Destination: Current Status	4
1.3. Introduction to the 10-Year Strategic Plan - 2008 to 2017	5
2. Bruce County Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Project 10-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN – 2008 TO 2017	6
2.1. The Mandate and Terminology	6
2.2. Strategic Guiding Principles	6
2.3. The operational Strategic Plan and its Implementation Plans	8
2.4 Recommendations	
3. Establishing Time Lines and Priorities	
4. Implementation Strategies	
4.1 Action Steps to Implement the Strategic Plan	
4.1.1 Formal Acceptance of the Report	
4.1.2 Disseminate the Strategic Plan and Invite Feedback	
4.1.3 Invite Leaders to Step Forward	
4.1.4 Identify Priorities Based on Available Resources	
4.1.5 Try For Changes that can be Introduced Easily	
4.1.6 Implement Plan in a Strategic Manner	
4.1.7 Monitor Administrative Policies to Ensure they Facilitate Rather than Impede Implementation of the Strategic Plan	

#### 4.1.8 Hang in There!

5. Strategic Action Plan
6. Gantt Chart Action Plan: Time Lines and Priorities
7. Identification of Lead Agencies and Organizations to Implement Strategic Plan or “Who Takes the Lead, Who Helps?”
8. What Does Success Look Like?
9. Implementing an Annual Research Agenda for Bruce County as an Early Warning System of Destination Changes
10. Selected Examples of Implementing the Product, Performance, and Futurity Recommendations
  - 10.1 Co-operation, Collaboration, and Improved Communications
  - 10.2 Adopt a Strategic Plan and Annual Research Planning Cycle
  - 10.3 Research-Driven Decision-making
  - 10.4 Leadership
  - 10.5 Education and Training
  - 10.6 Going Green/Eco-friendly
  - 10.7 Broaden Offerings
  - 10.8 Shoulder Season Development
  - 10.9 Niche Product Development and Marketing Expansion
  - 10.10 Cultural Planning
11. Summary

## **List of Tables**

- 1 Strategic Plan Recommendations
- 2 A Set of Indicators to Establish Priorities and Timelines for Implementing the Bruce County Tourism Industry Strategic Plan
- 3 Strategic Action Plan: Recommendations, Deliverables, and Steps to Achievement
- 4 Gantt Chart
- 5 Identification of Lead Agencies and Organizations
- 6 A Draft Comprehensive Tourism Research Strategy and Reporting Cycle

## **List of Figures**

- 1 Bruce County Tourism Industry Strategic Plan Structure
- 2 How to Read Table 3
- 3 Structure of and How to Read the Gantt Chart

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Premier-ranked Tourism Destination: The Process**

Bruce County embarked on a PRTD analysis of its current levels of tourism marketing, tourism product offerings, and its futurity or capacity to develop further to meet the potential market needs and opportunities as tourism becomes central to the economic development strategy and reality of the Bruce County economy. After initial work in 2005 and early 2006, in June 2006 a team was hired to conduct Phase One using the PRTD Workbook.

The Premier-ranked Tourist Destination (PRTD) research process included completion of the workbook, surveys, interviews, focus groups, the identification of strengths, weaknesses and gaps, and additional research into best practices and published materials reflecting the state-of-the-industry. has been synthesized into a 10-year, strategic plan for the County of Bruce tourism industry. It also identified many gaps where the needed research and data simply have yet to be done. Serious information gaps exist in many areas, which need to be remedied as a first step in any reliable form of implementation of this Strategic Plan.

A companion report to this 10-Year Strategic Plan, providing details and summaries of the whole research and present status evaluation results of Phase One, is available. That report formed the basis for the 2007 Phase Two work of tourism industry consultations and the first exercise of the Bruce futurity capacity, which is the production of this stakeholder directed 10-Year Strategic Plan for Bruce County tourism development 2008 to 2017.

### **1.2 Premier-ranked Tourism Destination: Current Status**

While the Phase One research showed that Bruce has key attractions and services that are at the Premier-ranked level, the overall score for Bruce tourism in the evaluation system was not at the Premier-ranked level. That also means that there is room for improvements and real opportunities for significant growth. At the same time, the carrying capacity limits need further research and the threat to the unique Bruce ecosystems from global warming is a very serious factor requiring much further study.

The strategic plan has been built on seven (7) recommendations (Table 1). These recommendations were developed from the detailed analysis of Bruce County's strengths, weaknesses, and gaps. The ultimate goal is to make Bruce County the "best that it can be" as a tourism destination and as a quality environment for its residents. Whether or not this means aiming to achieve "premier-ranked status", as defined by the PRTD process is, ultimately, up to the Bruce County tourism industry and wider community to decide.

### 1.3 Introduction to the 10-Year Strategic Plan – 2008 to 2017

Two key introductory sets of guiding principles, the Vision of Success and a Statement of Values introduce and set the standards for the three major operational components that follow.<sup>1</sup> The vision of success is the “grand recommendation” of the strategic plan, the ultimate indicator of success. This is what the tourism industry in Bruce County strives to achieve. The themes of sustainability (environmental, financial, social), development of the shoulder seasons, expansion of tourism products to attract a broader tourist base (natural, heritage, cultural), are fundamental. The opportunities require more co-operation and inclusion of all communities in the planning and implementation of the next generation tourism development.

The operational dimension of the strategic plan has three major components. First, as stated, seven recommendations were developed from the wealth of consultative and research input<sup>2</sup>. These recommendations are further distilled into a set of desired deliverables for each recommendation. Each deliverable is then broken down into a series of steps required for it to be achieved. Table 3 sets out the recommendations, deliverables, and achievement steps into a strategic action plan.

Second, deliverables are time-lined over a 10-year period setting out suggested times to start, continue, complete, and review each deliverable (Table 4). These time lines are “draft” as the various specific individuals, work groups, organizations, and departments that implement any of the recommendations (or specific deliverables within a recommendation) may need to make adjustments based on available resources (time, finances, and people/staff) and changing priorities.

Third, annual monitoring of the “health status” of Bruce County’s tourism industry will be important, as a method to monitor, not only successes in implementing the strategic plan, but changes (negative and positive) in the future context. To achieve this, a draft “monitoring strategy and reporting cycle” has been developed (Table 5). The statistics and indicators found in the PRTD process report would be used as “bench marks” of the state of the industry against which future years can be measured.<sup>3</sup> This monitoring and reporting strategy is, essentially, an “early warning system” of change.

---

<sup>1</sup> The vision of success and statement of values were developed with direct input from participants in the PRTD focus groups and interviews. They are important statements that announce to tourists, residents, and the tourism industry itself that “this is what we want to achieve” (vision of success) and “this is how we’ll achieve it” (statement of values).

<sup>2</sup> The term “research” is used throughout this report to mean “any” methods used to gather information about how the tourism industry is doing. It includes focus groups, interviews, statistics, published and unpublished reports, and similar methodologies. The term is not used in a more narrow sense of scientific research.

<sup>3</sup> See the original workbook version and consultant’s workbook narrative in the PRTD process report.



## **2. Bruce County Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Project 10-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN – 2008 TO 2017**

### **2.1 Introduction: The Mandate and Terminology**

This Strategic Plan comes from the wide-ranging input of the Bruce tourism industry and its stakeholders. The vision and values here are those of Bruce County residents and business people. The success of the implementation of this Strategic Plan depends upon tourism becoming seen as a central lens through which all decision-making in the County is seen, and all sectors of the community being involved in quality development for residents and visitors alike.

The operational terminology used here varies from standard strategic plan language and emphasizes a commitment to energetic action flowing from the full implementation of this particular Strategic Plan. Beyond the Vision and Values, the agreed directions are Recommendations, Deliverables and their Steps to Achievement.

### **2.2 Strategic Guiding Principles**

#### **Vision of Success**

Tourism in Bruce County will grow based on building community capacity for sustainable, environmentally responsible and enriched experiences for visitors and residents.

These experiences will be available for a wider spectrum of visitors and their interests, over a longer tourism season.

Authentic experiences based on Bruce County's wealth of natural and cultural resources will be enhanced by the augmented knowledge and hospitality of all communities.

While the Vision of Success is the statement of "what" will be achieved, the Statement of Values is the qualitative "how" success will be achieved. The statement of values is a promise to residents and tourists of the values the Bruce County tourism industry holds in doing business. Two sets of values encompass the industry itself and a promise to visitors. The statement reinforces a commitment to providing high quality experiences and recognizes the role all people of Bruce County play in service to visitors.

## Statement of Values

The people of Bruce County value its natural and cultural resources, and the unique qualities of its environment.

The communities of Bruce County value the contributions all people make to meeting the challenges of providing high quality experiences and opportunities to visitors in an informed and hospitable manner.

Industry Operating Values	Visitors' Services Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inter-industry co-operation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research supported decision-making</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Commitment to minimize social and environmental impacts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seek and support intra-Industry communications</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Service excellence through training</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Respect for the environment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Respect for community values</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Respect for employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friendly, courteous service</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Knowledgeable service</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility for all visitors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visitor feedback is important</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide high quality experiences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Services and experiences meet or exceed visitors' needs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A range of attractions and experiences to meet visitors' needs</li> </ul>

Implementing the recommendations requires a strategic and comprehensive approach to achieve success. As such, recommendations have been further developed into specific deliverables with specific steps to achievement for each deliverable. The steps to achievement have been time-lined on a Gantt Chart to identify tentative start, completion, and review dates. Priority status (low, medium, high) has been identified for each step to achievement. Together, the recommendations, deliverables, and steps to achievement form the "Strategic Plan".<sup>4</sup> (See Figure 1 for a schematic of the relationship of these components.) Each recommendation and its corresponding deliverables and action items are presented in table form (see Figure 2 for an explanation.)

---

<sup>4</sup> In traditional strategic planning terminology, recommendations are goals; deliverables are objectives; and, steps to achievement are action items or action plans.

The steps to achievement come directly from the recommendations and deliverables. Underlying this are “themes” and “trends” which emerged from the research process, leading to the recommendations. The themes and trends that emerged were:

- That Bruce County will continue to be a strong nature-based destination choice for a wide range of visitors’ interests
- The pursuit of an eco-friendly or green image through becoming a green destination of choice for visitors
- That there is a need to broaden the product offerings to include more cultural and heritage products and attractions
- The need to expand niche markets
- A need to increase service standards and provide training and educational opportunities to the tourism industry
- A need to enhance the present tourism industry environment to develop more co-operative and collaborative opportunities through increased tourism and supporting industry communications
- To ensure that product development and marketing is solidly based on research
- To continue to be competitive, future marketing must continue to be regionally oriented
- That Bruce County and Bruce County Tourism have been identified as the key player, in partnership with business, to take on the leadership role for overseeing an annual tourism strategic planning cycle

Two themes warrant expanded comments at this point. One of the strongest messages to come out of the consultations was the desire and need for more co-operation and collaboration with regard to marketing and (point 6 above). Majority input stated that there are too many DMOs (and private initiatives) creating too many publications, the effect of which is a very disorganized approach and significant waste of effort and resources, in trying to reach the tourist. Pooling of resources was seen as the way to get “more bang for the buck”. To illustrate, one respondent suggested that pooling of marketing dollars could buy substantial presence in newspapers such as the Globe and Mail, the National Post, and the Toronto Star.

Similarly, a strong message of continuing to push a regional marketing strategy would benefit the entire area and recognizes that tourists do not see nor care about municipal boundaries (point 8). Synergies that come from working together and the concept of “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” was highlighted many times in consultations. This message parallels the messages coming out of recent economic development forums and initiatives. This is not coincidence as tourism marketing and development are economic development strategies. This reinforces the need for tourism to be

a strong partner in economic development planning. (This is the central theme of recommendation 6.)

With this foundation of themes and trends, the implementation plan was developed to achieve the vision of success.

### 2.3. The Operational Strategic Plan and its Implementation Plans

Table 1 introduces the seven Recommendations developed through the PRTD research consultation process.

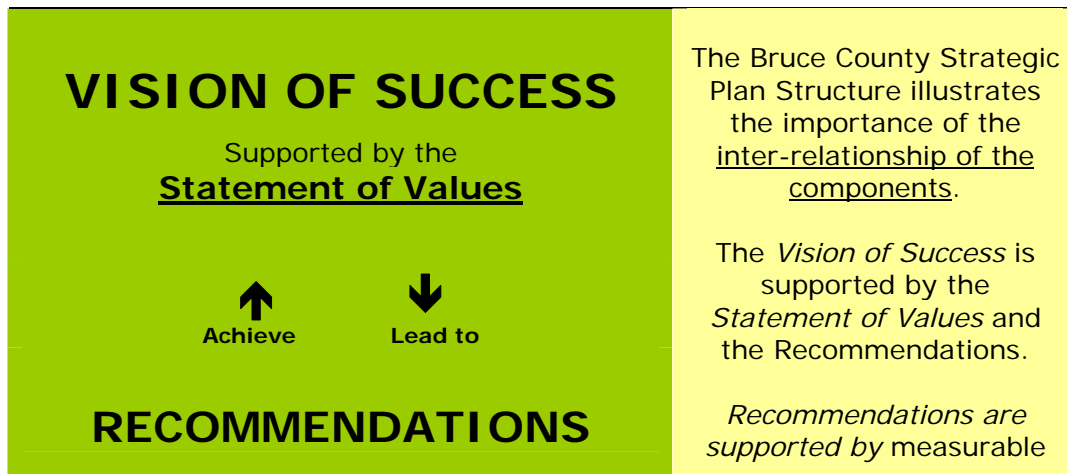
The implementation plans are then presented in two formats.

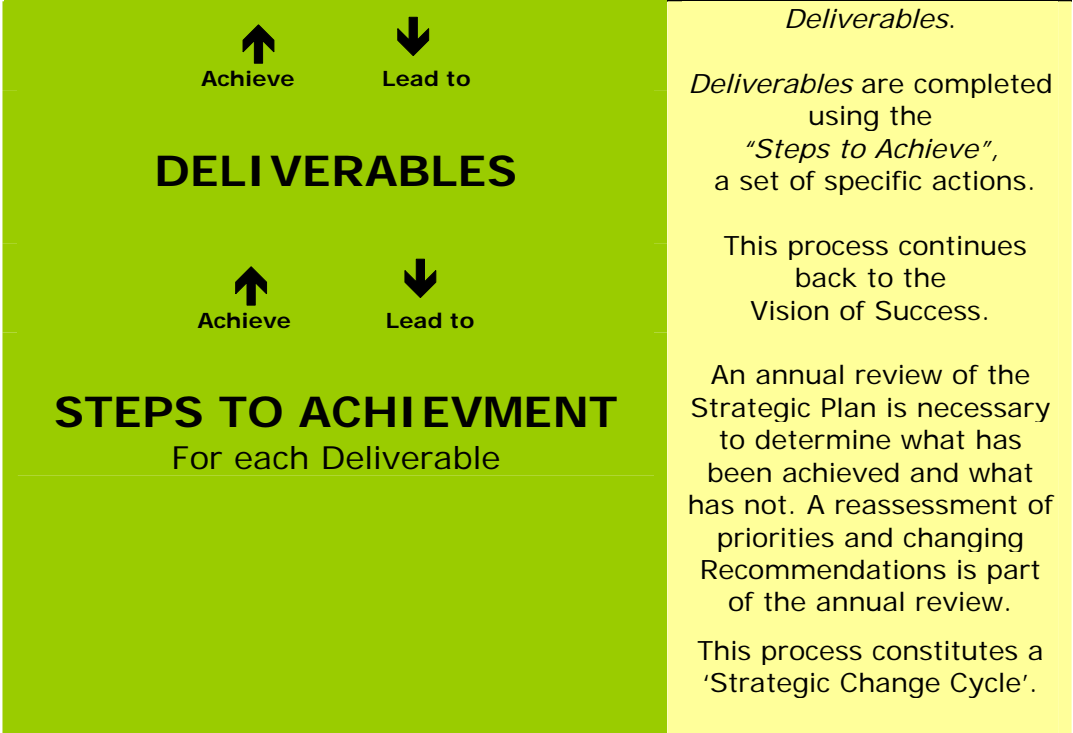
First, very detailed tables, one for each Recommendation, are presented, showing recommendations, deliverables, and steps to achievement (Table 2).

Second, an implementation plan, presented as a Gantt Chart, is presented, showing recommendations and deliverables and a time-line to undertake specific actions (i.e., start an action, review an action, targeted completion/success dates) (Table 3). As with all plans, this strategic plan should be reviewed and altered to meet available resources and changing local (and wider context) conditions.

The interrelationship of the strategic plan components (vision, values, recommendations, deliverables, and action items), is important to understand. These components form a hierarchy, moving from the general to the specific. This hierarchy has a two-way relationship, in that as the vision led to specific action items (or “Steps to Achievement” actions) the action items all support achieving the vision, the “grand recommendation” (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Bruce County Tourism Industry Strategic Plan Structure





## 2.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed directly from wide-ranging tourism industry and key stakeholder input, with the underlying themes and trends noted above. These recommendations are further refined into specific deliverables (Table 3) and draft timelines and priorities established (Table 4).

Table 1: Strategic Plan Recommendations

<b>Recommendation 1</b>
Bruce County develops as an adaptable and competitive destination in harmony with its natural and cultural resources
<b>Recommendation 2</b>
The Bruce County Tourism Community will plan and operate responsibly for environmental, social, and economic sustainability.
<b>Recommendation 3</b>
Tourism in Bruce County will grow based on outdoor and indoor attractions and activities, complementing and expanding the numbers of experiences available and the tourism season.
<b>Recommendation 4</b>
Community engagement and development is vital to authentic achievement of the Vision and requires educational programmes in service and regional tourism knowledge, plus an enthusiasm for the stories, including heritage, cultural, and natural, that uniquely identify our communities.
<b>Recommendation 5</b>
Co-operation and enhanced communication, through the annual research, planning, monitoring, measuring, and evaluation cycle, lead to professionalizing and de-politicizing the management and marketing of tourism in Bruce County.
<b>Recommendation 6</b>
The Bruce County Tourism Industry supports the importance of a regional marketing strategy that leads to increased numbers of visitors seeking niche experiences, that emphasises diversity, and keeps the brand promise of personal attention. A regional strategy is important but is subservient to the needs of Bruce County residents, businesses, and organizations.
<b>Recommendation 7</b>
Bruce County will undertake a review of the brand that is "Bruce County" to ensure that product offerings and experiences are in harmony or consistent with the brand.

### 3. Establishing Time Lines and Priorities

To establish draft time lines and priorities, several industry inputs were used as references.<sup>5</sup> First, focus group participants identified their individual priorities by voting for specific initiatives or development ideas. Second, the initiatives and development ideas were submitted to broader industry input through an on-line survey. Finally, the project consultants have added their perspective assessed against estimated availability of resources (human, financial, time), ease of initiating development, perception of the importance of an idea/issue, and within the context of the overall strategic plan. The contents of this table were used to inform the time lines and priorities on Table 4.

#### PHOTO

Time lines and priority ratings are submitted as “draft” and should be reviewed by those tasked to implement the various recommendations and deliverables, to ensure they meet actual and changing resources and priorities.

---

<sup>5</sup> The sequencing of the consultation process meant that the focus group and on-line survey inputs were collected prior to the development of recommendations and deliverables. Hence, the information in Table 2 is included in final rankings on the Gantt Chart (Table 4) but Table 2 does not include all of the deliverables in the Gantt Chart.

Table 2: A Set of Indicators to Establish Priorities and Time-lines for Implementing the Bruce County Tourism Industry Strategic Plan

Initiative or Development	Focus Group (Votes & Target Year) (See Note 1)	On-line Survey Rankings (% agreeing with statement)	Consultant's Perspective (Priority - Timeline) (Note 2)
Value & develop arts, culture, heritage resources	3 (2008)	67-77	M – M
Bundling of value-added experiences [is] #1; packages	3 (2008)	-	L – M
Economic sectoral champions	3 (2008)	-	H – M
Clean beaches and pristine environment	3 (2008)	93-97	H – M
Develop Farmers' Markets	2 (2008)	66	L – L
Development of live theatre and music	1 (2008)	-	M – L
Develop sectoral synergy	1 (2008)	74	H – M
More washrooms & frequent garbage collection (Sauble Beach)	1 (2008)	-	H – M
Formal tourism education, look to Europe & Asia	1 (2008)	-	L - L
Educate businesses & tourism partners about tourism trends, especially the baby-boomer economy/demographics	1 (2008)	-	M - M
Aesthetic pastoral improvements	1 (2008)	-	L – L
Co-operation between various groups	1 (2008)	82	H – M
Source water protection; sewage treatment	4 (2008/09)	-	H – L
Better tourism signage	6 (2009)	95	H – S
Collective promotion of shoulder season	3 (2009)	95	M – L
Collective promotion of shoulder season	3 (2009)	95	M – L
Development of "green" image; attain "green" image & eco-tourism	3 (2009)	74-88	H – M



Initiative or Development	Focus Group (Votes & Target Year) (See Note 1)	On-line Survey Rankings (% agreeing with statement)	Consultant's Perspective (Priority - Timeline) (Note 2)
Co-operation has to be improved by local councils & tourism industry	1 (2009)	-	H – M
Education & training of tourism operators	6 (2010)	89-90	H – S
Become trail capital of Ontario	5 (2010)	79	M – M
Better cell phone & Internet service visitors & residents/businesses	2 (2010)	75	M – M
Improve wireless infrastructure	1 (2010)	-	M – M
Bus routes between towns	1 (2010)	-	L – L
Develop "The River" [Saugeen]; fish, canoe, trail	1 (2010)	-	M – L
Most marketing is Web-based	1 (2010)	-	M – M
Heritage building preservation, develop streetscapes & small-town theme plans	6 (2011)	73-85	H – L
More washrooms & rest stops along Highway 6	3 (2011)	56	L – L
Maintain or increase natural public space	2 (2011)	73	M – L
May to October is "core" season	3 (2012)	92-93	M – L
Attract/develop up-scale hotels	1 (2012)	-	M – L
First Nations development collaborations	2 (2013)	67	M – L
Bike routes town-to-town	1 (2013)	-	M – M
Politics is taken out of tourism	5 (2017)	-	M – L

Note 1: Focus group participants were given six "votes" (coloured dots) to indicate their individual priorities for various initiatives. Only those initiatives that received at least one vote are included here. The full list of initiatives is available in the companion report.

Note 2: L = long term (10 years +); M = medium term (3-10 years); S = short term (1-3 years)

#### 4. Implementation Strategies

The PRTD research and planning project set out to assess the strengths and weaknesses of Bruce County's tourism industry, and, importantly, its opportunities. The process has benefited from the input of many skilled and knowledgeable individuals, who provided a wealth of information, resulting in a set of recommendations and a comprehensive strategic plan and planning strategy. *This is not an end, but a beginning.*

The strategic plan gives the Bruce County tourism industry tools and tactics to move forward. The recommendations reflect and are built on a wealth of data, industry input, and research. The strategic plan should be seen as an "organic document" that needs to be nourished with regular reviews, revisions, and critical analysis. Success of implementation, revised or not, will require strong leadership, and government and industry-wide support and involvement.

In this section, four "tools" are presented that will assist individuals, organizations, county departments, and work groups, to successfully implement the strategic plan's recommendations and deliverables.

First, eight action steps are presented. These action steps should be addressed prior to undertaking implementation of the strategic plan (Section 4.1). Second, the recommendations, deliverables, and action items are detailed in table format (Table 3), essentially the "guts" of the strategic plan. Third, a Gantt chart identifying priority rankings and time lines is presented (Table 4). Fourth, a "who does what, and who helps" table (Table 5) is presented. As stated elsewhere in this report, the tourism industry, *as a whole*, is responsible for implementing the strategic plan and Table 5 is intended to identify lead responsibility and facilitation/assistance for each deliverable. It should be reviewed and revised if need be.

Although not an "implementation tool" a research agenda (Table 6) provides an example of how to undertake future research, an ongoing monitoring and evaluation process. Such a research agenda would negate the need to undertake a major premier-ranked tourist destination study in the future, by identifying key indicators of tourism wellness from a number of sources, including the PRTD process. The agenda is a draft and requires further review and development, especially using current tourism best practices indicators, which have been developed and published by leading tourism researchers. The PRTD process should be used as a major benchmarking or baseline study from which future performance can be measured.

## **4.1 Action Steps to Implement the Strategic Plan<sup>6</sup>**

### **4.1.1 Formal Acceptance of the Report**

Ideally, this strategic plan requires some level of endorsement (i.e., officially endorsed by Bruce County Council and its Agriculture, Tourism, and Planning Committee) to be able to move forward. Official endorsement will mean the plan has better chances of buy-in and support from the tourism industry, municipal officials, tourism and business organizations, and residents. This should be the first action taken to begin the process of plan implementation.

### **4.1.2 Disseminate the Strategic Plan and Invite Feedback**

Make the recommendations and plan widely available to the tourism industry, community leaders, and the public, and seek feedback. Broad distribution will ensure buy-in and support are stronger. Copies of the plan can be posted on the County's various Websites, sent to county libraries for public access, sent to economic development departments, municipal councils and chief administrative staff, tourism associations and departments, chambers of commerce, and First Nations Chiefs and Band offices. Other potential recipients will be identified as the implementation process begins. Copies of the plan can be sent, where possible as PDFs, as an example of Bruce County Tourism "going green".

### **4.1.3 Invite Leaders to Step Forward**

Successful implementation of the recommendations and plan will depend on strong leadership candidates stepping forward. The County of Bruce and Bruce County Tourism have been identified for their key positions to initiate action on the strategic plan. The County should take the initial steps to convene industry and industry feedback sessions. Through this process, potential leaders will self-identify and be identified by participants. The role of the County should be one of facilitation and mentoring, to encourage and support others to step forward and assume leadership of work groups and roundtable sessions. County support will be important in creating an environment that maintains involvement of new leaders and the commitment of others in a variety of roles, including sitting on committees, roundtables, and workshops, as well as working on research and planning. The County can provide resources such as mentoring, meeting space, occasional staff support, training workshops, expenses to attend conferences and workshops,

---

<sup>6</sup> Some of these implementation strategies are referenced in Bryson, J.M. (2004). Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition).

disk space and technical assistance for an industry-owned Website, and similar support and in-kind services.

#### **4.1.4 Identify Priorities Based on Available Resources**

Recommendations and deliverables should be assessed against the draft time lines and priorities ratings to determine if resource needs (human, financial, time) are adequate. Once leaders are identified (4.1.3), their interests should be assessed against the list of medium and high priorities to ensure they can be addressed in a timely manner. Strategies to address gaps in available resources, especially for those recommendations that have medium and high priority, will be important early in the initial implementation stages.

Individuals and working groups/committees should review the initial draft implementation plan and revise as needed. Realistic and early assessments of resource needs will be helpful in identifying potential funding sources to implement recommendations and initiatives within recommendations.

Identifying gaps in human resource needs can be used to identify potential sources of staff and funding, such as Service Canada, college co-op students, and Trillium. As the tourism environment changes over short, medium, and long terms, modifications will be necessary, so frequent monitoring and evaluation of implementation plans will be necessary. Adopting the draft annual research agenda (Section 6.2) could be most helpful in supporting this implementation strategy.

#### **4.1.5 Try for Changes that can be Introduced Easily**

Strategies that can be implemented easily will help generate interest and lead to maintaining momentum. Early successes, especially those that are publicly visible and promoted, will be helpful in maintaining political, industry, and public support. A detailed review and discussion of the recommendations and deliverables will be helpful in identifying candidates for early implementation based on interests and skills. Initially, implementation of recommendations will begin with discussion, brainstorming, and strategizing sessions to identify the best candidates for easy and early successes. The barriers to overcome will be varying interests of the tourism industry, resources (human, financial, time), and political: the last two will require negotiation and identification of funding. Several deliverables can be used to illustrate this strategy. Development of an industry-owned and operated Website, to improve intra-industry communications, is addressed in Deliverable 5-4. With initial County support (modest funding for Web space and technical support) this initiative could be up and running in a matter of a few months. Deliverable 6-1 addresses the product development of small to medium scale conferences, workshops, and professional retreats. A position

funded through Service Canada could be used to develop an inventory of resources, identify gaps, and seek out potential markets. Professional conference planners and marketers are well established in other communities and are highly successful.

#### **4.1.6 Implement Plan in a Strategic Manner**

Review the overall plan to identify those recommendations that are foundations to implementing other recommendations, and, if possible, undertake them first. Use a project management approach by clustering action items into similar programmes or projects already in existence. Identify and recruit existing expertise, groups and individuals, in culture, heritage, politics, and business. Securing funding and budget approval for initiatives that have built in synergies, such as linking new strategies to existing operations and projects, will be easier. Deliverable 3-6 (trail development) and 3-1 (shoulder seasonal development) have an inherent synergy as the success of one feeds the success of the other. Similarly, Deliverable 3-1 (shoulder season development) is linked to the outcomes of Deliverable 6-1 (identification of key market segments that will be drawn to Bruce County and identification of competitors' markets).

#### **4.1.7 Monitor Administrative Policies to Ensure they Facilitate Rather than Impede Implementation of the Strategic Plan<sup>7</sup>**

Successful implementation of the Plan will come from supportive and complementary policies and by-laws at County and municipal levels. Work groups and committees working with this plan will need to be vigilant in keeping informed about policies, by-laws, and other actions by federal, provincial, county, and municipal governments that could have negative and positive impacts on initiatives under this plan. An industry-owned and operated Website will be particularly helpful as a tool to exchange information about various changes and potential impacts. At the same time, actions from the strategic plan might well lead to policy development, particularly at county and municipal levels. Again, adopting the draft annual research agenda (Section 6.2) could be most useful in supporting this implementation strategy.

---

<sup>7</sup> Bryson, J.M. (2004). Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Pg. 254

#### 4.1.8 Hang in There!

“Successful implementation in complex, multiorganizational, shared-power settings typically requires large amounts of time, attention, resources, and effort.” Rewards “can be great” and the “ultimate result can be the creation of substantial public value.”<sup>8</sup> Initial development work on the plan will require up-front discussions and meetings. Patience and persistence will be needed to moving forward. The PRTD process and resulting recommendations are significant first steps in adopting a comprehensive and strategic approach to tourism development. Some of the recommendations suggest taking the present regional marketing strategy and expanding it to include tourism development, to become a *destination development and management organization*. The recommendation to adopt a regional comprehensive research, monitoring, and evaluation strategy is a medium- to long-term initiative, with significant political implications. For Bruce County and the region to stay competitive and become a leading edge destination, the hanging in there will pay off.

### 5. Strategic Action Plan

The strategic action plan (Table 3) has been developed directly from the research and industry consultations. Specific action items have been identified and listed under each deliverable, these having been developed from a number of sources: (a) input from focus groups; (b) input from interview participants; (c) project consultants; and (d) research, including academic literature and best practices literature.

The strategic action plan is the “collected wisdom” of many participants and reflects the opinions and ideas of a diverse group of tourism industry business operators and DMOs. It is a snapshot-in-time and should be seen as an “organic document”, that needs to be nourished with regular reviews, revisions, and critical analyses. Some action items will drop by the wayside as circumstances change, and that is okay, even encouraged. Success of implementing the action plan, revised or not, will require strong leadership, and government and industry-wide support and involvement.

Figure 2 presents an example from the plan, a brief guide to the structure of the strategic action plan, and an “how to read it”.

---

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.* Pg. 255

Figure 2: How to Read Table 3 (Strategic Action Plan: Recommendations + Deliverables + Action Items/Steps to Achievement)  
An Illustrative Example

<p><b>*****An Example*****</b> <b>Recommendation One</b></p>
<p>Bruce County develops as an adaptable and competitive destination in harmony with its natural and cultural resources</p>
<p><b>Deliverable 1-1:</b> A completed map/report of natural resources for tourism potential, limitations, and sustainability <b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Undertake an inventory and mapping of strong natural resource candidates for further development as tourism experiences; assessment should include limitations and sustainability factors; enlist the expertise of local environmental and naturalist organizations, groups, and individuals; create a priority list of development potential</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop or identify tools to assess development potential and sustainability of resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 1-2:</b> A map of cultural resources and identification of a hierarchy of significant stories, interpretation potentials, and a scale of appropriate development <b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Undertake an inventory and mapping of strong cultural resources candidates for further development as tourism experiences by enlisting the expertise and assistance of regional cultural organizations (i.e., Grey Bruce Cultural Network), groups, and individuals to create a priority list of development potential</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify visitor segments that are or have potential to be drawn to Bruce County</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop or identify tools to assess development potential and sustainability of resources</li> </ul>

**Explanation:** Each recommendation, deliverable, and associated action items (a.k.a. “Steps to Achievement”), are set out in tables as shown above. The deliverable number is composed of two parts: the Recommendation number (1-) and the specific Deliverable number (-1). Under each deliverable is a series of bullet-points that identify specific tools, techniques, and actions that could be used to achieve the deliverable. A final catch-all section identifies issues raised through the research process that are outside of the direct control of the tourism industry, but that have significant impacts on tourism and the tourism industry. These issues have been included as areas that the collective tourism industry needs to address and for which it should have significant influence to affect change. All deliverables have been carried forward onto the Gantt Chart Action Plan (Table 4). Table 3 content begins on the following page.

Note: In the following tables, “FG+I” is the abbreviation for “focus groups + interviews”.

Table 3: Strategic Action Plan: Recommendations, Deliverables, and Steps to Achievement

<b>Recommendation 1</b>
Bruce County develops as an adaptable and competitive destination in harmony with its natural and cultural resources
<p><b>Deliverable 1-1:</b> A completed map/report of natural resources for tourism potential, limitations, and sustainability</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Undertake an inventory and mapping of strong natural resource candidates for further development as tourism experiences; assessment should include limitations and sustainability factors; enlist the expertise of local environmental and naturalist organizations, groups, and individuals; create a priority list of development potential</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop or identify tools to assess development potential and sustainability of resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 1-2:</b> A map of cultural resources and identification of a hierarchy of significant stories, interpretation potentials, and a scale of appropriate development</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Undertake an inventory and mapping of strong cultural resources candidates for further development as tourism experiences by enlisting the expertise and assistance of regional cultural organizations (i.e., Grey Bruce Cultural Network), groups, and individuals to create a priority list of development potential</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify visitor segments that are or have potential to be drawn to Bruce County</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop or identify tools to assess development potential and sustainability of resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 1-3:</b> A map and report of residents' and visitors' uses of these resources (Deliverable 1-2) with regards to spatial (geographical) and seasonal patterns</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement (existing tourism use patterns):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Undertake research about present uses of these resources to better understand impacts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a 'negative impacts avoidance strategy' for each identified resource</li> </ul> <p><b>Steps to Achievement (proposed tourism use patterns):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research and compare regional tourism use changes where comparable new opportunities have been introduced</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 1-4:</b> A research report of comparable tourism destinations that identifies 'best practices' planning</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Undertake research (academic literature, Web-based, field visits, interviews) to determine how other tourist destinations, with resources similar to Bruce County, have accommodated supply-demand stresses on their resources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish a 'Best Practices' approach to planning and policy making within tourism industry</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider using Butler's (2006a &amp; b) Tourism Area Life Cycle model to monitor changes over time; European Commission/TNO Inro (2002) has developed a practical application of the model (an "early warning system" approach); a "balanced score card" approach is another methodology</li> </ul>



**Deliverable 1-5:** Identification of long-term trends and opportunities and threats

- Undertake reviews of academic and government studies regarding tourism trends and tourists' changing interests, internationally, nationally, and domestic provincial
- Resources to use include Tourism Attitudes and Motivations (TAMS) studies, Travel Survey of Residents of Canada and the International Travel Survey, tourism journals and publications, in-house studies, tourism experts/consultants, Ministry of Tourism and Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership (OTMP) studies
- Research and review literature about climate change and long-term effects/forecasts on tourism (see below for brief discussion about snow mobiling)

**Deliverables** (see below): An action plan necessary to address key issues that are outside of the direct influence of the tourism industry and tourism organizations but that have a significant effect on tourism, tourists, and sustainability.

1-6	<p>□ Unregulated rock climbing, particularly in the north peninsula, is being undertaken by many climbers; continuation of this unregulated activity has been identified as a destructive activity, especially over the long-term; organizations and agencies (Bruce County, Bruce Peninsula National Park, Conservation Authorities) need to consider how best to address this issue to protect the Escarpment itself and the flora (e.g., ancient cedars); liability is an issue as well due to the possibility of injury by inexperienced climbers, on public and private lands. As a regulated activity, rock climbing has the potential for growth, both as a product (guided climbing) and supporting activities (retail sales and rentals of equipment).</p>
1-7	<p>□ The issue of wind turbines and wind farms has been discussed in the public forum in recent years and specifically in 2007. Relevant to tourism, the presence of wind turbines and potential for more to be developed, has been raised as having a negative impact on tourism, especially given the promotion of Bruce County as a destination of natural beauty. Several locally produced reports provided to this study suggest that impacts in Bruce County will be negative, based on other studies, some from Europe. The consultants' research has identified an environmental impact study for Black Craig Scotland (2006) that suggests that tourists' attitudes towards wind farms is either neutral or positive and depends on personal opinion that is influenced by attitudes toward wind energy and previous experience with wind turbines. A survey by Visit Scotland regarding the effect a wind farm would have on visiting an area, 26% of visitors said they would be less likely to return and 70% said it would have no impact. Other studies have shown similar and contrary results. The Black Craig study states that impacts on tourism will be "minor" during the construction and operational phases. The present and likely impact of wind turbines and wind farms on tourism requires a deeper analysis than can be presented here and needs cross-discussions with planning, economic development, and agriculture, First Nations, to name a few. See "References" in the main PRTD process report for relevant articles.</p>
1-8	<p>□ The FG+I process identified the complex issue of heritage building preservation, development and preservation of historic streetscapes, and development of small-town themes as means of stimulating, in particular, inland (i.e., away from the water) economic/tourism growth. This initiative received 6 "votes" at the FG and 76.7% support of "important" and "very important" through the on-line survey. Similarly, strategies to stimulate tourism in small towns received 85.4% support. The Ontario Heritage Act provides methods and resources to aid in development of heritage protection.</p>

**Specific issues raised during the research (FG+I) process**

□ Re Deliverable 1-5: A recent article by McBoyle, Scott, and Jones (2007) investigated the future of snowmobiling in non-mountainous regions in light of climate change. Using two models of climate change (low and high changes) they predict significant drops in the number of days available for snowmobiling. For Bruce County, predicted reductions might range from 24% to 52% (Sudbury) and 44% to 68% (Orillia) by the 2020s. The predictions for the 2050s are 33% to 95% and 56% to 99%, respectively. The model used a 30-year mean of 78 days for Sudbury and 69 days for Orillia. The conclusion that as a long-term investment strategy, snowmobiling will not be sustainable.

## Recommendation 2

The Bruce County Tourism Community will plan and operate responsibly for environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

**Deliverable 2-1:** A research agenda that addresses the question: “what needs to be done to stay competitive”

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Conduct an information needs assessment of tourism decision-makers and identify information gaps in existing research
- Develop information dissemination strategies
- Preparation to establish a research agenda will include background research about the value of research, seeking political and administrative support and resources, and industry-wide discussions about the benefits

**Deliverable 2-2:** An annual tourism strategic planning calendar

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Identify participants, government and industry, for annual tourism strategic planning (ATSP) sessions
- Identify recommendations and deliverables of the ATSP sessions, in areas of marketing, product development, research needs, co-operative/collaborative initiatives
- Preparation to establish a research agenda will include background research about the value of research, seeking political and administrative support and resources, and industry-wide discussions about the benefits

**Deliverable 2-3:** Identification of key participants to be involved (and how), to ensure regular monitoring of the tourism industry’s operations, length of stay, expenditures, businesses partnering in co-op marketing, visitor feedback, and similar indicators

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Establish key performance measures for industry
- Identify key players and negotiate responsibilities for data collection and analysis
- Establish reporting mechanisms to provide results to industry and government
- Preparation to establish a research agenda will include background research about the value of monitoring and evaluation, seeking political and administrative support and resources, and industry-wide discussions about the benefits

**Deliverable 2-4:** Identification of qualitative and quantitative measurements to aid in monitoring social, economic, and environmental impacts within Bruce County and beyond

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Review literature on sustainability indicators, and develop priority list of relevant indicators
- Develop strategies for collecting relevant information to monitor performance
- Develop “Blue Flag” ([www.blueflag.ca](http://www.blueflag.ca)) programme for potential application to beaches in Bruce County

**Deliverable 2-5:** A review of ways that the Grey Bruce Regional Tourism Marketing Partnership Table can be expanded to include broader representation from all sectors of the tourism community

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Assess motivations and experiences of current members of the Table
- Assess current mix of members participating at the Table
- Identify gaps in representation and recruit to fill gaps

**Deliverable 2-6:** A review of the idea of a 'regional tourism planning authority' to implement an annual planning and research programme, that is linked to regional economic development initiatives

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Meet with County Planners (Grey and Bruce) to discuss concept of regional planning of tourism as a significant component of regional economic development
- Determine interest and need of a regional planning approach with representation from key industry sectors, including political and taxpayer input
- As determined through the above bullet points, source-out funding opportunities to develop a practical model and implement initiative

**Deliverable 2-7:** Identification of options available to become a "green destination" in harmony with the UNESCO designation of the Niagara Escarpment as a World Heritage Biosphere Reserve and the Dark Skies designation

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Develop a mechanism, such as a "Green Round Table", to explore options to become a 'green destination'
- Options to explore are a green rating system for businesses; Bruce County Tourism leading the way by becoming green (vehicle image, recycled printed material, reduction of paper-based advertising, etc.); providing the public with monitoring information about physical, ecological, and environmental impacts; the '100-mile diet concept through the current Grey Bruce Agriculture and Culinary Association and the Grey Bruce Local Food Project initiatives; and locally produced "promo items" (e.g., successful walking sticks promotion, Aboriginal created products)
- Support development of more farmers' markets selling local foods
- Identify and promote green-friendly businesses as a choice for tourists
- Success will be defined as reaching a critical mass that supports the demands of eco/green tourists; incremental growth will occur and achieving targeted benchmarks will aid in measuring success

**Deliverable 2-8:** Establishment of a campaign, by the Bruce County Tourism Community, for the protection of source water and waste water management

**Steps to Achievement:**

- The tourism community will participate in initiatives to promote source water protection, waste water management, and other actions that are necessary, ensuring the region is environmentally sustainable
- The tourism community will actively engage in initiatives to monitor sustainability indicators (e.g., ecological footprint)

**Deliverable 2-9:** Establishment of protocols for discussions with the two First Nations Communities, to discuss common ground, common interests, and common issues, regarding tourism development

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Ensure that the Tourism Strategic Plan is communicated to First Nations Communities as reflected in Bruce County's commitment to consult with First Nations Communities on planning and development
- Seek the establishment of a Working Group to explore areas of mutual interests, concerns, and development potential, regarding tourism development
- Invite representatives of First Nations to sit at the tables of various groups and forums that are developed from the Tourism Strategic Plan

**Deliverable 2-10:** An action plan necessary to address issues that are outside of the direct influence of the tourism industry and tourism organizations but that have a significant effect on tourism, tourists, and sustainability.

None noted

**Specific issues raised during the research (FG+I) process**

None

### Recommendation 3

Tourism in Bruce County will grow based on outdoor and indoor attractions and activities, complementing and expanding the numbers of experiences available and the tourism season.

**Deliverable 3-1:** Develop a report that identifies, inventories, and evaluates existing and potential resources for expanding the tourism season, particularly the shoulder seasons of May/June and September/October, and identify gaps

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Develop an inventory of resources that are or could be available to support shoulder season tourism, including accommodations, attractions, activities, natural and cultural resources, food and beverage establishments, marinas, festivals and events, etc.
- Using current research, studies (e.g., TAMS), and data (e.g., Statistics Canada's core tourism surveys, PRTD Bruce County data) determine the likely target market for shoulder seasons
- Explore and inventory the resources available to develop a shoulder season conventions, workshops, and educational seminars market; for a minimum 3 to 5 year term, commit staff resources to developing 'market-readiness' by developing promotional and marketing materials, and personal contact marketing to organizations, companies, and non-profit sector candidates
- Facilitate industry-wide planning sessions specifically to explore sectoral synergies and collaborative shoulder season packages (themed, activities, touring routes, health and relaxation, cultural, etc.)

**Deliverable 3-2:** Develop a report that identifies, inventories, and evaluates significant cultural and historical stories and other resources for their potential to support new, authentic experiences and identifying relevant, key market segments

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Working with established groups, organizations, and individuals, develop an inventory of stories (historical, cultural, natural) that have potential to become tourist attractors, for both high and shoulder seasons

**Deliverable 3-3:** From these opportunities (2<sup>nd</sup> Deliverable/3-2) identify strong candidates suitable for further development through feasibility studies

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Based on Deliverable 3-2, identify several strong candidates for feasibility studies

**Deliverable 3-4:** Develop a report of funding sources (municipal, provincial, federal) to aid in bringing the stories to market as significant tourism experiences

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Bring together federal and provincial government bodies (agencies, Ministries, and programme funding) into development partnerships on provincially, nationally, and internationally significant resources and stories
- Identify and negotiate with potential development partners, sponsors, and entrepreneurs to develop these new experiences

**Deliverable 3-5:** Identification and recruitment of 'Sectoral Champions' to aid in moving developments forward

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Through a consultation process, identify and recruit 'champions' to lead support for developments, thereby developing 'ownership' of initiatives

<p><b>Deliverable 3-6:</b> Establishment of a strategy for promotion and marketing, along with product development, to establish Bruce County as the 'Trail Capital of Ontario' that includes walking, biking, snowmobiling, and all terrain vehicles (ATV)</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote the existing network of trails</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote and campaign for the development of an expanded trail network</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research the demand for and sustainability of trails for motorized vehicles</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Deliverables</b> (see below): An action plan necessary to address issues that are outside of the direct influence of the tourism industry and tourism organizations but that have a significant effect on tourism, tourists, and sustainability</p>	
3-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Explore the possibility of developing wilderness camping, as identified during the FG+I process, as a potential candidate for broadening the camping experience. A prime candidate location is the Bruce Peninsula National Park. Participants indicate a desire to explore the possibility of implementing this concept.</li> </ul>
3-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Explore the possibility of developing on-shore and near-shore camping facilities for kayakers, as was identified during the FG+I process. Further exploration of his idea could be combined with that of wilderness camping.</li> </ul>
3-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> River fishing, including fly-fishing, was identified in during the FG+I process as a potential for development, particularly as a shoulder season activity. The Saugeen River was noted in particular.</li> </ul>
3-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Explore the inclusion of a lake-based "boating circle route", similar to the present land-based Circle Tour, as a potential niche market, to be developed through a marinas' network.</li> </ul>
3-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue the development of agriculture and food -tourism (including farm vacations and tours), as identified through the FG+I process. Participants were aware of the present initiatives (GB Agriculture and Culinary Association and the GB Local Food Project). To achieve success, continued, broad support is necessary. See also Deliverable 2-7.</li> </ul>
3-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote the development of improved cellular telephone service, high-speed Internet, and wi-fi to better serve businesses, residents, and tourists. Through the FG+I process, participants noted that more retired people are travelling with technology that demands better wireless services (e.g., wi-fi in RV parks, highspeed Internet connections in roofed accommodations).</li> </ul>
3-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote the development of more rest stops along Highway 6 as a means to encourage visitors to stop, spend more time, and explore the area. These stops could be established near and within communities and near trail access points. Other strategic locations could be identified through research.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Specific issues raised during the research (FG+I) process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> None</li> </ul>	

#### Recommendation 4

Community engagement and development is vital to authentic achievement of the Vision and requires educational programmes in service and regional tourism knowledge, plus an enthusiasm for the stories/histories, including heritage, cultural, and natural, that uniquely identify our communities.

**Deliverable 4-1:** Development of a range of formal, informal, and in-service training opportunities to enhance the skills and competencies of tourism operators and frontline staff

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Undertake an assessment of operator and frontline staff training needs
- Develop or identify, (e.g., OTEC) training materials to meet these needs
- Re-assess needs annually

**Deliverable 4-2:** Development of new or identification of existing support materials and creative ways to deliver education and training to tourism operators and frontline staff in ways to minimize inconvenience and maximize opportunities

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Explore the concept of taking the training into the field and delivering on-site and in the community
- Develop or locate existing self-directed, Web-based 'training sessions' that allow seasonal staff to quickly learn the "tourist offerings" of Bruce County
- Both options could be built on a marketing theme of "I know Bruce. Ask me"; 'graduates' of training are given buttons to wear that encourage visitors to ask about "Bruce"
- Create partnerships for training and educational opportunities as an investment in and support of local economic development (invest locally)
- Identify and link with existing educational sources such as the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC)

**Deliverable 4-3:** Utilize the expertise of regional educational and cultural communities to achieve success of *Deliverable 4*

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Invite the educational and cultural communities to brain-storm ideas to achieve Deliverable 4-3
- Through this process, determine where the 'best fit' is for engagement of these potential partners
- One such cultural community is the newly formed Grey Bruce Cultural Network

**Deliverable 4-4:** Educational and training opportunities are made available to all sectors, particularly front-line workers working directly with visitors, involved in tourism in Bruce County

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Ensure training and educational opportunities are available to all interested publics
- Ensure broad advertising of training and educational opportunities

**Deliverable 4-5:** Development and provision of industry-specific seminars in knowledge and skill building for industry leaders and champions

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Based on the outcomes of Deliverable 4-1 and input from Deliverable 4-3, identify key knowledge building needs
- Identify sources that can capably deliver these knowledge sessions
- Invite existing and potential leaders and champions to knowledge sessions



<p><b>Deliverable 4-6:</b> Industry education sessions include a focus on the importance of managing service quality, and management and employee education, toward the goals of raising standards and reducing real and perceived negative impacts</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify best practices training materials related to service training</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that the message of better service standards is consistent throughout all industry training opportunities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 4-7:</b> Establish a strategy (including media partnerships) to use the media to inform the broader public about tourism benefits and issues, and as a mechanism to seek public feedback</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop strategies to ensure positive tourism related stories and issues are presented in ways to attract media attention</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use the media to announce tourism initiatives such as strategic planning, annual tourism reports, and public consultation meetings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Invite various news media to participate in tourism events including tourism conferences, workshops, and training as might be appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 4-8:</b> Establish a plan of action to encourage and support the implementation of Municipal Cultural Planning (MCP) as a tool to develop the community stories into viable cultural and heritage tourism products</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Invite speakers and consultants to appropriate tourism forums to explain and discuss MCP</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Determine how MCP can best benefit tourism product development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Actively promote adopting MCP at the municipal and county levels</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 4-9:</b> A research report of actions necessary to address issues that are outside of the direct influence of the tourism industry and tourism organizations but that have a significant effect on tourism, tourists, and sustainability</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> None noted</li> </ul>
<p><b>Specific issues raised during the research (FG+I) process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> None</li> </ul>

## Recommendation 5

Co-operation and enhanced communication, through the annual research, planning, monitoring, measuring, and evaluation cycle, lead to professionalizing and de-politicizing the management of tourism in Bruce County.

**Deliverable 5-1:** Development of opportunities for regular information exchange sessions, including private and public interests (see note below)

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Invite operators to become part of a steering committee to explore mechanisms for achieving 5-1, 5-2, and 5-3
- Identify leadership; the steering committee might be best lead by industry leaders with co-ordinating functions by Bruce County Tourism and Grey County Tourism if the approach is regional

**Deliverable 5-2:** Development of opportunities for regular, co-ordinated tourism development planning in partnership including municipalities, provincial and federal governments, their related agencies, and key private sector partners (see note below)

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Invite operators to become part of a steering committee to explore mechanisms for achieving 5-1, 5-2, and 5-3
- Identify leadership; the steering committee might be best lead by industry leaders with co-ordinating functions by Bruce County Tourism and Grey County Tourism if the approach is regional

**Deliverable 5-3:** A “gap analysis” report that identifies what information the industry needs to do effective marketing and product development

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Identify what gaps exist in the information the industry needs for effective marketing
- Identify what gaps exist in the information the industry needs for effective product development
- Research sources for the identified information
- Provide the information to the industry through mechanisms developed in 5-5

**Deliverable 5-4:** Development of effective and creative tourism industry-directed tools for sharing research findings, studies, reports, and similar industry related information and documents (see note below)

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Investigate the development of a tourism peer-to-peer, ‘industry operated, industry owned’ website (**not** a marketing Website)
- Consult with operators and set up a steering committee to develop a general concept for the Website
- Investigate similar industry-specific websites to inform decisions about structure, features, policies and procedures, nature of ‘ownership’ (i.e., government or industry owned), etc.
- Investigate possible full and shared funding opportunities (provincial, federal such as Industry Canada)

<p><b>Deliverable 5-5:</b> Provision of forums to encourage co-operation towards the reduction of marketing and promotion overlap and increasing overall marketing effectiveness</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop an inventory of current marketing and promotional publications and strategies used by various tourism-oriented organizations throughout Bruce County</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify gaps in present strategies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Determine interest in development of fewer, more co-operative marketing and promotional strategies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop strategies for more effective and efficient strategies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 5-6:</b> Development of and support for a 'network' through cross-appointments and cross-memberships on tourism, heritage, cultural, economic development agencies, and like-minded organizations, both formal and informal</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Initiate county-wide discussions to explore the interest in the development of a 'Bruce County Network' of organizations that have complimentary missions, sharing an overall vision of revitalizing heritage and culture towards economic development and heritage preservation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Investigate similar, successful networks in other jurisdictions, such as the Lowell, Massachusetts model</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 5-7:</b> As an important component of regional economic development, tourism receives the resources necessary to undertake strategic planning and development through research and industry involvement</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Through appropriate budgeting procedures, seek annualized, dedicated funding to undertake tourism research and planning as an integral part of local and regional economic development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish a research and planning agenda</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Also see Deliverable 6-3</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deliverable 5-8:</b> A research report of actions necessary to address issues that are outside of the direct influence of the tourism industry and tourism organizations but that have a significant effect on tourism, tourists, and sustainability</p> <p><b>Steps to Achievement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> None noted</li> </ul>
<p>Specific issues raised during the research (FG+I) process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Deliverables 5-1, 5-2, and 5-3 are closely related, but do differ. 5-1 focuses on information sharing and could be achieved with 5-4. 5-2 focuses on planning to accomplish specific goals; it is outcome directed. 5-3 focuses on brainstorming as a means of identifying issues. 5-3 could be combined with 5-2.</li> </ul>

### Recommendation 6

The Bruce County Tourism Industry will support the importance of regional marketing and development strategies that lead to increased numbers of visitors seeking niche experiences, that emphasises diversity, and keeps the brand promise of personal attention. A regional strategy is important but is subservient to the needs of Bruce County residents, businesses, and organizations.

**Deliverable 6-1:** Identification of, through research, key market segments of visitors that will be drawn to Bruce County attractions

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Through market research, identify key market segments for which Bruce County's products (natural, cultural, heritage) have appeal
- Through research (e.g., Travel Survey of Residents of Canada and International Travel Surveys) identify the origins and destinations of specific market segments (see note below)
- Through research, identify emerging markets and explore mechanisms to develop these markets (such as the Asian market, Gen Y/teenager; see note below)
- Investigate funding to develop an inventory of facilities and resources capable of hosting small and medium scale conferences (SMC), workshops, professional retreat, and events; develop the human resource capacity to test-market this for two to three years (see note below)
- Explore the development of Bruce County (together with Grey County) as a moderately priced golf destination (see note below)

**Deliverable 6-2:** A commitment of continued support for and expansion of the concept of a regional marketing strategy that leads to regional economic development and regional prosperity to the benefit of regional, county, local communities, and individuals

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Continue to support regional marketing strategies, together with regional attractions development (see note below)
- Explore marketing opportunities with other regions (e.g., Huron and Wellington Counties) (see note below)
- Develop research and monitoring strategies to determine success, failure, and stagnation of the effectiveness of these initiatives

**Deliverable 6-3:** Economic development departments are partnered to undertake a tourism research and planning cycle

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Investigate existing county and regional-level forums relating to economic development and identify those that have the potential to include tourism as a partner
- Negotiate the inclusion of tourism "seats" at these forums
- In the absence of existing suitable forums, explore industry and government support for developing a forum
- Also see Deliverable 5-8

**Deliverable 6-4:** A plan of action to explore and develop creative electronic promotional and marketing tools and techniques to the benefit of an expanded product base (i.e., nature + culture + heritage)

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Develop research-driven, marketing strategies based on new technologies such as Web-based "user-generated content" that includes YouTube, e-Bay, blogs, TripAdvisor, Flickr, MySpace, interactive Websites
- Ensure these strategies are compatible with a green or eco-friendly image
- Develop access supports to assist businesses and operators who lack the technological skills and tools have access to these new strategies

**Deliverable 6-5:** Development of a creative and comprehensive signage strategy

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Continue to promote and seek funding for a comprehensive Signage Strategy for Bruce County with possible implementation as a regional strategy

**Deliverable 6-6:** A research report of actions to address issues that are outside of the direct influence of the tourism industry and tourism organizations but that have a significant effect on tourism, tourists, and sustainability

**Steps to Achievement:**

- None noted

### Specific issues raised during the research (FG+I) process

□ Re 6-4: Investigate cost and practicality of a Bruce County 'tourism radio' service as a means of keeping visitors informed about attractions, accommodations, festivals and events, locations of information centres, and other tourism services. Investigate potential funding sources including OTMP and Industry Canada. The concept includes a series of short-range FM transmitters, similar to those used by drive-in theatres, the Bruce Peninsula National Park, and the Toronto International Airport; a series of transmitter sites could be located on well-travelled routes and located at specific locations.

□ Re 6-1: Using the Canadian and International travel surveys (and others such as TAMS) it is possible to identify the origins and destinations of travellers who undertake specific activities and market segments (e.g., swimming, sightseeing, boating). This process allows Bruce County's competitor regions to be identified. Once identified, marketing strategies can be developed to target the potential of new markets and increase marketing to under-developed markets.

□ Re 6-1: FG+I participants identified an increasing presence of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Asians over the past few years. This market segment has significant potential for development. FG+I participants noted a difference between service and experiential expectations of these tourists and the traditional tourist of the recent past. There exists a "knowledge gap" with operators, of how to best serve this new market, that could benefit from research and training sessions, possibly by specialists in understanding and serving this new market. A similar research strategy should apply to the Gen Y/Generation Y/teenager markets).

□ Re 6-1: The Phase I PRTD inventory identified a base of resources that could support the hosting of small and medium conferences, workshops, retreats, and events. Development of this resource could benefit from a paid position of "conference planner and recruiter" over the course of a two to three year period.

□ Re 6-1: Golf was identified as an important contributor to visitors in the Phase I PRTD research (golf was reported by 7% of visitors in 2004 with Grey Cty at 3%, Huron Cty at 1%, and Northumberland Cty at 2%). An investigation of developing this resource further should be undertaken as it has potential to become a "core" attractor.

□ Re 6-2: Regional marketing has developed well over the last few years with a number of successful Grey-Bruce strategies (motorcycle, lighthouse, garden, snowmobiling tours, etc.) and indications are that this will continue. The continuing "Georgian Bay Destination Development" initiative is another example.

### Recommendation 7

Bruce County will undertake a review of the brand that is "Bruce County" to ensure that the brand is in harmony or consistent with the product offerings and experiences.

**Deliverable 7-1:** Development of a mechanism for Bruce County and Bruce County Tourism to review and seek input from visitors and all Bruce County stakeholders, regarding the present Bruce County brand

**Steps to Achievement:**

- Within the context of the present tourism strategic planning process, undertake a review of the present brand
- Review should include broad community input

**Deliverable 7-2:** A determination of whether or not the present brand is flexible enough to accommodate the range of development opportunities as set out in the 10-year strategic plan

**Steps to Achievement:**

- The broader visitor experiential context (culture, natural, heritage), as outlined in the strategic plan, should be considered within the branding review

**Deliverable 7-3:** A review of the present Bruce County Brand to ensure that the regional nature of visitors' behaviours (e.g., choices of attractions, accommodations, dining, seasonality) is accommodated, and a plan to revise as might be necessary

**Steps to Achievement:**

- The brand review will include an assessment of regional approaches to branding as a mechanism to positioning Bruce County as a strong regional entity

**Deliverable 7-4:** A research report of actions to address issues that are outside of the direct influence of the tourism industry and tourism organizations but that have a significant effect on tourism, tourists, and sustainability

**Steps to Achievement:**

- None noted

**Specific issues raised during the research (FG+I) process**

- None

## 6. Gantt Chart Action Plan: Time Lines and Priorities

The following table (Table 4) sets out draft timelines and priorities for each deliverable as determined through industry consultations and consultant's input (see Table 2). Before undertaking the implementation of the strategic plan, the deliverables should be reviewed and revisions made to the Gantt Chart Timeline and Action Plan in accordance with available resources (i.e., human, financial, time). As well, the priority of each deliverable should be reviewed to confirm current realities.

All deliverables, priorities, and timelines should be reviewed annually to identify and accommodate changing circumstances, including changing resource availability. This annual review is an important component of the Annual Strategic Planning Cycle process.

[[[[[photo]]]]]

The following Gantt Chart Action Plan (Table 4) identifies all deliverables and proposed or draft "start" dates. Start dates have been established according to input from the focus groups and interviews consultations, on-line survey results, and consultant's perspective.

In many cases the deliverables are, in fact, continuous annual activities (e.g., annual strategic planning, information sharing), only the start date of the process is highlighted. Some deliverables, through the specific action items, can be accomplished in the near future while others require long-term developments.



Figure 3: Structure of and How to Read the Gantt Chart Action Plan (Table 4)

Recommendation	Deliverable	Priority	Dimension	Brief Description
1	1-1	Medium	Product Development	Natural resources inventory
1	1-2	Medium	Product Development	Cultural resources inventory
1	1-3	Medium	Performance	Visitors' patterns of use
1	1-4	Medium	Performance	Best practices tourism planning

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Start			Success		Review	
Start			Success		Review	
	Start			Success		Review
	Start					Review

The first section of the Gantt Chart Action Plan (GCAP) identifies each Recommendation, its Deliverables, priority date/year, the PRTD Dimension, and brief descriptive statement to facilitate quick reference. Each priority (high, medium, low) is highlighted with a different colour.

The second section covers the years from 2008 to 2017 and beyond (2018+). Each Deliverable is read across the row. Each "milestone" is highlighted with difference colours for quick reference. Milestone terminology is:

- **Start:** the year or years in which a Deliverable is initiated
- **Success:** a targeted completion year; those Deliverables without "success" dates shown are initiatives that have continuous processes; some Deliverables have "success" dates that reflect a first stage of completion and will continue with an internal cycle that will have subsequent "success" dates; an example is an Deliverable that produces a plan as an outcome and has a built-in evaluation process
- **Review:** suggested dates to undertake reviews to measure outcomes (e.g., success)
- **Continue:** a Deliverable that has no "real" end date or success date, it is a continuing or cyclical process
- **Prep:** a period prior to an actual start date that could include background research, a process of developing interest, or putting together a team/group/committee; required to start initiative

## Gantt Chart Page 1

[[[Note: full sized Gantt Chart is bound in here]]]

**Table 4: Gantt Chart**

**Bruce County Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Framework Strategic Plan  
Action Plan GANTT Chart**

Highlighting indicates the start of an initiative

Priority of initiative: High Medium Low

Goal	Objective	Priority	Primary Keystone	Brief Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017+
1	1-1	Medium	Product Development	Natural resources	start										
	1-2	Medium	Product Development	Cultural resources	start										
	1-3	Medium	Research	Visitors' patterns of use		start									
	1-4	Medium	Research	Best practices tourism planning		start									
	1-5	Low	Research	Long-term trends	prep	start									
	1-6	Medium	Infrastructure	Unregulated rock climbing	start	research process									
	1-7	Low	Research	Wind turbines		start									
	1-8	High	Product Development & Infrastructure	Heritage building preservation, streetscapes, & small-town themes				start							
2	2-1	High	Research	Research agenda		prep	start								
	2-2	High	Research	Annual strategic planning cycle	start										
	2-3	High	Community Relations	People involved in 2-2											
	2-4	High	Research	Impacts (social, economic, environmental)		start									
	2-5	Medium	Community Relations	GBRTMP	start	discussions									
	2-6	Medium	Research	Regional tourism planning strategy		start									
	2-7	Medium	Product Development	Green destination		start									
3	3-1	Medium	Product Development	Expanded tourism season		start									
	3-2	Medium	Research	Develop authentic experiences			start								
	3-3	Medium	Research	Feasibility studies for 3-2		start									
	3-4	Medium	Research	Identify funding for 3-2			start								
	3-5	Medium	Community Relations	Identify leaders for 3-2 to 3-4		start									
	3-6	High	Product Development	Trail Capital of Ontario	start	process									
	3-7	Medium	Product Development	Wilderness camping		start	discussions								
	3-8	Low	Product Development	On-shore camping for kayakers			start	discussions							
	3-9	Low	Product Development	River fishing (e.g., fly)		start									
	3-10	Medium	Product Development	Boating circle tour			start								
	3-11	Low	Product Development	Agriculture & food -tourism	start										

Gantt Chart Page 2

[[[Note: full sized Gantt Chart is bound in here]]]

3	3-12	Low	Infrastructure	Cell, highspeed Internet, wi-fi			start											
	3-13	Low	Infrastructure	Highway 6 rest stops			start											
4	4-1	High	Product Development	Educate operators	preparation		start											
	4-2	High	Product Development	Develop training tools	preparation		start											
	4-3	High	Community Relations	Develop partnerships	preparation		start											
	4-4	High	Community Relations	Deliver training	preparation		start	continuing education and training										
	4-5	High	Community Relations	Industry specific training	preparation		start											
	4-6	Low	Community Relations	Higher service quality & education of service staff			start											
	4-7	Low	Community Relations	Involve media in public education re tourism	start													
	4-8	Medium	Research	Municipal Cultural Planning		prep		start										
5	5-1	High	Community Relations	Information exchange			start											
	5-2	High	Community Relations	Tourism planning			start											
	5-3	Medium	Research, product development,	Gap analysis: product & marketing			start											
	5-4	Medium	Community Relations	Brain-storming sessions			start											
	5-5	Medium	Community Relations	Information sharing techniques			start discussions											
	5-6	Medium	Marketing	Collaborative marketing			start											
	5-7	Medium	Community Relations	Organizational cross-memberships/involvement			start discussions											
6	6-1	Medium	Research & Marketing	Identify key market segments through research			start											
	6-2	Low	Marketing	Regional marketing strategy			start											
	6-3	Medium	Product Development	Tourism development part of regional economic development strategy			start discussions											
	6-4	High	Infrastructure & Marketing	Signage strategy	start													
7	7-1	High	Marketing	Brand review	start						review							review
	7-2	High	Marketing	Product accommodation with Brand	start						review							review
	7-3	High	Marketing	Bruce Brand within regional Brand	start						review							review

Gantt Chart Page 3

[[[Note: full sized Gantt Chart is bound in here]]]

3	3-12	Low	Infrastructure	Cell, highspeed Internet, wi-fi			start											
	3-13	Low	Infrastructure	Highway 6 rest stops				start										
4	4-1	High	Product Development	Educate operators	preparation		start											
	4-2	High	Product Development	Develop training tools	preparation		start											
	4-3	High	Community Relations	Develop partnerships	preparation		start											
	4-4	High	Community Relations	Deliver training	preparation		start											
	4-5	High	Community Relations	Industry specific training	preparation		start											
	4-6	Low	Community Relations	Higher service quality & education of service staff			start											
	4-7	Low	Community Relations	Involve media in public education re tourism	start													
	4-8	Medium	Research	Municipal Cultural Planning		prep		start										
5	5-1	High	Community Relations	Information exchange			start											
	5-2	High	Community Relations	Tourism planning			start											
	5-3	Medium	Research, product development,	Gap analysis: product & marketing			start											
	5-4	Medium	Community Relations	Brain-storming sessions			start											
	5-5	Medium	Community Relations	Information sharing techniques			start discussions											
	5-6	Medium	Marketing	Collaborative marketing			start											
	5-7	Medium	Community Relations	Organizational cross-memberships/involvement			start discussions											
6	6-1	Medium	Research & Marketing	Identify key market segments through research			start											
	6-2	Low	Marketing	Regional marketing strategy			start											
	6-3	Medium	Product Development	Tourism development part of regional economic development strategy			start discussions											
	6-4	High	Infrastructure & Marketing	Signage strategy	start													
7	7-1	High	Marketing	Brand review	start							review						review
	7-2	High	Marketing	Product accommodation with Brand	start							review						review
	7-3	High	Marketing	Bruce Brand within regional Brand	start							review						review

Gantt Chart Page 4

[[[Note: full sized Gantt Chart is bound in here]]]

3	3-12	Low	Infrastructure	Cell, highspeed Internet, wi-fi			start											
	3-13	Low	Infrastructure	Highway 6 rest stops			start											
4	4-1	High	Product Development	Educate operators	preparation		start											
	4-2	High	Product Development	Develop training tools	preparation		start											
	4-3	High	Community Relations	Develop partnerships	preparation		start											
	4-4	High	Community Relations	Deliver training	preparation		start	continuing education and training										
	4-5	High	Community Relations	Industry specific training	preparation		start											
	4-6	Low	Community Relations	Higher service quality & education of service staff			start											
	4-7	Low	Community Relations	Involve media in public education re tourism	start													
	4-8	Medium	Research	Municipal Cultural Planning		prep		start										
5	5-1	High	Community Relations	Information exchange			start											
	5-2	High	Community Relations	Tourism planning			start											
	5-3	Medium	Research, product development,	Gap analysis: product & marketing			start											
	5-4	Medium	Community Relations	Brain-storming sessions			start											
	5-5	Medium	Community Relations	Information sharing techniques			start discussions											
	5-6	Medium	Marketing	Collaborative marketing			start											
	5-7	Medium	Community Relations	Organizational cross-memberships/involvement			start discussions											
6	6-1	Medium	Research & Marketing	Identify key market segments through research			start											
	6-2	Low	Marketing	Regional marketing strategy			start											
	6-3	Medium	Product Development	Tourism development part of regional economic development strategy			start discussions											
	6-4	High	Infrastructure & Marketing	Signage strategy	start													
7	7-1	High	Marketing	Brand review	start						review						review	
	7-2	High	Marketing	Product accommodation with Brand	start						review						review	
	7-3	High	Marketing	Bruce Brand within regional Brand	start						review						review	

## 7. Identification of Lead Agencies and Organizations to Implement Strategic Plan or “Who Takes the Lead, Who Helps?”

Undertaking this strategic plan is NOT the responsibility of one agency or organization, but rather a collaborative effort of many - individuals and collectives (such as chambers of commerce, DIAs/BIAs, tourism associations, and economic development departments). *The PRTD process and resulting reports belong to the tourism industry, collectively. As such, responsibility for and ownership of the plan is vested with the Bruce County tourism industry.* As an aid to implementing the plan, the following (Table 5) was developed to sort out “who takes the lead” and who can be involved in facilitation. As a first step, this table should be reviewed and leaderships confirmed. This will then allow the plan to move forward.

An important point to note is that the plan is a 10-year plan, and “success” of achieving deliverables range from one to 10 years. As stated elsewhere in the report, some deliverable (or parts) will drop by the wayside to make room for new and more important ones. Others will be deemed unachievable as time-lined, requiring new target dates. The strategic plan should be considered within the context of Section 4: Implementation Strategies.

Table 5: Identification of Lead Agencies and Organizations

Deliverable	Brief Description	Lead Agency or Organization	Facilitation & Additional Support
<b>Abbreviations:</b> Bruce County Tourism=BCT; Grey Bruce Cultural network = GBCN; Bruce County Planning = BCP; Bruce Peninsula National Park = BPNP; Provincial Parks = PP; Grey Bruce regional Tourism Marketing Partnership = GBRTMP; GB = Grey Bruce; Bruce County = BC; Conservation Authorities = CA; Grey Bruce Health Unit + GBHU; Phase I Report binders = PIRB; Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre = BCM&CC; Grey County = GC; Grey County Tourism = GCT;			
1-1	Natural resource inventory	CA + BPNP + PP	PIRB
1-2	Cultural resources inventory	BCP + GBCN + BCM&CC	PIRB
1-3	Visitors' patterns of use	BCP	GBRTMP
1-4	Best practices tourism planning	BCP + GBRTMP	
1-5	Long-term trends	GBRTMP + BCT + BCP	
1-6	Unregulated rock climbing	PP + CA	BCP
1-7	Wind turbines	BCP	Municipalities
1-8	Heritage building preservation	BC + Municipalities	BCP

2-1	Research agenda	BCT + BCP	Other marketing organizations
2-2	Annual strategic planning cycle	BCT + BCP	
2-3	People involved in 2-2	BC	
2-4	Impacts (social, economic, environmental)	BCP	PP, CA, municipalities, GBHU
2-5	Expand membership in GBRTMP	GBRTMP	Other sector organizations
2-6	Regional tourism planning strategy	GBRTMP + BCT + GCT + BC + GC	Other marketing & economic development organizations
2-7	Green destination	BCT + BC + regional environmental NGOs	Other marketing organizations, individual operators
2-8	Source water protection	BC + GBHU	Municipalities
2-9	First Nations collaborations	BC + BCP	
3-1	Expand tourism season	BCT	Other DMOs
3-2	Develop authentic experiences	Tourism operators	DMOs
3-3	Feasibility studies for 3-2		
3-4	Identify funding for 3-2		
3-5	Identify leaders for deliverables 3-2 to 3-4		
3-6	Trail capital of Ontario	BC	BCT
3-7	Wilderness camping	BPNP	
3-8	On-shore camping for kayakers/canoists	BPNP	BC
3-9	River fishing	CA + BC	BCT + operators
3-10	Boating circle tour	GBRTMP	Marinas
3-11	Agriculture & food tourism	Agri-groups, restaurants, growers, GB Agriculture & Culinary Association, GB Local Food Projects	BCT + Grey County Tourism

3-12	Cell, highspeed, wi-fi	BC	Municipalities + operators
3-13	Highway 6 rest stops	Province	BC
4-1	Educate operators	BC + GC + Georgian College + Lake Huron Learning Collaborative	BCT + Grey County Tourism
4-2	Develop training tools		
4-3	Develop partnerships		
4-4	Deliver training		
4-5	Industry specific training		
4-6	Higher service quality & education of service staff		
4-7	Involve media in public education re tourism	BCT + GCT + GBRTMP	
4-8	Municipal Cultural Planning	BC + Municipalities	BCP + GBCN + BCM&CC
5-1	Information exchange	BCT + operators	BC
5-2	Tourism planning		
5-3	Gap analysis: product & marketing		
5-4	Information sharing techniques		
5-5	Collaborative marketing		
5-6	Organizational cross-memberships/involvement		
5-7	Resources for planning and development	BCP	BC + Municipalities
6-1	Identify key market segments through research	BCT + other marketing organizations	Operators
6-2	Regional marketing strategy	BCT GCT + GBRTMP	Other marketing organization
6-3	Tourism development part of regional economic development strategy	Economic development offices/agencies	Proposed regional economic development corporation
6-4	Embrace new electronic marketing technologies	BCT	
6-5	Signage strategy	BC & BCT	
7-1	Brand review	BC + BCT + other DMOs	
7-2	Product accommodation with brand		
7-3	Bruce brand within regional brand	BC + GC + BCT + GCT + GBRTMP	GBCN



## 8. What Does Success Look Like?

Success can be an elusive thing – how can it be measured? How do we know we have succeeded in building a “better” tourism destination, for the benefit of visitors, residents, and business owners alike? To paraphrase an old axiom, “not only must success *be* achieved, but success must *appear* to have been achieved”.<sup>9</sup> Success must be evident in how people “feel” about “things tourism” and what they perceive to be true, beyond the statistics, to qualitative research and analysis.

Part of the answer is, of course, we can never really know we have arrived at success because the environment in which tourism, as an industry, is continually changing, and we continually aim higher – hence, there is no final completion or “arrival”. And this lends itself to the idea of the tourism industry lifecycle, just as many economic activities are cyclical. Continual monitoring and evaluation of the tourism indicators of success (e.g., total visitations, visitor satisfaction, total economic impact, quality of life measures enhanced) MUST be part of the process – an annual strategic planning and evaluation cycle. Such a strategy and a sample planning and evaluation strategy are discussed below (see Section XXX).

Participants in the focus group and interviews were asked: “How will we know we have arrived?” In other words, as we walk about the communities of Bruce County in ten years time, what will we see and hear that suggest the tourism industry is healthier than before the strategic plan was implemented? The participants easily answered this question. The following highlights the major or most common indicators articulated by the participants:

- economic success, more wealth, better wages
- higher visitation numbers, more tourists
- higher service standards, pride in service, personalized service
- more collaborations and co-operative ventures
- all hours of service (business, information, attractions) meet visitors’ needs
- a three and four-seasons destination
- employment will be up
- more sharing of information (at all levels, government, businesses, organizations, etc.)
- solid support for tourism by residents
- positive visitor feedback
- improved communications patterns
- we believe “good is not good enough”
- planning includes all interested groups and businesses

---

<sup>9</sup> The original states something similar to the following: Justice must not only be served, but it must appear to have been served.

- ❑ product offerings include nature, culture, heritage
- ❑ a “candy store of experiences”

Some of the above indicators are quantifiable and directly measurable (e.g., more tourists) while some are more suited to qualitative measures and analysis, reflecting a personal and “gut feeling” of success (e.g., pride in service, visitor feedback). Success can be quantified (i.e., measured) but there is the more elusive subjective opinion that needs to be considered through any future monitoring and evaluation exercises. This can be greatly enhanced through continually involving the industry and all stakeholders in dialogue.

Another part of the answer is addressed through the strategic plan itself. Each recommendation has measurable, or quantifiable, deliverables that, once completed, indicate “success”. Each deliverable has a set of action items that offer guidance in starting and completing the deliverable.<sup>10</sup> Initially, individuals and groups planning to tackle various recommendations and deliverables would be best advised to undertake a thorough review of the specific recommendation and deliverables; review the draft Gantt Chart Timelines; and, strategize their own work plans, based on resources.

In ten years of operations based on this Strategic Plan, the quality of life in the diverse and unique places of Bruce County will be significantly improved to the benefit of both residents and visitors. The peoples and places of Bruce County will be telling our stories and the authentic attractive qualities, character and places of The Bruce will be known far and wide as the Bruce experience is celebrated on the global communication webs.

## **9. Implementing an Annual Strategic Planning Cycle**

It will be important for the Bruce County tourism industry to monitor not only outcomes of the strategic plan, but other indicators of a changing Bruce County tourism environment. The PRTD process has resulted in an important set of data and benchmarks against which future indicators could be measured, highlighting both negative and positive changes. The PRTD workbook could be used on a regular basis (e.g., annually, every few years) to monitor changes but based on the present experience could prove impractical and costly in terms of resources (financial, time, and people). As an alternative to using the PRTD workbook, the consultants have developed a draft, annual research strategy that will accomplish similar results.

---

<sup>10</sup> The action items are not meant to be prescriptive but rather guidance-oriented. Available resources (economic, human, time), participants skills, interest, and government and political support, better implementation strategies, among others, will influence actual application.

## 9.1 A Draft Annual Research Agenda for Bruce County as an Early Warning System of Destination Changes

The draft research agenda (Table 6) provides a strategy that includes many elements that can be used as an “early warning system”, to warn of subtle changes, and those not so subtle, to Bruce County’s status as a significant tourism destination. The draft research agenda is built on the concept known as the “Tourism Area Life Cycle” (TALC).<sup>11</sup> Just as products have life cycles, a tourism destination (as a product and a collection of tourism products) is no different. Tourism areas will go through predictable stages of growth and development (product and performance), some of which end up in stagnation or lack of new development strategies. At the stagnation stage, destinations will continue in a period of stagnation or decline, or choose to rejuvenate itself (furfurity).<sup>12</sup>

The TALC concept highlights a need for tourism destinations to be vigilant in monitoring changes to the destination’s tourism environment and its performance. The TALC concept has been developed into a practical application toolkit by the European Commission (TNO Inro, 2002) as a best practices strategy. It is *highly recommended* that Bruce County adopt such a process as a technique to respond quickly to changes and as a pro-active strategy.<sup>13</sup> To implement such a process; (a) establish a Research Co-ordinating Team or Committee; (b) develop terms of reference; and, (c) set an annual budget. Committee members should come from the broader tourism and economic development communities.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> The TALC concept was originally developed by Richard Butler, a tourism professor at the University of Western Ontario. The TALC concept has been developed into an “early warning system” by the European Commission (see footnote 11).

<sup>12</sup> The model has been empirically tested.

<sup>13</sup> The European Commission’s toolkit can be downloaded at [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/services/tourism/studies\\_and\\_publications.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/services/tourism/studies_and_publications.htm)

<sup>14</sup> Some elements or statistics might need to be contracted to consultants familiar with the material.

Table 6: A Draft Comprehensive Tourism Research Strategy and Reporting Cycle

<b>Draft Comprehensive Tourism Research Strategy and Reporting Cycle</b> (including elements for an "Early Warning System")		
Elements to be considered for inclusion and possible sources of information	Minimum Frequency of Initiative	Start Date
<i>Establish terms of reference and budget for the research strategy</i>		Winter 2007/08
Basic review of Statistics Canada's tourism surveys	Annual	Spring 2008
Detailed review of Statistics Canada's tourism surveys	Biennial	Spring 2009
Assessment of the competition; other areas offering similar products (CTS/ITS data)	Annual	Fall 2008
Evaluate public sector perceptions of tourism sector (community forums, surveys, forums)	Annual with each municipality on a 3-year cycle	Spring 2008
Review academic literature (journal indexes)	Annual or bi-annual	Winter 2007/08
Review published reports: government and NGOs (e.g., TAMS, WTO, universities, Ministry of Tourism's Business Plan and Travel Price Index, Canadian Tourism Commission's Business Plan)	Annual	Spring 2008
Forums for Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Associations, and Economic Development Officials	Annual	Fall 2008
Monitoring investment in commercial properties (municipal building permits, GB Real Estate Board)	Biennial	Spring 2008
Assessment of traffic and traffic flows (provincial reports, Chi-Cheemaun data, Bruce County traffic data)	Annual	Spring 2008
Monitor spatial changes of tourism infrastructures (polygon maps of tourism infrastructure)	Triennial	Fall 2008
Tourism Location Quotients and Tourism-potential Index <sup>15</sup> Statistics Canada's tourism surveys	Annual	Fall 2008
Economic Impact Assessment (Ministry of Tourism's TREIM model)	Annual	Fall 2008
Industry related statistics such as accommodations occupancy rates, attractions visitations	Biennial	Fall 2008
Review and assessment of demographic statistics (Statistics Canada)	Every five years (census years)	Spring 2007 (2006 census)

<sup>15</sup> See Clark for the Tourism-potential Index (T-PI). (2003).

Survey of elected official to assess position on tourism (Bruce County Council, Elected Municipal Officials)	Biennial	Fall 2008
Tourist/Visitor feedback surveys	Annual	Fall 2008
Media feedback (newspapers' news coverage, editorials including letters-to-the-editor)	Continual monitoring and compilation for annual report	Winter 2007/08
Ecological Footprint (research tools to assess visitors' ecological footprint as an indicator of sustainability; see Hunter and Shaw, 2005)	Biennial	Fall 2008
Environmental health (Health Unit water quality reports, beach postings reports, Blue Flag statuses, source water reports, etc.)	Annual	Fall 2008
Employment/unemployment health (Service Canada's Labour Market Reports, GBHPGT Training Board)	Annual	Fall 2008
Monitor the ratio of permanent homes to seasonal homes (MPAC, Tax Rolls of municipalities, Bruce County Reports)	Triennial	Fall 2008
Provide feedback report to the Tourism Industry	Annual	Spring 2009

## **10. Selected Examples of Implementing the Product, Performance, and Furturity Recommendations**

Successful implementation of the strategic plan will require commitment and lively participation in identifying specific tasks and actions that expand the action items under each recommendation and deliverable. The consultants have developed the following examples have been developed further, providing more detailed actionables. The following examples represent a cross section of recommendations and deliverables and represent major themes.

Each example is identified by its Recommendation number and is introduced by a description of the major theme, followed by specific, detailed action items.

### **10.1 Co-operation, Collaboration, and Improved Communications See Recommendation #5**

There exists, as identified through the planning process, a strong desire to see improved co-operation and more collaborative efforts from all levels of the tourism industry – business/business and business/government. An improvement in intra-industry communications was identified as a priority as well. Improved communications included the need for a mechanism for sharing information (e.g., studies, research, statistics, etc.) and easier on-demand/as-needed access to information. Similar to education and training, the need for this information is as an aid to making better business decisions. Developing a regional approach to tourism planning and development should be considered along with exploring best practice regional planning models from other jurisdictions (e.g., European Commission’s Early Warning and best practices model, see TNO Inro).

#### **10.1.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

##### A) Develop an peer-to-peer, industry-owned, industry-focused, industry-operated Website

The development of an industry owned, operated, and focused Website will open up opportunities for information sharing and ideas exchanges. It is important to understand that this tactic is a peer-to-peer communications strategy and hence must be supported and developed by the industry itself.<sup>16</sup> *This tactic is NOT another tourist accessible Website. Success will require*

---

<sup>16</sup> In a recent article from the Journal of Vacation Marketing (2008, 14: 2, Pages 121-132) the authors found that such a peer-to-peer Website allowed geographically dispersed members/participants working for different sectors to develop social networks, share ideas and information, locate future colleagues, exchange thoughts and realizations, and receive constructive criticism. The article and subject Website could provide a model from which to start.

industry leaders from tourism associations, chambers of commerce, DIAs/BIAAs, and individual businesses, to step forward and take the lead for development. Features that could be included: 1) blogs; 2) links to Websites with tourism information, reports, and statistics; 3) links to Websites of local, regional, national, and international tourism organizations; 4) links to local business and tourism industry Websites (not businesses); 5) posting training materials and links to training materials; 6) “ask an expert” section; 7) resources section/links; 8) discussion boards/BBSes; 9) classified ads such as help wanted, for sale, looking for, etc.; 10) posting of information about new research and studies that have relevance to the local industry; and, 11) links to local cultural, heritage, and similar organizations. Other content should be considered as identified by the industry. This strategy appears not to have an Ontario tourism model to build on so can be seen as an innovation. Look to the province and federal funding for seed funding.

#### B) Develop an industry-owned, industry-produced newsletter

Develop a newsletter (quarterly to start) directed at the industry that allows businesses, especially those without Internet access, to be informed of tourism happenings and opportunities. The newsletter could also be made available to elected officials, municipal offices and councils, and the general public. Such a newsletter will help to raise awareness of “things tourism” throughout the region at all levels of involvement –residents to county officials. It is a tool to disseminate tourism information to the tourism industry and beyond. “Tourism Matters” is a possible publication name, reflecting double meanings of these are the issues and tourism is important. Newsletter should be posted on the industry Website (A).

#### C) Develop forums to maximize information sharing opportunities

Develop forums with regular meetings as a method of sharing information through open dialogue, developing networks, identifying information gaps, discussion of training and education needs, and other agenda items as determined by the participants. They could be developed as “round tables” to address one specific issue. These forums should include broad representation from culture, heritage, nature-based, economic development, and planning department environments. The suggestion for more forums came directly from focus group and interview participants, reflecting a strong desire for regular meetings to discuss issues and become more involved in planning and development of tourism initiatives. The need for such a forum has been identified but the focus and agenda should be developed from the industry itself rather than be prescribed. The issue is further discussed in Appendix A and highlighted in Appendices B and C (transcriptions of focus group discussions and interviews).

#### D) Host several roundtables to discuss issues of co-ordination and collaboration

Lack of co-operation and a need for collaboration amongst tourism organizations and businesses was cited numerous times in focus groups and interviews. Specific concerns were: 1) too many tourism publications for the area; 2) a lack of standard hours for businesses and information centres that meet the needs of visitors (i.e., weekends and evenings); 3) need for more business to business collaborations; 4) desire to discuss opportunities for tourism “packages” development; 5) a need for opportunities to discuss these issues; and, 6) similar issues. Few specific ideas about solving these issues were put forth by participants. Other specific issues should be identified and be broadly discussed to determine the extent of interest in these and other issues. Ideas and resolution will come about through frank discussions. An important discussion that must take place under this tactic is an assessment of “who does what”, or “role and function” analysis. A practical tool has been developed and is included on the accompanying PRTD report CD.

#### E) Develop mechanisms to gather input and opinions from the industry

Such input gathering mechanisms/tools/techniques as surveys, interviews, issue-specific focus groups, round tables, and the Delphi process should be developed.<sup>17</sup> The importance of regular input and feedback is that it will keep people involved and will allow current issues to be raised and addressed very quickly, a pro-active approach. Input should be part of an annual research and planning cycle strategy.

#### F) Explore the need for and interest in a regional approach to tourism planning and development

The Bruce County tourism industry to take the lead in initiating discussion with Grey County and Owen Sound regarding the idea of a regional approach to tourism planning and development. A regional approach could be built on the research agenda developed for this report (see Appendix J). Participants should come from planning, tourism, business, economic development, elected officials, and residents/taxpayers. An important first step will be the identification of best practice models used in other jurisdictions, including international. The European Commission’s early warning/preventive best practices model should be reviewed as a best practice model.

### **10.2 Adopt a Strategic Plan and Annual Research Planning Cycle See Recommendation #2**

Undertaking an annual strategic plan and research cycle gives backbone to marketing decisions and product development initiatives, acts as an early warning system of changes, can help identify negative impacts and stressors

---

<sup>17</sup> Delphi is one specific technique of many available that can be used to gather opinions from industry leaders. Others are available.



(economic, social, environmental), and gains support from the industry, residents, and elected officials.

### **10.2.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

#### A) Bruce County facilitates the development of an annual research and planning strategy

Under the guidance of Bruce County, initiate development of a sound research and planning cycle that will involve the tourism industry, economic development, planning departments, elected officials, government representatives (local, provincial, First Nations), and residents. A draft research and planning cycle agenda has been developed by the consultants and is included in Table 5. Parts of or the whole agenda can be contracted out if in-house resources are not available.

### **10.3 Research-Driven Decision-making See Recommendation #2**

This recommendation is closely aligned with the “education and training” and “co-operation, collaboration, and improved communications” recommendations. Better business and marketing decisions were seen as needing to be grounded in sound research that can come from locally produced studies and research, using existing government research and reports (such as Travel Survey of Residents of Canada, International Travel Survey, and Tourism Attitudes and Motivations Study), academic research published in a variety of journals. Many businesses have stated that they could benefit from more information. Expanding the base of research materials combined with an expanded distribution to all stakeholders will benefit the entire tourism community. Bruce County Tourism successfully incorporates research into its marketing decisions and this recommendation simply extends a best practice technique industry-wide. Research should also inform tourism planning and decision-making at the individual business level. Through education and training, business owners and managers can learn how to use information and tourism industry intelligence to their best advantage.

Research grounded decision-making is a tourism best practice and has been cited by the Canadian Tourism Commission: “Research excellence builds a solid foundation...we know that solid research would be critical to the success of the Canadian tourism industry”.<sup>18</sup> The same publication states the need of small and medium tourism businesses for information regarding “trends as

---

<sup>18</sup> Meis, S. (November/December 2005). In *Tourism: Canada’s tourism business magazine*. Pg. 8.

they emerge, more than statistics after they have happened” and “targeted marketing starts with detailed intelligence”.<sup>19</sup>

### **10.3.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

#### A) Ensure research is a central component of planning and development

Under the guidance of Bruce County, make a commitment to ensuring tourism-based research is central to tourism planning and product development and continues to inform marketing. This commitment can be confirmed through commitment of annualized financial resources to support an annual strategic plan and research agenda.

#### B) Identify sources of industry intelligence

Using the draft strategic plan and annual research cycle as guides, develop an inventory of research and information resources that can be used to inform decision-making. Beyond the usual provincial, federal, and academic studies, these resources can include in-house studies from all departments across the county, municipally generated studies, and privately sponsored studies.

#### C) Share the information

Ensure that the identity of these resources, and others that become available, are shared with the tourism industry through the industry-owned Website or in other ways, such as press releases, newsletter, newspaper articles, workshops, electronically, etc. Ideally, as much information as possible would be available in an accessible repository, such as an industry-owned Website.

## **10.4 Leadership**

### **See Recommendation #3**

Identification of strong leaders and industry champions was seen as necessary to move forward on tourism initiatives. Bruce County Tourism was identified as *the key agency* to championing tourism development initiatives, including co-ordination and facilitation of initiatives under the strategic plan. Bruce County Tourism (BCT) has the skills, legitimacy, respected authority, and practical powers to co-ordinate and direct change. BCT should consider a mentoring approach with hand-over of responsibility for leadership of forums, meetings, and leading development initiatives. The intent of this recommendation is not that Bruce County and Bruce County Tourism necessarily assume additional duties on a permanent basis, but, rather,

---

<sup>19</sup> In Tourism. (September/October 2007 and January/February 2007). Pgs. 12 and 11 respectively.

develop a strategy of training, mentoring, and support, to move leadership towards a public/private leadership model.

#### **10.4.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

##### A) Bruce County to provide leadership to move forward with the report and strategic plan

To generate momentum, Bruce County will need to provide leadership to move forward with the plan and to encourage industry leaders to step forward. Leadership should not include taking control but could include organizing expertise, mentoring, providing meeting space, offering financial support (postage, stationary, mailings, photocopying, etc.), co-ordination support, distribution of copies of the plan, AV equipment, industry-owned Website development service, act as a flow-through/host for grants and funding, invitations to in-house skills development workshops, and similar supports.

##### B) Identify and support industry leaders

Bruce County, in providing leadership, should offer support and mentoring to industry people who show an interest in stepping forward to help move the plan forward. Support should include services as noted above. Some people stepping forward will not require mentoring but might require support.

#### **10.5 Education and Training See Recommendation #4**

Participants identified a need to include education and training in the strategic plan. Phase I findings indicate employer-provided training ranged from 21% to 90% (varied with sub-sector) with a mean of 35%. Education and training includes improvements to service workers knowledge of attractions, events, and the overall tourism environment of Bruce County (and regionally); improvement to service standards and similar functional areas; better knowledge of tourism as an economic development strategy; tourism statistics; tourism reports, research, and studies; tourism industry intelligence materials, generally; and generally, better access to information to improve businesses decision-making.

#### **10.5.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

##### A) Identify education and training needs

Conduct an industry-wide consultation to determine industry training and education needs. Consultation should include needs of year-round staff, seasonal staff, at both front-line and management levels. Through research,

identify existing resources that can be utilized such as offered through the Ontario Education Training Corporation, Georgian College, and local consultants.

Training that cannot be met by existing resources or can be better met locally (considering time, travel, financial costs), should be developed in-house or contracted out. Utilize the regional cultural and educational communities to brainstorm ideas for achieving this objective.

#### B) Develop a mobile training strategy

To achieve the training objective in a manner that it has the greatest impact (i.e., serving larger numbers), it will be critical to develop creative delivery mechanisms. Delivery of training via the Internet is one possibility but limitations of the materials (is it Web-based friendly?) and the technology (is dial-up a barrier?) must be considered.

In the spirit of the bookmobiles model of service delivery used by libraries, some training could be taken on the road. Building the knowledgebase of staff, especially seasonal summer students, about Bruce County and its regional attractions, events, features, and histories, could prove useful as a visitor service enhancement. This could be accomplished, effectively and efficiently, through delivery of training sessions in communities throughout Bruce via PowerPoint presentations. Built on a marketing theme such as "I Know Bruce. Ask Me", graduates would be issued promotional buttons that prompt tourists to ask just that question.

#### C) Develop off-season workshops on specific topics

Off-season workshops could be delivered on specific topics identified in the education and training needs consultation (3.5 (A)). Some topics could include: 1) what does it mean?/using research, studies, and research data to inform decision-making; 2) building Websites; 3) creating and using computer-based marketing; 4) development, analysis, and interpretation of customer satisfaction surveys; 5) customer service training and how to train staff; and, 6) understanding and serving the growing Asian and GenY markets (and others); 7) tools and techniques to going green/eco-friendly. The industry consultation will identify other needs and interests.

### **10.6 Going Green/Eco-friendly** **See recommendation #2**

A strong message that came out of the industry consultation was a desire to develop green products, promote a green image, and ensure that the perceived clean and pristine environment is maintained.

### **10.6.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

#### A) Develop ideas to become a green destination

Establish an industry round-table to explore ideas, options, and barriers to going green. The table should include planners, elected officials, municipal representatives, environmental experts/green experts, and the public.

#### B) Bruce County Tourism leads by example

Bruce County Tourism (BCT) should lead by example by developing initiatives to go green. These could include: 1) promote and market itself as going green; 2) continue to reduce paper-based marketing in favour of electronic marketing (Web-based, e-mail, YouTube, FaceBook, eBay, blogs, TripAdvisor, Flickr, MySpace); 3) explore the concept of short-range FM transmitters to provide site-specific "Bruce Tourism Radio" services (providing up-to-date events information, ferry cancellations, accommodations availability, cultural events, promote local musicians, local weather forecasts, Adventure Bruce promotion); 4) BCT promotional vehicle is green/eco-friendly/hybrid; 5) continue to seek out locally produced promotional items/hand-outs and avoid imported items.

#### C) Identify existing green rating and identification programmes

Identify existing rating programmes and promote their adoption by Bruce County businesses, such as the Hotel Association's "Green Key Eco-rating Program". BCT marketing materials should identify properties, operations, and services that have achieved these industry ratings as an aid to visitors wanting to make green choices. BCT could research green programmes and promote their use to the local tourism industry.

#### D) Promote the use of locally produced agricultural products

In collaboration with the two agricultural initiatives underway in Bruce and Grey Counties, aggressively promote locally produced foods within the tourism sector and through marketing. Develop an awareness logo/tag line/slogan to promote businesses that use locally produced foods. Maintaining a working relationship with the Grey Bruce Agriculture and Culinary Association and the Grey Bruce Local Foods Project will ensure that the promotion of local foods in food establishments and food tourism will become important components of tourism as economic development.

#### E) Promote business buy-in and self-promotion

Encourage businesses to adopt going green as a business development strategy. Businesses could self-promote their consumption of local foods (e.g., the 100-mile diet concept), subscribing to green rating programmes

(e.g., Green Keys), and general acceptance of green principles. Co-ordinate “how to go green” workshops.

## **10.7 Broaden Offerings**

### **See Recommendations #1, #3, and #6**

Industry consultation feedback indicated that although the “nature-based” activities and attractions will continue to be strong “pull factors” for Bruce County, there is a wealth of cultural and heritage potential that needs to be developed and actively promoted. This is the strongest resource base on which to build authentically. Other complementary authentic opportunities include alternate energy sites, natural heritage sites, First Nations collaborations, and green/eco-friendly conferences, seminars and tours. The Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre is a natural and logical key cultural and heritage anchor for leading the exploration of authentic experiences.

Broader offerings, as a growth strategy, can be accomplished in one of two ways: 1) increasing scale, or doing more of the same; 2) increasing scope, do new things.<sup>20</sup> Both can be successful and each has its pros and cons. Through research and focus groups + interviews participant input, diversity (increasing scope) was a key message. Increasing scope will allow the tourism industry to build on more co-operative and collaborative opportunities. Increasing scale, especially nature-based activities, will increase chances of negative impacts (stresses) on a sensitive and sometimes fragile resource base. A balance certainly needs to be achieved.

### **10.7.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

#### A) Involve the culture and heritage community

Identify and recruit cultural and heritage leaders and organizations for initial discussions about bringing culture and heritage into tourism. Formation of a cultural and heritage working group to explore the development of specific culture and heritage products would be a necessary first step. The newly formed group, the Grey Bruce Cultural Network and the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre have significant potential to form the nucleus of a culture/heritage working group. Others need to be identified, such as artists and artists’ co-ops, musicians, theatre groups and facilities, and Metis and First Nations. Bruce County can supply a support role, allowing the working group to assume leadership and ownership.

#### B) Develop and map an inventory of culture and heritage resources

---

<sup>20</sup> Raynor, M. (2007). The strategy paradox. Pg. 108.

Using a variety of resources available, such as the Cultural Planning Toolkit (see [creativitycity.ca](http://creativitycity.ca)), the working group can undertake the inventory and mapping directly or explore grants and funding to contract out. Again, Bruce County can supply a support role, allowing the working group to assume leadership and ownership. Identify strong resource candidates for early development and identify development strategies.

#### C) Identify target markets

Using solid marketing research, identify target markets by origins (where the potential tourists live) and by demographics (who are they?), and consider how culture can be used as a shoulder season development strategy. Develop effective marketing strategies, with reference to best practices, marketing initiatives of other jurisdictions (competition), and the experiences and ideas of the local cultural and heritage communities.

### **10.8 Shoulder Season Development** **See Recommendations #3 and #6**

Participants (focus group and interviewees) stated a desire to expand the “core” season by developing stronger shoulder seasons. There was recognition that the process would take time and 2012 was identified as a target year to show some measurable improvements. Phase I survey results indicate a wide range of seasonality for tourism resources and businesses with a mean of 57% stating they were open year-round (the range was 0% to 77%). Strong niche product development and marketing, based on sound market research could prove beneficial. Shoulder season development will be a challenge, especially with the many businesses that open after May 24<sup>th</sup> weekend and close on or near Labour Day. Phase I findings indicate the potential for developing capacity for hosting small- to medium-sized conferences and seminars.

#### **10.8.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

##### A) Create an inventory of resources to support shoulder season development

Develop an inventory of resources that includes events, accommodations, restaurants, bars/pubs, attractions, specialty shops, tours, adventure outfitters, culture, heritage, etc. The inventory should include resource type, location/community, months of operations, business hours, potential to host conferences and seminars, and services, and other features applicable to attracting seasonal tourists.

##### B) Map resources, identify strengths, weaknesses, gaps

Using GIS tools and techniques (e.g., location quotients, Thiessen polygons/Voronoi polygons) create resource maps to highlight strengths,

weaknesses, and gaps (SWG). Through discussions with the tourism community, develop strategies to address the SWGs such as new products, seasonal extension of existing products, and co-operative and collaborative ventures.

#### C) Research the competition

Using sound research data (e.g., TAMS, Travel Survey of Residents of Canada/TSRC, ITS) create market profiles of tourists seeking travel experiences similar to what is and can be offered in Bruce County. Determine which competitive communities (market destinations) are presently providing these experiences, identify where the tourists are (market origins), and develop marketing strategies and promotions to attract them.

#### D) Explore the development of a conference and seminar market

Using the results from above, map resources with potential to support and host small- and medium-sized conferences and seminars. Identify gaps and brainstorm solutions. Create a position of "conference co-ordinator" for a two to four year incubation/exploratory period to develop the resources, identify and contact potential client companies and organizations, and provide broker services to local industry. Work toward a public-private partnership once seed funding expires. Conference co-ordinators, operating at the county or regional level are successful in other communities. The uniqueness of Bruce County and the UNESCO designation of the Niagara Escarpment, combined with a green/eco-friendly strategy, put the area in a prime position to capitalize on the conference market. Nature-based themes are a significant potential market.

#### E) Trails as a strong shoulder season market

Trails have the potential for shoulder season development, especially directed at childless travellers, tapping into the health and wellness market. Bruce County should ensure continued development of these resources. To explore the potential for motorized trail users (dirt bikes, ATVs), undertake research and identify existing studies to assess long-term potential as a development strategy. Trail hiking and walking links well with the green/eco-friendly recommendation.

#### F) Develop the potential of golf

Using sound research data and existing studies (TAMS, TSRC, golf industry reports) assess the potential of golf as a shoulder seasons activity. Initiate discussions with local golf industry to determine strategies to market golf experiences for the shoulder seasons. Develop shoulder seasons itineraries, "end-of-day" opportunities, for golfers and non-golfing spouses.



## **10.9 Niche Product Development and Marketing Expansion** **See Recommendations #1, #2, and #3**

Niche marketing or development of specialized products will be a significant product development strategy for the future. Products and experiences can incorporate green/eco-friendly best practices and include cultural and heritage products and experiences. Golf was identified in Phase I as an activity that has high potential for regional development. Overall ranking placed golf 9th as a reported activity in Bruce compared to Ontario's ranking at 17th. Total participation percentages were 7 for Bruce and 2 for Ontario, and 10 and 4 for overnight stays. Culture and heritage have strong potentials. In the July/August 2007 issue of "Tourism" culture and heritage tourism were touted as "key to success".<sup>21</sup> Tourism products mentioned included sports, learning/education, art, and museums. Bruce County potentials include Dark Skies/astronomy, nature-based photography and art, water/marine-based, Aboriginal/First Nations, Niagara Escarpment Biosphere learning, and industry consultation will identify others.

### **10.9.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

A) This recommendation can be developed in two ways; 1) use findings from "product development recommendations" to develop specialized marketing strategies; 2) looking to competitive communities and regions to determine what their successes are and if Bruce County has the existing resources or potential to develop the necessary resources to capture a part of the market. Themes and trends can be identified through references to the many tourism journals, tourism intelligence newsletters, and local industry consultation. Developing a Bruce County research and planning agenda will allow subtle changes to the regional tourism landscape to be identified and pro-active responses taken. Local industry-wide planning and discussion forums could be helpful regarding the changing landscape.

Culture and heritage tourism is a growing market.<sup>22</sup> Through Municipal Cultural Planning and initiatives, identify near-horizon/early success products, develop market profile, and develop necessary marketing strategies.

## **10.10 Cultural Planning** **See Recommendations #1, #3, and #4**

The Phase One PRTD Research identified serious gaps in cultural resources knowledge and few documented inventories of cultural resources in Bruce. Therefore there is a lack of data from which to determine which cultural

---

<sup>21</sup> See Tourism: Canada's tourism business magazine. (July/August 2007). Pg. 10.

<sup>22</sup> See Tourism: Canada's tourism business magazine. (July/August 2007). Pg. 9.

resources and stories have the potential to become core attractors for Bruce County. Municipal Cultural Planning offers the remedy.

The present potential for a David Milne Visual Arts Centre at or near Paisley is a nationally significant example. The Province has made culture the main driver and focus of funded support for rural economic development and revitalization programs. The Provincial government has begun its second mandate with an acceleration of its commitment to Municipal Cultural Planning.

### **10.10.1 Tasks and Tactics for Successful Implementation of the Recommendation**

#### **A) Municipal Cultural Planning**

Notwithstanding the lack of inventories, Bruce County has available partners, as well as the strong community feedback, on some key opportunities that could become significant core attractors. This echoes the results of the 2003 conference Artfully Yours in Kincardine and several other conferences in the region focused on the wider potential here for cultural tourism and community development. The Grey Bruce Cultural Network passed a resolution in November 2007 to make Community Cultural Planning a priority.

The Municipal Cultural Planning Partnership based at the University of Waterloo Centre for Cultural Management is leading the development of municipal cultural planning in Ontario. Many municipalities are moving to adopt this approach, which brings culture into every department and plan development in the municipality, as an equal partner and a “cultural lens” through which to see more richly the resources and potential of the community. This approach parallels the comprehensive integration of tourism into the whole planning and development context in Bruce.

#### **B) Cultural Mapping**

The Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, with its collection of artefacts and documents, and its exhibition and interpretation capabilities, is the vital centre of research and development for cultural mapping in Bruce, the essential foundational step in Municipal Cultural Planning. As a centre of community storytelling and regional cultural mapping, as well as becoming a core cultural attraction, BCM&CC can make ever-increasing contributions to the economic development of Bruce County, along with the Grey Bruce Cultural Network and the Ministry of Culture. This cultural mapping is the essential first step for both MCP and the solution to the serious gaps in the Bruce PRTD Tourism Resources Audit in Phase One.

## 11. Summary

The strategic plan is a direct outcome of considerable industry feedback, through two phases of research and consultation. It captures major themes from both the initial “workbook” phase undertaken from June 2006 to May 2007, and a focus group, many interviews, and an on-line survey in the second phase. The plan avoids being too detailed and prescriptive, understanding that individuals and work groups need to work with their collective skill sets and resources, and seek additional outside expertise as necessary.

**[[[[[[[[[[[to be completed]]]]]]]]]**