

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2025

SAUGEEN SHORES
DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

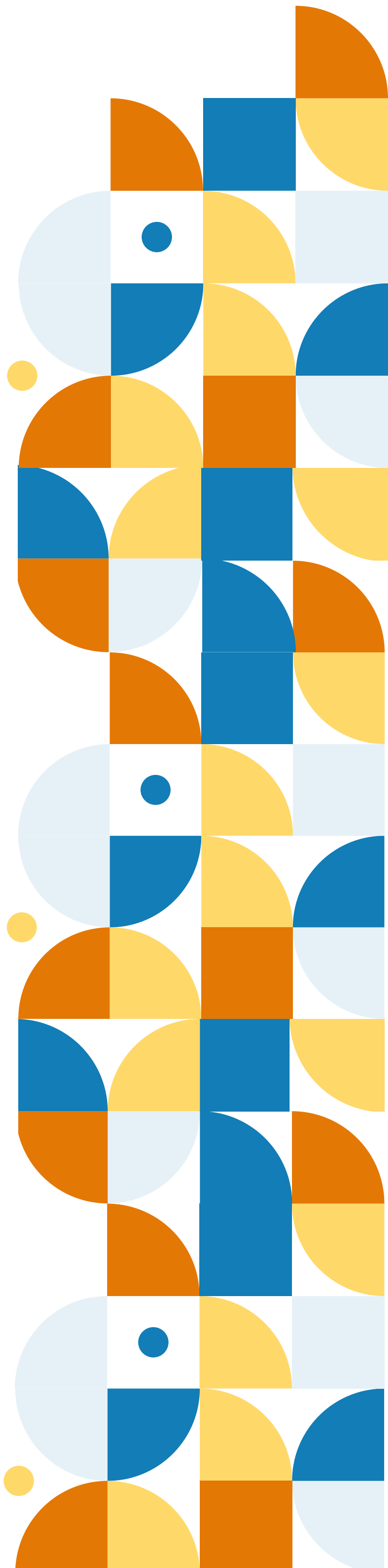


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WHAT IS DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Destination development creates a thriving, sustainable tourism industry that benefits visitors, permanent residents, and the Town of Saugeen Shores.

Destination development refers to the process of enhancing and managing a location's infrastructure, services, and attractions to make it more appealing and accessible to tourists and prospective residents.

Some of the components of destination development include infrastructure improvement, enhancing natural, cultural and existing attractions, and sustainable planning to ensure long term viability of the destination. It also includes strategic marketing and promotions, collaborative and partnered campaigns, community engagement and involvement from businesses.

It's about more than tourism. While visitors may be the initial audience, year-round tourism initiatives enhance Saugeen Shores as a place to live and invest in.

"Destination development is the process of transforming a community into a thriving, sustainable, and desirable place to live, invest in, and visit." – Roger Brooks



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prior to 2018, the Town of Saugeen Shores' tourism program was run through the Saugeen Shores Chamber of Commerce, who also managed the tourism information centre located in downtown Port Elgin, during the high season (May to October). In 2018, the Chamber changed their mandate and operating model, and the Town took over the tourism program, and sought to develop more programming to support the new wave of visitors in Saugeen Shores.

When the COVID-19 pandemic was well underway, and remote work presented long-term employment options, Saugeen Shores saw an influx of seasonal residents relocating and transitioning to permanent residents. There was strong recognition of the opportunity to shift the focus from high season (summer) tourism, to offering year-round amenities, experiences, and services to become a destination of choice - in every season.

In 2024, the Town of Saugeen Shores incorporated a division highlight in its business plan for the Planning and Development team to create a Destination Development Plan. This initiative was to be developed in collaboration with the two Business Improvement Area (BIA) associations in Saugeen Shores. The objective of this plan is to officially establish and implement a focused strategy to promote the Town as a four-season destination for both visitors and residents.

Simultaneously, tourism spending plays a key role in ensuring economic stability and diversification by generating local employment and business opportunities. It broadens the tax base and infuses fresh capital into the economy, thereby attracting more businesses and services that enhance the travel and tourism sector.

The Destination Development Plan will be fundamental in defining Saugeen Shores' role within the broader tourism and resident retention and attraction ecosystem. It aims to promote natural, cultural, and historical resources, along with the beautification and revitalization of Port Elgin and Southampton.

The plan will identify the best opportunities to improve Saugeen Shores' current resources, which will increase the economic impact of tourism. It will also explore ways to develop new tourism programs and off-season activities to attract more residents, while identifying community development projects that will enhance the overall experience for both visitors and locals.

The Plan will aim to be implemented over a five year timeline, from 2025 to 2030, reassessing at year five in 2030.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONT...

The purpose of the Destination Development Plan is to provide strategic direction to support becoming a four-season destination. Results should be tracked regularly to ensure lessons learned help improve future implementation activities be even more effective in increasing economic, social, and cultural benefits throughout Saugeen Shores.

The Destination Development Plan aligns with the Town of Saugeen Shores' 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan, Pillar 4: Fostering a Vibrant Place to Live and Visit. The Plan will help to further develop Saugeen Shores' environmental, social, and cultural vibrancy to attract new residents and visitors to the community. The Plan also supports the 2024 Business Plan, Development Services Division Highlight: Destination Development Plan. The Plan was developed in collaboration with business improvement areas and business community to promote Town as a destination for all four seasons.

In total, six (6) goals have been identified for implementation by the Town with the collaboration of the Business Improvement Areas, Saugeen First Nation, and community organizations and groups. The goals will support Saugeen Shores in becoming a four-season destination.

★ GOALS

- Goal 1: Evaluate Tourism Resources
- Goal 2: Enhance Shoulder Season Tourism
- Goal 3: Grow Local Tourism
- Goal 4: Enable Vibrant Communities Year-Round
- Goal 5: Create a Community Development Collaboration Plan with Saugeen First Nation
- Goal 6: Develop a Community Art Plan

In summary, the Destination Development Plan is a significant step for Saugeen Shores in maximizing its tourism potential and ensuring long-term economic growth and community development.



INTRODUCTION

Saugeen Shores has continued to receive an abundance of visitors throughout high seasons from May to October each year, with the shoulder seasons being November to April. For context, seasonal residents are not considered to be visitors. Saugeen Shores' economy has a reliance on tourism and visitors, and needed to develop a plan that both grows this sector and fosters current visitors to return, and ideally transition to a permanent resident.

The Destination Development Plan promotes the Town as a year-round destination, with a particular focus on the shoulder seasons—those periods just before and after the peak tourism months—and has several key objectives.

- **By attracting visitors and engaging residents** during the shoulder seasons, the Town can achieve a more consistent and stable revenue stream throughout the year, thereby mitigating the economic impact of off-peak periods.
- **Encouraging travel outside the high season** helps alleviate overcrowding, enhancing the visitor experience and reducing the strain on local infrastructure and natural resources. Tourism businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, and attractions, can better utilize their resources and staff year-round, improving operational efficiency and sustainability.
- **Promoting tourism during shoulder seasons** also allows businesses in Saugeen Shores to provide more stable employment for local workers, reducing the need for seasonal hiring and layoffs.

As the Town of Saugeen Shores becomes a four-season destination, it will attract visitors throughout the entire year, and engage residents, offering unique experiences and activities, often tailored to each season while promoting the Town's existing resources and product offerings.

The Destination Development Plan will acknowledge the roles and responsibilities of the Town and its partners for tourism delivery, supporting a vision that aligns with the goals and objectives of the Town and partners. The Plan will focus on supporting local organizations and businesses that contribute to the tourism sector in Saugeen Shores and increasing local revenue while enhancing the experience of both visitors and residents year-round.



PROFILES AND STATS

VISITORS AND RESIDENTS

Number of Visitors (2023)

*primary residence is between
40 km - 200 km

Daily visits 238,966
Unique visitors 35,926

Visitor Profile (2023)

Marital status: 61.8%
married/common law
Avg. household income: \$131,178
Education: 26.7% have a
university degree
Median age: 38.5
Visible minorities: 29.8%

Resident Profile (Pop. 15,908, 2021 census)

Marital status: 55.2%
married/common law
Avg. household income: \$103,000
Education: 26.7% have a
university degree
Median age: 46.8

Visible Minorities (2021 census)

South Asian: 57%
Chinese: 11%
Filipino: 9%
Black: 7%



TOP THREE SEGMENTS OF VISITORS IN SAUGEEN SHORES

Happy Medium

Suburban, middle-income couples and families

Who They Are

A quintessential portrait of Middle Canada, Happy Medium consists of couples and families living in the outer suburbs of large and midsize cities. The segment contains a mix of middle-income households with couples and families, maintainers aged 45 to over 75 and high school or college educations. Many households in this segment have deep roots: three-quarters of residents are third-plus-generation Canadians. Residents typically hold blue-collar or service sector jobs, and most own an older, single-detached house. With their unpretentious lifestyles, they enjoy home-based pursuits like woodworking, gardening and sewing, and outdoor activities such as canoeing and snowmobiling. To stretch their budgets, many shop at second-hand clothing and discount grocery stores.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$113,565

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD NET WORTH

\$739,536

RESIDENCY

Own

EDUCATION

Mixed

OCCUPATION

Service Sector / Blue Collar

DIVERSITY

Low

URBANITY

Suburban

FAMILY LIFE

Middle-Age Families

HOME TYPE

Single Detached

How They Think

"It is important that the country should hold a strong position in the world"

"Life in the country is much more satisfying than in the city"

"It is important to continue learning new things throughout your life"



TOP THREE SEGMENTS OF VISITORS IN SAUGEEN SHORES

New Country

Middle-aged, middle-income rural couples and families

Who They Are

Found mostly in Alberta and Ontario, New Country is one of the wealthiest rural segments, with nearly two-thirds of residents working in well-paying agricultural and blue-collar occupations. Forty percent of the maintainers are between 45 and 64 years old, and nearly 45 percent of households have children, typically of all ages. Most own comfortable, single-family homes, and often fill their driveways with power boats, ATVs and snowmobiles. Their daily routine is not unlike the one their grandparents enjoyed. For leisure, New Country members like to go hunting, fishing, and camping, or they'll stay home and do gardening or crafts. Known for their deep roots in the community, three-quarters of residents are third-plus-generation Canadians; fewer than one in ten is foreign born.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$112,209

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD NET WORTH

\$846,772

RESIDENCY

Own

EDUCATION

Mixed

OCCUPATION

Primary / Blue Collar

DIVERSITY

Low

URBANITY

Rural

FAMILY LIFE

Middle-Age Families

HOME TYPE

Single Detached

How They Think

- "I like to share my opinions about products and services by posting reviews online"
- "Out-of-Home or outdoor advertising affects how I see a brand"
- "Life in the country is much more satisfying than in the city"



TOP THREE SEGMENTS OF VISITORS IN SAUGEEN SHORES

Scenic Retirement

Older middle-income suburbanites

Who They Are

Scenic Retirement exemplifies one of Canada's dominant demographic trends, the aging population. With more than two-thirds of household maintainers over 55 years old, the segment features older married couples and singles living in the suburban neighbourhoods of smaller cities. Most members own single-detached houses and though only a third are still in the labour force, incomes are above \$100k from working in a mix of sectors. These households stay active by playing golf, strolling through parks/gardens, and attending exhibitions/fairs. Although most residents were born well before the advent of the Internet, this health-conscious segment goes online to read up on fitness while they continue to trust more in traditional media.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$112,333

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD NET WORTH

\$1,086,473

RESIDENCY

Own

EDUCATION

College / High School

OCCUPATION

Mixed

DIVERSITY

Low

URBANITY

Suburban

FAMILY LIFE

Mature Singles & Couples

HOME TYPE

Single Detached

How They Think

"I have made plans for those I love after I die"

"It is important that the country should hold a strong position in the world"

"Life in the country is much more satisfying than in the city"



POTENTIAL SEGMENTS

VISITORS AND RELOCATORS

Modern Suburbia

Multi-ethnic younger and middle-aged suburbanites

Who They Are

With one of the highest percentages of suburban households, Modern Suburbia is a magnet for younger and middle-aged, culturally-diverse families with young children. Many of these acculturated households contain first- and second-generation Canadians from Asia and South Asia. With their university and college educations, they earn upper-middle incomes that allow them to own new single-detached, semi-detached or row houses. Modern Suburbia members have crafted active lifestyles for their relatively large families. They participate in team sports, including basketball and hockey, often followed by a trip to a pizza or taco restaurant. For a splurge, they head to kid-friendly venues like amusement parks, zoos and aquariums. Many rely on their mobile phones for everything from streaming videos to entering contests.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$148,129

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD NET WORTH

\$646,092

RESIDENCY

Own

EDUCATION

University / College

OCCUPATION

Mixed

DIVERSITY

High

URBANITY

Suburban

FAMILY LIFE

Young Families

HOME TYPE

Single Detached / Row

How They Think

"My phone touches every part of my life - entertainment, organization, communication, work, banking, you name it"

"I am likely to share shopping deals or product information through shopping websites"

"I participate in sports on a regular basis"



POTENTIAL SEGMENTS

VISITORS AND RELOCATORS

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Family Mode

Suburban, financially comfortable middle-aged families

Who They Are

Comprising more than a million people, Family Mode is one of the largest segments—and growing. Home to large, suburban families living in recently built houses, this lifestyle is rooted in mid-sized cities surrounding large metro areas. Its neighbourhoods are filled with maintainers between 35 and 54, and children of all ages. These middle-aged adults have used their mostly high school and college educations to land a variety of grey- and white-collar jobs. Their upper-middle incomes allow them to purchase single-detached houses and garden or patio furniture. A typical weekend for this segment includes going to arcades/indoor amusement centres and dinner at a family-friendly restaurant.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$149,627

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD NET WORTH

\$906,462

RESIDENCY

Own

EDUCATION

College / High School

OCCUPATION

Mixed

DIVERSITY

Low

URBANITY

Suburban

FAMILY LIFE

Middle-Age Families

HOME TYPE

Single Detached

How They Think

“Out-of-Home or outdoor advertising affects how I see a brand”

“I do more entertaining at home now than ever before”

“I love sharing my vacation experiences on social media”



VISITOR TO RESIDENT JOURNEY

Apart from the economic effects of tourism, Saugeen Shores has a visitor-to-resident journey that should also be considered, linking tourism to resident attraction. The initial phase of a new permanent resident's development is represented by visitors. The most typical process for changing from a visitor to a permanent resident is depicted in the diagram below. Depending on the individual, this process could take several generations, and some steps might be bypassed. The immediate economic health and well-being of the region, as well as the municipality's long-term growth, depend heavily on tourism.



DEMAND GENERATORS

Visiting Friends and Family

Travelling to the area for the purpose of visiting friends and/or relatives (Permanent, Temporary and Seasonal Residents). A traveler that has friends or relatives as permanent residents. Saugeen Shores, by virtue of its vast number of cabins and cottages throughout the three communities, has the potential to attract many this visitor demographic. These visitors are already familiar with Saugeen Shores' more well-known attractions and events and look for "hidden gems" or unique experiences.

Food and Drink

Visitors and residents can enjoy artisanal cafes and bakeries, unique dining experiences, and local craft breweries. Often local and farm-to-table experiences are offered, promoting long-term sustainability and increasing demand for local food and beverages.

Unique Experiences

Two major outdoor events unique to Saugeen Shores are the Gran Fondo and Port Elgin Pumpkinfest. Other events and festivals in the area include the Marine Heritage Festival, Chantry Island Tours, farmer's markets in Southampton, Port Elgin, and Saugeen First Nation, the Sunset Piper, and visits from the Tall Ships.

Natural Environment and Landscape

Saugeen Shores boasts numerous outdoor attractions, including its beaches, MacGregor Point Provincial Park, and Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area. The primary draw for visitors during the summer season is the camping and beach experience. To enhance its profile within the target market, additional outdoor events during the shoulder seasons are needed.



DEMAND GENERATORS

Events and Festivities

Events play a significant role in attracting visitors, generating media exposure, raising awareness, and prompting infrastructure improvements. Saugeen Shores hosts a variety of events and festivities to draw visitors and engage residents, including markets, live music, and community events that run from May to October.

Arts and Culture

Saugeen Shores has a valued offering of galleries and artisan installations attracting a similar demographic. These assets combined with the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre, the Bruce County Playhouse, and Southampton Arts centre further define Saugeen Shores' image as a touring destination for the large visitor segment seeking a getaway from the urban centers. A focus on increasing community art installations and collaboration with Saugeen First Nation is a vital component of building on the arts, culture, and heritage in Saugeen Shores.

Shoreline Community

Saugeen Shores is renowned for its shoreline beaches and waterfronts, sailing and boating, making it a popular summer destination for visitors from larger urban centers seeking a lakeside escape.

Outdoor Recreation

Saugeen Shores provides a natural environment that offers a variety of outdoor activities for both residents and visitors. It combines experiences ranging from summer camping and beach activities to numerous trails and rugged terrains for those seeking more strenuous pursuits such as cycling, hiking, ATVing, and long-distance running. Saugeen Shores is home to over 40 km of trails.



TOURISM PARTNERS

Roles and Responsibilities

Given that tourism is one of the primary industries in Saugeen Shores, various organizations are dedicated to enhancing tourism within the community. These organizations have diverse responsibilities and focus areas, all aimed at attracting and servicing visitors while maximizing economic benefits. It is essential to understand the contributions of each group to identify any gaps and avoid duplication of efforts.

Regional Partners

Bruce County – Bruce County's role in tourism as a Destination Management Organization includes gathering and utilizing research and insights about Bruce County, tourism trends, and utilizing the data to make informed decisions and measure performance; strengthening product and community development; enhancing marketing and promotions; and empower municipal partners and advancing special projects.

Regional Tourism Organization 7 – RTO7 provides strategic and collaborative leadership to build, sustain and grow tourism in Bruce, Grey, and Simcoe Counties. They work collaboratively with tourism partners and stakeholders.

Local Partners

The Town of Saugeen Shores – The Town is vital to the community's ability to attract investment, foster capital development, and provide basic municipal services including building and planning. In addition, the upkeep of tourist-oriented facilities like trails, beaches, public rest spots, and restrooms falls within the responsibilities of the Town's Infrastructure Department.

The Saugeen Shores Chamber of Commerce – The Chamber aims to foster member engagement to offer leadership and access to opportunities. The goal of the Chamber is to empower, cultivate, and connect businesses to strengthen the economic vitality in Saugeen Shores, and drive economic growth.

Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) – The Port Elgin BIA and the Southampton BIA are the two BIAs in Saugeen Shores. The BIAs are responsible for marketing and enhancing the "downtowns" in Southampton and Port Elgin. The organization's primary goal is to draw customers to its downtown businesses, and as such, it engages in tourism marketing.



IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES

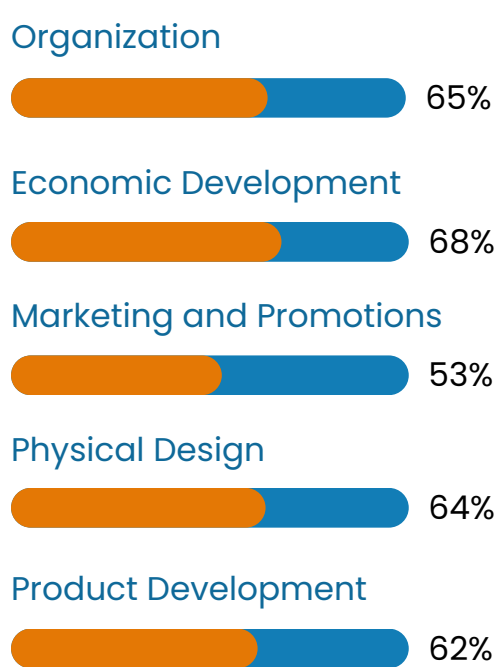
In May 2024, key downtown partners, including the Port Elgin Business Improvement Area, the Southampton Business Improvement Area, Town staff, and the Chamber of Commerce, were asked to participate in a forum to review current community development efforts and action items. Attendees provided feedback using The Characteristics of a Well-Functioning Downtown survey to help inform the Action Plans. The feedback was reviewed and used to develop both the Community Toolkits and the Destination Development Plan.

The Downtown Community Toolkits showcase Port Elgin and Southampton, their unique identities, and opportunities that if applied consistently, will provide a revitalization plan focused on the downtown core of each community.

As part of redeveloping the community toolkits, the **Characteristics of a Well-Functioning Downtown** survey was sent to key stakeholders in both Port Elgin and Southampton. The survey results helped identify gaps and opportunities in both communities as it relates to destination development for visitors and residents.

The survey is a tool developed to evaluate the function of downtown. Characteristics of a downtown are divided into five categories. Each characteristic is ranked on a scale of 1 to 5 to yield a final score out of 100.

Saugeen Shores Collective Score



★ Key opportunities

- Regular data collection is required to make informed strategic planning decisions as it relates to visitor and resident development.
- Enable vibrant downtowns year-round, ongoing events, festivities, and shopping.
- Improve the branding in the downtown areas.
- More collaboration between businesses, the Town, and community organizations.
- Improve the wayfinding and gateway signage to encourage downtown pedestrian traffic.



GOALS STRATEGIC ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

Feedback and information collected from the May 2024 Community Toolkits forum also influenced the Town's Destination Development Plan and goals of the plan.

The action items for each goal will be considered short, medium, or long-term initiatives. Completion of the goals and actions will be reassessed in 2030.

Short Term (ST) 1 year; Medium Term (MT): 1 to 3 years; Long Term (LT) 3+ years.

#	GOALS
1	Develop Long-Term Vision for Tourism
2	Enhance Shoulder Season Tourism
3	Grow Local Tourism
4	Enable Vibrant Communities Year-Round
5	Create a Community Development Collaboration Plan with Saugeen First Nation
6	Develop a Community Art Plan



GOAL 1

Develop Long-Term Vision for Tourism

Objective: Developing a long-term vision for tourism will allow the Town to plan and implement tourism initiatives that help achieve the overarching goal of Saugeen Shores being a four-season destination. Developing the vision enables sustainable tourism planning and encourages partnerships between the Town, businesses, and community groups. A long-term vision will provide a foundation for targeted and strategically aligned marketing and campaign efforts.

The subsequent goal of establishing a long-term tourism vision is to improve the visitor experience, encourage resident attraction and retention, and enhance the quality of life for residents. Developing a long-term vision for tourism helps the Town harness the full potential of tourism to drive economic growth and strengthen community well-being.



GOAL 1

Develop Long-Term Vision for Tourism

Strategic Actions	Timeline
Evaluate current tourism position, tactics, and tools, including but not limited to digital assets and tools, physical assets and tools, tourism related infrastructure, and tourism partners and collaborators.	ST
Identify gaps and areas of improvement to achieve a stronger tourism profile.	ST
Develop a tourism strategy that supports a vision that aligns with the goals and objectives of the Town and partners.	MT
Develop an engaging and user-friendly website and active social media profile to promote local attractions and events.	LT
Define visitor information centers and brand ambassadors, where tourists can get maps, brochures, tourism information offerings, and personal assistance.	ST
Develop and enhance tourism programming and material to encourage shoulder season experiences.	LT
Create a marketing plan to promote Saugeen Shores using various channels.	ST
Foster collaboration and partnerships; involve local community groups and organizations, businesses, Bruce County, RTO7, and other stakeholders.	LT
Collaborate with travel bloggers, influencers, and travel agencies to reach a broader audience.	ST
Identify funding sources and investment opportunities for tourism projects.	ST
Establish routine data visitor data collection and analysis to make informed decisions as it relates to visitor and resident development.	ST
Outcome: Tourism strategy developed.	

GOAL 2

Enhance Shoulder Season Tourism

Objective: Enhance shoulder season tourism to stimulate economic growth and ensure economic stability through a consistent flow of visitors. This approach provides a more stable revenue stream for businesses, accommodations, and community organizations, while also revitalizing Saugeen Shores' downtown areas. By capitalizing on existing assets and addressing gaps in seasonal tourism offerings, Saugeen Shores has a significant opportunity to expand its tourism market during the shoulder season.



GOAL 2

Enhance Shoulder Season Tourism

Strategic Actions	Timeline
Identify the segments and demographics of local visitors to create successful initiatives.	ST
Focus on local tourism – increase the number of tourists and visitors from within 50 kilometers of Saugeen Shores.	MT
Collaborate with the Business Improvement Areas and community organizations to plan and facilitate fall and winter experiences e.g. winter / Christmas markets and/or food festival, winter theatre performances, art gala in support of the hospital, etc.	LT
Develop programming to nurture and encourage engagement with visitors and residents e.g., electronic communications and direct mail campaigns to communicate seasonal events, activities, and programs.	ST
Collaborate with tourism and destination management organizations on joint marketing initiatives.	LT
Develop fall and winter activity guides and itineraries in collaboration with local businesses.	MT
Encourage local businesses to participate in tourism initiatives and create packages or discounts for tourists.	ST
Work with relative Town departments to ensure capacity for additional emergency services, and an increase to operations services e.g., washrooms, snow removal, waste management, etc.	LT
<p>Outcome: Increase in the number of fall and winter events and festivals; event attendance (postal codes when available); programs and marketing material developed; consistent operating hours for downtown businesses established.</p>	

GOAL 3

Grow Local Tourism

Objective: Increase the number of tourists and visitors from within 50 kilometers of Saugeen Shores. Attracting local visitors helps support more highly attended seasonal events, shopping, and seasonal attractions and experiences, boosting the local economy in the shoulder seasons. Unlike visitors from the greater urban and suburban regions including the GTA, Kitchener, Cambridge, Waterloo and Guelph, a focused effort will be put on attracting visitors from the Grey Bruce region.

Attracting local visitors may also encourage resident attraction and support local employment. Forecasted population growth and investment attraction initiatives may create future job opportunities. It will be more sustainable to employ locals and regional locals.



GOAL 3

Grow Local Tourism

Strategic Actions	Timeline
Collaborate with BIAs and community organizations to increase the number of shoulder season events, activities and programs in the shoulder seasons, attracting local tourists while benefiting residents.	LT
Create an inventory of existing demand generators e.g. historical sites, museums, seasonal events, arts and theatre, markets, recreation and outdoor activities.	ST
Develop itineraries for each season and promote through varying tactics.	MT
Develop marketing campaigns to promote shoulder season initiatives; target region of Grey Bruce within 50 kilometers of Saugeen Shores.	ST
Collaborate with Bruce County tourism, Explore the Bruce, to help reach the broader Bruce County audience.	LT
Explore editorial and advertorial opportunities to promote Saugeen Shores across Grey Bruce in regional publications.	MT
Working with businesses and the BIA, coordinate campaigns and special promotions to encourage residents and attract visitors during off-peak seasons to shop local.	ST
Outcome: Using geofence reporting, and postal code data collected from events, determine the increase in visitors to Saugeen Shores downtown areas that reside within 50 kilometers.	

GOAL 4

Enable Vibrant Communities Year-Round

Objective: Foster economic growth and quality of life by supporting local businesses, providing diverse activities, events, and amenities that can be enjoyed throughout the year. To achieve this, the Town will create dynamic, attractive, and bustling downtowns in Port Elgin and Southampton that appeal to both residents and visitors regardless of the season. Boost tourism, promote community engagement, and ensure the sustainability and resilience of our downtown areas.



GOAL 4

Enable Vibrant Communities Year-Round

Strategic Actions	Timeline
Encourage more collaboration with community organizations, businesses, and the BIAs to plan and execute year-round, ongoing events, festivities, and shopping.	ST
Support the Business Improvement Areas in achieving consistent hours of operation in each season.	MT
Review existing wayfinding and parking strategies and tools to support an increase in downtown foot traffic.	ST
Consider how the visitor information signage is supporting downtown businesses.	ST
Explore gateway landmarks / signage to direct residents and visitors to downtown experiences.	LT
Evaluate the Town's physical design in the downtowns e.g., number of bike racks, benches and picnic tables, covered areas, more waste receptacles.	LT
Working with the BIAs and community organizations, leverage the use of Fairy Lake, Pioneer Park, and Coulter Parkette for community events and experiential attractions.	MT
Work with Parks and Operations to explore the service level increase of plowing Northshore Park and the Southampton boardwalk in winter months.	LT
Investigate the service level increase of installation / facilitation of an outdoor skating rink or loop.	LT
Explore shoulder season use opportunities in Town waterfront leased facilities.	LT
Work with the Saugeen Rail Trail to investigate more tire pump stations and waste receptacles.	MT
<p>Outcome: Wayfinding and streetscaping evaluation report completed, further action identified if applicable. Consistent operating hours for downtown businesses established. Measure the number of shoulder season initiatives supported by the businesses.</p>	

GOAL 5

Create a Community Development Collaboration Plan with Saugeen First Nation

Objective: Making a focused effort to integrate SFN into both Saugeen Shores communities does three things: supports positive relationships between the Town and SFN; provides opportunities to help residents and visitors learn more about and experience the Indigenous heritage and culture in Saugeen Shores; and supports experiential tourism offerings, as well as the increase interest in Indigenous tourism offerings, a suggested need per the Destination Ontario 2021 report.

The Town will seek to work with Saugeen First Nation (SFN), SFN Independent Business Association, BIAs, and community stakeholders to develop an action plan that will guide and advance community development as it relates to Indigenous heritage and culture.



GOAL 5

Create a Community Development Collaboration Plan with Saugeen First Nation

Strategic Actions	Timeline
Review the CEDI pillar on tourism e.g. territory maps and action items to collaborate on tourism and resident engagement initiatives.	ST
Coordinate a working group with representatives from Saugeen First Nation, Saugeen First Nation Independent Business Association, Business Improvement Areas and Community organizations and groups.	MT
Collaborate in the planning and installation of various forms community art installations emphasizing Indigenous culture.	LT
Identify opportunities for integrative community events and initiatives, e.g., farmers markets, festivals, art shows, etc.	MT
With direction from Saugeen First Nation, identify ways to support and promote their community events and initiatives.	LT
Explore the Moccasin Identifier Initiative and how Saugeen Shores can implement different forms of the initiative, e.g., streetscaping, school programs, parks and trails installations. Moccasin Identifier is an Indigenous-led initiative dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding of Indigenous Treaties and history across Canada.	LT
Identify opportunities and strategies to support SFNIBA members and events.	ST
Outcome: Action plan developed.	

GOAL 6

Develop a Community Art Plan

Objective: Develop a Community Art Plan to encourage more art installations that will enhance placemaking, foster cultural development, encourage civic engagement, act as a tourism attraction, and improve the quality of life within Saugeen Shores. Promote local and Indigenous heritage and artistic culture. Strengthen community identity and pride among residents. And improve public spaces and the vibrancy of streetscapes in Port Elgin and Southampton.



GOAL 6

Develop a Community Art Plan

Strategic Actions	Timeline
Ensure alignment and cohesion with the Town’s Public Art Policy and Sign By-Law.	ST
Investigate outsourcing the development of the community art plan to a third party.	ST
Identify current strengths and challenges for implementing community art throughout Saugeen Shores.	MT
Take an inventory of current public and private art assets located in and around the downtowns of Port Elgin and Southampton, as well as outside of the downtowns, e.g., main streets, commercial/business properties, trails, parks, schools, etc.	MT
Assessment of private and public spaces and underutilized spaces that are well-suited for art installations.	ST
Develop a cohesive vision for community art in Saugeen Shores with outlined opportunities and impacts.	ST
Explore opportunities that correlate with Saugeen Shores’ strategic plan.	ST
Identify funding resources for community art projects.	ST
Encourage partnerships between various stakeholders, including the Town, the BIAs, and businesses leading to more comprehensive and sustainable community art projects.	ST
Develop an implementation schedule for the plan, set annual KPIs and develop a communications plan.	ST

Outcome: Community art plan developed.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Points

The Destination Development Plan plays a significant role in supporting stable tourism in Saugeen Shores, as well as building on the Town's reputation as a community of choice for permanent residents. It will also support employment generation, broadening the tax base, and attracting new businesses. The plan seeks to leverage the Town's natural, cultural, and historical resources while enhancing local facilities and services. It also focuses on promoting tourism to benefit local retailers, accommodations, and restaurants.

These plan's goals aim to improve the Town's tourism offerings, boost resident attraction, and foster community development.



