



Strategy, Design and Marketing for Economic Development

September 30, 2021



Draft Research and Analysis Report
Schreiber Investment Attraction

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1. Introduction

Economic development seeks improvement in the well-being of a community through policies, programs and initiatives that foster beneficial economic growth, retain and attract investment and talent, and grow and diversify the municipal tax base.

Economic development does not equate simply to the achievement of economic growth; rather, it seeks to encourage an enhanced quality of life and a qualitative balance with other community goals such as sustainability.”

The first phase of our engagement has reviewed background reports and supplementary information relating to Schreiber and the surrounding area. This included the following:

- 2011 Schreiber at a crossroads - Northern Ontario Business
- 2011 Schreiber Economic Development Strategic Plan
- 2013 Official Plan
- 2013 Community Profile
- 2016 Schreiber 3 Year Strategic Plan
- 2017 Community Revitalization Presentation
- 2018 Lake Superior North Shore Tourism-Strategy
- 2018 Prosperity and Growth Strategy for Northern Ontario
- 2019 Community EcDev Town Hall Presentation
- 2020 Budget Survey Results - EcDev and Tourism
- 2021 DRAFT Community Profile
- 2021 Superior Food Tourism Product Development Report
- 2021 Lake Superior Circle Tour Adventure Guide

In addition, further internet searches were conducted for recent news articles, announcements and actions. This included the area from Thunder Bay to Marathon.

2. Schreiber High level Competitiveness Review

Our high level competitiveness review compared Schreiber to municipalities in an approximate 100 km range along the Trans Canada Highway. These included Red Rock, Nipigon and Rossport to the west and Terrace Bay and Marathon to the east. While the population base is not evenly distributed, location along the Trans Canada Highway would indicate these communities would compete for resident and business attraction to the north shore of Lake Superior. Statistical analysis was conducted from Statistics Canada 2016 Census Data, the latest available.



Further analysis reviewed historical sectors of employment and current industry in each municipality. All communities have a history of development in natural resources and tourism with the addition of transportation in Schreiber with its genesis as a divisional office for CP Rail. All municipalities have

suffered the loss of a major employer, with Red Rock, Nipigon and Marathon in forestry and Schreiber and Marathon in mining.

Employment reflects the economic trend of a movement to service industries such as retail, education and healthcare. Significant employment has been maintained in mining (Marathon) and manufacturing (Terrace Bay) with even numbers for Schreiber in transportation and manufacturing. Higher median household incomes are reflected in those communities not totally dependent on service industries.

Housing prices do not necessarily correlate to income levels, with higher prices closer to Thunder Bay. Anecdotal information suggests the Tourism sector, including accommodation, food and beverage and retail industries have been affected negatively by the Covid pandemic, while work from anywhere and re-evaluation of lifestyle choices has led to housing price increases with a trickle effect from larger metros and Thunder Bay to smaller outlying communities.

Schreiber High level Competitiveness Review - Select Statistical Comparison								
	Schreiber	Red Rock	Nipigon	Rosspport	Terrace Bay	Marathon	Canada	Ontario
Distance from Schreiber	0	109	91	21	14	96		
Population 2016	1,059	895	1,642	65	1,611	3,273	36.1 mm	13.45 mm
Increase / Decrease 2001	-27%	-27%	-17%	-41%	-21% ¹	-35%	16.40%	13%
Median Age - 2016	50.4	48.6	48.6	54.1	50.8	44.9	40.7	41
Median Household Income	\$70,528	\$69,377	\$57,062		\$75,328	\$82,816	\$82,110	\$91,089
Private Dwellings - 2016	628	444	894	69	821	1,643		
Labour Force - 2016	570	375	655	n/a	825	1,724		
Unemployment Rate 2016	9.6	8.1	11.9	n/a	10.3	7.4	7.0	6.9
Unemployment Rate 2021-07							7.1	7.5
Housing price - 2016	\$ 88,732	\$95,078	\$114,449	n/a	\$94,112	\$98,686	\$470,661	\$535,931
Housing price 2020	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$488,000	\$594,000

¹ note - increase of 9.5% since 2011

Labour Force by Industry - Stats Can 2016						
	Schreiber	Red Rock	Nipigon	Terrace Bay	Marathon	Total
Accommodation	45	15	40	45	150	295
Administration	15	10	0	15	20	60
Agriculture	0	10	25	15	20	70
Arts & Entertainment	0	0	20	0	40	60
Construction	20	55	45	30	95	245
Education	55	50	50	80	210	445
Finance	15	10	10	15	30	80
Health Care	55	45	115	120	155	490
Information	0	10	10	10	10	40
Management	0	0	0	10	0	10
Manufacturing	85	10	15	250	55	415
Mining	10	25	20	10	415	480
Professional Services	10	10	15	25	25	85
Public Administration	35	40	60	60	115	310
Real Estate	0	10	0	0	15	25
Retail	100	50	95	60	250	555
Transportation	85	20	35	65	30	235
Utilities	10	0	45	0	10	65
Wholesale	0	0	10	0	25	35
Other	30	20	55	15	55	175
Total	570	390	665	825	1,725	4,175

3. Current Economic Sectors – Retail, Tourism, Natural Resources, Transportation

The main economic sectors in Schreiber consist of retail, tourism, transportation and nearby natural resources. The Town offers retail outlets including:

automotive sales and repairs bakery café bank convenience stores (2) dental centre discount store	fast food funeral services furniture store grocery store hardware store insurance agency	liquor store medical centre motels (10) Restaurant specialty stores (2) water retail
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Tourism

Casque Isles Trail Heritage Days Fishing	Schreiber Beach Winter Carnival Lake Superior Circle Tour	Schreiber Discovery Centre & Museum Red Chairs Christmas Tree Lookout
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Municipal facilities include:

fitness centre library	museum recreation fields	recreation centre seniors centre
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4. Analysis of regional and broader trends and drivers of investment

Our analysis of regional trends and drivers of investment included a review of various studies of Northern Ontario. Schreiber Township is located in Thunder Bay District, the Greenstone – Marathon Corridor.¹

The unique characteristics of the corridor include:²

- overreliance on natural resource exploitation. The result is a high degree of vulnerability to resource depletion, volatile world commodity price swings, the roller-coaster boom and bust cycles of the resource industries, the whims of corporate decisions, and changes in the Canadian dollar exchange rate (Dadgostar, Jankowski, and Moazzami 1992; Skogstad and Alahmar 2016).
- region’s high degree of dependence on external forces. Northern Ontario’s history of economic development powered by outside interests has resulted in a rather limited or stunted rate of local entrepreneurship compared with other regions in Canada (Robinson 2013; 2016)
- dispersed and low-density socio-spatial structure consisting of 6 larger cities, smaller, significantly less diversified, and resource dependent, and are commonly referred to as single-industry towns (Randall and Ironside 1996; Segsworth 2013). The third type consists of Aboriginal communities.
- local governance is driven by districts rather than regions and counties (southern Ontario), thereby restricting a regional government to act as an intermediary between the provincial government and the municipalities (Conteh 2015; McBride, McKay, and Hill 1993; Southcott

¹ [Northern Policy Institute – Economic Zones of Northern Ontario 2017](#)

² [Northern Policy Institute – Economic Zones of Northern Ontario 2017](#)

2013). It is therefore more difficult to design Economic Development programs with sufficient cluster aggregation to scale up sufficient density and a sufficiently large resource pool for longer term strategic economic planning and investment.

Economic development planning has traditionally centered around the larger 6 communities of Northern Ontario with the thought process of a trickle down effect to smaller communities. This disregards local communities own thinking and understanding of successful economic development.

We also reviewed the Government of Canada's 2018 Prosperity and Growth Strategy for Northern Ontario³ which identifies the economy, challenges, opportunities, support for innovation and skills development and approaches. Many of the opportunities represent challenges for smaller low density communities such as Schreiber and will require collaboration amongst communities to develop and implement.

On the positive side, identifying and marketing existing assets, the Lake Superior Marine Conservation Area, post pandemic funding for a Tourism Relief Fund⁴ and the Ring of Fire⁵ development to move forward on nickel mining for lithium batteries and other metals; presents economic potential for the corridor beyond the pulp mill and mining that is the current anchor industry in the area. It will be up to local communities to monitor and identify opportunities both individually and collaboratively.

There is a strong desire of local communities across the region to preserve their existence, reinvent themselves, and adapt to the imperatives of an ever changing economy.

It is against this backdrop we look to develop an investment attraction plan for the Township of Schreiber.

5. Real Estate

Residential

Anecdotal information gathered from realtors indicate half of Schreiber's dwellings were built pre-1960, with most of the remaining buildings built in the 1960s and the 1980s. There is a good variety of housing stock from single family bungalows and 2 storeys to duplexes and apartments. About 80% of the population of the township own their home and the remainder are renters.

Availability of housing is limited with two listings through Royal LePage and three listings through classified ads. The 2016 median price for housing was \$88,732. More up to date numbers are not available but discussions with staff, residents and realtors indicate a significant increase in pricing, reflecting other areas of Ontario during Covid 19.

The Town has undertaken a program of removing derelict buildings and currently have twelve fully serviced vacant lots for sale priced at \$3-\$5,000.

There is also a proposal for the development of an unserviced cottage subdivision at Schreiber Beach.

³ [Prosperity and Growth Strategy for Northern Ontario - 2018](#)

⁴ [Feds launch \\$500M Tourism Relief Fund – July 2021](#)

⁵ [Inside the battle to own a prized nickel deposit in Ontario's remote Ring of Fire – June 2021](#)

Royal Lepage

2 storey Brunswick \$109,900 – 3 Br 1255 sq. ft
Bungalow Bayview \$169,400 – 3 BR 1184 sq. ft.

Classified Ads

Modular \$23,000 - 3 BR - 1 BA
Duplex - \$32,000 - 3 BR 2 BA
Bungalow - \$65,000 3 BR 2 BA

Commercial

Our assessment of availability of commercial real estate consisted of online searches with real estate agents and the internet. One property was listed through RE/MAX relating to the Power of Sale of the former 8,900 sq. ft Pro Hardware site with a \$50,000 reserve bid.

A tour of Schreiber indicated vacant buildings along Winnipeg St. including the former Skafe Foods and a 2 story building next door, which have been sold and are under redevelopment or planning. There are five commercial lots identified for sale by the Township.

6. Stakeholders

Our stakeholder consultations were challenged by Covid 19 protocols; however, we undertook 3 methods of reaching out to the community:

- Online survey – 18 responses
- Direct phone calls with business, agencies of senior levels of government
- One on one interviews – Mayor of Schreiber and Council Members, business owners and locals

We also conducted a comprehensive tour of Schreiber Township, Red Rock, Nipigon, Rosspoint and Terrace Bay and conducted informal interviews with guests staying at the VOY motel.

We have attached Appendix II – a Preliminary SWOT Analysis which encapsulates feedback and findings from stakeholder consultations.

7. Investment Readiness

“It is better to be unknown with no impression than knowing you and having a bad impression.”

The above statement is the essence of investment attraction. A community must be investment ready before engaging in attracting investment. What does investment readiness mean? It is a process to evaluate and address the key attributes and assets of a community that will make them attractive both internally and externally to receive investment in resources, infrastructure and new business. It answers the question “*Why would someone invest here?*” before “*Who would invest here?*”

Schreiber has taken steps to address issues towards investment readiness. These include 5 projects to create Schreiber’s Community Revitalization Project:

- Trans-Canada beautification* and the Schreiber Virtual Railway Experience
- Downtown Revitalization*
- Waterfront revitalization
- Gateway, signage and Wayfinding
- Investment attraction and marketing (this project)

- Removal of derelict buildings within the community

* these projects are in the planning / implementation stage, and we will make further recommendations as part of our plan.

Our report will make specific recommendations towards streetscapes, placemaking, themes, collaboration etc. to enhance investment attractiveness.

We have attached Appendix I, which is a high level Investment Readiness Checklist, however part of our Investment Attraction Plan will be to discuss and recommend goals, actions and opportunities to be taken by the community and for each sector prior to initiating investment attraction. Note: the Investment Readiness Checklist is designed for all sizes of organizations and may not be applicable to all.

8. Key Sectors

Our research and initial observations point to Transportation (CP Rail), Retail and Tourism as the 3 major clusters of economic development.

The development of the Investment Plan will look to define the below areas for development and investment attraction, taking into consideration there is sector coupling that naturally occurs in local economies. This cross pollination strengthens and enhances each sector. Areas to develop include:

- Tourism – accommodation, food & beverage, attractions, events, recreation, hands on tourism experiences, market readiness, signage, customer service
- Entrepreneurship – structure to develop and promote small business, new start ups
- Real Estate – identifying and actioning opportunity for development
- Immigration – formalize a program based on existing success in attracting immigrant entrepreneurs
- Creative industries – arts and crafts, digital media, design, film, performing arts
- WFA – work from anywhere

Our plan will also comment and recommend planning and actions in areas that affect Schreiber but are somewhat beyond local control. This includes liaising and monitoring opportunities in natural resources, transportation with other communities and senior levels of government.

Retail

A gap analysis of retail is unrealistic at this time. Covid and the explosion of on-line shopping have had an unprecedented effect on retail business. A gap analysis is of no use until investment readiness and sector development and planning has occurred. Retail opportunities and their form can then be identified and promoted.

For example:

- Currently there is no “mainline” clothing store in Schreiber. As we emerge from Covid and tourism and travel improve, opportunity may exist for online retail supported by boutique brick and mortar.
- Visitor traffic may also increase opportunities for food and beverage, artifacts and souvenirs etc.

9. Summary

This preliminary report is provided to summarize qualitative and quantitative data and information gathered in our *Discovery Phase*. Consultation and consensus with the client will lead to the next phases of the project, including development of further Investment Readiness; Sector Profiles – goals, actions and opportunities; Value Propositions; Preliminary Targeting Recommendations

Appendix I - Investment Readiness Checklist

Readiness to Field FDI Leads: Leads as to prospective foreign investors are valueless unless they are acted upon in a professional and timely way by providing complete information. Quite apart from having no value, lack of prompt and full response to leads will damage the Community's and the organization's reputation. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that, prior to undertaking any proactive initiatives, resources are focused on ensuring that the response systems are in place and staff are clear on procedures.

The FDI Lead Readiness Check List (below) sets a minimum threshold to be reached before Community engages in activities that will generate FDI leads.

We have provided a checklist for a Community to review FDI attraction and retention plans, and you can assess your Community's current FDI readiness, ranking the levels:

- Green for "ready"
- Yellow for "further work required but underway"
- Red for "very low level of preparedness"

	FDI Lead Readiness Check List	G	Y	R	Comment
1	Community Profile				
2	Land & Building Profile				
3	Shovel Ready Industrial, Commercial and Research Land				
4	Business Directory				
5	Basic Marketing Collateral for FDI-Attraction				
6	Plan for Translation of Marketing Collateral, Business Cards, etc.				
7	CRM Tracking System Ready for FDI Leads				
8	CRM Tracking System With Basic FDI-Related Contacts Entered				
9	Senior Executives of Existing Foreign-Controlled and Other Prominent Businesses in Community Who Are Prepared to Meet with Prospects				
10	Contacts at Community Accounting and Legal Firms and Financial Institutions with Demonstrated Capability of Introducing Foreign Businesses to Doing Business in Canada				
11	In-House Company and Lead Generation Research Capability				
12	Ready Access to Professional Interpreters and Translators				
13	Access to HR Firms and up to date Labour Market Info				
14	Access to knowledgeable ICI Real Estate Professionals				
	Highly Desirable				
1	Website Space Designed for Site Selectors				
2	Brief Introductory Professionally Prepared PowerPoint and/or Video (Capable of Being Translated)				

Essential FDI-Related Marketing Collateral: A basic suite of marketing collateral to introduce and quickly position Community for non-Canadians is a prerequisite to engaging in FDI lead generating initiatives. Materials should be available in hard copy, electronic versions, and on the website.

Remember that the audience is non-Canadians. Some may have some general knowledge or impressions of Canada and maybe Ontario or Toronto, but most will have very limited or no knowledge of Community.

A prioritized plan for translations of the FDI-related marketing key pieces that aligns with the Action Plan should be laid out from the beginning and best quality translation services sought. The fact that most of the materials will be translated is another reason to keep the material straight-forward and factual. Flowery prose in English does not always translate well.

Give thought right from the get-go to how the material will be systematically updated so that it captures the latest statistics.

Essential FDI-Related Marketing Collateral	Comments
Community Fact Sheet - Introducing Community	Snap-shot, situating Community geographically and including population, talent pool and workforce, unemployment and participation rates, top employers, key sectors, post-secondary education and economic performance
Community Talent Profile	Post-secondary enrolment and graduates, trades and apprenticeship, and workforce statistics
Incentives	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● R&D tax incentives, and government funding for collaborative research with post-secondary institutions ● Education & Training, including wage tax credits, apprentice ship programs, co-op tax credits and Mitacs ● Brownfield incentives and downtown development
Innovation - Research & Development Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post-secondary institutions ● University and college research institutes, Canada Research Chairs and Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) funding ● University and college rankings nationally and internationally ● Innovation-oriented organizations in the Community cluster ● Funding models for R&D collaboration with universities and colleges ● Testimonials and company profiles
Transportation and Infrastructure with Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Road and rail infrastructure (including Community Junction Railway) ● Access to air and water transport ● Utilities ● Relationship to business districts, business parks, research parks and other employment lands
Real Estate Directory	Up to date listings of For Lease and For Sale properties with data sheets of all listing information
Sector Feature Sheets	Bias toward factual content versus overly-hyped narrative, providing historical context and significance, major companies, R&D, talent pool and workforce and post-secondary programs
Business Directory	Directory of all non- retail businesses in the Community. May include key contacts info, NAIC code, # employees, year started
Area, Provincial, North American MAPS	You can never have too many MAPS, concentric circles

Basic CRM Systems and Distribution Lists for FDI Attraction and Retention: As a matter of first priority before launching proactive lead generation programs, the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system used by Community Economic Development Services should be reviewed in an inclusive way with all staff in terms to ensure its functionality in anticipation of adding US and overseas prospects.

It will be important to target FDI prospects specifically, so the system should be able to identify this constituency (including some contacts physically located in Canada). Other distinctions that may need to be taken into account are:

- FDI performance metrics;
- standardized entry for FDI attraction events/projects;
- ability to sort by countries and regions (such as states) within countries; and
- coding by sector.

Economic Development Services staff may need a ready reference on abbreviations for US states and some geography grounding as to German states (Länder), Japanese prefectures (ken) and Chinese provinces (shěng).

As well, before launching proactive FDI lead generation activities, contact data for the prime FDI-related partners and support contacts whom Community Economic Development Services wants to cultivate should be entered into the CRM system. CRM is an efficient method of collaborating and communicating that can be (1) interactive and shared among like-minded members of committees or advisory groups, or (2) directly distributed individually to investment prospects, site selectors, and others.

The following is a check list of the prime FDI-related partners and prospects to have in the database from the outset:

Basic FDI-Related Contacts to Enter in CRM Database		
	Organization	Who
1.	Global Affairs Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GAC representative responsible for city / region ● Canadian Trade Commissioners in Embassies, High Commissions, and Consulates General ● Invest in Canada Bureau at GAC in Ottawa ● Sector Specialists in the Global Opportunities Bureau in GAC in Ottawa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possibly also selected sector officers in the Regional Office in Toronto that local officer reports to and works with ● Senior Trade Commissioners & Officers with Investment & sector responsibilities ● Important to know who are locally engaged and who are Canadians on posting ● Director General and Director level and specialist officers below
2.	Agricultural and Agri-Food Canada's Ontario Regional Office in Community	
3.	Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HQ in Toronto ● Regional Office 	In MEDJCT in Toronto, key functional areas are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investment Development ● International Trade ● Sector specialists

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ontario Representatives located in Canadian Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates General Outside Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marketing
4.	<p>Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business Development Branch, Community 	Investment Attraction Team
5.	Foreign Representatives based in Canada in embassies, high commissions and consulates general and in Trade Commissions and Chambers of Commerce	<p>Embassies and High Commissions are in Ottawa. Consulates General in Toronto.</p> <p>Prime candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Canadian German Chamber of Commerce and Industry ● Netherlands Consulate General, Toronto ● US Consulate General in Toronto ● British Consulate General in Toronto ● Italian Trade Commission ● Chief Representative of China Council for International Trade (CCPIT), Toronto
6.	Site Selectors	
7.	Lead Generators	
8.	Community Economic Development Advisory Committee	
9.	University Key Decision-Makers & Stakeholders, especially those associated with international linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● President ● Office of Research ● Deans and Chairs ● Research Institutes ● Research Park
10.	College Key Decision-Makers & Stakeholders, especially those associated with international linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● President ● President's Office ● Chair of Trades and Apprenticeships ● Applied Research ● Selected VPs, Executive Deans, Directors & Chairs
11.	Foreign-Affiliated Companies in Community	Aligned with BR&E/Aftercare calling program
12.	Support Organizations for Business in Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workforce, Training, BIA, VC
13.	Pan Regional Organizations	
14.	Other EcDev Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Canadian and Foreign Country cities, regions, provinces etc.

Other target segments to build and strengthen as part of the FDI-related list are:

- Real estate agents and developers actively involved with prospective foreign investors;
- Community financial institutions and legal and accounting firms that have the capacity and interest to deal with prospective foreign investors;
- Contacts at additional neighbouring post-secondary institutions
- Bilateral business groups; and
- Federal MPs, Ontario MPPs representing Community and environs and their senior staff.

Appendix II - SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Located on Highway 17 – Trans Canada Highway
- Located in a pristine, natural Canadian shield environment
- Economically priced, fully serviced real estate
- Reliable broadband service
- Access to utilities
- Access to primary healthcare and facilities
- Municipal investment in revitalization projects
- Outside private investment in existing businesses

Weaknesses

- Economic reliance on 2 large companies
- Targeted branding and marketing by Township and business
- Labour / skill shortage
- Activities for youth
- Highway and downtown curb appeal
- Uneven tax base split (commercial vs residential)
- Available housing and commercial space
- Business leadership and collaboration
- Lack of demand generators for tourism

Opportunities

- Immigration attraction
- Entrepreneurship support and promotion
- Tourism development, (accommodation, recreation, food & beverage, events, attractions)
- WFA – work from anywhere promotion
- Real estate development
- Branding and marketing collaboration for local and outside markets
- Regional collaboration (municipal, Indigenous and Metis)
- Environmental initiatives, clean tech

Threats

- Community and business leadership communication
- Lack of collaboration
- Aging and declining population
- Natural resource shutdown(s), transportation relocation
- Lack of funding
- Ongoing Covid 19 pandemic