



SCHREIBER TOURISM

Preliminary Observations and Assessment



Strategy, Design and Marketing for Economic Development

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1. Background

Canada's tourism sector is an essential contributor to the Canadian economy. In 2019, tourism was Canada's number one service export, totaling 3% of total exports, generating \$105 billion in revenue, and accounting for 1.8 million direct and indirect jobs in Canada.

Unfortunately, the Canadian tourism sector is currently one of the hardest hits by COVID-19 and has led to a shift in the way people think about travelling within and outside their own community, province and country.

An August 24, 2021, Destination Ontario Research Study states Ontario residents' sentiment to receive visitors to their community has increased by 77% over the past several months. The report suggests, when the time is right, to promote to locals and people living within Ontario as the best course of action. Ontarians are not receptive to promoting their community to the US at this time.

While a low percentage of Ontarians (25%) are not ready to travel, a further 16% are waiting for August 2022 to take a vacation. Interestingly 17% of Ontarians are looking to book a trip to a small town such as Schreiber.

Tourism is about bringing people and their money to a destination. Tourism assets include demand generators and supporting attractions.

Supporting attractions are those attractions and activities that do not bring people to the region but support people when they come: examples are accommodations, restaurants, information centers; retail and services such as banks, gyms, real estate offices.

Some Town assets are visitor ready with a few being market ready. There should be a focus on investment including infrastructure, beautification projects, downtown facade improvements or individual business's curb appeal, this investment is required. Furthermore, attention is needed for those market ready businesses to take them to the "visitor" ready status.

Below is a preliminary assessment of the current situation in the township of Schreiber, Ontario.

2. Accommodations

Schreiber has 9 roofed accommodations which equates to 96 rooms

The Rongie Lake Motel offers 5 cabins

Invest in facade of building and interior rooms

The Voy - begin renovations on second location

No local campground, however, Whitesands Lake Campground is located just 15 minutes from town. Located in close proximity is Rainbow Provincial Park Rosspoint Campground and Rainbow Falls Provincial Park.

Camping enables tourists to take a break from technology to enjoy natural attractions. Camping in Northern Ontario is known to provide a pristine view and true wilderness adventure. Ideas for activities while camping in and around Schreiber could include a visit to the Discovery Centre and Railway Museum, a day at Schreiber Beach, Casque Trail system, swimming, boating and fishing. The outdoors experiences are endless.

Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) implementation or a similar approach, adds a fee for non-residents on purchases such as in restaurants, gift shops, retail and accommodations. In November 2017, the provincial government issued the Transient Accommodation Regulation. This provided each municipality in Ontario the option to initiate a MAT tax for their community. MAT can be implemented in various forms with the community setting the rate of the tax and determining which business sectors charge the tax. Implementing a MAT tax within the Township of Schreiber could result in thousands of dollars each year in revenue that can be allocated to marketing destination. Information is provided here: [ORHMA > Government Relations > Municipal Accommodation Tax](#)

Once investments have been made by local motel owners to their properties and become “market ready,” new promotional signage should be created and installed along Hwy #17 east of Thunder Bay and west of Sault Ste Marie leading to the Town.

3. Travel Trade

Expedia, social media only

4. Meetings, Events and Conferences

The category is defined as follows:

Meetings are a one-time or repeat travel events centered around an activity or goal and often take place at hotels or convention centers.

Incentive are trips planned as a professional reward, often for performance or loyalty to the sponsoring company.

Conferences are events centered around professional learning or discussion.

Events are festivals, fairs, local celebrations.

The current infrastructure is not conducive to attracting large scale meetings or conferences. However, proper planning and infrastructure improvements to the Town could eventually lead to offering these services to groups. Location is everything and the Town is equipped to offer outdoor experiences in all four seasons.

Schreiber Winter Carnival and Schreiber Heritage Day events could be expanded to extend longer than one day to encourage overnight stays and visitor spending to the area. The Annual Fish Derby is widely popular with locals. There is a chance to attract more people to the area for this fishing derby by increasing the prize money. There is also an opportunity to create a new event around ice fishing. An

example of a successful ice fishing derby is in Big River Saskatchewan. A link to their information is here: [FishDerby2020 \(bigriver.ca\)](http://FishDerby2020(bigriver.ca))

5. Adventure Tourism, Recreation & Ecotourism

Wide open spaces, wilderness, trails

Currently, there is not enough activities within the town to create a demand to stay longer than a couple of hours, however there is opportunity to expand this area with guided tours, educational forums, etc.

6. Tourism Services

Hire a Tourism coordinator or partner with Red Rock, Nipigon, Rossport, Terrace Bay and Marathon to provide services.

Apply for the Canada Summer Student Grant [Funding: Canada Summer Jobs – Overview - Canada.ca](http://Funding:CanadaSummerJobs-Overview-Canada.ca)

Ambassador Program, Customer Service – graduates receive an engineer hat & certificate

Provide local tourism information such as accommodations, attractions, restaurants, campsites, trail system and Discovery Centre and Railway Museum to all retail outlets.

Design and create branded new brochure racks.

Partner with neighbouring communities to register and participate in Moving Tourism in Your Communities workshop hosted by Tourism Excellence North (TEN)

[Moving Tourism in Your Community from Ideas to Action Workshop - Tourism Excellence North](http://MovingTourisminYourCommunityfromIdeas>ActionWorkshop-TourismExcellenceNorth)

7. Food and Beverage

Most tourists eat three times a day which makes this category a demand generator for many cities within Canada. The fourth wave of the pandemic has had a negative effect on all dining establishments with Schreiber having limited hours or closed. Selection is extremely limited.

The lack of locally grown fruits and vegetables make it difficult to host a Farmer's market. There are no wineries and one craft beer cafe in Terrace Bay.

Fast food chain signs located within the town will draw visitors to their establishment. Once inside little to none of the menu is currently being offered. Take down redundant signs i.e. KFC, signage *inside* Robins Donuts and Pizza.

Communication between the motels and restaurants who offer a breakfast fare should increase.

Suggestions such as a tent card placed within the motel room directing the visitor to breakfast and lunch spots that are serving would be beneficial.

Bagged lunches are a sought after feature for travelers. Create opportunities for local restaurants to offer that service and advertise within the motel rooms.

Create opportunities on the main street and parks for visitors to sit outside and enjoy a meal. It can be as simple as adding picnic tables or bistro sets outside an existing restaurant.

8. Attractions

Demand generators are what attract people and why they visit your area. An example would be a Costco store, Eiffel Tower, a world renowned museum and even a ski hill. It is the reason people visit. Schreiber is lacking in demand generators that bring in larger groups of people with money to spend.

The Discovery Centre and Railway Museum will create a reason to stop. The key is how to keep a visitor in the area longer. Most traffic along Hwy #17 is not making Schreiber their final destination. However, there is an opportunity to make it a stopover for a couple of hours and overnight. Partner with the local motels to promote sites within the town such as Schreiber Beach and the Casque Isles Trail.

Make it “visiting simple” for the traveler. The first step in doing this is providing the information. Have information brochures in each motel room by creating a Welcome to Schreiber package that includes restaurants, attractions, hiking trails, beaches and more. Invite Terrace Bay and Rosspoint to participate in the package. It may create an extra night stay at the motel.

Brainstorming ideas:

- Promote the dark sky experiences at local campsites.
- Participate in the Group of Seven Trail
- Take advantage of the Lake Superior Circle Drive
- Be the “Best of something” along The LSCD
- Install bike lanes within the town. Bike rentals.
- Creating a welcoming “rest area” at the Discovery Centre and Railway Museum with shade trees, kids play area and picnic tables. This is also a great spot for the electric car charging stations.
- Home of Domenic “Hollywood” Filane. Add large Hollywood sign along Hwy #17 across from The Voy on the flat rock surface.
- Mallory Blue Park. Update play area to a themed train kids park.

9. Transportation

Transportation refers to air, land and water as it relates to tourism destinations - how people travel to and from your location. How they get there may involve more than one choice, depending on where they are traveling from and their purpose. Options for Schreiber include air to Thunder Bay and land, which the drive along the north shore of Lake Superior has advantages. Most people will be visiting by car, motorcycle or camper as they travel along Hwy #17.

Options to move people between Schreiber beach and the downtown core could be an opportunity including golf carts, vespas, bicycles and electric bikes, with downtown being a location for rentals. A railway theme would be to incorporate a trolley that travels from the Discovery Centre, downtown, the beach and back. New business opportunities at the beach area should be investigated.

Downtown Schreiber is home to a railway station.

Is there an opportunity to offer trains excursions from the station?

Fall tours are extremely popular and offer the opportunity to see Northern Ontario as it transitions from Summer to Fall.

Wildlife watching and dark sky opportunities are also potential themed tours that could be created.

Could an opportunity be presented to tour Northern Ontario by rail and have a destination along the rail line that offers overnight accommodations and northern lights watching?

Partnerships with Indigenous groups to provide Indigenous programming could be widely popular.

10. Market Ready Assessment

Provincial tourism organizations use tools to establish whether their partners are ready to accept guests. These tools are referred to as a "Market Ready Assessment." This section outlines the criteria for Visitor Ready, Market Ready and Export Ready guidelines. While some businesses in Schreiber are visitor ready, there are no examples of businesses that are Market or Export Ready.

The Investment and Development Office of the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation have developed a toolkit for operators to self-evaluate their business.

The link is here: [Tourism inc MarketReadiness workbook.pdf \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.tourism.on.ca/~/media/TO/MarketReadinessWorkbook.pdf)

11. Product Gaps And Potential Hidden Gems

- Indigenous Tourism – make an effort to continue the conversation for engagement and planning for future products and experiences with members of the Pays Plat reserve.
- Regional Tourism approach will allow for collaboration between neighbouring communities will result in better communication of tourism products and events as well as enhance the current tourism services for visitors. Continue partnership in the Lake Superior North Shore Tourism group and participate in implementing the 2018 strategy.

Accommodation Occupancy – Little room for meetings and conventions as industry and vacationers are booking the rooms. There is also a shortfall of small convention or meeting space within the Town. However, sports tourism is the opposite and need rooms usually on the weekends which works with the current market. Court more corporate hotel investment. Highway commercial visibility should be used for promotion.

- Guiding or Experiential Outdoor or Cultural Experiences – Offer guided tours. Include any heritage sites, experiences that be of interest.
- Packaged and Themed Product Itineraries – lack of clustered products or experiences based on themes. Build on the one off – Discovery Centre and Railway Museum, pristine nature.
- Unique Stays – create opportunities for yurts, glamping, treehouses, tiny houses, railcar motels
- Lack of Tourism or Lifestyle Brand – collaborative approach with five neighbouring communities.

- Improve quality of web presence – Better quality of digital travel information of tourism experiences within the area. Social media sites are not designated to tourism assets and tell more of the town’s activities. Tourism is in need of its own identity on the web.
- Parking at Schreiber beach is limited. Offer trolley rides from the Museum to the beach that include a stop at Breeze Bakery and Catering for a prepackaged picnic lunch.
- Golf cart rentals for seniors, beach goers, locals.
- Group Of Seven Tour - create an opportunity to be included in this driving route with a stop in the Town.
- Lake Superior Circle Tour – continue promoting the Discovery Centre and Railway Museum as part of the Route.
- Promote winter activities such as snowmobiling, cross country skiing and Christmas Tree viewing. Create packages with local motels. Include the Legion as the meeting spot pre and post rally.
- Create an opportunity for a community pride campaign.
An example could be to theme the town with trains.
 - downtown sidewalks looking like train tracks,
 - train signage,
 - kids train parks,
 - old town train downtown facade and menu items that are named train themes.
 Similar to the package the Kids Meals come in at McDonalds, create a box with a train theme at local restaurants and motels (could be filled with kid’s activities) if kids are checking in with parents.

12. Schreiber Tourism Investment Priorities

The below priorities will be addressed in the final report:

1. Communication & Leadership
2. Funding
3. Market Readiness
4. Destination Development
5. Tourism Investment