



LAMBAC
A Community Futures Development Corporation
Une Société d'aide au développement des collectivités



*LaCloche Manitoulin...
Let's Keep Going!*

LAMBAC'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2005 - 2010



LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Keep Going!

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PREAMBLE

In 2000, LAMBAC developed a strategic plan for economic development of the LaCloche Manitoulin region called ***LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!*** After five years of working towards the implementation of the five recommended strategies, the LAMBAC board of directors decided it was time to review the success of that first plan. It was also time to prepare a new strategic plan for economic development of the region for the next five years. This new plan has been dubbed ***LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Keep Going!***

What follows then is firstly a review and evaluation of the progress in implementing the first LAMBAC Strategic Plan. This is found in Section One of this document. It comprises the report of the consultant who was hired to conduct the evaluation and includes her recommendations for each project undertaken as well as her general conclusions.

Section Two of the document describes the process and the results of the new strategic planning exercise for the region, looking forward to the next five years. Included in this section of the report is a description of the methodology used to consult with the community stakeholders. The ideas that were generated from all the stakeholders and consultation are included, divided by economic sector. From these ideas came the final strategies recommended for implementation between 2005 and 2010.

LAMBAC will work towards the implementation of these strategies over the next five years, in conjunction with our community partners. This will require interest from private sector and/or public sector partners. The role of LAMBAC will be to act as a catalyst, a coordinator, and perhaps project manager in the initial stages of some of the initiatives. What is absolutely clear is that none of these strategies will be implemented by LAMBAC acting alone. We challenge our communities to work together with us to see what can be accomplished by 2010. Your interest and your reflections on this plan are very welcome.

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SECTION 1

An Evaluation of *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!* (2000)

Introduction

The strategic plan "*LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!*", August 2000, recommended five priority projects for implementation within the following five year period. The five priority projects were identified through extensive community consultation facilitated by a consultant and selected by a Vision Group comprised of a cross section of LaCloche Manitoulin residents.

Purpose

The purpose of Phase I of the review and update of the Strategic Plan for economic development in the LaCloche Manitoulin area is to evaluate the success to-date of the five projects selected for implementation in the 2000 study.

Objective

The objective of the Phase I evaluation is to review the five priority strategies for economic development arising from the "*LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!*" 2000 strategic plan and

- Assess the degree to which each has been implemented.
- Assess the economic impact of each to-date on the relevant community.
- Assess the work that remains to be done to fully implement each project.
- Project the feasibility of successful implementation of each over the next five years.

Vision Statement

The goal of LaCloche Manitoulin is to become a broad-based economically and socially attractive area where existing and future businesses can be sustained, while preserving the environmental, social and cultural diversity of the area.

Core Values of LaCloche Manitoulin

1. *Our Unique Identity* – evidenced by our healthy lifestyle, unspoiled environment, low crime rate, low population density, temperate climate and beautiful natural surroundings – and the importance of maintaining our environment.
2. *Our Balanced Economy* – the importance of maintaining the diversity found in our farming, resource-based industries, tourism and services sectors.
3. *Our Sense of Community* – evidenced by our levels of volunteerism, community stewardship, cultural diversity, pride of individuality and pride of ownership of family/small businesses.

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Methodology

The consultant reviewed the files on the five priority strategies, keeping in mind the Vision Statement, the Core Values of LaCloche Manitoulin and the original criteria for selection and inclusion in the strategic plan. These criteria are, as follows:

- longevity, sustainability
- employment opportunities
- regional impact, if possible
- economic viability – no on-going need for subsidy
- compatibility with core values, other ideas
- no negative environmental, social impact
- practical, do-able idea
- no duplication of another process
- time element required for development
- and the phases of the strategic plan – years 1&2/years 3,4,5

Numerous interviews with stakeholders in each of the priority areas were conducted, either in person or by telephone. Questions specific to each topic were prepared for discussion in the interviews. In addition, the questions led to general discussion from the individual stakeholder's viewpoint. A complete listing of the 35 individuals interviewed can be found in Appendix A. Interview questions are in Appendix B.

Each of the five strategies is addressed, in order of original selection. It should be noted that there was flexibility in interpretation and implementation of the strategies and this resulted in several related spin-off projects, thus enhancing the original plan.

Research Findings

Strategy Number 1: Commercial Composting

A. LaCloche Commercial Composting Project. This was selected as the first option in the strategic plan and work on the project began immediately. In December 2000, LAMBAC met with the municipalities and DOMTAR to discuss a centralized composting facility. Three of the LaCloche municipalities, Espanola, Baldwin and Nairn, along with private partner DOMTAR decided to have a feasibility study conducted to determine the costs involved, potential savings, and to research a possible site and composting system suitable to the needs of the LaCloche area. Espanola became the lead municipality. Sables Spanish Rivers Township did not join because council felt it would not benefit the taxpayers.

With funding from FedNor, Earth Tech was hired to do the feasibility study, and under the direction of Dave Caverson from Earth Tech, the Phase I study identified Nairn landfill as the preferred location for a composting facility and recommended turned windrow technology as the preferred composting method.

Phase II of the project involved the preparation of a business plan which would be used by the project partners to make a final decision on whether or not to proceed with implementation. The business plan has four components – market research, operational plan, management plan and financial plan.

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Phase III was the pilot composting project, using windrow technology. Domtar Inc. provided wood waste. The Town of Espanola provided their residents with biodegradable bags and instructions on collecting kitchen waste. They actually delivered the bags to each residence, and there were 2 pick-ups from each residence. Businesses were also encouraged to participate although there was not much buy-in from the business community. Either they did not have any wet waste or they had a regular, daily pick-up. They expected to get approximately 7 tonnes, but only received about 3-4. They were not sure of the reasons for this, although in the 90's, Espanola educated and encouraged their residents to divert waste by backyard composting. Perhaps it was successful because some people did not want to contribute their kitchen waste – it is very valuable to them. Also, the bags were too biodegradable and began to leak before the pick-up.

The actual site had a base approximately 12" deep and 100' long made of wood chips contributed by Domtar. The windrow was placed on top of the base, comprised of kitchen waste and wood waste. The loggers sweep their trucks out on the unloading platform and the waste goes to Domtar's landfill. This waste was contributed to the project, thus diverting it from their landfill. A tub grinder was brought in and the waste bark was ground with the kitchen waste. The resulting windrow was approximately 100' long, 40' wide and 9' high.

From the Earth Tech study, the optimum temperature for composting is 55 – 60 degrees, and during the process, the temperature is measured daily at a point 1 metre inside the windrow, where it should be at least 55 C on 15 separate days during the composting process, and the windrow turned frequently. It then cures for 6 months.

The project began in June and has just finished curing. The temperature has been taken every 3 – 5 days with a thermometer that resembles a metre long meat thermometer. The temperature is taken and recorded at 5 different places on the pile. From its initial size, when it took 4 hours to turn (they used a local contractor) the pile is now approximately 30' long, 12' wide and 5' high and it takes 1 hour to turn.

Dave Caverson collected 2 wheelbarrow loads and had the material analyzed to assess its compliance with provincial standards. In an e-mail dated March 21, 2005, Mr. Caverson stated, "The compost met the provincial standards for unrestricted use and has the appearance of a good quality compost. The feasibility studies indicate that composting in the LaCloche Manitoulin area is feasible."

In the Phase II Feasibility study, capital costs to get into commercial composting are estimated at approximately \$2.4 million, with annual operating costs of \$500,000. Annual waste management savings are estimated at \$250,000 for the LaCloche communities and there would also be revenue from the sale of product. In addition there are greenhouse gas credits. The feasibility study outlines several scenarios from positive to negative. Using the results provided in the final analysis the 3 municipalities and DOMTAR will have to decide on the future of commercial composting.

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In the LaCloche Central Composting Feasibility Study – Phase II, Final Report prepared by Earth Tech Canada Inc. for the Town of Espanola, financial projections were outlined in 3 scenarios.

- Scenario 1, using sales of 200,000 30L bags per year at \$4/bag, shows a positive cash balance in year 2.
- Scenario 2, using sales of 100,000 30L bags at \$4/bag, and 120,000 25L bags at \$2.50/bag, shows a negative but improving cash balance in year 3.
- Scenario 3, using bulk sales of 6,000 tonnes of compost at \$25/tonne, shows a negative and deteriorating cash balance in year 3.

During interviews with provincial government representatives, it was pointed out that other factors need to be considered, specifically nutrient management on Ontario farms. A successful composting pilot was carried out in Thunder Bay using manure. A portable unit system is being designed that could move from farm to farm. Small farms are usually efficient composters and depending on the nutrient content going into the units, farmers may have surplus product for sale, thus lowering the cost of the product to the consumer. A consortium from Thunder Bay is planning to expand the composting project. There are other examples in the agricultural community on large farming operations. In addition to manure, there are efficient uses of plastic wrap and other waste products. The provincial government has funding until 2007 for Emerging Technology and Energy projects.

Conclusion and Recommendations for LaCloche Commercial Composting Project

Phase I and phase II feasibility studies have been completed, as has a pilot project. Commercial composting is not a reality to-date, but is at the stage for partner municipalities to make an educated decision on its future. The economic impact of the study phase is minimal on its relevant community.

To fully implement commercial composting, should the municipalities decide to do so, all of the groundwork has been completed and all information is in place for the partners to make a decision.

Is it feasible? With a limited supply of waste, capital cost estimates in the \$2.4 million range, annual operating costs of \$536,000, offset by annual waste management savings of \$250,000 and sale of product (variable), and with new technology being developed, there are likely more cost efficient methods available.

The partner municipalities will have to make the final decision on the future of commercial composting after weighing all of the information available to-date, i.e.

- importance to municipalities of waste diversion
- estimated annual waste management savings
- number of jobs created
- quality of product
- market for product
- extension of life of existing landfill sites
- availability of government funding programs
- capital cost
- annual operating costs
- competition from other producers

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B Island Waste Management Project

The Island communities were not involved in the commercial composting project, but there has been activity related to composting. A research project, not directly related to the strategic plan nor arising from it, was conducted in Billings Township to investigate the rapid decomposition of fish waste and sawdust in a Bio-reactor. Gagnon Renewable Resources of Gore Bay developed the bioreactor and experiments took place at Billings Township landfill site, under the direction of Jacqueline Richard, Environmental Research Scientist.

Results from the preliminary study were positive but more detailed examination is required, according to Ms Richard. She is in the middle of analysis, and is interested in doing additional work on Manitoulin Island. She has been in contact with some Manitoulin municipalities and has had good response.

Directly related to the strategic plan and with leadership provided by LAMBAC, all Island municipalities are involved in and have committee representation on an Island Waste Management project. A Green Municipal Fund application has been completed by Dave Caverson of Earth Tech, for funding to develop an Island-Wide Waste Management plan. Terms of Reference have been completed and the study will look at diversion from landfill sites and options for disposal, such as the feasibility and cost effectiveness of one central landfill site. The new requirements for the recycling of electronic and electrical goods will also be considered.

Although all Island municipalities are involved in the project, there are concerns. Currently there are several approaches to the waste issue. Some municipalities have a good dump (and they are protective of it) with no recycling. Others have a recycling program but no dump. Some are reluctant to commit funds beyond their portion of the study costs, however, to-date, all municipalities have agreed to participate in the study.

Conclusion and Recommendation for Island Waste Management Project

There is a major trash problem and it is increasing. There is a lack of a common approach to deal with trash. None of the municipalities create enough trash to proceed on their own. It is difficult to create political will for a common approach, although by agreeing to participate it would indicate the need and acceptance of a common approach. It is a major undertaking to open or close a dump.

Continued support for the Island Waste Management project is strongly recommended. It will take 2 years to complete an Island Waste Management Plan and is estimated that, depending on recommendations, it will take up to 10 years to completion. It should be included in the 2005 strategic plan.

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Strategy Number 2: Co-operative Marketing and Branding

A. Manitoulin Branding Project

Although four of the five priority areas from the 2000 *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!* strategic plan were deemed successful during the evaluation process, perhaps this strategy achieved the highest degree of success. Interviews were conducted with manufacturers, farmers, retailers and small home-based craftspeople. Each was extremely positive with the progress to-date, and their outlook for the future was equally as positive.

Initially, a committee of Manitoulin producers and retailers worked on developing a framework for a brand. With funding from FedNor, a logo was developed to identify products made on Manitoulin, to increase the exposure and marketability of these products. An association with a Board of Directors was formed. Criteria for membership were developed. Promotional materials using the logo were purchased.

For a product to qualify for official brand labeling, it must meet certain criteria, i.e.

- The business must operate legally in Ontario
- The business must be located on Manitoulin Island
- The business owner must have primary residence on Manitoulin Island
- At least 50% of the staff involved in production must be residents of Manitoulin Island.

Also, producers apply to the Board to have their products considered for official brand status. Product applications are reviewed by a peer review committee and recommended/not recommended for approval by the Board of Directors. Once approved, the member has the right to use the Manitoulin Official Brand with the slogan "Look for it" on the approved product.

From interviews with stakeholders, it would appear that the implementation is complete. Several stated there was good response to a survey done at the ferry. Approximately 84% of respondents had seen the logo and, of those, 72% looked for products made on Manitoulin. Stakeholders would like to see yearly surveys.

The feedback from wholesale/retail was positive. They said the official brand was a big drawing card for customers. One Island retailer designated a portion of her store to products made on Manitoulin after customers requested official brand products. She sees the association as an advantage to her business and has become active as a committee member.

Everyone interviewed liked the logo. It stands out, is identifiable and easy to read. The billboards are eye-catching. The tags, labels and stickers are popular.

One of the individuals interviewed would like to see the project support production of new cottage industry products in the future, along with education and help for the craftspeople. She suggested they need assistance with markets, marketing and getting their products to trade shows off Island. She also suggested that the website could be expanded to include a catalogue site for on-line shopping.

The president of the association is confident that the association will function and grow in the future due to the strength and dedication of the membership. She is

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aware that in spite of the hype of year 1, there will be struggles and growing pains in the coming years, but there is a good working Board and community support.

Both the president and vice-president said it was too early to assess the economic impact. They should be able to have a preliminary assessment by December 2005, but will need 5 years to monitor it. They suggested there would be a bigger impact on the smaller businesses that traditionally have spent less on advertising. The big spenders, using the co-operative approach, can now do a broader range of advertising.

Those interviewed are optimistic about the future and think the producers and retailers are prepared to take the lead, perhaps under the umbrella of the Chamber of Commerce. They will have to find ways to generate funds, and there is a need for marketing and education. They feel it is a strong, talented, diversified group with good ideas, all working for the same goal.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Manitoulin Branding Project

The project has been successfully implemented and is ready to go forward on its own. Support in principle in the 2005 strategic plan would be an asset, as would government funding to continue with surveys and eventually an economic impact study.

B. Manitoulin Fine Arts Association

Not only was the Co-operative Marketing and Branding strategy as outlined in *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go! 2000* fully implemented, but there were positive spin-offs. The Manitoulin Fine Arts Association (MFAA) was incorporated. They received FedNor funding of \$10,000 for the 10th anniversary art tour, and HRSD contribution for a Job Creation Partnership (JCP) employee, office and website. In addition, they received an Ontario Arts Council (OAC) grant of \$6,000 for an art tour symposium.

As well as the art tour and symposium, the MFAA was active in other areas. They held several workshops, members' exhibitions, an open house and a fundraiser.

With members from Manitoulin Island and the LaCloche area, membership has grown to 63. According to a member who was interviewed, the MFAA has a great mix of talented artists. With the influx of new members came new ideas and a new 8 member Board of Directors, ready to move forward with their ideas and enthusiasm.

Although interviewees could not assess the economic impact of the MFAA or of the grants received, an increase in sales is the purpose of the organization for some of the members. The MFAA has raised awareness of the vibrant artist community. The website will give a wider audience. Exhibitions give greater opportunities for members to show and sell their work. Educational workshops are beneficial and the MFAA keeps members aware of opportunities to exhibit, and of how and when to enter shows. It was also suggested that the work of each professional artist shows his/her personality and skill, and sales are attributed to the individual's craft.

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C. Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network

The newest spin-off is the events network. The mission of the Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network is to promote and enhance events in Manitoulin-LaCloche for the benefit of the economy and community spirit. The website is under the banner of the existing website "Manitoulin-LaCloche, Where Spirits Come to Play".

Festivals and Events Ontario, supported by the Trillium Foundation, encourages local networking, sharing of resources, sharing of knowledge and event co-ordination. The local group has developed objectives and policies.

The purpose of an event network is for volunteer, non-profit organizations to share. This would include everything from knowledge to marketing dollars to equipment and other resources.

The Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network, although in its early stages, is soliciting members. Board structure has been determined, with co-chairs; one from the LaCloche area and one from the Manitoulin area. Currently membership is \$25. The network has received a Local Initiatives Project (LIP) grant to produce a glossy brochure that will highlight member activities in the area, while promoting the entire area.

In an interview, the LaCloche co-chair said that they have accomplished a lot in a short time. They have their Board structure, mission statement, objectives and policies, 10 members, the LIP grant and they have shared knowledge. There is still much to be done. The membership needs to grow, an inventory list needs to be compiled for the area and a calendar of events prepared. Once the equipment inventory has been prepared, perhaps other items can be purchased for the use of all members. This could lead to a storage facility in the future.

The future economic impact of the network should prove to be very positive for the volunteer, non-profit organizations and service clubs. In particular, the sharing of resources and equipment will be of financial benefit. Rather than each organization purchasing similar equipment, common ownership will benefit all. It is also possible that government funding could be available for group purchasing. This has the potential to lead to more festivals and events in LaCloche Manitoulin, thus providing a positive economic impact on the region.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Manitoulin LaCloche Events network

Both spin-off initiatives, the MFAA and the Festivals and Events Network are in the relatively early stages and should continue to receive support where needed in the 2005 strategic plan. Each is beneficial to its niche community, i.e. the arts community and the volunteer community.

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Strategy Number 3: West End Ferry

A west end ferry link to the USA was identified for **further research** and if feasible, implementation as soon as possible. A series of short ferries from Meldrum Bay to Cockburn Island to Drummond Island, where there is a ferry connection to mainland Michigan was proposed. The Strategic Plan manager visited Drummond Island, had contact with the western Manitoulin municipalities who showed little interest, and with Upper Peninsula Travel Society, who were interested in discussing the project. She also researched privately operated ferries in the Great Lakes.

A project of this magnitude would require the support of the provincial and federal governments along with a partnership of all municipalities and First Nations. The province does not consider a west end link as needed infrastructure for economic development, according to provincial government employees.

On the other hand, there are new docks proposed for Meldrum Bay and Cockburn Island, although not designed as ferry terminals. It would also require a road across private property on Cockburn Island, and therefore the buy-in of the property owner. There is an existing ferry link from Drummond Island to mainland Michigan. The venture would be costly and return on investment for private enterprise would be questionable.

Further study on the project was curtailed because Sheshegwaning First Nation was already working on a project to connect with Michigan, and rather than duplicating work, it was decided to give them the opportunity to pursue the idea. Sheshegwaning is still researching the project, although little progress appears to have been made in the 5 year period. Their Special Projects Officer is optimistic that it will be successful and will benefit both the aboriginal and non-aboriginal Islanders. There has been no decision on the route it would take, nor the type of ship it would be, i.e. a ferry, floating casino, cruise, etc.

Conclusion and Recommendations for West End Ferry Project

In the interest of positive community relations with our First Nation neighbours, there was no serious undertaking of this project, therefore no economic impact or implementation. In the 5 year period from 2000 – 2005, the First Nation proposal has made no progress. The idea of a west end link has merit from an economic impact standpoint. It would benefit the west end communities and could bring traffic from the existing ferry, benefiting the Island as a whole.

Taking into consideration the numerous obstacles including costs and finding interested funding partners, the idea of a west end link is still positive. A recommendation would be to keep the option open, as a project to support should the opportunity for government funding or support from private enterprise arise.

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Strategy Number 4: Supported Living for Retirees and Seniors

A. Manitoulin Retirement Living Project

Promotion of Manitoulin as a retirement destination was one of the five recommendations of the 2000 strategic plan, *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!*. All municipalities were invited to participate. The Town of Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands (NEMI), Central Manitoulin (CM) and Assiginack expressed interest, and Assiginack took the lead role. A committee was established with representatives of the three municipalities and LAMBAC.

In Phase I, FedNor funding was received for a market study, conducted by Care Planning Partners (CPP). They predicted an increase in population of approximately 5,000 by 2022. The majority of new residents are likely to be retirees, and CPP suggested the numbers could be increased with appropriate development and marketing initiatives. They also suggested that local demand is sufficient to justify some form of retirement living development.

Subsequent to this study, an Exit Survey was conducted in South Baymouth with funding provided by a Local Initiatives Program (LIP) grant. Nearly 4,000 surveys were completed, and 78% would consider Manitoulin as a desirable retirement destination.

From the results of the market study, developers showed little interest in an adult lifestyle community. The cost of development would be higher than the existing local market would bear. Because of this, the committee decided to bring in private partners and encourage the other municipalities and First Nations to become involved. The committee made a presentation to the Manitoulin Municipal Association (MMA) and most municipalities showed interest. The goal is to get all municipalities and First Nations as members and to increase private partner membership, particularly real estate, developers and building trades. To-date there are eleven private partners and potential interest from other municipalities. With the assistance of the private partners and the 3 participating municipalities, an excellent website has been created.

For this evaluation, the consultant interviewed municipal politicians, municipal staff and private enterprise. All were positive about the project and its future. The committee decided to market Manitoulin to young, active retirees since conditions locally support that. It may be a natural evolution to assisted living in the future, thus a job generator.

For the next phase, Central Manitoulin (CM) has become the lead municipality. CM has completed a Request for Proposals for a consultant to do a master plan to brand and promote Manitoulin in prime destinations. CM will hire an employee through the JCP to implement the master plan.

According to CM municipal staff, there is positive public support for the project. In public meetings there are many opinions but very little opposition. Studies show that young retirees have money to spend. This is good for business retention and can create jobs.

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One of the private partners is very pleased with the direction the committee has taken. He says there are far more economic benefits in attracting young retirees than in assisted living candidates. He says the people who will be attracted have money and some may continue their professions from home.

From the real estate/developer aspect, he said that Manitoulin has a poor reputation because it is difficult to get subdivision plans for development. The process for a developer can take 2 years, and the economic climate can change drastically in 2 years. Because of this, he said there is a shortage of inventory, particularly waterfront inventory.

About 70% of purchasers choose inland lakes to 30% North Channel. This is particularly true of people from Southern Ontario and the United States. The Sudbury market now makes up only 10% of purchasers. There is an inventory of building lots and existing houses. Approximately 90% of retirees want a modern bungalow with no steps, ready to move into, he said.

Another interviewee questioned the sustainability of the project from the infrastructure perspective, particularly health care and transportation. Young retirees will eventually need assisted living and if it is not available, they will likely leave, she said. She thinks the committee should be doing some public relations work to advise the local population of their plans, and they should also be strengthening the infrastructure to be prepared for the future.

The majority of those interviewed were positive and optimistic about the future of the project. They hope that eventually all municipalities and First Nations will become involved, along with private sector partners. They think that assisted living development is likely in the future.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Manitoulin Retirement Living Project

The project has been implemented, although it is still in its infancy. There is potential for a positive and substantial economic impact, probably within the next 5 years. The committee is active, committed and encouraging additional members. The website is established and a new marketing plan to brand and promote Manitoulin to young active retirees is underway. The project has been named "Retire Manitoulin".

Everyone interviewed recommended that the committee continue and expand. They all were of the opinion that the project could become self-sufficient through the membership. After the JCP employee is finished, it will require a staff person to maintain the website and respond to inquiries. It was suggested that this could be a part-time position, joined with another part-time to follow up with one of the other strategies. CM offered to host the position.

From the perspective of the evaluation, it would be recommended that the strategic plan 2005 consider the continuation of support to the Retire Manitoulin project. Within the next 5 years, it should be fully implemented with an economic impact analysis completed.

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Strategy Number 5: Aquaculture Research Facility and Demonstration Farm

A. Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association

An aquaculture research facility and demonstration farm was identified as a positive economic development project. While the final outcome is not exactly as initially suggested, flexibility was built into the entire plan.

There were several active aquaculture operations throughout the area, each working independently. The industry was growing, but there was no vehicle for the fish farmers to speak with an united voice. Through a co-operative effort with the Community Development Corporation (CDC) of the Town of Northeastern Manitoulin & the Islands (NEMI), FedNor and LAMBAC, the Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association (NOAA) was incorporated in 2002. In March 2003, Karen Tracey, with extensive experience in the aquaculture field, was hired by the NOAA Board of Directors as Program Co-ordinator.

The aquaculture industry has been faced with many challenges, according to the co-ordinator. There are 17 different pieces of federal and provincial legislation regulating the industry. Aquaculture as a new industry fell under the umbrella of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) when in fact, as a food product, it would be a better fit with the Ministry of Agriculture & Food provincially and the Department of Fisheries & Oceans federally.

Another spokesperson agreed, saying regulations change frequently. It can take an inordinate amount of time to get permits, from 3 to 4 years in Ontario, compared to 1 to 1.5 years in Nova Scotia.

Another challenge is the public perception of aquaculture in relation to the environment. The Georgian Bay Association (GBA) has been particularly vocal in their opposition to the industry.

The NOAA aggressively began a public education and public relations campaign to overcome the challenges. They are working closely with scientists from the University of Guelph, DFO, Environment Canada and Ministry of the Environment (MOE). Water quality studies are on-going and the impact of the fish farms is monitored.

The co-ordinator attends trade fairs locally as well as in other provinces and in the United States. There is a major educational display in FedNor's Northern Ontario booth at the Royal Winter Fair each year.

The NOAA has hosted meetings and tours with the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of Agriculture & Food, the local MPP, federal and provincial ministry representatives, GBA representatives, interested local residents and tourists. The NOAA has an open door policy and seizes every opportunity to educate the public, the co-ordinator said.

In interviews with fish farmers or their spokesmen, they said that the provincial government does not seem interested in expanding the industry, in spite of the number of jobs on the farms and in the processing facilities. Aquaculture has the potential to be a growth industry, providing a high quality food product with a low

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environmental impact. The critics, for the most part, are summer residents with unlimited financial resources who are not interested in economic development activities in the area.

Each farm operates as a demonstration site. Visitors are welcome. Research is ongoing through the University of Guelph, various ministries, and the Experimental Lakes project in northwestern Ontario. Local fish farmers are involved as members in the Ontario Sustainable Aquaculture Working Group, a co-operative effort by government agencies, the aquaculture industry and academia to prevent impacts to water quality and fish habitat.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association

The project has been successfully implemented. It is impossible to assess the economic impact of the industry on the local economy without a dedicated economic impact study. The number of jobs is estimated from 80 to 150, making the NOAA group a major employer in the area. That alone should give the industry the credibility it deserves. An economic impact study would not only define the number of jobs, but would also define the farm gate value of the product.

The industry requires support from the province to grow and be competitive. The local waters are a prime area for aquaculture. It is imperative that the NOAA continues as the vehicle for the industry to go forth speaking with one unified voice.

Recommendations:

- On-going government funding support for the NOAA.
- Government funding for an economic impact study of the local aquaculture industry.
- Regulations and guidelines for the industry consolidated under one ministry.
- Continuing research and public education.

The optimum goal for the NOAA would be self-sufficiency. It is unlikely this goal can be achieved in the next five years without government assistance and continued support in principle built into the strategic plan.

B. Manitoulin Streams Project

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) requested assistance with a program to rehabilitate the Manitou River and Blue Jay Creek. The project was deemed compatible with the Core Values of *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!* and since it was fish related and the strategic plan was flexible, it was addressed under the aquaculture project.

The Manitou River and Blue Jay Creek, once havens for many fish species, were suffering from the results of human activity. MNR contacted adjacent landowners and established a committee of stakeholders interested in the rehabilitation of the two waterways. LAMBAC was invited to provide project administration.

Funding was received for an engineering study to determine the areas requiring rehabilitation, and the methods to be used. Subsequently, a strategic plan outlined

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the sequence in which the work should be done over a 5 year period. In addition to funding for studies, government programs provided labour and research through Junior Ranger, Stewardship and College programs.

Initially the committee struggled to attract participants. Currently there are 14 to 15 members, all eager for the next meeting, according to one member. Also, with the work plan in place, they are ready to proceed with the first site. The landowner agreement has been signed, the engineering completed and construction tenders have been prepared. The next landowner is ready to go, and the spokesman said he expects the cycle of landowner agreement, engineering and construction will continue until rehabilitation is complete.

Again the project is in the early stages, but the future economic impact could be substantial. As fish habitat improves, so too will the sports fishery, thus impacting the tourism industry. As the river and creek are rehabilitated, the adjacent property will increase in value.

The social and cultural value should not be overlooked. Many people are participating in the project, giving it a strong local flavour and encouraging an interest in enhancing the environment. The spokesman says this may lead to a major steering group with sub committees set up for specific natural areas. He also acknowledged the professional administrative support provided by LAMBAC and their assistance in the development of the website and posters. Perhaps it is not significant compared to the work that is being carried out, but the committee has chosen a name – Manitoulin Streams – and a logo has been designed. High school students were invited to participate in the logo design process, and one of the entries was selected.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Manitoulin Streams Project

The project has developed from an unorganized group of individuals into a highly organized, progressive, tightly knit committee, working aggressively and diligently to make a positive impact on a particular environment.

It is recommended that LAMBAC continue to support and work with this group, and that governments continue to fund the rehabilitation of the Manitou River and Blue Jay Creek.

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Conclusion

The strategic plan prepared in 2000, *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!* has been a success. Four of the five priority projects have been implemented. Co-operative Marketing and Branding and Supported Living for Retirees and Seniors, renamed Retire Manitoulin, have advanced to the stage where they will soon become self-sufficient. All information is available for the municipalities involved to make an educated decision on the future of Commercial Composting. The Aquaculture Research Facility and Demonstration Farm priority has established the Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association. Under the umbrella of the NOAA, the fish farmers are involved in research, and each is open to the public as a demonstration farm. The NOAA and its members would benefit from continued government funding support. The one priority that was not implemented was the West End Ferry. A link to Michigan was proposed, using a series of short ferries, however, a First Nation was working on a similar project, and it was decided not to duplicate the work.

In addition to the implementation of the four projects, there were several equally successful spin-offs. These include the Island Waste Management Committee, Manitoulin Fine Arts Association, Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network, and Manitoulin Streams.

It is too early in the process to determine the economic impact of any of the projects, however, each should have a positive impact in the future. The Co-operative Marketing and Branding committee hope to have an indication of the economic impact of the official brand on their members by December 2005, with definite numbers in 5 years. The members of the Manitoulin Fine Arts Association are benefiting from the association, and it will give them new opportunities to market their work through the website and exhibitions. By sharing resources and equipment, the volunteers and non-profit organizations involved in the Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network will benefit.

Several people who were interviewed suggested that one municipality could host an employee who would do the follow-up on several of the projects, such as Retire Manitoulin, Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network, Official Brand, plus a general economic development role.

In an interview with a member of the LaCloche area francophone community, it appears that there is no real demand for francophone services. The fact that LAMBAC provides the service should it be requested is sufficient, in his opinion. The language of business in the area is primarily English.

In the majority of interviews, LAMBAC's role was not only acknowledged, but sincere appreciation was expressed to Board and staff. Positive working partnerships were developed by LAMBAC that otherwise would not have happened. General Manager Mary Nelder was frequently singled out for praise. Many felt the projects could not have been implemented without her guidance and administrative skills. The work of both Youth Interns who assisted with the various projects, Liam McGill and Arik Theijsmeijer, was also acknowledged.

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Also credited with much of the success in implementing the strategic plan priorities were the federal and provincial governments and the various grants received. FedNor provided the majority of funding for the studies required, and again, the support provided by FedNor was acknowledged repeatedly.

During the interview process, there were several suggestions for the next strategic plan. Common among the ideas was the need for cellular service throughout the area, with no dark areas; and high speed internet service available to everyone. It was pointed out that this was particularly important if the area is to attract young professionals, whether retirees or not. They will want to do business from their homes and will require guaranteed, uninterrupted service.

Another common theme was training for all sectors of the hospitality industry, particularly customer service and marketing. Training for the general business community was also suggested by several, such as marketing, management practices, production assistance and support during the start-up phase. In line with this and in support of existing businesses was the suggestion of using the Business Retention and Expansion program. Other suggestions included attracting light industry, waterfront development, and providing leadership in bringing the wind energy groups together.

In conclusion, four of the five priorities were successfully implemented. Many partnerships were developed. LAMBAC and its partners deserve credit for a job well done!

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SECTION TWO

Strategic Planning:

LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Keep Going! (2005)

Introduction

LaCloche Manitoulin has seen some changes since 2000. High speed internet capability has become more commonly available in the region, although there are still many pockets where this is not so. The tourist industry experienced a downturn with the incidence of SARS in 2003. The agriculture industry has been hard hit with BSE and the closing of the American border to Canadian beef in 2004. The forestry sector continues to struggle with a multitude of problems including serious competition from Asian and E.U. markets and the softwood lumber dispute with the U.S.

On the positive side, the population of the region has held steady or grown slightly since the last census, while the population in the rest of northern Ontario has been declining. Several new tourism initiatives have been successfully implemented, such as the Manitoulin to Mackinac Yacht Race, and the Espanola Paper Festival. In 2005 the Town of Espanola won the Winter Lights competition for Community Festivals. At least two new wind power developments are planned for Manitoulin Island. Another sign of a healthy economy is that in the past year, LAMBAC invested over \$1 million in loans to assist 24 businesses with start-up or expansion.

Having successfully implemented four of the five strategies arising from the 2000 strategic plan, LAMBAC's board of directors and staff initiated a new planning exercise to revise and update our strategies for economic development over the next five years. Community consultation was again a key component and this time specific efforts were made to engage the francophone community, but they met with little success. As a result, the decision has been made to conduct a separate outreach initiative in 2005-06 to identify the concerns and priorities of the francophone community.

This report outlines the process and the results of this planning exercise.

Purpose

To update the Strategic Plan for economic development in the LaCloche Manitoulin area.

Objectives

1. To review the vision statement and the core values identified in the LAMBAC strategic plan of 2000, *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!* and assess their current relevance to both language communities in the area.
2. To develop strategies for economic development of the LaCloche Manitoulin area over the next five years that are consistent with the vision and core values of the English and French population, that build on the successes of the past and the strengths that have been identified, while addressing the challenges that lie ahead.

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3. To develop a strategic plan for the implementation of no less than three and no more than six of the best strategies that have been identified in objective 4 above.

Desired Outcomes

- Renewed endorsement by community of vision and core values for the area.
- Identification of priorities for economic development in the area for next five years.
- Public endorsement by both language communities of bilingual strategic plan for economic development of LaCloche Manitoulin to 2010.

Vision Statement and Core Values

Considerable discussion took place to review our core values and the five year vision statement that originated from the 2000 strategic plan. They were revised as follows:

❖ Five Year Vision Statement:

Our five year goal for LaCloche Manitoulin is to measurably improve the financial and social conditions of our communities by empowering people to create and support profitable businesses while also respecting the environmental, historical, social and cultural features of our region.

❖ Core Values:

- *Our Unique Identity:* We appreciate the values of a healthy personal lifestyle, a balanced and beautiful natural environment, safe and vibrant community life, and our unique history in this region.
- *Vibrant Economy:* We value a diverse and developing economy and wish to encourage and support our business sectors and consumers.
- *Healthy Communities:* We appreciate a spirit of volunteer effort, community stewardship, cultural diversity, and pride in our homes, farms and businesses. We welcome the talents and creativity brought to our region by those who share our vision.

Methodology

Planning sessions

Several planning sessions took place involving LAMBAC staff and consultants to determine the best way to prepare a strategic plan for the next 5 years for the LaCloche-Manitoulin area. It was decided that a format similar to the 2000 *LET'S GO!* plan would be implemented and that tourism would be included as a sector in this strategic plan; it was not included in the 2000 plan due to the existence of the LAMBAC tourism marketing division. A vision group would be created, public consultations scheduled, and key informant interviews would take place. All this community consultation would be conducted by the consultant.

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Stakeholder Interviews

The consultant interviewed 10 stakeholders in the region. These stakeholders represented such groups as the Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce, the North Channel Marine Tourism Council, the Manitoulin Planning Board, the DSSAB, and the Manitoulin Municipal Association. Several municipal politicians were also interviewed, as was a realtor and an entrepreneur who is working in the knowledge-based economy.

Community Meetings

In addition to the stakeholder interviews, four community meetings were held for the general public. Community consultations were scheduled in Gore Bay, Little Current, Massey and a bilingual meeting was held in Espanola. A separate session for Francophone was offered but there were no takers. A copy of the advertisement flyer is in the appendix. Notices were placed in the Manitoulin Recorder, Manitoulin Expositor, The Monitor and Around and About. Also some radio coverage was generated through their newscasts. In total, 30 members of the public participated in these consultations.

Vision Group Meetings

The vision group list from the 2000 plan was reviewed and updated as several members had relocated out of the area since the last plan was completed. The list was expanded and new members were recruited to ensure the group was a good cross section of the North Shore and the Island. Consideration was given to economic sectors, geographic location; profile in the community and representation from as many groups as possible. In all, 25 people participated in the Vision Group.

Three day-long meetings of this group were held. The first meeting, in February, concentrated on the results of the 2000 strategic plan. Speakers gave brief presentations of the projects generated from that plan.

The vision group met for the second time in March and a list of potential ideas were generated across all sectors of our economy. The discussion was separated into the following economic sectors; agriculture and aquaculture, resource sector- mining & forestry, industry, service sector and tourism. The consultant took the ideas generated from this meeting and combined them with the ideas from the public consultations and the key informant interviews. A list of 32 ideas were compiled and sent to the vision group for their consideration at the next meeting.

At the third meeting in April the list of ideas was reviewed and clarified to all the members. These 32 ideas are described below in the research findings. Each vision group member selected their top ten ideas and voted by ballot. The results of the process are reviewed in the section called Top Ten.

Research

The final stage of this project involved research to determine the pre-feasibility of implementing the top ten ideas. This research was conducted by LAMBAC staff over the course of two months. The research findings were circulated electronically to all members of the Vision Group and the LAMBAC board of directors for their review and comment. Based on their feedback, the best strategies were selected to be implemented over the next five years. The strategic plan report for LaCloche Manitoulin was then written and presented to the LAMBAC board for acceptance, then released to the public in the fall of 2005.

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Community Ideas

The ideas gathered from the various public consultation sessions are summarized in this chapter. The Strategic Plan consultant summarized the many ideas into a list of thirty-two, which were presented to and further consolidated by the Vision Group. These thirty-two ideas are presented below, with brief explanations where necessary and categorized by sector.

FORESTRY SECTOR:

- 1. Value-added production of cedar and other wood products**
 - Encouraging the expansion and creation of new local industry in this field since currently the majority of cedar leaves Manitoulin Island as logs, mulch, slabs or lumber. Could involve items specifically mentioned such as model home construction, furnishings, or preserved wood foundations.
- 2. Managed Woodlot Program promotion**
 - Educating the public about this program meant for private woodlots, with the goal of better stewardship of local forestry resources and to reduce municipal tax loss due to poor management.

INDUSTRY (RESOURCE AND MANUFACTURING) SECTOR:

- 3. Training for workforce skill development**
 - With reference to public concern regarding shortages of skilled workers in Canada, and especially in Northern Ontario. Promotion of Sudbury-Manitoulin Training Board programs, opportunities and challenges. Includes forestry sector as well (for example machine operator skills).
- 4. Value-added production of stone products**
 - The high quality limestone on Manitoulin Island is largely being processed off Manitoulin and the creation or expansion of a business in this field could occur, for example decorative stone for landscaping or buildings.
- 5. Renewable Energy**
 - This could include wind, solar, biomass with biotechnology or hydroelectric power. Wind power may be a particular niche for this region. LAMBAC's role could be one of encouraging the industry and helping make investments by large companies of greater benefit to our local communities.
- 6. Retail Market Centre for local products**
 - There is an open building on Hwy 6 near Manitowaning, owned by Assiginack, which could be a retail market centre and office space for local products, potentially in partnership with the Manitoulin Branding Association and First Nations.

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7. Investment Readiness Tests for Municipalities

-A provincial self-evaluation done by municipalities measuring their openness and identifying any obstacles to attracting or welcoming investment into their communities.

8. Industrial Park Development

-Supporting ongoing efforts and developing new industrial parks to attract business to the region.

9. Commercial composting Development

-Could potentially involve added value to wood or fish waste, use of vermiculture or bio-digester technology.

10. Dry Dock / Ship Yard

-Create this business as there is an opportunity in a currently limited market for such services. Could potentially use existing unused facilities.

11. Regional Business Retention and Expansion Studies (BR+E)

-A program run through the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines with a defined structure and processes using local volunteers to survey all the businesses in participating townships and identifying areas of potential improvement. This could involve the entire region and the hiring of an intern to coordinate the project.

SERVICE SECTOR:

12. Customer Care Training workshops

-Capacity building and training programs for owners and permanent staff to use to increase the service quality of their temporary or seasonal employees.

13. Attract Federal Government Offices

-There are plans for the decentralization of 25, 000 federal public service employees to rural areas over the next years. It was suggested that there might be a possibility of attracting some of those workers to this area with targeted lobbying.

14. Improved Access to Child Care

-Concern exists that there is a shortage of available child care on Manitoulin Island, and work could be done to access promised federal funds or other currently available funds to increase this capacity.

KNOWLEDGE-BASED SECTOR:

15. Marketing region to attract knowledge-based workers and companies

-An opportunity identified due to the perception of an increase in remote offices within larger companies, independent individual consultants, and virtual assistants.

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16. Telecommunications Service Expansion and Cataloguing

-Call answer service was mentioned as lacking in the region. The cataloguing of telecommunication service availability for the use of realtors, municipalities and residents may be of benefit. May involve work to further improve cellular telephone and internet services in the region.

TOURISM SECTOR

17. Coordination of Tourism Marketing

-The development of an official rating system for accommodations to guide customers and spur quality improvements. May also involve an inventory of facilities and tour packages available to keep local operators and business people informed. There is also a need for marine tourism promotion with complimentary land based activities.

18. Development of Tourism Products

-Could involve a variety of products or packages: culinary tours, fall driving tours, winter packages, paddle tours on the Spanish River; packaging of day tours with menu selection options, theatre / live performance tours, a LaCloche-Manitoulin Road Race, a GPS Treasure Hunt, Marine Heritage development.

19. Harbour Infrastructure Development

-A potential for infrastructure such as docks, marinas, welcome centres to be developed for boaters and other tourists to the many natural harbours that are found in our area. The Spanish River was cited in particular as a provincially-noted natural feature which could benefit from such development.

20. LaCloche Foothills Recreational Trail Development

-Facilitating coordination and cooperation between municipalities, First Nations and volunteer trail user groups to create and exercise stewardship for new recreational trails set in the LaCloche Foothills. Health, community, and economic (through increased tourism) benefits could be realized. Also could potentially work in conjunction with the Ministry of Natural Resources regarding the newly created LaCloche Ridge Conservation Reserve.

21. Celebration of 400 year anniversary of Voyageur arrival in region

-Following on events in Eastern Canada in recent years, and upcoming events in Quebec, a regional celebration of the first arrival of Europeans could be organized. There is some uncertainty as to the date of this, with some sources saying 2008 and others up to 2016.

22. Development of LaCloche brand

-Branding of the region, which is not well known as "LaCloche" outside of the area, could have a number of benefits, including increasing regional identity and cooperation as well as marketing potential to attract both tourists and industry. Could also include cooperative marketing of locally made products such as has been done on Manitoulin Island.

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23. Developing Diving Industry &/or Awareness of Marine Heritage

-Given the popularity of the industry in Tobermory, there seems to be potential to develop more of a diving industry on Manitoulin Island. There may be a need to develop further knowledge of the wrecks available for divers. Past efforts have made some progress towards acquiring a large ship which could be sunk to give a boost to a potential industry.

24. Artisan Co-op Retail Location

-A shared studio space, which the Manitoulin Fine Arts Association has been investigating, would allow shared costs and increased exposure for local artists.

25. Economic Impact Analysis and Analysis of Barriers to Development of Arts and Culture

-These analyses could focus attention on and spur further growth in the important arts and culture sector.

AGRICULTURE SECTOR

26. Abattoir

-Supporting the development of this type of business was identified as crucial for alleviating the main constraint on the local livestock industry, which is already highly stressed from disease as well as trade and regulatory factors.

27. Alternative Local Marketing Options

-Suggestions of ways to enhance and support the agriculture sector through increasing the purchase of local products by local people. Examples of potential programs were given such as increased participation in farmer's markets, as well as expanded community shared agriculture programs, or creating food buying cooperatives such as good food box programs.

28. Community Collective Food Processing Facility

-For small producers or processors to work more cost-effectively in general as well as in meeting current and any new health regulations. Would complement and support the successful local farmer's markets.

29. Aquaculture Industry Development

-Includes value-added new product development as well as secondary industry development (such as food, rendering, or fertilizer).

30. Aquaculture Economic Impact Analysis

-To fill the need for quantitative information regarding this relatively new but growing industry in the region. Information would be useful for government lobbying, or acquiring public or private financial assistance.

31. Community Grain Storage

-Shared storage space such as this is common in many areas (especially in the Prairies) and could decrease costs for this industry in this region.

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32. Hemp production and/or processing facility

-An idea based on the perceived large potential for this crop and the many value-added products becoming available. Also ties into the need for innovation and new product development to assist the struggling agriculture industry.

TOP TEN

The Vision Group reviewed the list of 32 ideas and voted for the ten that they felt held the most promise for implementation. What follows is that Top Ten listing in order of popularity with the Vision Group.

1. Development of Tourism Products – culinary, winter, paddle tours on Spanish; packaging of day tours with menu selection options, theatre tours, LaCloche Manitoulin Road Race, GPS Treasure Hunt, marine heritage. (157)
2. Aquaculture Development – value-added/new product and secondary industry development (food, rendering, fertilizer) (119)
3. BR+E (112)
4. Trail Development (95)
5. Renewable Energy (89)
6. Coordination of Tourism Marketing- rating system; inventory of facilities; marine tourism with complimentary land based activities; inventory of tour packages; (84)
7. Marketing region to attract knowledge based economy (recruiting companies) (77)
8. Developing a Diving Industry (73)
9. Commercial Composting – processes to provide value to wood and fish waste, vermiculture, bio-digester (64)
10. Abattoir (63)

AMENDING THE TOP TEN LIST

Following review of the list by the LAMBAC board of directors, another priority was added to this list: *Harbour Infrastructure Development*. The board of directors felt this initiative was vital to the economy of the area but had been overlooked by the Vision Group. Thus it became a Top Eleven list. Prior to instituting the pre-feasibility research by LAMBAC staff, the list was condensed by combining similar ideas. Item 8 from the list above, *Developing a Diving Industry*, was combined with item 1, *Development of Tourism Products*. Item 9 above, *Commercial Composting*, was combined with item 2, *Aquaculture Development* because of the common element, processing of fish waste. The Top Ten list, which had become a Top Eleven list, then became in effect a Top Nine list. The research findings on these **TOP NINE** are discussed in the next section.

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PRE-FEASIBILITY RESEARCH

TOP NINE TOPIC: Development of Tourism Products

Summary of the Idea:

To increase tourism there is a great potential for more products to be developed, such as themed packages, guided tours and new events. Specific possibilities mentioned include live performance packages, culinary tour packages, winter or off-season packages, fall driving tours, paddle tours on the Spanish River, Celebration of the 400th Anniversary of the arrival of the Voyageurs to the region, a regional road race, a GPS Treasure Hunt and the development of a local diving industry.

Sources of Information:

Local Live Performance (Theatre, Dance and Concert) Producers
Local Accommodations and Restaurants
Provincial Tourism Marketing Programs and Resources
Economic Development Officers – Rob Maguire(Assiginack), Eleethea Marson (Espanola), Cheryl Kennelly (Community Development, Espanola)
Canadian Ecology Centre
Internet Research
Ontario Parks

Research Findings:

In order to more effectively market the region it would be helpful to develop specific themed or activity and accommodation packages which could be directly marketed by the partners involved or for which marketing materials could be sent to travel agents outside of the region. Partnership with yacht or bus tours could also hold great potential for marketing of new tourism products and packages. Some potential packages or new products which could increase tourism to the region are describe here, with more general recommendations also to be found below.

1. Off-season tourism packages

Off-season tourism development has long been sought as a potential boost for many of the region's otherwise very seasonal communities. There are a variety of indoor and outdoor activities available in both the LaCloche and Manitoulin regions which could be marketed as winter or off-season tourism packages.

a. With Espanola winning the 2005 Winter Lights Community Spirit Award there may be some momentum in that region for development of just this sort. Live performance such as the Espanola Little Theatre, Massey Players and concerts at the Ski Hill could be combined with snowmobiling, skiing, curling, winter festivals and parades as well as the local accommodations and restaurants. On Manitoulin, there are similar activities such as skiing, snowmobiling and curling, as well as hockey games, live performance at 4elements Studio, Abby's Dinner Theatre, and Debajehmujig, and concerts at the Manitoulin Ski Club. There are also a substantial number of art galleries, accommodations and restaurants still open in the winter which could be added to potential packages. The Community Development Officer in Espanola feels that training seminars aimed at building the capacity of local businesses to create such packages would be the best first step in this direction.

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- b. Spring / Fall - Another potential off-season activity with great potential but which is not yet marketed is bird-watching, a fast-growing activity in North America. This is especially so for Manitoulin Island which is highly rated as a bird-watching destination during the regular spring and fall migrations. Manitoulin has the same geographic advantages which make it a common migration stop for a high number of interesting bird species and which have made Pelee Island such a popular bird-watching destination. Naturalists clubs, accommodations, restaurants, nature reserves and even a new themed event could all be potential partners to market this potential new themed tourism package.
 - c. Fall driving tours – The Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership has contacted LAMBAC with an interest in marketing Manitoulin Island in this way. A fall self-guided driving tour package could take advantage of the beautiful fall colours on the Island and involve a variety of partners, though especially as a boost to accommodations and restaurants during a quieter season.
 2. Culinary Tours – There is currently a provincial initiative focused on developing culinary tourism in the province which could aid in the development of themed packages. The important *Where to Eat in Canada* has continually listed restaurants in this region in their “Top 400 Places to Eat in Canada”, with four locations on Manitoulin awarded this honour in 2005. This is an excellent basis for participation in the larger culinary tourism initiative, and local restaurants have expressed interest in a possible initiative in this area in partnership with nearby accommodations.
 3. Spanish River Paddle Tours – There are currently excellent opportunities for canoes and kayaks to enjoy the river though more infrastructure development is needed for larger craft. A local entrepreneur has begun planning a business with an interest in the great potential in offering guided or self-guided paddling tours and accommodation packages on the Spanish. Ontario Parks has recognized the potential of the area with the establishment in 2001 of the Spanish River Provincial Park, naming it a Signature Site, one of nine such areas featured in the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (1999)*. Signature Sites are identified for their range of natural and recreational values and their potential to contribute to future recreation and tourism. The area is known to have one of the largest remaining old pine forests in Ontario and is a provincially significant canoe route offering novice to intermediate river canoeing and backcountry travel on a challenging and scenic waterway. All of this information highlights the great potential for entrepreneurs and businesses to develop packages and tours, and governments and volunteer groups to continue to work to develop infrastructure to support these activities. Through local efforts the Spanish River could become the premier outdoor recreation destination it deserves to be.
 4. Live Performance Packages – There are many live performance visitor package in Ontario, some marketed by the provincial “Just the Ticket” program. Though there are a number of high-quality live performance groups in the area, many of their schedules do not overlap during the year which may make it difficult to coordinate shared packages between them. There are still some opportunities in

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- both regions for shared marketing though, such as between Massey and Espanola in the winter, or between Gore Bay, Debajehmujig and Burn's Theatre in the summer on Manitoulin, or Abby's Dinner Theatre and the Café in the Woods concerts in the winter on Manitoulin. Contact with some of the organizers of these organizations shows some willingness to pursue such a course. Again, a package could include other activities (such as golfing, boat tours or skiing), as well as of course accommodations and restaurants. Like the fall driving tours, or culinary tours, inclusion in a provincial initiative could create an increased chance of success in this area.
5. GPS Treasure Hunt – This is a potentially new product for the region. A GPS Treasure Hunt is marketed as adventure, learning about local nature and culture, and of course winning the treasures that you are able to track down. These treasures are called caches, usually a cash prize of \$200, though there are thirty-one prizes of \$5000 each available as well. Rather than being a single event it is an ongoing attraction throughout the year. The actual GPS units are becoming increasingly affordable and popular in outdoor stores in Canada. There is existing internet marketing in place (www.geocaching.com) for the Northern Ontario GPS Treasure Hunt (organized by the Canadian Ecology Centre in Mattawa) and new partners continually being added throughout Northern Ontario. Caches are sold by the Ecology Centre (five for \$1000) and are often purchased by economic development organizations or municipalities after public education sessions in a region are able to raise awareness of the event and secure local private sector partners (often in the accommodation sector).
 6. LaCloche-Manitoulin Road Race – A suggestion was made that this region could create an event based on the "Targa Newfoundland" race. Targa is a high-level event involving serious racers who compete against each other's times during certain sections of the route which are blocked off to the public. The Newfoundland event is a very successful large-scale event with \$4000 entry fees and government and corporate sponsorships. The general idea of a road race can come in any form from gimmick road rallies already in existence in the area to large-scale TARGA events, with smaller races able to be run in conjunction with other holidays or events. The idea of a road race has face value given the quality of the roads and scenery in the region.
 7. 400th Anniversary of Voyageur Arrival – Research of this idea found that the region is noteworthy in this regard in that the eastern shore of Manitoulin Island was the farthest west Samuel de Champlain ever traveled. Champlain and his assistants arrived from traveling down the French River. Further research could determine the exact year of this arrival to establish a target for a regional celebration, perhaps modeled on those in communities in the Maritimes and Quebec. The Voyageur could provide a theme for that particular year for existing events as well as being an impetus for new events (some which could become ongoing). Local history, especially that of the LaCloche Foothills, with Fort LaCloche and the alter route of other voyageurs could be tapped for their tourism value as unique local history. These celebrations could also highlight the French and First Nation populations in the region.
 8. Development of a Diving Industry – Given a recent article in the local newspaper arguing that there was a wealth of shipwrecks in the area, it may be that a

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thriving local diving industry is simply a secret waiting to be marketed. The proximity of the industry in Tobermory would largely be of benefit to the development of such an industry on Manitoulin Island, with the Fathom Five National Park attracting divers to the region. There is a great deal of local knowledge of shipwrecks in the area, such as at the South Baymouth Marine Heritage Museum, which could be harnessed to this end. Past and current efforts to bring a new large ship to sink to boost the diving industry have been stopped by the great expense of such an endeavor, though not by the lack of availability of ships. Ultimately, local champion would likely be needed to develop more diving services on Manitoulin, though tourism and development agencies may have a role in assisting with the marketing and business planning of such enterprises

Recommendations:

There are two potential routes which could be followed in pursuing this idea. One is to pursue the specific tourism products which are most feasible, the other is to attempt to generally build the capacity in the region for the creation of tourism products and packages by others. This latter approach is more clearly within LAMBAC's experience and mandate, given its history of training for business people. At the same time these two approaches are not mutually exclusive and in fact may both be necessary.

1,2 & 4. Off-season packages seem to have a great potential for partnerships and being of benefit to the local economy. The culinary tours, fall driving and live performance packages seem to have local support as well as larger programs which could support them and so seem to have a greater chance of success.

3. The Spanish River is an invaluable resource to the region which has not yet been harnessed for the benefit of the local communities. Infrastructure development along the river is a key component to the overall development of the river and should be strongly pursued by governments at all levels to allow tourism in the area to flourish. This infrastructure development would involve safe access to the river and mooring for vessels of larger size than is currently possible.

5. Participation in the GPS Treasure Hunt is recommended with its small scale, decentralized nature making it a low-risk effort.

6. The Road Race is a larger effort which would demand a number of serious community champions though it would be a worthwhile addition to the events schedule and certainly beneficial for the local economy.

7. If further research could confirm the significance of the historical events related to this region a volunteer committee could be formed to encourage and create celebrations surrounding the anniversary, potentially in conjunction with other Northern Ontario communities such as those along the French River.

8. At face value there is great potential for the development of a diving industry on Manitoulin which warrants further feasibility research.

Considering the still untapped potential for the tourism sector in this region, many of these ideas for new products should be pursued. They could be developed more effectively and efficiently by a Destination Marketing Organization than by LAMBAC or by any other currently existing organization in the region.

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Role for LAMBAC

- Hold training sessions for the tourism sector on the advantages and methods of creating attractive new packages and products, or other sessions aimed at building the capacity of the region's tourism sector.
- Facilitate and support where necessary the development and distribution/marketing of these products and packages.
- Support the development of a Destination Marketing Organization for the region.

Role of other Stakeholders

- In this region, businesses of all types have an incredible range of opportunities to develop new products and to partner to develop attractive holiday packages.
- Municipalities and business organizations have a responsibility and a need to support the tourism sector in this region, which means becoming active in the development of necessary infrastructure and supporting the development of a Destination Marketing Organization

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TOP NINE TOPIC: Value-Added Aquaculture and Composting

Summary of the Idea:

The aquaculture industry in northern Ontario is a significant employer and economic driver but operators are not able to expand their production facilities until the government regulators agree to license more cage sites. The best opportunity for expansion of the industry at this point would appear to be in the processing of fish products.

There are two distinct areas in which this may be feasible. The first is in secondary processing and packaging of fish products for the consumer market. This could take the form of pre-packaged fish dinners, packaging other kinds of fish products such as oils or fish burgers, single portion packaging, or packaging for commercial applications.

The second possibility is the processing of fish waste products. The industry produces 4.5 million lbs. of fish waste every year in northern Ontario in the form of skin, guts, bones, head and tails. Much of this is currently shipped to locations in southern Ontario for processing. Some of this product could be composted or processed through a bioreactor locally to produce liquid or solid soil amendments.

A third option exists for value-added enterprise from the aquaculture industry and that is the development of new and improved equipment specifically for cage culture operations.

Sources of Information:

Karen Tracey, Coordinator of the Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association
Mike Meeker, Dan Glofcheski, Dale Jordinson – fish farm operators, executive of NOAA
David Williamson – CAO of town of NEMI
Graeme Speirs – MIRARCO, Sudbury
Jeff Tuerk – Open Water Systems - aquaculture research

Research Findings:

1. Secondary processing. According to the NOAA, 1.5 million pounds of northern trout per year is being trucked to southern Ontario to be processed and sold. This is due to at least two factors: a surplus of fish on the market at this time and limited capability for processing in northern Ontario. A new processing plant in this area could do the primary processing of these surplus fish as well as secondary processing into higher value products for the consumer market. Such a plant could employ 6 to 7 people. Currently a private sector entrepreneur is looking into this as a potential business venture.
2. Processing of fish waste. Approximately 40% of each fish grown in northern Ontario is considered a waste product – essentially everything except the fillets. Currently this waste product is being shipped to southern Ontario, some of it for processing into secondary products such as animal feed and some of it for disposal, but most often at the cost of the aquaculture operator. Shipping costs are a significant expense for fish farm operators, and shipping fish waste, which is full of water, is inefficient at best. Even disposal of this product locally would seem to be a better option.

Recent trials conducted at the Billings landfill site by Laurentian University (2002) showed that, by using a bioreactor, fish waste and wood waste can be effectively composted in approximately 2 months to produce a high quality soil amendment. MIRARCO, the mining and industrial research organization affiliated with the University that conducted this trial, has indicated that they are interested in looking at further

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applications of the technology in northern Ontario. David Williamson, CAO of the town of NEMI, has expressed an interest in exploring the possibility of setting up a pilot project at the NEMI landfill site.

A pilot project recently completed at the Nairn Centre landfill site investigated the feasibility of composting wood waste from Domtar with organic waste from the surrounding municipalities using open windrow composting. The pilot project was monitored and evaluated by Earth Tech engineering consultants, and showed a very positive outcome. Almost no problems were experienced with smell, vectors or animals, and the resulting compost met all federal standards for commercial organic compost. It is undetermined whether this project will now move into a commercial phase, but at the very least it has shown that composting with wood waste in northern Ontario is feasible.

Attached is an article from AquaNews, produced by the University of Guelph, regarding a successful fish waste composting project in Australia.

3. Cage Culture Equipment LAMBAC is already administering funding for one research project looking at developing a better cage design that will withstand deep and rough water conditions. The next stage of this research will be to test the cage design under actual fish farm conditions with live fish. This project may eventually open up some possibilities for employment when and if the design goes into commercial production.

Recommendations:

1. Maintain contact with NOAA and assist local entrepreneurs with further research into feasibility of a production facility.
2. Investigate with fish farmers, Town of NEMI, MIRARCO the possibility of setting up a composting project using the bioreactor or other means of composting. Consider involving other municipalities or private sector partners, specifically suppliers of wood waste such as Domtar or smaller sawmills.
3. Continue to monitor progress of cage design research and look for opportunities for local production of other equipment or supplies.

Role for LAMBAC

1. LAMBAC may be able to play a role in helping to develop a partnership with the private and public sector to secure government assistance for a processing facility. LAMBAC may be able to obtain government assistance to conduct a feasibility study. LAMBAC may be able to invest in such an enterprise through our loans program.
2. Spearhead the project by calling all potential stakeholders to a meeting to discuss their interest in composting of fish waste. Investigate costs associated with project and potential sources of funding. Investigate potential markets for the finished product. Review business plan and market research developed for the LaCloche project and determine further work to be done to secure markets for the compost.
3. Work with Open Water Systems and other aquaculture operators to determine if the next phase of research is feasible and if there is a suitable location for live testing. Assist with applying for sources of funding. Assist with project administration if requested.

Role of other Stakeholders

NOAA should keep other partners informed concerning potential projects in value-added aquaculture.

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TOP NINE TOPIC: Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E)
Summary of the Idea: The BR+E program has been developed by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines based on similar programs operating successfully in the U.S. This is a model for strategic planning specifically with the business sector to identify opportunities for retention and expansion. The process uses volunteers to survey all businesses in a participating township to identify areas of potential improvement. Community involvement and support is essential for immediate and long-term implementation of recommendations.
Sources of Information: Mary Ellen Norry Car – Ministry of Northern Development and Mines Esther Taylor-Smith – Ministry of Northern Development and Mines Eleethea Marson – EDO, Town of Espanola David Williamson- CAO, town of NEMI Bill Spinney – Manager, Parry Sound Business Development Corporation Christopher Thorpe – Manager, Muskoka Community Futures Development Corporation Dan Fryia – Manager, Superior East CFDC
Research Findings: Several northern communities have successfully completed a BR+E project in recent years. The Town of Espanola hired an intern for one year through FedNor funding and launched their BR+E project in 2002. Several positive results have accrued: better communication between the community and the council, immediate action on a few 'red flag' issues such as by-laws related to business licensing, a community beautification project and a municipal signage project. Some of the recommendations arising from the BR+E exercise have been incorporated into the mandate of the Community Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC) for implementation and monitoring. Other recommendations have been less successful after funding ended for a Business Advocate position. The EDO stressed the importance of council making a long-term commitment to implementation of the recommendations. Muskoka proceeded with a BR+E exercise in 2004 that was slightly different than the prescribed model. Because the region of Muskoka encompasses three fairly large population centers (Bracebridge, Huntsville and Gravenhurst) and three largely rural areas, it was decided by the CFDC to try running BR+E projects concurrently in each of the three 'urban' centers. That experience was so successful that they are now planning three BR+E projects to run concurrently in the three rural areas in 2006. Although there was one coordinator and one leadership team, each community recruited its own volunteers and generated its own red flag issues and recommendations for action. It is too soon to comment on the long-term ramifications of the project.
Recommendations: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make contact with Mayors/Reeves, councillors and Clerks of municipalities that might be interested in running the BR+E project in their community.2. If interest exists, consider running BR+E exercises concurrently in two or three Manitoulin communities that have a critical mass of businesses. If this experience is successful, plan to run BR+E projects in the LaCloche municipalities or elsewhere on the Island in future years.

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3. Make application to the internship program offered by NOHFC for a BR+E program coordinator.

Role for LAMBAC

LAMBAC's role will be as project lead for the duration of the project, with the exception of the implementation phase. The General Manager will meet with local municipal councils to present the concept and solicit their participation. LAMBAC will apply for an intern to work exclusively on this project for one year. The intern will work as the project coordinator out of the LAMBAC office and be supervised by the General Manager. The project coordinator, with the help of the General Manager and the BR+E consultant of MNM, will recruit community members for one Leadership Team to oversee the project and one Task Force team for each participating community. LAMBAC will provide a computer and office space and will take responsibility for production of reports, rental of meeting space and all other costs associated with the project. Wherever possible LAMBAC will assist the communities with implementation of the recommendations arising from the project.

Role of other Stakeholders

- The BR+E consultant from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines will take responsibility for overseeing the entire project, advising and training the project coordinator.
- Municipal councils from each participating municipality will take responsibility for sending no less than one representative from council to sit on the Leadership Team and the Task Force. Council will be expected to fully participate in the public meetings to hear the recommendations in phase four of the project, and will make a commitment to implement as many of the recommendations as possible over the course of the next few years.
- It is anticipated that the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation will provide funding through their Youth Internship program for a project coordinator for one year.
- Business owners and other community members from each of the participating communities will be expected to participate in the project on several levels: as volunteer interviewers and interviewees; as members of the Leadership Team and the Task Force; in whatever capacity they are able, to assist with the implementation of the recommendations arising from the project in their community.
- Chambers of Commerce and Business Improvement Associations will be asked to participate by having representation on the Leadership Team and on the community Task Force. It is expected that these groups will play a vital role in implementing the recommendations arising from the project.

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TOP NINE TOPIC: LaCloche Foothills Recreation Trail Development

Summary of the Idea:

With the current planning process for the new LaCloche Ridge Conservation Reserve nearing completion and upgrades to both motorized and non-motorized recreational trails planned, there is a great potential for economic (especially from tourism), community and health benefits to the development of recreational trails. The LaCloche Foothills make an beautiful and challenging setting for potential trails and is therefore in this regard a major untapped resource for the region.

Sources of Information:

Ministry of Natural Resources LaCloche Ridge Conservation Reserve Planning Team
LaCloche Trails Association
Whitefish River First Nation
Ontario Trails Council
Town of Espanola Economic Development Officer
Trans Canada Trail Maps

Research Findings:

This is another idea which has been in the public awareness for years but which seems to currently have both momentum and community support from a number of directions. The main challenge for any trail development outside the Conservation Reserve is rising liability insurance costs. A current province-wide lobby effort by municipalities and other groups, and recent statements by government officials give some hope in somewhat alleviating this obstacle. The LaCloche Trails Association's goal is to develop a number of non-motorized trails in the LaCloche region, with their current priorities the development of a rail trail from Espanola to Little Current, and potential stewardship opportunities in the new LaCloche Ridge Conservation Reserve. Whitefish Falls First Nation and the Town of Espanola are also interested in partnering to develop similar trails. The Town of Espanola is aware of their potential for economic development and being especially interested in developing smaller loop trails which bring users back to the town proper.

There is also a section of the Trans-Canada Trail between Massey and Sudbury which is shown on maps but which has not been completed. This is an opportunity for further development and funds for trails in the area. On Manitoulin Island, there are also volunteer groups which have some experience in creating recreational trails, adding to the capacity and interest in trail development in the region. Guided trail hikes also have the potential to increase the appreciation of local geology and history, especially of the escarpment and the contrast between the Manitoulin and LaCloche regions, and the historical contribution of the Voyageurs in the LaCloche region. It will also be important to collaborate and connect trails with the Voyageur Trails Network Northwest of the LaCloche Region.

A marketable trail network in the scenic LaCloche Foothills could be not only a major visitor attraction but also a great recreational resource for locals. Larger trails like those being considered by local groups will demand partnerships between volunteer groups, Municipalities and First Nations which could be greatly facilitated by the involvement of a regional development organization such as LAMBAC. Volunteer groups could also benefit from the organizational assistance which LAMBAC or other development agencies or officers could offer to make sure the trails are properly constructed and

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maintained to maximize tourism and minimize potential future problems.

Recommendations:

Ultimately, high quality recreational trails connecting the entire region across the North Shore and down across Manitoulin Island should be pursued by communities, government and volunteers at all levels, as they would be an incredible visitor attraction and a boost to the tourism sector, a resource for new tourism products such as racing or fundraising events, would bring community benefits such as a even greater appreciation for and pride in the local natural heritage, as well as lowered local health costs as a benefit of the use of non-motorized trails.

Role for LAMBAC

-Assist volunteer groups and regional collaborations in their organizational development, government relations, and planning and fundraising capacity.

Role of other Stakeholders

-Municipalities and volunteer trail organizations should financially and organizationally support and participate in the development of recreational trails, especially in the LaCloche Foothills Region.

-Volunteer groups and other collaborations with the goal of developing recreational trails in the region should make use of the resources available from larger organizations to bring whatever expertise is needed to the region, such as from the Ontario Trails Council, Rails to Trails projects, Rainbow Roots in Sudbury and the Voyageur Trail Network as some examples.

-Provincial and federal governments should reconsider their decision not to fund trail development in light of rising health care costs and a growing concern about obesity.

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TOP NINE TOPIC: Renewable Energy

Summary of the Idea:

With the provincial need for new sources of energy and the government's commitment to have 10% of all energy generation from renewable sources by 2010 there may be an opportunity to attract new developments in this sector. This could include power sources such as wind, solar, biomass, landfill gas, hydroelectric, or biotechnology.

Sources of Information:

- Ontario Sustainable Energy Association
- Nottawasaga Futures Wind Energy Summit – Various Presentations
- Ontario Provincial Wind Energy Requests For Proposals and Technical Session Reports
- Ontario Provincial "Guidelines to Developing a Biotechnology Cluster Innovation Plan"
- Terms of Reference for the Development of a Biotechnology Plan for the Region of Sudbury
- Various *Municipal World* publications with articles regarding wind energy

Research Findings:

The Wind Energy Industry

The renewable technology with the greatest current regional, provincial and national momentum is wind power. Given the geography of the region (with both shoreline and escarpment features) as well as current private developments underway here this is also the technology which seems to hold the greatest potential for Manitoulin and LaCloche. Noticeably worsening air pollution involving a record number of smog days in Ontario in 2005 by June of the year, as well as Canada's push to meet its Kyoto targets, are both giving even greater impetus to the need for a switch to renewable energy. Therefore in wind power there seems to be an excellent opportunity for the Manitoulin LaCloche region due to government and private sector momentum, sufficient and growing public support and a unique local resource niche.

Ontario's greatest wind resources lie along the shores of its largest bodies of water, the Great Lakes and James and Hudson's Bay. While these resources are not as great as those in the Canadian prairies or Maritimes, a similar situation has not stopped Germany with only a moderate wind resource from currently approaching 20,000 MW of wind power production and leading the world in renewable energy production overall (50% of all energy in Germany comes from renewables). To put these numbers into context, with Germany estimated to be adding approximately 76 MW of wind power production per week, production there in only a few years would be sufficient to provide Ontario with more energy just from wind than it could possibly use.

What is more important than having the best wind resource is the public policy environment surrounding wind energy production in any particular jurisdiction. The Ontario government has greatly improved its support for wind energy in the last two years, offering its third request for proposals in July 2005. They are expected to exceed their first production target of 1,350 MW of renewable power by 2007, given their offering of 1,595 MW worth of RFPs to date. Each RFP contract signed guarantees the wind developer a fixed purchase price for a fixed term, making the developments financially secure and attractive for investors and lending agents. While it is often stated by renewable energy experts that the RFP system is slower in developing the industry than

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when the government simply states that it will buy (at a fixed term and price) as much renewable energy power as can be produced, the current aggressive series of RFPs are a significant step forward.

Wind and solar energy are also able to be produced at the smaller individual home or farm level, though there are currently regulatory barriers which seem to make this a costly and long process to get approval for to sell any surplus electricity back into the grid. Regulations are expected to improve in this area in the coming years, likely with funding of some sort which may make it an opportunity to assist local farmers or others becoming more energy self-sufficient or make a profit by selling power to the grid.

The government is also exploring a strategy to encourage very small community and agriculture-based renewable energy projects. The Ministry of Energy is consulting widely on the options available and expects to make an announcement later this year. This may be another opportunity for our local communities with assistance to initiate their wind or other renewable energy projects.

Local Opportunities, Benefits and Challenges

Hailed often as having great potential for rural economic development, wind energy is less impressive than other industries of a similar size because of the small number of jobs necessary and the agricultural zoning of the land used. Their benefits are still significant though. According to a study using Statistics Canada data, and published in a recent issue of *Municipal World*. The average municipal taxes from wind energy in Canada amounts to almost \$9,760 / installed MW of wind power per year. An example close to home gives an estimate of \$1.0 million per year in annual tax revenue for the current 200 megawatt Prince Wind Energy project in Sault Ste. Marie (plus \$700,000 in municipal taxes during the construction phase). Annual municipal tax benefits can also be complemented by revenues from planning approval fees. According to the same study, further local economic benefits are estimated as 1.64 short term construction jobs, .3 long-term operational jobs and \$4,646 in royalties for landowners for each MW of wind energy installed. With each large turbine taking an average of one half of an acre of space, royalties for farmers are considerably more lucrative than any displaced crops.

While not having a comparable job creation or property tax revenue as other large industries, wind energy also does not have comparable negative environmental impacts and so would of course be consistent with the vision statement of this strategic plan. The existence of wind energy developments not only bring badly needed income to farmers and rural municipalities, they also help reduce pollution levels by easing the need for energy production from traditional polluting sources in other areas.

With studies consistently showing no need for concerns regarding noise pollution, the killing of birds, light pollution or interference with airplane traffic, and new blade designs solving previous problems with ice build up, the only real local negative impact might be the visual one. This is of course subjective, yet even the greatest supporters of wind energy may have trouble with large wind farms in highly visible places, especially if local development continues at its current pace. For this reason, it is up to developers, municipal planners, the public and economic development agencies such as LAMBAC to work to make sure that developments have sufficient public consultation and education, contribute benefits to the local community as much as possible, and

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Another challenge to the local wind energy industry is the capacity of the grid. This is a concern throughout Ontario but is a somewhat greater concern in Northern Ontario. Technical sessions show that between Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie the electricity distribution lines have only 100 MW of capacity. In terms of voltage, the lines along the North Shore have a 230 kV capacity while the lines running from Espanola to Manitoulin have a 115 kV capacity. The government is studying these issues in consideration of necessary upgrades to the grid, in anticipation of well of the many new hydroelectric projects planned across Northern Ontario. Meanwhile current capacity will be stretched even by current planned developments on Manitoulin Island.

There are a growing number of government funds available for purchasers and developers of wind power, both federally and provincially. The Green Municipal Fund has been accessed by other regions and municipalities to develop feasibility studies, or subsidize or attract development in relation to wind power and this could also be done in this area.

Landfill Gas

Contingent on the development of new regulations and the continuation of the planned Manitoulin Island-Wide Waste Management Plan, there may be potential in this region for a regional landfill to produce energy from the burning of the methane gasses it produces. Two similar projects have had funding recently announced for them, though economies of scale may remain an obstacle in this area.

Biotechnology

The Northern Centre for Biotechnology and Clinical Research (NEUREKA) on behalf of the Northern Ontario Biotechnology Initiative (NOBI), has developed a Biotechnology Plan for Sudbury region. Biological engineering of this sort may have a potential to increase the efficiency of energy production in various biogas or biomass burning applications. Despite this, the innovation plan guidelines identifies a need for a local capacity (of large industry and research institution) necessary to attract the biotechnology cluster which LaCloche Manitoulin does not contain. There may be some potential though for the involvement of the pulp and paper or developing mining sector in this region to participate in conjunction with larger initiatives in the Sudbury region.

Recommendations:

-Considering the great potential for wind power production in this region, local participation should be strong in the consultation processes for current developments to ensure that they set a precedent of being of maximum benefit to the local community. The visual impact of these developments will be considerable and there is the potential for a public backlash against them which could hurt the prospects for future development.

-Given the strength of the tourism sector, especially on Manitoulin Island, developers should minimize the visual impact of any farms to avoid future problems. Also in this regard, the idea of a education / information centre attached to a new wind farm, potentially in conjunction with Science North, would be an excellent addition to the many excellent tourist attractions already existing in the area.

-Municipalities and development agencies should educate themselves on potential zoning issues which may arise, and assist landowners in their dealings with developers

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to assist them in gaining a favourable land lease contract.

-As public policy in relation to this sector evolves, new opportunities should be considered for community or cooperative ventures which may become feasible. Support should be given by governments at all levels to these potential community-based projects which could have wide-ranging economic, environmental and community benefits.

Role for LAMBAC

-Continue to watch public policy developments in this sector and consider partnerships with the private and public sector to attract or assist in the development of this sector as public support allows. This may involve acting as a local liaison between the public and developers.

-Play a role in supporting applications to attract further wind farm or electricity infrastructure development if requested

-Offer financial assistance or planning support to developers interested in creating a tourist information centre or attraction in conjunction with their wind farm.

-Overall, as with the development of any new industry in the region, work to make renewable energy development remain consistent with the vision statement and core values of this strategic plan.

Role of other Stakeholders

-Private sector wind developers have a responsibility to make wind farms as beneficial to the local community as possible. Including, if they are directly retailing their electricity, the provision for local purchase of a portion of the electricity produced, as well as the hiring of local contractors and staff for operation of the farms where possible, favourable land lease agreements, and cooperation with municipalities in their zoning processes.

-The great potential for wind energy developments in the region, if the electricity infrastructure is maintained, of renewable energy may be another pressure which could accelerate the need for a review of the Manitoulin Official Plan, in order to control where possible the development of large wind farms.

-Municipalities should review their own zoning bylaws in order to understand the dynamics of renewable energy developments and be sure they are educated in their dealings with developers. If willing they could also take the lead in attracting further developments of this nature to the area when possible, in the interests of economic development.

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TOP NINE TOPIC: Co-ordination of Tourism Marketing

Summary of the Idea:

Several ideas were suggested that could be classified under the heading of co-ordination of tourism marketing. These included:

1. developing a rating system for local resorts, restaurants and accommodation;
2. developing a directory of tourism attractions and facilities;
3. providing hospitality training to local service industry employers
4. matching promotion of marine tourism with complimentary land based activities;
5. collaborating to promote the Island on the ChiCheemaun.

Sources of Information:

Manitoulin Tourism Association, Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce, North Channel Marine Tourism Council, Ray Harding, Marcella Beange, Eleethea Marson.

Research Findings:

Manitoulin needs a more collaborative approach to tourism marketing. Most parts of the province have Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), funded mainly by their local governments, that take responsibility for regional marketing initiatives. There are many good models in other areas that could be copied. Manitoulin LaCloche would benefit from such an organization but past attempts to develop one have not been successful.

In the absence of a DMO for Manitoulin LaCloche, responsibility for tourism marketing on Manitoulin is shared by the Manitoulin Tourism Association, the North Channel Marine Tourism Council and the Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce. In LaCloche it is left to each individual municipality. Tourism marketing is not specifically part of the mandate of LAMBAC, except as it fits into our community economic development program.

Some tourism resources already exist on Manitoulin. The MTA produces both *This Is Manitoulin*, a glossy lure magazine that is distributed mainly outside the region, and *Manitoulin's Magazine*, a broadsheet format publication that highlights local attractions and activities during the summer, available free on the Island. In past years, the Chamber of Commerce has produced a directory of accommodations on the Island which was available on their website and printed and distributed to businesses that are Chamber members, although it is not available this year.

LAMBAC produced a directory of businesses and services in the region in the late nineties which is in the process of being updated. LAMBAC has also offered hospitality training sessions periodically through the years but nothing in the past five years. The regional Economic Partners meeting that is held biannually, sponsored by LAMBAC, MNDM and Waubetek, focused this year on the need to make better use of the time people spend on the ChiCheemaun for tourism marketing. To this end, the MTA and the Chamber of Commerce have collaborated, with financial assistance from LAMBAC, to hire a program coordinator to develop programming to promote the area during July and August 2005. It is hoped funding can be found to make this an ongoing position.

The North Channel Marine Tourism Council has produced a full-colour binder highlighting all the marinas in the North Channel and made it available to all its members. They have also produced a brochure that is widely circulated. Currently they are involved in a project to research a marketing model that would include ancillary services, land-based activities and other points of interest. The goal of this model would

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be to promote the North Channel area as a tourism destination. The study will result in a business case for the model, which will then be used to encourage partnership participation in actual development of the marketing tool. LAMBAC has provided funding for this research.

Recommendations:

1. LaCloche Manitoulin municipalities should make another attempt at establishing a regional Destination Marketing Organization. All of the ideas listed above would be part of the mandate of such an organization. An organization that specializes in tourism and operates on a regional scale would be more effective in establishing a rating system.
2. The two excellent publications of the MTA should each have greater distribution. They do a very good job of providing listings of attractions, accommodations, restaurants, activities and events on the Island, and to a lesser extent, the LaCloche area. Many local businesses complain that they cannot obtain enough copies of *This Is Manitoulin* to meet the demand from their customers. Complaints were also heard that the supply of *Manitoulin Magazine* was gone long before the summer was over. There should also be an effort made to include more content and businesses from the LaCloche area.
3. Local businesses need a resource that they can keep on their premises that will allow them to be able to quickly answer tourists' questions. A simple directory of tourist-related businesses by category with a contact phone number for each would be helpful.
4. LAMBAC's business directory needs to be made more accessible. It should be posted on the website and kept updated as much as possible. Local businesses should be made aware that it is available electronically.
5. Hospitality training should be offered for all employers in the service industry. It is recommended that the program content be geared to a "train-the-trainer" model and that employers themselves take the training so they can ensure all their staff provide a high standard of service.
6. The North Channel Marine Tourism Council should partner with municipalities, organizations and private enterprise to produce a high-quality marketing piece that connects marinas and water-based travelers with land-based activities and amenities across the entire region.
7. The MTA and Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce should partner with the Owen Sound Transportation Company and jointly apply to federal and provincial funders for assistance with creating an ongoing position of program co-ordination aboard the Chi Cheemaun.
8. In the absence of a Destination Marketing Organization, the LaCloche municipalities should work to develop a joint tourism strategy.

Role for LAMBAC

- Update and post business directory on website. Notify all LaCloche Manitoulin businesses and organizations when this is done.
- Print a simple directory of tourist-related businesses before tourist season each year and make it available to all businesses in the region.
- Organize and host hospitality training for all service-related businesses in the region.

Role of other Stakeholders

- Municipalities should spearhead the development of a Destination Marketing Organization.

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- MTA should increase the distribution of their promotional pieces
- Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce and the MTA should spearhead a project to obtain ongoing funding for a program coordinator aboard the ChiCheemaun.
- MTA, Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce, North Channel Marine Tourism Council, LaCloche Foothills Association, Espanola Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network, and all other stakeholders should urge their municipalities to develop and fund a Destination Marketing Organization.
- LAMBAC and government funding bodies should support the development of a Destination Marketing Organization for LaCloche Manitoulin.

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TOP NINE TOPIC: Development of Knowledge-based Economy

Summary of the Idea:

With the economy of developed nations such as Canada increasingly moving towards the production of knowledge and using information technology, and companies increasing their use of consultants and remote offices to cut costs and commuting, there is an opportunity to increase the flow of knowledge-based industry to this area with targeted marketing of the high-quality lifestyle in this region.

Sources of Information:

- Local Realtors
- Knowledge-based workers having already settled here
- Internet and Cellular Service Providers
- Local Economic Development Officers
- Net Central Community Connections Network

Research Findings:

Service Availability

High-speed internet service currently covers much of the Manitoulin-LaCloche region, with only the most rural settings unserved. Cellular service is much more lacking and is therefore more of a priority for service expansion. There are concurrent pan-Northern Ontario studies to identify all gaps in cellular and broadband internet service being considered for funding with the aim of filling all identified gaps in the next few years. As well, FedNor has been granted a further \$10 million in 2005 to bring high-speed internet access to all communities in Northern Ontario. Amtelecom is very interested in expanding their high-speed internet service in this area. Therefore the actual services are generally sufficient and soon to be improving, justifying the idea of marketing the area in this manner.

Realtors state that about half of people looking to purchase homes and settle in the region feel that high-speed internet access is a make-or-break factor. For businesses this service is even more important. Realtors state that they would find a map showing internet and cellular service availability in the region to be very helpful in satisfying their customers.

A Marketable Lifestyle?

It is clear from direct experience and many surveys that there is a marketable and attractive lifestyle or quality of life in the LaCloche and Manitoulin regions, with small communities, spacious and pristine environments, and relative proximity to Southern Ontario. Market studies and visitor surveys have been conducted in the past five years in connection with the Retire Manitoulin project which arose out of LAMBAC's 2000 Strategic Plan.

There are already a small number of businesses and remote offices settling in this region and much like the influx of retirees to the area, some targeted marketing could increase this flow. Knowledge-based workers are often younger, earning good wages and have families. They would also be individuals and families who value the lifestyle we currently enjoy and choose to be here because of it. All of these reasons would tend to make knowledge workers be excellent additions to strengthen our communities.

Marketing of the region's lifestyle to knowledge workers may be difficult due to the decentralized nature of this sector, but this is no different than the retiree market so

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should not be an impediment. There are associations of remote and virtual workers appearing in Ontario as well as internationally which could be targeted (such as the Canadian Telework Association which suggests 1.5 million people work in Canada as virtual assistants (administrative assistants who work independently from home). A broad-based marketing campaign featuring the region's lifestyle could also achieve a measure of success.

There is interest by the Retire Manitoulin committee in not just targeting retirees but expanding somewhat to market the lifestyle here to anyone interested in settling LaCloche-Manitoulin, such as teleworkers.

Recommendations:

1. Support initiatives to increase telephone, internet and cellular services in the region.
2. Begin marketing the area's lifestyle to teleworkers and companies through the Retire Manitoulin project.
3. Create an inventory of services currently available for the use of municipalities and realtors.

Role for LAMBAC

1. Lend its support to any initiatives which could expand telecommunications services in the region.
2. Continue the participation in the Retire Manitoulin project and encourage it to expand to attract knowledge-based workers and remote offices in conjunction with its current marketing campaign.
3. Could create or facilitate the creation and distribution by others of an inventory/map of service availability, potentially through its Local Initiatives Program Funding or on its own website.

Role of other Stakeholders

- A study should be funded to identify gaps in service and to fill those gaps in Northern Ontario.
- The Retire Manitoulin committee can take the lead in beginning to market the area to attract knowledge-based workers and remote offices in conjunction with its current marketing campaign.

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TOP NINE TOPIC: Local Abattoir
Summary of the Idea: The development of a local abattoir (licensed livestock killing facility) would give producers an opportunity to market directly to consumers, decrease transportation costs and overall improve profitability.
Sources of Information: Farming organizations (for example the Ontario Farmer's Association and the Ontario Cattlemen's Association) Local Farmer's and Farmer's Associations
Research Findings: All agricultural organizations and farmers polled agreed that the lack of an abattoir is the main constraint for the important local livestock industry which makes up largest portion of the local agricultural sector. The main barrier to developing a local facility is the difficulty in attracting private sector investment. The federal government may begin to invest in more local facilities given the current BSE crisis, in order to increase Canada's kill capacity and circumvent the current border restrictions on the shipment of live cattle.
Recommendations: Seek the required private sector investment to develop a local abattoir.
Role for LAMBAC: To provide support through its lending program or through letters of support which emphasize this idea in this Strategic Plan's Top Ten List of Priorities.
Role of other Stakeholders: Local Agricultural Associations can also lobby governments, work to attract investment or cooperatively invest.

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TOP NINE TOPIC: Waterfront Infrastructure Development
Summary of the Idea: Expansion of harbour and marina facilities to allow towns to offer full service to boaters in the North Channel and Spanish River. This would encourage boaters to stay longer and to take advantage of some of the attractions and services on-shore.
Sources of Information: Margaret Hague – Gore Bay waterfront development committee Gary Kessel – Friends of the Spanish River Association Austin Hunt – Billings waterfront development John Hodder – NEMI waterfront development Dave Ham – Assiginack waterfront development North Channel Marine Tourism Council Product Development Initiative report
Research Findings: Currently the towns of Gore Bay and Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands, as well as the townships of Billings and Assiginack and the unincorporated township of Dawson are working on waterfront development projects. These projects are all at different stages but they have one thing in common. The town councils recognize the vital importance of capturing market share offered by the increasing traffic in the waters around Manitoulin Island and LaCloche. The North Channel Marine Tourism Council has been working actively to promote this area for marine tourism since 1987. In a recent report on Product Development they list Goal 3 – <i>“to become an active participant in the retention and expansion of area infrastructure”</i> . They define this infrastructure as breakwaters, dock facilities, boat launches, recreation areas, marine services and related businesses/activities. These facilities either do not currently exist or they have deteriorated and become outdated. To compete with other ports of call in the Great Lakes, this area needs to invest significant amounts of money into waterfront infrastructure. Provincial and federal levels of government have also recognized this as a priority issue, as some funds have already been committed for planning in Billings, Gore Bay, Assiginack and NEMI. FedNor has also committed dollars towards the implementation of the Gore Bay waterfront development.
Recommendations: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Local municipalities with harbours should continue to pursue projects to refurbish and expand their waterfront infrastructure and facilities.2. Higher levels of government should support local communities in their efforts to refurbish and further develop their waterfront infrastructure.3. The North Channel Marine Tourism Council should work actively with their municipal partners and other tourism organizations in the LaCloche Manitoulin region to assist with the development of new waterfront infrastructure and the promotion of this region as a prime marine destination.
Role for LAMBAC: LAMBAC should support local communities in their efforts to refurbish and further develop their waterfront infrastructure.
Role of other Stakeholders: Local, provincial and federal governments should make waterfront infrastructure development a priority in this area, and should work closely with the North Channel Marine Tourism Council to ensure that the area is competitive in meeting boaters needs.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION 1 – 2000 Plan

1. Commercial Composting

- a) LaCloche Composting Project – no further action at this time
- b) Island Waste Management Plan – continue to support this initiative

2. Cooperative Marketing

- a) Manitoulin Branding Association – continue to support this organization as needed. Conduct an economic impact assessment in the future.
- b) Manitoulin Fine Arts Association – continue support in principle
- c) Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network – support further development of this initiative

3. West End Ferry – keep this option open and look for partners

4. Supported Living for Retirees

- a) Retire Manitoulin – continue to support this marketing initiative. Conduct an economic impact assessment in the future.

5. Aquaculture Industry Development

- a) Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association – seek ongoing government financial assistance for this organization. Conduct an economic impact assessment in the future. Lobby for consolidation of regulations under one Ministry.
- b) Manitoulin Streams – continue support for this initiative. Seek continued government assistance.

SECTION 2 – 2005 Plan

1. Tourism Product Development

There are two potential routes which could be followed in pursuing this idea. One is to pursue the specific tourism products which are most feasible, the other is to attempt to generally build the capacity in the region for the creation of tourism products and packages by others. This latter approach is more clearly within LAMBAC's experience and mandate, given its history of training for business people. At the same time these two approaches are not mutually exclusive and in fact may both be necessary.

- Off-season packages seem to have a great potential for partnerships and being of benefit to the local economy. The culinary tours, fall driving and live performance packages seem to have local support as well as larger programs which could support them and so seem to have a greater chance of success.
- The Spanish River is an invaluable resource to the region which has not yet been harnessed for the benefit of the local communities. Infrastructure development along the river is a key component to the overall development of the river and should be strongly pursued by governments at all levels to allow tourism in the area to flourish. This infrastructure development would involve safe access to the river and mooring for vessels of larger size than is currently possible.

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- Participation in the GPS Treasure Hunt is recommended with its small scale, decentralized nature making it a low-risk effort. The Road Race is a larger effort which would demand a number of serious community champions though it would be a worthwhile addition to the events schedule and certainly beneficial for the local economy. If further research could confirm the significance of the historical events related to this region a volunteer committee could be formed to encourage and create celebrations surrounding the anniversary, potentially in conjunction with other Northern Ontario communities such as those along the French River.
- At face value there is great potential for the development of a diving industry on Manitoulin which warrants further feasibility research.

Considering the still untapped potential for the tourism sector in this region, many of these ideas for new products should be pursued. They could be developed more effectively and efficiently by a Destination Marketing Organization than by LAMBAC or by any other currently existing organization in the region.

2. Value-Added Aquaculture and Composting

- Maintain contact with NOAA and assist local entrepreneurs with further research into feasibility of a production facility.
- Investigate with fish farmers, Town of NEMI, MIRARCO the possibility of setting up a composting project using the bioreactor or other means of composting. Consider involving other municipalities or private sector partners, specifically suppliers of wood waste such as Domtar or smaller sawmills.
- Continue to monitor progress of cage design research and look for opportunities for local production of other equipment or supplies

3. Business Retention + Expansion

- Make contact with Mayors/Reeves, councillors and Clerks of municipalities that might be interested in running the BR+E project in their community.
- If interest exists, consider running BR+E exercises concurrently in two or three Manitoulin communities that have a critical mass of businesses. If this experience is successful, plan to run BR+E projects in the LaCloche municipalities or elsewhere on the Island in future years.
- Make application to the internship program offered by NOHFC for a BR+E program coordinator.

4. Trail Development

Ultimately, high quality recreational trails connecting the entire region across the North Shore and down across Manitoulin Island should be pursued by communities, government and volunteers at all levels. They would be an incredible visitor attraction and a boost to the tourism sector as a resource for new tourism products such as racing or fundraising events. They would bring community benefits such as a greater appreciation for and pride in the local natural heritage as well as lowered local health costs as a benefit of the use of non-motorized trails.

5. Renewable Energy

- Considering the great potential for wind power production in this region, local participation should be strong in the consultation processes for current developments to ensure that they set a precedent of being of maximum benefit to the local

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community. The visual impact of these developments will be considerable and there is the potential for a public backlash against them which could hurt the prospects for future development.

- Given the strength of the tourism sector, especially on Manitoulin Island, developers should minimize the visual impact of any farms to avoid future problems. Also in this regard, the idea of a education / information centre attached to a new wind farm, potentially in conjunction with Science North, would be an excellent addition to the many excellent tourist attractions already existing in the area.
- Municipalities and development agencies should educate themselves on potential zoning issues which may arise, and assist landowners in their dealings with developers to assist them in gaining a favourable land lease contract.
- As public policy in relation to this sector evolves, new opportunities should be considered for community or cooperative ventures which may become feasible. Support should be given by governments at all levels to these potential community-based projects which could have wide-ranging economic, environmental and community benefits.

6. Coordination of Tourism Marketing

- LaCloche Manitoulin municipalities should make another attempt at establishing a regional Destination Marketing Organization. All of the ideas listed above would be part of the mandate of such an organization. An organization that specializes in tourism and operates on a regional scale would be more effective in establishing a rating system.
- The two excellent publications of the MTA should each have greater distribution. They do a very good job of providing listings of attractions, accommodations, restaurants, activities and events on the Island, and to a lesser extent, the LaCloche area. Many local businesses complain that they cannot obtain enough copies of *This Is Manitoulin* to meet the demand from their customers. Complaints were also heard that the supply of *Manitoulin Magazine* was gone long before the summer was over. There should also be an effort made to include more content and businesses from the LaCloche area.
- Local businesses need a resource that they can keep on their premises that will allow them to be able to quickly answer tourists' questions. A simple directory of tourist-related businesses by category with a contact phone number for each would be helpful.
- LAMBAC's business directory needs to be made more accessible. It should be posted on the website and kept updated as much as possible. Local businesses should be made aware that it is available electronically.
- Hospitality training should be offered for all employers in the service industry. It is recommended that the program content be geared to a "train-the-trainer" model and that employers themselves take the training so they can ensure all their staff provide a high standard of service.
- The North Channel Marine Tourism Council should partner with municipalities, organizations and private enterprise to produce a high-quality marketing piece that connects marinas and water-based travelers with land-based activities and amenities across the entire region.

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- The MTA and Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce should partner with the Owen Sound Transportation Company and jointly apply to federal and provincial funders for assistance with creating an ongoing position of program co-ordination aboard the Chi Cheemaun.
- In the absence of a Destination Marketing Organization, the LaCloche municipalities should work to develop a joint tourism strategy.

7. Development of Knowledge-Based Economy

- Support initiatives to increase telephone, internet and cellular services in the region.
- Begin marketing the area's lifestyle to teleworkers and companies through the Retire Manitoulin project.
- Create an inventory of services currently available for the use of municipalities and realtors.

8. Local Abattoir

- Seek the required private sector investment to develop a local abattoir.

9. Waterfront Infrastructure Development

- Local municipalities with harbours should continue to pursue projects to refurbish and expand their waterfront infrastructure and facilities.
- Higher levels of government should support local communities in their efforts to refurbish and further develop their waterfront infrastructure.
- The North Channel Marine Tourism Council should work actively with their municipal partners and other tourism organizations in the LaCloche Manitoulin region to assist with the development of new waterfront infrastructure and the promotion of this region as a prime marine destination.
- LAMBAC should support local communities in their efforts to refurbish and further develop their waterfront infrastructure.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the recommendations from our consultants, the input from our community partners and the pre-feasibility research conducted by our staff, what follows are the priorities for LAMBAC Community Development programming for the next five years.

A. 2000-2005 Projects Recommended for Continuing Support

The 'old' projects from *LaCloche Manitoulin...Let's Go!* that we will continue to support as long as necessary to maximize their chance of success are as follows:

1. Island Waste Management Plan
2. Manitoulin Branding Association
3. Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network
4. Retire Manitoulin
5. West-end Ferry
6. Manitoulin Streams

B. Recommended LAMBAC Priorities 2005-2010

The following list will be the new priority strategies for implementation by LAMBAC for the next five years. In these five strategies, LAMBAC hopes to play a leadership or catalyst role.

1. **Tourism Product Development**
2. **Value-Added Aquaculture and Composting**
3. **Business Retention + Expansion**
4. **LaCloche Trail Development**
5. **Co-ordination of Tourism Marketing (shared responsibility)**

C. Projects Recommended for Implementation by Other Stakeholders

The other strategies that do not appear on LAMBAC's priority list are recommended for implementation by other organizations and community stakeholders. In these other strategies, LAMBAC will play a supportive or facilitative role when requested to do so by the stakeholders.

1. Waterfront Infrastructure Development
2. Renewable Energy
3. Co-ordination of Tourism Marketing (shared responsibility)
4. Development of Knowledge-Based Economy
5. Local Abattoir

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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Tourism Product Development

Role for LAMBAC

- Hold training sessions for the tourism sector on the advantages and methods of creating attractive new packages and products, or other sessions aimed at building the capacity of the region's tourism sector.
- Facilitate and support where possible the development and distribution/marketing of these products and packages.
- Support the development of a Destination Marketing Organization for the region.

Role of other Stakeholders

- Tourism businesses of all types have an incredible range of opportunities to develop new products and to partner to develop attractive holiday packages.
- Municipalities and business organizations have a responsibility and a need to support the tourism sector in this region, which means becoming active in the development of necessary infrastructure and supporting the development of a Destination Marketing Organization

Value-Added Aquaculture and Composting

Role for LAMBAC

- LAMBAC may be able to play a role in helping to develop a partnership with the private and public sector to secure government assistance for a processing facility. LAMBAC may be able to obtain government assistance to conduct a feasibility study. LAMBAC may be able to invest in such an enterprise through our loans program.
- Spearhead the project by calling all potential stakeholders to a meeting to discuss their interest in composting of fish waste. Investigate costs associated with project and potential sources of funding. Investigate potential markets for the finished product. Review business plan and market research developed for the LaCloche project and determine further work to be done to secure markets for the compost.
- Work with Open Water Systems and other aquaculture operators to determine if the next phase of research is feasible and if there is a suitable location for live testing. Assist with applying for sources of funding. Assist with project administration if requested.

Role of other Stakeholders

NOAA should keep other partners informed concerning potential projects in value-added aquaculture.

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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Business Retention + Expansion

Role for LAMBAC

LAMBAC's role will be as project lead for the duration of the project, with the exception of the implementation phase. The General Manager will meet with local municipal councils to present the concept and solicit their participation. LAMBAC will apply for an intern to work exclusively on this project for one year. The intern will work as the project coordinator out of the LAMBAC office and be supervised by the General Manager. The project coordinator, with the help of the General Manager and the BR+E consultant of MNDM, will recruit community members for one Leadership Team to oversee the project and one Task Force team for each participating community. LAMBAC will provide a computer and office space and will take responsibility for production of reports, rental of meeting space and all other costs associated with the project. Wherever possible LAMBAC will assist the communities with implementation of the recommendations arising from the project.

Role of other Stakeholders

- The BR+E consultant from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines will take responsibility for overseeing the entire project, advising and training the project coordinator.
- Municipal councils from each participating municipality will take responsibility for sending no less than one representative from council to sit on the Leadership Team and the Task Force. Council will be expected to fully participate in the public meetings to hear the recommendations in phase four of the project, and will make a commitment to implement as many of the recommendations as possible over the course of the next few years.
- It is anticipated that the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation will provide funding through their Youth Internship program for a project coordinator for one year.
- Business owners and other community members from each of the participating communities will be expected to participate in the project on several levels: as volunteer interviewers and interviewees; as members of the Leadership Team and the Task Force; in whatever capacity they are able, to assist with the implementation of the recommendations arising from the project in their community.
- Chambers of Commerce and Business Improvement Associations will be asked to participate by having representation on the Leadership Team and on the community Task Force. It is expected that these groups will play a vital role in implementing the recommendations arising from the project.

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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

LaCloche Trail Development

Role for LAMBAC

-Assist volunteer groups and regional committees in their organizational development, government relations, and planning and fundraising capacity.

Role of other Stakeholders

-Municipalities and volunteer trail organizations should financially and organizationally support and participate in the development of recreational trails, especially in the LaCloche Foothills Region.

-Volunteer groups and other collaborations with the goal of developing recreational trails in the region should make use of the resources available from larger organizations to bring whatever expertise is needed to the region, such as from the Ontario Trails Council, Rails to Trails projects, Rainbow Roots in Sudbury and the Voyageur Trail Network as some examples.

-Provincial and federal governments should reconsider their decision not to fund trail development in light of rising health care costs and a growing concern about obesity.

Coordination of Tourism Marketing (partial responsibility)

Role for LAMBAC

- Update and post business directory on website. Notify all LaCloche Manitoulin businesses and organizations when this is done.
- Print a simple directory of tourist-related businesses before tourist season each year and make it available to all businesses in the region.
- Organize and host hospitality training for all service-related businesses in the region.

Role of other Stakeholders

- Municipalities should spearhead the development of a Destination Marketing Organization.
- MTA should increase the distribution of their promotional pieces
- Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce and the MTA should spearhead a project to obtain ongoing funding for a program coordinator aboard the ChiCheemaun.
- MTA, Manitoulin Chamber of Commerce, North Channel Marine Tourism Council, LaCloche Foothills Association, Espanola Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoulin LaCloche Events Network, and all other stakeholders should urge their municipalities to develop and fund a Destination Marketing Organization.
- Government funding bodies should support the development of a Destination Marketing Organization for LaCloche Manitoulin.