

SMITHERS DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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March 10, 2003

**Community Tourism Essentials Attendees
Smithers BC**

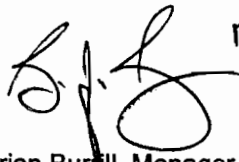
Report – Community Tourism Essentials Workshop

Enclosed, please find the report of the Community Tourism Essentials Workshop held January 24th, 2003. The report was prepared by the facilitator Ad van Haaften of Tourism Trends for Tourism BC and for you, the workshop participator.

Your comments on the report are valuable. Please send them directly to me and I can pass them on to Mr. Van Haaften, if you want me to. Most importantly, your suggestions about how the report can be used are wanted.

A copy of the report was sent to Cathryn Bucher, Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC). It is supposed to be on the agenda of their March 10th meeting. If there is any significant news to report about TAC's comments, I will pass it on to you as you are important stakeholders in this process.

Sincerely,



Brian Burnill, Manager
Smithers District Chamber of Commerce

Enclosure

TOURISM
BRITISH
COLUMBIA



CANADA

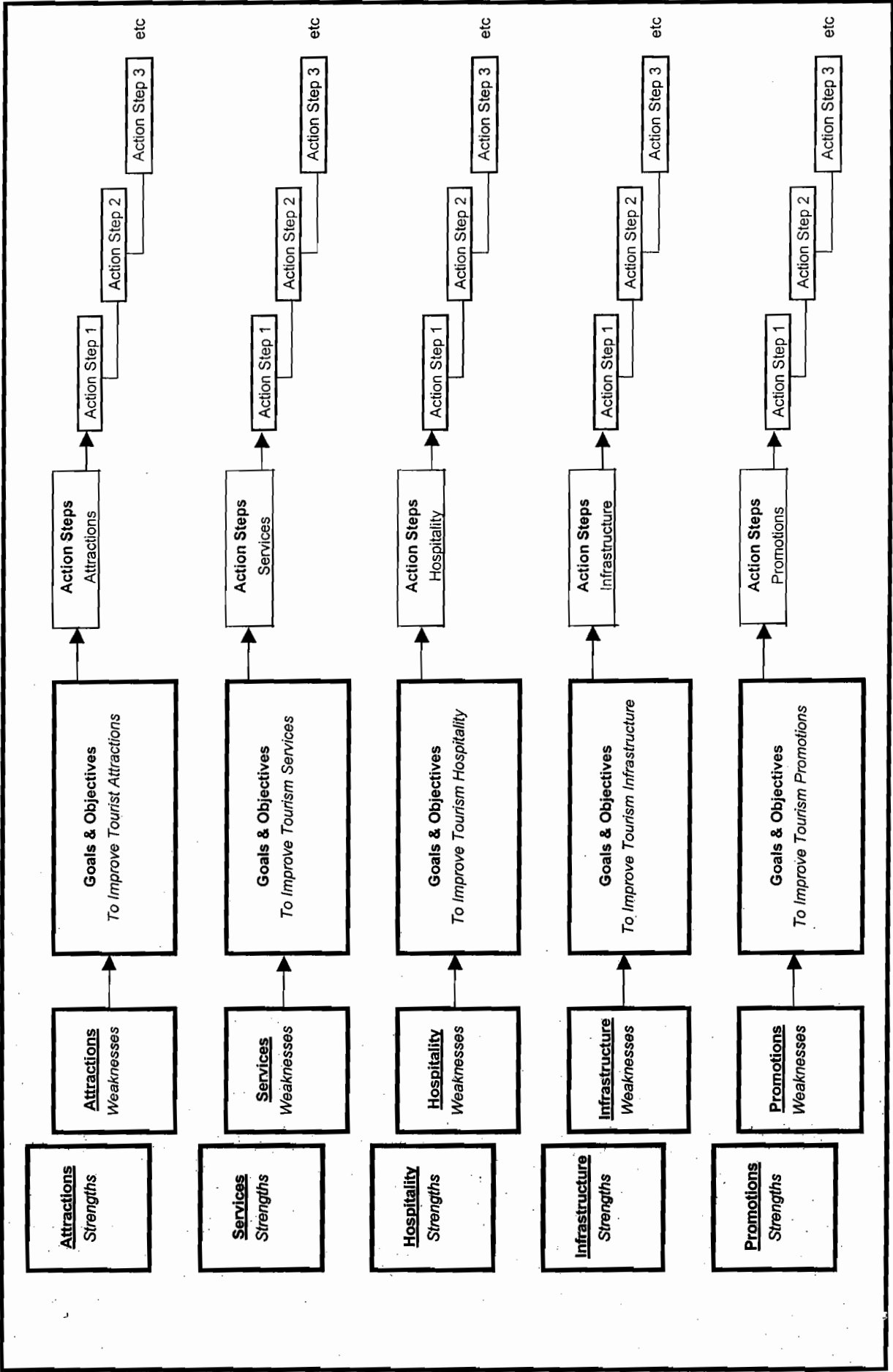
Community Tourism Essentials

Smithers

January 23—24, 2003

8th Floor, 865 Hornby Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6Z 2G3

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Attractions-Services-Hospitality-Infrastructure-Promotions

STRENGTHS

2

Attractions-Services-Hospitality-Infrastructure-Promotions

WEAKNESSES

3

Attractions-Services-Hospitality-Infrastructure-Promotions

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

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ACTION STEPS SUMMARY

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Attractions-Services-Hospitality-Infrastructure-Promotions

ACTION STEPS

ATTRACTIONS

STRENGTHS

Priority List

1. Ski Hill (11)
2. Wildlife and Fisheries (7)
3. Rivers & Lakes (6)
4. Pristine & Beautiful Areas (6)
5. Moricetown Canyon (6)

Mountains	3	Rivers & Lakes	6
Perimeter Trail/Tyee Lake Trails		Whitewater rafting/kayaking	
Rec Centre Pool	3	Fossil Beds	
Seasonal sports		Heritage & Cultural sites	3
Museum		Friendliness of people	1
Fishing / angling	5	Hunting	
NWC College -outdoor education - (students are tourists)		Well-balanced demographics (senior/youth/middle aged)	
Rich entrepreneurial spirit		Diversity of worship	
Strong environmental values		Backcountry hiking & biking	1
Backcountry skiing		Farmer's market	
Horse events(competitions, clinics, trail rides, etc.)		Diverse demographics -Europeans (new & old) and First Nations	
Dog sledding race		Ski hill	11
Central location in province		Wildlife/fisheries	7
Downtown beautification (Alpine theme)	5	Rich History (First Nations, Railway, Mining, Agricultural, Forestry)	
Moricetown Canyon	6	K'san	
Unique opportunity for community tourism development	2	Community events (Fall Fair, Cabin Fever Days, Winter Carnival)	4
Arts/music/theatre (live) & talent	2	Music Festival/Folk Festival	2
Twin Falls / Hudson Bay Glacier		First Nation's Culture	3
Golf courses		Bowman's Jamboree	
Moderate climate-receptive all year		Not discovered by rest of the world	
Diverse geography	3	Central Park building	
Snowmobiling		Pristine / beautiful areas	6
Potential for Ice Climbing on CN cliffs		Guitar / fiddle camp	
Professional guides (hiking, fishing, rafting, canoeing)	2	Shopping unique - especially outdoor stores	3
Riverside Park		Nordic Centre	4
Backcountry cabins	2	Train station/airport	1
Backcountry proximity (Spatsizi)		Prov. Parks - X country BVC	
Heli Tours (viewing,skiing,hiking)		Campsites	
Music events		Some attractive architecture	

SERVICES

STRENGTHS

Priority List

1. Variety of Accommodations (14)
2. Knowledgeable Resources for Outdoor Activities (11)
3. Professional Guides (8)
4. Transportation (Air, Rail, Road) (7)
5. Specialty Services (Taxidermy, etc.) (6)

Visitor Information Centre	2	Transportation (air, rail, road)	7
Professional guides	8	Water station for travellers	
Knowledgeable resources for fishing, hunting, backcountry experiences (Oscars, Valhalla, McBike, rentals)	11	Variety of accommodations (cabins, hotels, motels, B&B's, etc)	14
Good selection of grocery shopping	2	Fresh air	2
Car rentals		Internet café & other sites	2
B&B touring		Vets / pet kennels	
Summer-based services (kayaks, canoes)	3	Churches	
Specialty services (taxidermy)	6	Medical services	
Security-RCMP,S&R program	1	Professional education (outdoor)	1
Media very flexible and reactive to tourists' needs		Fast food restaurants/coffee shops	
Laundry services		Gas stations (24 hrs)/mechanics/carwash	2
Charter services		Good RV parking	
Good RV overnight facilities		In-town campground	
RV dumpsite		Kids parks	1
Safe		Potable water	

ATTRACTIONS

WEAKNESSES

Priority List

1. Lack of Alternate Activities (9)
2. Unable to Control Natural Resource Values for Tourism (6)
3. Need more Aboriginal Presence (4)
4. Limited Recreation Facilities (Multiplex, Conference Centre) (3)

Road to Twin Falls & Glacier Gulch	Inadequate Health care	1
Limited recreation facilities (multiplex, conference centre)	Lack of alternate activities (après-ski, dance halls, night clubs, outdoor eateries)	9
Lack of influence over use of resources (i.e. large designated "working forest" could limit recreation use/fisheries)	Need Interpretive Centre (aboriginal, mining, history, wildlife, etc.)	2
Over-regulation by local & regional governments restrict tourism (e.g. Ski Smithers)	V.I.C –poor access, off-highway, unattractive building	
Lack of parking	Service at gas stations downgraded	
Lack of knowledge at V.I.C.	Vandalism directed towards visitors	2
Lack of enforcement of hunting/fishing regulations	Need facilities/trails for inexperienced (operators)	1
Signage / standards	Poor disability access	
Far from large population base	Dude ranch	
Trail infrastructure partially present but neither coordinated nor maintained	Unwillingness to plan and/or invest in infrastructure	
Camping opportunities decreasing	ALR difficulty getting approval	
No respect for value of aboriginal culture	Need more aboriginal presence	2
Airfare cost-prohibitive/limited seating	Lack of consistent customer service	
Graffiti	Downtown closes too early	
Lack of community outdoor meeting area	College (lack of funding & courses)	
Road to ski hill (no transportation, no store for milk/liquor, etc.)	No plan/vision for town green space (bike paths, etc.)	2
No spa	Perimeter trail protection	1
Need receiving area for rubber (tire?) traffic (e.g. Central Park)	Lack of attractions on highway	
Day-guiding opportunities	Threats to recreation sites / trails	1

SERVICES

WEAKNESSES

Priority List

1. Knowledge of Frontline staff re Community's Activities (11)
2. IFR at Airport (11)
3. Lack of Service-Training Strategy (6)
4. Lack of Quality Service (5)

Lack of fine dining	4	Lack of ethnic food/restaurants	
Need more quality retail (local art, gift/souvenir, First Nations, etc)	4	Lack of knowledge on the part of service people on what is happening in community	11
Quality clothes shopping		Downsizing of health services	3
More downtown parking (incl. RV)		V.I.C. hours & appearance	3
No night life	4	Need info kiosks - video	1
Day guiding services	4	Lack of variety in camping	
Lack of support for isolated operations	2	Need guides for "causal" tourists	1
Route 16 needs repair		Lack of service training strategy	6
Need incentive programs for service		More diversity in dining	
Perception that business owners are disinterested in upgrading service skills		Lack of consistencies (not the same service level between stores)	3
Lack of knowledge of how good service can/should be	3	Need significant destination tourism product (5-star accommodation, backcountry and midcountry)	1
Lack of service people (high turnover)		VIA schedule & service (no connection)	1
Lack of customs office	3	Reduced C.O. service affecting guide outfitters	3
I.F.R. at airport	11	Health Spa	
Airline equipment (planes too small for anglers/hunters)	4	Local backcountry weather avalanche - snow conditions	
Air routs - north not all to Vancouver		Not good car rental service	
No RV rentals		No central rental registry	
Very limited services on Sundays		Poor cab services	
Airport capabilities need expansion	2	Lack of quality service	5
Low-speed internet			

TOURISM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal: To Improve Tourist Attractions

Objectives:

1. To stimulate creation of alternate activities
2. To gain influence over natural resource designations
3. To attract more Aboriginal presence
4. To create/expand recreational facilities

TOURISM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal: To Improve Tourism Services

Objectives:

1. To educate frontline staff on activities in community
2. To have ILS / IFR installed at airport
3. To develop a service-training strategy
4. To raise service quality

TOURISM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal: To Improve Tourism Hospitality

Objectives:

1. To create/improve signage to inform/welcome visitors
2. To counteract perception of tourism not providing "real" jobs
3. To stimulate businesses to subscribe to SuperHost training
4. To turn community into a tourism-supportive entity

TOURISM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal: To Improve Tourism Infrastructure

Objectives:

1. To have ILS /IFR installed at airport
2. To improve signage
3. To increase First Nation product presence
4. To update/improve Visitor Information Centre

TOURISM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal: To Improve Tourism Promotions

Objectives:

1. To ensure a collective voice in marketing/promotion
2. To maximize regional content in marketing/promotion plans
3. To generate private/public funding
4. To establish a clear destination / brand entity
5. To create a tourism research database

TOURISM ACTION STEPS

Summary

Attractions

- A-1: To stimulate creation of alternate activities
- A-2: To gain influence over natural resource designations
- A-3: To attract more aboriginal presence
- A-4: To create/expand recreational facilities

Services

- S-1: To educate frontline staff on activities in community
- S-2: To have ILS / IFR installed at airport
- S-3: To develop a service-training strategy
- S-4: To raise service quality

Hospitality

- H-1: To create/improve signage to inform/welcome visitors
- H-2: To counteract perception of tourism not providing "real" jobs
- H-3: To stimulate businesses to subscribe to SuperHost training
- H-4: To turn community into a tourism-supportive entity

Infrastructure

- I-1: To have ILS /IFR installed at airport
- I-2: To improve signage
- I-3: To increase First Nation product presence
- I-4: To update/improve Visitor Information Centre

Promotions

- P-1: To ensure a collective voice in marketing/promotion
- P-2: To maximize regional content in marketing/promotion plans
- P-3: To generate private/public funding
- P-4: To establish a clear destination/brand entity
- P-5: To create a tourism research database

ATTRACTIONS

Tourism Action Steps Project A-1

Goal: To Improve Tourist Attractions

Objective: To Stimulate Creation of Alternate Activities

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Identify type and nature of desired activities (outdoor eateries, après-ski facilities, dance hall, night club, etc.)
- ❖ Develop rational how/why these facilities would enhance Smither's tourism product offering
- ❖ Discuss with Chamber and Municipality possible incentive and/or support programs
- ❖ Investigate local/regional interest by presenting potential entrepreneurs/investors with business rational

Tourism Action Steps Project A-2

Goal: To Improve Tourist Attractions

Objective: To gain influence over natural resource designations

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Identify areas of concern
- ❖ Develop rational on importance for Smithers' tourism community to be involved in natural resource designations
- ❖ Consult with Northern BC Tourism Association for support, and to identify most effective manner to gain influence on decision-making process

Tourism Action Steps Project A-3

Goal: To Improve Tourism Attractions

Objective: To attract more aboriginal presence

Action Steps:

- ❖ Discuss opportunities with representatives from First Nations for adding more Aboriginal product
- ❖ Ensure coordination with members of Smithers' Tourism Marketing Committee for product compatibility and parameters/ guidelines for inclusion in promotion/marketing plans

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

Tourism Action Steps

Project A-4

Goal: To Improve Tourist Attractions

Objective: To create/expand recreational facilities

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Develop rational why additional facilities (Multiplex, Conference Centre) are of importance to tourism industry in Smithers
- ❖ Develop business model with projected revenue (including indirect revenue to community), identify size of market, etc.
- ❖ Discuss proposal with Municipal Authorities, Chamber of Commerce and potential investors

SERVICES

Tourism Action Steps Project S-1

Goal: To Improve Tourism Services

Objective: To educate frontline staff on activities in community

Action Steps: By Whom: By When: Result:

- ❖ Create complete inventory of major activities by type and location
- ❖ Publish and distribute (on a regular basis) information to appropriate businesses with request to circulate amongst staff
- ❖ Ensure information is also included in local staff training programs
- ❖ A "mystery tourist" program can be implemented to check effectiveness and to reward outstanding staff.

Tourism Action Steps Project S-2

Goal: To Improve Tourism Services

Objective: To have ILS / IFR installed at airport

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Develop a business case why NAV CANADA should install ILS & IFR facilities at Smithers' airport
- ❖ Obtain guidance & support from Northern BC Tourism Association and Tourism BC
- ❖ Obtain support/concurrence from aircraft operators presently serving Smithers*
- ❖ Contact NAV CANADA for further guidance:
Mr. Dave Merritt, Regional Manager Safety & Service Design, Edmonton at telephone 780-413-5462

***Note: It is essential that appropriate airlines are included in this process:
Nav Canada , a private corporation, recovers cost of
air navigation facilities through service charges levied on aircraft operators**

Tourism Action Steps Project S-3

Goal: To Improve Tourism Services

Objective: To develop a service-training strategy

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Investigate various training programs available from Tourism BC
Detailed information available at:
www.tourism.bc.ca/superhost
- ❖ Discuss program information with appropriate local businesses; select desired courses and develop funding formula and training schedule
- ❖ Develop rationale why suppliers such as breweries, food supply companies, soft drink bottlers, etc. should sponsor cost of such training programs

Tourism Action Steps Project S-4

Goal: To Improve Service Quality

Objective: To raise service quality in the community

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

See Action Steps under S - 3

HOSPITALITY

Tourism Action Steps Project H-1

Goal: To Improve Tourism Hospitality

Objective: To create/improve signage to inform/welcome visitors

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Identify areas for needed signage improvements
- ❖ Seek advice/input from Wanda Hook (Manager Accommodation Services, Tourism BC, Victoria)
Tel: 250-387-0104
- ❖ Contact District Highway Office and/or Municipal Authorities for information on approval/cost of highway and local signage
- ❖ Make presentations to appropriate authorities to have signage created/upgraded

Tourism Action Steps

Project H-2

Goal: To Improve Tourism Hospitality

Objective: To counteract perception of tourism not providing "real" jobs

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Seek input from Northern BC Tourism Association, Tourism BC, COTA, Destinations, etc. as to tourism employment opportunities, projected industry growth, compensation comparisons, etc.
- ❖ Make presentations to local organizations (Service Clubs, etc) on value of tourism to the community
- ❖ Make presentations to local high school students on value of tourism and its career opportunities
- ❖ Encourage local/regional news media to report on career success stories

Tourism Action Steps Project H-3

Goal: To Improve Tourism Hospitality

Objective: To stimulate businesses to subscribe to SuperHost training

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

See Action Steps under S - 3

Tourism Action Steps

Project H-4

Goal: To Improve Tourism Hospitality

Objective: To turn community into a tourism-supportive entity

Action Steps:

- ❖ Develop a comprehensive document outlining the present impact of tourism on the community as well as the impact from future growth (tax revenue, employment, etc.).
Seek assistance/input/data from Northern BC Tourism Association and Tourism BC
- ❖ Make presentations to local organizations (Service Clubs, etc.) on the value of Tourism to the community
- ❖ Encourage local news media to carry "good news" tourism experiences/stories
- ❖ Involve local community volunteers in tourism events

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

INFRASTRUCTURE

Tourism Action Steps Project | - 1

Goal: To Improve Tourism Infrastructure

Objective: To have ILS / IFR installed at airport

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

See Action Steps under S - 2

Tourism Action Steps Project 1-2

Goal: To Improve Tourism Infrastructure

Objective: To improve signage

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

See Action Steps under H - 1

Tourism Action Steps Project 1-4

Goal: To Improve Tourism Infrastructure

Objective: To update/improve Visitor Information Centre

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Identify areas where improvement/ upgrading is needed
- ❖ Develop renewal/upgrading process with priorities, time line and budgets
- ❖ Invite advice/input from Tourism BC:
Jennifer Handley, Manager Visitor Services and Sales, Victoria
Tel: 250-387-1643
Fax: 250-356-8246
Email: Jennifer.Handley@tourism.bc.ca
- ❖ Identify potential sponsors for upgrading costs and ongoing maintenance

PROMOTIONS

Tourism Action Steps Project P-1

Goal: To Improve Tourism Promotions

Objective: To ensure a collective voice in marketing/promotion

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Call for a full-day workshop with all members of Tourism Smithers and other appropriate parties, ensuring a proper representation of **all** tourism interests.
- ❖ Establish a process through which the community's prime tourism objectives and related strategies are identified and agreed upon
- ❖ Select/elect a marketing committee to create a strategic marketing plan

It is recommended that this process is led by a qualified facilitator and be done in coordination with the Northern BC Tourism Association

Tourism Action Steps Project P-2

Goal: To Improve Tourism Promotions

Objective: To maximize regional content in marketing/promotion plans

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Discuss regional product positioning with appropriate regional representatives and the Northern BC Tourism Association; define logical geographical product grouping
- ❖ Coordinate regional product into promotion/marketing plans where appropriate and investigate partnership opportunities with Northern BC Tourism Association

Tourism Action Steps Project P-3

Goal: To Improve Tourism Promotions

Objective: To generate private / public funding

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Develop fee structure for membership in Tourism Smithers
- ❖ Create proposal to municipal and regional authorities to match membership revenues
- ❖ Identify hotel tax revenue stream
- ❖ Discuss partnership opportunities with the Northern BC Tourism Association to maximize marketing budget impact

Tourism Action Steps Project P-4

Goal: To Improve Tourism Promotions

Objective: To establish a clear destination / brand identity

Action Steps:

By Whom:

By When:

Result:

- ❖ Organize "Brand Discovery Sessions" to be conducted with:
 - Tourism Industry
 - Non-tourism business community
 - Mayor, municipal council & staff
- ❖ Organize a one day "Synthesizing Session" to identify the most powerful attributes and personality/style elements from Brand Discovery Sessions.
Participants: Selection from previous sessions
- ❖ Select final brand/identity for Smithers

Tourism Action Steps

Project P-5

Goal: To Improve Tourism Promotions

Objective: To create a market intelligence database

Action Steps:

- ❖ Collect relevant statistical information from the Northern BC Tourism Association, Tourism BC, CTC, and other sources.
- ❖ Obtain customer profiles from local/regional tourism businesses
- ❖ Develop (confidential) "reporting" system with local/regional tourism businesses on visitor profiles (volume, age, origin, reason, mode of travel, etc.)
- ❖ Interpret information and use for better product/market match

By Whom:

By When:

Result: