

Tobermory

A Community of North Bruce Peninsula



**Spruce
the Bruce**

Community Toolkit



Credits

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Introduction

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula (NBP) covers an area of 782 square kilometers and is the most northerly community in Bruce County. This municipality boasts a permanent population of 3,850 year round residents. Highway 6 traverses through the middle of NBP bringing record numbers of visitors to the peninsula each year.

The peninsula itself is surrounded on the east by Georgian Bay and on the west by Lake Huron. The area is host to Fathom Five National Marine Park, Bruce Peninsula National Park, the Bruce Trail, Cabot Head and Lion's Head Nature Reserves, two First Nations Hunting Reserves and a large Bruce County Forest Tract. In 2004, NBP was proclaimed as a "dark sky community" in the hope of preserving and protecting the night time environment and their heritage of dark skies from the adverse effects of light pollution.

In 2010, NBP participated in the County of Bruce's Spruce The Bruce program. One of the initial steps to this program is the identification of a community's identity. This toolkit documents the process and outcomes and while each community in Northern Bruce Peninsula possesses a unique character and history they are part of the amalgamated Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula. The goal of these individual Toolkits' is to showcase each community's unique identity for the purpose of enhancing their distinctive characteristics and inherent charms. Lion's Head and Tobermory's Toolkits are complementary to one another and contain consistent elements to indicate that they are part of the broader Corporation.





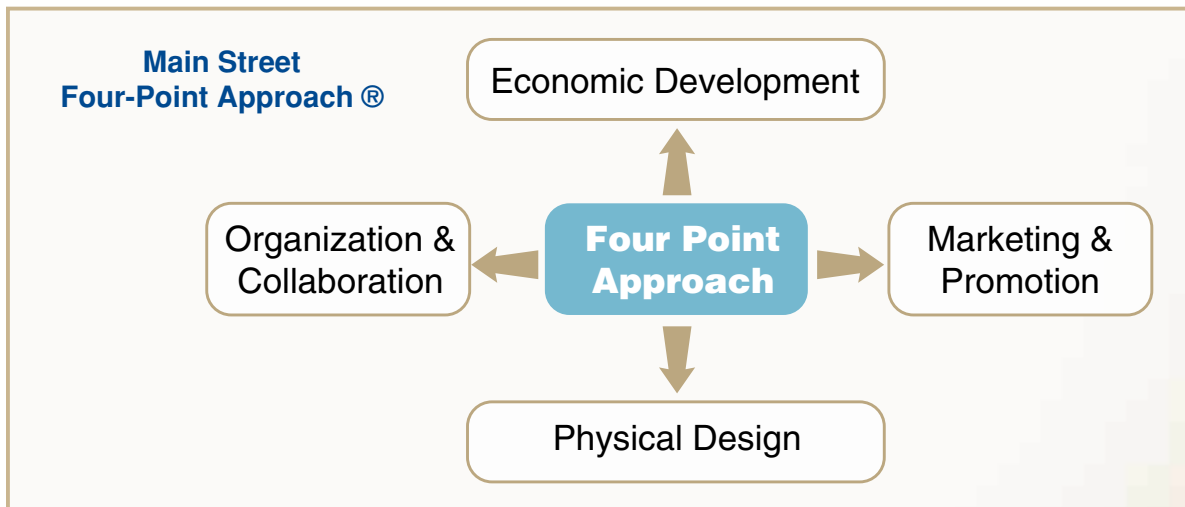
Tobermory's downtown is the jewel at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. Tobermory means so much to so many and naturalists, photographers, hikers, cyclists, campers, boaters, and divers all call it paradise. It is home to the Chi Cheemaun and is the southern link to Manitoulin Island. Quaint frame houses and two harbours create a unique maritime atmosphere. It is the core area of the UNESCO Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere and home to Fathom Five National Marine Park. So many opportunities and adventures are possible in Tobermory including great eateries, comfortable accommodations, outdoor and underwater life, sightseeing, strolling the boardwalk or just relaxing.



2 Why Mainstreets Matter

We all know where our mainstreets are, but do we know *what* they are and *why* they matter? Whether they are named First Avenue or King Street, are a County Road or Provincial Highway, what they represent is universal. Mainstreet is the economic engine, the big stage, the core of the community. Bruce County's mainstreets represent over 70 % of our commercial assessment and are our main point of contact with tourism dollars – our second largest industry. Our mainstreets tell us who we are and who we were, and how the past has shaped us. We do not go to our commercial strips to learn about our past, explore our culture, or discover our identity. Our mainstreets are the places of shared memory where people still come together to live, work, and play.

The Spruce the Bruce process is not a new concept, but has been specifically adapted for Bruce County. The bones of the program come from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States and their Main Street® program. The Preservation first got its roots in 1947 centred on protecting national historic sites and buildings. In 1980, they established the National Main Street Centre and over the past 30 years, the Main Street movement has transformed the way communities think about the revitalization and management of their downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. Cities and towns across the United States and Canada have come to see that a prosperous, sustainable community is only as healthy as its core.



So what is Main Street®? When we talk about Main Street®, we are thinking of real places doing real work to revitalize their economies and preserve their character. The Main Street Four-Point Approach® is a unique preservation-based economic development tool that enables communities to revitalize downtown and neighborhood business districts by leveraging local assets - from historic, cultural, and architectural resources to local enterprises and community pride. The Four-Point Approach® is the basis of the Spruce the Bruce program and is a comprehensive strategy that addresses the variety of issues and problems that challenge traditional downtowns.



3 Purpose of this Community Design Toolkit

This Community Toolkit showcases Tobermory and its unique identities and opportunities that, if applied consistently, will provide the community with the potential to enhance its downtown both economically and aesthetically. Tobermory has the advantage of being situated at lands end and has natural, inherent attractions that draw thousands of visitors each year. Tobermory plays a critical tourism role in the County and hence an important economic role as well. Developing Tobermory to manage its status as a premier destination is the main goal of this Toolkit.

By focusing efforts and being strategic with both public and private undertakings, we have the potential to create an atmosphere that attracts more visitors, businesses, and creates a vibrant, self-sustaining community for our residents. This Toolkit is intended to foster leadership and creativity while at the same time providing some guidance in terms of next steps and how to move forward in a consistent and coordinated manner. It provides a summary of the community's identity; an action plan and some tools to help get started. In order to support a coordinated approach, it is recommended that all community partners from business owners and community groups to Town Council and staff embrace this Toolkit and follow this guide as closely as possible, recognizing that it is a living document that will evolve with time.

While sweeping changes are not expected overnight, community-wide participation and implementation through small incremental changes that use the tools outlined in this document will, over time, allow the vision for downtown Tobermory to be realized!



4 Roles

Role of the Community

- Be proud and take ownership of their community identity;
- Incorporate the community identity into their daily quality of life;
- Support the broader community, businesses and municipality to showcase the identity; and
- Seize opportunities to promote the identity to friends, family and people from outside the area.

Role of Businesses

- Be proud and take ownership of their community identity;
- Incorporate the community identity into their daily business life;
- Adapt and adopt the identity into their business (i.e. Façade alignment, business signage, themed sale days, etc.)
- Work with their local Chamber of Commerce and Business Improvement Areas to create special events themed around the community identity; and
- Support municipal infrastructure upgrades that align with the community identity.

Role of Municipality

- Be proud and take ownership of their community identity;
- Incorporate the community identity into daily municipal business life;
- Promote the individual identities in municipal marketing materials; and
- Use beautification and infrastructure projects such as streetscaping, signage, park development, municipal building facades, and urban design initiatives to enhance each community's identity.

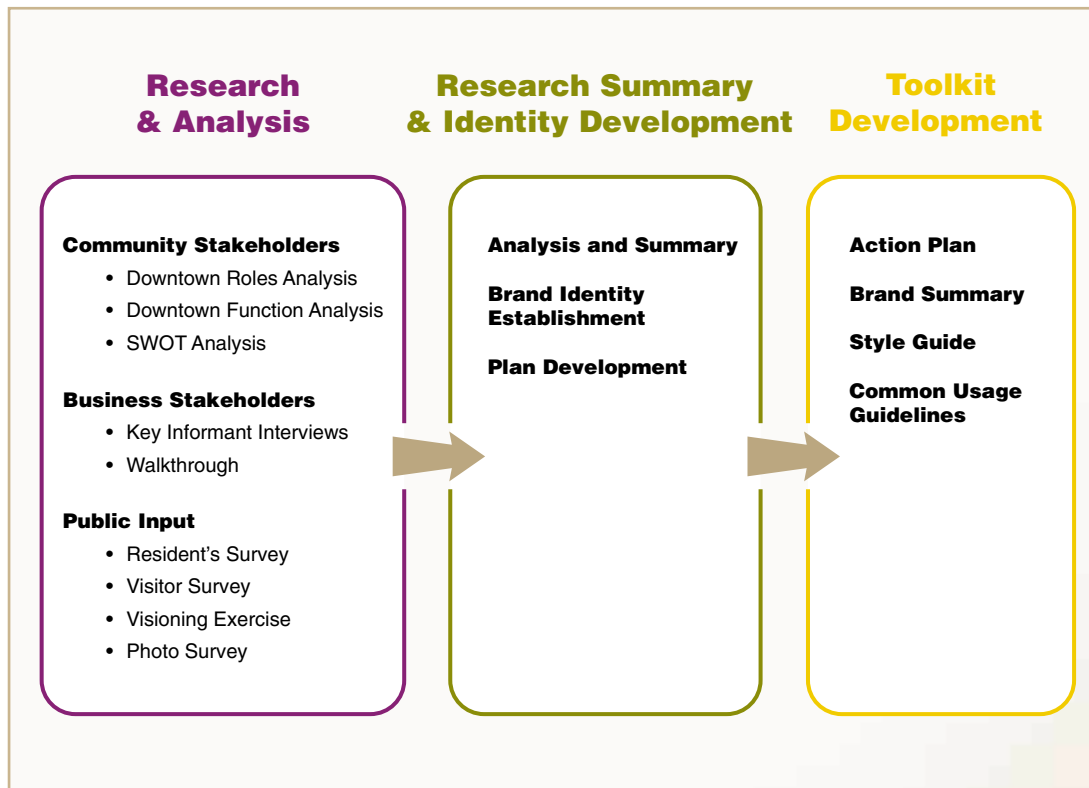
Role of County

- Be proud and support the local identities and brands of communities in The County;
- Promote the individual identities in County marketing materials;
- Use the individual identities to create a unique tourism product offering; and
- Assist municipalities with the delivery of projects to enhance their identity.



5 Process

The Community Toolkit development process began in the spring of 2010 with the launch of the Spruce the Bruce Committee in Northern Bruce Peninsula. The Committee is composed of key staff at the Municipality as well as community stakeholders from both Lion's Head and Tobermory. The Toolkit development process was a 10 month process involving an extensive research phase that culminated in the formation of this Toolkit. The Toolkit includes an Action Plan, Brand Summary, Style Guide, and Common Usage Guidelines which are essential to the revitalization of downtown Tobermory.



The Research

6 This is what you told us!

The key to any successful downtown revitalization program is to build a solid foundation. Research from the Main Street® program indicates that this foundation is centred on four pillars: Organization; Economic Development; Marketing and Promotion; and Physical Design.

In the summer of 2010 the Spruce the Bruce (STB) team collected background information regarding the health of downtown Tobermory in order to develop a structured and focused downtown revitalization program. The team solicited feedback from a number of sources and this document represents a summary of those research findings.

The sources were:

- Community stakeholders which undertook Downtown Diagnostic exercises;
- Business stakeholders through Key Informant interviews;
- Public input through a Resident's Survey, Visitor's Survey and Photo Survey.

These research findings form the basis of the Brand Summary, Style Guide, Common Usage Guidelines and Action Plan for Tobermory to support their revitalization efforts.



6.1 Community Stakeholders

Key Tobermory community members and the Spruce the Bruce Committee used two diagnostic tools to determine how the downtown was functioning. The first tool (**Downtown Function**) used 25 characteristics of a well-functioning downtown. These were broken down into four components - organization, marketing, economic development and design. Participants were asked to provide a score out of 4 for each characteristic.

The second tool was a **SWOT analysis** (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). Participants again were asked to assess the function of the downtown. Each area of the SWOT was divided up into four categories and a summary: organization, marketing, economic development, and design.



Downtown Function Tool

This second diagnostic tool asked participants to give the downtown a score out of 100 by ranking 25 separate characteristics on a scale from 0 to 4:

- 0 Does not meet criterion
- 1 Weakly meets criterion
- 2 Meets criterion moderately well
- 3 Meets criterion reasonably well
- 4 Very strongly meets criterion

The first set of questions asked respondents to rate characteristics of the downtown as excellent (4), good (3), fair (2), or poor (1). The questions were broken down into seven categories: Physical setting, Transportation, Parking, Gateway/ Entrances, Storefronts, Competitive position, and Joint marketing/ promotion. The average for each characteristic was between fair and good. Some of the highest rated characteristics included the overall neat and tidy appearance of the street and the lack of vacant storefronts. The lowest ranked characteristics were that the community lacks a unifying element letting visitors know they are downtown, and that some areas of the downtown are inaccessible for people with disabilities.

This score indicates that although the downtown meets several criteria moderately well, the downtown needs a complete revitalization strategy that focuses on design and marketing.



SWOT Analysis

The second diagnostic tool used was a SWOT analysis. There were some significant discussion points that arose from each of the areas in the SWOT and they are highlighted below.

- Strengths:** A strong Chamber of Commerce and a great mix of visitor retail and activities. Area geography, as well as the natural harbour, rocks and woods are a natural draw for tourists. The Chi-Cheemaun is also a tremendous asset.
- Weaknesses:** Congestion of both vehicles and people in the summer is a problem, especially on long weekends. The location of the boat launch adds to congestion around the harbour. A few storefronts that are in need of repair are unappealing. The short but extremely busy tourist season creates a lot of staff burnout.
- Opportunities:** There is a great opportunity to expand tourism into the shoulder seasons by starting a few weeks earlier and extending into the fall by a week or two as well. Better signage can redirect vehicles to reduce congestion and increase pedestrian safety, especially by the harbour.
- Threats:** Most of the visitor draws are outdoors and subject to unpredictable weather, competition from other tourism destinations, and transportation constraints were the largest threats identified.



6.2 Business Stakeholders

Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interviews were conducted on two days during July 2010 with the businesses owners and operators in downtown. The goal was to determine what is currently working and not working in the downtowns as well as what changes they would like to see that would help to improve the business environment of the downtown area.

The first set of questions asked respondents to rate items as excellent (4), good (3), fair (2), or poor (1). The questions were broken down into seven categories: Physical setting, Transportation, Parking, Gateway/Entrances, Storefronts, Competitive position, and Joint marketing/promotion. The average for each item was between fair and good. Some of the highest rated elements included the overall neat and tidy appearance of the street and the lack of vacant storefronts whereas the lowest ranked elements were that the community lacks a unifying element letting visitors know they are downtown, and that some areas of the downtown are inaccessible for people with disabilities.

The next section asked respondents whether their business would benefit from any programs, grants or services including façade improvement grants, joint marketing ventures, and improvements to the physical infrastructure. The response was generally positive but they did not identify a perceived benefit from improved brochures, maps and business directories or improvements to the telecommunication infrastructure.

When the respondents were asked to provide suggestions for improving the retail environment, more and better festivals and events was the top suggestion. The least popular was attracting more niche market and specialty stores. This can be attributed to the fact that there is virtually no vacancy in the downtown.

Lastly, respondents were asked (1) why people were coming downtown; (2) one thing they would like to see improved to downtown; and (3) what they thought was preventing downtown from being a success. The survey concluded that people are coming downtown for the atmosphere and activities including diving, boat tours, and parks; they would like to see the boat launch moved and a more pedestrian friendly environment; that traffic and parking issues are a major concern, in part due to the location of the boat launch, and that lack of funding was preventing these issues from being resolved.



6.3 Public Input

Residents Survey

Every household in Northern Bruce Peninsula was mailed a survey in July 2010 asking them specific questions regarding the town they lived closest to (i.e. either Lion's Head or Tobermory). The questions touched on marketing and economic development elements in the downtown. The survey concluded with some basic demographic questions. In total, 2200 surveys were mailed out and 162 (7%) responses were received.

Marketing

Residents were asked if they were familiar with any specific identity elements for both their Municipality and their community. Nearly 64% indicated that they were familiar with the identity elements for the Municipality but only 43% indicated they were familiar with identity elements for Tobermory. Most respondents indicated that they knew the Northern Bruce Peninsula logo and the flowerpot, the Parks Canada logo and the Explore the Bruce logo.

As for the Village of Tobermory, the flowerpot, Parks Canada, orchids and diving were popular responses however, 67% of respondents felt that these elements did not accurately reflect the community, and 72% felt that visitors to the community did not recognize these identity elements. Residents were then asked what unique features of the community would draw people in, as well as what positive images or aspects of downtown should be promoted. Generally respondents indicated that the harbour was Tobermory's biggest asset along with the ferry, the visitor centre and the downtown shops. The activities that Tobermory has to offer that need to be promoted including the Bruce Trail, visitor centre, and walking tours of downtown.

Economic Development

Residents were asked about their shopping habits to help determine the local attitude towards the businesses environment in town as well as the overall economic health of the community.

The majority of respondents agreed with the statements: I tried to shop locally whenever possible; stores in my downtown are open when I want to shop; and, businesses in my downtown sell the products/ services that I want. The majority of respondents disagreed with the statement: parking in my downtown is convenient and easy to use. Respondents were also asked if they would use extended hours for businesses – 31% indicated they would use extended hours on Thursday and Friday night and 29% indicated that they would like to see businesses opened longer into the off-peak season.

The top three new businesses people wanted to see were more restaurants, a pharmacy, and a full service hardware store. Finally, respondents were asked to provide some general feedback regarding the downtown retail environment. Most people felt that downtown should be more pedestrian friendly and to encourage this, respondents suggest moving parking and the boat launch from the harbour. Some respondents were also unhappy with the selection available and location of the grocery store. Signage was identified as weak and better signage was noted to help clear up traffic congestion in the summer and reduce the number of vehicles from the downtown core.



Visitor's Survey

Visitor surveys were placed at the Information Centre, Parks Canada Visitor Centre and were collected from visitors in the downtown core. Surveys were also available online. Respondents were asked three questions: *Why did you come to Tobermory? How would you describe it to someone who's never been here before? and Are you a resident, cottager or visitor?*

The purpose of this brief survey was to help determine a direction for the brand of the community. The first question was intended to determine the specific reasons why people were coming to the area (i.e. diving, camping, boat tours etc). Most of the responses were generic and included comments like vacation, holiday, and sightseeing. Responses also included camping, visiting the National Park and Flowerpot Island, diving and hiking.

The second question was intended to gather words, phrases and images that the brand could be built around. The majority of the responses were once again generic and included small town, beautiful, lovely, and quaint.

While 70% of the respondents were visitors, this tool did not yield the intended types of responses and therefore, was not effective.



Photo Survey

In June 2010, disposable cameras were handed out to a variety of people (i.e. student; senior; visitor; resident; business owner; etc) within the community of Tobermory in order to capture visually what defines their community.

The participants were given 3 weeks to take photos of Tobermory and all the cameras were returned at which time staff sorted all the pictures into like groupings.

The themes that were highlighted through this exercise were:

- **Nautical** – with pictures of the ChiCheemaun; boat tours; harbour; and diving;
- **Vibrant Downtown** – with pictures of the streets and shops;
- **Water / Escarpment** – with iconic pictures of places like the Grotto and Bruce Trail; and
- **Icons** – flowerpots; lighthouses; national park and sunset.

The photo analysis gave direction to the professional photos that were taken and used to express the brand identity for Tobermory as further developed in the next section.



Nautical



Vibrant Downtown



Water / Escarpment

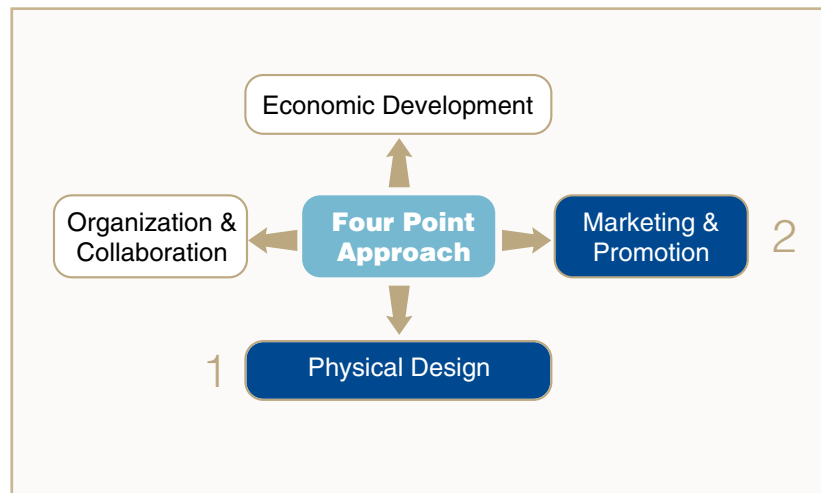


Icons



7 Research Summary

In summary, each of these research tactics utilized highlights a key to the downtown revitalization puzzle. As noted, downtown revitalization is focused around four key pillars: Organization; Economic Development; Marketing and Promotion; and Physical Design. The priority areas for Tobermory are primarily **Design** and secondary, a coordinated approach to **Marketing and Promotion**.



1) *Design* means getting Tobermory's downtown into top physical shape. Top shape means capitalizing on its best assets to create an inviting atmosphere for all visitors and residents of the downtown. This can be created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signage and landscaping to convey a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include maintenance, enhancing the physical appearance by rehabilitating buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management, and long-term planning.

2) Coordinating Tobermory's approach to the *Marketing and Promotion* pillar follows when the physical resources are in place to accommodate the potential increased traffic that will be generated. Selling a coordinated, positive image of Tobermory encourages consumers and investors to Tobermory. Marketing the unique characteristics with an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by locals. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in Tobermory and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area that will spill into the off seasons.

Regardless of the priority area for a community, one of the first steps to any revitalization program is for the community to know who they are and what they want to be. Establishing a community identity that can be utilized in all areas of the improvement plan is the next step to Tobermory's revitalization plan and will be based on the research and community direction that was summarized in this report.



8 Establishing the Identity

Establishing a community identity that can be utilized in all areas of improvement is an important first step for Tobermory. It will help to develop a memorable, valuable, and appealing community character that will draw visitors to the area as well as enhance the quality of experience for both the area's permanent residents and visitors alike. This Community Toolkit will showcase Tobermory and its unique identities that, if applied consistently, will enhance this distinctive destination within Bruce County.

In the research summary the STB team began to disseminate a coherent community identity for use as the 'brand' for Tobermory. Ownership is the key to developing an authentic and believable brand identity for any community. The residents, community, businesses and municipality need to be involved in developing and delivering the brand to create the recognition, feeling and sense of place that make a local brand successful.

As a result of the research, the following Community Identity or Brand has been developed for Tobermory. This brand was presented to various stakeholders in October / November 2010 and received a positive reception.



The Plan

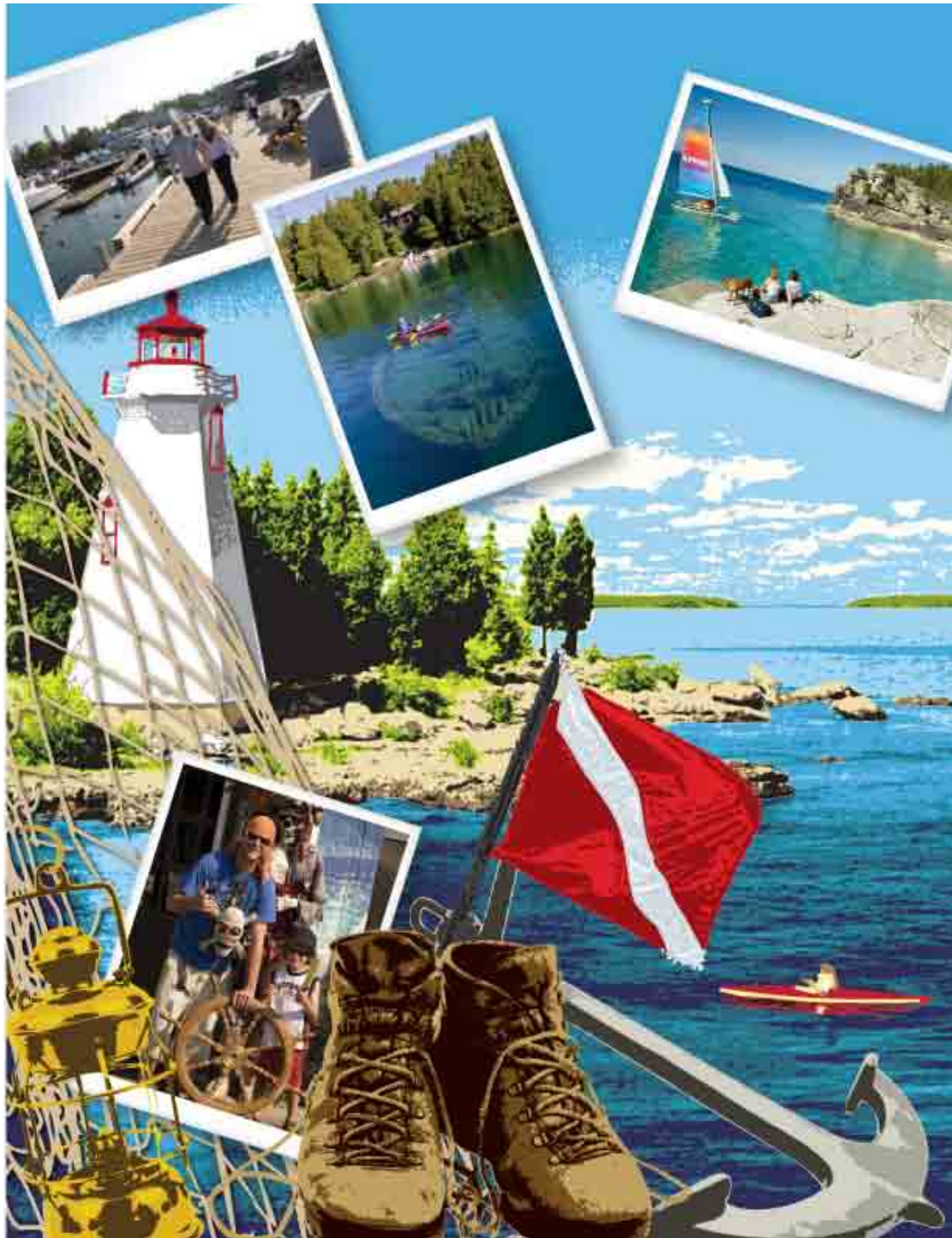
9 The Identity – Port of Call

The backdrop to Tobermory's brand should be one of a nautical village and port. From shipwrecks to the Grotto, Tobermory has tremendous assets that position it for success. Tobermory's brand identity evokes the clear blue waters that make it a diving and boating hotspot, the natural harbour that shelters the Chi Cheemaun, and the on-shore opportunities to explore the cliffs, forests, and shoreline of the peninsula.

Tobermory is a Port of Call - not only for the ChiCheemaun but for various tour boats, pleasure craft and personal crafts checking out the wrecks of Fathom Five and making circuits of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron. Imagery that comes to mind are places like Cape Cod, Peggy's Cove and Tobermory, Scotland, but with more captivating natural features.

Tobermory should embrace a fun, bright and flavourful nautical community that is perched on the edge of the unique wilderness of the national park system. Few communities can boast a connection to a National Park and none to a Marine National Park and the aquatic opportunities that it brings. The cliff-ringed harbour, shipwrecks, and visitor's centre bring elements of the both parks right into the community and set the stage for further development of this entire area's uniqueness and marketability.





10 Developing the Plan

As noted, before tackling any of the revitalization pillars for downtown, both the community and the revitalization program must first get organized. **Developing the Plan** starts with articulating common goals and objectives as well as outlining the steps necessary for achieving them.

It is important to distinguish between a vision and a brand. Much has been written about brands in general; many 'branding' consultants have attempted to give relatively unknown towns, downtowns, and businesses clever branding treatments – catchy slogans about whatever the downtown wants to be. Brands seek to place in the prospective visitor's head a belief that "this is the place to go for.....". The key distinction between a brand and a vision is that a brand describes the image you want people to have of your downtown right now, while a vision describes what the downtown will look like at some point in the future.

Defining a Vision for downtown Tobermory is essential as it establishes the 15-20 year perspective for the community and looks beyond the current planning documents to the kind of place that the community aspires to become. It takes that community identity (Port of Call) and conveys a sense of personality, character and identity for downtown. A Vision is a description of a desired condition at some point in the future. That Vision guides the mission, goals, objectives and actions of the revitalization plan and makes the connective link between the desired / authentic Identity and the Plan to move the community there.



Vision

The result of the exploratory or research phase was the establishment of the following **VISION** for downtown Tobermory:

Tobermory is one of the County's premier tourism destinations. The sparkling-clean waters and the terminus of the Bruce Trail provide this coastal harbour with exceptional assets. Blessed with an extraordinary collection of one-of-a-kind shops, dining, and nautical adventure, Tobermory pulses with a dynamic spirit and a passion for exploration. The cliff-ringed harbour, shipwrecks, and visitor's centre bring elements of both national parks right into the downtown and set the stage for an unforgettable experience that is known worldwide.



Mission Statement

A Mission statement takes Tobermory's Vision and translates it into a stated purpose for the downtown revitalization effort; it can be viewed as the public statement for accomplishing the Vision and the pathway in order to get you there. The mission statement for downtown Tobermory is:

To improve the physical setting of Tobermory to support the volume of visitors and their needs and coordinate the marketing and promotion of Tobermory to expand the economic potential of the area into shoulder seasons.

Goal statements transform the Mission statement into priority areas for downtown. The Spruce the Bruce committee undertook a strategic planning session in September 2010 in order to transform the mission statement into strategic directions. The following Goals were established for downtown Tobermory as priority areas:

- GOAL 1: To foster an environment of organization, leadership and management;
- GOAL 2: To strategically address the traffic flow, parking areas and signage for downtown;
- GOAL 3: To improve the physical design of the main harbour area and increase the quality of public places in the core;
- GOAL 4: To support improvements to the physical appearance and functionality of commercial buildings;
- GOAL 5: To develop marketing, promotion and event strategies for Tobermory to attract traffic downtown and into the shoulder seasons.



11 Putting the Plan to Work

In order to enact change and begin to see some tangible results in Tobermory, the Spruce the Bruce team recommends that Tobermory focus its initial program on both the **Physical Design** pillar with the **Marketing and Promotion** pillar once the organizational pillar is established. While any revitalization strategy requires broad-based support and organization of both the public and private sector in order to achieve success, it has been our experience that laying the foundation and ground-work for success on the organizational pillar should be completed before a broad-based program is developed.

A Tobermory Spruce the Bruce Committee should focus for the first year on organizing, assessing, and planning. This is a critical mobilizing phase that develops the vision / mission, partnerships, strategies and actions and will begin to yield results that further mobilize the program. Through the 2010 Spruce the Bruce process a number of preparatory steps were accomplished including:

- identifying the resources;
- assessing the community;
- developing the community identity;
- developing the revitalization vision; and
- determining the short-term actions.

Setting up the organizational structure and developing a more detailed work plan over the next six months to a year will take the knowledge gained from the exploratory phase and begin to develop a plan to move forward. It is important for the Tobermory STB committee to tackle some visible, high impact, short-term projects throughout these preliminary months while the less visible supporting documentation is being developed. The following is the Action Plan as it relates to downtown Tobermory.



12 Action Plan

The next step to a downtown revitalization plan is to develop action items for each of the priority goals which ensure that the plan remains dynamic and produces results. When each Goal is developed it is important to consider how the Actions will touch on all four points of the revitalization strategy with emphasis placed on each.

GOAL 1: To foster an environment of organization, leadership and management;

1. **Organization and Leadership Action:** To create a Tobermory specific Spruce the Bruce Sub Committee with representation on the NBP Spruce the Bruce Committee.

Recruiting the appropriate resources by building support from a variety of stakeholders is essential because these people can serve as future volunteers, members, financial contributors, donors of in-kind services, advocates, event participants, and customers. The TSTB Sub Committee may transform an already existing committee, adding members and expanding their focus or it may be a completely new entity recruiting new members.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Initial start-up

Budget Implications: None

2. **Economic Development Action:** To attract representatives to the TSTB Sub Committee from the business community and specifically make connections to the Tobermory Chamber of Commerce.

As the core group of individuals begins to establish the TSTB program, it must identify people who have a vested interest in revitalizing the commercial district. Involving a broad range of interests in the process will show various groups that they share a common goal and facilitate the overall objective of a healthy successful downtown.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 1 - Initial

Budget Implications: None



3. **Physical Improvement Action:** To attract representatives to the TSTB Sub Committee from Parks Canada, the Bruce Trail Association and tour operators.

As previously noted, you can't lead a community-wide effort without the support of others. Tobermory's assets are largely related to its outdoor facilities, water activities and proximity to the national parks. Connections need to be made to the groups that maintain and organize activities in Tobermory as they are already interested in the promotion and enhancement of the community and it is therefore essential that they be involved in the revitalization effort.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 1 - Initial

Budget Implications: None

4. **Marketing and Promotion Action:** Communication of this Toolkit to other stakeholders (Chamber, Bruce Peninsula Tourism, Snowmobile Associations and Cross Country Ski Groups, Parks Canada, key operators) and solicit their participation.

Grassroots organizing starts with articulating common goals and the steps necessary for achieving them, and disseminating this information to the widest audience possible. You will need community stakeholders to create public support and involve enough people to get broad-based participation. Without the support and involvement of all groups, it is doubtful that any revitalization program will achieve long-lasting success

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 1 - Initial

Budget Implications: None



GOAL 2: To strategically address the traffic flow, parking areas and signage for downtown;

1. **Organization and Leadership Action:** To create baseline mapping of the transportation infrastructure surrounding the main harbour area and all the streets leading into this area.

Few elements of urban infrastructure are as complicated as transportation. If commercial areas are to be successful, they must provide options. That means downtown organizations must become involved in managing a transportation system that includes automobile access, marine access, pedestrian mobility and safety and bicycle and scooter access.

Before a community can start to tackle the challenges that are present related to transportation infrastructure in downtown, there needs to be a base line of mapping that outlines the physical profile of the street and streetscape and identifies where there are issues and opportunities related to traffic flow, parking and signage.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee with MNBP Roads Department

Proposed Timing: Year 1

Budget Implications: None

2. **Economic Development Action:** To secure funding to implement a Transportation Plan as well as participate in regional signage initiatives.

Money and funding do exist, especially if there is a coordinated and organized program in place that can demonstrate the need. When a Transportation Plan is completed that outlines the priority items for Tobermory, the TSTB Committee can start finding funding to make it happen. It doesn't necessarily need to be big money to make a difference. Small-scale, inexpensive improvements can sometimes be more effective at maneuvering people into downtown than major 'big-bucks' projects.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 3-5

Budget Implications: Yes



3. **Physical Improvement Action:** Complete a Tobermory Transportation Plan with key strategic recommendations /actions for all areas of physical study.

Integrating transportation priorities into the downtown development plan is essential. The following areas should be researched when developing an integrated plan: traffic circulation and management; parking; pedestrian flow and management; cyclist and marine circulation and management; public space; ingress and egress; wayfinding signage and development demand.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 3-5

Budget Implications: None

4. **Marketing and Promotion Action:** Work with key stakeholders to identify traffic flow, parking and signage trouble spots and opportunities for improvement.

In order for community streets to become places for people, thereby fulfilling the critical function that is missing in much of Tobermory, they need to be planned and designed appropriately using complete street design principles. Downtown streets have the potential to become destinations worth visiting and that are safe for walking and interacting.

Transportation planning requires public input. The TSTB sub committee can host public participation workshops to help identify trouble spots and opportunities for improvement in Tobermory.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 2

Budget Implications: None



GOAL 3: To improve the physical design of the main harbour area and increase the quality of people places in the core;

1. **Organization and Leadership Action:** To create baseline mapping of the public realm areas of main harbour in Tobermory.

To understand the range of urban design issues that have become the main focus of downtown management, there are four basic elements of the public realm: building appearances and facades, sidewalks, roadways, and open spaces. This Action addresses the sidewalks and open space components. Improving the design and comfort of the pedestrian experience on the sidewalk is essential. The goal is to create a sense of place around the harbour by improving or adding additional public areas needs to be a priority.

To tackle the challenges that are present related to physical design, there needs to be a baseline of mapping that outlines the physical profile of the street and streetscape - essentially an inventory of the public portion of downtown streets. This Action Item should be inventoried in conjunction with the Transportation Plan inventory.

Primary Responsibility: MNBP Public Works

Proposed Timing: Year 1

Budget Implications: None

2. **Economic Development Action:** Investigate and secure the necessary funding for streetscape improvements and upgrades.

Unattractive or non-functional sidewalks, back alleys, and wasted space – every downtown has these - ugly spaces. Quality design and attention to detail has the power to transform dead spaces into vibrant places that invite people to explore and discover Tobermory's downtown.

When a Streetscape Masterplan (see below), outlining the priority actions for Tobermory's mainstreet is completed, the TSTB Sub Committee needs to start finding funding in order to implement the recommendations.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee / Municipality of NBP

Proposed Timing: Year 3-5

Budget Implications: Yes



3. **Physical Improvement Action:** Complete a Streetscape Masterplan that includes specific design solutions for tree coverage, pedestrian signage, traffic calming and beautification.

Revitalizing streets for walking, gathering and shopping is perhaps the most direct example of how to benefit a community economically. Currently the street is designed only for the movement of traffic, which has the alternate goal of effectively eliminating other features necessary for healthy street life and economic activity. Incorporating wider sidewalks, large trees, enhanced parking and a community inspired revitalization program can bring life back to the street, rejuvenating the heart of Tobermory. Additionally, attention in the Plan should be given to the physical appearance of the street (and buildings) in the shoulder season.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 2-3

Budget Implications: Yes

4. **Marketing and Promotion Action:** Complete a design workshop to highlight the downtown design issues and potential solutions.

People provide perspective and valuable insights into how an area functions; they have a unique understanding of the issues that are important. The sooner the community becomes involved in the planning process the better – ideally before any planning has been done.

The people who live or work near the downtown will know from experience which areas need improvement, which spaces are comfortable, and where people are comfortable walking. A design workshop is an opportunity for those with a vested interest to share their insights into the downtown and help to create not only a design but an effective management strategy for downtown.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 2

Budget Implications: None



GOAL 4: To support improvements to the physical appearance and functionality of commercial buildings;

1. **Organization and Leadership Action:** Complete a Community Improvement Plan and Development Guidelines for Tobermory.

Community Improvement Planning, one of the many sustainable community planning tools found in the Planning Act, can help municipalities address some of the challenges related to changing economic trends in our downtowns. It provides a means of planning and financing development activities that effectively use, reuse and restore lands, buildings and infrastructure. Community Improvement Plans (CIP) can be a tool for signification rehabilitation, development and land-use change.

Additionally, Development Guidelines are important to:

- Maintain and improve the visual image and identity of Tobermory, by raising awareness of the community's unique identity 'Port of Call' and increasing its presence with key structural components;
- Ensure that development pressures are directed to achieve better design quality by making sure new development is appropriate and 'fits' into this unique setting;
- Ensure high quality design is achieved from new development across the downtown area; and
- Foster greater interest in the positive contributions new development can make in the community and commitment to making places for people to appreciate and enjoy; and

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee / BC Planning & Economic Development

Proposed Timing: 1-3

Budget Implications: Potential



2. **Economic Development Action:** Complete a Building and Business Inventory for downtown.

A Building and Business Inventory compiles information on all the buildings and businesses in the downtown. The inventory provides baseline information and informing the downtown businesses about the revitalization process underway. It provides a number of benefits:

- Acts as a basic contact management system;
 - Information can be used in various promotional tools;
 - Provides up-to-date statistics that can be used to market and describe the health of the downtown;
 - Can assist realtors, developers, entrepreneurs in identifying property; and
 - Provides a means of documenting important heritage and physical design features in downtown.
- When the inventory is completed, you can generate statistics about your downtown, including number of employees, number of new businesses, vacancy rates, locally owned businesses, etc.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 1 - Initial

Budget Implications: None

3. **Physical Improvement Action:** Assist in the development of an incentives program for facades, signage, structural, accessibility improvements, etc. for private businesses (grants and / or loans).

Downtown buildings and establishments define the street and are a major contributor to the character of the community. Clean, interesting and well-maintained buildings and signage communicates a sense of pride, commitment to quality in the community and encourages passerby's to stop and enjoy the downtown.

The Planning Act allows for incentives for rehabilitation and improvements to buildings to be established through a Community Improvement Plan. Part of the Plan creation should be an investigation of the feasibility of a grant and / or loan program with attention to financing; development; and management of the programs.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 3-5

Budget Implications: None



4. **Marketing and Promotion Action:** Promote the programs outlined in the CIP and Development Guidelines and celebrate program successes as improvements are completed.

The time frame for downtown revitalization is not a short one. When the program moves into around the 4 year timeframe it moves into the Growth Phase and during this phase, economic impacts are being achieved and there are now success stories to be told and credibility to the program. The TSTB committee can accelerate the success of downtown revitalization by drawing attention to the incremental changes that have begun to take effect. Being strategic about drawing recognition to the hard work and dedication is essential as it generates renewed investment and participation in the program.

Primary Responsibility: TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 4-5

Budget Implications: Potential



GOAL 5: To develop marketing, promotion and event strategies for Tobermory to attract traffic downtown and into the shoulder seasons.

1. **Organization and Leadership Action:** Encourage the Chamber of Commerce to undertake strategic and coordinated initiatives related to the development of a Marketing Strategy for downtown.

The Marketing Strategy will be the foundation for highlighting the greatest assets for Tobermory. We have a tendency to focus on those primary assets and they soon become part of the wallpaper of Tobermory. It is the challenge of the Marketing Strategy to reopen our eyes and rediscover the treasures that we can use in creative ways.

The Chamber of Commerce with the TSTB Committee must be willing to design and lead a long-term campaign. Several areas of emphasis are suggested for the marketing strategy:

- Promoting the downtown merchants as celebrities;
- Promoting the experiential institutions as downtown anchors;
- Promoting local history and downtown connection to the National Parks as the context for experience;
- Promoting a 24/7 mind-set among all of the downtown stakeholders;
- Managing and creating different criteria for new businesses (e.g. actors in the experience);
- Becoming a concierge: scripting the trip; organizing the trip; and creating itineraries for locals and visitors alike.

These areas give the downtown Marketing Strategy a framework in which to create events and opportunities to produce excitement and drive economic success.

Primary Responsibility: Tobermory Chamber / TSTB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 3-4

Budget Implications: Potential



2. **Economic Development Action:** Undertake a Business Retention and Expansion Study and Market Analysis to aid in the development of a targeted Marketing Strategy.

One important background piece to any comprehensive downtown program is the completion of a Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Study. The BR&E provides an excellent tool to support and grow existing businesses while enabling the community to demonstrate their support for their local businesses in concrete ways. The Business Mix Analysis (Community to Community Comparison and Market Threshold Analysis) as well as the Trade Area Report are commonly known as downtown Market Analysis Tools. Both tools are valuable in understanding the local economy and business climate, and providing essential information for a community's economic development and marketing strategic plan.

Primary Responsibility: STB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 1-2

Budget Implications: Yes

3. **Physical Improvement Action:** Create a space in the downtown that is suitable as the central point for downtown events.

Through the research that was undertaken, the STB team heard repeatedly that there was insufficient public space in the core area. Specific to this goal, is the need for a sufficient, dedicated, public space right in the heart of the matter that will be suitable to stage downtown events while providing the day-to-day public space needs of the community. Without the space, it is hard to fulfill this goal and as part of the Streetscape Masterplan for Tobermory, consideration and accommodation of this essential need should be addressed. This need should be kept in mind as the Transportation Plan is being developed.

Primary Responsibility: STB Committee

Proposed Timing: Year 2-3

Budget Implications: Yes



4. **Marketing and Promotion Action:** Create a downtown Tobermory component to build on the successes of existing promotions and events in Northern Bruce Peninsula and investigate programming of smaller, more frequent events.

The purpose of creating a downtown Tobermory component to existing festivals and events is that it helps to solidify the branding of the business area by establishing it as a special place where something is always going on. More importantly, it brings the participants of these events into the core area where the potential for them to spend dollars at our local businesses is increased.

Programming smaller, more frequent events will animate the downtown and will continue to draw participants there in the shoulder seasons. Both of these events will maximize the experience of Tobermory, positioning the downtown as a place worth visiting and will package the downtown as an entertaining destination.

Primary Responsibility: Tobermory Chamber of Commerce

Proposed Timing: Year 5

Budget Implications: Yes



Action Plan Summary

These Action Plans will become the road-map for the enhanced success of Tobermory. As the Tobermory STB committee moves forward with the implementation of its revitalization work, it should ensure that the activities include a mix of quickly achievable actions as well as those that will take longer to realize.

Beginning the process of implementing the Action Plan is the next step for Tobermory and it is necessary to create an effective work plan for the TSTB committee that meets regularly and provides feedback to the NBP Spruce the Bruce committee about the progress of the Action Plan. It is vital to regularly monitor the Action Plan, revise the goals and develop annual work plans – based on the progress made, obstacles encountered and changes happening in downtown. An annual update or report is an effective tool to ensuring that the downtown Action Plan is continually evolving.





Action Plan Timeline

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
GOAL 1: To foster an environment of organization, leadership and management;					
Develop Tobermory STB Sub Committee	•				
TSTB Sub Committee involves business community representatives	•				
TSTB Sub Committee involves Parks Canada, the Bruce Trail Association and tour operators	•				
Tobermory STB Sub Committee involves stakeholders	•				
GOAL 2: Strategically address the traffic flow, parking areas and signage for downtown;					
Mapping of transportation infrastructure	•				
Research and secure funding and Transportation Plan		•	•	•	•
Completed Tobermory Transportation Plan with recommendations/actions			•	•	•
Identify traffic flow, parking and signage trouble spots and opportunities	•	•			
GOAL 3: Improve the physical design of the main harbour area and increase the quality of people places in the core;					
Mapping physical profile of the downtown streetscape	•				
Research and secure funding for streetscape improvements			•	•	•
Complete Streetscape Master Plan (tree coverage, pedestrian signage, traffic calming and beautification)		•	•		
Workshop to highlight the downtown design issues and potential solutions	•	•			
GOAL 4: Support improvements to the physical appearance and functionality of commercial buildings:					
Complete a Community Improvement Plan and Development Guidelines		•	•		
Compile a Building and Business Inventory	•				
Create an Incentive Program for facades, signage, structural, accessibility improvements etc.			•	•	•
Promote the existing programs of CIP & Development Guidelines and celebrate program successes of improvements				•	•
GOAL 5: Develop marketing, promoton and event strategies to attract traffic downtown and into the shoulder seasons:					
Chamber of Commerce/ BIA initiate strategic and coordinated initiatives of marketing strategy			•	•	
Implement a scoped Business Retention and Expansion Study and Market Analysis to aid in the development of a targeted Marketing Strategy	•	•			
Create space in central downtown for community events		•	•	•	•
Downtown Tobermory to utilize the success of existing promotions and events in NBP and investigate programming of smaller, more frequent events					





The Tools

The images and colours shown are for illustration purposes only, and are intended to illustrate a desired style and effect, not to define a specific product or colour palette, and are not intended to serve as working drawings or templates for production.

Keywords

Clear Blue Water

Adventure

Natural Harbour

Captivating Natural Features

Flavourful Harbour Community

Perched on the Edge

Lands End

Materials



lighthouse lens



Nautical Element



Bright Exteriors



Cedar



Weathered Wood

Development in Tobermory should enhance the historic buildings of downtown with additional architectural details which bring home the maritime, the harbour town feel.

Building materials are horizontal wood siding (natural or painted), glass, cedar shake, coordinated colour palletes, stone foundations, ropes.

Materials: horizontal wood siding, glass, cedar shake, coordinated colour palletes, stone foundations, ropes

Graphic Elements such as banners, signage or advertising should reference the Port of Call theme focusing on the cliff-ringed harbour which make this area unique. Street furniture and improvements should carry forward this nautical theme with ropes, rigging, buoys, rudders and other flotsam and jetsam.



Summary Direction

Colour Palette



Red
Pantone: 1797 C



Navy
Pantone: 296 C



Aqua Blue
Pantone: 3265 C



Dark Green
Pantone: 371 C



Light Green
Pantone: 374 C

Primary Font

Dominican

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz123456789

DOMINICAN SMALL CAPS

AA BB CC DD EE FF GG HH II JJ KK LL MM NN OO PP QQ RR SS TT UU VV WW XX YY ZZ 123456789

Complimentary Font

Hoefler Text

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz123456789

Hoefler Text - Black

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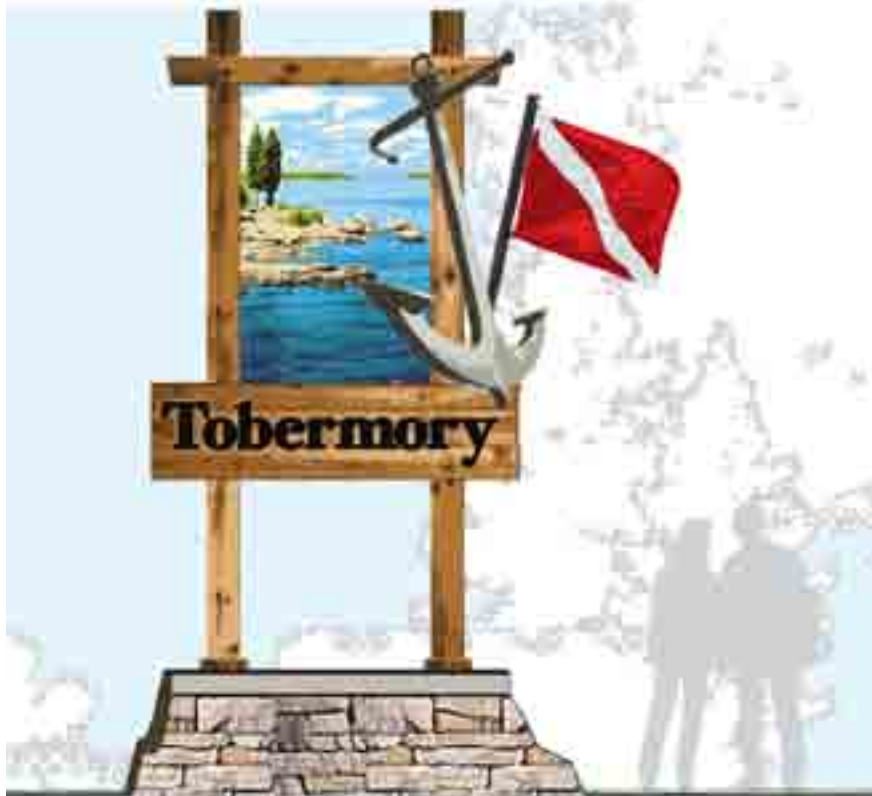


Common Usage Guidelines

Gateway Entrance Signage



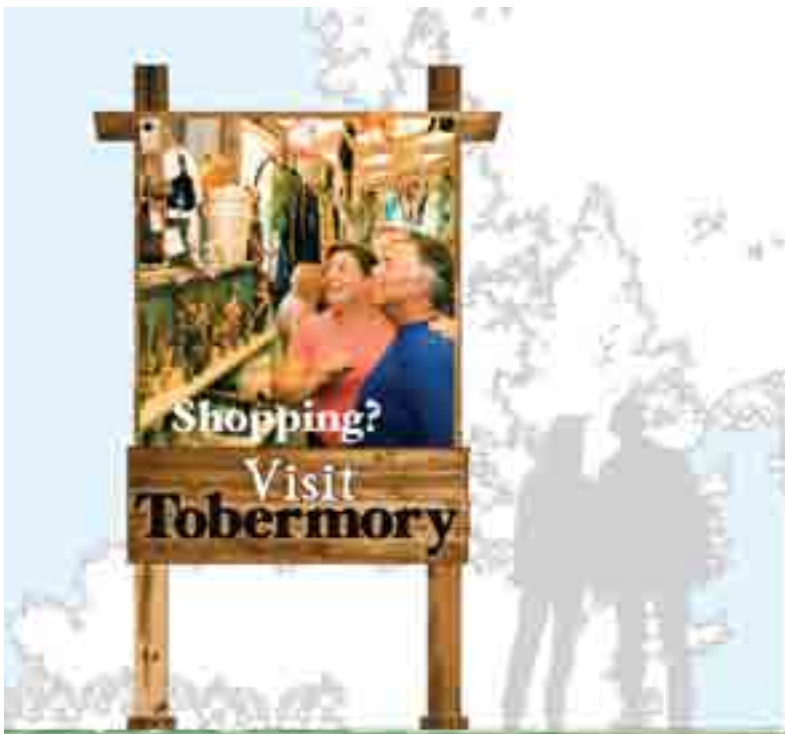
Secondary Entrance Signage



NOTE: Secondary entrance signage for strategic locations around the harbour core.



Economic Development Boards



Street Banners





Streetlight



Signage
Headers



Community Kiosks and
Countdown Clock





Bike Racks

The suggested bike rack for Tobermory features a helm that reflects the maritime theme.

Bench

Street furniture is an element that improves the streetscape, benches also provide comfort as visitors explore the downtown shops and embrace the Port of Call at the harbour front.



Planters

Planters provide visual interests along the streetscape and greenery in the downtown environment.

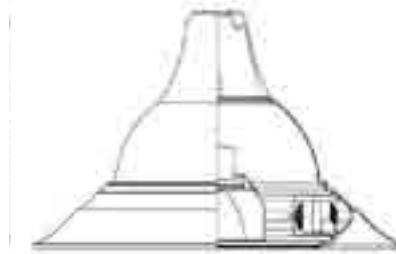


Lighting



Light Wall

Green Earth Lighting Impact Quarter Sphere HPS. A wall mounted luminaire has a full cut off distribution of light and would provide adequate lighting to spaces along the exterior walls of buildings.



Light Street

Lumca IDA Approved/
HPS bulb Model
CPL0406



Light Bollard

Holophane H100 series Flat top bollard with a CFL bulb (can select a warm yellow hue or low watt HPS bulb)



Public Art

The opportunity for the community of Tobermory to create public spaces and displays of art to reflect the local talent and industries.



Lure public space – Toronto, ON



Maritime fountain - San Francisco, CA



Lighthouse Mural - Midland, ON



Boat in a bottle



Façade



Existing



Artists rendering



Summary

In summary, STB has developed with the community of Tobermory a Toolkit that creates the basis for an enhanced downtown program. Ownership is the key to developing an authentic and believable brand identity for a community as well as a long lasting and successful downtown program. All members of the community have a role to play in developing and fostering the brand identity and in moving the Action Plan for Tobermory forward. The methods employed to create this Toolkit combined with positive community feedback ensures that this Toolkit is destined for success if the organizational capacity is developed and the Toolkit is applied consistently.

P.S.

In closing, we offer the following inspiration.

1. Creating successful downtowns is about more than planning and many great plans get bogged down because they are too big, too expensive and simply take too long to happen. Short-term actions, like planting flowers, can be a way of not only testing ideas, but also giving people the confidence that change is occurring and that their ideas matter. Short-term actions need to occur at the outset and then be evaluated while longer term planning is in progress.
2. Money is not the issue. All too often money is used as an excuse for doing nothing, which is why you hear people say "It can't be done!". In fact, too much money or money spent on consultants actually discourages the inventiveness and creativity required to create a great street or downtown. When money becomes an issue, it is generally an indication that the wrong concept is at work. So don't worry about the money, just get started!
3. You are never finished. Creating a great place is not about developing a plan or a design. It is based on community passion and vision and on an ever evolving Action Plan. Part of any plan has to be the management of the downtown. No matter how good the buildings look or how many hanging baskets are hung, the downtown will never be successful unless it is well managed by the Tobermory Spruce the Bruce Committee.

This Toolkit is a starting point and illustrates possibilities. For more information or support with your local project please contact the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula or the Spruce the Bruce team at sprucethebruce@explorethebruce.com.

