

Table of Contents

Introduction	02
Assumptions	03
2022-2023 Priorities	05
Executive Summary	09
Defining Success for Central Counties Tourism	13
Business Plan Details	14
Governance and Administration	15
Research	16
Industry Relations and Industry Equipping	19
Product/Experience Development	26
Investment Attraction	28
Marketing Support	30
Group Travel Support	43
Partnership	44
Appendix I - Definitions	45
Organization Chart	48

Introduction

The board and staff of Central Counties Tourism believe that the visitor economy is delivered by businesses, championed by communities and supported by DMOs/RTOs. The 2022-2023 Business Plan reflects this belief and further cements CCT's leadership role in the industry – both regionally and at the provincial level.

In September 2021, the Central Counties Tourism Board of Directors met for a facilitated session to determine the assumptions and priorities that were to guide the 2022-2023 programs. The staff then developed the 2022-2023 Business Plan to deliver against the priorities and make the organization the tourism leader for the regional industry.

CCT knows why it exists; to grow the visitor economy. The board and staff recognize that in order to achieve that, two things have to happen:

- 1) Tourism businesses must have the capacity to grow and be more successful
- 2) Municipalities must deliver a welcoming, visitor-friendly environment

There are many ways and layers to achieve the above. Each of the many objectives, goals and tactics is designed to support these two keys to tourism success.

It is important to note that this plan is a stand-alone based on expected provincial funding and earned revenues. At the time of writing this plan, November 2021, Central Counties staff is in the process of applying for additional federal funding that would flow into fiscal 2022-2023. If successful, staff will create a separate plan for effective, efficient dispersion of the funds.

2022-2023 Assumptions

In building out the business plan, the following assumptions were discussed and agreed upon by the board as the “expected case”. The plan priorities and deliverables are designed around these assumptions; however, it is important to note that the plan has been built to be flexible in case things are better or worse than assumed.

General

- Masks will continue to be expected indoors at least until Q3
- 4th wave will be coming to a close near the beginning of the fiscal
- Youth vaccination will be underway
- Yearly booster shots begin
- Capacity limits will increase for both indoor and outdoor, allowing for some large-scale events
- Large-scale events will still be restricted due to public health conditions
- Accommodations have a competitive advantage because not downtown Toronto
- More disposable income for travel

Markets

- Ontario will be open for Ontarians. Short lead times still
- Ontario will be open for the rest of Canada with longer lead times
- Ontario will reopen for international, with VFR being the first to travel
- MC&IT will re-emerge with smaller groups booking within shorter windows
- Sport Tourism will re-emerge in Q2/Q3 at the local/regional level
- Day Trips will be prevalent
- More Ontarians comfortable with national/international travel

Visitor Experience

- Some municipalities will create a welcoming environment for visitors
- Outdoor spaces will be better linked to economic hubs
- Stakeholders will continue to work together to build destinations and critical masses of activities
- More in-person visitor options although “hybrid” engagement will still be in play
- Staff shortages continue to be an issue for service delivery

Funding

- RTO funding will remain flat to 2021-2022
- Some additional provincial funds may be made available in Q1 to help kickstart the spring/summer season
- Federal assistance programs will have stopped or will be nearing the end

2022-2023 PrioritiesPolicy/Advocacy

Priorities: Staffing – recruitment, retention and tourism as a career
 Municipal tourism readiness
 Visitor economy as municipal economic policy

Role: Staffing: Support efforts to build and retain a strong tourism talent pool including, working with colleges/universities (course development, delivery and “tourism as a career” communications), supporting TIAO/TIAC’s advocacy for provincial and federal resources to fill the gaps, and communicating stakeholder staffing priorities / red tape to TIAO to be included in advocacy efforts
Municipal Tourism Readiness: Solicit municipal investment in completing Community Tourism Plans, facilitate plan development and support the completion of CTP priorities by municipalities with plans in place.
Visitor Economy: Educate EDOs and other municipal staff on the importance of the visitor economy on the vibrancy of the community. Share municipal best practices and provide opportunities for EDOs to learn how to successfully incorporate the visitor economy into economic strategy/plans.

Research

- Priorities:** Geo-Fencing for individual stakeholders, BIAs, Festivals, Municipalities, etc.
Data collection partnerships so that we can collectively tell compelling stories (ROI)
Champion evidence-based decision making
- Role:** Educate stakeholders on the research services CCT offers and their benefits
Lead aggregate data collection, analysis and reporting for the region
Support stakeholders' understanding of how to interpret and utilize the data

Industry Equipping

- Priorities:** Continue to develop relevant stakeholder learning modules
Ensure Stakeholders understand the competitive advantage of and encourage their participation in programs like Safe Travels, Feast ON, Propel so that CCT can communicate their designations to visitors
Connect stakeholders with co-op and internship opportunities to help grow the workforce
Facilitate networking opportunities to create new synergies & partnerships
Make it easy for stakeholders to take advantage of industry equipping opportunities (toolkit)
- Role:** Lead the development and delivery of relevant course/workshop content
Support stakeholder knowledge through B2B website and social channels
Work with DMOs/Stakeholders to build and deliver compelling content for locals
Work with Destination Ontario so that campaign messaging and content is amplified

Experience Development

Priorities: Expand Trails Talks + 1 other CCT-led initiative
Facilitate and support stakeholder-led initiatives that are rooted in CCT consumer categories or seasonal themes (focus on shoulder/winter)
Shift the Art & Artisan project to stakeholder-led

Role:

- CCT-led
 - Designed to have an impact on stakeholders, building engagement through education and filling a gap in the consumer market that they do not have the capacity to deliver themselves

- Stakeholder-led
 - Sounding Board to fully build out their concept
 - Networking / Introductions
 - Facilitation
 - Sharing best practices
 - Education – tools, programs, resources, opportunities
 - Red Tape reduction
 - Content, marketing and communications
 - Support throughout the process
 - Evaluation support and refinements

Marketing

Priorities: Virtual Road Trip – Re-purpose / education library
Media Strategy – Positive / counter fears
YDH – SAFE Travel / Educate Consumer

Role: Educate stakeholders (including municipalities) on how to tell their stories (safety, visitor confidence)
Provide opportunities for stakeholders to tell the stories
Assist stakeholders to build their content
Use stories to motivate visitation

Executive Summary

The plan has been developed to deliver against the priorities while furthering CCT’s mission to provide resources and support to stakeholders so they have the capacity to achieve success. Objectives for fiscal 2022-2023 are:

Governance and Administration

- Clear and transparent delivery of the 2022-2023 Business Plan
- Transfer Payment Agreement compliance, clean audit and budget oversight
- Engaged Board of Directors to maximize organizational excellence and direction

Industry Relations & Advocacy

- Build municipal (town and resident) understanding of, and increased support for, the visitor economy as it relates to the vibrancy of the community
- Support the development and implementation of Community Tourism Plans to increase tourism readiness
- Support advocacy efforts of TIAO and other industry leaders in the reduction of red tape and championing “Tourism as a Career”

Investment Attraction

- Grow municipal investment in tourism through the facilitation of Community Tourism Plans and Wayfinding Plans
- Leverage stakeholder investment through the partnership program

Research

- Provide stakeholders a holistic view of the tourism landscape in the region and its importance on the vibrancy of communities
- Provide in-depth visitor analysis to stakeholders and recommendations on how to grow their business based on it (revenue generator)
- Provide aggregated visitor analysis to municipalities and DMOs so that they can understand their visitor landscape and make informed decisions about experiences to develop, audiences to target and markets to penetrate
 - Now expanding this service to other RTOs/DO (revenue generator)
- Continue to collect and aggregate all COVID-19 data and disseminate to stakeholders so that they have a full understanding of how to be as successful as possible in the current climate
- Manage the partnership reporting for CCT to better understand the programs' impact on the region and determine best use of CCT's resources
- CCT to be an integral part of provincial/national research working groups and panels so that stakeholders needs/wants are communicated and implemented which will assist them in their success
- Curate research report executive summaries and top-line interpretation suggestions (including how to reach and engage target markets) by industry sector so that complex data can be understood easily and used to make more informed decisions

Partnership Program

- Foster tourism investment
- Further CCT impact on tourism

Industry Equipping

- Grow stakeholder ability to strengthen their skills by providing learning content on key topics that increase tourism-readiness resulting in strong and competitive tourism businesses
- Promote opportunities and highlight relevant information through B2B communication channels to support business growth and innovation
- Help businesses to maintain a competitive edge by informing them on current industry-wide programs offered by organizations
- Ensure businesses and community stakeholders are aware of opportunities and support programs offered by CCT to assist them in developing a strong visitor economy
- Develop shoulder season tourism by assisting stakeholders in building strategies to sustain their communities and their workforce
- Support the tourism student talent pool by providing learning and mentoring and assisting employers to acquire early talent to help with the recovery and stability of the industry
- Assist municipalities to create a welcoming environment for visitors by providing customer and tourism ambassador skills training to the tourism workforce

Experience Development

- Facilitate an increase in industry-led experience development
- Develop and launch new Trails Talks in partnership with regional stakeholders
- Support Marketing & Communications campaigns through development of itineraries

Marketing & Communications

- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to tell their stories through YDH pan-regional campaigns as well as Travel Safe messaging to visitors through the media and online digital marketing tactics as part of the YDH seasonal campaigns
- Position the region as Ontario’s Road Trip Destination for local & domestic visitors in order to increase economic impact.
- Become a leader in Consumer Education in order to provide visitors with all the information they require during the destination selection process.
- Raise consumer awareness of tourism businesses and products found in York Durham Headwaters while retaining strong sub-regional identification.
- Strengthen local tourism awareness while supporting new economic impact models
- Align with Destination Ontario and other in-region tourism partners in order to raise awareness of YDH as a premier and safe destination – including local markets
- Measure success through goal setting and metric models

Group Travel Support

- Be the best practice example of pan-regional partnerships through the Golf in Ontario Program
- Support group travel growth through bid-support and offsetting the cost for stakeholders to attend Travel Trade events

Revenue

- Communicate the value of the programs CCT offers and solicit participation
- Increase CCT’s ability to support stakeholders
- Further CCT’s impact on tourism

Defining Success for Central Counties

Success for Central Counties Tourism is two-fold. The main measure of success is seeing an increase in stakeholder capacity, which is built through active engagement with CCT. The second measure of success is formal recognition from municipalities regarding the importance of tourism to the community, which leads to further support for the sector and, through coordination and cooperation, a regional approach for tourism development.

Each of the pillar objectives are broken into tactics, with measurable KPIs, and goals staff plans on achieving. In addition, new research capabilities allow CCT to provide a clearer picture of the visitor economy and, where possible, the organizations' impact on it.

The real success is measured against the two main components for growing the visitor economy: stakeholder capacity for growth and municipalities delivering a welcoming, visitor-friendly environment. Measures include the number of stakeholders furthering their capacity by participating in CCT-led initiatives, the number of new products/experiences developed and launched, the amount of stakeholder investment being made, the number of partnerships, municipal investment in Community Tourism Planning, municipal investment in tourism products/events, municipal investment in tourism infrastructure, tourism budgets, tourism advisory committees and an acknowledgement of tourism impact on the economics and vibrancy at the community level.

Business Plan Details

The tactics, KPIs and goals listed below are how CCT plans on delivering against the priorities as set out by the Board of Directors. It has been purposefully built to be flexible, allowing staff to react quickly to the ever-changing environment created by COVID-19.

Governance and Administration

Objectives:

- Clear and transparent delivery of the 2022-2023 Business Plan
- Transfer Payment Agreement compliance, clean audit and budget oversight
- Engaged Board of Directors to maximize organizational excellence and direction

Organizational Excellence				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Maintain Financial Accountability	Clean Audit		Finance & Admin	ED
Sustainability	Leveraging stakeholder investments	\$50,000		ED
Deliver on the objectives of the business plan	Quarterly and Year End Reports	5		ED
Board Engagement	# of board and committee meetings	5 Board 7 Committee	Board Training	ED

Research

Objectives:

- Provide stakeholders a holistic view of the tourism landscape in the region and its importance on the vibrancy of communities
- Provide in-depth visitor analysis to stakeholders and recommendations on how to grow their business based on it (revenue generator)
- Provide aggregated visitor analysis to municipalities and DMOs so that they can understand their visitor landscape and make informed decisions about experiences to develop, audiences to target and markets to penetrate
 - Now expanding this service to other RTOs/DO (revenue generator)
- Continue to collect and aggregate all COVID-19 data and disseminate to stakeholders so that they have a full understanding of how to be as successful as possible in the current climate
- Manage the partnership reporting for CCT to better understand the programs' impact on the region and determine best use of CCT's resources
- CCT to be an integral part of provincial/national research working groups and panels so that stakeholders needs/wants are communicated and implemented which will assist them in their success
- Curate research report executive summaries and top-line interpretation suggestions (including how to reach and engage target markets) by industry sector so that complex data can be understood easily and used to make more informed decisions

Provide aggregate visitor analysis to stakeholders, municipalities, DMOs and RTOs/DO				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Collect monthly hotel occupancy rates and revenues for Durham, York, and aggregated CCT (shared quarterly).	# of collections	4	Industry Relations	RDM
Geo-fence specific locations for municipalities, DMOs and RTOs/DO.	# of reports	8	Industry Relations	RDM
Write a series of articles for the B2B Newsletter on visitation trends & success stories.	# of B2B Articles	4		RDM

Collect and aggregate all COVID-19 data and disseminate to stakeholders				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Collect, summarize, and identify trends in available and prominent data as it relates to COVID-19* and its impact on Ontario/RTO6. *Please note: Frequency of available data is TBD as its sources are beyond our control. However, prominent data will be shared as needed.	# of reports	2*	Industry Relations	RDM

CCT to be an integral part of provincial/national research working groups and panels				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Continue to represent RTO6 and its stakeholders at a provincial/national level within various research groups and disseminate key insights as needed.	# of committees	3		RDM

RDM – Research and Development Manager

Manage the partnership reporting program for CCT				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Connect successful partnership recipients with pre and post reporting template to educate them on the available tools, how to collect and measure the data.	# of reporting templates	2		RDM
Follow-up with successful partnership recipients to ensure they are sharing the information from their digital channels.	% Compliance	50%		RDM
Complete bi-annual analysis of all available data to determine the impact that CCT had on stakeholder success, as well as provide information on stakeholder communications consumption preferences. Time period is based on each partnership intake term.	# of reports	2		RDM

Curate research report executive summaries and top-line interpretation by industry sector				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Work with the various target industry sectors and report on key findings in an easy-to-read report.	# of reports	4		RDM

Industry Relations (Advocacy/Communications)

Objectives:

- Build municipal (town and resident) understanding of, and increased support for, the visitor economy as it relates to the vibrancy of the community
- Support the development and implementation of Community Tourism Plans to increase tourism readiness
- Support advocacy efforts of TIAO and other industry leaders in the reduction of red tape and championing “Tourism as a Career”

Building the visitor economy				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Meetings with municipal EDO staff and/or council members to discuss the importance of the visitor economy on the vibrancy of the community.	# of Meetings	12	Admin	ED
Publish stories in the B2B newsletter about stakeholders and how they are making a difference in the community.	# of Articles	6	Industry Relations	DIR
Provide staff access to research to help build the case for supporting the growth of the visitor economy.	# of Municipalities utilizing CCT research	12	Industry Relations	RDM
Provide staff/council with tools on how to champion the visitor economy to residents.	# of municipalities championing tourism	6	Industry Relations	ED

ED – Executive Director, DIR – Director of Industry Relations, RDM – Research Development Manager

Community Tourism Planning				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Support the achievement of at least one objective for every municipality that has a community tourism plan.	# of partnerships	6	Admin	ED
Facilitate the development of Community Tourism Plans / CTP refreshes.	# of plans	2	Admin	ED

Supporting Advocacy Work				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Work with industry to grow the tourism workforce.	# of initiatives	2	Industry Relations	DIR
Maintain sector association memberships and actively communicate stakeholder concerns to them so that they can advocate effectively.	# of memberships	6	Industry Relations	ED
Support the advocacy work of sector associations by communicating opportunities for stakeholders to feed them information.	# of communications	6	Admin	ED
Support the benefits of membership in ORHMA and other tourism member groups through B2B channels.	# of communications	4	Industry Relations	ED

Industry Equipping B2B Support Plan

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit businesses hard. Supply chain issues, workforce retention and attraction, the rebuilding of community and stakeholder confidence to welcome back visitors and the uncertainty of consumer sentiment in returning to normalcy has impacted tourism businesses everywhere. Central Counties will work with our stakeholders to offer B2B programs and content that is created to support the shifts in the tourism environment due to the pandemic. Tourism readiness now requires finding new ways of doing business and building back strong communities that welcome visitors again. The B2B objectives and tactics are designed to help region stakeholders thrive in their businesses and communities and focus on the priorities identified in the 2022-23 Board planning session.

Objectives:

- Grow stakeholder ability to strengthen their skills by providing learning content on key topics that increase tourism-readiness resulting in strong and competitive tourism businesses
- Promote opportunities and highlight relevant information through B2B communication channels to support business growth and innovation
- Help businesses to maintain a competitive edge by informing them on current industry-wide programs offered by organizations
- Ensure businesses and community stakeholders are aware of opportunities and support programs offered by CCT to assist them in developing a strong visitor economy
- Develop shoulder season tourism by assisting stakeholders in building strategies to sustain their communities and their workforce
- Support the tourism student talent pool by providing learning and mentoring and assisting employers to acquire early talent to help with the recovery and stability of the industry
- Assist municipalities to create a welcoming environment for visitors by providing customer and tourism ambassador skills training to the tourism workforce

Stakeholder Engagement				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Redesign and relaunch the Tourism Now webinar module to create an awareness toolkit of CCT programs and opportunities for businesses, communities, municipalities.	# of modules	1	Stakeholder training/workshops	DIR
Connect with stakeholders utilizing B2B communication channels to provide important and up to date information that enhances business intelligence.	# of social media posts	30	B2B Communications	DIR
	# of articles	12		
	# of e-news	12		
Create an Industry Program Awareness road-map to inform on the advantages of participation in industry groups/associations such as ORHMA, TIAO, Safe Travels, FeastOn, Propel, etc., and support Ontario industry associations.	# of programs	1	B2B Communications	DIR
Support tourism-readiness training by creating relevant content for the CCT Learning Lab portal.	# of modules	4	Stakeholder training workshops	DIR
Offer training to develop and grow shoulder season experiences through a series of workshops on a) developing opportunities b) prioritization of key initiatives c) developing a strategy.	# of workshops	3	Stakeholder Training Workshops	DIR

Support efforts to build and retain a strong tourism talent pool in local communities by aligning with colleges/universities to provide placement opportunities for students.	# of student placements	10	No budget allocation line. 120 hours. @\$15/hr X 10 students = \$18,000	DIR
Support tourism workforce skills development for customer service excellence and tourism ambassador training for businesses and community groups.	# of Tourism Ambassador Program graduates	200	Stakeholder Training Workshops	DIR

B2B Learning Lab

In 2022-2023, CCT will continue to focus on increasing the tourism readiness of region businesses by providing access to customized, interactive content through the Learning Lab portal launched in 2021 on the B2B website www.centralcounties.ca. Four modules will be developed: Guide to Unlocking Grants and Funding; How to Write a Pitch Perfect Press Release; Media Advisories, Photos & Captions; and, Tourism Now. These modules will be added to the existing content library launched in early 2022: Tourism Ambassador Program; Marketing Your Brand in Words; Tourism Social Media 101; Tourism Social Media 201; Tourism Photography and Video; and, Tourism Websites 101. CCT will continue to monitor stakeholder learning needs to create a library of on-demand innovative content.

Timelines for B2B Learning Lab Content Development

B2B Program	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Tourism Now												
Guide to Unlocking Grants and Funding												
How to Write a Pitch Perfect Press Release												
Media Advisories, Photos & Captions												

Product / Experience Development

Objectives:

- Facilitate an increase in industry-led experience development
- Develop and launch new Trails Talks in partnership with regional stakeholders
- Support Marketing & Communications campaigns through development of itineraries

Increase industry-led experience development				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Connect engaged stakeholders interested in experience development	# of stakeholders	12	Experience Development	FM
Facilitate and support the development of new experiences	# of new experiences developed	3	Experience Development	FM
Support the implementation and communication of new experiences	# of new experiences implemented in fiscal	2	Experience Development	FM
Work with the art community to lead the development of new experiences	# of experiences	1	Admin	ED

FM – Field Manager, ED – Executive Director

New Trails Talk series				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Determine topic(s) based on visitor interest research				DMC
Solicit and engage one or more community partners				DMC
Develop content			Experience Development	Partner
Launch and support new product	Launch Trail Talk	Q4	Experience Development	DMC

DMC – Director of Marketing and Communications

New and Refreshed Itineraries for seasonal campaigns				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Determine the itinerary themes for each campaign	# of Themes	4		DMC
Connect with stakeholders that support the theme(s)	# of Itineraries	3 per campaign	Field Managers	FM
Develop content			Field Managers	FM
Launch Campaigns	# of campaigns	4	Marketing	DMC

Investment Attraction

Objectives

- Grow municipal investment in tourism through the facilitation of Community Tourism Plans and Wayfinding Plans
- Leverage stakeholder investment through the partnership program

Grow municipal investment				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Audit existing CTP action items	# of action plans reviewed	4	I.A	ED
	# of action items implemented	6		
Offer 'Tourism Event Planning' facilitation so that municipalities benefit from understanding how to leverage CCT resources, marketing, visitor research, etc.	# of facilitated sessions	3	I.A	ED

Support Stakeholder Groups				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Host Tourism Readiness/Welcome Back Workshops and networking sessions.	# of Workshops	3	I.A	ED
Facilitate 'Strategic Visioning (planning) Sessions' for small groups E.g. BIAs, Community Associations, Event Organizations, Agri Fair Boards, etc. Educate on the RTO Resources.	# of planning sessions	8	I.A	ED
Facilitate the sharing of best practices between organizations for efficiencies and effectiveness.	# of facilitated meetings per region	3	I.A	ED

Marketing Support Plan

In 2022-2023, the province will be in the re-opening/recovery stage from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the tourism industry faced with a “new world” of regulations, protocols, ever-changing public opinion, safety concerns and fear. The future visitor to the region will be highly cautious and therefore motivated to educate themselves prior to making plans and decisions; accordingly, CCT and its tourism businesses must focus on providing the consumer with the proper tools to make the right choices.

There are also some interesting changes to the digital sphere, as it continues to adapt to consumer needs and trends. The Metaverse (and to a lesser degree TikTok) is the next evolution of social connection and CCT staff will devote resources to understanding the technology in order to create content to fit into this new social universe as it rolls out to the public over the next fiscal.

As the RTO for York Durham and Headwaters, our marketing initiatives are being created to support this unstable and changing environment. Our 2022/2023 marketing activities are adaptable and aligned with key tourism partners and will serve to assist our tourism industry to recover, rebuild and re-establish consumer confidence and loyalty.

The marketing plan follows the guidelines as set out by the CCT Board and staff during the 2021 board retreat and the RTO Strategic Assumptions Plan while offering stakeholders additional trackable marketing opportunities.

Research

In 2022/23, research will continue to be a key resource in understanding the current/post-COVID-19 visitor. All campaigns & tactics utilize current data gathered by the CCT marketing team and the CCT Research Manager, that outline market trends, existing visitation profiles, and travel indicators/motivators, in order to position YDH as an ideal destination to the most appropriate/responsible and viable audiences. We have developed a multifaceted /phased marketing plan to help encourage people to explore our regions as travel markets begin to reopen.



The red oval represents CCT's -local market and the blue oval represents a catchment area within a 2-hour drive of the region.

Target Audience

The target audience for RTO 6 is domestic. 96-98% of all visitation to the regions and the website have been from the GTA. Lucky Orange (IP annual data tracker) and the CCT research team through postal code and geofencing research, reported in 2019/2020 and 2021/22, that visitors from GTA and local markets are the foundation of overall visitation.

Due to the outcomes of the COVID-19 travel restrictions, vaccination protocols and an unstable travel environment, CCT will continue have an increased emphasis on local primary targeting (both in print and digital).

Consumer Personas

In 2021, CCT and Environics, established 6 consumer personas utilizing postal code research and geofencing. The personas were matched with existing CCT tourism ready businesses and the tactical marketing plan reflects the attributes and behaviours of those target audiences.

- Art Lovers – Rural & Urban
- Adventure Seekers
- Family Fun
- Foodie Fanatics
- Passionate Putters

Primary Objectives

- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to tell their stories through YDH pan-regional campaigns as well as Travel Safe messaging to visitors through the media and online digital marketing tactics as part of the YDH seasonal campaigns
- Position the region as Ontario’s Road Trip Destination for local & domestic visitors in order to increase economic impact.
- Become a leader in Consumer Education in order to provide visitors with all the information they require during the destination selection process.
- Raise consumer awareness of tourism businesses and products found in York Durham Headwaters while retaining strong sub-regional identification.
- Strengthen local tourism awareness while supporting new economic impact models
- Align with Destination Ontario and other in-region tourism partners in order to raise awareness of YDH as a premier and safe destination – including local markets
- Measure success through goal setting and metric models

Additional Secondary objectives:

- Generating loyalty
- Encouraging safety
- How to provide the consumer what they need immediately
- Managing consumer expectations while balancing the post COVID-19 impact on stakeholders
- To ensure the marketing budget spend on paid advertising and content development are responsible and accountable.

Campaigns: Timelines, Elements, Weight

Masthead Campaign Message: York Durham Headwaters is Ontario’s **Ultimate Road Trip** Year-Round Road Trip Destination for domestic tourism.

Each season, using the product categories to engage visitors (identified in the targeted consumer personas) to drive visitation to our regions be delivering compelling content that is engaging and motivating. This content will be created to support in-person, distanced and virtual visitation while also supporting tourism sustainability messaging. The campaigns will also provide visitors with the proper information in order to generate a sense of safety and well-being.

Timelines Campaigns: Spring, Summer, Fall, Holiday, Winter

Campaign	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Spring												
Summer												
Fall												
Holiday												
Winter												

Product Segments

As per the direction of the original Destination Management Plan (2015-2018) and supported by current audience research reports, the Strategic Plan (2018-2021), and the 2021 CCT Board Retreat findings, all York Durham Headwaters consumer campaigns focus on the following:

- Art Lovers
- Foodie Fanatics
- Adventure Seekers
- Family Fun
- Golf (Passionate Putter)

Weight

Product Focus	Spring	Summer	Fall	Holiday	Winter
Art Lovers					
Foodie Fanatics					
Adventure Seekers					
Family Fun					
Golf *					

Please note: Green indicates heavy promotion during campaign, blue is constant. Golf is promoted under the YDH umbrella but also has its own campaign as part of a joint venture with other golf destinations in the province under the brand Golf in Ontario.

B2C Strategic Goals

In 2022-2023, CCT will continue to focus on strengthening YorkDurhamHeadwaters' in-market position, as Ontario's Ultimate Road Trip Destination with a retained emphasis on supporting local visitation. CCT will achieve this through the storytelling "Featured Article" model (see below) which uses innovative and creative content to highlight tourism businesses, and products under our primary product categories while working with DMOs, BIAs and other Tourism partners to align messaging and tactics.

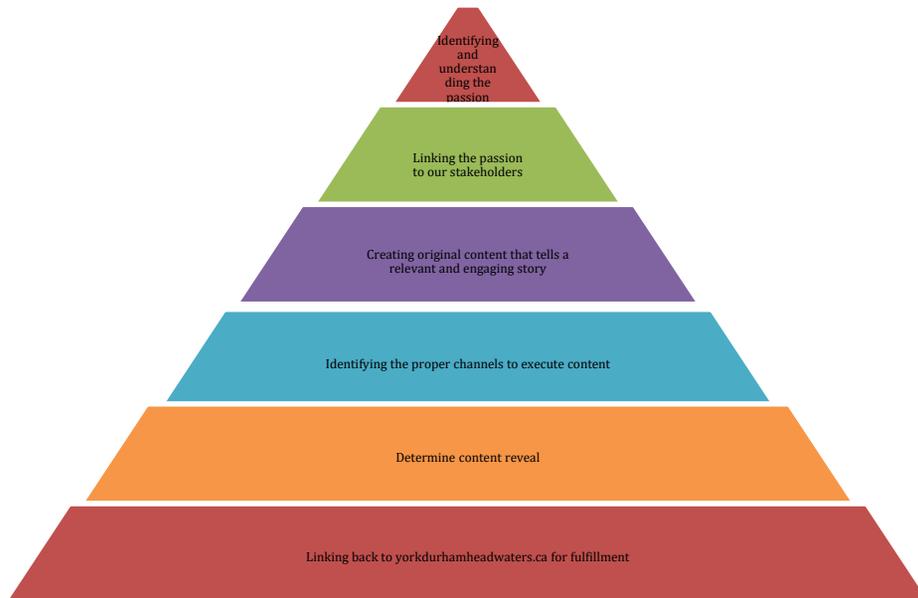
Continued from 2021-2022: CCT will continue to expand the Marketing Featured Content Model by layering in additional video – with a focused efforts on reels and potentially augmented reality. To refresh – in 2020/2021, using industry research & trends along with notable shifts in digital advertising methodology, CCT online consumer surveys, and social listening tools; CCT created a new advertising/communications fulfillment model for both paid and organic campaigns. The campaigns are and will continue to be executed strategically in an aligned tactical manner across multiple platforms: social media, search engine marketing, third party influencers, media relations and print advertising.

The Content

All campaigns will be centered on content that captures the uniqueness of the landscape, history and heritage of our regions and the incredible stories about our stakeholders and their products.

All tactics (paid and organic) will drive to our website, which will be filled with robust current content which will include: events, videos, articles, podcasts, the audio/driving tours, maps, augmented reality, and landing pages that will inspire visitors to take the tours and visit your businesses along the way. The content is adaptable and flexible in order to respond to any changes in the environment that might affect tourism visitation.

The Featured Content Model:



Understanding the model

The Passion: By isolating a passion within one of our core product categories we establish a connection with our targeted consumer.

Link: The connection is revealed through strong content about one of our stakeholders.

Content: Tell a relevant and engaging story.

Channels: We match the right content with the right channel for the right consumer.

The lure: We determine how much of the content to reveal and share to the consumer in order to spark motivation, action and conversion.

The fulfillment: We share the complete content with links to conversion and promote passion matched product.

This model also allows CCT to measure referral traffic via UTM coding with the lead stakeholders while giving interested stakeholders greater opportunities to share their stories thus improving our B2B support messaging.

Flexible and Adaptable Content

All content will be delivered to the consumer with a “flexible” call-to-action as needed in order to respond to the current travel restrictions/policies. Whether it be in-person activation or virtual, we will drive awareness, economic impact (where applicable) and create consumer loyalty.

Marketing Mission

To create a fiscally responsible measurable strategic marketing plan that promotes tourism ready products and experiences to the public via effective communication channels and through quality content that tells stories of our region with honesty, inspiration, integrity and authenticity, to drive awareness of the regions of York Durham Headwaters and increase economic impact for our businesses.

Web Strategy Objectives

To create a website that will advance the marketing mission while communicating seasonal campaigns, tools & content and message(s) to its core audience (i.e. visitors, locals, the media, influencers, tourism businesses) in a manner that is: dynamic and engaging, can readily adapt to meet the diverse and changing needs of visitors, the represented businesses, the tourism industry environment and consumer trends while providing targeted and user-friendly interaction.

Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
To create engaging seasonal campaigns that drive visitation to the regions.	# of campaigns	5	Web strategy	DM
To create a new educational portal that informs prospective visitors about the tourism businesses in our region and COVID protocols.	# of portals	1	Web Strategy	DM
To build out 2 new YDH Trail Talks Landing pages with podcasts, tools and content.	#of landing pages	2	Web Strategy	DM
To execute online survey that explores the success of website content and isolates consumer needs.	# of surveys # of completed surveys	1 750	Web Strategy	DM
To conduct research studies that compares online visitation with in-person visitation in order to ensure web content validity.	# of reports	2	Web Strategy	DM/RDM
To refresh “build your own Ultimate Road Trip Adventure” itinerary tool for each seasonal campaign.	# of updates	5	Web Strategy	DM
To embed visitor intent (google tags) tracking mechanisms within articles to track success.	# of Articles Embedded	20	Web Strategy	DM/MM
Implement the YDH Safe Travels Stamp Program.	# of programs	1	Web Strategy	DM/MM

Digital Strategy Objectives

To create engaging, highly-targeted, measurable organic and paid digital experiences that attract new and existing visitors, and drives engagement with high-converting, personalized content and generates visitation to the regions while supporting the needs of our businesses.

Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Social Media Engagement: Complete quarterly YOY engagement growth comparison for all social channels for B2C, YorkDurhamHeadwaters.	% of engagement increases per channel	Twitter: 20% Facebook: 15% Instagram: 30%	Reporting	DM/MM
Social Media Referral: Complete quarterly YOY comparison for all social channels for B2C, YorkDurhamHeadwaters.	# of unique traffic referrals per channel	Twitter: 600 Facebook: 15,000 Instagram: 1000	Reporting	DM/MM
Content Development: Create, prioritize and execute a “shot list” to continue to build a robust image bank that accurately reflects the pillar 5 product content inventory of each region for marketing purposes.	# of images for print/web	1000 images	Photography / Videography	DM/MM
Content Development: Continue to develop the video bank to accurately reflect the pillar product content inventory of each region for marketing purposes.	#of b-roll collections #of reels	4 20	Photography / Videography	DM/MM
Research and attend International Social Media Conference.	# of conferences	1	Content	DM/MM
Content development: work with travel writers to create compelling articles that tell the story of the region, tourism businesses, products and programs.	#of articles	40	Content	DM/MM
Execute a targeted search based marketing campaign to raise awareness of tourism businesses, products, and programming.	# of impressions	2,600,000	Advertising	DM/MM
Execute native ad social media campaigns.	# campaigns	3	Channel Advertising	DM/MM
To refresh B2C e newsletter.	# of refreshes	1	B2C Newsletter	DM/MM

Earned Media and Influencer Relations Objectives

To establish, build relationships and maintain solid and ethical relationships with media, influencers and bloggers for accurate, balanced and timely information release that raises awareness of tourism businesses, products, programming and people in our regions in order to attract visitors, extend audience reach and increase economic impact while measuring the impressions and earned media value.

Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Work with paid influencers whose audience is demographically and geographically matched with CCT’s target audience base in order to utilize their channels to raise awareness of CCT tourism businesses, programs and products while extending our audience reach through their verified channels and increase visitation to the regions.	#of campaigns	5	Earned Media and Influencer Relations	DM
Pan-Regional Monitoring – Create report in order to measure success in the following categories: impression reach, PR value and regional coverage.	# of reports	12 (monthly)	Earned Media and Influencer Relations	DM
Press release distribution for stakeholders in order to extend their marketing efforts	# of releases distributed	50	Earned Media and Influencer Relations	DM

<p>Press release creation and distribution of CCT generated press releases and advisories in order to raise awareness of campaigns, offerings, special products.</p>	<p># of releases distributed</p> <p>Estimated Media Value</p>	<p>48</p> <p>\$4M</p>	<p>Earned Media and Influencer Relations</p>	<p>DM</p>
<p>Host media event for travel writers and influencers who have over 80% of Audience based in Ontario.</p>	<p># of events</p> <p># of influencer led campaigns</p>	<p>1</p> <p>10</p>	<p>Earned Media and Influencer Relations</p>	<p>MM/DM</p>
<p>Work with paid influencers to tell the YDH/Regional tourism story on their verified channels utilizing key stakeholders.</p>	<p># of external campaigns</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Earned Media and Influencer Relations</p>	<p>DM/MM</p>
<p>To develop a yearlong media strategy which tells the positive side of Covid recovery – higher safety measures, how businesses have improved safety protocols in order to alleviate fear.</p>	<p># of strategies</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Earned Media and Influencer Relations</p>	<p>DM/MM</p>

Paid Marketing Objectives

To execute a paid marketing campaign that is aligned with our seasonal strategy. We will work with print publications that have a solid, targeted audiences that match the CCT target audiences based on CCT research studies and the CCT consumer personas. We will also offer tourism businesses affordable advertising opportunities in order to raise awareness of their products, programs and experiences in order to generate economic impact.

Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Partner with tourism businesses to raise awareness of tourism products, programs and events while providing advertising opportunities to tourism businesses.	# of full page co-op ads	10	Partnerships	DM
Partner with Destination Ontario in order to extend audience reach while leveraging dollars.	# of campaigns Value: \$30,000	1	Media Buys	DM
Work with Ontario By Bike/Greenbelt to promote cycling in our regions	#of ads	1	Partnerships	DM
Work with regionally based tourism publications to promote local tourism	# of ads	3	Printing / Graphic Design	DM
Earned Revenue from Co-Ops	Value	\$26,000	Partnerships	DM

Group Travel Support

Objectives

- Be the best practice example of pan-regional partnership through the Golf in Ontario Program
- Support group travel growth through bid-support and offsetting the cost for stakeholders to attend Travel Trade events

Golf in Ontario Growth				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Solicit new stakeholder and DMO/RTO partners to actively grow the program	# of new partners / stakeholders	10	Golf in Ontario	ED

Group Travel Growth				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Communicate CCT ability to support new business bids and solicit applications against the bid fund	Funds Leveraged	100%	Bid Fund	ED
Support stakeholder investment in developing group travel markets by offsetting costs to attend tradeshow and conferences	Funds Leveraged	100%	Tradeshows and Conferences	ED

Partnership Program

Objectives

- Foster tourism investment
- Further CCT’s impact on tourism

Foster Tourism Investment and Impact				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Solicit partnership proposals from municipalities, BIAs, DMOs and regions that focus on supporting increased visitation, stakeholder capacity, destination development and other tourism-related projects.	# of mentions in B2B newsletters #of direct conversations with stakeholders # of Partnerships	4 10 4	Partnership	
Support projects that advance Community Tourism Plan action items	# of Partnerships	4	Partnership	

Note: Additional FedDev funding may increase both the budget and add objectives to match those of the Tourism Relief Fund

Further CCT impact on tourism				
Tactics	KPIs	Goals	Budget Line	Lead
Solicit partnerships that encourage increased visitation and increased length of visit.	# of Partnerships	25	Partnership	
Encourage development of shoulder season products/experiences/festivals.	# of Partnerships	4	Partnership	

Appendix I

Definitions

In discussing strategy, it is important to have a common understanding of the terms used in the document.

Objectives	Manageable, time-sensitive allocations of resources that move the organization toward the ultimate Strategic Direction. There is a clear link between each objective and a Strategic Direction. Objectives are the backbone of the yearly Business Plan and build on each other year-over-year.
Tactics	Individual activities that support the achievement of Objectives. Each Objective may have several tactics associated with it. Tactics are measurable and are used to gauge organizational effectiveness at achieving the Objectives and moving towards the Strategic Direction.
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators are the agreed upon outcomes that will be measured to determine the execution effectiveness of each tactic.
Goals	The quantitative and qualitative, agreed-upon target to be achieved for each tactic.
Results	The final measurement of achievement for each tactic.
Outcome	The cumulative affect of results supporting the objective.

Definitions Cont'd

Operator:	A tourism-related business or organization that is providing an end product/service that is utilized directly by consumers.
Partner:	An organization that supports the tourism agenda without directly owning the products/services that are used to deliver the tourism experience. These include Municipalities, BIAs, Chambers of Commerce, DMOs and Festival Organizers.
Stakeholders:	An umbrella term to capture all operators, partners and individuals who support and/or benefit from tourism.
Region(s):	In its singular, Region is referring to Central Counties Tourism Region (RTO 6). When used as a plural, Regions refers to the three sub-regions that make up Central Counties borders. These are Durham Region, York Region and The Hills of Headwaters tourism region.
DMO(s):	The staff and board of directors of the three regions that work to further tourism within their borders.
Categories:	The five product categories identified as strengths for CCT. They are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art Lovers• Foodie Fanatics• Adventure Seekers• Family Fun• Golf (Passionate Putters)
Leisure Market:	Visitors travelling for personal reasons, not as a group or for a sport tournament or business meeting/convention

Acronyms

CCT	Central Counties Tourism
YRAC	York Region Arts Council
Durham	Durham Region Tourism
DeON	Destination Ontario (formerly Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation)
TIAO	Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
DC	Destination Canada (Federal Tourism Agency)
IDO	Investment Development Office (Ministry of Tourism)
Q(1-4)	Fiscal Quarters Q1 Apr-Jun, Q2 Jul-Sep, Q3 Oct-Dec, Q4 Jan-Mar

Organizational Chart

