

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee Members:

Councillor J. Fullarton, Chair
Councillor M. Wren
T. Barnes
Mayor J. Baker, Ex-Officio

Absent:

J. Barabash

Other Council Members:

Councillor C. Wales

Staff:

C. Cosgrove, Director of Operations
S. MacDonald, City Clerk
L. Murray, Deputy City Clerk (Recording Secretary)
M. Pascoe Merkley, Interim City Manager
R. Nolan, Director of Economic Development
L. White, Manager of Strategic Initiatives

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil.

2. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Municipal Accommodation Tax

Pat Markovich representing the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism addressed the committee regarding the allocation of the MAT tax.

Jason would like a copy of the presentation circulated to the committee. *(a copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes)*

[CHAMBER TOURISM ORGANIZATION PRELIM STRATEGIC PLAN
OVERVIEW Dec 5 \(3\)](#)

3. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

Nil.

4. REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Nil.

5. STAFF REPORTS

1. 2018-123-12

2019 Tall Ships Festival Update

Moved by: T. Barnes

THAT the Tall Ships Committee provide financial reports to the EDRTC in March 2019 and June 2019.

CARRIED

L. White summarized the report for the committee. Lesley will circulate an updated budget.

2. 2018-128-12

**Proposed Allocation of the
Municipal Accommodation Tax**

Moved by: Councillor Wren

1. THAT the following allocation of the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) be endorsed;

Allocation – subject to annual approval by Council:

Funds received from the MAT, as at December 31st each year, will be allocated as follows:

- I. 50% to the City of Brockville for tourism-related assets and activities.
- II. 50% to the local Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for increased marketing support of local festivals and new product development.

2. THAT \$50,000 of the 2018 MAT receipts, before the formula is applied, is allocated to the Aquatarium as authorized by Council resolution at the Council meeting of Tuesday, July 24th, 2018. Of the balance of the 2018 MAT receipts, the City of Brockville's 50% shall be allocated to the Aquatarium;
3. THAT the DMO report to EDRTC annually with a costed business plan of how the MAT funds will be spent;
4. THAT the DMO report to EDRTC annually with the outcomes from the money spent;
5. THAT the DMO will provide annual audited financial statements to the City of Brockville related to MAT revenues and expenses;
6. THAT no fee be charged by the City for administration of the MAT.

CARRIED, AS AMENDED ON A LATER VOT

Motion to Amend

Moved by: T. Barnes

THAT paragraphs I and II in Clause 1. be reversed.

CARRIED

The vote on the original motion, as amended, was now taken and the motion, as amended, was carried.

Amended Motion

Moved by: Councillor Wren

1. THAT the following allocation of the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) be endorsed;

Allocation – subject to annual approval by Council:

Funds received from the MAT, as at December 31st each year, will be allocated as follows:

- I. 50% to the local Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for increased marketing, support of local festivals and new product development.
 - II. 50% to the City of Brockville for tourism-related assets and activities.
2. THAT \$50,000 of the 2018 MAT receipts, before the formula is applied, is allocated to the Aquatarium as authorized by Council resolution at the Council meeting of Tuesday, July 24th, 2018. Of the balance of the 2018 MAT receipts, the City of Brockville's 50% shall be allocated to the Aquatarium;
3. THAT the DMO report to EDRTC annually with a costed business plan of how the MAT funds will be spent;
4. THAT the DMO report to EDRTC annually with the outcomes from the money spent;
5. THAT the DMO will provide annual audited financial statements to the City of Brockville related to MAT revenues and expenses;
6. THAT no fee be charged by the City for administration of the MAT.

CARRIED

6. NEW BUSINESS - REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL
Nil.

7. EDRTC - CONSENT AGENDA
Nil.

8. MEDIA QUESTION PERIOD

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Councillor Wren

THAT the Economic Development, Recreation and Tourism Committee adjourn its meeting until the next meeting scheduled for January 15, 2019.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TOURISM ORGANIZATION PRELIMINARY STRATEGIC PLAN – DECEMBER 2019

Overview:

Brockville & 1000 Islands Tourism Organization is Brockville's sole mandate is to promote the attraction of visitors to the municipality which includes encouraging the development of tourism products to stimulate and enhance visitor spending and city-wide economic well-being. 100% of the funding provided by the City of Brockville, via the MAT, will be used for the exclusive purpose of promoting tourism with a strategic focus on the industry. This includes culture, leisure travel, and sport/recreation tourism as well as meeting and convention sectors for both group travel and Free Independent Travellers (FIT).

The strategies outlined in this plan are dependent on the separate and additional funding for Tourism via the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT), and the Tourism Long Term Strategic Action Plan currently being developed by the MDB Insights Consultants.

Additional funding will be used to expand opportunities for the businesses, and attractions in Brockville and work towards the creation of additional local jobs. Overall it will provide an opportunity for Brockville to compete in a very competitive tourism market and an opportunity for increased economic prosperity in the City of Brockville.

Organizational Structure:

Brockville & 1000 Islands Tourism works under the auspices of the Brockville & District Chamber of Commerce. The City of Brockville has contracted the Chamber since 2002 to provide tourism services for the City of Brockville. Assisted by a Tourism Advisory Board, Brockville & 1000 Islands Tourism represents the City of Brockville on the world stage, and is the DMO member of the Regional Tourism Organization RT09.

Brockville & 1000 Islands Tourism works together with more than 300 tourism-related businesses, events, and conferences to profile Brockville as a diverse and exciting place to visit. From the city's cultural gems, to award-winning attractions and restaurants, Brockville & 1000 Islands Tourism works to showcase all of what Brockville has to offer.

A Growth Opportunity:

These additional funds will serve to promote Brockville on a wider geographical basis, and also to promote Brockville as a year-round destination. This plan details a marketing strategy which employs a balance of digital advertising with print advertising in both relevant, geographic, specialty publications, and other promotional opportunities in order to significantly expand opportunities and remain competitive.

Enhanced spending and performance will serve to:

- Facilitate incremental business opportunities that otherwise could not be successfully attained
- Increase day and overnight visitations and grow revenue, improve occupancy and average daily rates for the Brockville hospitality industry

- Increase the number of business conventions and delegate spending
- Stimulate an increased interest in Brockville to host significant sporting, culture and entertainment events
- Leverage investment, increase economic growth, and job creation
- Contribute to branding Brockville as a vibrant, liveable city and stimulate growth.

Various studies conclude that an accommodation tax is a proven and successful business strategy that fuels tourism growth and leverages funding that have the capacity to yield more tourism revenue for the community. By focusing on the promotion and development of tourism and destination travel by tourists, conventions, delegates and other business travellers, attracting sport and cultural events to Brockville will not only stimulate economic growth and job creation but substantially proliferate Brockville's reputation as a nationally recognized visitor destination.

The MAT provides a significant advantage to Brockville as it enables Brockville to compete successfully for tourism business with competitor tourism organizations in Ontario who operate with more operational and MAT funding, as well as tourism organizations throughout the country.

MAT provides the DMO with an opportunity for increased leveraging with grants from government and RT09. This growth opportunity can and will contribute exponentially to economic development in Brockville and in the process bolster civic pride and quality of life for all citizens.

Long Term Strategy & Action Plan:

Brockville Tourism contracted a consultancy firm in August of 2018 and is in the process of developing a Long Term Strategy and action plan that will guide the direction of tourism in Brockville for the next five years. As of December 2018 the consultants have engaged in a number of one-on-one interviews, stakeholder group sessions and surveys as well as reviewing relevant city documents and past studies. A preliminary report is expected in January of 2019. At the conclusion of this process Tourism will work to refine the direction and targeting of the planned promotional components contained in this report in terms of demographic sectors, tourism sectors, and as directed by the consultant's findings. Tourism will present the finalized strategic plans in a frequency dictated by the Economic Development, Recreation and Tourism Committee and Council at large.

Plan Component Overview:

1. Digital Marketing:
2. Social Media
3. Print
4. Product Development/Target Market
5. Other Promotional
6. Performance / Analytics

Details on Plan Components:

1. Digital Marketing

The statistics relevant to digital marketing include:

Daily media consumption:

- 49% of digital media consumption is through mobile devices.
- The digital customer is online 7.6 hours a day as follows:
 - 28% surfing social media
 - 24% on email
 - 23% Surfing content
 - 19% surfing video
 - 6% online shopping
 - 1% searching

Digital Marketing Goal:

Engage in more robust digital marketing campaigns that expand breadth and depth of coverage.

Brockville Digital Marketing Campaign - Best campaigns are \$60 - \$80K which could be achieved through matching grant programs and put us in line with campaigns run in Gananoque, Kingston, and other destinations in south eastern Ontario.

Brockville can graduate from “Good Level” to “Best Level”, which is moving from 1.75 million impressions to 2.6 million impressions and 5 events that can be targeted. A higher level of digital impressions would allow further programmatic advertising technology opportunity, and better targeting with digital ads, when a visitor:

- Is online looking for Brockville or a competitor’s offerings, targeting prospects that are researching locations right now. (Behavioral)
- has identified themselves as a specific audience we want to target based on interests, income, or other firmographic / demographic information (Persona HD)
- is at an event that Brockville would like to target (Event Targeting / Geofencing)
- has gone to and left from our website (Site Retargeting)
- is reading industry blogs, forums, and sites they go to regularly (Sector Targeting)
- is surfing the web at work (Company Targeting)
- is in our consumer or industry e-mail database today

Tour Group Target for Digital Campaign: Participate in OMCA Digital E-Newsletter Advertising Banner

- Distribution: 812 Subscribed Motor Coach Professionals
- Frequency: Weekly

- Average Open Rate: 97%
- Swap out ads as often as every week
- Educate and inform the subscribing motor coach professionals on local area attractions

Digital Marketing to LGBTQ Market: Participate in Digital Advertising in the specific on line media consumed by the LGBTQ market

Digital Partnership Marketing via Thousand Island Tourism Commission Partnership Cooperative Advertising Campaign (TITC)

Upgrade participation to Level 1 opportunity to have increased exposure with TV ads, digital impressions, Minimum 2000 clicks for native advertising, programmatic display ad, 750 clicks on Brockville creative for Facebook ads, TripAdvisor advertising, etc.

Currently we operate with the Level 2 partnership which gives 300 TV ads and 20,000 digital impressions, with 1000 clicks and 300 clicks on Brockville creative on Facebook ads.

There is also an opportunity to expand geographic reach for an additional \$5,700 annually to reach New York City-Toronto. (NYC, Rockland Country, Long Island, NJ, Fairfield County, CT, Toronto)

2. **Social Media:** Promote Brockville and the Region through supporting all tourism products, businesses, activities, events, etc. Achieve this via the Tourism Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube Channel. Moving towards more “experiential” or storytelling with Tourism messages and posts to engage our visitors and draw them in to our Brockville experience as well as reach out to locals, who are the ambassadors for their own community and can impact Family and Friends to visit.
 - A. Ensure Website is current and relevant as well as engaging and interactive. Create digital content for the website (and Tourism YouTube channel)
 - B. Engage with social media aggregators like Crowdriff to be able to manage all visual images taken by visitors in our area under one platform, optimizing our visual content and allowing us more sharing thus extending our reach. Provides us with photography we can use without further costs.
 - C. Increase digital promotions by purchasing Facebook ads, LinkedIn test ads and sponsored content and purchasing google ad space
 - D. Set social media goals as to number of followers and track progress
 - E. Engage social media bloggers with big followings to come to Brockville and write about us (fam tours)
3. **Increase Print Components** to gain exposure in key publications like CAA, AAA, Epoch Magazine, Island Life, European publications, specialty magazines (sport/fishing/boating/camping, cycling, golfing, diving, curling), TITC Visitor Guide
4. **Product Development & Target Market**

Provide research and information of use to the tourism community, and look at expansion of target markets both geographically and demographically

- Explore and report on current trends like “dark” tourism and aboriginal tourism.
- Focus on international markets, like China and Europe where higher spending visitors are located
- Pursuit of Asian “FIT’s” Free Independent Travelers
- Develop more robust shoulder and winter season attractions and events
- Increased support and direction with festivals and events

5. Promotional Opportunities

Increase awareness in geographically targeted areas using new methods like truck wrapping— putting our attractions on the sides and back of trucks in cities we want to target.

Participate in On Route advertising on exterior and interior of service stations to reach car travelers along the 401. Digital components also available.

Participate in key fundraisers with good exposure like WPBS Focus on cooperation between attractions by developing packages that would also serve to help market our destination, assist attractions, accommodations and other businesses.

Attend niche trade shows for target markets and specialty markets.

Take memberships in critical tourism organizations and increase engagement with tourism organizations

6. Performance Measures:

The initiatives undertaken with support from the MAT will include a detailed measurement mechanism of key performance indicators that can include:

- Accommodation Occupancy
- Accommodation average daily rate
- Web Site analytics/visitor interactions
- Twitter/Facebook/Instagram followers
- Economic impact assessment analysis for festivals, sport events, recreation, and attractions

Additional metrics that could be made possible with MAT are:

- Purchasing Credit card data to determine visitor spending
- Hyllo tracking for attractions like the rail tunnel, Blockhouse Island, and events
- Hiring of research students for questionnaires for boaters, campers, etc.