



The Town of Orangeville **Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2021 - 2026**

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Terms & Acronyms

AR:

Augmented reality

Arts & culture:

Those elements that define the appeal of any given place, including visual and performing arts, historic and culinary elements, and other shared experiences

BIPOC:

Black, Indigenous, People of Colour

Brand:

The visual and storytelling image presented by an organization or product to demonstrate its appeal and value

Collaboration:

The act of combining efforts between public and/or private businesses & organizations when working towards a common goal, or when common interests could be more effectively met by working together (whether through time & financial resource allocation, marketing, etc.)

Community engagement:

The process of involving residents, local business owners and others directly in information gathering and decision making

Destination:

A place that people visit with intent, for (a) specific reason(s) or purpose, typically rooted in entertainment and activity

Inclusion:

The act of including people of all cultural backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, physical capabilities, ages and income groups in each stage of tourism development, from community engagement, to committees, to marketing & promotions

Itinerary:

A planned route or journey, outlining a clear sequence of activities and a suggested schedule

Packages:

Where and when multiple service providers act in concert to provide a pre-set “product/experience.” For example: Stay and Dine package, Event and Stay package, Activity and Meal package, etc.

Socially conscious traveller:

Those travellers’ who prioritize ethical, inclusive, sustainable sources of entertainment

Sustainable tourism development:

An approach to tourism growth & promotion that prioritizes: long-term benefits for residents, business owners and visitors; community spirit; respect for all people & the natural environment; and dollars spent versus simply heads in beds

Tourism:

Leveraging attractions, natural assets, arts, culture, culinary appeal or other factors to attract visitor spending

Tourism asset / tourism driver / tourism product:

Any event, attraction, experience, service or otherwise that supports the delivery of tourism

Tourism collateral:

Those resources which support the promotion and marketing of tourism assets, including but not limited to photos, videos, brochures, guides, maps, etc.

Visitor economy:

Defined by the World Travel & Tourism Council as any direct, indirect and induced economic activity resulting from visitors interactions with their destination

VFR:

Visiting friends & relatives

2sLGBTQIA+:

Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual

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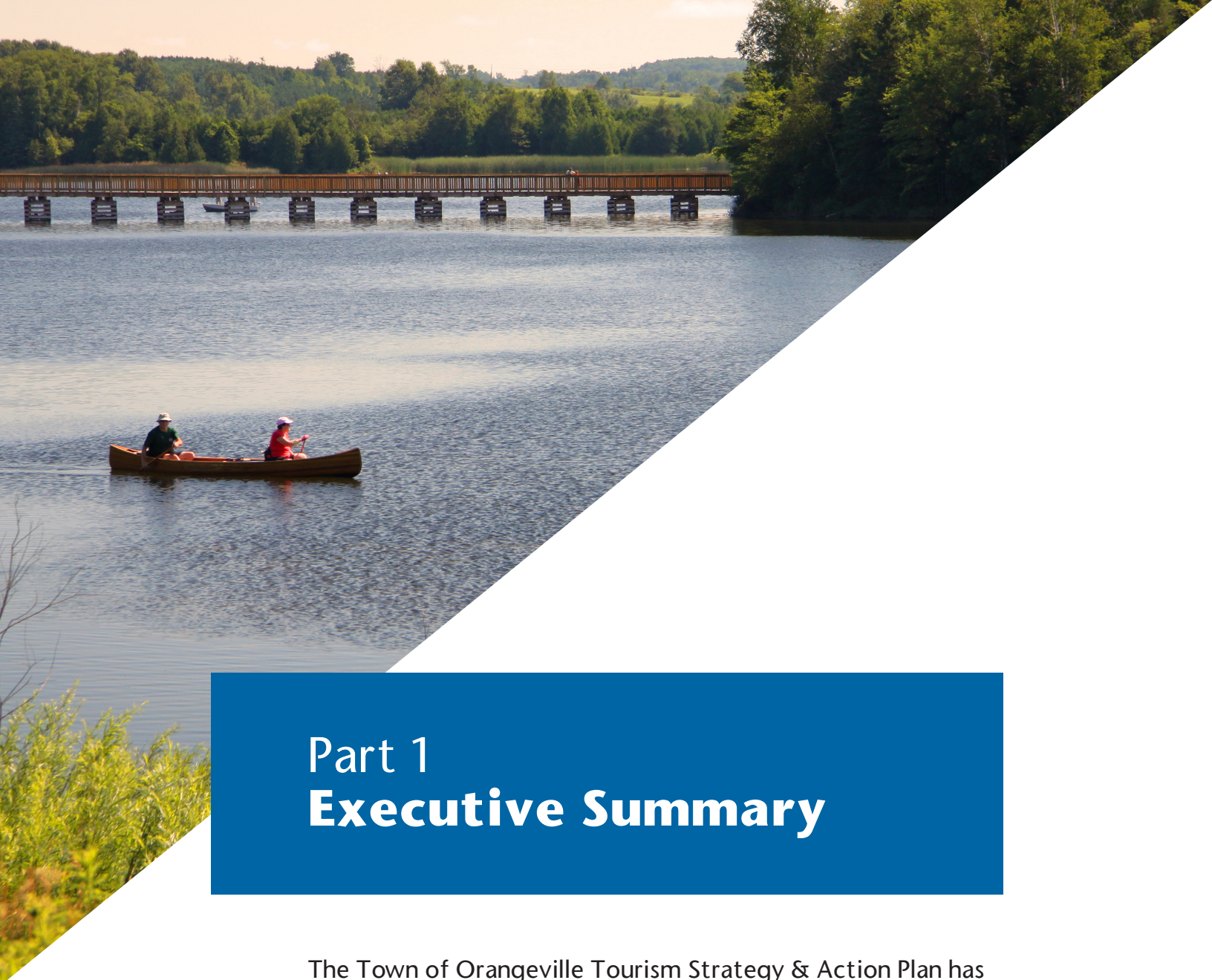
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Part 1

Executive Summary

The Town of Orangeville Tourism Strategy & Action Plan has been developed to provide clear and achievable goals that will guide ongoing local tourism success. Its creation follows the findings of the Town's Economic Development Strategy 2018, which identified tourism as a sector of focus for future growth within the region.

The Plan highlights assets throughout the Town that, together, create a compelling tourism narrative, and seeks to define how these can be most effectively utilized or enhanced. The Strategy also identifies new and innovative approaches to attracting visitors, building upon established themes such as arts & culture, nature & the outdoors, and historic, small-town charm.

While research and analysis informed much of the approach, in-depth interviews with town staff, stakeholders, councillors, volunteers, and residents were pivotal to understanding current tourism perceptions and opportunities.



Specific key actions that supported the development of the plan include:

- Background research:
 - o Orangeville Tourism Development and Marketing Plan (2010)
 - o Orangeville BIA Strategic Plan (2017)
 - o Town of Orangeville Official Plan (2018)
 - o Orangeville Economic Development Strategy Update (2018)
 - o Cultural Plan (2014) + Cultural Plan Progress Summary Report (2018)
 - o CCT Visitor Research Program, Town of Orangeville Visitor Information Centre (2019)
 - o Cycling & Trails Master Plan (2019)
 - o Roger Brooks Assessment Findings & Suggestions Report (2019)
 - o Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan (2019)
 - o Recreation and Parks Master Plan (2020)
- Stakeholder engagement:
 - o 26 one-on-one interviews with local tourism & tourism-adjacent stakeholders;
 - o 15 one-on-one interviews with town representatives, including staff and council members;
 - o a public information session, which engaged approximately 40 participants;
 - o a stakeholder workshop, with 6 participants;
 - o and a stakeholder survey, with 24 responses.
- A comparable analysis of municipalities with opportunities and challenges in tourism development similar to those of Orangeville (see Appendix A)
- Two site visits



Tourism snapshot

The Town of Orangeville is ideally located just off Highway 10, with easy access from communities in any given direction. There is a charming downtown with heritage buildings that are well-maintained and beautified thanks in part to the Façade Improvement Grant Program. The Town partners with downtown businesses and invests up to \$30,000 per year in façade improvements.

In the past, the Credit Valley Explorer Train has been praised for attracting out-of-town visitors, particularly in fall and winter seasons. This train is no longer running (since 2018), impacting Orangeville's year-round appeal. Further, the Headwaters Tourism Association ceased to exist as of December 2019, leaving a gap in the tourism promotion of Orangeville and other areas of Dufferin County.

Still, there are plenty of other draws to the area, particularly productions by Theatre Orangeville and local festivals and events, such as the Blues & Jazz Festival. The Best Western acts as the primary option for accommodation in the Town, though investments have been made by private businesses for further development, both within the Town limits and just outside (in Mono). Any new hotel properties expected in the area at the moment are poised to be mainstream brands targeting mid-range visitors.

Orangeville is a well-situated day trip destination, with potential for more overnight appeal as new accommodation options become available.

Top tourism assets identified within the Town limits include:

- Historic downtown / heritage building facades
- Local shops & restaurants
- Theatre Orangeville
- Island Lake Conservation Area
- Blues & Jazz Festival
- Local events (Celebrate Your Awesome, Moonlight Magic, Harvest Celebration, Taste of Orangeville, Ribfest, Indigenous Peoples Day)
- Tree sculptures
- Public art displays (i.e. utility boxes)
- Farmers' Market
- Town parks and trails

Some of the top tourism assets identified nearby include:

- Hockley Valley Resort
- Adamo Estate Winery
- Mono Cliffs Provincial Park
- The Bruce Trail
- Forks of the Credit Provincial Park
- Alton Mill
- Museum of Dufferin

Tourism development priorities

Through the research, engagement and analysis process of this Strategy development, four strategic priorities emerged, within which recommendations and an action plan have been built. These include:

- **Administration & Operations**
- **Branding & Promotions**
- **Tourism Assets & Experience Development**
- **Infrastructure & Investments**

Within these priorities, recommendations focus largely on allocating appropriate human resources to supporting effective tourism development efforts; maintaining, enhancing and expanding tourism assets; investing in infrastructure to improve the local visitor experience; and defining and developing a tourism brand, or “place identity”, from which other marketing and promotional efforts will be established. A special focus has been placed on the arts & culture sector, where there are exciting opportunities for growth through new events, activities, and public art. Orangeville’s historic downtown, culinary offerings, and local parks & trails are also considered important to the future growth of the local visitor economy.



Impacts of Covid-19

Work on this Tourism Strategy began in May 2020, only two months after a global pandemic was declared due to Covid-19 and the world struggled to adapt to new ways of life—varied rules for social interaction, retailer operations, physical distancing, etc. There is no sure end in sight, and despite predictions for a vaccine to be available in 2021, it's safe to say that the impacts of the coronavirus will continue to be felt well into 2021 and beyond.

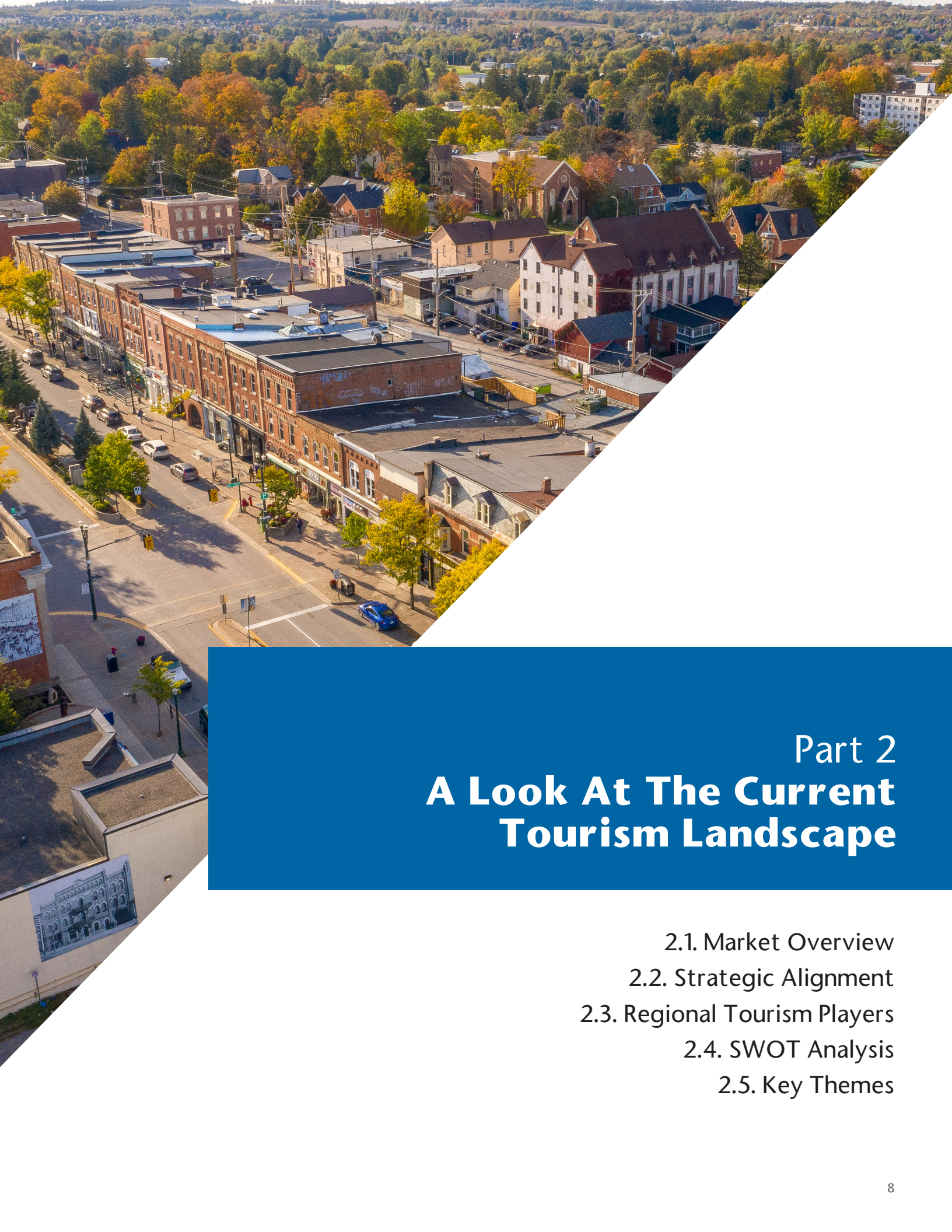
Given the unknown circumstances of how, or even if, major events such as Blues & Jazz can be hosted in 2021 or when live theatre performances can return—two long-standing and valuable tourism drivers in Orangeville— expectations must be managed and a strategic approach considered in carrying-out this plan.

As such, the first 12 to 24 months of implementation should be viewed as a rebounding period, as well as an opportunity to enhance the Town's tourism appeal. Dedicating resources to tourism product development and brand & marketing initiatives will establish a more solid foundation from which to grow in the years ahead. The Action Plan has been developed with this general approach in mind.

Five-year vision

Ultimately, this Strategy & Action Plan aims to achieve the following five-year vision:

By 2026, the Town of Orangeville will be a burgeoning tourism destination known for its unique combination of progressive community values and small town vibe, which both locals and visitors look to for unique public & performing art experiences, culinary imbibement, and access to outdoor activities, knowing there is something to enjoy year-round.



Part 2

A Look At The Current Tourism Landscape

- 2.1. Market Overview
- 2.2. Strategic Alignment
- 2.3. Regional Tourism Players
- 2.4. SWOT Analysis
- 2.5. Key Themes




2.1. Market Overview

Covid-19 has disrupted the visitor economy on a grand scale. Local businesses are left with fewer resources—both time and money—to invest in engaging with the community and regional visitors. Residents and prospective visitors are facing uncertain economic futures, not to mention health & safety concerns. These factors are consequently limiting many people's interactions with tourism assets within their home communities and beyond.

The coronavirus has also disrupted marketing and communications channels. Tourism brands must consider how to engage with the public ethically and with the best interest of local businesses and residents front of mind, which are often two competing mandates.

Despite the challenges thrust upon destinations across the globe, one trend is expected to take-off over the coming months, and indeed, potentially years: Travellers will be seeking new experiences that are close to home because of the reduced health risks and financial burdens associated with local and regional travel compared to further-afield domestic trips or international vacations.

A [poll by Vancouver-based firm, Research Co.](#) found that most Canadians aren't interested in getting on a plane to anywhere, at least until a vaccine is widely available. Results of [an Ipsos study](#) reinforce this notion, indicating that four in 10 Canadians surveyed are more open to domestic travel this year. Looking ahead to the easing of travel restrictions, [a study by Oliver Wyman](#) suggests that, for Canadians, there is a greater propensity for domestic urban and domestic rural experiences, or to not travel at all, compared to those interested in international travel.



“ Tourism success doesn’t need to mean having the best festivals or the most hotels per capita; for us, it would mean a small influx of visitors that support our local businesses & enjoy what we have to offer.

- Stakeholder interview

This data reinforces the opportunities ahead for the Town of Orangeville, which is at a particular advantage for a number of reasons, including but not limited to:

- its proximity to markets such as the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), the Golden Horseshoe, Barrie, Collingwood, Guelph, Waterloo, and more;
- its ideal geographical location, as a hub to a wealth of outdoor activities within Town limits and throughout Dufferin County;
- and its diverse arts & cultural, and historic downtown & offerings within.

These characteristics could be leveraged for tourism development in a pre- or post-pandemic era, however, given current trends, the value of these realities are enhanced in today’s circumstances.

Further, conversations and action surrounding diversity and inclusion are also dominating headlines, with consumer priority shifting to businesses that hold these values paramount to operations. This trend is expected to apply to travel spending and destination selection among Orangeville’s target markets—from the Greater Toronto Area in particular, especially with regard to Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC), 2sLGBTQIA+, differently-abled folks, and other equity-seeking groups. As an indication of the visitor potential from the GTA alone, 2.9 million people identify as “visible minorities,” according to the [2016 Census](#), and an additional 39,000 identify as Indigenous. Inclusive practice in marketing and communications will position Orangeville to effectively capture a portion of this population segment.

Given Orangeville’s downtown charm, unique arts & cultural appeal, and natural assets, there is ample reason to invest in the tourism sector—and in doing so, appeal to a diverse range of prospective visitors. With a clear strategy and commitment of resources, residents and stakeholders, the Town stands to reap the rewards of thoughtful, sustainable tourism development.

2.2. Strategic Alignment

In order to effectively dedicate resources and attention to various tourism development initiatives, it is important to acknowledge where there are opportunities for strategic alignment with other Town projects and initiatives. Following a comprehensive review of various reports, Bannikin sees alignments that include but are not limited to the following areas:

Orangeville Strategic Plan (2017)

- Municipal Services: Town services will be citizen focused and delivered professionally to ensure quality that meets the needs of the community, delivered effectively and efficiently.
- Economic Vitality: Economic growth will focus on business development, retention and expansion and increased tourism and cultural opportunities; will attract & retain business, foster entrepreneurship and stimulate tourism/economic development.
- Community Stewardship: Our community will embrace our heritage and will be an accessible, inclusive place where all residents feel safe, engaged and involved; where citizens are: active & healthy, engaged & involved.
- Sustainable Infrastructure: Infrastructure will become sustainable through the well-planned management of town assets and systems that keep people moving and the town functional.

Orangeville BIA Strategic Plan (2017)

- Five major directions: customer attraction, member engagement, beautified unique space, stakeholder alignment & organizational effectiveness.
- Identification of trends, including The Experience Economy, Slow Food Movement and Social Connection.
- Commitments to building on strengths, improving capacity & capabilities, empowering members, working smarter (not harder), and being future ready.
- Valuing collaboration, through leadership and teamwork to achieve vision of being “the ultimate place to go.”




Cultural Plan (2014) + Progress Summary (2018)

- The Town should develop a focused approach to the arts and culture by integrating cultural opportunities across all its departments and activities, such as recreation programs, and by developing a cultural investment strategy.
- The Town of Orangeville needs coordination to leverage the social, tourism and economic potential of its cultural scene and should create a dedicated position for a Culture and Tourism Coordinator.
- Mandate: To be a leader in cultural development and engagement in the Orangeville area and to celebrate, facilitate and enhance arts and culture for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.
- Principles: Identity, inclusion, collaboration & community; economy; inspiration; capacity; & accountability.

Economic Development Strategy Update (2018)

- A consistent, focused and authentic brand will enhance Orangeville's profile as a place for business, manufacturing, tourism and arts and culture. A re-evaluation of Orangeville's economic development and tourism branding, last undertaken in 2009, would be timely and might be coupled with the development of a new tourism strategy commencing in 2020; Recommendations: Undertake an Orangeville economic development and tourism branding review; and renew and update websites, including strengthening content.
- Tourism-specific and Creative Industries recommendations, including: Review Visitor Information Centre operations and opportunities for collaboration with other municipalities as appropriate; Support training for the hospitality workforce and operators to enhance the Orangeville visitor experience; Continue to target sports tourism that aligns with availability of accommodation in Orangeville; Continue to seek and evaluate opportunities to build new and expanded assets that strengthen cultural tourism; and Promote linkages among the arts and culture, tourism, and food and culinary sectors.



“Orangeville has a unique charm, a great variety of shops and amenities, a great sense of community and a lot of other assets in our own backyard.

- Stakeholder interview

Town of Orangeville Official Plan (2018)

- To maintain and enhance a vibrant, mixed use environment in Downtown Orangeville, by establishing a long-term program of community improvement projects, and a strategy for implementing improvements in a planned and coordinated manner. To support Downtown's long-term marketplace success, employment opportunities, tax revenue, increased residential use and its role as the Town's main focus of commercial, office and institutional activity.
- To recognize and protect the Town's unique form and identity which arise from its diverse land uses, topographical forms, stock of heritage buildings and natural areas.
- To recognize Orangeville as a community of creative innovation and ideas, and one that leverages the unique and authentic voices of the diverse, young and growing cultural community, and which strives to be on the leading edge of cultural activity and development, and in building capacity for its residents.
- To work towards imbedding sustainability principles and processes into the day-to-day decision making of all matters relating to the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of the Town.
- Recognizing the potential significance of tourism in the local economy, Council will support and promote attractions and events that would bring visitors to Orangeville. Council will actively promote Orangeville as a tourist destination in cooperation with local and area tourism associations, local businesses and attractions. Council will also promote the development of facilities to serve tourists and visitors, particularly accommodation facilities, a visitor information services facility to serve the Downtown area, entertainment venues and recreational facilities such as a trail system.

Roger Brooks Assessment Findings & Suggestions Report (2019)

- Optimize utilization of Visitors Centre.
- Give visitors the tools & resources they need to clearly & easily navigate the Town and its tourism assets.
- Develop material to promote the Town and its attractions/tourism assets.
- Ensure cross-promotion between various tourism stops.
- Establish a brand for Orangeville tourism.

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan (2019)

- Further establish Orangeville's identity through the preservation and expansion of tourism, culture, and heritage.
- Enhance economic resiliency through attraction, expansion and retention of diverse business industries that in turn, provide varied local employment opportunities.
- Protect and enhance natural heritage and the urban forest.
- Provide accessible social and community program options that support health, wellness and learning.
- Build social networks that encourage well-being and celebrate the community.
- Encourage and support inter-departmental collaboration and communication to facilitate the adoption of sustainable practices in the municipality.
- Preserve Orangeville's small-town appeal, while bolstering robust businesses and tourism opportunities that support a healthy economy; connect tourists to the Town as an urban hub within the County.

Recreation & Parks Master Plan (2020)

- Continue to work with Dufferin County, and neighbouring municipalities and other partners to strategize, plan, and offer visitor-directed events.
- The Town should take the lead in determining, along with Dufferin County, Orangeville's tourism objectives with relevant public agencies, local volunteer groups, interested commercial operators, etc.
- Work with the Town's Economic Development and Culture division and support efforts to create a variety of visitor packages.
- Work with the Town's Economic Development and Culture division to improve/expand marketing of Town events.
- Continue to actively seek out partnership opportunities with community businesses, organizations, and agencies interested in contributing to recreation programming.
- The Town should take the lead in pursuing, formalizing, and managing programming partnerships.
- While certain aspects of accessibility are legislated 'trends' and so are required, opportunities to exceed minimum standards should be considered wherever feasible.
- Considerations as per: Inclusion and populations at-risk, Ethnic diversity & newcomers, Affordability, Healthy active living, Age-friendly communities.
- Town needs a central downtown square to act as the heart of the Town.
- The Town should prepare a feasibility study and business plan for a dedicated arts and culture facility. The scope of the study should be based on a determination of the potential to collaborate with other municipalities in its provision.

2.3. Regional Tourism Players

A common theme found throughout Orangeville's Tourism Strategy & Action Plan is collaboration. Leveraging the skills, resources and expertise of local stakeholders and regional tourism players will position the Town to maximize its reach and impact in tourism development & promotion. Key players are as follows:

The Orangeville Business Improvement Area (OBIA)

Representing 230 businesses in the downtown area, the OBIA "is mandated with developing the downtown through beautification, general improvements and upgrades, promotion, events and marketing; to advocate on behalf of the interests of the business improvement area and to undertake strategic planning as necessary to make improvements to the Area." Its work supports the ongoing maintenance of Orangeville's small town charm, as well as its role as a local economic anchor. It hosts various events that engage locals and visitors alike throughout the year, and supports & sponsors other key tourism drivers such as the Blues & Jazz Festival and Theatre Orangeville. There is a strong, established and collaborative relationship between the OBIA and the Town, which will remain vital to continued tourism development.

The County of Dufferin

As Orangeville rolls out its five-year Tourism Strategy & Action Plan, The County of Dufferin ("the County", "Dufferin", "Dufferin County") is implementing a sustainable and inclusive tourism plan of its own. Many consider Orangeville to be the hub to Dufferin; its natural assets, as well as the unique artistic community, make it a gateway to experiences beyond the Town limits. As Dufferin initiates investments in its tourism development, Orangeville's position as an established destination will prove important. Orangeville and Dufferin should keep an eye open to opportunities for collaboration (by way of investments and marketing, for example), and work together toward the common goal of growth in the local visitor economy.

Central Counties / Regional Tourism Organization 6 (RTO6)

RTO6, also known as Central Counties Tourism, works with tourism offices within the regions of York, Durham and Headwaters. While each municipality is responsible for its own product development and marketing, the RTO's mission is "to increase tourism in the region by promoting and developing unique and competitive tourism products that attract high yield visitors from outside the Central Counties region." Orangeville will benefit from maintaining its existing, successful relationship with the RTO. Key opportunities include leveraging industry research, aligning on marketing initiatives where appropriate, and identifying investment attraction opportunities.



2.4. Summary of Comparable Analysis

The work of destinations with similar products and positioning as Orangeville offer insights to best practices and key learnings that can be applied to the Town's ongoing tourism development. Five destinations were selected for the purposes of a comparable analysis, as follows:

Stratford (ON) - Stratford Tourism Alliance

Stratford was reviewed for its defining arts & culture offering, its culinary program and its success at diversifying its economy and building out natural assets to complement its arts scene (i.e., bike trails and green spaces).

Squamish (BC) - Tourism Squamish

Squamish was included because, as one of the fastest growing communities in British Columbia, the city is seeing significant investment in further developing its downtown core.

Wiarton (ON) - Explore the Bruce

As a community within a larger destination region (The Bruce Peninsula), Wiarton provided a comparable framework for Orangeville's relationship with Dufferin County, as it has its own distinct brand/appeal (Wiarton Willie Festival), complemented by natural assets in the surrounding region.

Brockville (ON) - Brockville Tourism

Brockville was identified as a strong comparable given its efforts to better weave its diverse City offerings together cohesively over the past decade.

Richmond (BC) - Tourism Richmond

Richmond was included in the analysis on the strength of its Arts Strategy, Culinary Strategy and the destination's ability to leverage outdoor and recreational activities.

Areas of particular focus throughout the analysis included the use and development of arts & culture; the integration of natural assets, the development and promotion of culinary tourism; and downtown core development.

Arts & culture

Richmond's Arts Strategy 2019–2024 now positions the arts as a means to achieve community goals in economic development, health and well-being, infrastructure and tourism. The five strategic directions identified include:

1. Ensure affordable and accessible arts for all
2. Promote inclusivity and diversity in the arts
3. Invest in the arts
4. Increase awareness and participation in the arts
5. Activate public spaces through (and for) the arts

There is an emphasis on linking the Arts Strategy to other planning initiatives, and ongoing work between City divisions to provide arts opportunities within the community.

As for Stratford, the town has centred its brand identity on arts & culture, leading with its slogan: "The Arts Are What We Are." The sector is a key economic driver, thanks in part to events such as The Stratford Festival and Stratford Summer Music. Its visual art scene on display at Gallery Stratford and during its Art in the Park exhibits, as well as The Stratford Perth Museum and Perth Archives, have been identified as additional competitive advantages.

Key takeaways: The success Richmond and Stratford have experienced in harnessing arts & culture for tourism development is largely rooted in proper planning, community involvement in program development, and arts & culture considerations throughout all areas of local development. The arts are also core to their respective brand identities. Likewise, Orangeville can enhance its arts & culture offerings through conceptualizing new events and activities, and by including local performers and artists in the process. Further exploration of Orangeville's brand should place a strong value on its existing arts offerings and displays.

The integration of natural assets

Further to its arts focus, Stratford leans on its natural assets for shoulder season program development, highlighting its nature walks, local foraging and seasonal tastings. It also has programming focused on the local swans, which have a notable presence in the town.

Wiarton highlights its proximity to a variety of natural assets prominently on its website, and brands itself as the "Basecamp to the Bruce Peninsula." In fact, the "Wiarton Community Toolkit," a program developed by Bruce County, recommends that development in Wiarton should work to highlight the natural features of the surrounding escarpment and the plentiful outdoor opportunities in and around the town.

Tourism Squamish uses its content and messaging to consistently highlight the destination's world class sport, adventure and natural experiences including: mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing, wind sports, water sports, fishing, rafting, nordic skiing, backcountry skiing and snowmobiling. Meanwhile, Richmond places emphasis on history and culture activities, identifying its top assets as "sites where important historical events took place" and sites that allow them to "adapt to the local culture, exploring and spending time in local areas most tourists don't visit."

Key takeaways: A destination must first understand whether natural assets are a primary or secondary tourism driver, so programming and promotions can be developed accordingly. Orangeville's more advantageous position is to focus on arts & culture as a priority, and complement these efforts with activities and event planning that highlight its parks, trails and other outdoor spaces. It can also lean into its position as a gateway to natural assets in Dufferin County, beyond those within the Town limits.




The development and promotion of culinary tourism

Tourism Richmond offers a wealth of culinary-focused tourism collateral, such as a Food Street “Food Crawl” guide and a library of “Dining Guides” that are theme-based, including “Cheap Eats” and “What’s in Season.” Additionally, Richmond has established the Richmond Night Market, which is now an annual tradition and one of its flagship summertime events. Plus, a dedicated “Taste of Richmond” page on its website offers comprehensive guides to tastings, hands-on classes, tours and experiences.

The Stratford Tourism Alliance (STA) has created the Stratford Culinary Trail, designed to introduce visitors to local artisans while they sample foods on the Chocolate Trail, the Bacon and Ale Trail and, during the holidays, the seasonal Christmas Trail, which offers new finds and gifts in November and December. In 2018, the ‘Culinary Trails’ program resulted in 12,000 visits to local businesses.

Key takeaways: Destinations should consider how local culinary offerings can be used to create tourism experiences, from itineraries, to tours, to events. There is an opportunity for Orangeville to enhance its culinary-focused content and itineraries. The Town can also consider opportunities for an expanded range of food-focused activities, whether workshops or larger events, and include local culinary talents whenever possible.



“The community is small and growing. The friendliness is palpable & I think when people visit, they feel it.”

- Stakeholder interview

Downtown core development

In its 5-Year Tourism Strategy and Action Report, Brockville Tourism identified the opportunity to attract higher yield overnight visitors in the downtown core of Brockville, along with the waterfront on the St. Lawrence River and the 1000 Islands. Therefore, it was recognized that one key focus had to be in creating expanded overnight capacity in the downtown core and the waterfront.

In Wiarton, there are a number of initiatives dedicated to redeveloping the downtown, such as Wiarton Revitalization committee, an action-oriented group made up of volunteers, residents, business owners and staff, and Spruce the Bruce, a community development program that supports local community efforts to facilitate long-term downtown revitalization plans. Collaboratively, Spruce the Bruce, the Wiarton Revitalization committee, the local Chamber of Commerce and the Town of South Bruce Peninsula have continued to spearhead the development of downtown revitalization initiatives. These include streetscape, activity programming and infrastructure upgrades. One focus is on strengthening and diversifying businesses within the downtown, as well as addressing seasonality concerns related to retail business.

investStratford is a brand mark of the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEED Co.). Principally funded by the City of Stratford, SEED Co. has been established as a stand-alone entity with a mission to focus singularly on Stratford's economic future. The organization spearheads the distribution of a \$20,000 grant awarded to the City of Stratford as part of the Main Street Revitalization funding received from the Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). This matching grant program is made available to businesses located within the Stratford City Centre boundary. The Downtown Initiative has been designed to support exterior capital improvements with a focus on energy efficiency, accessibility, aesthetics and marketability of small businesses within the downtown.

Key takeaways: Comparatively speaking, Orangeville is well-positioned when it comes to prioritization of its downtown development. This is thanks in part to Town's Façade Improvement Program, paired with ongoing investments in public art maintenance and development. One consideration is if, and how, accommodations can fit within the downtown offering.

See **Appendix A** for the complete analysis.

2.5. SWOT Analysis

The general sentiment among stakeholders, staff and councillors was uniform with regard to tourism considerations for the Town of Orangeville. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) deduced include:

Strengths

- There is an established commitment to tourism development in the Town, from the Town team, Council and stakeholders.
- There is a strong connection and culture of collaboration within Town divisions; Economic Development is well-aligned with Parks & Recreation, as well as the Library, for collaboration.
- Current investments in arts & culture support the Town's attractiveness as a destination; this is evident through Theatre Orangeville, festivals and events, the Farmers' Market, downtown revitalization & upkeep, engagement of local artists for local displays of their work on utility boxes, and more.
- Orangeville has well-respected Visitors Centre operations.
- The OBIA is active and effective.
- There is an historic, well-maintained downtown core with heritage buildings & small-town charm.
- There is an impressive local culinary scene.
- The Town is home to a professional theatre company with highly inclusive practices.
- There is a unique & growing public art collection.
- Orangeville is in close proximity to an array of outdoor activities & experiences, within the Town & beyond.
- Orangeville is also within accessible distance from major potential source markets (i.e. GTA, Golden Horseshoe, Collingwood, Barrie, Guelph, Waterloo, etc).
- There are successful, well-regarded festivals & events locally, particularly Blues & Jazz.
- There are a wealth of venues for small indoor events (Library, Opera House, Westminster United Church).
- Orangeville is home to a talented, creative community that is progressive, welcoming and engaged.
- The Town has a solid foundation of products on which to build for a successful tourism story.

Weaknesses

- There is currently limited structured collaboration between stakeholders and tourism/tourism-aligned organizations, within the Town and in the broader Dufferin County.
- There are resource limitations at the Town level, with no full-time, dedicated commitment to tourism development.
- Orangeville's tourism web presence appears corporate, with little tourism marketing strategy applied; it is not ideal for engaging leisure travellers, which leaves a missed opportunity to effectively leverage the website as a tourism marketing tool.
- There are currently few accommodation options available within town limits, outside of the Best Western.
- Downtown businesses work limited hours, often inaccessible at peak tourism times (evenings, weekends).
- There is no central arts & culture hub for the community and visitors to gather, whether for art displays, performances, workshops, or other events & activities.
- The major festivals and events largely take place during the summer months; there is a lack of winter attractions, events & activities.
- Incorporation of Indigenous culture & history within Town activities has been a low priority.
- There is limited appeal to families, with respect to activities; those visiting for sports tournaments rarely engage with the Town beyond the recreation facilities.
- There is limited space effectively developed for outdoor events and public gatherings within the downtown.
- There is a lack of "nightlife" or compelling experiences after dark.
- There is a lack of downtown parking options during high-traffic times.
- There is a lack of public washroom facilities.
- There is a lack of engagement with or knowledge of Town offerings by residents, particularly those who live within the Town but commute to work outside of the community.
- There is limited accessibility to Orangeville for visitors without cars.
- There is little involvement of youth in activities, events and development within the Town.
- Orangeville's presence along Highway 10 going north is not attractive or compelling, with a lack of visual appeal to draw people into the downtown area. To effectively direct travellers to the downtown core from Highway 10, a number of signage issues would need to be overcome with the MTO.
- There is a lack of brand awareness/awareness of tourism products by key markets.
- There is a lack of diverse representation in tourism promotion materials (i.e. social media), leaving behind the potential to attract diverse audiences.
- The parks & trails maps are underdeveloped.
- The current presentation of maps, walking tours and other itineraries does not adequately present an enticing experience.

Opportunities

- Allocating full-time resources to a dedicated tourism staff within the Economic Development Division would allow for greater strides to be made in effective tourism development and marketing.
- Investing in helping local businesses and stakeholders become “tourism ready” will support the enhancement of service and on-the-ground experience for visitors.
- Further investment in and development of arts & culture assets, particularly public art, will build upon the dominant tourism narrative of Orangeville as an arts & culture destination.
- Attracting investors for unique, boutique downtown accommodation would add an extra layer of appeal for the Town.
- Creating cohesive, mutually-beneficial partnerships between stakeholders will support long-term growth and prosperity across the community.
- Adapting best practices of the OBIA and downtown vendors to better suit new business prospects (i.e. extending business hours) will improve the visitor experience.
- Cross-promotion of tourism assets in neighbouring municipalities will broaden Orangeville’s sale-ability.
- Integration of Indigenous connections & history throughout product development planning and art will deepen the tourism narrative and respond to the demand for Indigenous tourism offerings.
- As more accommodation options become available, there will be a great opportunity to entice sports tournament participants to engage with the Town beyond recreation facilities.
- Developing the rail line into a rail trail and historic walk will enhance the Town’s ability to use natural assets as a tourism draw.
- Educating locals on assets within the community & developing a strategy to engage the VFR (visiting friends & relatives) market will expand the market potential.
- Carrying-out recommendations of the Recreation & Parks Master Plan, such as developing a public gathering space in the downtown and further trail development (particularly for winter skating trails), will enhance tourism assets and attractions.
- Leading sustainable tourism development with social inclusion as a key element, and determining ways to engage marginalized people within the community, BIPOC residents, persons who are differently abled, etc., will open up Orangeville’s appeal to diverse markets.
- Collaboration with Dufferin County on tourism development projects & investment as deemed appropriate will maximize the impact of the Town’s tourism initiatives.

- Capitalizing on local tourism demand given impacts of Covid-19 on travel intentions will stimulate economic recovery and also create local ambassadors for tourism, as residents share their experiences within their hometown on social media, and with friends & relatives.
- Developing a tourism brand and brand guidelines will allow for effective, memorable marketing and visitor engagement.
- Building awareness of Orangeville's tourism assets within key source markets (i.e., GTA, Golden Horseshoe, Barrie, Collingwood, Guelph, Waterloo) and "drive-through" markets (those on their way to or from cottage county) will positively impact visitor arrivals and local spending.
- Establishing Orangeville as a main hub for tourists visiting the broader Dufferin County will be an opportune positioning to take as Dufferin's tourism appeal evolves.
- Partnering with similar nearby municipalities/Towns where there are product alignments will allow for unique product packaging, itinerary building and joint promotion, to maximize reach and impact.
- Enhanced Visitors' Centre services will allow the Town to better serve prospective visitors on multiple platforms, and better collect visitor data so product development and marketing can be targeted more effectively.

Threats

- There are high property taxes, which could impact Orangeville's appeal to new retailers and service providers.
- Limited investment in resources to effectively carry-out this tourism strategy will result in limited growth of the local visitor economy.
- The potential for limited development/adoption of a tourism brand upon carrying out this strategy will result in less effective marketing initiatives and a lack in evolution of the outside understanding of "Orangeville" as a destination.
- Covid-19 is impacting the Town's ability to host events, festivals and performances and may impact the presence of retailers and restaurants downtown; tourism appeal and reasons for visitors to make a trip to Orangeville is affected as a result.
- Climate change and its impact on year-round planning adds an extra challenge, particularly with regard to snow/cold weather-based winter activities.
- Limited collaboration with other tourism & tourism-adjacent organizations upon carrying out of strategy will hamper the success of this Strategy.

2.6. Key Themes

Recurring themes identified throughout the community engagement process, SWOT analysis and background research include:

- Orangeville boasts a well-maintained, historic downtown with heritage buildings, an established arts & culture sector, festivals and events, and culinary offerings. The Blues & Jazz Festival and Theatre Orangeville were two assets consistently mentioned as central to the Town's identity.
- There is a vibrant arts community in Orangeville and the surrounding area, and an opportunity exists to more actively bring local artists and their work together.
- Summer has traditionally been a busy time for festivals & events; there needs to be attention paid to year-round experience development.
- Orangeville has a well-developed network of parks and trails within the Town that could be more effectively leveraged for tourism purposes.
- Orangeville is a hub to other experiences in the region, including those beyond Dufferin County (i.e. Hockley Valley, Alton Mill, etc).
- The natural beauty of Dufferin County—including nearby access to the Bruce Trail, Island Lake and more—are compelling draws for people to the region. This Tourism Strategy should entice visitors to the region to stop in Orangeville (and spend money there) along their journey.
- Stakeholders feel a major challenge is that there is little awareness among target markets of what the Town can offer visitors. With its location on a well-travelled path between the GTA and Cottage Country, there is potential to attract more people who pass by frequently but have traditionally never made their way to the downtown.
- One of the most-widely perceived barriers to tourism growth is the Town's lack of brand identity, and awareness within target markets.
- The general desire is to attract visitors to the area, but with moderate increases in number so as not to disrupt the sense of place or quality of life for residents.
- There is a need for a realistic approach to tourism development; an understanding of what the Town is and offers at present and what it has potential to offer in the future, as well as realities of Covid-19 and climate change, in order to ensure energy is strategically placed and expectations are managed accordingly.



Part 3

The Future of Tourism in Orangeville

- 3.1. Mission, Vision & Values
- 3.2. Five-Year Vision
- 3.3. Defining Target Markets
- 3.4. Foundational Tourism Drivers
- 3.5. Strategic Priorities
- 3.6. Recommendations & Action Plan



3.1. Mission, Vision & Values

The following Mission, Vision & Values have been developed for the Town's consideration, to guide its tourism development.

Mission:

To create a tourism brand and destination that showcases unique public & performing arts, food & drink, and outdoor activities, all of which can be appreciated by residents and visitors alike and in turn, enhance community spirit & success.

Vision:

To support community pride & engagement, economic success and local collaboration through sustainable tourism development, with creativity, inclusion and entrepreneurship at the core of all activities.

Values:

- 1. Sustainability:** We value quality tourism development over mass tourism development. Respecting the community & natural environment is at the core of all our actions and activities.
- 2. Diversity & inclusion:** We ensure that people of all cultural backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, physical capabilities, ages, and income groups are included in each stage of tourism development, from community engagement, to committees, to marketing & promotions.
- 3. Collaboration:** We bring together various public and private organizations to work collaboratively towards the common goal of tourism development for economic and community success.
- 4. Appreciation:** We understand and appreciate Orangeville for all that it is and all that it can be.
- 5. Safety:** We endeavour to offer safe & welcoming spaces for all people, where visitors and residents can engage with local businesses and recreational spaces without concern or fear.

3.2. Five-Year Vision

For tourism to truly transform communities, there must first be buy-in from decision makers, local stakeholders and residents from a range of orientations and backgrounds. Working together toward a common goal develops pride of place, which then trickles through to create positive visitor experiences. A commitment of resources to tourism development, both human and financial, is required. The return on these investments has potential to be great, with long-term results. Ideally, the future of tourism in the Town of Orangeville achieves the following vision:

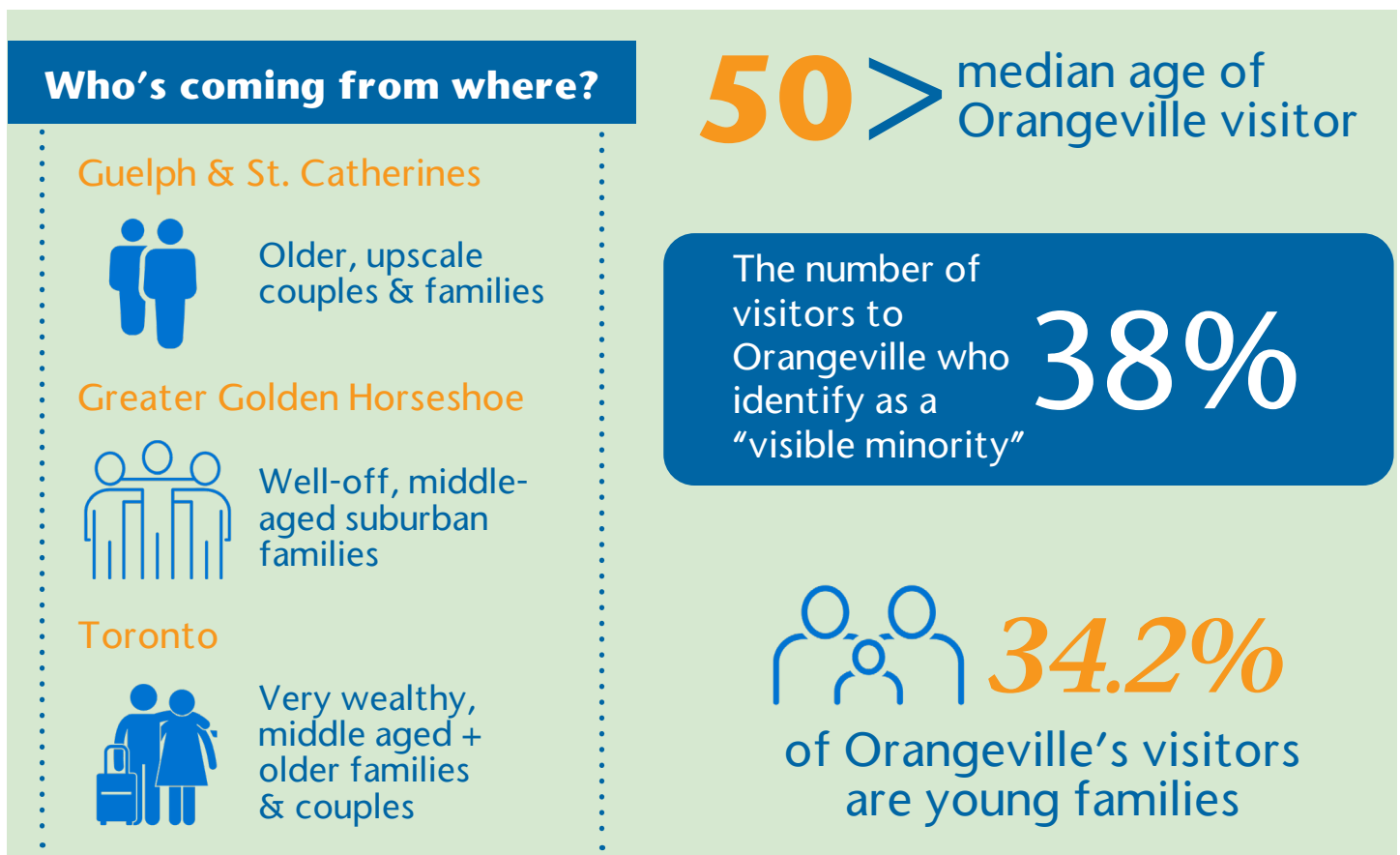
- There is a dedicated Tourism & Culture Officer on the Town staff within the Economic Development and Culture division, responsible for leading initiatives and conversations around tourism development, including coordinating efforts between the public and private sectors, spearheading media and marketing initiatives, and working with stakeholders to enhance year-round product offering.
- Public art continues to be enhanced through new commitments of space and integration of technology.
- Four seasons of activities and events, as well as a robust public arts scene, attract visitors to Orangeville year-round.
- The Town of Orangeville actively collaborates with the OBIA, as well as teams at Dufferin County, RTO6 and other local municipalities on opportunities to promote the destination and attract visitors.
- There is a well-established brand identity for Orangeville as a tourism destination, particularly for its artistic and cultural offerings, demonstrated through increased visitation, media mentions in target communities, and social media engagement.
- Residents are spending more dollars within the Town limits, thanks to a new appreciation for local vendors and assets.
- The visitor economy is recognized by all stakeholders as an important driver of economic growth to the region, as well as for its role in enhancing community pride and engagement.
- Local stakeholders work together and with the Town tourism development staff to promote other nearby businesses and Town events.
- Visitors from target regions are coming to Orangeville throughout the year for different reasons and in different ways, as it develops its four-season appeal.
- Prioritizing inclusive tourism development & marketing practices are paying off, evident in the diversity of visitors.
- The Town captures a portion of the traditional drive-through market to make its way downtown and spend dollars with local businesses.

5 year vision

By 2026, the Town of Orangeville will be a burgeoning tourism destination known for its unique combination of progressive community values and small town vibe, which both locals and visitors look to for unique public & performing art experiences, culinary imbibement, and access to outdoor activities, knowing there is something to enjoy year-round.

3.3. Defining Target Markets

According to the Central Counties Tourism Visitor Research Program (CCTVRP) in 2018, Orangeville's average visitor was a median age of 50. The data suggested that the Town appeals primarily to demographics qualified as "older, upscale couples and families" from the Guelph and St. Catherines regions; "well off, middle-aged suburban families" from the Greater Golden Horseshoe; and "very wealthy, middle-aged and older families and couples" hailing from Toronto.



Given Orangeville's reputation for theatre and the arts, excellent cuisine, attractive architecture and natural resources, it's no surprise that the CCT report identified key visitor markets as affluent, educated and environmentally-savvy. Another notable observation is its high diversity; 37.7% visitors to Orangeville in 2018 were "visible minorities." This distinction, when coupled with a demographic of travellers with young children (CCTVRP found young families made up 34.2% of Orangeville's visitors), represents a significant opportunity for the Town's future development by way of a growing consumer set: **the socially-conscious traveller**, whose decisions are influenced by their consciences as much as by their preferences and pocketbooks.

Socially-conscious traveller

Those travellers who prioritize ethical, sustainable sources of entertainment, though interests may include anything from arts, culture and cuisine to sports and outdoor activities. They will actively seek-out and give priority to Black- and Indigenous- owned businesses, as well as those owned by People of Colour. They understand the power their purchasing decisions can have on influencing brands—and they're not afraid to wield it by avoiding choices that may contradict their values in favour of those which validate them, even at personal cost. Socially-conscious travellers who are parents feel a responsibility to expose their children to socially ethical enterprises and advocacy as much as possible, and will even let the kids take the lead on decision-making, in the interest of encouraging progressive attitudes. Savvy brands and destinations that gain the trust of the socially conscious traveller can expect long-term and devout loyalty, a high rate of referrals and generous user-generated social media content.

Diversity & inclusion considerations will be important in target market outreach, pertaining to equity-seeking groups such as Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC), differently-abled folks and the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Inclusive approaches will broaden the market potential, by appealing to a diverse set of prospective visitors that are often overlooked in tourism marketing & promotional materials. Further, studies such as the “[Heat Test](#)” conducted in 2019 by Deloitte-owned agency, Heat, show consumer preference and better financial performance for brands that practice inclusive marketing.

This lens should be applied in considering Orangeville’s target market segments, particularly day-trippers and weekend visitors, who fit within the following profiles:



Connected Explorers

Connected Explorers are young couples under 40, both with and without children. They are a confident, youthful, optimistic group. They have a deep-seated need to travel and expose themselves to many new experiences. Travel for them is about expanding their horizons, and they are looking for a fully packed schedule of activities. Technology is a key part of travel. They use it at all phases of a trip including researching, booking, planning and especially when sharing their travel experiences once back home.

Orangeville’s appeal: Public art, historic downtown, local restaurants, parks & trails, Island Lake, gateway to Dufferin County



Outgoing Mature Couples

Skewing strongly toward seniors and those in retirement, these travellers are driven by a desire to maintain their vitality and connection with the world. They are not particularly adventurous, rather they want to maintain their vitality often by interacting with new people (travellers and locals alike). It is important to them to feel competent and vital.

Orangeville's appeal: Festivals & events, Theatre Orangeville, historic downtown, public art



Knowledge Seekers

Travellers in this segment are looking to appreciate and understand the places they visit. Their trips are typically about expanding their knowledge and stimulating their minds rather than resting and relaxing. They are driven by a desire to explore culture, history, architecture and natural landmarks and often focus on sight-seeing, museums, galleries and historical sites.

Orangeville's appeal: Public art, Theatre Orangeville, Island Lake, historic downtown, Footsteps From Our Past tour, local cuisine



Up and Coming Explorers

This is a youth-oriented group that is on its way up in the world. These travellers are emerging into a new life-stage, often characterized by greater affluence and new opportunities. Visible minorities and immigrants often fall into this segment. Travel is not about connecting with family or friends. While these people often want to be adventurous and energetic, their travel experiences often start with core tourist attractions.

Orangeville's appeal: Public art, Theatre Orangeville, Island Lake, historic downtown, festivals & events



Nature Lovers

This is a consumer segment attracted to outdoor experiences aligned to Ontario's quintessential parks & lakes offering. Camping and associated activities, e.g., hiking, canoeing, fishing are key interests for this group. The majority classify as "nature lovers". Activities align with the recreational aspects of the outdoors and not necessarily the extreme aspects of the outdoors, e.g., avid angling or hunting.

Orangeville's appeal: Local parks and trails, Island Lake, gateway to Dufferin County

These traveller types may exist amongst residents, visiting friends and family (those who come to Orangeville to see loved ones in the area), or leisure travellers who live within a two-hour drive & are seeking new experiences.

Note: Developing brand guidelines will further define target market profiles, though these segments should be considered in directing marketing efforts, including content creation, social media communications and newsletter inclusions.



3.4. Foundational Tourism Drivers

The following assets and characteristics are inherent to Orangeville's ongoing tourism development activities and promotional focus:

Public art

Orangeville and the broader Dufferin County has been described as “one of Canada’s most artistic communities” by stakeholders and municipal representatives. Though there is potential to expand the display of public art in the Town, the Art Walk of Tree Sculptures and painted utility boxes are unique and notable assets. There are 50 tree sculptures, all created by artists from across Ontario and scattered throughout the Town to depict various stories and histories. Colourful work on the Town’s utility boxes, crafted by local artists, adds another layer to displays within the community. Those who stop at the Visitors Centre won’t miss the Mantis Queen sculpture, which sets a tone for the creative displays throughout the town. Orangeville’s public art is further complemented by nearby assets such as the Alton Mill and the Museum of Dufferin.



Looking ahead: Expanding the presence of public art will enhance Orangeville’s position as an arts and culture destination. New displays, whether in the form of murals (on the Visitors Centre, downtown buildings, or recreation centres, for example), sculptures or other unique pieces would build upon the creativity already established. Not only would this add a new dimension to the Town’s visual appeal, but it will also allow for the creation of new walking and cycling tour routes & itineraries. An “Arts in Nature” program could be developed to enhance the Town’s outdoor spaces and create a uniquely Orangeville experience by putting public art on display throughout local trails and parks. Further, arts-based events and workshops can also be conceptualized to draw arts & culture enthusiasts to the area.

Performing art

Theatre Orangeville is the centrepiece to the Town's performing arts. Working with professional actors, choreographers, composers and musicians, this is the only professional theatre company in the Central Counties region. Presenting 12 to 16 productions and upwards of 150 performances year-round, patrons come from regions like Stratford, Collingwood and Toronto to immerse themselves in expertly-executed live shows at the historic Opera House or Island Lake. Works range from classic favourites to new Canadian work. The Theatre has paved the way for inclusive practices through its youth programming and work with neuro-diverse adults and children. Community and out-of-community user groups also rent the venue and provide an additional 25-30 productions (50-60 performances) annually. Further, Theatre Orangeville has an existing partnership with the Toronto Fringe Festival which brings unique engagements to the Town on an annual basis. Enjoying a night out at the Theatre doesn't start and end at

the doors of the Opera House; guests are encouraged to enjoy dinner and explore the historic downtown before the show, and imbibe with a post-performance cocktail. In addition to theatre shows, the Opera House hosts a variety of performances and events, bringing attention to and engagement with the downtown core year-round.

Looking ahead: Building upon the existing performing arts programming, Orangeville can work with local talent and venues to build programs for ongoing performances throughout the Town, whether outdoor or indoor dependent on the season. A "Performances in the Park" summer initiative, for example, could include an ongoing entertainment schedule from June to August. Not only would these types of activities entice visitors, it would also support the evolution of Orangeville's attractiveness to arts & culture enthusiasts.



Trails & outdoor experiences



More than 20 kilometres of trails run throughout Orangeville, making it an attractive destination for fresh air and physical activity. The Town's trails connect 35 parks and Island Lake Conservation Area, which is a year-round destination, with trails and wetlands for visitors to hike, cycle or kayak in the spring, summer and fall; skate and snowshoe in the winter; and enjoy fishing no matter the season. Apart from Island Lake, local trails can be leveraged to enhance a visitors' experience, though not likely to be the primary draw for visitors.

Looking ahead: Creating comprehensive trail maps will be an important first step to maximizing visitor access to (and engagement with) these local assets. Further, integrating public art within the trail network would create a uniquely-Orangeville outdoor experience, and lean into this core piece of its identity. More tourism-beneficial enhancements are recommended within the 2020 Recreation & Parks Master Plan. For example, a winter skate trail through Rotary Park would bolster Orangeville's appeal for winter visitation, and create a unique centrepiece around which to host seasonal festivals and events. Also, given the current lack of an outdoor central gathering space within the downtown core, the recommendation to transform Alexandra Park into a civic space would also evolve the potential for activities and events development.

Historic downtown

Along Orangeville's main street of Broadway, visitors find beautifully-maintained historic brick facades which provide a positive first impression for the downtown's unique retailers and top-notch restaurants. Supported by ongoing efforts from the OBIA, this area of Town is the centrepiece to tourism; where visitors will gather to explore, be entertained, and dine. The charm trickles beyond Broadway, with historic homes and buildings that offer an unexpected sense of being on a movie set, the pristine appearance made all the more lovely by the surrounding greenery. Visitors can learn more about the history of these homes and buildings through the Footsteps From Our Past walking tour. Beyond the visual appeal, Orangeville's downtown plays host to community events, including the weekend Farmers' Market. The downtown will remain a central focal point for tourism development going forward.



Looking ahead: To enhance engagement with the historic downtown, creating a responsive digital version of the Footsteps From Our Past tour will make the experience more accessible. It can be further improved by integrating augmented reality along the way, adding new dimensions and character to the tour. Further, part of the appeal of Orangeville's downtown is the public art, the retailers, and the experiences to be found there (such as Theatre Orangeville). Combining these elements into compelling itineraries will be an important enhancement, particularly using a step-by-step format that leaves no room for uncertainty among visitors about where to go or how to get there. For example, a one-day itinerary can be designed that takes visitors strolling through the downtown, showcasing specific tree sculptures, painted utility boxes and historic facades in a logical and engaging order. Suggestions for stops in between should be provided within the itinerary, along with background information about each featured building and piece of art.

Culinary offerings

Orangeville's collection of quaint, privately-owned cafés, fine dining establishments, farm-to-table offerings and culinary events creates a confluence of experiences that are more often found within large city centres—albeit, without the price point. The restaurants found in the downtown are ideal for an après-theatre dinner or drink, while its cafés and pubs are excellent for a quick lunch or take-away picnic en route to Island Lake. Orangeville's year-round, downtown Farmers' Market acts as a hub for locals and visitors alike, connecting the Town's rural roots to a growing appreciation for farm-fresh produce, meat and other locally-made goods. Taste of Orangeville and the annual Rotary Ribfest are draws for visitors, and can act as a jumping-off point to entice attendees to further explore all that the Town has to offer, once they've arrived.

Looking ahead: Orangeville's culinary offerings should be an integrated piece of every visitor experience. The Town can tempt visitors through their palate by:

- Building itineraries around existing food-focused events that share more of the Town with visitors beyond what they might see otherwise (for example, a Ribfest Ramble: A town-wide scavenger hunt that people can partake in that eventually leads to Ribfest);
- Creating new activities and events based on culinary experiences (for example, a Teddy Bear picnic whereby local restaurants offer boxed lunches for a set price);
- Integrating food-based experiences into itineraries (for example, within a downtown "Taste of Orangeville" walking tour itinerary, suggest stops at different restaurants to try specific dishes).

Festivals & events

Annual events have traditionally been major tourism drivers for the Town of Orangeville. Some notable inclusions are Taste of Orangeville, the Maple Syrup Festival, the Great Canadian Pondspiel, Celebrate Your Awesome and Rotary Ribfest, among others. The largest Town event is The Blues & Jazz Festival, known as a “community celebration” and a key tourism driver for Orangeville. Featuring performances by provincial and Canadian artists, the Festival takes place throughout the downtown on four stages, complemented by additional live performances at local pubs and restaurants. Other activities enhance the experience, such as displays of classic cars and motorcycles, and interactive workshops. The Festival attracts upwards of 40,000 visitors annually, approximately 15% of whom come from 40-80 kilometres outside of Town. Historically, the event was free to access but there is now a \$5 fee per person per day for attendance. The Town provides ample funding to Blues & Jazz, amounting to \$57,000 budgeted for 2020; \$52,000 in 2019; and \$50,000 in 2018. Other financial support comes from the OBIA. As downtown retailers weather the impacts of Covid-19, there is concern that financial support for the festival will be compromised in the future. Still, as communities rebound from Covid-19 and major events are once again permitted, the Blues & Jazz Festival will remain a core tourism asset for the Town.



Looking ahead: Orangeville can continue to capitalize on the community camaraderie that exists thanks to festivals and events, ensuring there are year-round options for visitors to choose from. Introducing a Winter Carnival to take place annually in January, for example, would fill a current gap in new-year activities, and can be designed to attract different audiences, from families to adult groups. Further, developing itineraries to showcase the Town beyond whichever event prompted a visit will broaden their spend and enhance their experience. Itineraries might be specially-curated from a thematic perspective. For example, in preparation for the Maple Syrup Festival, a “Pancake Walk” can be created to guide visitors to try different and delicious pancakes at different venues throughout the Town.

3.5. Strategic Priorities

Based on the SWOT analysis, comparable analysis, background research and stakeholder engagement process, the following strategic priorities have been identified to guide the Action Plan:

1. Administration & Operations

This refers to internal work at the Town of Orangeville, with regard to staffing, priorities and processes. In order for this tourism strategy to meet its potential, there must be full-time resources dedicated to carrying out its recommendations and responding to changing demands of the market. There must also continue to be effective inter-departmental collaboration.

Goal: Allocate resources to tourism development internally to ensure consistent, committed efforts are made to sustainable tourism growth.

3. Tourism Assets & Experience Development

This refers to existing tourism assets, potential for new tourism assets, and the act of combining various products to create experiences that will draw visitors to Orangeville. The stakeholders responsible for said assets are also included in this priority.

Goal: Leverage and enhance existing products, create new products (with a particular focus on arts & culture), and package products effectively to attract high-spending visitors to Orangeville & stimulate economic activity from within the community.

2. Branding & Marketing

This refers to the work that needs to be done to effectively promote the Town of Orangeville to prospective visitors, and provide them with the resources required for seamless, positive experiences in-destination.

Goal: Develop an inclusive tourism brand and identity for the Town of Orangeville that will attract new visitors and engage the local community, supported by enticing tourism collateral, successful marketing initiatives and stakeholder commitment to world-class service delivery.

4. Infrastructure & Investments

This refers to the presence of proper infrastructure, services & investments necessary for a positive, well-rounded visitor experience, such as accessibility ramps, public restrooms, water stations, etc.

Goal: Maintain and develop Town infrastructure, making investments where needed, to elevate the visitor experience throughout the Town.

More than 70 detailed actions across these priority areas have been developed for implementation over the coming five year period, further demonstrating the need for appropriate resource allocation.

Directing the focus

Within these strategic priorities, the primary and initial areas of focus are:

Full-time staffing

In order to adequately fulfill the recommendations of this Strategy and to support future development of Orangeville's visitor economy, a full-time position on the Economic Development & Culture team should be established. It will be invaluable to have a dedicated team member whose entire focus can be product development, marketing strategy, brand implementation, and the facilitation of collaborative efforts with stakeholders, businesses and relevant organizations. Though the current Economic Development & Culture division has made great strides despite stretched resources, this step will allow for Orangeville to take its tourism appeal to the next level.

Tourism brand development

A well-defined brand identity is the most effective path by which destinations can make a personal or emotional connection with consumers, building recognition and awareness, and consequently, attracting target audiences. As outlined in the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) [Handbook on Tourism Destination Branding](#):

A destination brand can: help destinations compete more effectively for visitors; assist in the projection of a country's, a city's or a region's overall image; and occasionally help transform the image of a county, a city or a region... The process of destination branding is therefore seen as not just worthwhile, but as a fundamental step in projecting, maintaining, and even changing a [place's] image - first as a place to visit but also indirectly as a place in which to live, work, study, invest and do business.

A [report by Destination Think](#) adds, "Today, creative expressions, words, or images that are unsupported by a place's identity are counterproductive." With this in mind, defining Orangeville's tourism brand, or "place identity"—both visually and with regard to key messages, brand values, etc.—will ensure marketing, communications, product development and promotions are most-effectively developed and received. Building a destination brand is an integral part of Richmond, B.C.'s strategic plan, which is a good example of the impact a well-defined brand can have. [As a result of Richmond's 2019 brand campaign](#), it saw 800,000 website sessions—a "significant increase" in website sessions over the year prior—which resulted in 160,000 clicks through to stakeholder websites. Though Richmond is significantly bigger than Orangeville and has access to more resources for tourism marketing, its success speaks to the potential impacts of an effective brand strategy.





A branding exercise would result in these key elements:

- Brand positioning statement to uniquely identify and communicate Orangeville's tourism offerings; what does the Town offer to tourists and why should they visit
- A tourism-specific logo and tagline that specifically targets visitors while maintaining a strong link to the Town's established logo and "Historic Charm, Dynamic Future" slogan
- Guidelines to define the "look and feel" of all marketing collateral – colours, fonts, imagery, etc.
- Templates for advertisements, social media posts, etc. to ensure consistent communication and messaging
- Key messaging and written content that can be used to consistently describe the Town's tourism drivers
- Target market definitions and key communication methods for each audience

Expansion of public art displays

One of the defining factors of Orangeville's tourism appeal is its local arts scene. Visual arts such as the painted utility boxes and tree sculptures, paired with performing arts—particularly the work of Theatre Orangeville and the Blues & Jazz Festival—are renowned throughout the community. Whether using building exteriors as canvas or placing art throughout Town trails for added dimension, dedicating additional resources to expanding public art would further establish Orangeville's position as a destination for arts & culture enthusiasts. To add another dimension to public art displays, recommendations include the integration of augmented reality (AR) technology. Investments in this area would further enhance Orangeville's positioning as an arts & culture destination.



Infrastructure improvements

In an effort to enhance the overall visitor experience, various infrastructure improvements and investments should be considered. For example, expanded access to public washrooms, public drinking water and bike racks would alleviate some challenges that visitors may otherwise encounter when visiting the Town. In the longer term, the presence of boutique accommodations in the downtown area, similar to that of [The Walper Hotel](#) in Kitchener or [Hotel Metro](#) in London, could extend Orangeville's charm and artistic sense of place into an overnight experience.

Enhancement of tourism materials

Once a new tourism brand is defined and the photo & video library is expanded, the Town will be well-positioned to enhance assets such as its Visitors Guide, itineraries, maps and pamphlets. Specific enhancements should include more inclusive imagery and a storytelling approach to content. An adjusted approach to itinerary presentation would better-serve prospective visitors by clearly identifying complementary experiences in the region. Another key component to enhancing visitor engagement will be a dedicated tourism web presence, independent from the existing function of [orangeville.ca](#). Though the new web interface launched in summer 2020 can be adapted for this purpose, a unique visual and navigational experience should be applied to optimize impact. Communicating with prospective visitors in the manner that will best pique their interest will be necessary to success; such an approach should be highly-visual and content-rich.



3.6.

Recommendations & Action Plan

The recommendations of this Strategy, as well as defined actions and objectives for each, are as identified on the following pages.

Strategic Priority #1

Administration & Operations

Create a full-time Tourism & Culture Officer position within the Town's Economic Development & Culture Division.

1. *To ensure consistent oversight and effective management of tourism development (stakeholder relations, collaboration between public & private entities, ongoing marketing & content creation, grant applications, etc.), and to better equip the Town to see sooner ROI on this Tourism Strategy & Action Plan.*

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Allocate & approve budget for a full-time, mid-level, tourism-focused staff member with the title of Tourism & Culture Officer or similar.	Y1, Q1	Full-time Tourism & Culture officer onboarded by March 2021.	\$75,000 - \$85,000
ii. Task the Tourism & Culture Officer with leading the execution of the Tourism Strategy & Action Plan, focused on stakeholder relations, collaboration between public & private entities, ongoing marketing & content creation, grant applications, etc.	Upon onboarding Ongoing	Benchmarks as presented within this document are adhered to, or adjusted as needed.	
iii. Follow benchmarks for tourism development, with quarterly reviews of progress utilizing this document to track successes.	Y1 - Y5		
iv. Seek-out opportunities for collaboration between various Town divisions in the interest of tourism development, including Economic Development & Culture, Parks & Recreation, and the Library.	Ongoing	Combined efforts between Town divisions leads to tourism sector gains.	
v. Explore opportunities for the Tourism & Culture Officer to collaborate with partner organizations on complementary initiatives.	Ongoing	Orangeville benefits from BIA, Dufferin County and Central Counties initiatives.	

2. Evolve the approach to the existing Arts, Culture & Tourism newsletter.
To ensure tourism promotion is top of mind among all stakeholders, and all entities work toward the same goals with access to the same information & resources.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
1. Mandate that each Arts, Culture & Tourism newsletter includes a tourism focus, whether a blog, itinerary, event promotion or tourism asset highlight, to ensure subscribers are aware of things to see & do throughout Town.	Y1	Tourism is a recurring inclusion in each newsletter.	
ii. Develop a separate tourism-focused newsletter exclusive to stakeholders. Distribute quarterly, utilizing a recommended structure such as: Orangeville tourism updates, upcoming events, and a social corner (whereby the Town provides stakeholders with content - text, videos, images, etc., which they can use on their own social platforms to promote upcoming events, activities or initiatives).	Y1, Q1 Ongoing	Stakeholder newsletter is distributed quarterly.	
iii. Update the Arts, Culture & Tourism newsletter database monthly with the new e-mail addresses collected via the Visitors Centre.	Ongoing	Newsletter database updated regularly.	

3. Enhance the systems in place to track tourism arrivals and collect visitor data.
To effectively track the implementation of the Tourism Strategy & Action Plan, and monitor correlated visitor arrivals to Orangeville through the Visitors Centre.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Mandate that the Visitors Centre collects the following information upon every interaction, whether walk-in, call or e-mail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postal code Age (range): <25, 25-35, 36-45, 46-60, 60+ Reason for visit: Visit friends & family; Explore the area; To see a specific site, do a specific activity or participate in a specific event (please specify), On business Approximate length of stay: Half day, Full day, Two days, More than 2 days (please specify) E-mail address (Request consent to Arts, Culture & Tourism newsletter) Visitor or prospective visitor Mode of contact: Walk-in, call, e-mail 	Y1 Ongoing	Greater understanding of local tourism arrivals (#) and visitor profiles.	
ii. Monitor progress of Destination Ontario and Central Counties data collection and visitor segmentation, to further define target markets and best-allocate marketing funds.	Ongoing	Up-to-date understanding of visitor profiles, based on official data.	

4. Expand Visitors Centre services.

To ensure the knowledge, expertise & resources of the Visitors Centre are widely available and on various mediums, in order to effectively connect with visitors and prospective visitors as they demand.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Launch a Live Chat function on the Tourism section of the Town's website; ensure inquiries are monitored 9-5, and those submitted during outside hours are acknowledged first thing the following day.	Y1	Live Chat function available online between visitors and Visitors Centre representation.	\$19 - \$99 / month *
ii. Introduce summer seasonal Visitors Centre services at the Opera House; expand into other seasons if the demand exists.	Y3	Additional Visitors Centre location open.	May require amendments to 2023 Visitor Services Agreement
iii. Consider introducing Visitor Centre services at select Town events, to offer relevant collateral (maps, itineraries) to participants.	Y3	Ever-presence of Orangeville tourism at major events.	
iv. Invest in digital information kiosks to live outside the Visitors Centre and Opera House.	Y4	Digital tourist information kiosks available to enhance visitor experience.	\$6,000 - \$12,000 / each

5. Integrate community participation within tourism development initiatives.

To ensure tourism development is inclusive of the entire Orangeville community and considers the varied needs and ideas of its residents, stakeholders & diverse pool of prospective visitors.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Ensure Orangeville tourism is engaged and included in local events and activities. Provide relevant collateral to interested attendees, build their awareness of Orangeville's tourism drivers and extend their engagement with the Town. <i>For example, if a book club is reading historical fiction, providing a version of the Footsteps From Our Past itinerary may be interesting; or, offer a photography club an itinerary of interesting streetscapes, art, and visuals to capture.</i>	Y2	Tourism integrated throughout community conversations.	
ii. Establish a Tourism Advisory Committee for the purposes defined in Appendix B. Prioritizing diverse representation, invite up to eight individuals to act as the TAC, coordinated by the newly appointed Town Tourism & Culture Officer. Work with the TAC to refine its goals, roles & responsibilities, utilizing the framework provided in Appendix B as a starting point. Redistribute responsibilities of the current Cultural Plan Taskforce to this committee.	Y3	An established TAC.	

* Many recommended actions will be implemented through utilization of the existing EDC operational budget and through collaboration with partner organizations

6. Provide support to tourism-related businesses and entrepreneurs, including local artists.
To offer tourism-ready experiences and enhance exposure of the community's creative talents.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Train and support stakeholders for tourism readiness through workshops, events and resources developed for their specific needs (for example, customer service, marketing or product enhancements). Utilize the Small Business Enterprise Centre resources when possible.	Y2	Local stakeholders feel prepared to serve visitors; provide a good standard of customer service.	\$500 - \$800 per session *
ii. Create an online directory of Orangeville-based artists whose sales depend on e-commerce, further promoting the community's creative talent.	Y2	The work of Orangeville artists and the Town's creative talent is easily accessible to web visitors.	
iii. Establish an exclusive stakeholder Facebook group, whereby local artists, retailers, restaurateurs and other Orangeville entrepreneurs can connect to: seek-out partners for activities or promotions; share ideas for tourism initiatives (experiences, workshops, tours, etc.); and offer their services or talents.	Y2	Stakeholders are making new connections & pursuing joint initiatives to promote visitation.	

* Many recommended actions will be implemented through utilization of the existing EDC operational budget and through collaboration with partner organizations

Strategic Priority #2

Branding & Promotions

- 1. Define & build a tourism brand guide to direct marketing efforts & to support the growth of Orangeville's brand recognition as a "destination."**
To define Orangeville's image as a "destination" and establish foundational elements required for effective tourism marketing & engagement.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Complete a destination branding exercise that establishes a new visual brand identity, a tagline and clear direction as to how Orangeville can effectively distinguish itself from other communities as a destination in marketing and promotions.	Y1, Q2	Dedicated brand guide available for reference and application.	\$20,000 - \$25,000
ii. Introduce the new brand to Town Council, stakeholders, the BIA, Dufferin County, RTO6 and the community using various channels (virtual presentations, social media, newsletters, etc.), to ensure all involved are aware of Orangeville's new tourism brand.	Y1, Q3 - Q4	Adoption of tourism brand amongst partners and stakeholders.	
iii. Integrate new branding across tourism infrastructure, including: social media pages, tourism web pages, marketing & promotional materials, wayfinding, signage, social media, website, etc.	Y1, Q3 - Q4 Ongoing	Internal brand applications are carried out.	

2. Refresh, update, enhance & expand tourism-related collateral, including itineraries, maps and the Visitors Guide.

To enhance the appeal and accessibility of tourism information and inspiration, to best reach & serve prospective visitors.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Invest in updating Orangeville's photo and video assets, to capture four-season appeal and include diverse visitor segments (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, differently-abled, various age groups based on target markets, 2SLGBTQIA+) in order to effectively expand appeal of the Town throughout target markets.	Y1 - Y3	Tourism collateral is representative of community and target markets.	\$5,000 - \$8,000 *
ii. Update promotional materials based on new brand guidelines and using new photo assets. Graphic designer services will be required.	Y1 - Y3	Updated brochures, pamphlets and Visitors Guide available.	\$10,000 - \$12,000 *
iii. Make maps, itineraries, brochures and guides available in print and web format, including Footsteps From Our Past; ensure web formats are mobile responsive and also available for download in PDF form.	Y1 - Y3	All collateral is available in multiple formats.	
iv. Distribute tourism materials through local businesses, in person (maps, brochures available for pick-up) and online (link to Town's tourism page). Utilize the distribution channels available via public facilities as well (i.e. Recreation Centres, Libraries).	Ongoing	Tourism collateral is available via retailers and restaurants, as well as public facilities, throughout Orangeville.	\$50-\$150 per display rack *
v. Review collateral annually and update it for the following year as needed, to remain relevant and accurate.	Annual	Always relevant & up-to-date tourism collateral.	\$3,000 - \$5,000 / annually *

* Many recommended actions will be implemented through utilization of the existing EDC operational budget and through collaboration with partner organizations

3. Develop an annual tourism marketing plan to solidify an editorial calendar and marketing investments for the year ahead, based on scheduled activities & events.
To effectively showcase and share the story of Orangeville as a destination, in an effort to attract high-yield visitors.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Map-out a marketing framework that can be adapted annually, or as needed, to plan promotional activities based on Town calendar; include elements such as an editorial calendar (blog & newsletter content), social media calendar, budget, advertising channels, co-op marketing partners and media & influencer opportunities.	Y1, Q1	12-month marketing plan in place; specific KPIS to be determined internally based on initiatives planned.	\$18,000 in Y1, with potential increases in subsequent years (Existing operational budget) *
ii. Work on the assumption that years 1 & 2 of the Tourism Plan will largely be about recovering former tourism arrival numbers; incremental growth should be expected in years 3-5.	Ongoing		
iii. Build a promotional plan for selected events and activities, and decide appropriate marketing channels for each (print, web, radio, social media). Consider social media marketing as the primary targeted approach.	Y1, Q1 (annually, typically in Q3 or 4 for the following year)	Marketing dollars strategically allocated.	
iv. Identify stakeholders and partners with whom to work in carrying out various elements of the marketing plan. Simple criteria for potential co-op marketing partners include stakeholders who have funds available, whose values align with the Towns, and who will directly benefit from marketing initiatives.	Ongoing	Co-op marketing dollars secured.	
v. Create a robust bank of content (written, video and photo content), and establish a Blog section on the Tourism webpage, utilizing the editorial calendar within the marketing plan to guide efforts.	Y1, Q2 Ongoing	Blog section established and populated with content.	

* Many recommended actions will be implemented through utilization of the existing EDC operational budget and through collaboration with partner organizations

4. Enhance the online presence of tourism collateral & content via orangevilletourism.ca & orangeville.ca.

To maximize efficacy of online platforms for the purposes of tourism promotion.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
<p>i. Invest in improvements to the Tourism section of Town's website to make it more appealing to prospective visitors (versus current corporate approach). Apply a visual experience that is also content rich, providing intuitive access to resources such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog content • Itineraries (sorted by interest) • Asset descriptions • An activities & events calendar 	Y2	Uniquely-positioned Orangeville tourism website within the newly launched orangeville.ca, available via orangevilletourism.ca.	\$20,000+
ii. Commit to ongoing maintenance and making regular updates to the content and visuals.	Y2 Ongoing	Always relevant and up-to-date tourism website.	\$3,000 / annually *

Strategic Priority #3

Tourism Assets & Experience Development

- 1. Dedicate ongoing resources to maintaining public art collections & the historic downtown, while planning for & investing in new and innovative installations.**
To develop Orangeville's position as a destination for arts & culture enthusiasts, and create new opportunities to engage visitors.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Maintain and expand tree sculpture and utility box art display program collections annually.	Y1 Ongoing	Existing public art maintains its appeal; new public art continuously added to Orangeville streetscape.	\$7,000 - \$8,000 / annually *
ii. Continue to invest in the beautification and maintenance of downtown Orangeville (i.e., Facade Improvement Program, OBIA).	Y1 Ongoing	Downtown maintains appeal; any changes should enhance, not detract, from the current aesthetic.	
iii. Transfer management of all public art pieces and related publications to the Economic Development & Culture office to allow for consistent, consolidated, and enhanced promotion of the entire collection.	Y2	All tourism assets are managed by the appropriate division.	Transferred from other divisional operating budgets
iv. Determine Town spaces for painted murals, such as those in the downtown, the Visitors Centre, and recreation & athletic facilities. Gradually commission work from local & regional artists, dedicating specific spaces to Indigenous art.	Y2	Ongoing creation of new murals throughout the Town; prioritization of Indigenous public art.	
v. Invest in community-engaged installations for display in the downtown and top-visited parks, such as large instruments and Instagramable displays (think the "LOVE" lock sign in Toronto's Distillery District).	Y4	The presence of at least one piece of community-engaged art in downtown Orangeville.	\$10,000 - \$25,000
vi. Create itineraries for Public Art Walks, as the sites expand. Consider arranging competition-style art hunt activities.	Ongoing	Tourism collateral updated with evolution of public art attractions.	
vii. Integrate public art displays into the Activities & Events plan. (Refer to Recommendation 2, following.)	Ongoing		
viii. Evaluate and pursue any opportunities to secure funding to support continued implementation of the Town's public art programming.	TBD	Funding opportunities are pursued and secured.	

* Many recommended actions will be implemented through utilization of the existing EDC operational budget and through collaboration with partner organizations

2. Build upon the Town's annual events & activities and year-round attractions, including public art, by creating new experiences and packaged itineraries to create four-season appeal.

To provide visitors & residents with a broader selection of tourism assets to explore, and to further enhance the Town's positioning as an artistic community.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
<p>i. Develop an annual Activities and Events plan in partnership with the BIA, stakeholders, and local businesses. Events should focus on tourism drivers (public art, outdoor spaces/ activities, historic downtown). Ideas for Orangeville's consideration include (but are not limited to):</p> <p>January:</p> <p><i>Winter Carnival:</i> Kick the year off with some excitement, embracing sub-zero temperatures with a weekend carnival that engages locals and visitors of all ages. Activities might include axe throwing, log sawing, snowman making competitions, a "Beer Tent" (where visitors can imbibe beer or winter cocktails like hot chocolate & Baileys), ice sculptures (perhaps making carved ice versions of tree sculptures), outdoor performances, and more.</p> <p><i>Winterlicious:</i> Preempt Toronto's annual Winterlicious with Orangeville's own restaurant-focused event, offering price fixe menus that tempt the taste buds of locals and visitors alike.</p> <p>May:</p> <p><i>Teddy Bear Picnic at Island Lake:</i> Ideally targeted toward the regional visitors of Island Lake, this nostalgic family event offers the opportunity to showcase Orangeville's outstanding food scene, set in an outdoor space frequented by visitors and locals alike. Set in the Oak Canopy Pavillion area, the Orangeville Teddy Bear Picnic could play on a beloved foregone pastime. Participating local restaurants (approx 3-5) would set up tents in the pavilion and sell special boxed "picnic" lunches for a set price (e.g. \$10 per, or \$30 for a family size) and ice cream or popsicles. Farmers' market vendors can also sell their wares. Pre-outlined spaces where families can lay down BYO picnic blankets (encourage social distancing, as necessary) and live performances by local artists geared toward a younger audience (and their plush companions) ensures an engaging and entertaining day for all.</p> <p>...continued on following page</p>	Y1 - Y5	Full calendar of events available for promotion year-round.	<p>Budget will vary and can range from \$500 and staff time per event to more substantial financial commitments *</p> <p>\$2,000 - \$5,000</p> <p>n/a</p>

<p><i>(Teddy Bear Picnic, continued from previous page)</i></p> <p>This event provides downtown restaurants and local artists the opportunity to connect with locals and tourists alike, in an area known to attract visitors. It can be marketed to citizens in and around Orangeville, and its location presents the opportunity for day-of participation as well. Note: Alternatively, this event could take place in a downtown park, allowing restaurants to sell their boxed lunches onsite to people en route.....</p>			\$1,000 - \$2,000
<p><i>Outdoor Arts Festival:</i> Put local art, music and makers on display for a weekend Arts Festival. Integrate interactive experiences such as simple art classes and sidewalk art, with professional displays from local and visiting talent. Combine with art talks and readings from local authors for a well-rounded event that will appeal to various interests.....</p>			+/- \$2,000
<p>September:</p> <p><i>Cultural Take-Out Food Festival:</i> Based on a successful event held in Belleville, Ontario in summer 2020, this dynamic culinary event appeals to the public's taste for adventure within the idyllic setting of the downtown core. Featuring a multicultural array of Orangeville's top culinary talent, this festival can run through a long weekend, during set times each day (11 a.m. - 7 p.m.). Restaurants register to participate, and create a signature dish available at a set price (\$10). Attendees obtain online passports, designed to help them find participating restaurants. A trivia game where questions are posted at each restaurant, leading to entry into a prize draw encourages attendees to visit as many locations as possible along the downtown. As restrictions around Covid-19 exist, being a "take-out only" event ensures crowd control as restaurants adjust to new indoor seating regulations. As physical distancing restrictions are lifted, the event can evolve further.....</p>			+/- \$1,000
<p>Ongoing:</p> <p><i>Monthly Coffee House:</i> Featuring local talent—from musicians to poets to comedians—an ongoing Coffee House (i.e. monthly) will enhance the Town's position as an arts destination, offering entertainment to locals & visitors alike. Host at a local bar or restaurant, the downtown Library, the Opera House or Westminster United Church, and outdoor spaces when possible.....</p>			n/a
<p>...continued on following page</p>			

<p><i>Workshops:</i> Collaborate with local artisans, chefs and venues to host workshops, whether general (painting, pottery, improv, cooking classes, music lessons, photography) or seasonal (i.e. wreath making). Again, consider local venues such as the downtown Library or Westminster United Church, and outdoor spaces when possible. Workshops may initially be 2-3 hours to garner attention from nearby target markets, and expand to 1-2 full day sessions.</p>			\$500 - \$5,000 per session
<p><i>Scavenger Hunt challenges:</i> Write itineraries that guide visitors through the downtown in the form of clues and hints, leading them to public art pieces, tree sculptures and notable landmarks (i.e. the Opera House). Include hints that guide participants to engage with stakeholders, for example hinting at different dishes to try at local restaurants or goods to buy at local retailers.</p>			n/a
<p><i>Performances in the Park:</i> Work with local musical talent and venues to create a weekend entertainment schedule from June - August, with additional performances at the Opera House throughout the year based on availability.</p>			Vary per performance and may receive sponsorship
<p>ii. Collaborate with surrounding regions/ municipalities (i.e. Dufferin County, Caledon, Alton, etc.) to create & package experiences & itineraries that appeal to identified visitor profiles.</p>	Y2 Ongoing	Robust tourism experiences that feature Orangeville & its stakeholders as part of a broader visit available to prospective travellers.	

3. Enhance and expand the current library of tourism itineraries.
To enhance the appeal and accessibility of tourism information and inspiration, to best reach & serve prospective visitors.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
<p>i. Apply a new format to existing itineraries; abide by this format for all new itineraries going forward. The approach should more actively describe tourism assets, and illustrate the experience for prospective visitors. As a sample structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note who the tour is for • Note duration of tour • Note physicality (Low, Medium, High) • Tour overview: What can people expect to see & do, and what are the highlights • Full itinerary: Well-developed narrative offering exciting and immersive illustration of what participants will see & experience on the tour • Photo gallery <p>Refer to small tour operators such as Urban Adventures for examples of illustrative itineraries.</p>	Y1, Q3 - Q4	Engaging, well-rounded and clear itineraries available to visitors.	
<p>ii. Conceptualize and write new itineraries, with accompanying maps & suggested routes, that hone-in on downtown public art and stakeholders. Commit to ongoing itinerary development, particularly as new public art, annual events and activities are added to the Town offering.</p> <p>A series of ideas to consider include (but are not limited to):</p> <p><i>Dazed & Downtown:</i> One-day itinerary featuring downtown Orangeville, including elements from the “Footsteps From Our Past” tour, art discovery, and local vendors.</p> <p><i>Weekend Wandering:</i> One-day itinerary featuring different walking paths and destinations paired with stops at local vendors, the Farmers’ Market, etc.</p> <p><i>10,000 steps:</i> A one-day itinerary that strolls through the Downtown from tree sculpture to tree sculpture, painted utility box to utility box, historic facade to historic facade, with suggestions for stops in between and background offered for each featured piece of art.</p> <p><i>...continued on following page</i></p>	Y2 Ongoing	New itineraries available on an ongoing basis.	\$5,000

<p><i>Bite-size Orangeville:</i> A half-day or full-day foodie tour, ideally with recommended dishes and treats for participants at each stop.</p> <p><i>Orangeville Christmas Walk:</i> A half-day itinerary that guides visitors to where they can find unique gifts throughout the Downtown, featuring local retailers.</p>			
iii. Offer local tours delivered by well-informed community members and/or scripted co-op/summer students. Tours can be subject specific (culinary, historical, arts-related, etc.) based on the needs of the group. Develop scripts to optimize the delivery of guided tours based on select itineraries, available for a small fee (\$15 - \$25).	Y3	Guided tours available through the Town's EDC division.	Approx. \$8,500/yr (Subsidies may be available through federal/provincial funding programs)
iv. Develop more family-focused itineraries and programming if/when new accommodations open up .	TBD	Ongoing itinerary & programming developed as the Town's market appeal evolves.	

- 4. Align with the Parks & Recreation Division, as well as Island Lake/Credit Valley Conservation, to establish connections between parks & trails, creating uniquely Orangeville experiences through outdoor spaces.**
- To link the Town's outdoor spaces by creating a cohesive narrative and through a similar standard of upkeep, presentation and overall appeal that is unique to Orangeville.*

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Create an "Arts in Nature" program, enhancing the Town's outdoor spaces and making them uniquely Orangeville by mapping out areas where public art (including Indigenous art) can be on display throughout Orangeville trails and parks. Work with the TAC and community at large to build a narrative for each space, and source art from local artists that helps to tell each story.	Y3 - Y5	Min. one piece of art for every park, and every 0.5 km of trail (or as determined feasible).	\$20,000+ / annually (EDC/P&R budgets) *
ii. Leverage "Arts in Nature" programs within tourism promotions, tourism collateral, and Activities & Events plan.	Y3 - Y5		
iii. Work to promote the expansion of trails in Orangeville in the interest of connecting to other communities.	Y4 - Y5	Orangeville trails connect to surrounding regions.	
iv. Develop the rail line into a rail trail and historic walk, should the opportunity come available; incorporate Orangeville's rail station within the plan.	TBD		

5. Integrate Augmented Reality experiences to tourism assets & developments.
To add another dimension to Orangeville's public art and expand a visitor's ability to interact with the Town.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Connect with AR specialists, such as Neighbour or Driftscape, to discuss specific areas and approaches to augmented reality within the Town.	Y3	Augmented reality technology available to and used by visitors to experience Orangeville's public art & historic downtown.	Initial investment of \$5,000 with reduced maintenance fees thereafter *
ii. Work with Heritage Orangeville to enhance the "Footsteps From Our Past" tour using augmented reality.	Y3		
iii. Enhance the "Arts in Nature" experience through augmented reality, allowing visitors to access another dimension of the work they come across (i.e. to access an artist profile or information about the piece of history it represents, or to see an interactive version of the piece, audio guides, etc).	Y3		

* Many recommended actions will be implemented through utilization of the existing EDC operational budget and through collaboration with partner organizations

Strategic Priority #4

Infrastructure & Investments

- 1. Continue to fulfill the wayfinding program currently in place, updating and filling gaps where needed with a focus on pedestrian-level signage and trail signage.**
To more effectively guide visitors and connect tourism assets.

ACTIONS			
i. Remove Credit Valley Explorer Train from wayfinding signage, and replace where possible.	Y1, Q3	A fully-developed, well-refined wayfinding program is in place.	\$2,000 - \$5,000 *
ii. Remove the community event signs.	Y1, Q3		

- 2. Enhance visitor-friendly infrastructure & services throughout the Town.**
To ensure services are available (such as retailer open hours, as well as bike racks, accessibility ramps, public restrooms and public water stations) in order to expand the appeal of Town assets.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Continue to work with BIA to establish a plan for trialing adjusted business hours for retailers, such as later open times on Thursdays & Fridays (7 p.m.) and open on Sundays (close Mondays for those currently closed Sunday).	Y1, Q2 Ongoing	Greater access to downtown retailers during peak visitor times.	
ii. Work with StopGap and the BIA to equip downtown retailers with accessibility ramps, offering a rebate to those who participate; expand the program beyond the downtown. As the Town's sidewalks are resurfaced, consider more permanent infrastructure improvements for improved accessibility.	Y2	Downtown retailers made accessible to differently-abled guests.	\$250-\$550 each *
iii. Work with the Parks & Recreation Division to install bike racks in downtown parking lots.	Y3	Expanded bike parking available downtown.	\$500 each *
iv. Work with the Parks & Recreation Division to install self-cleaning public restrooms and water stations, ideally in a downtown parking lot.	Y4	Public restrooms & water stations available in key locations.	Approx. \$250 per square foot

* Many recommended actions will be implemented through utilization of the existing EDC operational budget and through collaboration with partner organizations

3. Carry-out tourism-related recommendations presented in the 2020 Recreation & Parks Master Plan.

To align the efforts & investments of multiple Town divisions for mutual progress and success.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Undertake a full design process including community consultation to assess the feasibility of a skate trail throughout Rotary Park. (P25)	Y1 - Y2	Enhanced outdoor spaces that can be utilized for tourism programming and promotion.	\$80,000
ii. Develop a plan to transform Alexandra Park into a civic space for hosting gatherings and special events, as part of the Downtown Event Precinct. (E6)	Y1 - Y2		\$1,150,000

4. Explore the possibility for a boutique hotel, using successful examples in like communities as models for best practice; evaluate the opportunity to pursue with a private investor over time.

To determine the viability of a non-chain hotel presence within the Town, in hopes of bolstering the appeal for overnight stays.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	GOALS / KPIS	BUDGET
i. Assess areas of possible location for downtown, boutique accommodation.	Y4 - Y5	Viability / possibility for boutique hotel determined.	
ii. Connect with representatives from associated tourism or economic development offices to discuss the impact boutique properties have had on visitation and brand recognition.	Y4 - Y5		
iii. Connect with owners or managers of boutique hotels to discuss business model, viability, etc.	Y4 - Y5		
iv. Approach private investors, if opportunity appears viable.	Y4 - Y5	Secure investor for boutique property in Orangeville's downtown.	

5. Conduct feasibility study for an Arts & Culture centre, using source funding to support the initiative wherever possible. Prepare a business plan, if deemed appropriate.

To evaluate the economic, geographic, economic & social viability of a dedicated Arts & Culture hub within the downtown.

ACTIONS			
i. Issue & manage an RFP for outside services to complete a feasibility study for an Arts & Culture Centre.	Y4 - Y5	Consultant acquired to conduct feasibility study.	\$75,000
ii. Carry-out recommendations presented within the feasibility study.	Y4 - Y5	Feasibility study completed, with productive direction provided.	

Appendix **A**

Comparable Analysis

Town of Orangeville Tourism Strategy & Action Plan

A purposeful review of the paths charted by destinations with opportunities and challenges similar to those Orangeville faces provides us with a considered base to support the creation of the Tourism Strategy & Action Plan. This Comparable Analysis will inform recommendations & actions, as we examine approaches and strategies to consider, as well as potential obstacles and issues to avoid, relevant to the Town's own development.

This comparable analysis is designed as a supporting document to the Orangeville Tourism Strategy & Action Plan. To complete the comparable analysis, a member of our team, separate from the project lead, reviewed the strategies and performance of five relevant destinations and their respective destination management organizations:

Stratford (ON) - Stratford Tourism Alliance

Stratford was identified for its defining arts & culture offering, its culinary program and its success at diversifying its economy and building out natural assets to complement its arts scene (ie: bike trails and green spaces).

Squamish (BC) - Tourism Squamish

Squamish was included because, as one of the fastest growing communities in British Columbia, the city is seeing significant investment in further developing its downtown core, as well as the destination marketing organization's (DMO) focus on sport specific and active adventure leisure travellers and families.

Wiarton (ON) - Explore the Bruce

As a community within a larger "destination region" (The Bruce Peninsula), Wiarton provided a comparable framework for Orangeville's relationship with Dufferin County, as it has its own distinct brand/appeal (Wiarton Willie Festival), complemented by natural assets in the surrounding region.

Brockville (ON) - Brockville Tourism

Brockville was identified as a strong comparable as the destination has worked to better weave its diverse offering together cohesively over the past decade.

Richmond (BC) - Tourism Richmond

Richmond was included in the analysis on the strength of its Arts Strategy, Culinary Strategy and the DMO's ability to leverage outdoor and recreational activities.

A detailed table of findings, statistics and documents sourced [can be found here](#).

Leveraging & Developing Arts & Culture

As Tourism Brockville noted in its '2010 Tourism Industry Expansion Plan', the development of cultural industries could serve the destination as an attractor for the 'target tourist,' which would encourage visitors to consider taking up residence and, potentially, start businesses locally.

As such, leveraging and developing Orangeville's arts & culture offering has the potential to do more than just encourage tourism in the destination. It can have also have a positive impact on encouraging future residents and businesses, thereby contributing to the overall health of the community.

Richmond

As British Columbia is best-known as an outdoor & recreation destination, Tourism Richmond needed a well-defined strategy if the DMO was going to successfully promote and develop Richmond as an arts & culture community.

In 2004, Richmond adopted its first Arts Strategy, independent of a tourism strategy, with the aim to make Richmond a city with a thriving cultural life where opportunities for participation in the arts at all levels were accessible, artists felt they have a place and are seen as contributing to the community, cultural industries are welcomed and cultural activity is visible and supported.

Since then, there has been significant civic investment to increase the capacity of artists and arts organizations, offer high-quality arts festivals and programs and showcase Richmond's artistic talent. During the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, especially as part of Richmond's O Zone, local artists were integral to instilling community pride, identity and spirit, and enjoyed unprecedented profile to local and international audiences.

The 2004 Arts Strategy was updated in 2012, with the majority of its goals addressed by 2017. Richmond's Arts Strategy 2019–2024 now positions the arts as a means to achieve community goals in economic development, health and well-being, infrastructure and tourism.

Its Five Major Strategic Directions to lead arts and cultural development over the next five years are:

1. Ensure affordable and accessible arts for all
2. Promote inclusivity and diversity in the arts
3. Invest in the arts
4. Increase awareness and participation in the arts
5. Activate public spaces through (and for) the arts

The 2019-2024 Arts Strategy lists as an objective to "Integrate the arts at a strategic level in community, economic, tourism, environmental and wellness planning" with the following supporting actions:

1. Link the Arts Strategy to other city planning initiatives
2. Raise the awareness among city divisions of the benefits of arts and culture in building a strong community
3. Continue to work with other city divisions to provide arts opportunities including art in the public realm
4. Conduct a deeper analysis of the data collected through the community engagement process and connect, where applicable, to relevant data from other sources

Stratford

Stratford has made it extremely apparent, through its branding efforts, that it is first and foremost an arts & culture community. Its slogan is: “The Arts Are What We Are.”

Stratford’s arts and culture scene is a leading contributor to the growth of the city’s creative economy and that is well understood by residents. The Stratford Festival is the city’s top employer, with successful revenue and attendance year after year. As a result, Stratford’s brand is now understood to be synonymous with the arts: music, drama, dance, the visual arts, literature and the culinary arts.

When reviewing Stratford-related content and collateral, there is no mistaking that arts & culture are the driving force behind its destination success. Everything else is secondary and supporting to the arts & culture message and experience.

The Stratford Tourism Alliance (STA) identified that “the city is packed with the sights and sounds of actors, musicians, chefs, hoteliers, artists and writers” and notes that its Arts & Culture Competitive Advantages as:

- The Stratford Festival: the epicentre for theatre in southwestern Ontario and in all of Canada
- Stratford Summer Music in July and August: attract international singers, musicians and composers
- Vibrant visual art scene found in the artist collective of Factory 163 at Gallery Stratford and during the Art in the Park exhibits
- The Stratford Perth Museum
- Perth Archives celebrate local history through collections and exhibits
- Perth Arts Connect is dedicated to raising awareness of the diversity of the arts, culture and heritage in the county

Stratford is also using the strength of its arts & culture sector in its tourism recovery efforts from Covid-19. Lights On Stratford, a brand new arts and culture festival being spearheaded by the Stratford Economic Response and Recovery Task Force, will bring colourful, elaborate light sculptures and exhibits to various spots across the city during the cold-weather months between November and February.

The event is inspired by the Toronto Light Festival, and much of the art featured in Stratford’s version will be created by lighting designers and technical staff from the Stratford Festival, providing a unique, local experience.

The STA noted that, because the community has access to some of the best light designers, prop builders and the like from the world of theatre, they had an opportunity to harness that creative energy and turn it into this valuable community/tourism event.

The inaugural event will cost about \$385,000 with a portion of the budget shared by the task force, the Stratford City Centre BIA, the Stratford Tourism Alliance, and a regional office of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. Organizers are also looking for sponsorships to cover about \$205,000. Art will be introduced in stages and will represent the main focus of the task force’s tourism recovery efforts this winter.

A board member of the STA noted to councillors that the new festival not only offers an opportunity to bring much-needed tourism to Stratford during the pandemic era, but also offers an off-season attraction that could become an annual tradition.

Considerations:

- Adopt and maintain an overall Arts Strategy that focuses on ensuring opportunities for participation in the arts at all levels are accessible, artists feel they have a place and are seen as contributing to the community, cultural industries are welcomed and cultural activity is visible and supported
- Link the Arts Strategy to other community planning initiatives
- Invest to increase the capacity of artists and arts organizations, offer high-quality arts festivals and programs, and showcase Orangeville's artistic talent
- Firmly define the destination based on the arts & culture offering
- Harness the creative energy of the community and turn it into valuable experiences and events for locals and visitors alike

Leveraging Natural Assets

Understanding a destination's defining natural assets and building out a complementary schema for additional offerings was central to a number of strategies observed.

Stratford

For instance, while Stratford's arts scene is the destination's primary draw and brand, the Stratford Tourism Alliance recognized that Stratford's swans are still one of the destination's most iconic symbols and natural assets.

As such, the DMO worked to develop a swan-centric weekend celebration that includes a Saturday program featuring "Swan Quest" (12 decorated topiary swans displayed in downtown Stratford, people vote for their favourite for a chance to win a \$100 Stratford City Centre BIA shopping spree and ballots were available at Stratford Tourism Alliance and at each swan location); eco-nature themed product for kids such as free walks, storytelling, partnerships with retailers and naturalist groups and swan-themed arts performances.

The Sunday portion of the programming includes the weekend's centrepiece event, the parade, followed by additional family activities.

The DMO messaged the programming through a number of themed campaigns, pay-per-click promotion, social media promotion, TripAdvisor, newsletter, PR & media visits and posts on travelontario.net.

Appreciating the value of one of their best-known natural assets and then building off it has allowed the STA to curate an event that provides a weekend-long economic boost to downtown businesses, encourages more widespread exploration of the destination and enhances the destination brand while also contributing to the community.

The DMO has also leveraged its natural assets to encourage a stronger shoulder season tourism offering, highlighting its nature walks, local foraging & healthy alternatives experiences and seasonal tastings across its "Cleansing Getaways" spring campaign content.

Squamish

Unlike Stratford, Squamish's tourism offering is largely focused on its natural assets as a main driver of tourism in the destination. Squamish has more than 200 kilometres of mountain bike trails, is considered the "bald eagle capital of North America," and has more than 30 recreational clubs and associations. It hosts annual, internationally recognized recreational-based events including the Kite Clash (kite-boarding), Squamish Enduro (mountain biking), Squamish 50 (trail-running) and the Climbing Academy (rock climbing).

Considering the assets available to the destination, Tourism Squamish has made the decision to focus on sport-specific and active adventure leisure travellers and families who visit destinations specifically to partake in their activity of choice during relevant seasons or to get outside and enjoy nature.

Tourism Squamish uses its content and messaging to consistently highlight the destination's world class sport, adventure and natural experiences including: mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing, wind sports, water sports, fishing, rafting, nordic skiing, backcountry skiing and snowmobiling.

Wiarton

Wiarton highlights its proximity to a variety of natural assets prominently on its website, going so far as to brand itself as the "Basecamp to the Bruce Peninsula."

The "Wiarton Community Toolkit" - a Bruce County developed-program that supports communities through strategic policy and capital investment - recommends that, in order to create a destination-wide look and feel that supports this position. Wiarton should work to highlight the natural features of the surrounding escarpment, as well as the plentiful outdoor opportunities in and around the town.

In order to fully achieve the desired look and feel, the Toolkit goes so far as to prescribe that Wiarton developments should have a "classic frontier feel and architecture that integrates the escarpment stone and natural timber into the streetscape and buildings is encouraged. Local white cedar timber, posts, trim and flagstone in irregular sizes are materials that can easily adapt to exterior and interior finishes. Natural stone boulders in different sizes and colours can create naturally defined areas, sculptural elements and photo opportunities. Pine trims and siding are readily available in rough or planned and the flexible colour options make it an ideal product once coated. Buildings should utilize natural materials available locally such as Wiarton limestone and white cedar for structural elements and highlights. Preservation of downtown architecture and existing brick structures is encouraged. Vinyl and metal siding is not appropriate for commercial areas that are visible from the mainstreets. Wiarton stone is also known as Dolostone, Wiarton Black Dolostone, Ledgerock, Eramosa and ranges in colour from beige to black and is a medium-hard limestone. Stone adds a natural aesthetic to building and landscape projects. By integrating surrounding natural elements into downtown Wiarton, Wiarton will highlight itself as an outdoor adventure basecamp."

Richmond

Despite British Columbia's reputation as an outdoor & recreation destination, Tourism Richmond leverages outdoor & recreation activities only as a secondary driver, listing 'Wildlife & Nature' as one of the elements listed under its 'Activities & Attractions' heading on its tourism website (along with drivers like Olympic Oval, Nightlife & Entertainment, Indoor Activities), providing links to a selection of brochures detailing the birds, butterflies, and plants found throughout Richmond Nature Park from its consumer facing tourism website. Whale watching is listed as its own category of Activity, separate from Wildlife & Nature (and included on the Wildlife & Nature Page).

In the 2019-2020 Richmond Visitors Guide, whale watching, golf, biking are given space, with the largest emphasis on whale watching, which it labels as a "Don't Miss" activity.

As Richmond targets Authentic Experiencers in its marketing efforts, more emphasis is placed on history and culture activities, identifying the top assets Richmond chooses to promote as "sites where important historical events took place" and sites that allow them to "adapt to the local culture, exploring and spending time in local areas most tourists don't visit."

Considerations:

- Identify Orangeville's strongest natural assets, determine if they are primary or secondary tourism drivers, and develop strategy framework from there
- Develop an event around strongest and most recognizable natural assets that provides an economic boost, encourages more widespread exploration and enhances the destination brand while also contributing to the community
- Develop and promote natural/cleansing "getaways" to increase shoulder season visitation
- Focus natural assets marketing efforts on sport-specific and active adventure leisure travellers and families who visit destinations specifically to partake in their activity of choice during relevant seasons
- If decided appropriate, focus crux of branding on Orangeville as access-point to natural assets
- Develop a community toolkit that encourages downtown development to underscore the destination's strongest assets

Developing & Promoting Culinary Tourism

Based on the destinations analyzed, the strength of a destination's culinary tourism appeal runs parallel to the destination's ability to effectively communicate what it is about the local culinary experience that makes it interesting or distinct. As is the case observed in 'Leveraging Natural Assets' above, appreciating the destination's strongest culinary assets and building a strategy from strength is key to success.

Richmond

Tourism Richmond, in conjunction with other key stakeholders, finalized a Richmond Food Tourism Strategy in 2019. Tourism Richmond has stated that the plans account for long- and short-term goals to increase visitation—especially in the shoulder season—and how to provide visitors with the best experiences when they come to Richmond.

The Food Tourism Strategy is not yet available for the public to view. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the plan had been to begin rolling out the initiatives and actions outlined in these two tourism plans in 2020.

Aside from this defined strategy, Richmond had already established itself as a culinary destination as its Alexandra Road has been branded as “Food Street” or “Wai Sek Kai.” Food Street is a three-block stretch of the City’s Golden Village and has the highest concentration of restaurants in the city, most serving Asian cuisine.

Tourism Richmond offers a Food Street “Food Crawl” guide available on its website and has also developed a “Dumpling Trail” (listed among CNN Travel’s list of 12 of the world’s most enticing food and drink trails), which is available to download as a PDF from the Tourism Richmond website. The organization has also created a number of additional “Dining Guides” made available on its website:

- Best Chinese
- Best Dim Sum
- Cheap Eats
- What’s in Season
- WestCoastFood Guide

Additionally, Richmond has also established the Richmond Night Market, which has become an annual tradition and one of the flagship

summertime events of the region. Founded in 2000 by entrepreneur Raymond Cheung, the Richmond Night Market has grown from modest beginnings since its first location at the Continental Centre on Cambie Road and is now the largest Night Market in North America and has become an international attraction, attracting over one million visitors each year. It features 250 merchandise booths, more than 100 food vendors serving Asian street food and desserts, diverse family-friendly entertainment and more than 1,000 on-site free parking stalls.

And finally, “Taste of Richmond” is a dedicated page on Tourism Richmond’s website, offering a guide to tastings, hands-on classes, tours and guided experiences.

Stratford

The STA has created the Stratford Culinary Trail, designed to introduce visitors to local artisans while they sample foods on the Chocolate Trail, the Bacon and Ale Trail and, during the holidays, the seasonal Christmas Trail, which offers new finds and gifts in November and December.

In 2018, the STA’s ‘Culinary Trails’ program achieved a record year, resulting in 12,000 visits to local businesses and its 25th Anniversary edition of the Culinary Guide. A related media campaign was launched with an event attended by more than 30 culinary media writers and influencers, 5 Stratford #nextgen chefs, STA and SCS reps, and craft brewers/distillers.

Additionally, the STA produces the Savour Stratford: Culinary Guide, which it uses to celebrate local chefs, in addition to promoting the local food and beverage offering.

Brockville

In the 'Supporting Infrastructure and Complementary' portion of its 5-Year Tourism Strategy and Action Report, Tourism Brockville identified that, while Brockville has a lot of the complementary pieces in place to support a strong tourism offering, they need to be utilized better and tied together more effectively.

Part in parcel to this, there was an identified need and opportunity to develop more unique local food and beverage options that would differentiate Brockville from other locations along the 1000 Islands. It was suggested this could be done by working with the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance to connect local growers to existing and prospective restaurateurs, and improving on the Farmer's Market, including options for a winter market.

That said, one of Brockville's most popular annual community events is Brockville RibFest - an annual tradition that Brockvillians do not miss, and visitors are invited too. There are many activities as well as non-food vendors, eating competitions, a kids zone with activities and live music at night. The local Big Brothers Big Sisters charity organization put on the festival annually to raise funds.

Considerations:

- Develop a culinary-focused tourism strategy in addition to the overall strategy
- Identify Orangeville's standout/distinct culinary offering, develop complementing pieces from there
- Create a culinary guide that celebrates local chefs, farmers, culinary artisans in addition to promoting local restaurants (i.e. develop a piece of content people want to read and share)
- Create a food-focused webpage offering a guide to tastings, hands-on classes, tours and guided experiences
- Develop an event that celebrates the local culinary offering and can bring in influencers and media
- Work with a culinary tourism program to help connect local growers to existing and prospective restaurateurs

Downtown Core Development

Brockville

In its 5 -Year Tourism Strategy and Action Report, Brockville Tourism identified that the destination's real opportunity to attract higher yield overnight visitors lies in the downtown core of Brockville, along with the waterfront on the St Lawrence River and the 1000 Islands.

Therefore, it was recognized that Brockville's focus for future tourism development had to be in creating expanded overnight capacity in the downtown core and the waterfront, and adding in strategic new tourism products, experiences and supporting infrastructure targeted at the identified high opportunity markets.

It was also noted that Brockville needed to consider the preparation of a Heritage Master Plan that would inventory and ensure protection/preservation of the city's heritage resources, particularly in the downtown core (i.e., street facades, historic churches, Railway Tunnel, 19th century buildings). Further, it said that consideration should be given to the creation of a heritage conservation district in the city's commercial centre, similar to what was done in downtown Cobourg. This was recommended to help to protect the unique character and sense of place, with particular focus on exterior alterations and new construction.

In a 2010 Tourism Industry Expansion Plan, Downtown Revitalization was identified as providing an immediate 'wow' impact on first-time visitors and combines well with the street café and cultural industries concepts.

Squamish

As one of the fastest growing communities in British Columbia, with 15% growth from 2014-2019, Squamish is seeing significant investment in further developing its downtown core, namely the Newport Beach "Waterfront Village" Development project with the hope of revitalizing waterfront property. Since 1999, \$45 million have been invested into the property to ready it for development.

The project, which is being overseen by an organization called Newport Beach Developments LP, has the stated goal of working to "build community, achieved by creating a place where people will come together to work, to play, to learn and to live. This confluence of uses is anchored by the surrounding water, marking the peninsula as the start of the journey, rather than the end of the road... designed to create a microcosm of idyllic living tailored to the natural landscape."

For its part, Tourism Squamish has made advocating for destination development initiatives one of its six main goals by maintaining participation on the Economic Development Steering Committee; assisting in the identification, growth and enhancement of product experiences; and becoming the organization for data, policy and direction for future tourism development.

Wiarton

Wiarton's tourism marketing and overall strategy fits into the larger Bruce County framework under the Explore the Bruce program. As such, Wiarton's downtown hasn't factored into the organization's strategies.

However, aside from the tourism marketing operation, over five years, the Town of Wiarton collected background information regarding the health of its downtown in an effort to develop a structured and focused downtown revitalization program.

It also developed the Wiarton Revitalization committee, an action-oriented group made up of volunteers, residents, business owners and staff that share an objective interest and vision for the long-term success of Wiarton, with a primary focus on the downtown area, redeveloping downtown Wiarton as an economic generator for the community and the Peninsula, thereby increasing economic opportunities (job creation, expanded tax based, tourism, youth opportunities, better quality of life) for the whole community.

Relatedly, Spruce the Bruce is a community development program that supports local community efforts to facilitate long-term downtown revitalization plans, bringing together stakeholders to build community capacity and assist with strategic policy and capital investment. The program provides communities with the resources to develop strategies and implementation methods necessary to maintain and grow healthy commercial areas in association with the county and various partners.

Collaboratively, Spruce the Bruce, the Wiarton Revitalization committee, the local Chamber of Commerce and the Town of South Bruce Peninsula have continued to spearhead and progress the development of downtown revitalization initiatives including streetscape, activity programming and infrastructure upgrades.

The economic development focus includes strengthening and diversifying businesses within the downtown, as well as addressing seasonality concerns related to retail business. Spruce the Bruce identified that Bruce County's downtowns represent two-thirds of its commercial assessment value and are the main point of contact with tourism dollars; the region's second largest industry, noting "our mainstreets tell us who we are, 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 collective memory and where people still come together."

The Spruce the Bruce Program had its genesis from the "Main Street Program" developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States, but focuses on a destination-oriented downtowns improvement agenda that embrace brand development to create unique and successful downtowns.

The "Main Street Four-Point Approach" is described as a preservation-based economic development tool designed to enable communities to revitalize downtowns and neighbourhood business districts by leveraging local assets-from historic, cultural and architectural resources to local enterprises and community pride.

The Four-Point Approach is the genesis of the Spruce the Bruce program and is designed to be a comprehensive strategy that addresses the issues and problems that challenge traditional downtowns.

Main Street Four Point Approach:

- Economic Development
- Marketing & Promotion
- Organization & Collaboration
- Physical Design

Organization & Collaboration was identified as the most important pillar in this approach, as it is the leaders in the community who can accomplish the goals and objectives set out by the program. It brings partners together and gets everyone working towards the same goal. It was noted that this pillar is so important to the process that, until the Organization & Collaboration pillar is established within the community, the community simply should not move forward onto the other points of the approach.

Spruce the Bruce has developed, with the community of Wiarton, a toolkit that creates the basis for a successful revitalization program for downtown based on:

"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."

Stratford

investStratford is a brand mark of the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEED Co.). Principally funded by the City of Stratford, SEED Co. has been established as a stand-alone entity with a mission to focus singularly on Stratford's economic future.

investStratford has spearheaded the distribution of a \$20,000 grant awarded to the City of Stratford as part of the Main Street Revitalization funding received from the Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative is a matching grant program available to businesses located within the Stratford City Centre boundary. The Downtown Initiative has been designed to support exterior capital improvements with a focus on energy efficiency, accessibility, aesthetics and marketability of small businesses within the downtown. The project has awarded nine businesses towards facade improvements, with five more grants expected to be awarded in the next six months.

Considerations:

- Prioritize identifying and bringing together the leaders in the community who can accomplish the goals and objectives of a downtown development initiative
- Form an action-oriented group made up of volunteers, residents, business owners and staff that share an objective interest and vision for the long term success of Orangeville, with a primary focus on the downtown core
- Ensure short-term actions occur at the outset while longer term planning occurs
- Consider the preparation of a Heritage Master Plan that would inventory and ensure protection/preservation of the city's heritage resources
- Advocate for destination development initiatives as one of the strategy's main goals by maintaining participation in Orangeville Economic Development/ SBEC

Conclusion

Determining whether Orangeville is an arts & culture destination or a nature & outdoor destination first and foremost will be crucial in determining how to construct Orangeville's Tourism Strategy & Action Plan. As clearly identified by the destinations examined in our analysis, focusing on a strength component to lead the plan is key to communicating a destination's tourism offering and then effectively marketing it.

That same approach is applicable to the complementary elements that will make up the strategy, such as the culinary element. Identifying what makes Orangeville's food and beverage offering stand-out will help inform the lead messaging of the overall promotion strategy. As the DMOs and destinations analyzed here have demonstrated, a scattered or fragmented approach has the potential to confuse or muddle the messaging and attractiveness of a destination to visitors.

And finally, identifying and then achieving buy-in from those community members and organizations that will be necessary to advocate for, action on and actualize an effective strategy and, initially, create short-term actions that demonstrate early success will be key to realizing a productive tourism plan.

Appendix **B**

Tourism Advisory Committee Framework

Town of Orangeville Tourism Strategy & Action Plan

The development of a Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) is a recommendation of The Town of Orangeville Tourism Strategy & Action Plan (Strategic Priority #1, Administration & Operations - 5.ii). The following framework is meant to offer a starting point in defining the goals, roles & responsibilities of the TAC, though should be refined once the committee is established.

The general goal of this committee will be to advise the Tourism & Culture Officer on their deliverables pertaining to the Strategy, inquire into tourism-related matters using a practical, task-oriented approach, and report any findings and recommendations for action to Orangeville Town Council. Membership should be comprised of up to two individuals from Town Council, an appointee from each the Orangeville BIA and Dufferin County, and representatives from various community groups and stakeholders. Members should be appointed on the basis of the impact tourism has on their role, organization or sector. Dedicate one membership role to local youth participation. All TAC members shall be voting members.

Goals & Objectives

The Tourism Advisory Committee will serve to represent various facets of the Orangeville community, and work cooperatively with the Tourism & Culture Officer to oversee Orangeville's development as a destination with unique artistic and cultural experiences, culinary imbibement, and fulfilling outdoor activities that are appreciated by locals and visitors alike.

Other goals include:

- To provide guidance and recommendations to the Tourism & Culture Officer and Town of Orangeville regarding the ongoing development of the Town's visitor economy, and its brand as an Ontario destination
- Assist in the development of measurable outcomes for Orangeville's tourism initiatives
- To encourage community & partner alignment and engagement within the tourism sector
- Create a fulsome understanding of local, regional and visitor needs and expectations
- Align aforementioned needs and expectations with emerging trends and evolving circumstances.

Role

Meeting quarterly, the TAC will facilitate the development of Orangeville's visitor economy by identifying strategic priorities, fostering partnerships, and ensuring tourism-related objectives align with the interests and initiatives of local and regional stakeholders, community groups and residents. The TAC will also ensure that the local priorities are aligned and integrated with regional strategies. Further, the role of TAC will be to advise and work with partners to identify and develop new initiatives to achieve Tourism Strategy goals and objectives.

The TAC will be required to work with the Tourism & Culture Officer to submit an annual report on the activities and results of its quarterly meetings and general tourism performance in the Town of Orangeville. TAC members are considered volunteers and will not receive remuneration. Meeting expenses shall be undertaken by the Town of Orangeville, as deemed acceptable.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the TAC will be expected to evolve as the implementation of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan continues, but will be primarily as follows:

- Support the Tourism & Culture Officer accountable in carrying-out the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan
- Advise Tourism & Culture Officer on matters pertaining to the tourism budget, policies, infrastructure and visitor services, marketing plans and initiatives and destination seasonality
- Develop recommendations for events, activities and public art, and align them with Dufferin County initiatives
- Recommend adaptations to Tourism Strategy and Action Plan benchmarks as needed, ongoing
- Identify emerging tourism trends, niche markets and opportunities according to the needs and expectations of their own networks, with an eye toward stimulating market demand
- Support collaboration between various Orangeville sectors, community groups and greater Dufferin County for product development, partnership efforts and destination positioning.
- Support the development and production of Tourism & Culture Officer's annual report
- Identify gaps in tourism products and barriers to positive tourist experiences; advise on how barriers can be addressed

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