

TOURISM AS A STRATEGY FOR THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL TOWNS

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Cynthia Jiann-Chiou Nei

Urban Design Program
School of Architecture
McGill University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
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ABSTRACT

Small towns in North America have seen a decline in their population and their appeal to visitors and potential inhabitants due to the lack of maintenance, preservation and development of downtown areas. They have instead moved towards big box developments which are located far away from the core to create economic disparities for local shop owners and businesses. The closure of small businesses and the reduction of the surviving businesses working hours have contributed to the abandonment of anchor buildings and the lack of development in existing empty land lots. In turn, many rural downtown areas have suffered in being attractive places to live or conduct business due to their lack of vitality and sense of place.

This report introduces the concept of tourism as a method to promoting economic and social progress in rural areas. Secondly, the report will highlight several successful case studies of small towns which have capitalized on niche tourism and focus on the strategies used to contribute to their successful economy and population growth. Finally, using the Town of Peace River in Northern Alberta, Canada as a case study, this report explores key barriers in small town development and promoting tourism as a means to overcome these barriers. Subsequently, the report outlines a number of strategies which are intended to promote tourism and market methods to increase the exposure of Peace River and similar small towns as an ideal place to visit and eventually live. This report also demonstrates the financial and social impact of these alternative strategies and identifies the extent to which they can improve the urban environment of a small town community.

The author suggests that there are many alternative approaches which are effective in the development of a small town and recommends communities and their municipalities further explore the implementation of comprehensive strategies aimed at modifying their current development patterns in order to enhance the overall community and maintain long term growth.

RÉSUMÉ

Plusieurs petites villes d'Amérique du Nord ont connu un déclin de leur population et sont devenues moins attrayantes aux visiteurs et futurs habitants en raison du manque d'entretien et de développement de leurs centres villes. Elles ont plutôt déménagées vers des développements grandes surfaces situées loin du centre des villes créant ainsi des disparités économiques pour les commerces et propriétaires de magasins. La fermeture de petits commerces et la diminution du nombre d'heures de travail de ceux ayant survécus ont contribuées à l'abandon de bâtiments importants et au manque de développement des parcelles de terrains vacants existants. À leur tour, plusieurs zones de centres ruraux en ont souffert en étant moins attrayants à vivre ou à mener des affaires en raison de leur manque de vitalité et sens de lieu.

Ce rapport introduit le concept de tourisme comme méthode de promotion du progrès économique et social dans les zones rurales. Ensuite, il met l'accent sur de nombreuses études de cas ayant connu du succès dans de petites villes en capitalisant sur le créneau du tourisme et se concentrant sur des stratégies utilisées pour contribuer à une importante croissance économique et de population. Finalement, en se référant à l'étude de cas de Peace River, au Nord de l'Alberta au Canada, ce rapport explore les principaux obstacles dans le développement et la promotion du tourisme des petites villes comme moyen de les surmonter. Par la suite, il décrit de nombreuses stratégies prévues pour promouvoir le tourisme et des méthodes de marché afin d'augmenter l'exposition de Peace River et de petites villes semblables comme endroit idéal à visiter et éventuellement y habiter. Ce rapport démontre également l'impact financier et social de ces stratégies alternatives et identifie leur importance dans l'amélioration de l'environnement urbain d'une petite communauté.

L'auteure suggère qu'il existe plusieurs différentes approches efficaces dans le développement de petites villes et recommande aux communautés et leurs municipalités d'explorer davantage la mise en place de stratégies globales visant à modifier leurs caractéristiques de développement actuel dans le but de renforcer la communauté dans son ensemble et de maintenir une croissance à long terme.

Chapter 1.0

INTRODUCTION

1.1 SETTING THE STAGE

“Tourism” is considered an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational and economic sectors of national societies and on their international relations. (UNWTO technical manual: Collection of Tourism Expenditure Statistics, 1995).

According to the World Tourism Organization, tourism has been undertaken by mankind for a very long time. However, only in relatively recent times has tourism been recognized as an important social and economic phenomenon, with its effect increasingly being felt both at the individual level and through its impacts on society.

Furthermore, tourism involves “the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes [and as] travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes” (UNWTO technical manual: Collection of Tourism Expenditure Statistics, 1995).

The World Tourism Organization also defines “*tourists*” as people who “travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty-four hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited” (UNWTO technical manual: Collection of Tourism Expenditure Statistics, 1995). Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, in 2008, there were over 922 million international tourist arrivals, with a growth of 1.9% as compared to 2007. International tourism receipts grew to US\$944 billion (€ 642 billion) in 2008, corresponding to an increase in real terms of 1.8% (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, June 2009).

According to Holden in his definition of tourism, the word “tourist” is a fairly new addition to the English language, the word “tour-ist” (deliberately hyphenated), first appearing in the early nineteenth century. In addition, “travelers” (originating from the French word *travail* meaning work, trouble, torment) such as pilgrims travelled across arduous terrain and experienced numerous hardships in order to reach their destination, whereas “tourists” today travel in order to tour a place, usually via an organized and packaged excursion (Holden, 2000).

Holden goes on to state that traveling for pleasure to visit beautiful landscapes, as opposed to traveling for necessity, or to demonstrate religious piousness is a relatively recent phenomenon in the context of human activity. He noted that until the nineteenth century, travel was not an easy option, nor were landscapes that we now regard as aesthetically pleasing, necessarily regarded in the same way (Holden, 2000). The frequent movement of millions of people outside of their home environment is a result of modern urban life and needs to be planned as an important element in the quality of life and as a major activity that influences the employment and economic well-being of very large numbers of people around the world. According to Holden, since the 1950s there has been a rapid increase in the demand in western societies for people to travel. In turn, tourism became a specialized industry with the improvement of people’s living standards and the growth of leisure time (Holden, 2000).

Tourism has increased the mobility of people and goods for both work and leisure. Tourists are no longer a small privileged group of wealthy travellers, but a diverse group of people travelling for pleasure in their ever-increasing leisure time. Tourism has been a central component of the economic, social, and cultural shift that has left its imprint on the world system of cities in the past two decades. There has been a growing importance of tourism in the late twentieth century, which in turn, has created a physical effect of the redevelopment, marketing, sports, entertainment, and gaming components of industry within cities and towns. Peter Eisenger from Wayne State University explains that “the city as a place to play is manifestly built for the middle classes, who can afford to attend professional sporting events, eat in the new outdoor cafes, attend trade

and professional conventions, shop in the festival malls, and patronize the highend and middlebrow arts.” (Eisenger, 2000). Furthermore, according to the sociologist John Urry, tourism represents a fundamental search on the part of travelers for places, people, and experiences different from those that define their everyday lives (Urry, 1990).

According to Alan Lew, a professor of tourism and geography at Northern Arizona University, there are different categories of tourists and tourism. These include business-related travel, such as attending conferences or consultations; group travel, such as organized tours or tournaments; and personal leisure travel for both large and small budgets. There is also *Adjectival Tourism* which refers to the numerous niche tourism markets or speciality travel forms of tourism that have emerged over the years, each with its own adjective focusing on the special interests of particular clients. Many of these have come into common use by the tourist industry and academe. Some examples include agritourism, culinary tourism, educational tourism, cultural tourism, ecotourism, religious tourism, wildlife tourism, and heritage tourism. This is also known as *Speciality Tourism*. This approach includes travel experience and tourism landscapes and economies to which Alan Lew refers to as *Conceptual Tourisms*. (Lew, “On *Adjectival Tourism*”. Retrieved 18 November 2009).

There are many categories of tourism that can be discussed in detail; these have been listed in Appendix 5.1 and 5.2 of this report. This research however. will focus specifically on the development of rural tourism. This introduction aims to establish a context for the subsequent and more focused chapters by outlining issues and questions related to the nature of rural tourism and recreation.

For instance, some niche market tourism programs are located in rural areas. From wine tours and eco-tourism, to agritourism and seasonal events, tourism can be a viable economic component in rural community development. According to a 2008 study by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Cooperative State, Education and Extension Service:

"Tourism is becoming increasingly important to the U.S. economy. A conservative estimate from the Federal Reserve Board in Kansas, based on 2000 data, shows that basic travel and tourism industries accounted for 3.6 percent of all U.S. employment. Even more telling, data from the Travel Industry Association of America indicate that 1 out of every 18 people in the U.S. has a job directly resulting from travel expenditures." (On *Rural Tourism*, 2008).

Promoting Tourism in Rural America goes on to explain the need for planning and marketing rural communities by weighing the pros and cons of the impacts of tourism. It covers the major issues in rural tourism including agri-tourism, cultural/heritage tourism, ecotourism, planning, marketing, economic impact, and more. In addition, it acts as an extension of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) description of how to promote rural tourism. Local citizen participation is helpful and should be included in starting any kind of a tourism program. Being prepared by planning tourism can assist in a successful program that enhances some communities.

1.1.1 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Rural tourism appeals to many travelers. According to a 2009 travel poll by the U.S. Travel Industry Association, sixty-two percent of American adults took a trip to a small town or village in the past three years (<www.ustravel.org/researchpubs/economic_research_impact_tourism.html>, 18 March 2009). Even more telling, data from the Travel Industry Association of America indicate that in 2008, the U.S. travel industry gained \$772.9 billion from domestic and international travelers (excluding international passenger fares). These travel expenditures, in turn, directly generated more than 7.7 million jobs with \$194.1 billion in payroll income for Americans, as well as \$117.3 billion tax revenue for federal, state and local governments (U.S. Travel Industry Association, Bureau of Economic Analysis/U.S. Department of Commerce, 2009). This information is listed in Figure 1.1.

Travel Expenditures *	\$772.9 Billion
Travel-Generated Payroll	\$194.1 Billion
Travel-Generated Employment	7.7 Million Jobs
Travel-Generated Tax Revenue	\$117.3 Billion
Travel Trade Surplus	\$ 29.7 Billion

Figure 1.1: Economic Impact of Travel in the U.S., 2008 (including both U.S. resident and International Travel).

Source: U.S. Travel Industry Association, Bureau of Economic Analysis/U.S. Department of Commerce

* Includes spending by domestic and international travelers in the U.S. on travel-related expenses (i.e., transportation, lodging, meals, entertainment & recreation, and incidental items); p=preliminary

In addition, data from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative State, Education and Extension Service indicate that 1 out of every 18 people in the U.S. has a job directly resulting from travel expenditures (“Rural Tourism”, Website accessed 30 December 2008). This translates to millions of American adults. A majority of these trips are for leisure purposes and the most popular reason overall for traveling to a small town or rural area is to visit friends or relatives. The development of small towns is an important strategy in promoting economic and social progress in rural areas. The restructuring of small towns for tourism has currently become a matter of great importance. Rural tourism allows the creation of an alternative source of income in the non-agricultural sector for rural dwellers. The added income from rural tourism can contribute to the revival of lost folk art and handicrafts. It is an ideal and natural method of rural and urban economic exchange. Many niche tourism programs are located in rural areas. From wine tours and eco-tourism, to agri-tourism and seasonal events, tourism can be a viable economic component in rural community development (“Rural Tourism”, Website accessed 30 December 2008).

Furthermore, “Baby Boomer” travelers are more likely than younger or older travelers to visit small towns or villages for reasons other than visiting friends and relatives. Hugh MacKay observes that Boomers are “obsessed” with travel but want their tourism experiences to produce a heightened self-awareness. His research reveals that the Boomers “feel unfulfilled by lives destabilized by uncertainty and insecurity” and “often look to a holiday experience for a brush with longed-for perfection in one form or another – the perfection of simplicity, of sophistication, of discipline, of exploration – but always of heightened self-awareness” (Mackay, 1997: 117). The rural tourism experience is well positioned to satisfy these needs, especially if it involves exploring cultural roots. In addition, more than half (55%) of travelers to rural locations travel with their spouse. Many travel with children. Six percent of rural travelers go with their parents, and many others travel with family members. Some travel with friends or as part of a group tour. Others travel alone (“Rural Tourism”, Website accessed 30 December 2008).

Many small North American towns are currently experiencing attrition due to the fact that large numbers of young people are leaving for college or work in the big city and do not return. The exodus of young people from small towns leads to the deterioration of rural America, explain Carr and Kefalas, two sociologists and authors of *Hollowing out the Middle: The Rural Brain Drain and What it Means for America*. “There are striking parallels with the urban crisis, although this is taking place much more slowly and is pretty much under the radar,” said Carr, who is an assistant professor of sociology at Rutgers University. Carr states that “[t]here are implications and causes of global market shifts, deindustrialization, depopulation and the flight of the middle class” (Carr and Kefalas, 2009). As part of their research, Carr and Kefalas moved to “Ellis,” a small town of 2,000 in Iowa, U.S. where they lived for 18 months. Ellis is typical of many small towns struggling to survive, and Iowa is typical of many states in the Heartland, aging rapidly. One reason is that many small towns simply aren’t regenerating, but another is that its educated young people are leaving in droves.

In Ellis, Carr and Kefalas met the working-class “stayers,” struggling in the region’s dying agro-industrial economy; the high-achieving and college-bound “achievers,” who often left for good; the “seekers” who head off to war to see what the world beyond offers; and the “returners,” who eventually circled back to their hometowns. The “returners” also has two subcategories. “Boomerangs,” eventually come back to live in Ellis after obtaining some education. “High fliers” return with a bachelor’s or master’s degree to establish a new life (Carr and Kefalas, 2009).

What surprised them most was that adults in the community were playing a pivotal part in the town’s decline by pushing the best and brightest young people to leave, and by under-investing in those who choose to stay, even though these young people are their best chance for a future. Carr attributes the dire state of small towns to failing to invest in those who stay. “Small towns play a very real, strong role in sending people off on these trajectories, and in many ways, small towns sow the seeds of their own decline,” Carr said. While “achievers” are carefully selected to leave small towns and be successful, “stayers” often remain in the same agricultural jobs they held as teenagers, Carr said (Carr and Kefalas, 2009).

According to a 2009 study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, from 1980 and 2000, more than 700 non-metropolitan counties lost 10 percent or more of their population, mostly due to young people leaving. From 2000 to 2005, more than 800 non-metro counties had more deaths than births (Economic Research Service (ERR)/USDA, 2009). Likewise, non-metropolitan communities are attracting an increasing percentage of new industrial plant locations. Some small communities have capitalized on this national trend—others have not. As small towns experience economic and social restructuring, some towns are pursuing tourism opportunities as one component of a more diversified local economic strategy (Bachtel, Molnar, and Lee, 1991).

This study will focus on reviewing how small North American towns can strengthen their local economy as a result of business people and concerned citizens collectively identifying the community's special uniqueness and then capitalizing on it. The author is interested in focusing on the town of Peace River in Northern Alberta, Canada, as a case study. While the town was once a thriving service center with a growing downtown area, this traditional economy has faded due to the lack of a number of factors, including the development of big box stores that have taken business away from the downtown area, the lack of appropriate policies and planning support, and the need to encourage the existing and potential population of people to live within or near the downtown core in order to contribute to the town's vitality. Encouraging tourism is one way to improve both the vitality and the economy of Peace River. Promoting tourism within Peace River will create improvements in the development of a substantial economy. While Peace River has potential for developing a tourism-oriented economy, many of the important policy and planning supports needed to assist with diversification are not yet in place. Ultimately, the primary purpose of this research is to provide other researchers a better understanding of how to apply urban design techniques to places similar to the town of Peace River that are in dire need of revitalization.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The body of research involving urban revitalization is diverse and extensive and many researchers and organizations have explored ways in which to redevelop dilapidated urban areas. Tourism has become highly developed and professionally run industry in less than a century. Since the latter part of the 20th century, tourism and leisure activities became one of the most significant components of the global economy, giving economic sustenance to millions of people around the world. Recreation and tourism have become a part of contemporary life for the comfortable classes throughout the developed world and the act of traveling to a place have major social, economic, and

environmental consequences at every level, transforming places into new landscapes.

In *Promoting Tourism in Rural America* (John, 2008), the need for planning and marketing a rural community and weighing the pros and cons of the impacts of tourism is explained. Local citizen participation is helpful and should be included in starting any kind of a tourism program. Being prepared by planning tourism can assist in a successful program that enhances a community (John, 2008). According to John, the pros and cons of tourism development in rural America are varied. Tourism provides income and diversification to rural communities and most of the dollars generated from outside visitors stay within the local economy. In addition to gains from direct sales to visitors, many indirect benefits are realized from tourism. Visitors contribute to the tax revenues collected and can influence the quality of life by financing community facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses, restaurants, and shopping facilities. Community events intended for tourists, also attract local residents. Many potential industries prefer locations that provide high quality services and recreational resources. If the community is a pleasant place, the visitors may become permanent residents. John continues to mention the indirect benefits of tourism, including the need to provide services to tourists that in turn creates new jobs in the community. Although they may not be high paying employment opportunities, these jobs satisfy the need of students and dual-earning families for part-time or seasonal employment (John, 2008). Nevertheless, one must consider that developing and maintaining the tourist industry in a community requires added costs and puts pressure on public services. The cost of surveys, impact analyses, promotions, insurance, fund raising, and operations are some points to consider. Advanced planning maximizes the advantages and minimizes the disadvantages of developing rural tourism as shown in Figure 1.2.

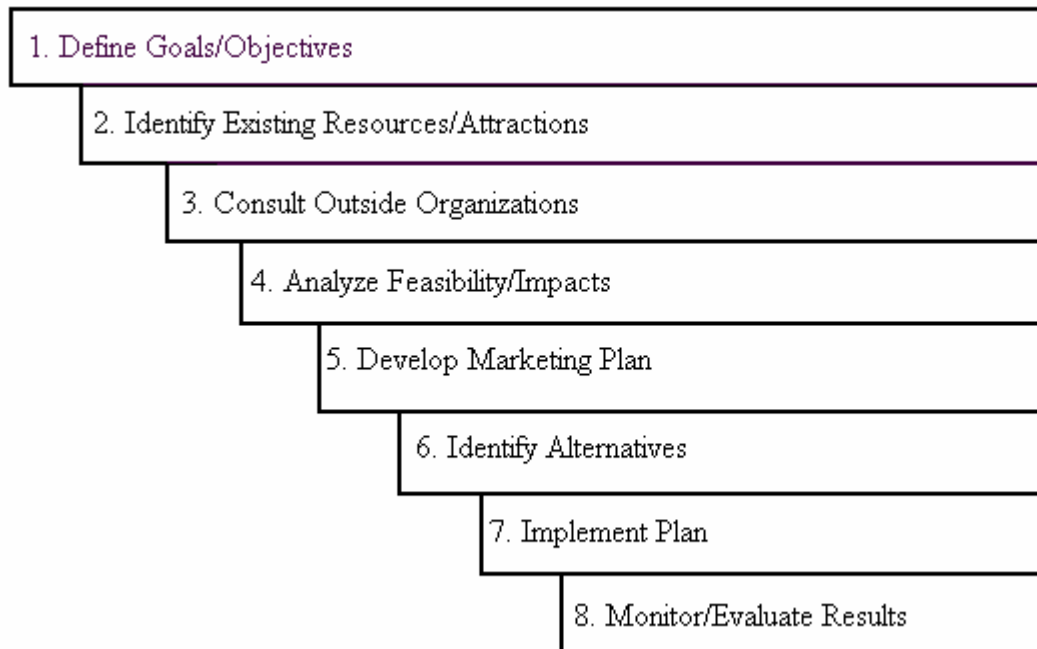


Figure 1.2: Steps in Planning and Developing Tourism.

Source: John, Patricia LaCaille (2008). Promoting Tourism in Rural America. National Agricultural Library, Rural Information Center. Retrieved December 30, 2008.
<<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/tourism.html>>.

Some tips and technologies can be used by many communities to turn tourism into a major industry using these techniques (John, 2008):

- Understand the potential for tourism development
- Inform and educate the community to create support
- Secure investments from public and private sources
- Manage natural, human, and financial resources
- Build an image for the community

However, one must first ask where to start, prior to creating a tourist centre. Leaders must first assess the potential for tourism in the community. What businesses serve travelers and how much additional revenue will tourism generate? Are these enough services to satisfy the potential demands? What are the goals and objectives of the community? Talking about tourism with other members of the community will provide additional ideas. Tourism requires support, and one way to gain support is by informing and educating the citizenry by introducing the idea to the Chamber of Commerce, at civic clubs, at city

council, or at other community organization meetings. The community and its leaders can broaden support for tourism by securing financial commitments from public and private sources (John, 2008).

In addition, managing natural, human, and financial resources is an important component of tourism development. Most communities have existing resources and attractions that can draw visitors, as shown in Figure 1.3.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| • natural settings | • retirees |
| • scenery | • events |
| • parks and recreations | • festivals |
| • historical identity | • fairs |
| • cultural identity | • shops |
| • ethnic identity | • hotels |
| • volunteers | • local industries |
| • students | • art galleries |

Figure 1.3: Resources and Attractions to Draw Visitors.

Source: John, Patricia LaCaille (2008). Promoting Tourism in Rural America. National Agricultural Library, Rural Information Center. Retrieved December 30, 2008. <<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/tourism.html>>.

The next step is to identify what a community has to offer. By conducting an inventory by describing each type of attraction in terms of quality and quantity, separating them by "core elements" (primary reasons tourist are attracted) and "secondary elements" (supporting resources; those that contribute positively to the tourists' travel experience) and looking ahead at the resources that might be enhanced or used more fully will help a community to prioritize its strengths and attractions to tourists (John, 2008).

As Page and Hall observed, urban tourism management is not just about attracting tourists, but also making sure the benefits of tourism are maximized for the wider population and not just a select few. The most appropriate policy and institutional response to the global environment will be one that sees tourism as part of an integrated inclusive development strategy, rather than as a single end in itself (Page and Hall, 2003). Planning and policy are terms that are intimately

related. According to Cullingsworth, "Planning is the purposive process in which goals are set and policies elaborated to implement them" (Cullingsworth, 1997). In contrast, policy analysis is "concerned with understanding and explaining the substance of policy content and policy decisions and the way in which policy decisions are made" (Barrett and Fudge, 1981).

Surveys and models are used in the process of tourism planning to determine:

- Community attitudes toward tourism
- Recreational use value and demand
- Tourism patterns
- Travel costs
- Economic impacts

Types of survey methods include telephone interviews, questionnaires, and mall interviews (John, 2008). Telephone interviews are low in cost, and provide a quick turn-around. In order to simplify the responses, the interviewer offers a minimum number of choices to each question in the survey. The interviewer also sends a letter before the call is made in order to state the date and time of the survey and ask the customer's cooperation. Questionnaires can be used to identify the different types of tourists, or market segments. The surveyor lists responses that can be checked off by the visitor. This type of response is easy to tabulate. The survey may include questions that ask:

- Where does the visitor live?
- What attracts the visitor to the community?
- How does the visitor find out about tourist attractions?
- What type of businesses/facilities does the visitor use?
- What kinds of accommodations/services are needed?

The survey tests the questionnaire to determine the typical responses and to modify the questions. Face-to-face interviews are useful if visual aids are necessary, for instance, in evaluating what promotional materials are pleasing to the consumer. These interviews are conducted at a central location, such as in a

shopping mall. An important step in tourism planning is determining target market segments and developing a marketing plan. Experts begin by defining the market areas that will draw the most visitors. They then divide the market into trip-length categories. Finally, they define the clientele that will be attracted to the community. Figure 1.4 illustrates how trips can be broken in separate categories.

Geographic Market Areas	
Day Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short -- within 50 miles • long -- up to 200 miles
Pass Through Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • day visits • overnight stays
Overnight Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • weekends • vacations
Outdoor Recreation Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Recreations • Camping, Hiking, Bicycling • Hunting • Winter Sports • Horseback Riding • Picnicking • Hang Gliding, Ballooning • Nature Study • Photography, Painting
Entertainments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Heritage • Historic sites • Events • Fairs, Festivals • Shopping • Picnicking
Other Travel Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Friends & Relatives • Business

Figure 1.4: Tourism Market Segments.

Source: John, Patricia LaCaille (2008). Promoting Tourism in Rural America. National Agricultural Library, Rural Information Center. Retrieved December 30, 2008. <<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/tourism.html>>.

When the tourism expert has determined the market segments, leaders of the community are ready to make a written marketing plan. This plan helps them to see the best combination of marketing strategies, prices, places, and promotions to use. Which characteristics are unique to the community? Using the plan, leaders are able to develop a theme that ties the community's businesses and services together. It is important to involve all facets of the community in the decision-making process. Everyone and everything the visitor has contact with projects and promotes something about the community.

Keeping promotional messages short and targeted to the community theme will also help to promote a community. A community's theme can be promoted by the following ways (John, 2008):

- on brochures, billboards, posters
- on t-shirts, hats, stickers, coupons
- at demonstrations, contests, the library
- for public announcements on television, radio or community calendars

Furthermore, in *Leisure, Property, and the Viability of Town Centres* by Ravenscroft, Reeves, and Rowley (2000), the concerns about the future viability of many town centres have lessened as a result of improvements due to the promotion of leisure and tourism businesses and the concomitant conversion of property. Tourism has become a core strategy for many local authorities and town-centre managers. They concluded from their study that leisure attractions and entertainment venues can have a major role to play in enhancing the vitality of town centres, both during the day and at night. (Caborn, quoted by Gilling, 1998; Hicks, 1999). In addition, the concentration of these types of uses can have a profound impact on the urban area as a whole, particularly in contributing to the image of the town as a significant regional centre (Smith, 1997). A key part of this strategy revolves around a wide-ranging provision for leisure, both in supporting other uses and in creating new attractions (Ravenscroft, Reeves, and Rowley, 2000). For the present, rather than being a net addition to the commercial use of town-centre space, most leisure use involves the conversion

of existing premises which is typically from secondary and tertiary retail units (Ravenscroft, Reeves, and Rowley, 2000). Thus, the leisure use of property may have a role to play in the regeneration of town centres in order to maintain vitality through the identification of short-term opportunities for the occupation of centrally located property at relatively low rents (Ravenscroft, Reeves, and Rowley, 2000).

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question provides a focal point from which researchers can investigate their question and a point of return to when the research begins to wander in unintended directions. In the case of this research, the questions are as follows:

What are the barriers to tourism in a small North American town?

What urban design strategies can be introduced in order to effectively revitalize dilapidated downtown areas?

How can downtown urban renewal play a role in introducing a tourist industry in small towns?

1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this study is to analyse the challenges to tourism, as well as evaluate the strengths of creating tourism in towns so as to revitalize their urban core in regards to economic vitality, community growth and local recreation. The objectives of this study are to:

1.4.1 Explore the various types of rural tourism that draw an audience into a town

1.4.2 Identify barriers to tourism in small North American towns

1.4.3 Identify regulatory and development strategies intended to increase tourism in small North American towns, thereby leading to greater population density, a larger economic pool for the retail sector, and available housing affordability in comparison to nearby larger towns and cities

1.5 INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience of this study comprises primarily tourism experts, planners, elected officials, researchers, practicing urban designers, and development officials conducting research in the fields of alternative development standards. This study may prove to be valuable for municipal decision-makers and stakeholders who are looking for alternative ways of incorporating regulations into their existing guidelines.

The goal is to produce a study that effectively contributes to the greater body of research and knowledge in the areas of rural tourism, urban design, and alternative development standards for small towns in North America.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach to this research study has focused primarily on a combination of literature review and case study investigation. Literature review was conducted to find research, past work, initiatives and ideas related to tourism, challenges to achieving a strong urban core and placemaking, as well as the existing strengths which keep the current population and attract tourists who become potential residents. The author collected information from books, journals, articles, and websites. The acquired information will be used to help understand the issues facing small towns in regards to attracting tourists.

In addition, three case study examples will be referenced from the literature review and from personal visits to demonstrate the common challenges and

barriers currently facing many small towns. These case studies highlight the issues that are common in rural tourism, as well as what makes these towns attractive to a tourist. Tourism research on these case study examples provides insight on tourism demand and consumption. It also provides knowledge on patterns of tourism that becomes a valuable asset in better understanding the requirements for making a particular town desirable.

This research focuses on the barriers and strategies in existing small towns that are interested in revitalization on both a social and economic level through tourism and urban design.

1.7 SCOPE / PARAMETER OF WORK

In order to establish feasible boundaries and conduct focused research, it is important to clearly define the extent of this research project. The intention here is to explore literature related to rural tourism and rethinking the social science of mobility, economic and environmental problems of tourism, with emphasis on the problems and contributions of tourism to sustainable development in a place. Furthermore, this research will include case study reviews of projects that demonstrate where these ideas have been implemented and whether they have been successful or problematic. The parameters of this work include a literature review on small towns within North America, data collection, a site visit, and surveys done on a small town called Peace River in Northern Alberta, Canada.

Due to the depth of this topic, as well as the fact that tourism is a fairly new concept that has developed in the latter part of the 20th century, this research will not explore every potential barrier or detail all the options and strategies available to decision-makers looking for alternative development standards and guidelines. The barriers and strategies, as well as potential outcomes, extend beyond the scope of this report.

1.8 RESEARCH OUTLINE

The following chapters highlight many of the challenges that exist in rural communities, along with the opportunities available to create a positive change in relation to the growth of successful rural development.

Chapter 1 introduces both general and specific definitions of tourism, social and economic impacts of travel, and the issues facing small towns in regards to planning for their future growth based on principles gathered from literature review.

Chapter 2 provides an in-depth review and analysis related to the evolution of tourism in small towns, with a general introduction of rural tourism, as well as highlighting what issues are important. It also lists examples of tourism in small North American towns as a precedent to what constitutes healthy strategies for urban development.

Chapter 3 provides a general review of the areas that create barriers to tourism in rural areas and small North American towns, focusing on the town of Peace River, Northern Alberta, Canada, as a case study. It also discusses how to overcome these barriers. It includes existing tourism in Alberta, the process of data collection via a visit to Peace River, interviews, and surveys.

Finally, Chapter 4 focuses on the strategies to overcoming barriers to tourism in rural areas and other small North American towns with an introduction on what small towns need to do in order to create interest in tourism. It also summarizes the information from Chapters 1-3 and provides recommendations and insight based on the author's professional experience in the field.

Chapter 2.0

TOURISM IN SMALL TOWNS

2.1 THE EVOLUTION OF TOURISM IN SMALL TOWNS

Rural tourism development that makes up about 10-25 percent of all forms of tourism activity, has attracted increasing interest in the 1990s, and the literature has contributed to the understanding of it as an evolving phenomenon (Hall, Mitchell, and Roberts, 2003). Tourism in general is widely perceived as being of considerable economic and social benefit to rural areas through the income and infrastructural developments it may bring to less economically developed regions. It can provide organic, relatively low capital economic growth for locally owned business and alternative activities to townspeople (Bollman and Bryden, 1997; Long and Lane, 2000). Many rural tourists are day visitors rather than those making overnight stays. However, larger numbers of people are visiting rural areas and the recreational activities undertaken in rural areas are increasing and diversifying, raising issues of providing adequate planning and management to cope with the demands of both visitors and locals alike (Hall, Mitchell, and Roberts, 2003).

Many parts of Europe have experienced a century, and in North America some eighty years, of rural decline (Long and Lane, 2000). While economic revitalization of rural areas is often sought, few rural dwellers, either new or recent in-migrants, would wish to change dramatically the physical character of their landscapes by encouraging the siting of a gambling casino, prison, or nuclear power plant (Hall, Mitchell, and Roberts, 2003). The challenges of designing for small towns and the social composition of many rural areas require an understanding and management of rural tourism which is firmly integrated into an appreciation of the (often urban-derived) social, economic, political, cultural, psychological, and environmental processes shaping both reality and the social idea of what constitutes a rural setting (Hall, Mitchell, and Roberts, 2003).

In order to contribute to successful urban development in small towns, tourism needs to be integrated into a portfolio of strategies. The evaluation of development impacts must be considered prior to development, as well as the kind of speciality tourism that a town wants to promote to tourists. Factoring in

the type of tourism in a particular town is important because it will assist a community to complement its economy. If there is a weak economy, promoting tourism can create income and employment possibilities, in turn adding to its economic growth. Some contributions that tourism can make to a town include (Hall, Mitchell, and Roberts, 2003):

- Revitalising and reorganizing local economies, and improving the quality of life
- Providing supplementary income for farming, craft and service sectors
- Opening up the possibility of new social contacts, especially in breaking down the isolation of remoter areas and social groups (Gladstone and Morris, 1998, 1999)
- Providing opportunities to re-evaluate heritage and its symbols, “natural” resources of landscape and the accessibility of open space, and the identity of rural places
- Assisting policies of environmental, economic and social sustainability
- Helping to realize the economic value of specific, quality-based production of foodstuffs, as well as of unused and abandoned buildings, unique scenery, spaces and culture

2.2 BARRIERS TO TOURISM IN SMALL NORTH AMERICAN TOWNS AND WAYS TO OVERCOME THEM

What are the key barriers to tourism in small North American towns? Why is it important to overcome these barriers to tourism? What is it that makes some small towns more successful tourist destinations than others? What urban design strategies can be introduced in order to effectively revitalize dilapidated downtown areas in a small town?

First, the author will discuss some of the general key barriers to tourism in small North American towns, with reference to barriers specific to the town of Peace River in Alberta. Rural areas have long played an important role in tourism and

leisure within the developed world. Rural areas are perceived variously. They are viewed as places where one can escape the pressures of modern urban-industrial society, as untamed wildernesses that can rekindle the human spirit, or simply as large reserves of open areas suitable for space-intensive recreational pursuits. While rural areas are highly sought after as places for leisure and tourism, their use is heavily contingent upon social access and the politics of countryside ownership. There are three concepts which are critical here; the *rural opportunity continuum*, *accessibility* and *time-space budgets* (Shaw and Williams, 1994).

The *rural opportunity continuum* in the countryside refers to the location of a wide range of outdoor leisure and tourist activities which change over time. Drives, outings, and picnics were the most popular activities in 1977, followed by walks over two miles. By 1984 walks had been significantly overtaken in popularity by visiting unspoiled countryside and by visiting historic buildings (Shaw and Williams, 1994).

Accessibility to a rural recreation zone is relatively important because accessibility invites visitors to resource-based areas with relatively scarce but often inaccessible physical attributes. In the edges of urban areas, visiting zoos or watching sports are relatively important. In the countryside near towns, walking and visiting historic settlements are relatively important. In the intermediate and distant countryside, driving or outings are particularly important. Access depends on more than simple distance. Accessibility is also socially conditioned. It depends on access to transport, either private or public. Frequent visitors to the countryside tend to be young professional households with one or two cars. Occasional users tend to be clerical and skilled manual households with one car. Rare users tend to be low-income, unskilled, unemployed, elderly or ethnic minority households without a car. There is an underclass in terms of access to rural tourism and leisure, just as there is in the general construction of developed societies (Shaw and Williams, 1994).

Space-time budget constraints refer to the distances involved and the nature of some of the activities in rural tourism. Large chunks of time are required in order to be able to enjoy some types of rural activity, such as long-distance walking. During the working day leisure time is limited to a few hours at most, so that most recreation for the urban dweller will occur within the city. If a full day is available, then the nearby countryside becomes a possibility for recreation. If a weekend is available, then short-break rural tourism is feasible. Finally, if a long holiday is possible, then longer distance travel to more remote areas becomes feasible (Shaw and Williams, 1994, 225).

According to the sociologist John Urry, tourism represents a fundamental search on the part of travelers for places, people, and experiences different from those that define their everyday lives (Urry, 1990).

2.2.1 Roads and Access

The development of any civilisation has always been related to road building. The Roman Empire followed the Roman road; their invading armies swept across Europe two thousand years ago and were sustained by the road system constructed to link the outposts of the Empire. The Silk Road leading from China to Europe had similar purposes of linking a maintained route to merchant outposts at both ends.

Roads are essential for communication of all kinds. Trade and commerce has spread throughout the world by roads within countries, by sea routes linking countries, and in more recent years, by air routes encircling the globe. While roads did not develop for the benefit of the mass tourist industry, they are essential to it. Tourist development needs road access as a link with other transport systems such as arrival ports, airports, or railway stations, and as a means of communication between tourist centres (Mills, 1983).

The following case studies are examples of small towns in North American that illustrate successful techniques focusing on selected specialities in tourism that have contributed to each town's success.

2.3 CASE STUDY: SOLVANG, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

Solvang is a town in Santa Barbara County, California, United States. The town is one of the communities that make up the Santa Ynez Valley. The population was 5,332 at the time of the 2000 census (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>). The aptly named town of Solvang —meaning “sunny fields” in Danish is also known as the “Danish Capital of America” according to the Solvang Visitors’ Bureau website (<http://www.solvangusa.com/listings/index.cfm?catid=7>). The author has made many trips to Solvang as it is located near Los Angeles County where she hails from and bases the majority of the following information from her past personal visits.

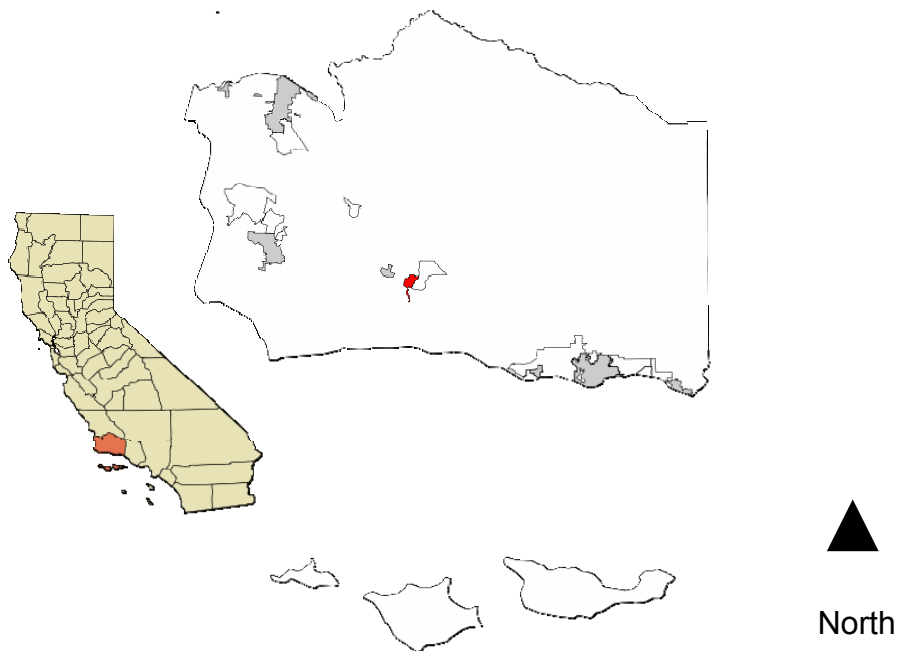


Figure 2.1: Solvang location within Santa Barbara County in California, U.S.A.

Source: By Arkyan. Retrieved 30 July 2007.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Santa_Barbara_County_California_Incorporated_and_Unincorporated_areas_Solvang_Highlighted.svg>.

Solvang, formerly Spanish land, was founded in 1911 on 9,000 acres (36 km²) by a group of Danish educators, who traveled west to escape mid-western winters. The city is home to some bakeries, restaurants, and merchants offering a taste of Denmark in California. The architecture of many of the buildings follows traditional Danish style. There is a copy of the famous Little Mermaid statue from Copenhagen, as well as one featuring the bust of famed Danish fable writer Hans Christian Andersen. A replica of the Copenhagen observatory Rundetårn in the scale 1:3 was finished in 1991 and can be seen in the city centre (www.solvangua.com).

Mission Santa Ines, one of the California missions and a U.S. National Historic Landmark, is located near the center of the town at the junction of State Route 246 and Alisal Road. It is located near the Hans Christian Andersen Museum and the Elverhoj Museum of History and Art. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 2.5 square miles (6.4 km²), all of it land. Solvang actually bears very little resemblance to modern Denmark (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>)¹.

¹ As of the census of 2000 (www.census.gov), there were 5,332 people, 2,185 households, and 1,415 families residing in the city. The population density was 2,143.3 people per square mile (826.8/km²). There were 2,288 housing units at an average density of 919.7/sq mi (354.8/km²). The racial makeup of the city was 88.24% White, 0.43% African American, 0.66% Native American, 1.05% Asian, 0.04% Pacific Islander, 5.51% from other races, and 4.07% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino residents of any race were 19.86% of the population.

In addition, there were 2,185 households out of which 26.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 53.2% were married couples living together, 8.1% had a female householder with no husband present, and 35.2% were non-families. 30.2% of all households were made up of individuals and 14.1% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.37 and the average family size was 2.96 (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>). In the city the population was spread out with 21.9% under the age of 18, 5.5% from 18 to 24, 25.2% from 25 to 44, 24.4% from 45 to 64, and 22.9% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 43 years. For every 100 females there were 89.8 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 86.2 males (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>).



Figure 2.2: Downtown area. Solvang, California, U.S.A.

Source: Photo by Peter Merholz from Berkeley, CA, United States. 30 December 2004, 18:06:01. <<http://www.flickr.com/photos/35468145500@N01/2708574>>.



Figure 2.3: Downtown area. Solvang, California, U.S.A.

Source: Photo by Bobak Ha'Eri. 5 January 2005 (12 February 2006 (original upload date)) <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Solvang-Jan05.jpg>>.

A key tourism strategy Solvang has used to attract visitors is its focus on preserving and highlighting its cultural heritage. Solvang is an example of a small North American town that successfully caters to both tourists and the local population through its Danish cultural charm. The town imitates a European-style village within a picturesque location in central California's scenic Santa Barbara County. There are many events year round related to celebrating Danish heritage, as well as restaurants and cafes that serve Danish food and

pastries, and specialty mom and pop shops that sell imported goods directly from Denmark. Another key tourism strategy related to Solvang's success is its accessibility. It is easily accessed via a personal vehicle. Amtrak, a national transportation company, also has a bus stop that makes daily runs in front of Solvang Park on Mission Drive, (HWY 246) in downtown Solvang to the train station in nearby Santa Barbara. Solvang is also near two commercial airports: Santa Maria airport is about 33 miles northwest of Solvang and Santa Barbara Airport is approximately 35 miles south. The nearest small craft airport is about 6 miles east of Solvang on HWY 246 in Santa Ynez (Solvang Visitors Bureau website, <<http://www.solvangusa.com/>>).

For tourists who are not so keen on visiting Solvang for its cultural heritage, there are nearby golf courses, vineyards, hotels, nut and berry farm tours, an apple farm for apple picking, art museums, a vintage motorcycle museum, trolley and horse carriage rides, a miniature donkey farm (a petting zoo where one can purchase their very own mini pet donkey the size of a large dog). As well, tourists can visit the local ostrich farm (for ostrich rides, eggs, meat, eggshell paintings and other souvenirs); visit the local Chumash casino; go horseback riding; visit the nearby Santa Ines Mission, and of course enjoy all the natural, beautiful scenery. Many tourists also come to Solvang because it is a pleasant stopping point on the way from Los Angeles to San Francisco. It is also located near many other famous attractions in California such as Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch home, Hearst's Castle with its wild zebra collection, the scenic Highway 101 and Highway 1 which run along California's coastline and near its famous elephant seals, the Monterey Bay aquarium, and the city of San Luis Obispo---home of California Polytechnic University San Luis Obispo University.

Solvang is an good example of a small North American town that has developed healthy strategies for urban and economic development through successful marketing as a tourist centre via professional websites, flyers, word of mouth, large directional signage viewable from the local highways, travel accessibility, celebration of its cultural heritage, and a lively downtown centre with many year-round activities, shops, and restaurants. There are also conference and meeting

facilities available for weddings and other events, as well as hotel accommodation for visitors. Due to their past pleasant experiences of the town, Solvang has attracted many former visitors who want to live there, thereby increasing its population and adding to both its economic and social growth.

2.4 CASE STUDY: VULCAN, ALBERTA, CANADA

Vulcan is a small town in Alberta, Canada, with a population of 1,940 living in 814 dwellings, as recorded in the 2006 census, a 10.1% increase from 2001, according to Statistics Canada. Vulcan is located midway between the cities of Calgary and Lethbridge, in southern Alberta, Canada. The population of the county, which is also named Vulcan, was 3,718. The town has a land area of 6.58 km² (2.5 sq mi) and a population density of 294.8 /km² (763.5/sq mi) (Statistics Canada, 2006). The town's economy is mainly agriculture-based. Wheat, canola, and barley are the main crops grown in the Vulcan area.

What makes Vulcan an interesting case study is the fact that there was a community downturn in the mid-1980s that pushed a group of community members to take action towards the opportunities presented to them by a tourism development group. This action, in turn, pushed Vulcan to develop a stronger economy (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009, 80). The town was named by a surveyor for the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1915 after Vulcan, the Roman God of Fire. Originally all the streets of the new town of Vulcan were named after gods and goddesses of the classical world. In 1926 a major tornado destroyed many homes and the new curling rink of the town. At one time the town could also boast of having more grain elevators than any location west of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Due to the changing economics of the agricultural industry, the original elevators were gradually taken down. Today only one of the many original "prairie skyscrapers" that once could be seen from miles away. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulcan,_Alberta) remains. In addition, an air force training base, RCAF Station Vulcan, was located a few kilometers southwest of the town during the Second World War. Many of the old hangars still exist and the runways can still be seen (Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulcan,_Alberta).

The town's name has brought some attention that has helped it become a tourist attraction (Certenig, 1990). In the *Star Trek* television and feature film series Vulcan is the name of the home world of the Vulcans (Vulcan Tourism website, www.vulcantourism.com/). Capitalizing on this coincidence, the town has built a *Star Trek*-themed tourist station (the Tourism and Trek Station), which provides tourist information, displays *Star Trek* memorabilia, and where visitors may participate in *The Vulcan Space Adventure* virtual reality game. Nearby, a replica of the starship Enterprise from *Star Trek V* has been mounted on a pedestal that features writing from *Star Trek* alien languages like Klingon. The town has also created space-themed murals and signs, and hosts an annual community-wide *Star Trek* convention known as VulCON: Spock Days/Galaxyfest. This convention attracts hundreds of *Star Trek* fans from around the world. Since 1990, Vulcan has hosted the annual Vulcan Tinman Triathlon, which takes place at the beginning of June. This sprint-distance triathlon attracts nearly 1,000 participants. There are sports classes for adults of all ages and skill levels, as well as for teams and children (Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulcan,_Alberta).

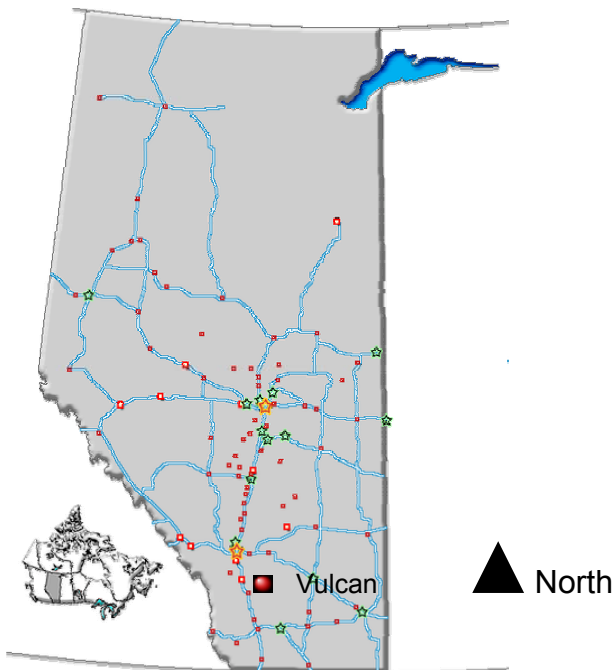


Figure 2.4: Vulcan location in Alberta, Canada.

Source: By Qyd. Retrieved October 2006.
<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:AB-towns-highways.png>>.



Figure 2.5: Vulcan's Downtown Main Street.

Source: By Qyd. January 2008. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mainstreet_Vulcan.JPG>.



Figure 2.6: Vulcan's Tourist Centre.

Source: By Qyd. January 2008. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Vulcan_visitor_centre.JPG>.



Figure 2.7: Startrek Enterprise Replica in Vulcan.

Source: By JamesTeterenk. Retrieved 07 July 2006.
<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:VulcanAlbertaEnterpriseReplica.jpg>>.

What makes this case study interesting as a tourism strategy is the identity created by building on the *Star Trek* image. Assessing this case allows one to ask how television, film, and fashion influence the creation of themed consumption spaces for tourism in rural and urban areas. While movie and television-themed tourism is growing, there have been relatively few efforts to investigate these developments (Busby & Klug, 2001; Mordue, 2001; Riley *et al.*, 1998), nor to help better understand how the creation of media-themed tourism settings plays out in local communities. By setting the stage for planning the tourism product, a vision can be created. As this case makes clear, it is the continually changing attitudes and actions of everyone who takes part in the life of Vulcan - those who want the Star Trek image to be an all-encompassing theme for community, the various tourists who visit (e.g. fans of the series, as well as others), and the locals who live in Vulcan - that leads to a very multifaceted experience of place (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009). Unlike many rural communities, and primarily due to the boom in the oil and gas industry in Alberta, combined with its tourism strategy of creating a sense of identity within a place, Vulcan enjoyed a 10% increase in its population from 2001-2006. (Statistics Canada, 2006).

According to George, Mair, and Reid, in the 1980s the move to tourism seemed like a valid response to the economic realities facing Vulcan. The choice to follow a tourism development path that many in the community found to be alien and alienating, can teach us many things about the way a tourism project can affect the identity and meaning of a community. This case is very similar to Roswell, New Mexico, U.S.A., a community that also experienced economic downturn from its resource-based economy and where the alien imagery accompanying the UFO theme in this community has created a wide array of community reactions, from support to embarrassment and resistance (Paradis, 2002). Cases like these help us to realize that reacting to a political economic situation with a tourism-related solution in a small town requires a very careful approach. Having as many community member voices heard as possible is essential to the grounding of a tourism approach so that the decisions made to market a town are not met with resistance from those who have to live there. What this case illustrates is that the process of creating an identity requires negotiation and acceptance by the community members. Developing a theme for a community is a way of transforming areas into destinations and centers of consumption. It should be noted that consumption is a fundamental theme in this case. As Paradis (2004) notes:

In a market economy based increasingly on consumption rather than production, contrived meanings and identities become all the more important to create perceived differences in products that are in actuality quite similar. In short, themes are designed specifically to promote the virtual and experiential consumption of places.

Vulcan made it clear that it was a town determined to survive economic hardships and carve out an enduring image for itself. Vulcan is a town devoted solely to “Trekdom”, calls itself the centre of the galaxy and the official Star Trek capital of Canada (Vulcan Tourism website, www.vulcantourism.com/). Visitors and local townspeople gather there once a year to pay tribute to all things “Trek”. Vulcan is like any other small prairie town, with their own history and friendly hospitality, but Star Trek sets it apart from any other small town as a whole. Galaxyfest doubles the size of Vulcan, but this festival only strengthens this town’s love of Star Trek. Vulcan is a place where people can come dressed up

and not feel out of place. People walk around the town in their Star Trek gear without anyone looking twice. Vulcan attracts Star Trek fans around the world without the visitors feeling out of place in their costumes. In big cities or other small towns, people would consider their character costumes as weird and out of place, but in Vulcan it is normal. Star Trek visitors and fans feel comfortable and at home walking around town in their costumes. During economic down times when other small towns are hurting, the tourism industry within Vulcan is doing very well, which is a great benefit to the local people. There are Star Trek conventions every week all around the world, but they pale in comparison to the little town of Vulcan, because there, Star Trek is not just a convention...it is a way of life (Vulcan Tourism website, www.vulcantourism.com/).

2.5 CASE STUDY: CANSO, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

Canso is a small, coastal fishing town on the north-eastern tip of mainland Nova Scotia in Guysborough County. The community has a population of 1,250 residents with 2,000 or so living nearby (Approx. 10 KM), according to the 2001 Statistics Canada population count. The town is located on the southern shore of Chedabucto Bay. The southern limit of the bay is at Cape Canso, a headland approximately 3 km southeast of the town. Canso Harbour is protected by the Canso Islands, a small archipelago lying immediately north and east of the mainland, with Durells Island, Piscataqui Island, George Island, and Grassy Island being the largest. Canso is the southeastern terminus of Trunk 16, an important secondary highway in Antigonish and Guysborough counties. As the town is situated on the end of a peninsula jutting into the Atlantic Ocean, Canso frequently experiences fog, particularly during the warmer summer months when continental air temperatures collide with cooler ocean temperatures offshore (Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canso,_Nova_Scotia#cite_note-0). Figure 2.8 shows the location of Canso in Nova Scotia, Canada.



Figure 2.8: Location of Canso in Nova Scotia, Canada.

Source: By NordNordWest. Retrieved 25 August 2009.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Canada_Nova_Scotia_location_map.svg>.

Canso is often cited as the oldest fishing port in the Maritimes, having been founded in 1604. The area's rich history is well presented at a local museum and National Historic Park. The community's economy has been predominantly fishing and remains so today.

In 1990, the collapse of the Atlantic Ground Fishery placed Canso in a very precarious economic state. Since that time a concentrated diversification effort has been pursued. The Stan Rogers Folk Festival is, of course, one of the many components of the economic development strategy that has emerged (www.stanfest.com/visitor-info.asp?section=150). The Stan Rogers Folk Festival is an annual event held around the Canada Day weekend. This event attracts over 10,000 visitors, who enjoy music from all over the world on seven different stages over three days (Stanfest website, <http://stanfest.com/>).

In addition, each year, during the second week of August, a regatta is held within the town. This week-long event includes boat races, hootenannies, a midway, parade, and seaman's memorial, as well as various activities for the youth. The regatta draws many previous generations of the town, serving the purpose of a

Come Home week. Each year, the regatta has a theme that is reflected in the parade, with 2009's being The Circus Comes to Town. (Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canso,_Nova_Scotia#cite_note-0).

What makes Canso unique is its promotion of its music festivals. The original notion was to construct a festival that would draw tourists and promote the region—tourism could bring substantial economic benefits to the community. The festival originated as a memorial to a popular Canadian songwriter, artist and folk music icon, musician Stan Rogers, who had been killed in a 1983 airline tragedy while returning home from a folk festival in Texas, USA (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

Data analysis and research show that the progressive development and growing success of the festival became a major tourist attraction over the next ten years in Canso. With the help of government support, the music festival has significantly helped the community diversify its local economy and achieve its objective of honoring Stan Rogers. Canso has taken on a new persona as a cultural and tourism destination that is unique from other destinations due to its festival as a big economic part. The community organizers have created a longer term objective of expanding the event to a two-to-three week “Festival of the Arts”, using the Stan Rogers Folk Festival as its big demand generator. Perhaps Canso’s success is due to the strong involvement, solid commitment, and enthusiasm of its people. The festival is a leading example of community ownership and animation. Although Canso has relied on government funding over the first 10 years of the festival project, what is different now is that the funding goes directly into the community coffers for decisions in disbursement and not into the pockets of large corporations and conglomerates on which the community had been formerly dependant. Canso residents appear to have taken collective ownership of their community, and are clearly making decisions regarding its future direction. This new shift in thinking and mindset has also released the community from the grip of learned helplessness (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

Canso uses the creative arts – music and songwriting – to build a focal tourism attraction that has now positioned Canso as an international cultural tourism destination. The attraction has not only helped to stimulate and revive the local economy, but it has also lifted the community out of its previous state of inactivity and stagnation and restored its dignity. Besides economic viability, tourism success must include the social and cultural benefits to both visitors and the local population who live there. Such benefits include strengthening social cohesion and social sustainability, motivating volunteerism, building community capacity, enhancing or restoring community pride, fostering collective optimism and developing coping skills and resiliency. In this case, music is utilized as a mechanism to expand old and new social relations and re-image a new community identity. This case serves to illustrate how the creation of a culture-based festival attraction of music and song can be used as a tourism mechanism to rejuvenate and rebuild its community economically, as well as its pride and collective spirit. This form of tourism maybe considered civic tourism (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

Despite not having all the necessary ingredients for successful tourism, such as ample accommodation, amenities, infrastructure, services, and so on, the community has, over 10 years, successfully created and grown an international tourism attraction. Much of Canso's success arises from the strong involvement, solid commitment and enthusiasm of its people. The festival is a leading example of community ownership and animation (Greencorn, RadioUPEI, 2006). Figures 2.9 and 2.10 showcase the advertisements placed by the town of Canso to highlight the heritage of the community and attract visitors to their local festival, Stanfest.

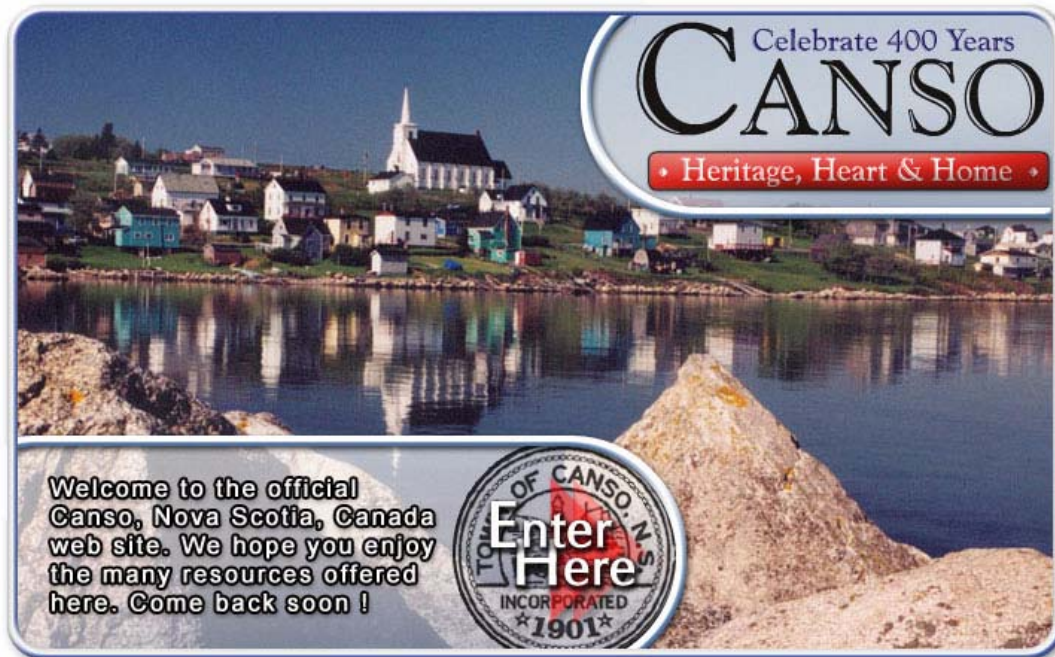


Figure 2.9: Canso promotional advertisement.

Source: Canso website. <<http://www.townofcanso.com/>>. Retrieved 25 August 2009.



Figure 2.10: Stanfest advertisement.

Source: Stanfest website. <<http://stanfest.com/>>. Retrieved 25 August 2009.

2.6 CASE STUDY: PORT STANLEY, ONTARIO, CANADA

Port Stanley is a community in the Municipality of Central Elgin, Ontario, Elgin County, located on the north shore of Lake Erie at the mouth of Kettle Creek. A settlement named Kettle Creek was founded here in 1812 by Lieutenant-Colonel John Bostwick. Around 1824, it was renamed Port Stanley after Edward Smith-Stanley, 14th Earl of Derby, who had visited nearby Port Talbot. Lord Stanley later became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the father of Frederick Stanley, 16th Earl of Derby, Governor General of Canada, ice hockey enthusiast and donor of the first Stanley Cup in 1893 (www.portstanley.ca).



Figure 2.11: Port Stanley in Ontario, Canada.

Source: < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Canada_Ontario_location_map.svg >.
Retrieved 25 August 2009.



Figure 2.12: View of Port Stanley from the harbour.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Port_stanley_7-28-2009_6-21-33_PM.jpg>.

Retrieved 25 August 2009.

Port Stanley has a large sheltered harbour operated by Transport Canada. Historically, these facilities supported trade in coal and wood between Southwestern Ontario and the United States. Today, most of these facilities are not used, but a commercial freshwater fishery operates from the harbour.

Attractions include a large sandy beach and the Port Stanley Festival Theatre. Port Stanley Terminal Rail operates a tourist train between St. Thomas, Ontario and Port Stanley, using a portion of the former L&PS rail line (www.portstanley.ca).

The village used to have a building opened in 1926 as the L&PS Pavilion, later renamed the Stork Club (not to be confused with the famous New York establishment), with a 13,000-square-foot (1,200 m²) dance floor, the largest dance floor in the London-Port Stanley area; the club was famous for swing dance and big band and attracted several big names to play there. It was closed by health authorities in 1973 because it could not earn the revenue to keep the building up. H.J. McManus, a London businessman, bought it and his son, Joe Jr., led the renovations, reopening in 1974 with the Harry James Orchestra performing before a sellout crowd. The last event was a performance by Daybreak on New Year's Eve of 1978; a fire in a dumpster 12 days later damaged the building too heavily to save it.

During the 1970s, the village promoted itself with the acronym CALIPSO: Come And Live In Port Stanley Ontario. Over the past decade, there have been numerous proposals to operate a ferry between Port Stanley and Cleveland, Ohio. This area has had a long history as a popular destination from the 1920s to the late 1960s, when locals began to take longer vacations in more exotic and pristine areas, passing up local tired destinations like Port Stanley. Lately, however, local people and visitors from farther afield have reconnected with this area as a tourism destination. Entrepreneurial efforts to develop new businesses and an environmental clean-up of the surrounding beaches have been strong factors in the reestablishment of tourism in this community. Many of the old private cottages are now giving way to redevelopment that is also contributing to its revitalization (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

Recently, new tourism-related businesses and volunteers have become more apparent. A group of volunteers purchased the old railway line leading into Port Stanley and restored the long-ailing railway. They have rebuilt designated and vital parts of the track bed and refurbished some of the passenger cars; this has made the once grand railway operative for limited tourism excursions from St. Thomas to Port Stanley. While the beach provides a major attraction, additional ways of engaging that resource were devised. In the past, there was a nightclub called the Stork Club that burned down and it was replaced by condominiums and a more sophisticated shopping area consisting of the usual tourist types of curio and art shops that have been created near the entry to the municipality (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

Port Stanley's uniqueness lies with its natural attractions such as the meandering Kettle Creek and the multitude of leisure boats that dot its banks. Port Stanley is home to the largest, north shore, inland federal harbour that attracts impressively large lake vessels. Along with the natural environment of the lakefront with its sandy beaches, Port Stanley has developed a shopping area with open access to the lake from the many marinas that are located nearby. Commercial fishing boats, restaurants, and hotels line the harbor shore; as well, one of the passenger cars of the tourist railway rests at the Port Stanley station. Increased

accommodation has helped to provide the needed infrastructure, not only to attract but encourage visitors to stay longer, turning potential day visits into longer stays. Still, the beach and the lake are the main attractions of Port Stanley. Recreational activities such as beach volleyball have been introduced and provide a facility where young visitors collect (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

Port Stanley uses tourism as a way to attract those who will move permanently to the area. An annual weekend festival is organized and run by local service groups, businesses, and individual citizens. These types of events also provide a leisure experience for locals as well as an attraction for tourists. Summer Theater on the second floor of the old municipal building and library seems to be successful. Much of this community's appeal rests with the beaches and since summer is quite limited, the town's latest round of tourism development focused on new condominiums which replaced old nightclubs and other under-utilized buildings or plots of land facing prime beach property (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

In addition to maintaining historical conservation, Port Stanley has begun to replace some of the old buildings that have drifted into disrepair with modern-day structures. In addition, the building of summer homes as a condominium development on lakeside properties is often a new strategy for redevelopment. Port Stanley has also been able to maintain its public beach function, including some of its historical private enterprises, which provides a connection with the historical past. Mackie's Beachside Restaurant and Arcade is an example of a business that has been on the beach for several decades and is now a cherished and continuing landmark. In order to rejuvenate a community's tourism product for visitors, communities similar to Port Stanley need to invest in redevelopment of their current state of housing stock, downtown remodeling, preservation of heritage sites and landmarks, traffic flows and general problems of living. To be sustainable, development must not overwhelm the community either physically or socially. Tourism should be considered a part of an overall multi-sector diversification strategy and not the sole focus for development to the exclusion of

other economic possibilities. The potential for increased amenities, such as restaurants, museums, attention to cleanliness and increased economic activity, to be developed out of tourism are some of the positive aspects of tourism. All communities are unique and the collective engagement of the community provides the true integration of tourism where the entire interests and aspirations of community members are included in the process and outcome (George, Mair, and Reid, 2009).

Chapter 3.0

THE CASE OF PEACE RIVER, ALBERTA, CANADA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will identify the key barriers to tourism in rural areas and small North American towns by focusing on the town of Peace River, in Northern Alberta, Canada, as a case study and suggest some ways to overcome these barriers. The process of data collection was conducted via a visit to Peace River, in order to better understand those barriers and how to overcome them. A better understanding of how to keep and attract the young generation and encourage the current and outside populations of people to stay, will, in turn, contribute to the sustainability of the future social and economic prosperity of small town life.

3.2 CASE STUDY: PEACE RIVER, ALBERTA, CANADA

3.2.1 LOCATION

Located approximately 500 km north of Edmonton, on Highway 2 in Northern Alberta, is the Town of Peace River. The original part of the town lies on a flood plain at the confluence of Peace River and Smoky River; the town has also expanded to areas on higher ground, mostly to the west. The valley itself is nearly 1,000 feet (305 meters) below a relatively flat terrain. The Greene Valley Provincial Park lies just east of the town (2006 Statistics Canada).



Figure 3.1: Location of the Town of Peace River in Alberta, Canada

Source: *Peace River*. Wikipedia.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_River,_Alberta>.



Figure 3.2: Aerial view of the Town of Peace River's Downtown.

Source: The Town of Peace River's Planning Department

3.2.2 HISTORY

According to the Peace County website, the initial settlements in Peace River date back to the 1700s when the First Hudson's Bay Company fur traders arrived in the region along the Peace River. Fort Fork was established on the south bank of the Peace River by the Northwest Company when Sir Alexander Mackenzie made his journey along the Peace River in 1792, during his epic journey to the Pacific Ocean. The Fort was located just upstream of the confluence of the Peace and Smoky Rivers, near what later became the Town of Peace River. Missionaries were the first settlers to the area, sent to introduce Christianity to the native people. They began to promote agriculture and required river transportation for supplies. Unwittingly, they proved the value of agriculture in the Peace, a region soon defined by both agriculture and river transport. Between 1910 and 1916 the rail lines were extended north from Edmonton. When the rail line reached the area, the settlers came also and the first settlement began,

about the same time the first post office opened. Before 1919 this community was known as "The Peace River Crossing". The settlement on the east bank of the river was known for many years as the "Peace River Landing Settlement". With rail came an influx of settlers and others interested in lumbering the Peace Country trees and drilling for oil. The period between 1926 and 1931 also brought large numbers of workers and settlers to "God's Country", as the Great Depression robbed many of a livelihood in Saskatchewan and southern Alberta.

The town site of Peace River was first surveyed in 1909 and became the Village of Peace River Crossing on June 2, 1914. The name of the village was later shortened to "Peace River" on May 22, 1916. The Town of Peace River was incorporated on December 1, 1919. Peace River is known for a number of historic facts and legendary figures. One of the most famous figures was Henry Fuller Davis. He was commonly called "Twelve Foot Davis", due to his twelve-foot land claim during the Caribou Country gold rush in British Columbia that netted Davis almost \$30,000.00 worth of gold. He took these profits and staked it all on a trading post close to where the Town of Peace River stands today. Davis was known to be a generous man and represents the true spirit of pioneering.

Numerous steamboats plied the waters of the Peace, but none more famous, than, nor as large as, the D.A. Thomas that, in 1929, after 15 years of service, sank in 11 feet of water. With the end of the steamboat era, rail transport became the most important link to the south. Many a politician suffered under the strain of establishing a rail link in the varied landscape, which makes up the Peace Country (All historical data gathered from the Town of Peace River website. <http://peaceriver.govoffice.com/>).



Figure 3.3: Looking north on Main Street. Ca. 1916. Peace River, Alberta.

Source: Peace River Museum, Archives and MacKenzie Centre. Photo by J. Martinos.



Figure 3.4: Main Street today. Peace River, Alberta.

Source: Peace Country website. <www.discoverthepeacecountry.com>.



Figure 3.5: Main Street looking south. Peace River, Alberta.

Source: Peace River Museum, Archives and MacKenzie Centre.



Figure 3.6: Main Street looking north. Peace River, Alberta.

Source: Peace River Museum, Archives and MacKenzie Centre

3.2.3 POPULATION

The Town of Peace River has grown from a population of approximately 980 people in 1921, to a community of 6,315 in 2006 (Stats Canada 2006 Census). Population growth was slow until 1946, when it increased moderately. In 1961, a more rapid growth period began, with the highest period of growth occurring between 1961 and 1971. The characteristics of Peace River's population are fairly typical of northern Alberta communities. Figure 3.7 illustrates how such communities generally exhibit a relatively young population, as compared to provincial or national demographic characteristics.

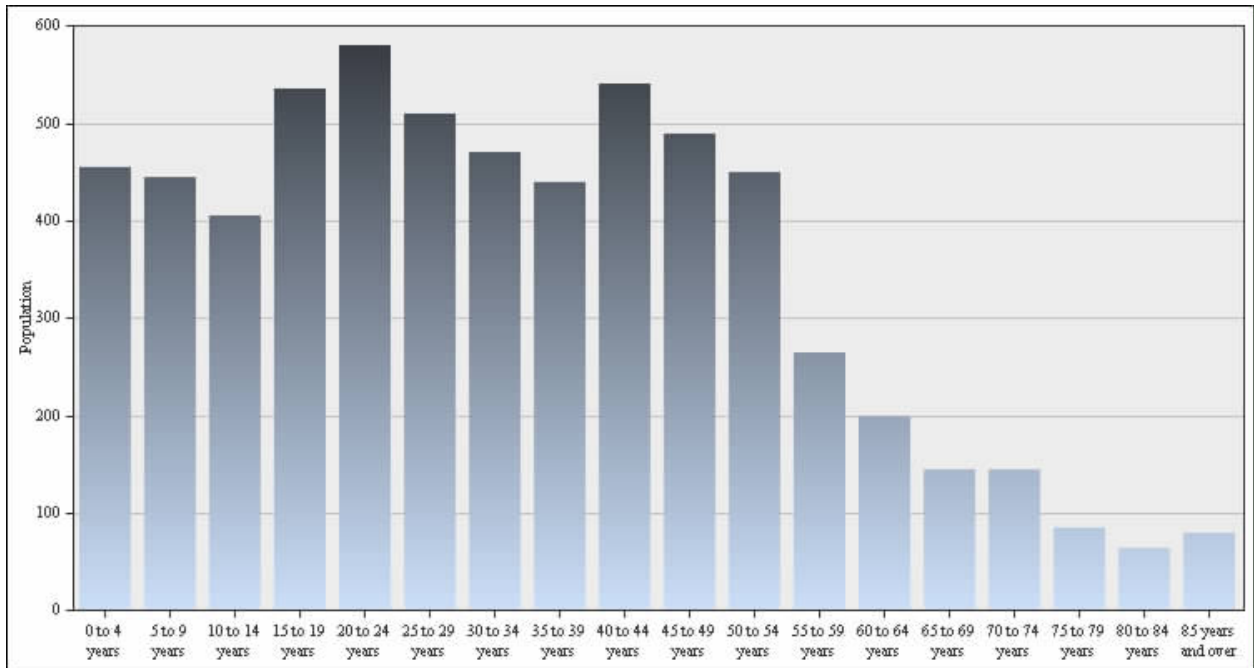


Figure 3.7: Age Distribution of Peace River Population (both sexes).

Source: Community Profiles of the 2009 Census from Statistics Canada.

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page_figure.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4819038&Geo2=PR&Code2=48&Data=Count&SearchText=PeaceRiver&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&Profile=2000&Sex=T>.

3.2.4 INDUSTRIES

The top five industries of Peace River are Retail Trade at number one, followed by Agriculture, Health & Social Services, Construction, and then Manufacturing, as shown in Figure 3.8. The Peace River Pulp Mill is located 25 km from the town of Peace River. Daishowa-Marubeni International Pulp Mill employs over 350 people. It was in October of 1996 that Daishowa announced plans to build the \$900 million light-weight coated paper mill. The highest population sector of Peace River (as opposed to the paper mill) is under 14. Citizens 65 and over make up the lowest populated segment (Peace County website. www.discoverthepeacecountry.com).

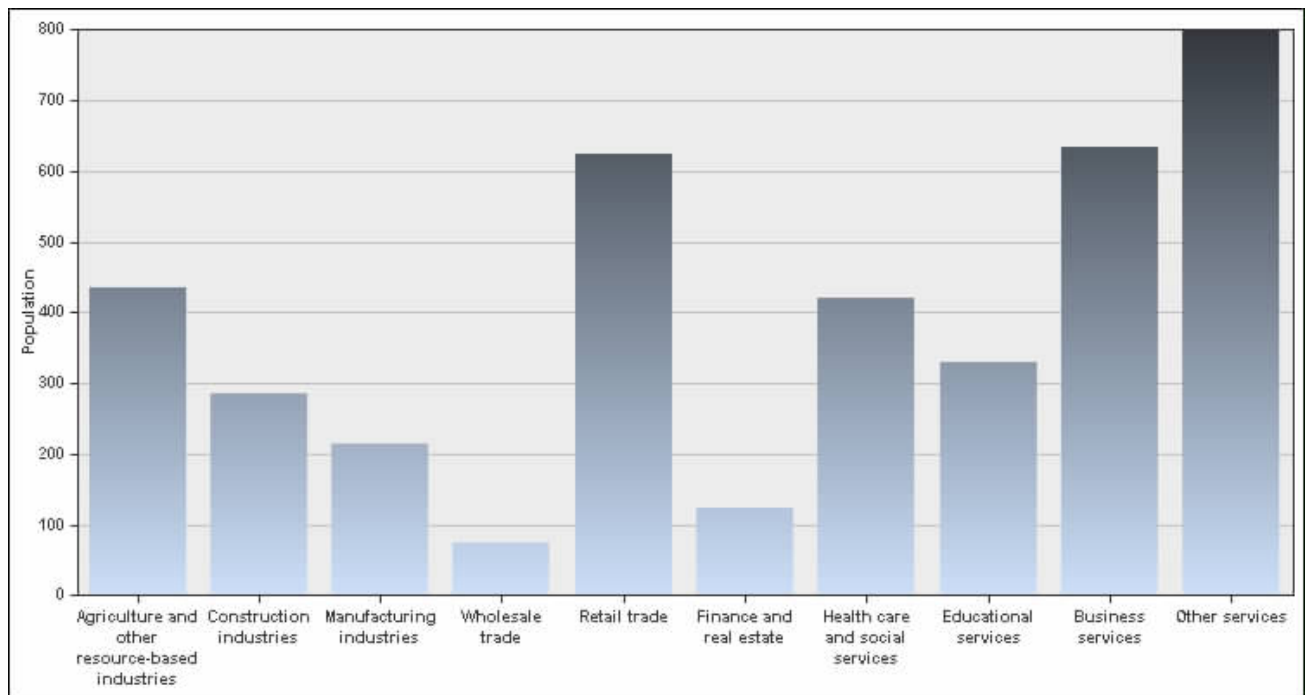


Figure 3.8: Employment in Industries in Peace River (both sexes)

Source: Community Profiles of the 2009 Census from Statistics Canada.

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page_figure.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4819038&Geo2=PR&Code2=48&Data=Count&SearchText=Peace River&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&Profile=23000&Sex=Total>.

3.3 BARRIERS

3.3.1 Inaccessibility

In Peace River, there are a limited number of air flights. There is a small airport, but it is non-operational due to the lack of travelers and budget cuts. Currently the closest airport to Peace River is located in Grande Prairie, which is about a two-hour drive away. The problem with lack of accessibility is that potential tourists are deterred from desiring to visit the area due to the inconvenience associated with arrival.

Reopening the existing Peace River airport would make it much easier for tourists to visit the area. An alternative is to offer a guided tour bus service directly from Grande Prairie to Peace River. As discussed in the case of the town

of Solvang (cited in Chapter 2), tourists are able to access its downtown area easily, due to the convenience of a shuttle bus system that carries visitors to and from downtown to the main rail station.

3.3.2 Poor Way Finding

Means of access and exit should be adequate for the expected maximum number of visitors and must be clearly marked, remembering that many tourists may have limited knowledge of the native language of the tourist destination. International directional signs or easily understood pictograms should be used. In addition, the car parking lot must not be too large. A number of smaller linked parking areas would be preferable to one large characterless area. A simple means of identifying the location of the car when parked is essential, especially for visitors (Mills, 1983).

Despite the fact that there are several signs that point in the direction of downtown, the way-finding in and to Peace River is not clear. Tourists who come to visit the Town of Peace River need unified signage that is attractive and easy to read. Due to the complicated road system, visitors can easily become lost. One way to overcome this problem is to provide clearer directional signage.

New signage can be introduced to replace old ones, not only to offer Peace River's downtown a freshly updated look, but also to help tourists navigate visiting the area.

3.3.3 Cold Weather

In hot climates, shade is desirable to prevent overheating of the cars (and people). Trees and well planned landscape would provide shade, help people to find their way around by serving as landmarks, break up the visual monotony of large numbers of cars (that are very common in Peace River), and give colour and interest to an otherwise uninteresting area (Mills, 1983).

Peace River is located in a part of the world with low sun angles and lots of wind; thus is not a location well equipped to welcome winter tourists. There are no

small spaces or niches to hide from the weather and a lot of open, vacant lots. On windy days, of which Peace River has many, pedestrians have to face the harsh elements without enough places to retreat to.

Efforts should be made to attract tourists to the area by providing places where they can shelter from the elements as they shop, go about their business, and visit historic sites, etc. This strategy might comprise the inclusion of densely planted trees to block wind and taller buildings to create a micro-climate.

3.3.4 No Sense of Place

With vast heritage and virgin destinations that are yet to be explored, Peace River's rural landscape has a lot to offer and makes for viable business possibilities for the willing, though, as with any good opportunity, these come with equally demanding challenges.

One of the biggest challenges in the growth of rural tourism is the concept of having no sense of place. This lack of a sense of place takes the form of visitors not being able to find the uniqueness factor; this includes such things as their not being aware of the area's history, the significance of specific buildings, and symbolic elements. There are several methods by which to assist a town in branding its identity. Providing information regarding destinations, along with relevant photographs, is a huge draw for customers and tour operators as this helps to clarify for tourists what to expect on arrival. Word-of-mouth advertising also helps to draw more visitors.

Peace River lacks a sense of place and identity that would allow it to distinguish itself from other small towns. Taking one of the case study locations from Chapter 2, the town of Vulcan in Alberta for example, one can see how Vulcan distinguishes itself as a Star Trek tourist attraction. When a place has a strong identity or brand, it becomes a major draw for tourists to relate to. Peace River must distinguish itself from other nearby towns by introducing a stronger brand, theme, and identity. Identity can be established by incorporating a theme into the current streetscape and adding fine-grained details, such as street furniture,

themed murals, porches and awnings, to Peace River's downtown area in order to distinguish it from other towns.

to Peace River's downtown area in order to distinguish it from other towns.

3.3.5 No Tourism / Economic Development Officer

Promoting the use of tour operators and marketing specialists is a crucial area that needs to be addressed for the growth of tourism in an area. Currently, there is a need for a tourism and economic development officer to promote Peace River as an enchanting place to visit. Without such a specialist to market Peace River, it will stay invisible to visitors who are unaware of its natural beauty, wildlife, and many other elements that contribute to its charm.

Hiring a specialist who can create marketing brochures, update the local website, promote events such as the Peacefest (similar to the Stanfest in Canso, Nova Scotia as mentioned in Chapter 2), and with connections to other travel specialists will create a tourist niche within the Town of Peace River.



Figure 3.9: Town of Peace River Advertisement. More similar ads should be created and distributed to potential visitors.

Source: Town of Peace River web advertisement.

<http://peaceriver.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={3ECF067F-991A-4B79-9FB0-080466B9BD55}>.

3.4 THE CHALLENGES WITHIN PEACE RIVER

The town acknowledges the importance of the downtown core as the business and cultural centre of Peace River and has commenced a downtown revitalization and riverfront beautification program to improve the quality of life for its residents and to enhance its appeal for tourism and inward investment. Projects have included the construction of a dyke walkway system on the banks of the Peace River; a pedestrian walkway bridge; unique rock and brick planter medians on Main Street, together with external upgrades to the Town of Peace River offices, and the commencement of the creation of a community park on Main Street. Private business has responded positively to these projects and many of the downtown businesses have undertaken impressive building upgrades to enhance the character and appearance of the downtown core.

There has been a significant increase in development activity within the community, reflected by the annual increase in the number of permits issued. The projects undertaken during 2005 include a 32-suite apartment-style condominium building, new hotel and restaurant, two major school expansion projects, new residential subdivision projects, and other commercial ventures. Projects scheduled for 2006 include a new residential subdivision; 71-unit apartment building; major retail box store development; and the establishment and expansion of industry-related business to service the upcoming oil sands projects within the region (Town of Peace River website, <<http://peaceriver.govoffice.com>>).

The town faces a number of challenges from a community planning perspective. Built upon the terraces of the Peace River Valley, the town has been forced to respect the topography of the town site and to develop the community in a unique manner from that of many traditional communities. Through effective planning, the town will continue to enhance its excellent quality of life and scenic community (Town of Peace River Planning & Economic Development brochure, printed 24 October 2007).

3.5 STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS

There are big changes occurring in the rural and more remote regions of the globe and communities are feeling the impacts of all forms of migration and economic change. The restructuring of rural regions, once dominated by now nearly obsolete resource-based economies, has put immense pressures on many communities as they struggle to retain a viable economy and culture. Much of this effort has been directed towards tourism and development.

While the financial and physical ability of people is at a level unsurpassed in history, many places must accommodate the changing needs and interests of a new set of tourists who, concerned by and sensitive to the environment and other issues affecting the world today, seem to be searching for deeper and more meaningful experiences. Paralleling this search for meaningful tourism is the huge shift from mass tourism activities to more specialized niche markets and customized products. This shift opens up a new world of opportunities for many rural communities that can provide culturally unique, one-of-a-kind experiences that cannot be replicated by larger tourism conglomerates or destinations anywhere in the world. A town like Peace River can take advantage of the natural settings and market itself as a place that caters to eco-tourism, but it can only do so with the right tools, by hiring tourism specialists and other experts. Of course, this is often at a high cost to both tourism and the destination site. As these experiences become popular and sites are visited by more and more tourists, a destination can lose its appeal to both the tourist and the local resident. And, while the tourist can stop visiting, the resident is often left to deal with any leftover issues. The ability of a destination site to regenerate itself by finding practical yet attractive solutions such as the use of clear directional signage, easily accessible roads and public transit ways, and the creation of pedestrian-oriented pathways, furniture, and landscape to protect one from inclement weather is a start, not only to attracting tourists, but also as an investment towards sustainability of the town and the well-being of its residents. Enhancing the experiential quality of Peace River strategically in these recommended ways will help to reconnect downtown with the rest of the urban

fabric. Enhancing the actual entrances to Peace River will help to create a more consistent series of spaces to complete the topographical separation currently plaguing this area; this will, in turn, help to bind together downtown with the newer developments around it.

While tourism operators continue to search for the ideal tourism destinations, it is up to a town to market itself in order to attract potential visitors. Tourism development is a dynamic and viable way to rejuvenate a community's economy and inspire a cultural renaissance. It can provide new places and spaces to foster sociability and nurture friendly relations between hosts and visitors, or it can do the opposite. Planning and management is necessary to oversee a town's outcome; this can determine whether the outcome is positive or negative. Research has shown that if a town is to be truly successful and sustainable, it has to embed within it certain key principles (George, Mair and Reid, 2009). Tourism has to be appropriately planned. It must also involve all community stakeholders. Tourism development must be continually monitored and controlled. It must allow for adaptation and corrective action when needed. A host community and its residents provide the foundation for tourism development to evolve and flourish. In the case of Peace River, strategies should begin with the local population maintaining precedence in the planning and decision-making processes. Community involvement should not simply be seen as a barrier the developer must pass to get the project moving.

Globalization and environmental challenges in contemporary times can provide exciting opportunities for rural communities if they take the initiative to be innovative, creative, and inclusive in planning for their future. Being small, rural, and unique gives many communities a competitive edge over other more established tourism destinations that are quickly becoming part of a homogenized global economy. While tourism may not be an economic saviour, it also should not be considered a false hope. The preceding studies of the five communities in rural North America, cited in Chapter 2, have illustrated the methods they used to attempt to pave the way to their future through tourism. While they are certainly different from each other and from Peace River in many

ways, the communities described here are also similar to communities around the world as they try to adopt tourism as a means to sustainability.

The appendix lists various items that describe the ambiance or personality of desirable small towns. Some adjectives include historic, small, quaint, charming, and romantic. Or we could employ the phrases “a step back in time”, “picture postcard” or “small town Americana at its best”. According to Small Town Gems’ website, many have historic districts, attractive store fronts on Main Street, antique shops, art stores or other boutiques, Victorian homes, and bed and breakfast lodging. (<<http://www.smalltowngems.com/aboutus.html>>, Retrieved April 2010).

The following section lists the actions that the town of Peace River should undertake in order to move itself forward one step at a time towards becoming a tourism destination and a more viable place to live.

3.5.1 Funds and Wealth

The Town of Peace River needs to define a tourism niche that can accommodate it and that it can afford, according to its available resources. The Town should find and approach potential sponsors and investors who are able to manage some of these tourism strategies in return for offered incentives. In addition, the Town should look to collaborate with other private and public organizations that want to develop tourism in the area. Finally, the Town should find out about and apply for provincial and federal grants to help subsidize the overall cost of the project.

3.5.2 Sense of Ownership

Once the Town begins its strategic plan to enhance tourism, a parallel and ongoing campaign should begin in order to inform key stakeholders about the initiative. The Town can also use media outlets such as newspapers, radio, or television advertisements to develop a tourism industry that will benefit all its

citizens as it will most likely expand their tax base and generate local wealth. The facilities built for tourists need to also serve the needs of the local townspeople.

3.5.3 The River

The Town of Peace River has prioritized the creation of a new development focused on the river, renaming it the “Harbour-front”, and phasing it in over several years, with funds invested in developing infrastructure for both locals’ and tourists’ enjoyment. A range of options, along with their estimated costs, will be further investigated in coordination with the provincial government, which oversees river intervention. The Town will initiate a meeting in order to engage all the stakeholders who can contribute to the development of river activities and establish a method and timeline for moving forward.

3.5.4 Unknown Place

The Town will review its branding opportunities and awareness with key private stakeholders and the province of Alberta. A marketing expert should interact with the Town and understand the residents’ needs and explore the most suitable advertising options for them, as well as the costs involved. The Town can also look into various avenues for free publicity by inviting media representatives to spend time in Peace River. Finally, a revamped tourism website should be launched in order to attract potential visitors.

3.5.5 Professional Tourist Operators

The Town can host a tourism investment fair, to which national and provincial operators will be invited, in order to assess how to appeal to investors in tourism. The invitation can be accompanied by locating investment opportunities and

through the preparation of an incentive package. Seminars to motivate and educate local entrepreneurs can be initiated by the Town.

3.5.6 Air Travel

The Town should look into the possible start-up of regular flights into its local airport, including charters. The possible initiation of regular bus travel or minivans, similar to the type that connects Calgary and Banff, as well as Edmonton and Jasper, should be examined.

3.5.7 Downtown Renewal

The Town should consider putting into effect plans to renew the downtown area. Special attention should be given to building façades, street furniture, directional signage, streets leading to the new harbour-front area and the condominiums built along the river. In addition, the development of the natural amphitheatre bordering the harbour should be considered.

3.5.8 Winter Tourism

The Town should commit itself in a feasibility study to survey the growth of sports activities and the option of investment in ski facilities for the existing underutilized ski area. The Town should explore the possibility of making Peace River the “Tournament Capital of Northern Alberta”, or at the very least, of the immediate region. The Town should try to collaborate with the nearby Village of St. Isidore in staging events during the Carnival period.

3.5.9 Seminars, Training, Conventions

The Town should collaborate with available venues to introduce a seasonal or year-long speaker series. There should be a direct approach made to local

corporations with training programs to see if Peace River can become a regional training centre for their employees.

3.5.10 Spa and Restaurant

The Town needs to set aside land for the creation of future restaurants along the riverfront and in the downtown area. Incentive packages should be prepared for this kind of investment. The area above the roundabout, located at the entry to downtown, should be designated a “tourist zone” and include a revamped welcome centre.

3.5.11 Attract Large Scale Commercial Anchor

By attracting a large-scale commercial anchor such as a supermarket or a permanent indoor farmers’ market, other potential smaller retail stores will have a stronger business incentive to want to invest in a downtown location near this large-scale enterprise for greater business earning potential. Attracting a large commercial venture to establish itself in the downtown core will also encourage nearby existing smaller businesses to keep their doors open for longer hours for the convenience of customers, thereby generating more urban activity and places for people to interact with each other.

3.5.12 Attract Families with Children

Many people do not visit a place simply because it is not kid-friendly. By providing facilities, entertainment zones catered towards both young and older children and their families, and other fun activities, people will naturally be drawn towards a place. The families would enjoy a great day out while having fun with their children. Providing activities for children to do that is based around them will encourage parents to stay for longer periods in a place as well as spend more money in town. Some examples include family-friendly restaurants; video

arcades; heritage river steam boat rides and steam train rides; science centres; bowling allies; live music; sidewalk cafes; parks with tot lots and adult exercise play areas; interactive water features or sculptures; mini-golf courses; biking trails; wildlife viewing; flower gardens; indoor climbing gym; river tubing; snow tubing and skiing; dirt biking and ATV riding; paint-balling; white-water rafting; swimming; go-karting; horseback riding; canoeing and kayaking; fly fishing; old-fashioned horse drawn wagon and hay rides; skateboard park; scuba diving and snorkelling; wakeboarding and waterskiing; hiking, and boating; rock hounding and fossil hunting; and helicopter tours. Based on these examples, there are numerous ideas which the Town can utilize in attracting families with children.

3.6 SUMMARY

Incorporating these action items into the development plan will bring the Town of Peace River one step closer to achieving its goal of becoming a more viable place to live and a more attractive tourist destination. The Town renewal process can be achieved over a phased period of time and financial investments need to be made over several years. Refocusing on the Town's downtown core area in beautification strategies through the use of street furniture, directional signage, and building façade face-lifts will make downtown a more attractive place to be, for locals and visitors alike. The existing big box stores, such as the local Wal-Mart, have taken away a significant amount of activity and urban livelihood from the downtown area. Therefore, it is extremely important to reestablish urban renewal strategies for the future sustainability of the Town of Peace River. By locating more public amenities downtown, such as new housing, civic squares, commercial hubs, training centres, municipal centres, events and festivals, and anchor stores, people will naturally be drawn towards visiting, and will eventually desire to move closer to downtown. Downtown renewal requires vision, funding, motivation, diligence, and foresight for future sustainable success. When we consider all the quality factors, together with all the problems, we see that Peace River with all its beautiful and less-than-beautiful public spaces is a town well worth caring for.

Chapter 4.0

CONCLUSION

4.1 PERSONAL INSIGHT AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE

While it is important to nurture ideas and look for alternative approaches to the development of a small town, one must consider that numerous other factors, beyond those discussed in this report, often come in to play.

In many small towns, there is a lack of guidance by a specialist who can help a community market itself in a way that contributes to its sustainability and future growth. In order to successfully implement many new initiatives, the town leaders and the specialists need to work together to find a common goal and support and introduce alternative options that are functional and effective yet enhance a community and maintain long-term growth.

4.1.1 FACTS: CHARRETTE

One way to provide personal insight within a community is through community charrettes as a mode of project development in community and urban design. The word *charrette* may refer to any collaborative session in which a group of designers drafts a solution to a problem. While the structure of a charrette varies, depending on the design problem and the individuals in the group, charrettes often take place in multiple sessions in which the group divides into sub-groups. Each sub-group then presents its work to the full group as material for future dialogue. Such charrettes serve as a way of quickly generating a design solution while integrating the aptitudes and interests of a diverse group of people.

Early in the planning stage, many questions should be asked and answered as to the costs and benefits of various types of growth. Answers to these questions will provide a good foundation for economic development planning. In many small towns such as Peace River, economic development committees have difficulty putting their plans into action due to a lack of careful planning in the early stages of development. Setting specific goals is an important initial step in creating an overall plan. The committee must next identify the obstacles that

could prevent the accomplishment of their goals and establish a feasible plan for overcoming these obstacles. An overall plan for the development of a town must include the goals to be accomplished, as well as the organization of the development effort. Peace River has not yet assembled an effective economic development team. As a result, most economic development activities there are conducted somewhat at random without the guidance of a professional advisory committee. The plan must be detail-oriented and still contain the big picture objectives that a community might have over the next several decades. A well conceived plan sets businesslike goals and a businesslike approach for implementing the objectives. With an organized plan, the people responsible for carrying out the development of it can complete the following steps and feel assured that they are receiving the maximum support from the community.

Usually charrettes are several day-long engagements that are interactive processes between the community stakeholders and the practicing professional that can yield various concepts from multiple perspectives within a short span of time. Design charrettes are generally important as a mode of project development in community design. There are both advantages and disadvantages of not including community stakeholders in the early decision-making process. Advantages of not including community stakeholders early in the planning stages include the ability to direct energy and design efforts into focused project development. By allowing the design specialists to do what they specialize in and focus on creating physical graphic visualization products for discussion, it will help community stakeholders visualize the possibilities on a given site. Disadvantages of not including community stakeholders in the process include missing out on key opportunities and possible interventions that could be overseen by the design specialist. Community stakeholders provide other dimensions and perspectives that contribute to the overall success of a project and its goals. As a designer, it is obligatory to include community stakeholders, not only so they can feel that their input counts towards the final product, but also so that they understand the evolution of the design process and why the final product becomes what it ultimately is. In a way, educating the general public about the design process also spreads the word of the importance

of the design specialist's role. In addition, it gives community stakeholders a sense of pride that they were involved in the authorship of a project. Market pressures create the need for a high-speed, high-results approach to project development. The design charrette is an interactive process that yields concepts and materials that could be presented to various stakeholders to establish credibility and security for complex projects. Not including community stakeholders in the process would be a mistake (Miller, 1982).

Lastly, the author will discuss the ways in which such undertakings could be changed or enhanced, both as an academic exercise done *intra muros* and as a general technique for design development. As urban designers, we include all professionals who directly or indirectly shape the form of urban areas, including among others, urban planners, policy advisors, architects, landscape architects, conservationists, geologists, and environmental planners. The charrette is one of the key experiences that everyone involved in the design process has an opportunity to interact within. Adding another dimension to teamwork skills could be enhanced by including during the charrette phase, the missing component of engineers by whom the majority of the public works are completed. As someone who has worked within the real estate industry, I can speak for myself in saying that many private sector real estate developers and investors want to be planners and urban designers on some level. The design community should strive to take advantage of the deep-pocketed, well connected real estate industry with which their interests are often aligned by including students and faculty from the world arena establishment, in addition to engineers.

As mentioned by Miller, "[T]he charrette presents a unique opportunity to bring together members of the local profession, students, and local businesses to collaborate in an exhilarating academic and architectural exercise under the guidance of nationally and internationally recognized designers" (Miller, 1982). The charrette is an effective tool to bring together a diverse group of people. In addition, Forsyth cites innovation as an important factor to the work of research universities. Using the charrette as an analytical technique tool, we could use

this research and collection of data to “accelerate and disseminate inventive work in urban design, so that the urban design field experiences significant innovation” (Forsyth, 2007).

Perhaps one way to approach innovative techniques is to couple it with internet-based forums, blogs, dedicated web sites and the gathering of live data in order to reach an even greater audience for feedback. Interactive sites such as Facebook or web-links to more established organizations, such as the Urban Land Institute, are powerful tools that can be developed as a platform post-charrette for generating that elusive summary of goals and the creative compromise and reaching out to people outside the university and speciality research level, since community members may perceive the university and researchers to be “ivory towerish” (Sutton & Kemp, 2006). There should also be a greater emphasis on mediation skills, in addition to presentation skills, somehow incorporated into the urban design and urban planning programmes prior to participation in a future charrette.

Urban and community design is not only about design. It is about the dynamic understanding of how people articulate their views, meet their rights and obligations, and mediate their differences. If people cannot mediate their differences, how can they be expected to mediate within a charrette team, or furthermore, in front of large audience? Within this context, the urban designer is not a dictator with a drawing pen, but a collaborator and director with unique listening skills, holding the baton of societal dialogue towards the concrete manifestation of visible consensus.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

While there are a multitude of options to attracting tourists to a town, there are several key recommendations that present themselves as the best methods to attracting visitors.

4.2.1 Professional Visitation

Hiring a specialist who is in contact with resources outside of town can provide insight that might not be easily provided locally. Understandably, funds will be required for hiring a specialist, in which case the best idea is to start a fundraising program, create events to generate funds, or find sponsors within or outside the community to raise funds for this purpose. Hiring specialists will probably eliminate most unwise investments before they become unwise expenditures. The specialists could be urban planners, architects, geographers, historians, business marketers, or tourism agency officials. The outsiders can come to the town in the morning and be given a guided tour for orientation purposes. They need to know what local townspeople believe is important about their town. The tour can finish at a local restaurant and during lunch, the visitors will have an opportunity to ask questions and talk with community leaders about the town.

After lunch, the professionals should be free to look around the town on their own in order to become more familiar with it. Some may wish to arrange special interviews with business representatives, radio or media groups, city officials, utility managers, and development or planning commissions for a more in-depth questioning in their specialty areas. The professionals should provide a summary report describing what they liked about the community and what they believe to be the marketable uniqueness of the town. They should also be invited to comment on any conditions that they feel need improvement. This is all valuable marketing information and can be obtained for a relatively modest cost. It is a good chance for local townspeople to get input on what their town is doing right, what they may be doing wrong, and where it could improve.

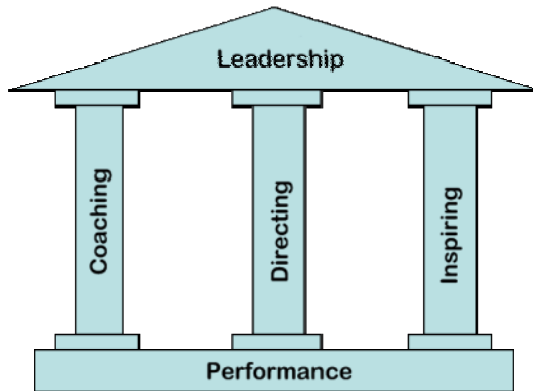


Figure 4.1: Find or create a leader who specializes in a certain field.

Source: <<http://theleadershipbook.com/>>. Sherwin Shao. 2008.

According to the Leadership book, there are three distinct roles that the leader takes on, as illustrated in Figure 4.1:

- The leader as the **coach** ensures that the performer has the right skills. He needs to have domain expertise to command the respect of the performers. He needs to have the attitude of relentless improvement to keep the organization competitive.
- The leader as the **director** coordinates to make the team greater than the sum of the parts. A well-trained, well-coordinated force will outperform the untrained and uncoordinated. This is how 300 Spartans overcame thousands of Persians. The Strategic leader plans with creativity and executes with discipline.
- The leader as the **motivator** ensures that everyone on-board is performing together, willingly. The motivator has the empathetic maturity to know what drives people, and the inspirational creativity to send the right messages. He knows how to inspire the right attitudes, and how to remove the bad attitudes.

4.2.2 Define a Niche

Determining what kinds of businesses could work profitably with the existing population, business activity, and labour supply will help a community determine what kinds of businesses or services are lacking. Resources made available through university research, the provincial or state economic development department, and local residents concerning the services or products that they travel out of town to purchase could help to determine the kinds of businesses or services that need to be established. Defining what a community currently has available will help a community to determine what kind of niche they can reasonably develop within their budget. Once a niche has been defined, a community should look into drawing more businesses and services that can cater this niche. For example, in the case of the Town of Peace River, a strong niche that the town can focus on is their natural beauty and scenery.

A community can approach potential businesses by writing letters, making telephone calls, sending emails, and following through by staying in contact and keeping notes on follow-ups. They could ask the workers or employees of a niche market business or service if they would be interested in moving away from the hustle and bustle of the big city, provided that they could make a profit as their own boss. Telling the potential service providers about the town and the amenities that it has to offer, such as the wide-open spaces, fishing, hunting, and fresh air, could help to draw these key providers in to establish their own business in town to benefit, not only themselves, but the local town population. However the community leaders must spend some time developing a presentation of what to sell to prospective new businesses.

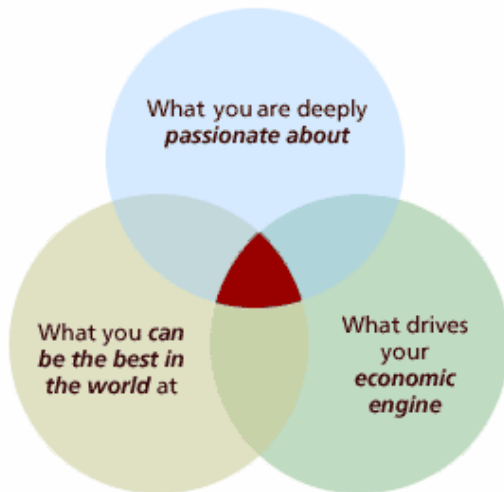


Figure 4.2: Three Circles of the Hedgehog Concept which can be applied in defining a niche market.

Source: <<http://theleadershipbook.com/>>. Sherwin Shao. 2008.

4.2.3 Marketing and Promotion

Once a town has found its niche market, it must successfully promote its uniqueness to prospective visitors. Communities can promote this through advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and publicity. Advertisement includes brochures, trade publications, magazines and newspapers, signage, and digital media such as an interactive website. Information on a town's uniqueness and its potential visitors gained through marketing and promotion can help a community draw new interest to what a town has to offer. Word-of-mouth advertising through verbal conversation is another effective strategy in attracting out-of-town visitors. Sales promotion through free entertainment, coupons, stickers, balloons, and other promotional items could help to boost the unique marketable qualities that a town has to offer, but like every other form of advertising, the potential visitor or tourist must be identified first before moving too quickly into a general advertising and promotion campaign. Publicity works for small towns with small budgets because there is no cost associated with it. Publicity happens when something newsworthy in the eyes of the media---radio,

television, magazine or newspaper---occurs. Publicity could be an effective way to reach potential visitors who could never be reached in the other ways mentioned earlier.

4.2.4 Look at the Existing Built Environment

Looking at the existing community's built environment is important because in many small towns, the existing infrastructure is inadequate for the many desired new businesses. An economic development strategy for small towns should include a community development strategy. Improving community facilities and services is necessary to increase economic potential. Taking the initiative to improve a town's infrastructure is vital in establishing the town's image as an ideal place to hold conferences, lure retailers to build a business, or hold sporting or festival events. Adding to both the public and private infrastructure would, in itself, be economic development. Infrastructure includes both the private and the public sectors. The public sector includes schools, utilities, transportation, parks, and other community facilities and services. The private sector includes all the supporting business services that a new business might need, such as welding or machine shop services, banks, loan companies, accounting or bookkeeping services, retail services, affordable housing, financial institutions, and medical services.

There appears to be a natural order in which medical, recreational, and communication facilities develop in a community. In addition to buildings, directional signage is an important way-finding part of locating essential services. Oftentimes, only the local townspeople know where essential services are located. Therefore, having clear directional signage as a part of the infrastructure foundation is key to assisting out-of-town visitors to find what they are looking for while they are visiting. Knowledge of this order of development would indicate where efforts should be placed next to improve chances for a successful economic development plan. Improvement of community facilities is itself a boost to the economy (Coppedge, 1982).

4.3 SUMMARY

In closing, it is clear that tourism is one method in establishing the well-being of a town on both economic and societal levels, and has proven itself capable of becoming the strength to continued prosperity in a place that seems to have few other alternatives for long-term growth and success.

Community leaders must recognize that they are engaged in a marketing enterprise of their town to prospective customers who could make use of what the town, its people, and its businesses have to offer. It is a marketer's job to create, in the customer's mind, an idea that a particular place is unique in an important way so that the place will have a competitive edge over other places. This uniqueness or competitive edge is what is known as a differential advantage and in the context of community development, it is the job of the community leaders to persuade potential tourists, residents, and outside businesses that their town is unique in a way that could be important to them in their decision of where to visit or where to settle down. This differential advantage could be a deciding factor for a family considering where to spend their next vacation. It could also influence a family or a young couple who is thinking of moving to another community, or it could steer a business to locate in one town over another town that does not appear to have anything unique to offer. In cases where other towns offer similar features, it is up to the community leaders to create a differential advantage in the potential customer's mind.

In marketing a town, the various features of a town become products. The town itself is seen as a product that offers scenery, natural resources, friendly people, easily accessible transportation, history, appropriate facilities for events, shopping, entertainment venues, sporting opportunities, and many more positive attributes. All these aspects contribute to the particular characteristics of a specific town. Sometimes these qualities are unique to a particular town, but they can also characterize an area of in a country as well.

In Rural Tourism Development, the authors state that:

“[T]here are big changes occurring in the rural and more remote regions of the globe and communities are feeling the impacts of all forms of migration and economic change. The restructuring of rural regions, once dominated by now nearly obsolete resource-based economies, has put immense pressures on many communities as they struggle to retain a viable economy and culture. Much of this effort has been directed to tourism development” (George, Mair and Reid, 2009).

The selection of what kind of marketable uniqueness a town decides to promote can have a major impact on the ultimate success or failure over other towns. Essentially, it is through effective communication that a town can be promoted. Community leaders and tourist specialists must communicate the aspect of their town’s uniqueness to prospective visitors. Reaching the right target group is often the most difficult task because promotion costs money and most small towns are limited by a tight advertising budget. However, if well designed, a low-cost advertising budget can be effective. By nurturing and promoting the uniqueness of a town’s resources to prospective visitors within the budget limits and carrying out a marketing plan, a town can expect tourism to broaden their economic base within its community.

Research by George, Mair and Reid has shown that tourism has to be appropriately planned and embedded within it are certain key principles. Tourism planning must involve all stakeholders as much as possible. Small, rural, and unique towns offer communities a competitive edge over other more established tourist destinations. However, these small places require the development and foundation of specialists to help communities and residents to flourish. The local population must be motivated to take charge of the planning and decision-making processes in order for tourism development to evolve and flourish. Being innovative, creative, and progressive in planning for the future sustainability, a town gives communities a means to viability. It can rejuvenate a community’s economy and inspire a cultural renaissance (George, Mair and Reid, 2009).

By following the previously mentioned recommendations, small towns will be able to make better decisions on what best suits their own niche tourism market. The Town of Peace River, like many North American towns, taps into the American frontier spirit. It is a perennial dream of moving forward and starting anew, while celebrating its frontier history. Rekindling the kinder, gentler North American town of the past takes people back to a time of innocence. Even Walt Disney himself knew that, centering Disneyland on Main Street America, which is based on his own childhood memories growing up in a small town. It was a place people wanted to see and be seen. Main street was where neighbours greeted neighbours in the quiet of the summer twilight. It was a place of caramel apples and cotton candy, secret forts, and hopscotch on the streets. However, the town that Disney imagined and realized is far from the reality of today's small towns. Disneyland has an extended, real-life version of Main Street, made as the centerpiece of all the Disney theme parks, which reproduces a "typical" Midwestern American street at the end of the nineteenth century, complete with ice cream parlour, theatre, and candy stores. When people are within easy walking distance of the town centre, where the main thoroughfare has small, friendly stores and no corporate brand names, more people will naturally become attracted to a spend longer periods of time there. Taking the basic concept of restoring civic spirit to a town's public space, supposedly blighted in the postwar period by soulless subdivisions and big box stores, will small towns counteract the placelessness of the postwar Levittowns and their imitators. (<http://www.americansc.org.uk/Online/Celebration.htm>, 2003).

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APPENDIX

The following lists some examples of these two approaches on tourism based on Lew's description from his weblog (<http://hubpages.com/hub/Adjectival-Tourism>).

5.1 Specialty Niche Tourism Markets

For many of these, the word "Travel" is interchangeable with "Tourism"

1. - Aboriginal Tourism (also Tribal Tourism and Native American Tourism)
2. - Adventure Tourism (usually outdoors)
3. - Aerial Tourism (also Flightseeing)
4. - Agri-tourism (or Farm Tourism)
5. - Alternative Tourism
6. - Armchair Tourism (also Vicarious Travel -- experiencing travel without traveling)
7. - Atomic Tourism (or Nuclear Tourism)
8. - Atrocity Tourism (also War, Disaster, etc., below)
9. - Audio Tours / Tourism
10. - Backpack Tourism (or Youth Backpack Tourism)
11. - Battlefield Tourism
12. - Beach Tourism (see also SSS, below)
13. - Border Tourism (or Cross-Border Tourism)
14. - Business Travel
15. - Celebrity Tourism (including Celebrity Cruises)
16. - Commodity Tourism (based on fishing, agriculture, etc.; includes Plantation Tourism)
17. - Community Based Tourism (or Community Supported Tourism)
18. - Cruise Tourism
19. - Culinary Tourism
20. - Disaster Tourism
21. - Dark Tourism
22. - Desert Tourism
23. - Dive Tourism (SCUBA)
24. - Drug Tourism (to buy legal or illegal drugs)
25. - Ecotourism (or Eco-tourism in some countries)
26. - Educational Tourism (or Edu-tourism)
27. - Immersive Tourism (educational, volunteer, adventure and working travel)
28. - Enclave Tourism
29. - Equestrian Tourism
30. - Ethnic Tourism
31. - Event Tourism (or Special Event Tourism, including Festivals)
32. - Extreme Tourism
33. - FIT - Fully Independent Traveler (of Free and Independent Traveler)
34. - Free and Easy Travel (transportation and accommodations only package)
35. - Gambling of Gaming Tourism
36. - Garden Tourism

- 37.- Gay Tourism (also LGBT Tourism - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender)
- 38.- Geoparks Tourism (geology-based parks)
- 39.- Geo-tourism (related to Sustainable Tourism)
- 40.- Girlfriend Getaway (all female trip)
- 41.- GIT - Group Inclusive Travel (also All Inclusive Holiday, related to Package Tour)
- 42.- Golf Tourism
- 43.- Green Tourism (related to Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism)
- 44.- Grief Tourism (related to Thana-tourism)
- 45.- Health Tourism (or Wellness Tourism; overlap with Medical Tourism and New Age Tourism)
- 46.- Heritage Tourism
- 47.- Hobby Tourism
- 48.- Hot-Spot Tourism (places of current conflict)
- 49.- Incentive Travel (gift or award vacations for employees)
- 50.- Inclusive Tourism (for disability travelers)
- 51.- Island Tourism
- 52.- Honeymoon (or Second Honeymoon)
- 53.- Mass Tourism
- 54.- Medical Tourism
- 55.- MICE - Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conventions and Exhibitions
- 56.- Mountain Tourism
- 57.- New Age Tourism
- 58.- Nightlife Tourism (also Entertainment Tourism)
- 59.- Package Tourism (related to GIT)
- 60.- Perpetual Tourism ("travel as a way of life")
- 61.- Photography (or Photo) Tourism
- 62.- Plantation Tourism (Agri-tourism to tropical plantations)
- 63.- Poverty Tourism (or Poorism)
- 64.- Pro-Poor Tourism
- 65.- Reality Tourism (real world experiences; often related to Responsible Tourism and Poverty Tourism)
- 66.- Religious Tourism (or Faith Tourism; includes Pilgrimage)
- 67.- Residential Tourism (retirement in another country)
- 68.- Responsible Tourism (or Purposeful Tourism)
- 69.- Reunion Tourism
- 70.- River Cruise Tourism
- 71.- Roots Tourism (or Genealogy related tourism)
- 72.- Rural Tourism
- 73.- Second Home Tourism (also Vacation Home)
- 74.- Senior Tourism
- 75.- Sex Tourism (also Child Sex Tourism)
- 76.- Shopping Tourism
- 77.- Social Tourism (meaning social welfare, associated with European communist policies)
- 78.- Space Tourism
- 79.- Sports Tourism

- 80.- SSS - Sun, Sand and Surf (also Sand, Surf and Sex)
- 81.- Staycation (became widely used in Summer 2008)
- 82.- Thana-tourism (meaning 'death' related tourism)
- 83.- Urban Tourism
- 84.- VFR - Visiting Friends and Relatives
- 85.- Virtual Tourism (a modern form of Armchair Tourism)
- 86.- Volunteer Tourism (also Volun-tourism)
- 87.- War Tourism
- 88.- Wine Tourism (a form of Culinary Tourism)
- 89.- Winter (Sports) Tourism

5.2 Conceptual Tourisms

These are more on the theoretical and academic concepts of tourism experiences and landscapes (<http://hubpages.com/hub/Conceptual-Tourism>).

- 1. - Active / Passive Tourism
- 2. - Authentic Tourism (or Tourism and Authenticity)
- 3. - Behavioral Tourism (studying tourist behavior and decision making)
- 4. - Clustered Tourism (or Destination Tourism) / Dispersed Tourism (or Touring Tourism)
- 5. - Existential (Authenticity) Tourism
- 6. - Experimental / Participatory Tourism
- 7. - Experiential Tourism
- 8. - Globalization / Localization / Hybrid Tourism
- 9. - Inbound/ Outbound Tourism
- 10.- Inauthentic / Placeless / Staged Tourism
- 11.- Modern / Postmodern Tourism (or Pomo Tourism and Post-Tourists)
- 12.- Pro-Poor / Responsible Tourism
- 13.- Recreational Tourism
- 14.- Sustainable Tourism
- 15.- Structured Tourism

5.3 Desirable Small Town Criteria

What type of criteria contributes to a desirable small town? Here is a listing of items based on Small Town Gems website (<http://www.smalltowngems.com/aboutus.html>).

- ♦ Distinctive Architecture
- ♦ Part of the downtown has been designated a state or national historic district
- ♦ Numerous stone or brick buildings in downtown
- ♦ Pedestrian/bicyclist friendly
- ♦ County seat with historic courthouse
- ♦ Lampposts along the main thoroughfare
- ♦ Fountains
- ♦ Abundant tree and flower landscaping
- ♦ Art galleries, antique stores, or specialty boutiques
- ♦ Small college or university in or near the town
- ♦ Bed-and-breakfast lodging, usually in Victorian or Bungalow-style housing
- ♦ Gourmet coffee shops and/or bakery
- ♦ Clock towers
- ♦ Brick/cobblestone sidewalks or streets
- ♦ A river or canal through the downtown
- ♦ Proximate to a lake or ocean
- ♦ Bike or walking path
- ♦ Clean, easily accessible public restrooms
- ♦ Wooden picket or wrought iron fences
- ♦ Wrought iron railings on upper-story balconies
- ♦ Unusual scenery nearby
- ♦ Vintage train station with locomotive and caboose
- ♦ Iron or covered bridges
- ♦ Tourist trolley buses and horse-drawn carriages
- ♦ Abundant and decorative trash receptacles