

ONTARIO TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT

THE AGREEMENT is effective as of the 1st day of April, 2022

B E T W E E N :

**Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario
as represented by the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and
Culture Industries**

(the “Province”)

- and -

Regional Tourism Organization 12 Parry Sound / Muskoka

(the “Recipient”)

CONSIDERATION

In consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements contained in this Agreement and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are expressly acknowledged, the Province and the Recipient agree as follows:

1.0 ENTIRE AGREEMENT

1.1 The agreement, together with:

Schedule “A” - General Terms and Conditions
Schedule “B” - Project Specific Information and Additional Provisions
Schedule “C” - Project Description
Schedule “D” - Budget
Schedule “E” - Payment Plan
Schedule “F” - Reports and,
Schedule “G” - Business Plan

any amending agreement entered into as provided for in section 4.1, constitutes the entire agreement between the Parties with respect to the subject matter contained in the Agreement and supersedes all prior oral or written representations and agreements.

2.0 CONFLICT OR INCONSISTENCY

2.1 **Conflict or Inconsistency.** In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between the Additional Provisions and the provisions in Schedule “A”, the following rules will apply:

- (a) the Parties will interpret any Additional Provisions in so far as possible, in a way that preserves the intention of the Parties as expressed in Schedule “A”; and
- (b) where it is not possible to interpret the Additional Provisions in a way that is consistent with the provisions in Schedule “A”, the Additional Provisions will prevail over the provisions in Schedule “A” to the extent of the inconsistency.

3.0 COUNTERPARTS

3.1 The Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which will be deemed an original, but all of which together will constitute one and the same instrument.

4.0 AMENDING THE AGREEMENT

4.1 The Agreement may only be amended by a written agreement duly executed by the Parties.

5.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

5.1 The Recipient acknowledges that:

- (a) by receiving Funds it may become subject to legislation applicable to organizations that receive funding from the Government of Ontario, including the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010* (Ontario), the *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996* (Ontario), and the *Auditor General Act* (Ontario);
- (b) Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario has issued expenses, perquisites, and procurement directives and guidelines pursuant to the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010* (Ontario);
- (c) the Funds are:
 - (i) to assist the Recipient to carry out the Project and not to provide goods or services to the Province;
 - (ii) funding for the purposes of the *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996* (Ontario);

- (d) the Province is not responsible for carrying out the Project; and
- (e) the Province is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Ontario) and that any information provided to the Province in connection with the Project or otherwise in connection with the Agreement may be subject to disclosure in accordance with that Act.

- SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS -

The Parties have executed the Agreement on the dates set out below.

**HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF
ONTARIO as represented by Minister of Heritage,
Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries**

April 26, 2022

Date




Name: Katherine Kelly Gatten
Title: Assistant Deputy Minister

**Regional Tourism Organization 12 Parry Sound /
Muskoka**

April 20, 2022

Date



Name: James Murphy
Title: Executive Director

I have authority to bind the Recipient.



April 20, 2022

Date

Name: Michael Simonett
Title: Chair, Board of Directors

I have authority to bind the Recipient.

**SCHEDULE “A”
GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

A1.0 INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS

A1.1 **Interpretation.** For the purposes of interpretation:

- (a) words in the singular include the plural and vice-versa;
- (b) words in one gender include all genders;
- (c) the headings do not form part of the Agreement; they are for reference only and will not affect the interpretation of the Agreement;
- (d) any reference to dollars or currency will be in Canadian dollars and currency; and
- (e) “include”, “includes” and “including” denote that the subsequent list is not exhaustive.

A1.2 **Definitions.** In the Agreement, the following terms will have the following meanings:

“Additional Provisions” means the terms and conditions set out in Schedule “B”.

“Agreement” means this agreement entered into between the Province and the Recipient, all of the schedules listed in section 1.1, and any amending agreement entered into pursuant to section 4.1.

“Budget” means the budget attached to the Agreement as Schedule “D”.

“Business Day” means any working day, Monday to Friday inclusive, excluding statutory and other holidays, namely: New Year’s Day; Family Day; Good Friday; Easter Monday; Victoria Day; Canada Day; Civic Holiday; Labour Day; Thanksgiving Day; Remembrance Day; Christmas Day; Boxing Day and any other day on which the Province has elected to be closed for business.

“Effective Date” means the date set out at the top of the Agreement.

“Event of Default” has the meaning ascribed to it in section A13.1.

“Expiry Date” means the expiry date set out in Schedule “B”.

“Funding Year” means:

- (a) in the case of the first Funding Year, the period commencing on the Effective Date and ending on the following March 31; and
- (b) in the case of Funding Years subsequent to the first Funding Year, the period commencing on April 1 following the end of the previous Funding Year and ending on the following March 31.

“Funds” means the money the Province provides to the Recipient pursuant to the Agreement.

“Indemnified Parties” means Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario, Her ministers, agents, appointees, and employees.

“Maximum Funds” means the maximum Funds set out in Schedule “B”.

“Notice” means any communication given or required to be given pursuant to the Agreement.

“Notice Period” means the period of time within which the Recipient is required to remedy an Event of Default pursuant to section A13.3(b), and includes any such period or periods of time by which the Province extends that time in accordance with section A13.4.

“Parties” means the Province and the Recipient.

“Party” means either the Province or the Recipient.

“Project” means the undertaking described in Schedule “C”.

“Reports” means the reports described in Schedule “F”.

A2.0 REPRESENTATIONS, WARRANTIES, AND COVENANTS

A2.1 **General.** The Recipient represents, warrants, and covenants that:

- (a) it is, and will continue to be, a validly existing legal entity with full power to fulfill its obligations under the Agreement;
- (b) it has, and will continue to have, the experience and expertise necessary to carry out the Project;
- (c) it is in compliance with, and will continue to comply with, all federal and provincial laws and regulations, all municipal by-laws, and any other orders, rules, and by-laws related to any aspect of the Project, the Funds, or both; and

- (d) unless otherwise provided for in the Agreement, any information the Recipient provided to the Province in support of its request for funds (including information relating to any eligibility requirements) was true and complete at the time the Recipient provided it and will continue to be true and complete.

A2.2 **Execution of Agreement.** The Recipient represents and warrants that it has:

- (a) the full power and authority to enter into the Agreement; and
- (b) taken all necessary actions to authorize the execution of the Agreement.

A2.3 **Governance.** The Recipient represents, warrants, and covenants that it has, will maintain in writing, and will follow:

- (a) a code of conduct and ethical responsibilities for all persons at all levels of the Recipient's organization;
- (b) procedures to enable the Recipient's ongoing effective functioning;
- (c) decision-making mechanisms for the Recipient;
- (d) procedures to enable the Recipient to manage Funds prudently and effectively;
- (e) procedures to enable the Recipient to complete the Project successfully;
- (f) procedures to enable the Recipient to identify risks to the completion of the Project and strategies to address the identified risks, all in a timely manner;
- (g) procedures to enable the preparation and submission of all Reports required pursuant to Article A7.0; and
- (h) procedures to enable the Recipient to address such other matters as the Recipient considers necessary to enable the Recipient to carry out its obligations under the Agreement.

A2.4 **Supporting Proof.** Upon the request of the Province, the Recipient will provide the Province with proof of the matters referred to in Article A2.0.

A3.0 **TERM OF THE AGREEMENT**

A3.1 **Term.** The term of the Agreement will commence on the Effective Date and will expire on the Expiry Date unless terminated earlier pursuant to Article A11.0, Article A12.0, or Article A13.0.

A4.0 FUNDS AND CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT

A4.1 Funds Provided. The Province will:

- (a) provide the Recipient up to the Maximum Funds for the purpose of carrying out the Project;
- (b) provide the Funds to the Recipient in accordance with the payment plan attached to the Agreement as Schedule “E”; and
- (c) deposit the Funds into an account designated by the Recipient provided that the account:
 - (i) resides at a Canadian financial institution; and
 - (ii) is in the name of the Recipient.

A4.2 Limitation on Payment of Funds. Despite section A4.1:

- (a) the Province is not obligated to provide any Funds to the Recipient until the Recipient provides the certificates of insurance or other proof as the Province may request pursuant to section A10.2;
- (b) the Province is not obligated to provide instalments of Funds until it is satisfied with the progress of the Project;
- (c) the Province may adjust the amount of Funds it provides to the Recipient in any Funding Year based upon the Province’s assessment of the information the Recipient provides to the Province pursuant to section A7.1; or
- (d) if, pursuant to the *Financial Administration Act* (Ontario), the Province does not receive the necessary appropriation from the Ontario Legislature for payment under the Agreement, the Province is not obligated to make any such payment, and, as a consequence, the Province may:
 - (i) reduce the amount of Funds and, in consultation with the Recipient, change the Project; or
 - (ii) terminate the Agreement pursuant to section A12.1.

A4.3 Use of Funds and Carry Out the Project. The Recipient will do all of the following:

- (a) carry out the Project in accordance with the Agreement;

- (b) use the Funds only for the purpose of carrying out the Project;
- (c) spend the Funds only in accordance with the Budget;
- (d) not use the Funds to cover any cost that has or will be funded or reimbursed by one or more of any third party, ministry, agency, or organization of the Government of Ontario.

A4.4 **Interest Bearing Account.** If the Province provides Funds before the Recipient's immediate need for the Funds, the Recipient will place the Funds in an interest bearing account in the name of the Recipient at a Canadian financial institution.

- A4.5 **Interest.** If the Recipient earns any interest on the Funds, the Province may:
- (a) deduct an amount equal to the interest from any further instalments of Funds; or
 - (b) demand from the Recipient the payment of an amount equal to the interest.

A4.6 **Rebates, Credits, and Refunds.** The Ministry will calculate Funds based on the actual costs to the Recipient to carry out the Project, less any costs (including taxes) for which the Recipient has received, will receive, or is eligible to receive, a rebate, credit, or refund.

A5.0 RECIPIENT'S ACQUISITION OF GOODS OR SERVICES, AND DISPOSAL OF ASSETS

A5.1 **Acquisition.** If the Recipient acquires goods, services, or both with the Funds, it will:

- (a) do so through a process that promotes the best value for money; and
- (b) comply with the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010* (Ontario), including any procurement directive issued thereunder, to the extent applicable.

A5.2 **Disposal.** The Recipient will not, without the Province's prior written consent, sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any asset purchased or created with the Funds or for which Funds were provided, the cost of which exceeded the amount as provided for in Schedule "B" at the time of purchase.

A6.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A6.1 **No Conflict of Interest.** The Recipient will carry out the Project and use the

Funds without an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

A6.2 Conflict of Interest Includes. For the purposes of Article A6.0, a conflict of interest includes any circumstances where:

- (a) the Recipient; or
- (b) any person who has the capacity to influence the Recipient's decisions,

has outside commitments, relationships, or financial interests that could, or could be seen to, interfere with the Recipient's objective, unbiased, and impartial judgment relating to the Project, the use of the Funds, or both.

A6.3 Disclosure to Province. The Recipient will:

- (a) disclose to the Province, without delay, any situation that a reasonable person would interpret as an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest; and
- (b) comply with any terms and conditions that the Province may prescribe as a result of the disclosure.

A7.0 REPORTS, ACCOUNTING, AND REVIEW

A7.1 Preparation and Submission. The Recipient will:

- (a) submit to the Province at the address referred to in section A17.1, all Reports in accordance with the timelines and content requirements as provided for in Schedule "F", or in a form as specified by the Province from time to time;
- (b) submit to the Province at the address referred to in section A17.1, any other reports as may be requested by the Province in accordance with the timelines and content requirements specified by the Province;
- (c) ensure that all Reports and other reports are completed to the satisfaction of the Province; and
- (d) ensure that all Reports and other reports are signed on behalf of the Recipient by an authorized signing officer.

A7.2 Record Maintenance. The Recipient will keep and maintain:

- (a) all financial records (including invoices) relating to the Funds or otherwise to the Project in a manner consistent with generally accepted

accounting principles; and

- (b) all non-financial documents and records relating to the Funds or otherwise to the Project.

A7.3 Inspection. The Province, any authorized representative, or any independent auditor identified by the Province may, at the Province's expense, upon twenty-four hours' Notice to the Recipient and during normal business hours, enter upon the Recipient's premises to review the progress of the Project and the Recipient's allocation and expenditure of the Funds and, for these purposes, the Province, any authorized representative, or any independent auditor identified by the Province may take one or more of the following actions:

- (a) inspect and copy the records and documents referred to in section A7.2;
- (b) remove any copies made pursuant to section A7.3(a) from the Recipient's premises; and
- (c) conduct an audit or investigation of the Recipient in respect of the expenditure of the Funds, the Project, or both.

A7.4 Disclosure. To assist in respect of the rights provided for in section A7.3, the Recipient will disclose any information requested by the Province, any authorized representatives, or any independent auditor identified by the Province, and will do so in the form requested by the Province, any authorized representative, or any independent auditor identified by the Province, as the case may be.

A7.5 No Control of Records. No provision of the Agreement will be construed so as to give the Province any control whatsoever over the Recipient's records.

A7.6 Auditor General. The Province's rights under Article A7.0 are in addition to any rights provided to the Auditor General pursuant to section 9.1 of the *Auditor General Act* (Ontario).

A8.0 COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS

A8.1 Acknowledge Support. Unless otherwise directed by the Province, the Recipient will:

- (a) acknowledge the support of the Province for the Project; and
- (b) ensure that the acknowledgement referred to in section A8.1(a) is in a form and manner as directed by the Province.

A8.2 **Publication.** The Recipient will indicate, in any of its Project-related publications, whether written, oral, or visual, that the views expressed in the publication are the views of the Recipient and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.

A9.0 INDEMNITY

A9.1 **Indemnification.** The Recipient will indemnify and hold harmless the Indemnified Parties from and against any and all liability, loss, costs, damages, and expenses (including legal, expert and consultant fees), causes of action, actions, claims, demands, lawsuits, or other proceedings, by whomever made, sustained, incurred, brought, or prosecuted, in any way arising out of or in connection with the Project or otherwise in connection with the Agreement, unless solely caused by the negligence or wilful misconduct of the Indemnified Parties.

A10.0 INSURANCE

A10.1 **Recipient's Insurance.** The Recipient represents, warrants, and covenants that it has, and will maintain, at its own cost and expense, with insurers having a secure A.M. Best rating of B+ or greater, or the equivalent, all the necessary and appropriate insurance that a prudent person carrying out a project similar to the Project would maintain, including commercial general liability insurance on an occurrence basis for third party bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage, to an inclusive limit of not less than the amount provided for in Schedule "B" per occurrence. The insurance policy will include the following:

- (a) the Indemnified Parties as additional insureds with respect to liability arising in the course of performance of the Recipient's obligations under, or otherwise in connection with, the Agreement;
- (b) a cross-liability clause;
- (c) contractual liability coverage; and
- (d) a 30-day written notice of cancellation.

A10.2 **Proof of Insurance.** The Recipient will:

- (a) provide to the Province, either:
 - (i) certificates of insurance that confirm the insurance coverage as provided for in section A10.1; or
 - (ii) other proof that confirms the insurance coverage as provided for in section A10.1; and

- (b) upon the request of the Province, provide to the Province a copy of any insurance policy.

A11.0 TERMINATION ON NOTICE

A11.1 Termination on Notice. The Province may terminate the Agreement at any time without liability, penalty, or costs upon giving at least 30 days' Notice to the Recipient.

A11.2 Consequences of Termination on Notice by the Province. If the Province terminates the Agreement pursuant to section A11.1, the Province may take one or more of the following actions:

- (a) cancel further instalments of Funds;
- (b) demand from the Recipient the payment of any Funds remaining in the possession or under the control of the Recipient; and
- (c) determine the reasonable costs for the Recipient to wind down the Project, and do either or both of the following:
 - (i) permit the Recipient to offset such costs against the amount the Recipient owes pursuant to section A11.2(b); and
 - (ii) subject to section A4.1(a), provide Funds to the Recipient to cover such costs.

A12.0 TERMINATION WHERE NO APPROPRIATION

A12.1 Termination Where No Appropriation. If, as provided for in section A4.2(d), the Province does not receive the necessary appropriation from the Ontario Legislature for any payment the Province is to make pursuant to the Agreement, the Province may terminate the Agreement immediately without liability, penalty, or costs by giving Notice to the Recipient.

A12.2 Consequences of Termination Where No Appropriation. If the Province terminates the Agreement pursuant to section A12.1, the Province may take one or more of the following actions:

- (a) cancel further instalments of Funds;
- (b) demand from the Recipient the payment of any Funds remaining in the possession or under the control of the Recipient; and
- (c) determine the reasonable costs for the Recipient to wind down the Project and permit the Recipient to offset such costs against the amount

owing pursuant to section A12.2(b).

A12.3 No Additional Funds. If, pursuant to section A12.2(c), the Province determines that the costs to wind down the Project exceed the Funds remaining in the possession or under the control of the Recipient, the Province will not provide additional Funds to the Recipient.

A13.0 EVENT OF DEFAULT, CORRECTIVE ACTION, AND TERMINATION FOR DEFAULT

A13.1 Events of Default. Each of the following events will constitute an Event of Default:

- (a) in the opinion of the Province, the Recipient breaches any representation, warranty, covenant, or other material term of the Agreement, including failing to do any of the following in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement:
 - (i) carry out the Project;
 - (ii) use or spend Funds; or
 - (iii) provide, in accordance with section A7.1, Reports or such other reports as may have been requested pursuant to section A7.1(b);
- (b) the Recipient's operations, its financial condition, or its organizational structure, changes such that it no longer meets one or more of the eligibility requirements of the program under which the Province provides the Funds;
- (c) the Recipient makes an assignment, proposal, compromise, or arrangement for the benefit of creditors, or a creditor makes an application for an order adjudging the Recipient bankrupt, or applies for the appointment of a receiver; or
- (d) the Recipient ceases to operate.

A13.2 Consequences of Events of Default and Corrective Action. If an Event of Default occurs, the Province may, at any time, take one or more of the following actions:

- (a) initiate any action the Province considers necessary in order to facilitate the successful continuation or completion of the Project;
- (b) provide the Recipient with an opportunity to remedy the Event of Default;

- (c) suspend the payment of Funds for such period as the Province determines appropriate;
- (d) reduce the amount of the Funds;
- (e) cancel further instalments of Funds;
- (f) demand from the Recipient the payment of any Funds remaining in the possession or under the control of the Recipient;
- (g) demand from the Recipient the payment of an amount equal to any Funds the Recipient used, but did not use in accordance with the Agreement;
- (h) demand from the Recipient the payment of an amount equal to any Funds the Province provided to the Recipient; and
- (i) terminate the Agreement at any time, including immediately, without liability, penalty or costs to the Province upon giving Notice to the Recipient.

A13.3 Opportunity to Remedy. If, in accordance with section A13.2(b), the Province provides the Recipient with an opportunity to remedy the Event of Default, the Province will give Notice to the Recipient of:

- (a) the particulars of the Event of Default; and
- (b) the Notice Period.

A13.4 Recipient not Remediating. If the Province provided the Recipient with an opportunity to remedy the Event of Default pursuant to section A13.2(b), and:

- (a) the Recipient does not remedy the Event of Default within the Notice Period;
- (b) it becomes apparent to the Province that the Recipient cannot completely remedy the Event of Default within the Notice Period; or
- (c) the Recipient is not proceeding to remedy the Event of Default in a way that is satisfactory to the Province,

the Province may extend the Notice Period, or initiate any one or more of the actions provided for in sections A13.2(a), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), and (i).

A13.5 When Termination Effective. Termination under Article will take effect as provided for in the Notice.

A14.0 FUNDS AT THE END OF A FUNDING YEAR

A14.1 **Funds at the End of a Funding Year.** Without limiting any rights of the Province under Article A13.0, if the Recipient has not spent all of the Funds allocated for the Funding Year as provided for in the Budget, the Province may take one or both of the following actions:

- (a) demand from the Recipient payment of the unspent Funds; and
- (b) adjust the amount of any further instalments of Funds accordingly.

A15.0 FUNDS UPON EXPIRY

A15.1 **Funds Upon Expiry.** The Recipient will, upon expiry of the Agreement, pay to the Province any Funds remaining in its possession or under its control.

A16.0 DEBT DUE AND PAYMENT

A16.1 **Payment of Overpayment.** If at any time the Province provides Funds in excess of the amount to which the Recipient is entitled under the Agreement, the Province may:

- (a) deduct an amount equal to the excess Funds from any further instalments of Funds; or
- (b) demand that the Recipient pay an amount equal to the excess Funds to the Province.

A16.2 **Debt Due.** If, pursuant to the Agreement:

- (a) the Province demands from the Recipient the payment of any Funds or an amount equal to any Funds; or
- (b) the Recipient owes any Funds or an amount equal to any Funds to the Province, whether or not the Province has demanded their payment,

such Funds or other amount will be deemed to be a debt due and owing to the Province by the Recipient, and the Recipient will pay the amount to the Province immediately, unless the Province directs otherwise.

A16.3 **Interest Rate.** The Province may charge the Recipient interest on any money owing by the Recipient at the then current interest rate charged by the Province of Ontario on accounts receivable.

A16.4 **Payment of Money to Province.** The Recipient will pay any money owing to the Province by cheque payable to the “Ontario Minister of Finance” and delivered to the Province as provided for in Schedule “B”.

A16.5 **Fails to Pay.** Without limiting the application of section 43 of the *Financial Administration Act* (Ontario), if the Recipient fails to pay any amount owing under the Agreement, Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario may deduct any unpaid amount from any money payable to the Recipient by Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario.

A17.0 NOTICE

A17.1 **Notice in Writing and Addressed.** Notice will be in writing and will be delivered by email, postage-prepaid mail, personal delivery, or fax, and will be addressed to the Province and the Recipient respectively as provided for Schedule “B”, or as either Party later designates to the other by Notice.

A17.2 **Notice Given.** Notice will be deemed to have been given:

- (a) in the case of postage-prepaid mail, five Business Days after the Notice is mailed; or
- (b) in the case of email, personal delivery, or fax, one Business Day after the Notice is delivered.

A17.3 **Postal Disruption.** Despite section A17.2(a), in the event of a postal disruption:

- (a) Notice by postage-prepaid mail will not be deemed to be given; and
- (b) the Party giving Notice will give Notice by email, personal delivery, or fax.

A18.0 CONSENT BY PROVINCE AND COMPLIANCE BY RECIPIENT

A18.1 **Consent.** When the Province provides its consent pursuant to the Agreement, it may impose any terms and conditions on such consent and the Recipient will comply with such terms and conditions.

A19.0 SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS

A19.1 **Invalidity or Unenforceability of Any Provision.** The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of the Agreement will not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision of the Agreement. Any invalid or unenforceable provision will be deemed to be severed.

A20.0 WAIVER

A20.1 **Waiver Request.** Either Party may, in accordance with the Notice provision set out in Article A17.0, ask the other Party to waive an obligation under the Agreement.

A20.2 **Waiver Applies.** Any waiver a Party grants in response to a request made pursuant to section A20.1 will:

- (a) be valid only if the Party granting the waiver provides it in writing; and
- (b) apply only to the specific obligation referred to in the waiver.

A21.0 INDEPENDENT PARTIES

A21.1 **Parties Independent.** The Recipient is not an agent, joint venturer, partner, or employee of the Province, and the Recipient will not represent itself in any way that might be taken by a reasonable person to suggest that it is, or take any actions that could establish or imply such a relationship.

A22.0 ASSIGNMENT OF AGREEMENT OR FUNDS

A22.1 **No Assignment.** The Recipient will not, without the prior written consent of the Province, assign any of its rights or obligations under the Agreement.

A22.2 **Agreement Binding.** All rights and obligations contained in the Agreement will extend to and be binding on the Parties' respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and permitted assigns.

A23.0 GOVERNING LAW

A23.1 **Governing Law.** The Agreement and the rights, obligations, and relations of the Parties will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Province of Ontario and the applicable federal laws of Canada. Any actions or proceedings arising in connection with the Agreement will be conducted in the courts of Ontario, which will have exclusive jurisdiction over such proceedings.

A24.0 FURTHER ASSURANCES

A24.1 **Agreement into Effect.** The Recipient will provide such further assurances as the Province may request from time to time with respect to any matter to which the Agreement pertains, and will otherwise do or cause to be done all acts or things necessary to implement and carry into effect the terms and conditions of the Agreement to their full extent.

A25.0 JOINT AND SEVERAL LIABILITY

A25.1 **Joint and Several Liability.** Where the Recipient is comprised of more than one entity, all such entities will be jointly and severally liable to the Province for the fulfillment of the obligations of the Recipient under the Agreement.

A26.0 RIGHTS AND REMEDIES CUMULATIVE

A26.1 **Rights and Remedies Cumulative.** The rights and remedies of the Province under the Agreement are cumulative and are in addition to, and not in substitution for, any of its rights and remedies provided by law or in equity.

A27.0 FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH OTHER AGREEMENTS

A27.1 **Other Agreements.** If the Recipient:

- (a) has failed to comply with any term, condition, or obligation under any other agreement with Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario or one of Her agencies (a “**Failure**”);
- (b) has been provided with notice of such Failure in accordance with the requirements of such other agreement;
- (c) has, if applicable, failed to rectify such Failure in accordance with the requirements of such other agreement; and
- (d) such Failure is continuing,

the Province may suspend the payment of Funds for such period as the Province determines appropriate.

A28.0 SURVIVAL

A28.1 **Survival.** The following Articles and sections, and all applicable cross-referenced sections and schedules, will continue in full force and effect for a period of seven years from the date of expiry or termination of the Agreement: Article 1.0, Article 3.0, Article A1.0 and any other applicable definitions, section A2.1(a), sections A4.2(d), A4.5, section A5.2, section A7.1 (to the extent that the Recipient has not provided the Reports or other reports as may have been requested to the satisfaction of the Province), sections A7.2, A7.3, A7.4, A7.5, A7.6, Article A8.0, Article A9.0, section A11.2, sections A12.2, A12.3, sections A13.1, A13.2(d), (e), (f), (g) and (h), Article A15.0, Article A16.0, Article A17.0, Article A19.0, section A22.2, Article A23.0, Article A25.0, Article A26.0, Article A27.0 and Article A28.0.

- END OF GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS -

SCHEDULE “B”
PROJECT SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

Maximum Funds	\$1,148,107	
Funding by Category	Core	Partnership
	\$982,107	\$166,000
Expiry Date	March 31, 2023	
Amount for the purposes of section A5.2 (Disposal) of Schedule “A”	N/A	
Insurance	\$ 2,000,000	
Contact information for the purposes of Notice to the Province	Geneviève Blanchet-Frost Senior Policy / Program Advisor Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries 400 University Avenue, 5th floor Toronto, ON M7A 2R9 Tel: 647-328-4416 genevieve.blanchet-frost@ontario.ca	
Contact information for the purposes of Notice to the Recipient	James Murphy Executive Director, RTO 12 / Explorers' Edge 3 Taylor Road Bracebridge, ON P1L 1S6 Tel: 705-706-1649 james@explorersedge.ca	
Contact information for the senior financial person in the Recipient organization (e.g., CFO, CAO) – to respond as required to requests from the Province related to the Agreement	James Murphy Executive Director, RTO 12 / Explorers' Edge 3 Taylor Road Bracebridge, ON P1L 1S6 Tel: 705-706-1649 james@explorersedge.ca	

Additional Provisions:

None

SCHEDULE “C” PROJECT

Background

- In 2010, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport supported the establishment of 13 tourism regions to further advance the competitiveness of Ontario’s tourism sector. This was a key recommendation from the 2009 Tourism Competitiveness Study.
- Each region is led by a Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) that provides leadership, strategic coordination and delivery of tourism activities at a regional level. RTOs are in place to enhance the economic impact of the tourism sector by leveraging partnerships and collaboration across industry.

Regional Tourism Organizations are to adhere to the program parameters as outlined in the RTO Guide including the following:

Project Objective

Strategic Objective: To profitably grow visitor spending in Ontario

- RTOs are expected to develop and deliver strategies to meet the following destination management priorities (pillars) in their region:
 1. Product Development
 2. Investment Attraction/ Investor Relations
 3. Workforce Development and Training
 4. Marketing
 5. Partnerships
- The Ministry strongly encourages RTOs to work with all tourism partners including other regions, sector-based organizations, municipalities and other organizations on matters of mutual interest. Strong partnerships and a coordinated approach are vital to the future sustainability of tourism across the province.

1. Product Development

- Work with tourism partners to undertake research, surveys and data analysis.
- Collaborate with tourism partners to undertake product or asset inventories; develop itineraries; improve the market-readiness of existing tourism experiences; undertake market-match studies; showcase local distinctiveness; create/develop new niche tourism products to entice and target new visitors (e.g., gardens, culinary, golf,

biking, etc.); create tour routes; implement signage; and/or enhance programming and interpretation of experiences.

- Adapt programs into other languages or accessible formats.
- Establish annual targets for each product development strategy, so that the results can be compared to the desired or expected return.

2. Investment Attraction / Investor Relations

- Work with public and/or private sector partners (e.g., municipalities, economic development officers, tourism operators and investors) within the region to identify opportunities for new or existing tourism infrastructure investments.
- Reach out to existing tourism businesses/investors to help support tourism industry investments.
- Collaborate to identify tourism businesses/investor opportunities and encourage business expansion or new business development.
- Help the Province facilitate awareness of existing programs that can assist small and medium sized tourism businesses.

3. Workforce Development and Training

- Work in collaboration with regional partners and other RTOs to develop tourism sector-based strategies that help address the needs of tourism employers and workers and provide visitors with enhanced experiences.
- Identify and participate in projects to address short- and long-term sector skill needs and other workforce development issues.
- Develop linkages with employment and training community partners and government programs to advance workforce development within the tourism sector.
- Establish annual targets for workforce/training strategies, so that the results can be compared to the desired or expected return.

4. Marketing

- Work with tourism partners such as local Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), businesses, sector associations and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC) to create a marketing plan that wisely invests resources to maximum effect.
- Identify target markets (geographic and demographic) and determine marketing strategies and best tactics to implement (e.g., media relations, web presence, social media, tourism operation relations, advertising, collateral, consumer shows, direct marketing, etc.).
- Determine what will be advertised, who will produce it and what will be the estimated production time.
- Determine placement dates to ensure that the selected target markets can be successfully reached.
- Establish annual targets for each market/tactic, so that results can be compared to the desired or expected return.

5. Partnerships

- Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) are eligible to receive funding from the ministry based on their ability to leverage funding from regional members and stakeholders for joint projects that fall into the 4 pillars describes above. The intent of the partnership allocation is to encourage collaboration between the RTO and a variety of partners in order to leverage regional resources and to support new or incremental tourism activities that support the implementation of the RTO's business plan.

Strategic Priorities

RTOs are also encouraged to undertake projects and programs that support strategic priorities set by the Ontario government such as:

- Francophone, Indigenous and Multicultural Tourism;
- Wine and Culinary;
- Trails;
- Cycling;
- Great Lakes and Waterways;

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act; and
- Youth Tourism Initiatives

Initiatives

Deliver on all initiatives as outlined in RTO 12's 2022-23 Business Plan (Schedule "G").

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are those deemed reasonable and necessary by the ministry for the successful implementation of RTO deliverables and the work of the RTO.

1. Staffing expenses
2. Technology, equipment and office supplies
3. Professional development
4. Travel and communications
5. Marketing
6. Workforce development and training
7. Product development
8. Investment attraction/ investment relations

Ineligible Costs

1. Grants and flow-through to other organizations
2. Charitable fundraising
3. Advocacy
4. Donations to political parties or lobby groups
5. Capital costs related to permanent structures or acquisitions (e.g., materials, labour, motorized vehicles, land acquisition, purchase of equipment for project construction, etc.)
6. Competition prizes, prize money and monies paid to competition participants

7. Previously incurred expenses
8. Refundable portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) or other refundable expenses (e.g., security deposits, etc.)
9. Expenses that do not relate directly to the delivery of the TPA.

**SCHEDULE "D"
BUDGET**

Item	Amount
Governance and Administration	
Salaries & Benefits	\$110,000
Governance	\$8,000
Overhead / Facilities	\$61,000
Finance and Administration (Accounting, Audit, Legal)	\$25,000
Travel	\$35,000
Industry Relations / Stakeholder Engagement	\$6,500
Information Technology	\$5,000
SUBTOTAL	\$250,500
Product Development	
Salaries & Benefits	\$23,000
Product Development Engagement	\$32,000
Sustainability	\$4,000
Research	\$5,000
SUBTOTAL	\$64,000
Marketing and Promotion	
Salaries and Benefits	\$100,000
Marketing / Advertising	\$30,000
Commercial Air Service	\$150,000
Content Development / Guest Authors / FAM Tours	\$5,000
Promotions/Contests/Incentives	\$10,000

Creative Development	\$5,000
Project Mgmt. Ad Trafficking	\$6,000
Strategist (Retainer)	\$30,000
TICO	\$3,000
Newsletter	\$3,000
Shuttle Service	\$50,000
Reservation Platform	\$10,000
Transacting / Dispersion / Tracking	\$50,000
SUBTOTAL	\$452,000
Investment Attraction	
Salaries & Benefits	\$20,000
Outreach / Meetings	\$3,607
SUBTOTAL	\$23,607
Workforce Development	
Salaries & Benefits	\$61,000
Workforce Recruitment, Training and Outreach	\$20,000
Workforce Research & Development	\$95,000
SUBTOTAL	\$176,000
Partnerships	
Salaries & Benefits	\$16,000
Marketing & Communication	\$110,000
Regional Marketing / Workforce	\$56,000
SUBTOTAL	\$182,000
TOTAL AGREEMENT COSTS	\$1,148,107

SCHEDULE "E"
PAYMENT PLAN

PAYMENT DATE OR MILESTONE	AMOUNT
Provided this Agreement has been signed by both parties	\$574,054 (50%)
Submission of a 2021-22 Final Report and the Province is satisfied with the same DUE: May 27, 2022	\$344,432 (30%)
Submission of a 2022-23 Progress Report, Audited Financial Statements and Schedule of Revenues and Expenses as per the TPA 2021-22 and the Province is satisfied with the same DUE: October 28, 2022	\$229,621 (20%)

SCHEDULE "F" REPORTS

Name of Report	Due Date
1. Business Plan for 2023-24	January 13, 2023
2. Final Report for 2021-22	May 27, 2022
3. Progress Report 2022-23, Audited Financial Statement and Schedule of Revenues and Expenses as per the TPA for 2021-22	October 28, 2022
4. Reports specified from time to time	On a date or dates specified by the Province.

Report Details

1. The recipient will complete the Final Report for the 2021-22 fiscal year on the template provided.
2. The recipient will complete the Progress Report for the 2022-23 fiscal year on the template provided. In addition, the recipient will provide an Audited Financial Statement and Schedule of Revenues and Expenses for the 2021-22 fiscal year.
3. Reporting as requested from the Ministry.

**SCHEDULE "G"
BUSINESS PLAN**



**2022 – 2023 Business and Operational
Plan**

(April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023)

February 23, 2022

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Executive Summary

Established in 2010, Explorers' Edge (EE) is one of thirteen Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) representing stakeholders in the geographic areas of Algonquin Park, the Almaguin Highlands, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka, Parry Sound and South Algonquin, Ontario, Canada.

The region is located on the traditional lands and waterways of the Anishinabek, Algonquin, Métis and Mohawk peoples, and is part of the Robinson Huron (1850) and Williams (1923) Treaties territory.

This Business and Operational Plan (BOP22-23) outlines RTO12's annual strategy; provides a brief background on the status of the organization and the regional tourism industry into the third year of the global pandemic; and identifies specific goals, activities, timelines, performance measures and budget that have been established. The BOP22-23 priorities were finalized by the Board of Directors during a regular meeting of the Board that was held online on February 8, 2021.

Though the regional tourism industry continues to face substantial challenges due to the ongoing detrimental effects of the global pandemic and the intermittent and disruptive travel restrictions that ensue, this part of Ontario – that which we call 'the great Canadian wilderness just north of Toronto' in branded marketing efforts – continues to be in demand with travellers, if not even more so since the pandemic began and rural destinations increased in popularity. That's good news for most, though not all, of our regional tourism businesses, which are still recovering from two years of Covid-19 fallout.

From a corporate perspective, the previous fiscal year was extremely productive for RTO12 in terms of launching its new Regenerative Tourism Strategy and re-positioning as a Destination Development Organization (see BOP21-22 for more details).

As a result, this current BOP will restate major programs that were instigated in the previous year and are in now a developmental trajectory, with the expectation that these initiatives will lead to the entrenchment of sustainability for the organization itself and the region as a whole in the years to come. Fiscal BOP 22-23 carries with it the intention of continuing to move forward with these greater objectives for the recovery, resilience, and endurance of the local tourism industry.

The biggest obstacle to full recovery continues to be substantial gaps in the labour market; the need to attract and retain workers is at an all time high, and not just in this region. Limited affordable housing supply, particularly in a market that became increasingly commodified over the past two years, is also highly problematic.

To that end, workforce development remains a major area of concentration for RTO12. Significant projects are now underway to ensure success, including the introduction of a Regional Data Hub, the micro-credential online training and job recruitment program, and the next phase of the "Explorers' Edge Catalyst Housing" project, all of which are facets of the organization's long-standing *Workforce Thrusters Strategy*.

In 2022-2023, RTO12 will continue the vision to build a resilient and thriving regional tourism industry by keeping regenerative principles at the forefront of all its endeavours.

Governance

RTO12 has maintained an open and transparent governance philosophy since its inception and has adopted an unwavering reliance on process to do so. Composition of the Board of Directors is developed using a nomination process, and representation on the Board pertains to geographic, sector, gender, skill set considerations. As priority membership is given to business owners or their key GMs/presidents, the

RTO Board of Directors has been composed of private sector tourism operator stakeholders since it was created. Ex-Officio members also sit at the table to lend expertise and input. The Board meets bi-monthly, with the Executive conferring weekly. A list of Board of Directors as of January 2022 is as follows:

[Michael Simonett](#), Chair

msimonett@clublink.ca (705) 571-2853

Sherwood Inn / Rocky Crest Resort, 20 Barnwood Drive, MacTier, ON

Hillary Chambers, Vice Chair

hilary@pinegroveresort.com, (705) 757-2345

Lost Fox B&B, 32 Davis Dr B, Port Loring, ON

Angela Pollak, Secretary

workingmom@rogers.com, (519) 571-4584

Four Corners Algonquin Camping and Glamping, 29924 Highway 60 PO Box 420 Whitney, ON

Don MacKay, Treasurer

dmackay@muskokahighlands.com, (705) 644-2017

Muskoka Highlands, 1040 South Monck Dr, Bracebridge, ON

Andrew Rusynyk

andrew@skihiddenvalleyresort.ca

Hidden Valley Highlands Ski Area Inc., 1655 Hidden Valley Rd. Huntsville, ON

Darren Smith

darren@lakeofbaysbrewing.ca

Lake of Bays Brewing Company, 2681 Muskoka Road 117, Baysville, ON

Dave Anderson

dave@huckleberrys.ca

30,000 Island Cruise Line Inc., 9 Bay Street, Parry Sound, ON

Gail Burrows

gail@sequinvalley.com, (705) 378-2555

Seguin Valley Golf Club, 173 Badger Road, Seguin, ON

Scott Doughty,

sdoughty@hiddenvalleyresort.ca (705) 571-4290

Hidden Valley Resort, 389 Indian Trail, Huntsville, ON

Resource Members

[Laura Ross](#), Regional Development Advisor

laura.ross@ontario.ca (705) 641-8349

Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, 1350 High Falls Road, Bracebridge, ON

Explorers' Edge is governed by a nine (9) member Board of Directors representing each of the six sub-regions (Algonquin Park, Almaguin Highlands, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka, Parry Sound and South Algonquin). Six committees oversee the work of the organization:

1. Executive Committee

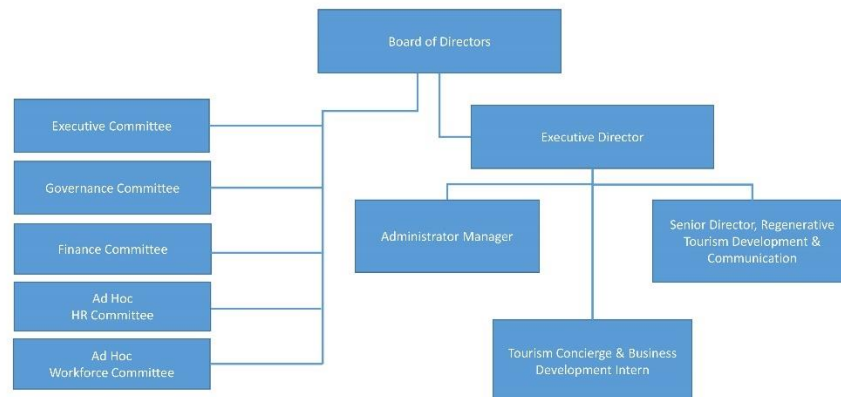
2. Governance Committee
3. Finance Committee
4. Ad hoc – Nomination Committee
5. Ad hoc - Workforce Development Committee
6. Ad hoc – Human Resources

Committee Terms of Reference are available on the rto12.ca website. Committee updates are provided at each Board meeting.

In 2017 the Governance Committee reviewed bylaws, policies and procedures as well as the Terms of Reference for each Committee. In addition, Explorers’ Edge undergoes annual financial audits as a requirement of its open and transparent philosophy. The organization is in sound financial standing.

With an objective of keeping administrative costs as low as possible, a permanent staff of three (3) conducts the ongoing work of Explorers’ Edge. In Fiscal 2022-2023, EE will also hire a **Tourism Concierge & Business Development Intern** to assist with Commercial Air Service and the administration of the inbound travel division associated with our TICO licence.

Figure 1 - 2022 - 2023 Organization Chart



Chair: Michael Simonett

Director of Revenue with Rocky Crest Golf Resort & Sherwood Inn, ClubLink with a demonstrated history of working in the leisure, travel & tourism industry. Strong community and social services professional skilled in Front Office, Customer Service, Customer Satisfaction, Marketing, Revenue, Sales and Training.

Executive Director: James Murphy

After completing a college diploma in Hotel & Resort Management, James completed an undergraduate degree at the University of New Brunswick with a Bachelor of Applied Management in Hospitality & Tourism in 2004. In 2008 James received his Master of Arts, Recreation and Leisure Studies, Tourism Planning and Policy degree from the University of Waterloo. Post-graduation, James served as the general manager of SAVOUR Muskoka, a culinary tourism initiative aimed at bridging the gap between supplier and restaurant chef while at the same time creating a culinary identity for the region of Muskoka

and Parry Sound. During this time, he was involved in tourism initiatives on district and provincial levels as a Board member with Muskoka Tourism, the Ontario Culinary Tourism Association (OCTA) and the Muskoka Lakes Chamber of Commerce. James has also worked on projects with the Canadian Tourism Commission (now Destination Canada), Canadian Relais & Chateaux Association and Statistics Canada. James joined RTO12 as Executive Director in 2011 is responsible for the introduction of strong governance, administrative procedures, additional funding revenue and the organization's industry-leading programs. He leads the organization's shift to a Destination Development Organization.

Senior Director, Regenerative Tourism Development & Communications: Kate Monk

Kate Monk holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) from the University of Toronto. She also earned post-graduate certificates in public relations and media copywriting from Humber College in Etobicoke, Ontario. She is a proven business strategist and communications professional, with particular interest in transformation, innovation, and benchmarking beyond the status quo. In 2021 she earned her Professional Certificate in Sustainable Tourism from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council. Kate joined RTO12 in 2011 and has been responsible for the creation of its innovative strategies and programs.

Administration Manager: Erin Smit

Erin holds a BA in Sociology from Laurentian University and a diploma in Hotel & Resort Operations from Georgian College in Barrie. She joined Explorers' Edge under a one-year FedNor contract and then joined the team permanently. She is the lead on project management for most undertakings at RTO12, and for operator outreach. Erin also acts as the organization's office administrator.

Tourism Concierge & Business Development Intern – TBD

RTO12 Vision, Mission and Mandate:

The impact of Covid-19 on the global tourism industry meant the need to revisit and revise RTO12's **Vision, Mission** and **Mandate** statements in Fiscal 2021-2022. The following summarizes the new priorities for the organization from an administrative and governance perspective:

Vision – RTO12 is a Destination Development Organization that leads the Canadian tourism industry in regenerative development, ensuring that the region's communities and tourism stakeholders are resilient and able to thrive long-term.

Mission – RTO12's mission is to steward the regional tourism industry's recovery, rebuild and renewal by developing innovative regenerative programs to ensure long-term sustainability and success for all stakeholders.

Mandate:

- Steward / Lead
- Research / Innovate
- Recover / Build
- Sustain
- Train
- Collaborate

Explorers' Edge Guiding Principles:

- Develop regenerative strategies, programs and products that are the result of “out of the box” thinking, innovation and strategic collaboration.
- Use strategy, process and “the business of tourism” as guiding beacons to ensure the sustainability of the organization, tourism stakeholders and connected communities.
- Prioritize industry, stakeholder and community communications.

Explorers’ Edge Operating Principles

- Lead the recovery and rebuild as the regional Destination Development Organization
- Build programs and initiatives using the lens of regenerative business thinking.
- Leverage significant strategic partnerships.
- Engage various direct and indirect stakeholders to ensure wider sustainability and growth.
- Build revenue generation for the long-term sustainability of the organization and the regional industry.

Regional Overview & Assessment: March 2021–April 2022

Provincial Travel Indicators

Prior to the pandemic, visitation and spend results from the Research Unit of the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries showed that domestic travel to the RTO12 region remained strong up until the last year reported (2019):

RTO12 Estimated Visits:

- 2008: 3.5 million visits
- 2010: 3.8 million visits
- 2011: 4.8 million visits
- 2012: 4.1 million visits
- 2013: 4.3 million visits
- 2014: 4.3 million visits
- 2015: 4.4 million visits
- 2016: 4.7 million visits
- 2017: 4.5 million visits
- 2018: 3.7 million visits
- 2019: 4.4 million visits

RTO12 Estimated Spending:

- 2008: \$662 million in spending
- 2010: \$513 million in spending
- 2011: \$598 million in spending
- 2012: \$596 million in spending
- 2013: \$614 million in spending
- 2014: \$589 million in spending
- 2015: \$699 million in spending
- 2016: \$778 million in spending
- 2017: \$650 million in spending
- 2018: \$884 million in spending
- 2019: \$840 million in spending

RTO12 Businesses:

- 2008: 1,738 establishments
- 2010: 1,688 establishments
- 2011: 1,666 establishments
- 2012: 1,757 establishments
- 2013: 1,795 establishments
- 2014: 1,905 establishments
- 2015: 1,921 establishments
- 2016: 1,931 establishments
- 2017: 1,958 establishments
- 2018: 1,965 establishments
- 2019*: 841 Establishments

*2019 statics did not include “Retail” & “Other Services”, which accounted for 1,101 establishments in 2018.

RTO12 Occupancy Data

Occupancy data for regional accommodations for the twelve months ending in December 2021 showed that our RTO continued to grow year over year. More importantly our region was able to increase its Average Daily Rate from \$188.68 to \$218.92 well ahead of the provincial average. This underscores the current demand for accommodation in our region. Revenue per room also increased substantially year over year.

Figure 2 - CRBE Twelve Months Ended December 2021

TRENDS IN THE CANADIAN HOTEL INDUSTRY National Market Report: A monthly professional publication										CBRE		
Report of rooms operations for RTO 12 and the Province of Ontario												
MONTH OF DECEMBER 2021												
Location	Occupancy Percentage			Average Daily Rate			Revenue Per Available Room					
	2021	2020	**Point Change	2021	2020	Variance	2021	2020	Variance			
RTO 12	36.3%	22.0%	14.3	\$184.24	\$156.28	17.9%	\$66.92	\$34.37	94.7%			
ONTARIO	45.4%	25.3%	20.2	\$137.85	\$104.79	31.5%	\$62.64	\$26.50	136.4%			

** Please note that the variance between current and previous year occupancy is reported as a point change and not as a percentage variance.

SOURCE: CBRE Limited with reproduction and use of information subject to CBRE Disclaimer and Restrictions as detailed at <https://www.cbre.ca/en/real-estate-services/business-lines/valuation-and-advisory-services/hotels-valuation-and-advisory-services/disclaimer>

TRENDS IN THE CANADIAN HOTEL INDUSTRY National Market Report: A monthly professional publication										CBRE		
Report of rooms operations for RTO 12 and the Province of Ontario												
TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 2021												
Location	Occupancy Percentage			Average Daily Rate			Revenue Per Available Room					
	2021	2020	**Point Change	2021	2020	Variance	2021	2020	Variance			
RTO 12	42.4%	39.6%	2.8	\$218.92	\$188.68	16.0%	\$92.86	\$74.65	24.4%			
ONTARIO	44.1%	34.8%	9.3	\$128.79	\$126.03	2.2%	\$56.79	\$43.84	29.5%			

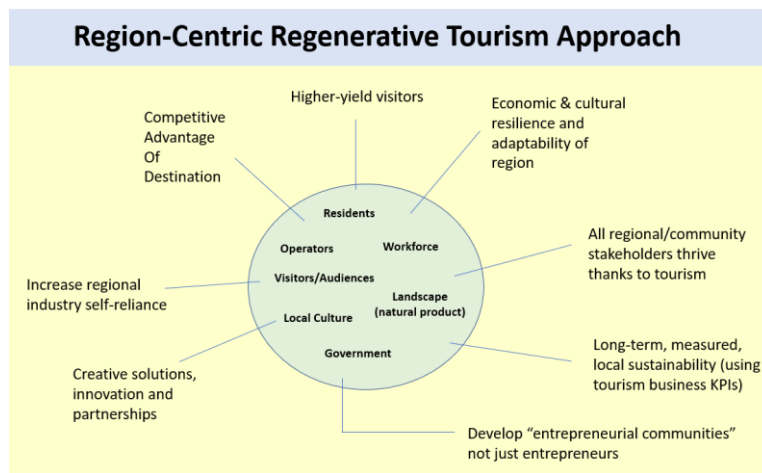
** Please note that the variance between current and previous year occupancy is reported as a point change and not as a percentage variance.

SOURCE: CBRE Limited with reproduction and use of information subject to CBRE Disclaimer and Restrictions as detailed at <https://www.cbre.ca/en/real-estate-services/business-lines/valuation-and-advisory-services/hotels-valuation-and-advisory-services/disclaimer>

In winter of 2022, operational mandates were once again placed on tourism stakeholders by the Government of Ontario, stemming from a significant surge in the Omicron variant. This meant restricted occupancy and indoor limits for some regional tourism businesses. The impact of these restrictions has not yet been measured at the time of this document’s publication.

Regenerative Review: Long-Term Strategy for Recovery, Rebuild and Resilience

Figure 3 - Region-Centric Regenerative Tourism Approach



In Fiscal 2021-2022, RTO12 embarked on an ambitious “Region-Centric Regenerative Tourism Approach” to create innovative solutions for industry sustainability, wider community development, and organizational sustainability (see BOP21-22 for details). The key pillars of this approach are:

- 1) Work to ensure the economic, social, cultural, and environmental resilience of the region through tourism development.
- 2) Consider and weigh the desires and needs of all community stakeholders – not just those involved directly in the tourism industry, nor only those in ownership positions.
- 3) Increase regional self-reliance to solve local challenges and increase revenue generation to stabilize and develop the tourism industry.
- 4) Seek and implement creative solutions, innovation, and strategic partnerships to solve community development and industry sustainability challenges. Develop timely research and attract digital and tech innovation for the industry.
- 5) Develop KPIs to reflect improvement of the tourism industry in relation to economic, social, cultural, and environmental objectives (a holistic measurement).
- 6) Concentrate on developing higher-yield visitation (spend more, stay longer in the region) rather than on mass tourism.
- 7) Build an extremely robust communications plan to promote the ongoing development of the regional tourism business ecosystem.
- 8) Position EE as a Destination Development Organization that champions ‘the business of tourism as a catalyst for thriving communities.’

Regenerative Foundations: Work-To-Date

Big bucket items of RTO12's region-centric regenerative approach commenced in Fiscal 2021-2022 and included the following:

Data / Research

One of the most important initiatives moving forward is the necessity to build a "Regional Data Hub" (RDH) that will provide up-to-date and timely intelligence on the state of the local tourism industry. With regenerative principles in mind, this expands the information usually gathered to beyond the traditional measurements of visitation and spend. The RDH will also establish KPIs and track performance of regenerative tourism programs developed by RTO12.

In the previous fiscal year, RTO12 contracted Environics to conduct research into four main areas:

- A new 'Business Confidence Index' (includes items affecting the ability of a business to have confidence, such as provincial operational restrictions, labour shortages, increased costs for staff and guest safety, etc.).
- Regional Labour Shortages & Requirements (from the operator perspective: how many workers do we need at any given time?)
- Worker Insights (to improve loyalty and attraction of workers: why do they stay, why do they leave, and how do we attract more workers)
- Resident Sentiment (to ensure community support for "the business of tourism" as an economic driver)

The RDH will be developed using Google Data Studio and will help the RTO and tourism stakeholders develop responsive business initiatives for recovery, rebuild and resilience. The dashboard will live on the new RTO12 corporate website (launched March 2021) and will also eventually include information regarding the impact of tourism on the environment.

The Sustainable Tourism Pilot Project

In an effort to convince as many tourism businesses as possible to adopt sustainable practices on their properties, RTO12 partnered with nine regional businesses to have them become certified in sustainability by GreenStep Solutions Inc., a consultant that uses the recognized standards of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council. This group of businesses will then work with RTO12 staff to additionally build a greater business case for sustainability, in order to educate additional regional operators on the benefits of introducing sustainability. This is a multi-year project to track YOY indicators.

Micro-Credential Training: The Rural Tourism Certificate for Job Recruitment



In an effort to attract workers, RTO12 developed a micro-credential program called “The Rural Tourism Certificate” which launched in March of 2022. A series of online modules educate participants on the region and why it is a popular vacation destination, as well as why a tourism job in the region will serve them well.

The program also makes the case for rural vs. urban workforce development. The intent is to build a lead nurturing database to share information about current job openings and recruitment events.

The first five videos in this expandable online training include:

1. Introduction to the Rural Tourism Certificate Training
2. Welcome to Rural: The Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto
3. The Rural Tourism Revival
4. Developing Tourism Products & Experiences: A Rural Approach
5. Work & Play in the Great Canadian Wilderness

Each module contains a graded quiz, and a certificate of completion is issued with an overall passing grade. This micro-credential training is expandable to additional modules depending on target audiences, and acts as a pilot project for additional training in the Catalyst Housing and Workforce Thrusters Strategy.

Job Bank Development

In September of 2021, recognizing the need to recruit workers to fill the gaps left by the departure of seasonal student workers, RTO12 created a regional tourism Job Bank, which was housed on the branded consumer website and marketed using display advertising. The inaugural edition of the Job Bank marketing was a great success, and a second round of advertising commenced in late winter of 2022.

RTO12 will continue to make enhancements to the Job Bank in order to optimize efficacy and conversion, as well as operator participation.

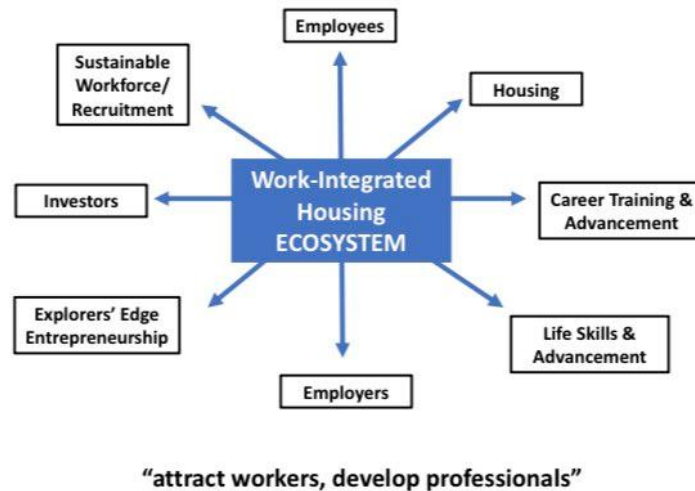
Catalyst Housing

The Catalyst Housing project is RTO12’s innovative housing model that is intended to serve the regional tourism industry, and potentially other sectors as well (e.g. healthcare, building trades). The intent is to “attract workers and develop professionals” by leverage housing, employment and training opportunities in one offering.

As part of its regenerative approach, funding for the Catalyst Housing project will include a combination of public, private and impact investors.

In 2021, RTO12 commenced its “Road Map to Catalyst Housing” communications plan, which will be released in Fiscal 2022-2023. It will include recommendations for community involvement and the successful development and issuance of impact bonds.

Figure 4 - Road Map to Catalyst Housing



TICO

RTO12 continued the process of acquiring its Tourism Industry Council of Ontario (TICO) license to operate as a travel agency. This will allow for the development of itineraries and packages that will target higher yield visitors, who stay longer and spend more. A percentage of revenue from the sale of packages will also be put towards sustainability programs across the region.

Commercial Air Service: Higher Yield Visitors and Regional Dispersion

With its aviation partner, Porter Airlines, RTO12 was thrilled to announce the return of summer service to the Muskoka Airport, with tickets sales commencing on February 22, 2022. The service, which runs twice weekly from June 24 to September 6, 2022, is intended to attract higher yield visitors from international markets, including New York, Boston and Chicago.

In addition to taking a lead in marketing for the service, RTO12 will once again invest in and deploy a shuttle service to ensure dispersion of visitors across the entire region, for the benefit of as many tourism stakeholders as possible.

Indigenous Outreach and Tourism Development

Working with an economic development specialist with a background in First Nations outreach, grant development and tourism development, RTO12 commenced efforts to build mutually respectful and beneficial relations with the First Nations and Metis stakeholders in the Robinson Huron and Williams Treaties territory.

RTO12 2022-2023 Goals

The current and long-standing mandated pillars by Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries for the RTO to work within include:

- **Product Development** – to enhance visitor experience through well-designed tourism products that meet current and future visitor demand.
- **Investment Attraction/ Investor Relations** – to increase investment in the tourism industry to enhance visitor experience.
- **Workforce Development and Training** – facilitate and support the attraction, development and retention of a tourism workforce to enhance the visitor experience.
- **Marketing** – to increase awareness of Ontario as a travel destination and increase conversion in target markets.
- **Partnership** – to become a catalyst in building strategic alignment and promoting collaboration within the industry.
- **Additional** – Industry Communication, Liaison and Accountability

As a result of pandemic learnings and keeping in mind the pillars of operation required by the Ministry, the following goals will shape the work of RTO12 for the next 2 years (as a continuation of the 3-Year Regenerative Strategy launched in BOP21-22).

Marketing

- Leverage our successful content marketing program to target hyper local, domestic or international audiences, depending on the state of opening in the province and region.
- Leverage the flexibility of content marketing to “stop and go” our marketing thrust, depending on the state of opening and which particular audience is to be targeted (if at all, on any particular day). We are prepared to scale up or scale down at a moment’s notice.
- When not actively marketing, produce content to retain audiences for when travel bans are lifted, in order for the region to remain front of line.
- Present multiple “travel Zoom” events targeting travellers and pertaining to demand generators.
- Market programs and initiatives to all community stakeholders, not just tourism operators and government.
- Continue to develop branded transacting programs to stimulate purchase and travel.
- Include packages and itineraries in all lead nurturing and content in order to move travellers down the purchase funnel to repeat conversion.
- Transition the Explorers’ Edge brand to the administrative identity, and position “The Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto” as the sole consumer brand, regardless of target market (hyper local, domestic, international). Promote new website.
- Include messaging to protect the natural product and to prevent any negative effects of “over tourism” as rural destinations increase exponentially in popularity (e.g. a “Leave No Trace” education campaign).
- Include message to promote safe visitation.
- Focusing on developing higher-yield customers rather than mass volume of visitors
- Improve resident sentiment towards tourism as integral to regional economic development.
- Continue to offer marketing training workshops and instruction to operators.
- Conduct ongoing, timely and region-centric consumer research.

Product Development

- Build relationships with existing Indigenous tourism operators and develop opportunities for new Indigenous operators.

- Develop packages related to strategic itineraries, with the intention of converting higher-yield customers.
- Develop branded travel packages such as “Fuel & Fun” or “Cottage Country Spirit Local Travel Package” to stimulate purchase (whether hyper local, domestic or international)
- Continue to promote and support product relevant to the “Key Tourism Activities”.
- Market Explorers’ Edge as a travel booking agency once final TICO accreditation is achieved (anticipated April 2021)
- Introduce package booking widget functionality to consumer website, content and promotional tactics.
- Build sustainability training programs for tourism operators/operations.
- Build regional field to fork culinary supply chains for local agri and dining sustainability.

Investment Attraction

- Build community and impact investing for the catalyst housing/training program.
- Build stakeholder and community membership contributions for “buffer” investing.
- Start to build a tourism business case for passenger rail service.
- Continue to invest in Great Lakes cruise ship programs with the Town of Parry Sound, including shuttle service for day trip dispersion (anticipated cruise ships return summer 2022)
- “Re-launch” commercial air service promotion and passenger programs including shuttle service for regional dispersion when air service returns

Workforce Development

- Continue to work with post-secondary and secondary institutions to build awareness of the region as a tourism career destination.
- Convert urban students to rural employees.
- Communicate with youth, return-to-work, immigrant, international student and “she-covery” audiences.
- Continue to host Zoom Job Recruitment events that include “sense of place” marketing.
- Build a “Neighbourhood Network” of police-checked volunteers who will welcome new workers to the region.
- Launch 3-year Catalyst Housing project with training development (Year 1); build strategy in Years 1 & 2 (with potential build(s) in Year 2 & 3); stakeholder investing outreach and buy-in Years 2 & 3
- Conduct ongoing, timely and region-centric industry research

Partnership

- Ensure regional partners understand the Region-Centric approach and have opportunities to align strategies.
- Partner strategically with local agencies or individuals to deliver hyper local program.
- Develop extra-industry partnerships to move projects forward (including expertise)

Industry Communication, Liaison and Accountability

- Develop communication and relations with our Indigenous community throughout and beyond our RTO12 regional borders.
- Engage multiple operators when possible.
- Continue to strengthen outreach and communication with industry.
- Develop outreach and communication to non-industry stakeholders.

- Develop “regenerative tourism champions” across the region.
- Ensure the industry is well informed on all tourism related topics (marketing, research, product development, training, investment etc.)
- Deliver and receive diversity, inclusion and equity training.
- Determine regenerative tourism KPIs to track economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability and growth of the regional industry and community stakeholders.

What follows is a summary of the BOP22-23 implementation, as well as objectives, key activities, timelines, and performance measures for MHSTCI TPA requirements.

2022 - 2023 Business and Operational Plan Summary

Governance 250,500	Marketing 452,000	Product Development 64,000	Investment Attraction 23,607	Workforce 176,000	Partnership 182,000
<p>Govern EE through effective leadership; strong equitable industry representation and following strategy, systems, policies, and procedures.</p> <p>Regional Tourism Summit sharing tourism sustainability program outcomes, regenerative program development and destination development updates.</p> <p>Annual General Meeting. Explore business awards and tourism employee awards.</p> <p>Build stakeholder & community membership contributions.</p> <p>Ensure organizational decisions meet the needs of both the tourism business community and the community of a whole to “float all boats” (including tourism SME’s, employees, and residents)</p>	<p>Promote the great Canadian wilderness brand.</p> <p>Target hyper local, dom. & int’l markets depending on provincial/federal restrictions.</p> <p>Publish exceptional content & launch promotion that is flexible, adaptable & scalable.</p> <p>Sell product packages & itineraries (primary CTA) via TICO travel division</p> <p>Develop & promote incentivized travel packages to coincide with high yield travellers to the region.</p> <p>Reboot lead nurturing and commercial air service.</p>	<p>Build relationships with existing Indigenous tourism operators and develop opportunities for new Indigenous operators.</p> <p>Develop high yield packages & itinerary for purchase.</p> <p>Commence development of local culinary supply chains.</p> <p>Develop content to promote the KTAs to target audiences.</p> <p>Explorer product opportunities to ensure year two of regional air service exceeds expectations.</p> <p>Maintain Bike Cottage Country product site.</p> <p>Continue sustainability training programs for tourism operators / operations (e.g. property stewardship guides).</p>	<p>Explore partnerships & investing that prioritizes regenerative tourism and workforce development.</p> <p>Communicate community & impact investing for the catalyst housing/training program.</p> <p>Continue to explore a tourism business case for passenger rail service.</p> <p>Continue to liaise with regional economic development agencies to ensure that the tourism impact remains a top priority.</p> <p>Continue as a member of the Great Lakes Cruise Coalition ensuring a robust cruise network, investment and season on the shores of Georgian Bay.</p>	<p>Attract workers and develop professionals via outreach to education partners including high schools, colleges, and universities.</p> <p>Educating workers on the region as career destination via the developed Micro Credential Workforce Rural Certificate.</p> <p>Convert urban post -secondary students to rural employees.</p> <p>Communicate with youth, return-to-work, immigrant, international students & “she -covery” audiences.</p> <p>Host Zoom Recruitments.</p> <p>Build a “Neighbourhood Network” who will welcome new workers.</p> <p>Conduct ongoing, timely and region-centric industry research.</p>	<p>Prioritize partnerships that support RTO12’s regenerative tourism and workforce development initiatives.</p> <p>Marketing and communication to support the commercial airline year two launch.</p> <p>Continue to work with local stakeholders to examine mutually beneficial regional partnerships.</p>

2022 – 2023 BOP: Objectives, Key Activities and Timelines, Performance Measures

Governance

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Governance and Administration			
Governance			
<p>Govern EE through effective leadership; strong equitable industry representation and following strategy, systems, policies, and procedures.</p> <p>To ensure organizational decisions meet the needs of both the tourism business community and the community of a whole to “float all boats” (including tourism SME’s, employees, and residents)</p>	<p>Introduce sustainability principals with solid & innovative business strategies.</p> <p>Cultivate an organizational philosophy with the greater community to understand impacts of the RTOs role as a Destination Development Organization.</p> <p>Manage our assets and liabilities responsibly while delivering expected results on time.</p>	<p>Solicit community input / reaction on strategies and organizational approach (Region-Centric Regenerative Tourism Approach) via webinars and surveys reporting back on outcomes via follow-up communication.</p> <p>Continue governance training and diversity, inclusion, and equity training.</p> <p>Development of committee(s), when necessary, that is inclusive to the community.</p> <p>Board quarterly update, review, and input on annual BOP execution.</p> <p>Conduct board reviews via surveys of RTO plans and performance measures against stated objectives and targets; adjusting as required</p> <p>Complete a skills matrix to identify priority areas for board member recruitment.</p> <p>Regularly review activities, finances at board meetings.</p>	<p>Participation in community input sessions (target 600 participants) (target 12 webinars) (target 3 surveys).</p> <p>Effective board training participation (target 100% of board directors) (target – 70% of participation identify being satisfied / highly satisfied with training outcomes).</p> <p>Business plan participation, results of the financial audit and operational reporting (operating goals met, clean audit) Board satisfaction with governance updates and discussions at the board table regarding committee items(target – 70% of participation identify being satisfied / highly satisfied with governance outcomes).</p>

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Operations			

<p>Continue with regenerative practices within the organization to benefit both internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>To steward the regional tourism recovery, rebuild and renewal.</p> <p>Continue to develop an investment strategy for future operational, organization and industry resiliency.</p>	<p>Revenue generation via membership, activities include the development, communication, and solicitation of an updated membership model.</p> <p>Development of investment strategy, activities include outreach, research, and input.</p> <p>Development of tourism award(s) with activities that include communication and participation.</p> <p>RTO will presentation of organizational operational updates / direction via webinar, Zoom, WebEx meetings, Microsoft Teams etc.</p>	<p>Membership (target – 150)</p> <p>Award Participants (target – 12 stakeholders)</p> <p>Number of stakeholders involved in the communication of organizational activities / updates (target – 1,400 stakeholders)</p> <p>RTO operational presentations (target – 12)</p>
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Industry Communication, Liaison and Accountability

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Industry Communication, Liaison and Accountability			
<p>Ensuring the community understands the role the RTO plays in leading the recovery of both the regional economy and the community.</p>	<p>Strengthen communications with industry and non-industry throughout RTO12.</p> <p>Ensure the industry is well informed of all tourism related topics.</p> <p>Make certain all three levels of government understand the impacts decisions at the municipal, provincial, and federal level impact our regional communities.</p>	<p>Foster outreach to operators and facilitate information sharing while continuing to facilitate the development of industry capacity by providing relevant information.</p> <p>Strengthen communications with operators and ensure updates happen in a timely manner.</p> <p>Monitor Facebook business forum for feedback.</p> <p>Monitor Twitter for regional grievances, criticism, complaints etc.</p> <p>Explore joint investment, marketing, product development, and other initiatives that benefit operators.</p> <p>Strengthen outreach and communication with industry reviewing / updating internal CRM, mailing list etc.</p> <p>Facilitate presentations via webinars with RTO senior staff and guest speakers highlighting best practices, innovative tourism programs, recovery related programs.</p>	<p>Participants on RTO webinar updates (35 per webinar).</p> <p>Number of new subscribers to organization Newsletter. (target – 65)</p> <p>Identification of three stakeholder concerns to be communicated to the Board of Directors and levels of government (target – 6)</p>

Marketing

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Marketing			
Content Development			
Create promotional content for the destination brand, sub-regions, products/KTAs, commercial air service, and for package and itinerary sales.	<p>Convert “discoverers” to travellers by moving them down the purchase funnel (“awareness” to package “purchase”).</p> <p>Capture consumer email addresses in the lead nurturing program to move registrants down the purchase funnel.</p> <p>Increase website analytics, sessions, users, page views, pages/session & average session duration (via content).</p>	<p>Development of regional content via researching story ideas, interviewing stakeholders, alignment with research (includes interviews, photography development and regional outreach).</p> <p>Assigning staff on a weekly basis to work with the lead nurturing third party to develop, deploy and monitor segmented emails.</p> <p>Assigning staff daily to update consumer website with new content, events, pictures, listings, and packages by scanning regional and provincial partner sites and social accounts.</p>	<p>Regional Content developed (target – 6 sub-regional pieces, 10 product pieces, 10 itinerary pieces)</p> <p>Consumer opt-in for the consumer e-mail database: (target – hyperlocal/500, domestic/1000, international/100)</p> <p>Website analytics including: visits (target – 150,000), page views (target – 200k), pages/session (target – 1.40) & average session duration (target – 1.20 minute)</p>
Social Media Marketing			
Introduce regional product to hyper local, domestic, and international audiences.	Create awareness of regional product and travel experiences consumers visiting on-line channels.	<p>Traffic developed content over social media channels monitoring, updating, and responding to travel enquiries related to posted information.</p> <p>Update social media channels with information related to regional product and experiences.</p> <p>Respond and interact with travel enquiries across multiple social media platforms.</p>	<p>Social media analytics (MERGED)</p> <p>Facebook Likes (target – 500 new)</p> <p>Twitter followers (target – 50 new)</p> <p>Social media mentions (target – 500)</p> <p>Social media comments (target - 500)</p> <p>Social media Post Likes (target – 5,000)</p> <p>Social media clicks to Website (target – 50,000)</p>
Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Media / PR Program			

<p>Participate media promotions to facilitate a positive media coverage of RTO12.</p>	<p>Continue brand/story awareness and produce unpaid, positive, and engaging editorial coverage in target markets.</p> <p>Continue media release outputs related to work being completed during fiscal year.</p>	<p>Regional outreach to gauge feedback on media opportunities.</p> <p>Engage industry partners (DO, sub regional partners, operators) on media opportunities.</p> <p>Meet with media representatives at key virtual marketplaces.</p> <p>Develop community outreach and membership communication plans.</p> <p>Develop robust hyper local, domestic, and international in-house Media List.</p> <p>Coordinate media tours when safe to do so.</p> <p>Track media engagement.</p>	<p>Inbound media visits. (target – 1)</p> <p>Increase in unique visits to the RTO media communication page on new administrative site.</p> <p>Produce organization communication plan.</p> <p>Increase in the number of media contacts in the database. (target – 50-75)</p> <p>Coordinated media tours. (target – 1)</p> <p>Deploy minimum one media release per quarter.</p>
<p>Dispersion / Shuttle Service</p>			
<p>Facilitate a summer shuttle service coinciding with commercial air service ensuring traveler dispersion throughout the region.</p>	<p>Provide air travelers to the region the opportunity to disperse into sub regions of RTO12 / Explorers' Edge.</p>	<p>Re-establish 2019 scheduled stops with regional business(s).</p> <p>Re-visit reservation platform, updating and making necessary changes.</p> <p>Communicate shuttle service to travellers to the region.</p> <p>Update terms and conditions along with the schedule to transportation AOR.</p>	<p>Total # of travellers using the service – target 300</p>

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Transacting			
To assist tourism SMEs with liquidity issues and stimulate travel during the pandemic through out the rebuild phase.	Ensure markets are dispersed throughout the region exploring tourism product via either hyper local or domestics depending on the current travel advisories.	<p>Update the scope of the RTO long standing voucher program (hyper local and domestic program) examining applicability and viability along side the current and future travel needs for the region.</p> <p>Coordinate with local chambers of commerce, BIA's and DMO's to identify local, regional, and provincial tourists.</p> <p>Communicate outcomes with the board of directors and stakeholders on the commencement of the program.</p> <p>Provide stakeholders with information related to transacting programs on a regular basis.</p> <p>Survey past package recipients related to applicability and use of the voucher program.</p>	<p>Dispersion – continue traveller spending & dispersion in the region (target – voucher redemption in all sub regions)</p> <p>Redemption rate of vouchers (target – 70%)</p> <p>Transacting Visitor Exit Survey (target – 50 responses)</p> <p>Operator Satisfaction with the transacting program (target – 85% satisfied or highly satisfied)</p>
Package Development			
The development of high yield packages to generate revenue filling an identified gap in the consumer purchase funnel.	Development of high yield packages aligning with organizational KTAs.	<p>Work with the Travel Industry Council of Ontario (TICO) to launch our inbound travel division.</p> <p>Outreach to tourism operators regarding criteria and scope of the high yield packages.</p> <p>Organization of travel packages that coincide with commercial air service.</p> <p>Communication of RTO specific travel packages.</p> <p>Monitoring, follow-up and reporting on RTO packages.</p>	<p>During first year of TICO Licence benchmark revenue & expenses</p> <p>Targets associated with package development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 packages developed. • 20 stakeholders participating • 50 packages sold

Product Development

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Product Development			
Indigenous			
Gain an understanding of challenges associated with Indigenous tourism operators.	Understand the role that tourism can play in reciprocity with our Indigenous communities.	Continue outreach with Indigenous communities via the RTO Economic Developer consultant. Continue Indignons dialogue and communication.	Track Indigenous outcomes and exchanges communicating lessons learned. Confirmed meeting with each of our nine identified regional Indigenous communities.
Sustainability			
Position our region as a sustainable destination option.	Work towards fostering regional sustainability with tourism SMEs through out the region.	Present findings of first group of sustainable tourism SMEs at regional and provincial summits. Continue working with our accreditation consultant guiding SMEs through the process. Meet with cohort of business participants on a quarterly basis to discuss action items, challenges, successes while gathering program feedback. Benchmark number of accredited tourism operators and share successes.	Present findings of year one sustainable development program at three regional speaking engagements. Confirm six accredited sustainable tourism SME's
Industry Statistics			
Track the health of regional tourism industry.	Ensure industry and non-industry stakeholders have access to relevant tourism statistics.	Track monthly occupancy percentages, average daily rate & Revenue per available room via CRBE. Using staff resources the RTO will network with stakeholders to assemble data related occupancy outcomes. Track and disseminate Ministry-generated consumer research, statistics, and tourism updates.	Number of views / downloads of the online research findings (target - 125). Number of participants participating in the research dialogue via Regional Tourism Summit, quarterly stakeholder meetings and monthly webinars (target- 55) Number of research presentations (target - 2)

Investment Attraction

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Investment Attraction			
Communication			

<p>Make certain that Tourism is an investment priority across regional, provincial, and national networks.</p>	<p>Tourism investment bolsters the Workforce Thruster Strategy as it relates to the catalyst housing / training program.</p>	<p>Explore partnerships & investing that prioritizes workforce development.</p> <p>Additionally, conduct outreach, solicit feedback, and interview potential investment partners.</p> <p>Provide regional economic development partners with project outlines and applicable updates related to the progression of forthcoming investment projects in the region.</p> <p>Present and communicate the concept of impact investing and community bonds.</p>	<p>Involvement in investment seminars, meetings, and workshop(s) (target - 10)</p> <p>Regional outreach / update engagement sessions (target - 5)</p>
<p>Transportation</p>			
<p>Investigate and maintain travel infrastructure options throughout the region.</p>	<p>To ensure all options for travel to the destination is examined, researched, maintained, and developed (where deemed appropriate).</p>	<p>Examine the necessary foundational work for the development of a tourism business case for passenger rail service. Additionally, conduct rail passenger interviews with key national and international experts.</p> <p>Support the Great Lakes Cruising Coalition (GLCC) with membership and input as it related to their efforts during the travel ban.</p> <p>Additionally, attend GLCC meetings, AGMs, industry zoom events adding input and advice.</p> <p>Continue dialogue with partners involved in the commercial air service program maintaining dialogue. Additionally, provide input into additional investment into the commercial air service program.</p>	<p>Passenger Rail Interviews (target - 6)</p> <p>Great Lakes Cruising Coalition Events (target – 6)</p> <p>Commercial Air Service Meetings (target - 4)</p>

Workforce

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Workforce			
Work Force Inspiration & Intelligence Gathering			
Endorse tourism as a career.	Showcase tourism as a desirable and applicable career choice showcasing RTO12 a premier tourism career destination.	<p>Continue work with high schools, colleges, and universities to Inspire and gather intelligence related to student career sentiment towards tourism.</p> <p>Communication of career options via content, zoom recruitment and familiarization tours along with the circulation of the Rural Tourism Certificate Micro Credential.</p> <p>Work with existing organizations to coordinate workforce development, opportunities in the region.</p>	<p>Number of educational institutions working with the RTO (target – 5)</p> <p>Students that the RTO engages with (target – 250)</p> <p>Completion of Rural Tourism Certificate Micro Credential (target – 75)</p>
Work Force Communication			
Communicate the possibilities regional workforce opportunities.	Involve youth, return-to-work, immigrant, international students, and ‘she-covery’ audiences via communication outreach.	<p>Update communication plan for additional audiences related to research outcomes.</p> <p>Continue to capture contact information to continue dialogue while gauging feedback.</p> <p>Continue to create content positioning the region as a career option related to tourism.</p>	<p>Leads captured related to interested individuals and audiences (target – 50)</p> <p># of pieces of content related to workforce development (target – 2)</p> <p># of content views (target – 250)</p>
Work Force Recruitment & Welcome			
Convert Urban graduates to rural employees.	Introduce graduates to rural tourism opportunities.	<p>Continue “Neighbourhood Network” program that educates, welcomes, and converts urban graduates.</p> <p>Continue outreach to service clubs to ascertain involvement and support.</p> <p>Assemble regional ambassadors, on board and brief on program objectives. Additionally, link the ambassadors with Urban graduates.</p>	<p>Ambassador to graduate network / relationships (target – 40 matches)</p> <p>Urban graduates working in RTO12 (benchmark target – 8)</p>

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Work Force Research			

Gain a comprehensive understanding of the current workforce landscape.	Gain a thorough understanding of employment insights via residents who don't work in the industry, those who currently work in the industry and those who have left the industry. Obtain information on labour shortages via tourism business owners in the region.	Development of surveys related to employment insights and labour shortages. Review and integrate research outcomes into upcoming strategies / operation plans Solicit feedback from community partners related to research objectives. Communicate research outcomes to regional partners, board of directors and stakeholders.	Research presentations to regional stakeholders (target – 3) # of downloads of research (target – 200) # of times research is used by stakeholders (other than the RTO) to support business plan development (target – 10)
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Partnership Allocation

Priority / Strategic Focus	Objectives	Key Activities / Tactics	Performance Indicator
Marketing & Communication			
Collaborate with partners that align communication and marketing with RTO priorities and objectives.	Work in partnership to ensure commercial air service program, and regional product communication are supported.	Using staff resources communicate organizational operational plans, strategies, objectives, and outcomes. Circulate partnership criteria and process to regional stakeholders. Work with third party(s) to establish partnership work plans, key deliverables, and dates. Using staff resources communicate mid partnership progress and final report to board of directors and stakeholders.	# of communication and marketing partnerships (goal and target – 8)

Marketing Communications Plan

Context

The 2018 *Product Research & Framework* study ([Click Here - Appendix 1](#)), which is the basis for the 3-Year Strategy pertaining to marketing, identified six “Key Tourism Activities” (KTAs) that were most likely to motivate high potential international travellers to the region. These include:

- Indigenous Cultural Tourism
- Being Lakeside
- Hiking
- Paddling
- Wildlife Viewing
- Guided Nature Tours

With the return of commercial air service (intended to attract international travellers) and the opening of domestic travel, RTO12 will continue to market the KTAs to build both international and domestic visitation. The establishment of hyper local marketing, integral to the ongoing recovery of the regional industry, will continue as well, though an increase in this targeting by multiple local agencies will require more consideration of how not to duplicate efforts.

Continuing With the 3-Year Strategy

Package Sales

A key deliverable the re-designed consumer site is to feature and promote package sales on interior pages and in content (main CTA). This is part of the organization’s commitment to increase higher-yield travel conversions, and to increase organizational revenue.

New Segments in a Covid World

In the summer 2020, Explorers’ Edge undertook a substantial region-centric consumer research study ([Click Here - Appendix 2](#)) to determine macro and micro travel intentions in pandemic/post-pandemic times.

The results indicated that the regional brand – “The Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto” – will resonate extremely well with domestic and international travellers for years to come and act as a catalyst to book (in contrast to provincial urban destinations, where travel intentions are lower).

As a result of the study, which included factor analysis of the primary research, Explorers’ Edge created four new traveller segments, two of which became the primary audiences for targeting in 2021-2022, and which will continue for 2022-2023.

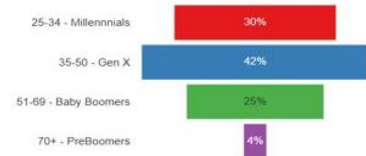
NEW - Ontario Staycation Tax Credit

All content marketing landing pages and commercial air service pages will include information related to the temporary Ontario Staycation Tax Credit. The credit aims to encourage Ontario families to explore the province, while helping the tourism and hospitality sectors recover from the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Top Priority Segment 1: Excellent alignment with brand, regional offerings, and KTAs



ONTARIO ACTIVE & OUTDOORS (43%) Immersive & active, want to be outside and occupied



Skews higher education



Most likely employed with average income



Married/common law with kids

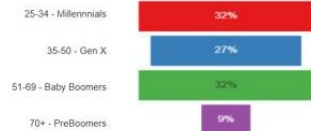
Drivers to travelling in Ontario	Being active, escaping, relaxing
Barriers to travelling in Ontario	Lack of flexibility, things to do, safety protocols
Product	Winter and Fair weather sports, nature, relaxing
Impact of COVID on travel	Cancelled plans in 2020 but likely to travel in 2021
Focus	Appeal to their vitality and need for escape

Top Priority Segment 2: Highest % of most-likely-to-travel/Millennials



FREE & FOMO (6%)

Experiential, looking for authentic experiences



Average to high education



Most likely employed with high income



Married/common law, some with kids

Drivers to travelling in Ontario	Exploring, being out there, taking great pictures
Barriers to travelling in Ontario	Not feeling excitement about what's available
Product	Wine/brews tours, culture, relaxing
Impact of COVID on travel	Cancelled plans in 2020 but likely to travel ASAP
Focus	Appeal to need to explore & fear of missing out

Hyper Local Travel: Here to Stay

The pandemic saw the exponential rise of hyper local travel to sustain regional businesses. Marketing to 'backyard tourists' is now a staple strategy of any destination and will remain so for a long time to come. Explorers' Edge will continue to build this audience to promote intra-regional travel and make particular use of incentivized local travel packages to do so.

The hyper local market is also important for ensuring outbound sales and high load factors on the Porter Airlines summer seasonal service in 2022.

"Stop & Go" Marketing

Our long-standing content marketing program has served us well during the pandemic when, depending on orders from the provincial or federal governments, we could be open or closed at a moment's notice. Internally, we call this "Stop & Go" marketing. One week we could be in a holding pattern and only publishing scenic content with no call-to-action (CTA); the next we could be targeting regions of Ontario not under travel bans or lock down orders to book a getaway or to sign-up for a local travel package.

To that end, though this plan entails producing and promoting a specific amount of strategic content, Explorers' Edge recognizes that our approach moving forward must continue to be flexible, adaptable and scalable as long as external pandemic influences exist.

Marketing Priorities 2022-2023

- Continue to promote the long-standing GCWNT brand and brand voice (“earnest, approachable, informed and most of all, Canadian”)
- Target hyper local, domestic, and international markets depending on provincial and federal travel restrictions.
- Ensure the return of commercial air service with Porter Airlines is a success (optimize inbound and outbound load factors)
- Publish exceptional content (‘educate, entertain, convince’) and launch promotion that is flexible, adaptable, and scalable.
- Use successful social, mobile content promotion tactics (primarily Facebook) while testing additional platforms to reach up-and-coming travellers/younger audiences.
- Sell product packages and itineraries (primary CTA) / also work with Porter Escapes
- Develop and promote incentivized travel packages, such as *Fuel & Fun* and the *Cottage Country Spirit Local Travel Package*
- Reboot lead nurturing marketing, which was halted during the pandemic.
- Maintain/develop content on BikeCottageCountry.ca, CottageCountryBeerTrail.ca and GolfMuskoka.com

Overall Goal:

Build hyper local, domestic, and international leads and convert them to higher yield* travel purchasers in the Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto (when it is safe/legal to do so).

**Higher yield does not connote luxury travel segments only. Rather it is travellers who stay longer and spend more, regardless of their travel budget and intentions. The aim is to attract more of these visitors, instead of mass volumes of lower-yield visitors.*

Overall Strategy:

Use proven social content marketing program to promote itineraries and packages to attract and convert higher-yield travellers, whether originating from hyper local, domestic, or international markets.

Tactics:

- Content Development (note: not all content will be boosted with spend as the budget is considerably less than other years)
- Facebook Marketing (promoted posts and ads)
- Display Advertising (for package promotion)
- Potential Retargeting with Display
- Lead Nurturing (database and email marketing, which includes segmenting hyper local, domestic, and international leads for better quality interaction and better chance of conversion)
- Earned Media: develop robust hyper local, domestic, and international media databases and promote products and packages.
- Product Zooms: develop product-related “Branded Travel Zooms”
- Repurpose content when fitting.

Measurable Objectives:

- 10 product/KTA themed pieces of content
- 1 Porter Airlines service piece of content
- 1 Explorers' Edge Airport Shuttle Service piece of content
- 5 itinerary themed pieces of content
- 2 sustainable practices themed content (promote respect for the landscape...work in conjunction with Muskoka Watershed Council "awareness days")
- Continue to develop a substantial hyper local, domestic, and international leads database
- Deploy minimum one media release per quarter.
- Increase hyper local leads: 200 new entries.
- Increase domestic leads: 500 new entries.
- Increase international leads: 100 new entries from targeted Designated Marketing Areas
- Deploy one e-newsletter per fiscal quarter to each segment (hyper local, domestic, international)
- Sell 50 packages

Strategic Partnerships

As always, Explorers' Edge will consider marketing partnerships with agencies (e.g. Destination Ontario, Chambers, DMOs, etc.) and entities (private businesses, etc.) whose strategies and objectives align with our own. (A caveat to partnership availability in 2022-2023 is that the priority of the Partnership Program will be regenerative development programs, including workforce projects.)

Activity Timeline:

See BOP Activity Chart Above

Budget:

See BOP Budget Below

Note: Due to the inability to anticipate when provincial or federal travel restrictions will be implemented or rescinded at any given time, the applied budgets are anticipated for Fiscal 2022-2023 but may be impacted depending on the state of travel over the coming year.

The Partnership Program

The Partnership Program will once again be an opportunity for industry and community partners to collaborate with Explorers' Edge on mutually beneficial and strategic initiatives. As Explorers' Edge adopts a "Region-Centric Regenerative Tourism Approach," priority will be to projects that help Explorers' Edge move towards its newly stated Destination Development 'goal posts.'

Staff will actively seek out significant, innovative, and strategic partnerships to further develop the organization's goals, and intake of proposals from the industry or community stakeholders will commence in Spring 2022 while at the same time continuing supporting regional level communication programs where applicable.

Risk Identification, Assessment, and Mitigation

While there are no identified barriers or possible risks to successfully delivering on BOP2022-2023, the Board of Directors will wisely defer some decisions until more data are obtained. The Board at times will also, if necessary, restructure a project such that the impact of early decisions on “downstream” execution is minimized. Additionally, projects will also be reviewed for go or no-go decisions at identifiable, discrete points.

RTO12 project risk management is an iterative process that begins in the early phases of each project and is conducted throughout the project life cycle. The RTO applies proactive, systematic thinking about all possible outcomes before they happen and defining procedures to accept, avoid, or minimize the impact of risk on the project.

Types of risk that are considered during the process include:

- Financial risk of the budget and project costs
- Government/political risk such as regulatory change, legislative change or policy change
- Physical risk such as natural disasters, fire, accidents, death etc.
- Technical risk such as IT security, infrastructure, software etc.
- Participants i.e. project managers, team members, stakeholders and experts.

The following Best Practices are implemented by the RTO to mitigate risk:

- Identify Early – identify risks as early as possible in the project lifestyle.
- Identify Continuously – continue to identify and reevaluate project risk.
- Analyze – analyze the potential impact of the identified project risk.
- Define and Plan – define risk thresholds and triggers.
- Communicate – regularly communicate status and risk.
- Update – update stakeholders as often as possible
- Educate- educate the entire board of directors and encourage them to actively communicate and mitigate risk.
- Work with other RTOs on mutually beneficial programs to further drive efficiencies and reduce duplication efforts.

2022-2023 Budget

Budget Items	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Governance and Administration					
Salaries & Benefits	27,500	27,500	27,500	27,500	110,000
Governance	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,000
Overhead / Facilities	15,000	15,000	15,000	16,000	61,000
Finance and Administration (Accounting, Audit, Legal)	5,000	5,000	5,000	10,000	25,000
Travel	8,750	8,750	8,750	8,750	35,000
Industry Relations / Stakeholder Engagement	1,625	1,625	1,625	1,625	6,500
Information Technology	2,000	500	500	2,000	5,000
SUBTOTAL					250,500
Product Development					
Salaries & Benefits	5,750	5,750	5,750	5,750	23,000
Product Development Engagement	20,000	5,000	5,000	2,000	32,000

Sustainability	0	4,000	0	0	4,000
Research	0	5,000	0	0	5,000
SUBTOTAL					64,000

Marketing and Promotion					
Salaries and Benefits	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	100,000
Marketing / Advertising	20,000	0	2,000	8,000	30,000
Commercial Air Service	100,000	0	0	50,000	150,000
Content Development / Guest Authors / FAM Tours	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	5,000
Promotions/Contests/Incentives	2,000	3,000	1000	4,000	10,000
Creative Development	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	5,000
Project Mgmt. Ad Trafficking	4,000	0	0	2,000	6,000
Strategist (Retainer)	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	30,000
TICO	0	0	0	3,000	3,000
Newsletter	750	750	750	750	3,000
Shuttle Service	0	50,000	0	0	50,000
Reservation Platform	4,000	0	0	6,000	10,000
Transacting / Dispersion / Tracking	0	50,000	0.00	0.00	50,000
SUBTOTAL					452,000
Investment Attraction					
Salaries & Benefits	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	20,000
Outreach / Meetings	0	1,000	2,000	607	3,607
SUBTOTAL					23,607

Workforce Development					
Salaries & Benefits	15,250	15,250	15,250	15,250	61,000
Workforce Recruitment, Training and Outreach	10,000	5,000	2,500	2,500	20,000
Workforce Research & Development	40,000	20,000	20,000	15,000	95,000
SUBTOTAL					176,000
Partnership					
Salaries & Benefits	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	16,000
Marketing & Communication	50,000	25,000	10,000	25,000	110,000
Regional Marketing / Workforce	5,000	30,000	15,000	6,000	56,000
SUBTOTAL					182,000
TOTAL AGREEMENT COSTS					1,148,107