

**Draft Business  
&  
Operational Plan  
2024-2025**



**Town Hall Presentation 2024**

# Today

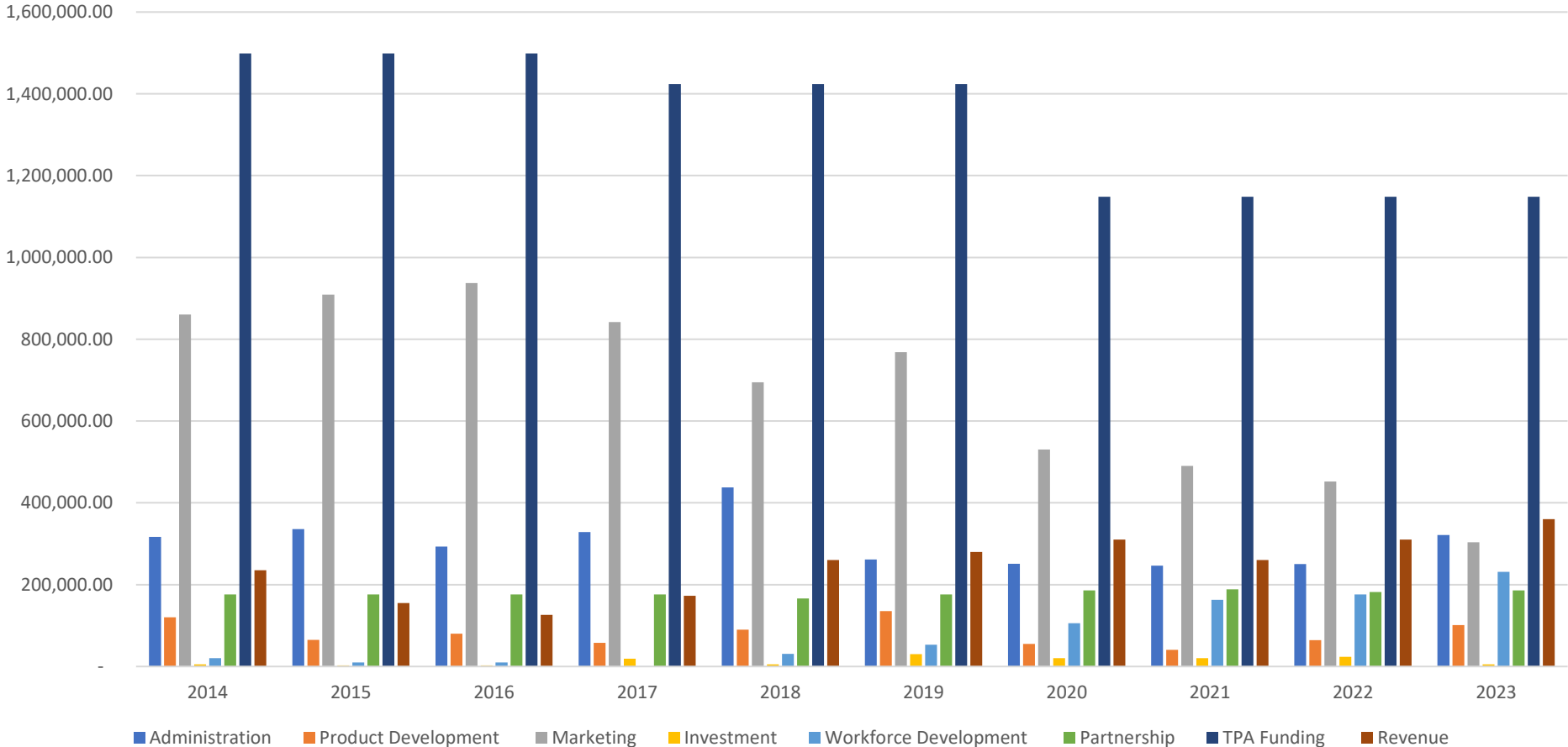
- Quick Round Table
- Reminder of the Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) and Business & Operational Plan (BOP) process
- Pillars & Priority Projects
- Current Regional Sector Status
- Higher Yield Marketing Strategy
- Workforce Infrastructure Strategy (including Catalyst Housing)
- Tentative Budget
- Governance Updates

# Quick Round Table

- **Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA)**
  - April 1 – March 31
  - Inclusion of Ministry Pillars
  - Current annual funding \$1,148,107.00
  
- **Business and Operational Plan (BOP)**
  - Submitted to Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport for approval January 15 each year
  - Pillars weighted differently each year.

# TPA Does Not Track Additional Funding

Historical TPA Funding Pillars - Year over Year - With Revenue



# Region-Centric Regenerative Approach



*Within the circle are the community stakeholders.*

*Outside the circle are the intended outcomes of the region-centric regenerative approach.*

# Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Sport Pillars

- Workforce Development
- Product Development
- Investment Attraction
- Industry Communication
- Governance
- Consumer Marketing

# Priority Projects / “Transformation in 3 Years” (T3Y)

- Regional Data Hub
- Product Development/Investment Attraction
- The Sustainable Tourism Pilot Project
- Big Applause Awards / Women In Tourism Social Clubs  
(workforce development & retention)



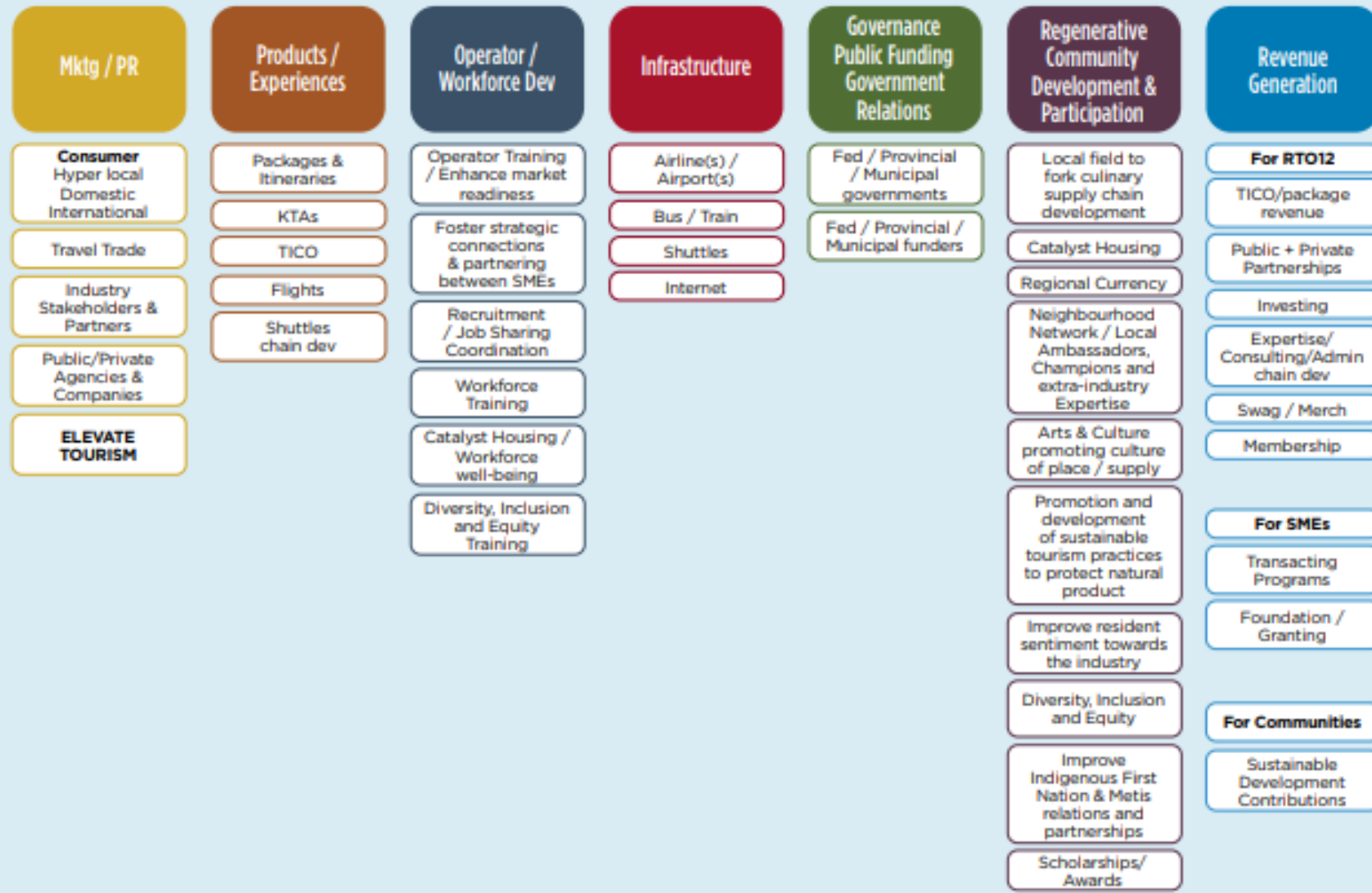
# Priority Projects / “Transformation in 3 Years” (T3Y)

- Revenue Generation for sector and organizational sustainability (includes “Regenerative Travel Agency”)
- Workforce Infrastructure Strategy (Train, House, Incentivize)
- Partnership Program



Figure 6: RTO12 – Destination Development Organization (Region-Centric Approach)

## RT012 – Destination Development Organization (Region-Centric Approach)



# Current Regional Sector Status

# Uneven playing field (sub-regional development)

- **FUNDING:** Muskoka heavily funded from multiple sources now (District, municipalities, MATs, DMO, Chambers)
- **MARKETING:** differentiated audiences depending on the sub-region (GTA vs. Ottawa, North Bay, Sudbury)
- **PRODUCT DEV:** (lack of funding or human capital)



# 2024-2025 BOP Recommendation:

Invest in sub-regional strategies and development (primarily **product/event development**) for under-funded sub-regions






# Duplication (Consumer Marketing)


**Destination Ontario**     
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Explore the snowshoeing c... See more






algonquinoutfitters.com   
**Start Your Winter Outdoor Adventures...** [Learn more](#)



  15 2 comments


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Snowshoeing promises not... See more






discovermuskoka.ca   
**Muskoka: The Snowshoeing Capital...** [Learn more](#)


   12 1 comment

 **deerhurstresort**   
anamē, gardenstate, Bien · The... 






**snowshoeing**

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# Duplication (Consumer Marketing)

 Destination Ontario   
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Winter glamping is the coziest way to immerse yourself in Ontario's snowy scenery. Stay in a heated dome, hot tent or rustic cabin, fall asleep beneath star-filled nights and awake to adventure literally on your doorstep.



NORTHERNONTARIO.TRAV...  
**11 Winter Glamping** [Learn more](#)

 Comment as   

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Learn to rough it or keep things pampered when you book your winter getaway just north of Toronto.



thegreatcanadianwilderness.com  
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# Duplication (Consumer Marketing)

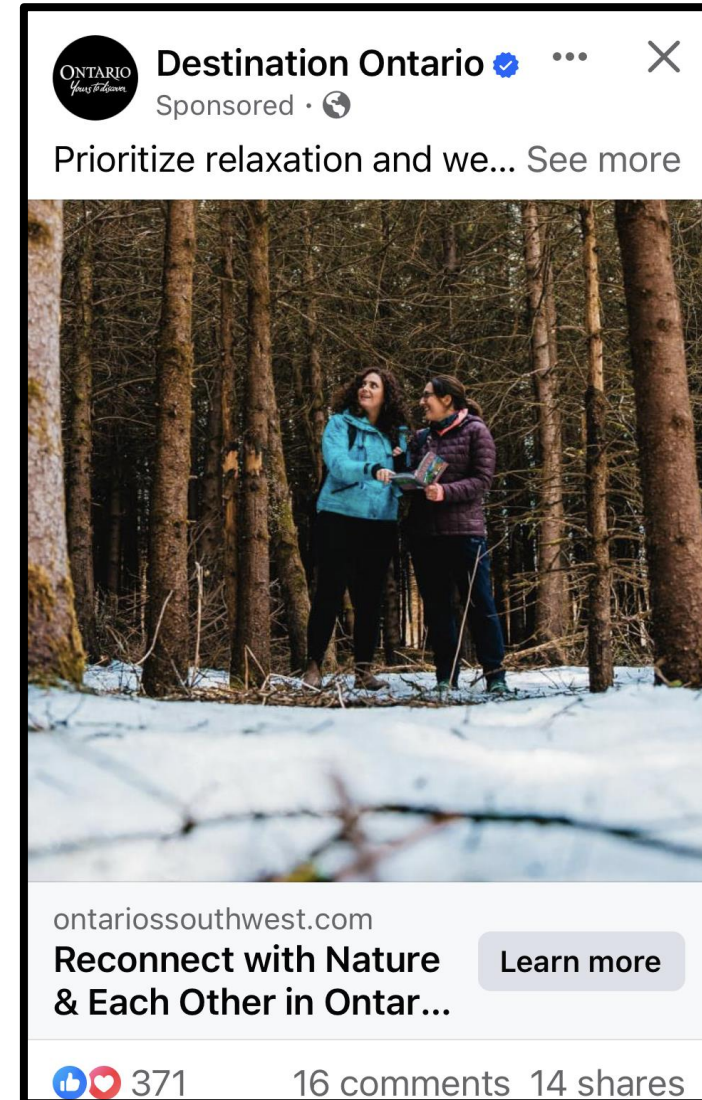




ottawatourism  Sponsored




**This winter,  
treat the  
whole family**

A sponsored social media post from Ottawa Tourism. The background is a winter scene with people snowshoeing on a snowy path. A large blue snowflake graphic is overlaid on the right side, containing the text "This winter, treat the whole family". The Ottawa Tourism logo and "Sponsored" text are at the top left.





Destination Ontario  Sponsored 

Prioritize relaxation and we... See more



ontariosouthwest.com  
**Reconnect with Nature  
& Each Other in Ontar...** [Learn more](#)

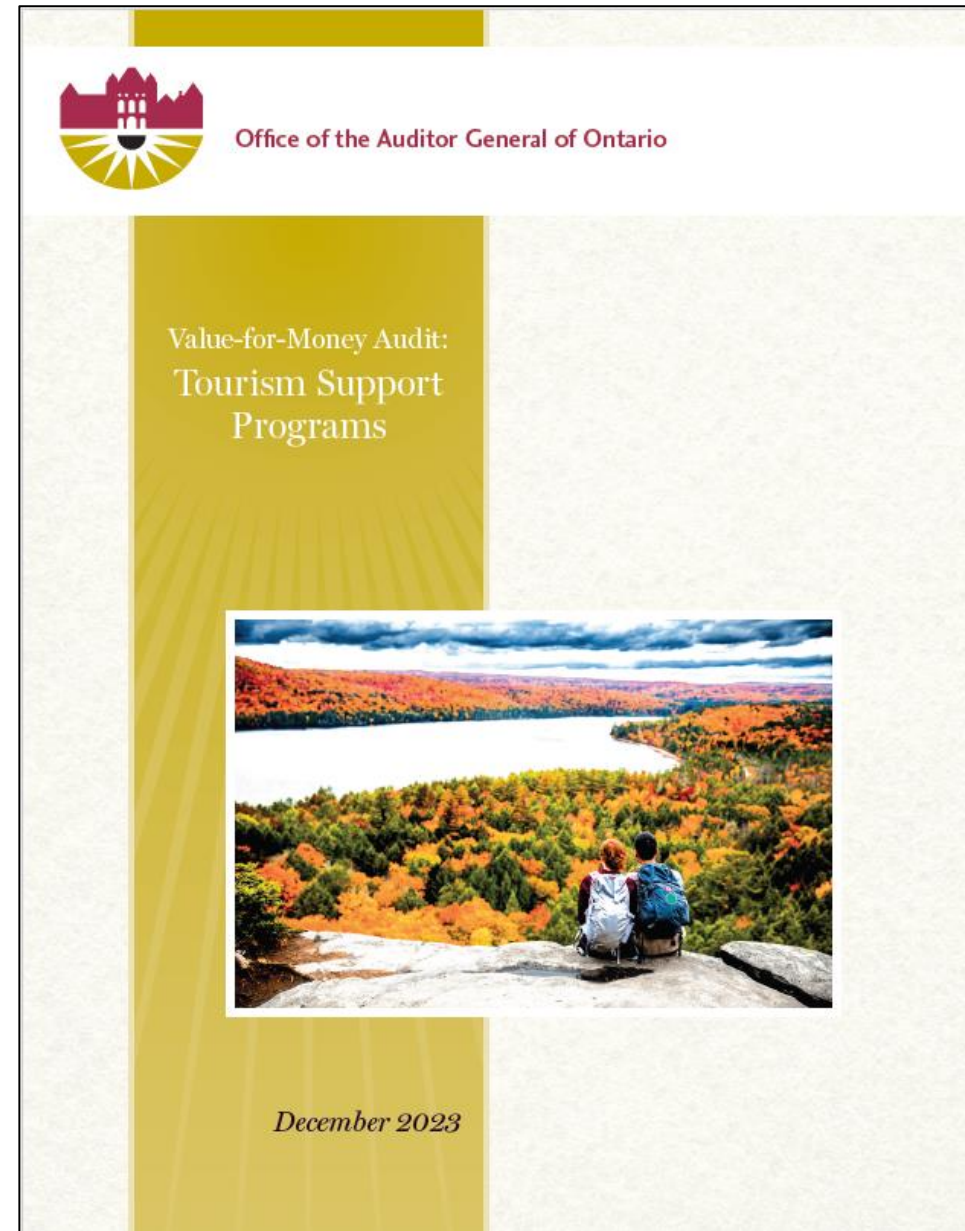
  371 16 comments 14 shares

A sponsored social media post from Destination Ontario. The background is a photo of two people standing in a snowy forest. The text "Prioritize relaxation and we... See more" is at the top. Below the photo, there is a link to "ontariosouthwest.com" and a truncated headline "Reconnect with Nature & Each Other in Ontar...". At the bottom, engagement statistics show 371 likes, 16 comments, and 14 shares.



# Value for Money Audit: December 2023

- Duplication
- Lack of provincial strategy



# Measures of Success

- Regional Data Hub Indexes
- Increased Spend (w/out increase in mass visitation & despite diminished workforce)

## RTO12 Estimated Visits:

2008:	3.5 million visit
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

# 2024-2025 BOP Recommendation:

## Higher Yield Marketing Strategy

Visitor numbers remain steady. Revenue increases exponentially.

(regenerative approach)

- Target “high value” travellers who have “purpose” or “personal identity motivation”
- More focused path to purchase with more relative nurturing along the way
  - Build destination loyalty (**Stay. Eat. Do. Repeat.**)
  - Eliminate duplication, inefficiencies (taxpayer \$\$)
    - Increase Visitor Spend

# Introduce

- Social groups of like-minded purpose travellers for lead nurturing (no more email marketing)
- Meet them where they are depending on identity/purpose
- Pre/During/Post trip contact, member-to-member recommendations, tips
- Loyalty programs / Incentives
- Operator-generated content
- Special socials “events” with regional “purpose” experts

# Introduce

- User-generated content
- Q&As
- Packages & Itineraries
- Online purchase function (Regenerative Travel Agency)
- Translation with AI/Avatars/Tech
- Revenue Generation for sustainability (pay-to-play)
- **AVOID GENERAL CATEGORIES/SEGMENTS**

# EXAMPLE 1 Specific Interest Group: Sustainability Avids

Opportunities for visitation based on personal identity (“I practice sustainability in my life first and foremost”) and specific-interest (“Where can I/ How can I have sustainable travel experiences?”)

## Promote & Highlight:

- Accommodations that operate with sustainability as part of their DNA
- Non-motorized outdoor adventures (paddling, cycling, hiking, foraging, sailing, etc.)
- Guided tours of eco-systems (e.g. Georgian Bay Biosphere, South Algonquin Stargazing events, wildlife photography workshops, etc.)
- Restaurants with local supply chains/dishes with native ingredients
- Field-to-fork culinary events
- Citizen science vacations (e.g. bird counts in Algonquin Park, etc.)
- Indigenous cultural tours



# EXAMPLE 2 Specific Interest Group: Dog Lovers

**Opportunities for visitation based on personal identity (“I’m a dog person”) and specific-interest (“What adventures are available for me and my dog(s) to come along?”)**

## Promote & Highlight:

- Pet-friendly accommodations
- Accommodations with dedicated dog parks
- Top Trails for exploring with a dog
- Best Beaches for swimming with a dog
- Paddling Pooches (e.g. instructional Tik Tok for buying a dog life jacket from an outfitter, as well as where to rent paddle gear)
- Ontario Parks (including Mikisew PP, which has a dedicated dog park)
- Events where dogs are welcome / location/attraction/event-based experiences (e.g. dog on top of famous lookouts for photo opportunities)
- Ice cream parlours with water bowls and treats
- Fido Photo Ops



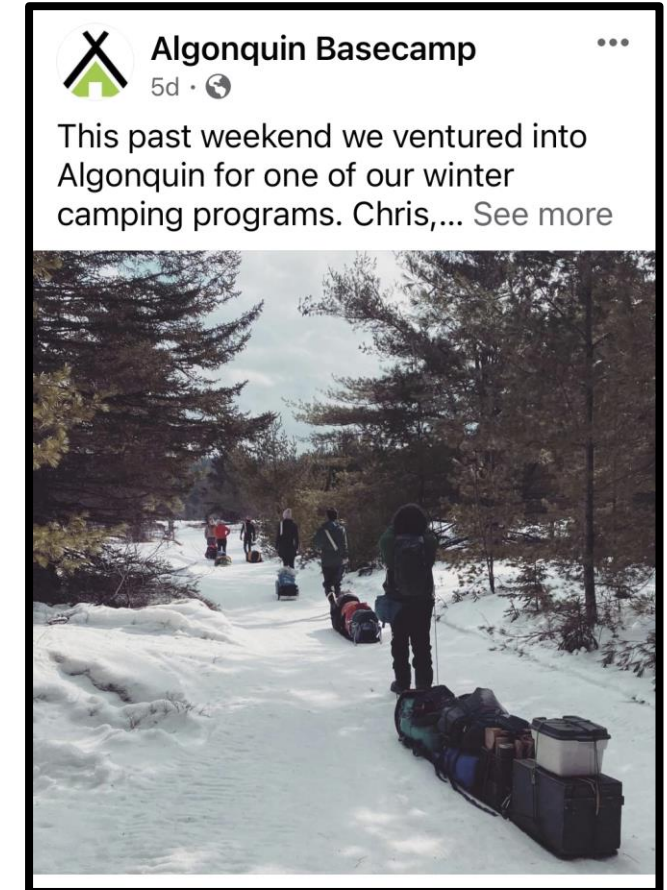


# EXAMPLE 3 Specific Interest Group: **Urbanites/Nature Deficit**

**Opportunities for visitation based on personal identity** (“I am a city person”)  
**and specific-interest** (“How can I experience quintessential Canadian experience?”)

## Promote & Highlight:




- Introduction to Canada’s rural areas/natural landscapes
- Intro to camping
- What you need to wear in the woods
- Primal living: learn to light a campfire
- Field to fork culinary experiences
- Winter is the hottest season of all
- Guided tours
- Learn to paddle
- First Nations cultural encounters (Wasaayaa, Misko Aki, etc.)
- Gateway events (live music, festivals, etc)
- Look up: Stargazing
- Transportation options (bus tours, shuttles)




# (Differentiated) Potentials

- VFR
- Boutique Business Events (“off-sites”) and conferences
- Family Events (weddings, reunions, grief/mourning gatherings, family vacations)
- Accessibility
- Product Avids (“I’m a golfer” “I’m a cyclist” “I’m a motorcyclist”)
- Luxury
- Women Solo
- New Age/Health/Wellness
  
- Germans in the great Canadian wilderness (test with Destination Ontario)




# Mini Test: Motorcycle Avids (multiple RTOs)




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The best winding roads, in a country of winding roads. Find your ride just north of Toronto, Ontario.




thegreatcanadianwilderness.com  
**Motorcycle Touring in the Great Canadian Wilderness** [Learn more](#)





 Like  Comment  Share




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Motorcycle touring just north of Toronto, Ontario. Stunning landscapes everywhere you turn, including Canada's oldest provincial park.



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**THE GREAT CANADIAN WILDERNESS**  
JUST NORTH OF TORONTO

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Home / Read On & Discover More / Motorcycle Touring in the Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto



## Motorcycle Touring in the Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto

BY KATE / JANUARY 1, 2024

There's great news for riders seeking an iconic Canadian wilderness touring experience: it's waiting for you just two hours north of the nation's largest city.



Pristine forests. Thousands of sparkling lakes and rivers. Granite rock outs and exposed shorelines. Winding backroads that range from tame cruisers to technical twisties. This is what riding in this stunning region – also known as "Ontario's Cottage Country" – is all about. In fact, quintessential Canadian landscapes and our renowned hospitality are probably closer than you think.

### About The Region

The region is located approximately **2 hours north of Toronto**, **2-1/2 hours from Ottawa** (the nation's capital), and **3 hours from world famous Niagara Falls**. One of Canada's most popular vacation spots, this place is home to unique sub-regions, each with its own distinct character and tons to experience off the bike.

Motorcycle Touring in The Great Canadian Wilderness

### Join Us for More Travel Planning Info: The Explorers' Edge Vroom Zoom on May 14, 2024

Explorers' Edge is the regional tourism organization for the great Canadian wilderness just north of Toronto. Interested in learning more about our region, the awesome roads, and all the epic things to see and do in this neck of the Ontario woods? Join us for a special "Vroom Zoom" event when our staff and two motorcycle journalists will answer your questions about riding in these parts. By the time we all gather, our rider will have been out to do his annual "Ride The Edge Check" – an annual ride and report on the state of our Top Roads. He'll share his observations – as well as any new-found places to stop. Click here to sign up for the Zoom, and be sure to include any questions you have for planning your visit.



### For more information on the great Canadian wilderness just north of Toronto, click here. To plan your stay, click here.




# Regenerative Travel Agency / Travel Industry Council of Ontario (TICO)

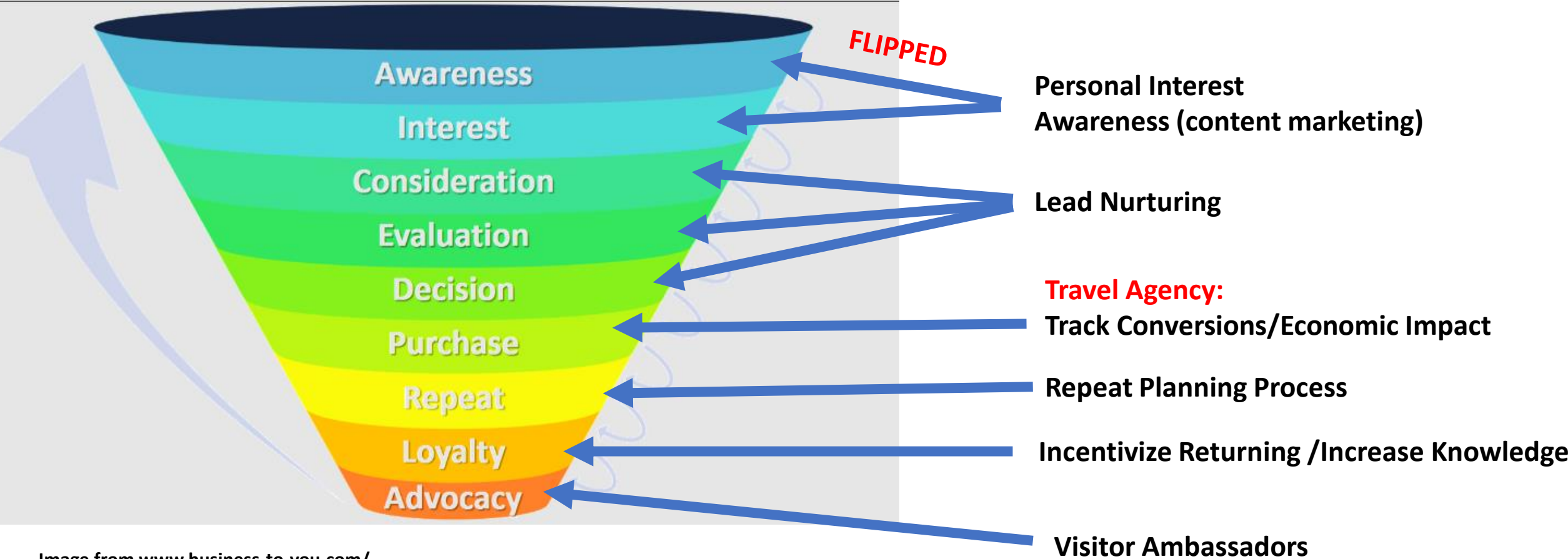


Image from [www.business-to-you.com/](http://www.business-to-you.com/)

- **Finalizing business model (need target audiences/customer segments)**
- **Revenue generation/pricing**
- **Scalable**
- **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

# Additional

- Destination Ontario Northern Marketing Committee returns
- EE ex-officio (Kate)

# Workforce Infrastructure Strategy

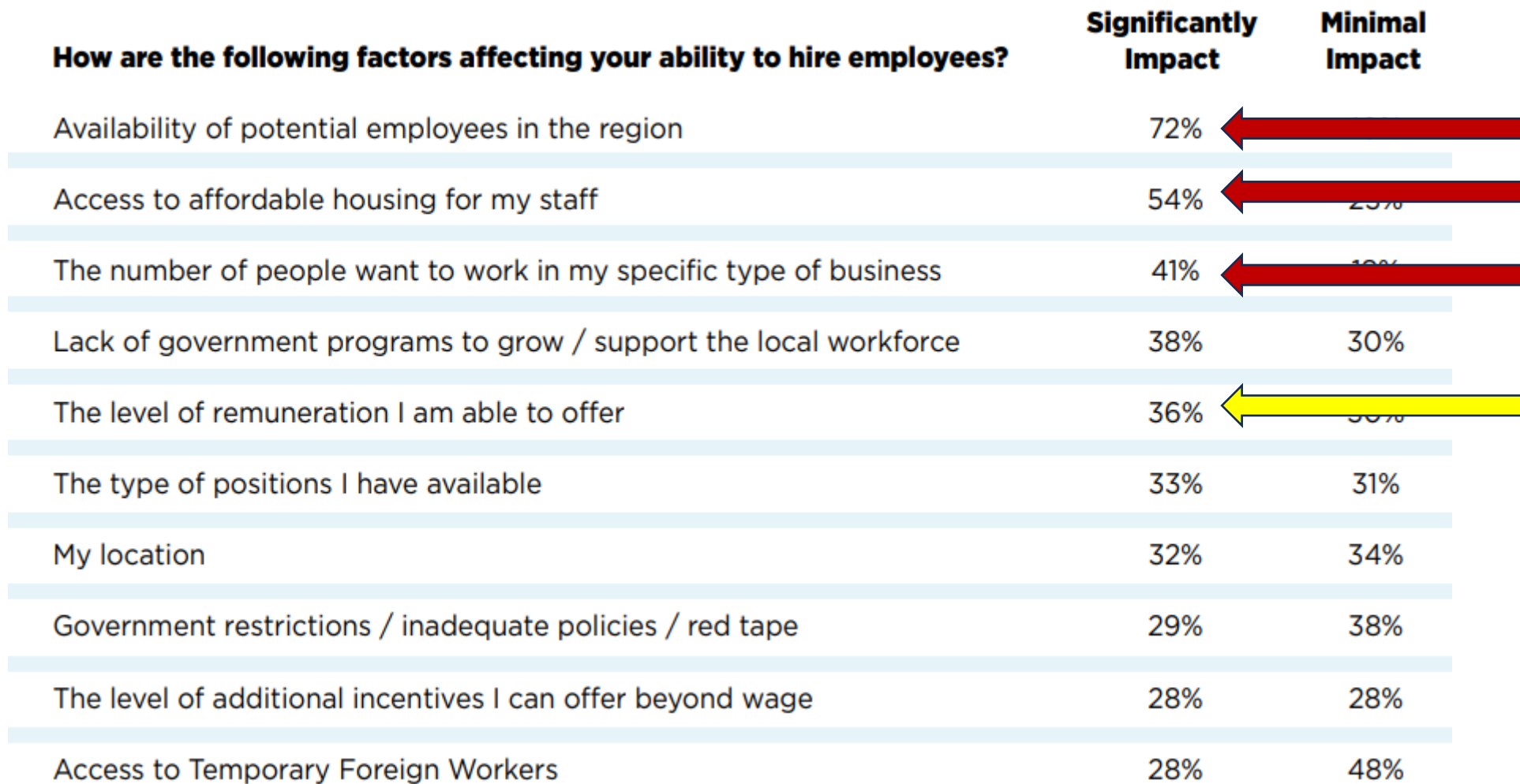
**Train. House. Incentivize.**





**2018-2024:  
Workforce Is #1 Issue**





**RT012**

# **Employee Sentiment Study WAVE 1**

**December 2022**



# 2018-2024: Workforce Is #1 Issue


- **Only 54% of current employees said they earn a living wage**
- **Only 46% of current employees would recommend a job in the regional tourism sector**

# 2018-2023: Workforce Is #1 Issue

## Likelihood to Relocate

- Barely a quarter of respondents say they would relocate for a tourism job
- Not a surprising result given the industry perception of paying low wages

**How likely would you be to relocate to take a new job in the tourism and hospitality industry? Would you be...**

				Gender			Age		
	Total	RTO12	Male	Female	Other	18-34	35-49	50+	
Total	378	308	198	180	-	89	113	176	
Very/Somewhat likely	24%	19%	25%	22%	-	34%	21%	20%	
Not very/very unlikely	75%	79%				64%	78%	79%	



## ADDRESSING THE “SPIN CYCLE” IN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ACROSS CANADA

Understanding the Need for Pre-employability  
Programming

Dr. José F. Domene & Dr. David Redekopp, with the assistance of  
Lindsay Warner



January 2024



- **4500 part-time and 1300 full-time positions needed**

# Workforce **Infrastructure** Strategy

Train. House. Incentivize.



# Workforce Catalyst Housing **Nutshell**

**In return for working in the regional tourism industry for a short-term period to fill our sector labour gaps...**

**We will lift the burden of rent in newly-developed sector housing...**

**While we train you in tourism and financial/housing literacy**

**To elevate you in a career and move you along the housing continuum.**

even **smaller** nutshell...

**Attract  
Workers.**

**Develop  
Professionals.**

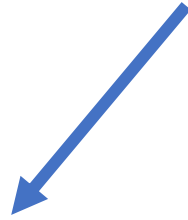
# Workforce Infrastructure Strategy

we train people

- Reverse negative perception of tourism as a viable career
- Build workforce from within the community
- Supports positive social outcomes for the community



# Workforce Infrastructure Strategy



we train people

- General Career
- Business Incubation
- Succession

## Succession challenges loom for aging business owners

CHRIS HANNAY > INDEPENDENT BUSINESS REPORTER  
PUBLISHED JULY 2, 2023  
UPDATED JULY 3, 2023



Domenic Masellis installs new windows in a house in Toronto on June 29.  
GALIT RODAN/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

4 COMMENTS SHARE BOOKMARK GIVE THIS ARTICLE

LISTEN TO ARTICLE

The past few years have been a busy time for Domenic Masellis.

Masellis Aluminum, the door-and-window-installation company he runs with his brother in Markham, Ont., rode the pandemic's home-renovation boom. Customers who were stuck at home with extra cash plowed that money into major renovation projects.

# Workforce Infrastructure Strategy

we train people

- Life Skills
- Financial Literacy
- Lower the Mortgage Risk

THE HOUSING CONTINUUM



# Workforce **Infrastructure** Strategy



we house people

Lessen the burden of rent for a fixed period to allow for career and life advancement.



- Donations
- Impact Investors
- Community Bonds
- Scalable Rent
- Rent-To-Own



## The community development organisation looking to publicly support affordable housing

When Haliburton County, Ont.-based affordable housing provider Places for People launched a community bond raise earlier this summer, one of the very first investors snapped up \$50,000 worth of bonds – a pretty significant chunk of the \$850,000 goal. That investor was the Haliburton County Development Corporation (HCDC), and executive director Patti Tallman says it was HCDC's longtime faith in Places for People's work that made investing a no-brainer. "Knowing the affiliation with Tapestry...we felt very comfortable in that investment," Patti adds.

After working with Places for People for many years – HCDC has loaned the organization money in the past for its affordable housing work – Patti says the community bond campaign was a welcome opportunity to publicly support Places for People's work. "We wanted to be able to show that HCDC is a huge supporter of the concept of what Places for People is and what they do," says Patti. "To be able to help launch the program right from the get go, it's maybe going to [encourage] more people to think, Yeah, I can make an investment here."



PLACES  
FOR PEOPLE



# Workforce Infrastructure Strategy

EXPLORERS' EDGE  
FALL 2023  
\$25 Voucher\*

FALL fuel & fun! PACKAGE

Algonquin Park • Almaguin Highlands • Loring-Restoule • Muskoka • Parry Sound • South Algonquin

THE GREAT CANADIAN WILDERNESS  
JUST NORTH OF TORONTO

EXPLORERS' EDGE

ONTARIO  
Yours to discover

\* Twenty-Five Dollar Fuel & Fun Fall Travel Package Voucher

- Accepted at participating businesses only
- Not redeemable for cash
- Must be redeemed between September 15 – November 30, 2023
- Some terms and conditions apply

[www.thegreatcanadianwilderness.com/fuelandfunfall2023](http://www.thegreatcanadianwilderness.com/fuelandfunfall2023)

Voucher #



we reward people

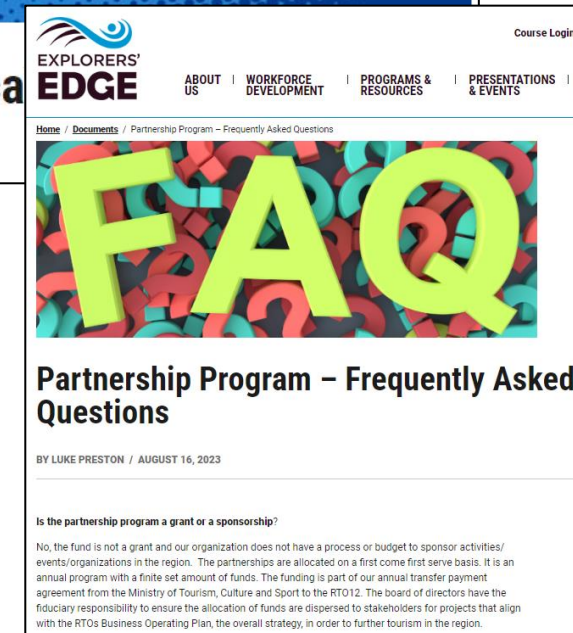
# Catalyst Housing Foundational Framework

- Determine granular level / local labour gaps
- Determine under-employed and unemployed segments
- Determine existing, curated and proprietary training
- Determine businesses that want units/subsidizing
- Determine business model per locale (social enterprise)
- Create highly-networked eco-system to meet objectives
- Plan for long-term success

# Partnership

# Partnership Allocation

- \$166,000.00 allocation
- At minimum 50 / 50 project cost sharing.
- Process
- Intake form, outreach, MOU, 3<sup>rd</sup> party contract, 3<sup>rd</sup> party payment, invoice partner,



# Partnership Allocation

Partnership Program 2023-2024	Pillar	RTO12 2023-2024 Contribution
Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve	Product Development	\$ 1,352.00
Tall Pines Music Festival	Marketing	\$ 6,438.00
Jaynes Cottages International Marketing	Marketing	\$ 1,641.00
Toronto Metropolitan University Work Integrated Learning	Workforce Development	\$ 12,272.00
Township of Muskoka Lakes Signage Program	Product Development	\$ 1,500.00
BlackFly Music Festival Marketing	Marketing	\$ 2,884.00
Howl Photography Conference Marketing	Marketing	\$ 3,325.00
Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency Fall Spotlight Program	Marketing	\$ 12,500.00
JW Marriott Resort & Spa   The Rosseau Muskoka Breakfast Television	Marketing	\$ 5,000.00
Town of Bracebridge, Ontario by Bike Product Development	Marketing	\$ 1,000.00
Resorts of Ontario Regional Members, International Collaborative Program	Marketing	\$ 1,200.00
Town of Parry Sound Cruise Ship Development and Dispersion	Marketing	\$ 8,236.00
Muskoka Arts and Crafts Marketing	Marketing	\$ 1,974.00
Festival of the Sound Marketing	Marketing	\$ 5,000.00
Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency, Muskoka Brand Perception Report	Product Development	\$ 26,598.50
Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency Winter Spotlight Program	Marketing	\$ 12,500.00

Partnership Program 2023-2024	Pillar	RTO12 2023-2024 Contribution
Town of Huntsville, Labour Shortage Gap Research	Workforce Development	\$ 15,000.00
Muskoka Chautauqua Marketing Program	Marketing	\$ 2,016.00
Muskoka Discovery Centre (Misko-Aki) Marketing Launch	Marketing	\$ 17,117.00
Almaguin Community Economic Development Fall and Winter Marketing	Product Development	\$ 5,000.00
Outdoor Adventure ATV Marketing Launch	Marketing	\$ 956.00
Parry Sound - Downtown Business Association Event Marketing	Marketing	\$ 884.37
Muskoka Chambers of Commerce - Muskoka Oktoberfest	Marketing	\$ 561.28
Georgian College Work Integrated Learning	Workforce Development	\$ 11,000.00
Bracebridge BIA, Bracebridge Fire and Ice Marketing	Marketing	\$ 5,000.00
South Algonquin Business Alliance - Trail Signage Program	Product Development	\$ 5,000.00
Holly Matrimony - Shoulder Season Product Development	Marketing	\$ 1,200.00
Bracebridge BIA Holiday Light Festival	Marketing	\$ 300.00
<b>Total</b>		\$ 167,455.15

# BOP Recommendations (Programs)

- **Increase overall marketing budget, test new “purpose travel” strategy, determine AOR**
- **Decrease research budget (core)**
- **Hire training/HR expert to assist with the development of work-integrated training for catalyst housing (Foundational Framework)**
- **Hire PR consultant to assist with corporate messaging and eventually investor relations (increase community, stakeholder and industry awareness of RTO12/programs)**

# BOP Recommendations (Programs)

- **Invest in sub-regional strategy and development (primarily product development)**
- **Increase third party revenue and track impact as part of organizational output (e.g. grants, Destination Ontario pilots)**
- **Support Women In Tourism Social Clubs development (an outcome of the co-creation session and part of workforce development/outreach)**



# Proposed Budget

Administration	Product Development	Workforce Development	Marketing	Investment Attraction	Partnership
<b>\$286,107.00</b>	<b>\$80,000.00</b>	<b>\$93,000.00</b>	<b>\$482,500.00</b>	<b>\$20,500.00</b>	<b>\$186,000.00</b>
	<p>Investment Website Updates</p> <p>Workshops and Town Halls</p> <p>Product &amp; Org Comm</p> <p>Sustainability Program</p> <p>Research (CBRE &amp; data collection)</p> <p>Staff Resource</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation (outreach &amp; time)</li> <li>• Market Research and Analysis</li> <li>• Sub Regional Concept development</li> <li>• Stakeholder Engagement</li> <li>• Budget and Finance information</li> <li>• Evaluation and Monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>Big Applause Awards</p> <p>Job Bank Communication</p> <p>Staff Resource</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum Development</li> <li>• Survey Review &amp; Analysis</li> <li>• Job Bank Platform and maintenance</li> <li>• Employer outreach and relationship building</li> <li>• Job posting management</li> <li>• Data collection and Analysis</li> </ul>	<p>RTA Incentivization</p> <p>In Market Spend</p> <p>TICO</p> <p>Newsletter</p> <p>See Chart</p> <p>Staff Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content development</li> <li>• Content review</li> <li>• Sourcing content</li> <li>• Strategy &amp; campaign development</li> <li>• Performance tracking &amp; analysis</li> <li>• Optimization</li> <li>• Reporting &amp; Communication</li> <li>• Partnerships and Collaboration</li> </ul>	<p>Meeting Budget Allocation</p> <p>Staff Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Market Research and Feasibility</li> <li>• Defining Bond Structure</li> <li>• Project Planning and Management</li> <li>• Investor Relations and Communication</li> </ul>	<p>Staff Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying Potential Partners</li> <li>• Building Relationships</li> <li>• Understanding Partners Needs and Goals</li> <li>• Proposal Development and Negotiation</li> <li>• Formalizing Agreements</li> <li>• Collaborative Planning and Coordination</li> <li>• Resource Sharing and Management</li> <li>• Monitoring and Evaluating Partnership Success</li> </ul>

# Supporting Governance

- Completed Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA)
  - September 2023
  - Corporate name change – RTO12
- Board Governance Chair
  - Review of current governance
  - Moving away from committees
  - Policy review



## **Women In Tourism Social Club: Celebrate International Women's Day**

**Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2024**

**Time: 4pm to 6pm**

**Place: Inn At The Falls in Bracebridge, Muskoka** (8 Mahaffy Ct)

**\*\*Celebrate In Parry Sound March 7th!\*\***

RT012's Women In Tourism Social Club is very pleased to also be a supporting partner for the International Women's Day celebration happening in Parry Sound on **March 7th, from 6pm to 8pm** at **Di Salvo's Bella Cucina**.

# Questions

[james@explorersedge.ca](mailto:james@explorersedge.ca)