Ontario Tourism Strategy
Implementation Plan
Accomplishments 2004-05
Priority Directions 2005-06

Ministry of Tourism and Recreation
A Message from Minister Bradley:

I am delighted to see that this year’s Tourism Federation of Ontario’s conference focuses on the implementation of the provincial tourism strategy.

The following provides information on the findings of stakeholder working sessions and the direction of the implementation process as a result of input from the tourism sector. Good luck in your deliberations.

Jim Bradley
Minister

Ontario Tourism Strategy Overview

5 Strategic Directions:

• Embracing a visitor-first philosophy
• Developing destinations and experiences
• Building the image and influence of tourism
• Strengthening strategic marketing
• Developing an “all of government” approach to tourism

Key Enabling Mechanisms:

• Infrastructure
• Market Intelligence
• Tourism Investment
• Information Technology
• Business Skills Development
Key Accomplishments for 2004-05 and Priority Directions for 2005-06

Embracing a Visitor-First Philosophy

2004-05 Accomplishments:
• Completed online regional tourism profiles showing where and why tourists travel in Ontario
• Held five stakeholder consultations on an accommodations rating system and completed an analysis of options for industry implementation
• Conducted customer relationship management training for tourism operators in the north

2005-06 Priorities:
• Implement a mobile Tourist Information Centre initiative in Toronto
• Implement industry quality recognition initiatives
• Undertake a tourist signage review (TODS)
• Support industry efforts to develop an accommodations rating system
• Undertake a new Travel Activities and Motivation Survey (TAMS)
• Advocate the interests of visitors in addressing border-crossing policies
• Develop a Tourist Ambassador Program in Toronto
Developing Destinations and Experiences

2004-05 Accomplishments:
- Completed the Premier-ranked Tourist Destinations Framework in four municipalities
- Initiated the Premier-ranked Framework in 14 municipalities
- Supported four projects to develop wine and culinary tourism experiences across the province
- Completed the Rideau Heritage Route development project
- Implemented the Convention Development Fund in five key convention cities
- Supported development of Francophone, Aboriginal and festival and event experiences across the province
- Completed six destination development projects in key regions

2005-06 Priorities:
- Initiate a Destination Development Team approach to coordinate efforts, resources and expertise in leading and emerging destinations
- The Ministry will work with the Rural Development Division of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to identify opportunities to support tourism marketing and development in rural and small communities
- Continue to support province-wide experiences such as:
  - Festivals and Events
  - Great Lakes Cruising
  - Wine and Culinary Tourism (e.g., Savour Ontario), Francophone Tourism, and Aboriginal Tourism
  - Outdoor tourism experiences (e.g., Go Fish Ontario)
  - Trails Strategy
  - Support the completion and implementation of Premier-ranked Frameworks across the province
Building the Image and Influence of Tourism

2004-05 Accomplishments:
- Developed the “Making the Case for Tourism” toolkit to assist communities in raising the profile of tourism locally
- Developed four Market Readiness workshop modules
- Conducted workshops with the Economic Development Council of Ontario to build the image of tourism as a business and an economic driver for communities

2005-06 Priorities:
- Distribute and present the “Making the Case for Tourism” toolkit
- Launched the Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model on the Ministry website
- Present Market Readiness workshop modules throughout Ontario
- Participate in “Beyond the City Lights” rural tourism conferences
- Implement an aboriginal youth apprenticeship program with NOTO and NONTA
- Work with the ministry’s agencies and attractions to incorporate economic impact information into local tourism advocacy
- Support industry capacity building and future sustainability
Strengthening Strategic Marketing

2004-05 Accomplishments:
- Multi-year strategic plan to market Ontario coordinated by OTMPC
- Conducted OTMPC review of website from user perspective
- Confirmed OTMPC as a government agency
- Established a joint northern marketing strategy with Fednor
- Delivered the Tourism Revitalization Program

2005-06 Priorities:
- Complete the Ontario Branding Exercise
- Conduct Marketing Partnerships with destination partners, for example:
  - Toronto
  - Niagara Falls
  - Ottawa
  - Muskoka
  - Southern and Northern Ontario
- Improve on-line experience for consumers
- Align Travel Information Centres to OTMPC’s marketing efforts
- Agencies and attractions will participate in strategic marketing in their regions.
All of Government Approach

2004-05 Accomplishments:
• Asserted Ontario’s interests in the development of a national tourism strategy
• Collaborated with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and NOTO to implement a resource stewardship agreements program
• Collaborated with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to include reference to tourism in Provincial Policy Statements (PPS) in the Planning Act
• Worked with the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services on Travel Industry Act amendments
• Transferred Uncle Tom’s Cabin from the St. Clair Parks Commission to the Ontario Heritage Foundation
• Worked with the tourism industry to ensure their concerns were recognized in government policy development (e.g., safe drinking water regulations, destination marketing fee, electricity issues

2005-06 Priorities:
• Pursue the implementation of a national tourism strategy
• Partner with the federal government to address barriers to tourism
• Promote tourism interests in planning initiatives:
  • Growth plan and transportation plan
  • Greenbelt Act
  • Municipal Act reform
• Explore additional partnership with Fednor
• Work with the Ministry of Natural Resources to streamline Crown land tourism resource allocation
• Update Innkeepers Act and Hotel Registration of Guests Act
• Address hotel levy and taxation issues
• Renew our northern tourism partnership with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
Enablers

2004-05 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

INFRASTRUCTURE:
• Worked with the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Renewal to address the tourism sector’s future investment requirements.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE:
• Maintained comprehensive research information on the Ministry’s research web site
• Established a Research Advisory Committee

TOURISM INVESTMENT:
• Updated the tourism investment website www.2ontario.com/tourism for investors
• Maintained a tourism investors’ database and monitored major tourism investments in the province

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:
• Provided Tourism Revitalization Funding for global online travel reservation systems to sell Ontario travel packages

BUSINESS SKILLS DEVELOPMENT:
• Launched the Tourism Business Bundle at www.serviceontario.ca

2005-06 PRIORITIES:

INFRASTRUCTURE:
• Continued provincial support of capital project construction (Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, Dragon Boat, Royal Ontario Museum, Art Gallery of Ontario, Ottawa Congress Centre, Ontario Place, York University stadium, etc.)
• New projects – Toronto International Film Festival Centre, bid for the 2015 World’s Fair

MARKET INTELLIGENCE:
• Travel Activities and Motivation Survey (TAMS) rollout
• Expand research outreach and communication

TOURISM INVESTMENT:
• Update the tourism investment website and database
• Work with municipalities on the development of investment opportunities

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:
• Conduct a regional pilot project to identify tourism information technology needs and solutions

BUSINESS SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
• Deliver market readiness workshops across the province