



East Algoma
Economic Development
Strategic Plan 



Community Values to Guide the Economic Development Mission

As derived at the Community Workshop on October 24, 2011

Municipality of Huron Shores

Prepared by:



Community Values to Guide the Economic Development Mission

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These are the outcomes of the Workshop on “Community Values to Guide the Economic Development Mission”, held on October 24 in Huron Shores.

As emphasized at the Workshop, openness and transparency are key aspects of the project process, so we now explain how the outcomes of the session were recorded and then “processed”.

For those unable to attend this session, the Community grouped themselves around tables. After an introductory presentation, questions were asked of the groups which were discussed and then recorded verbatim on individual flip charts.

- First, the contents of the flip charts were transcribed into a data-base, table-group by table-group, in the order in which the points were made. This data was then “frozen”, enabling us to reproduce the original flip charts at any time in the future.
- Then the input was separated into Values (DON'T WANT and DO WANT) and Ideas.
- The two sets of Value points were then reviewed and categorized. While such categorization can be accomplished in many different ways, and with finer and coarser degrees of analyses, our purpose was to focus on the economic development implications. During the Workshop, the conversations were deliberately not constrained to economic development matters, since Community Values are much broader. As a result, some of the points recorded relate directly to economic development, while others only connect indirectly. The categorized outcomes are provided attached.

Each Value point was “scored” by the Workshop participants to indicate those issues which were of most importance to them. These scores are also shown in the attached.

- The Ideas were not further processed and will be added to the other ideas that will arise during the project as possible initiatives to carry forward into the plans.

When reviewing the attached, the reader will note some conflicting points (not everyone will agree on everything in a Community) as well as some apparently contrary perspectives. For example, while more and better services and amenities are desired, people also want lower taxes. This is entirely normal and, once more, points towards the need for reasonable compromise in a Community. Of course, one solution to this is increased economic activity, the resulting prosperity enabling the Community to afford these better services and amenities perhaps without an increase in taxes.

The Values were then used by the Consultants to derive a Draft Mission Statement for Economic Development. This was accomplished by:

- Reviewing the Values (DON'T WANT and DO WANT) for their score.
- Using the higher scoring items that relate directly to economic development as crucial elements of the Mission Statement



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Draft Mission Statement for Huron Shores Economic Development

The Huron Shores Economic Development Mission is to enhance prosperity in the Community. Key strategies will focus on:

- Well-paying and enduring employment opportunities
- Encouraging diverse, value-added and appropriate industries to locate in the Community
- Agriculture as a key component

The Mission will respect the dearly held Values of the Community, most especially:

- Avoiding, minimizing or mitigating further impacts to all aspects of the natural environment
- Maintaining the individual and unique nature of the Community
- Keeping taxes as low as possible, consistent with the desired level of service

Also included is a paper that was presented at the Workshop by members of the Community, which was well received by the participants.

Please do review, critique and improve this through feedback to the Consultants. Comments and input on any and all aspects of the project would also be very welcome.

Thank you,



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WCM Consulting



Greg Bender
MMM Group

Contacting us

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- By mail or drop-in to: **Your Community Municipal Offices**



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Values as expressed by Community	Score
Agriculture - DON'T WANT	
No elk	1
Loss of agricultural land	
Imported species; elk, wild turkey	2
Agricultural land to be bought up	1
Agriculture - DO WANT	
Value-added industries for agriculture and forestry; maple syrup, furniture	8
Promote agriculture; revitalize the potential; adopt best agricultural practices; local foods	12
Hemp farms	
Community - DON'T WANT	
To watch the community die	4
To be solely a retirement settlement; loss of family values, institutions, education, culture	3
Super schools	1
Public school to close	
Over-development	
Non-inclusiveness; loss of mutual respect	
More people to leave	2
Loss of small town appeal and tourists	
Loss of rural lifestyle versus urban style; banking, social services	7
Loss of community influence on outside industry	
Loss of community feel	3
Loss of community activities	2
Increased poverty	
Impending change in postal system	8
Having private bankers control our debt	
Gated community	
For the community to disappear	6
For Iron Bridge to disappear	
Empty buildings	
Constant threats to my peace of mind	
Compromises	
Children to leave area for jobs	



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Values as expressed by Community	Score
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Children leaving and not returning; family values; institutions;
culture
Age discrimination

Community - DO WANT

Unified school system; resources go further	1
Sustainable, reasonable and humane development	
Population mix of different ages (demographics)	
Natural gas	
More stewardships	4
More policing	1
Managed population growth	
Inclusive, welcoming community to different cultures (Amish, Indian, etc.)	5
Improved roads and rail	5
Improved rail and passenger lines	17
Improved access to broadband communications to southern Ontario standards; cellular upgrade; 4G	5
High speed internet	
Growth in our community	
Diversity for the community and its individuals	
Community to grow	
An ongoing professional facilitator	3
Accessibility to services	6
A tidy municipality	4

Environment - DON'T WANT

Windmill farms; aesthetics and loss of land	2
Wind farms	3
Unsustainable use of natural resources	2
To waste paper	
Thoughtless destruction of trees and animal habitat	
Regional waste management - imported from out of the region	5
Pollution of any type	
Polluters	
Polluted water	1
Over-populated lakes	
Nuclear waste manufacturing facility	4
Nuclear power plant	2



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Values as expressed by Community	Score
Nuclear power	1
Nuclear generator	3
Nuclear facilities; dangerous health issues due to radiation	11
No large carbon footprint industries	
Negative impact on our environment; i.e.: Toronto's garbage or toxic waste	
Negative environmental impact	4
More hydroelectric dams	
Maple trees cut down	
Land polluted from garbage dumps	
Hydro plant	3
Garbage dump for southern Ontario	
Excessive pollution	
Clear-cutting	
Chemical trails (aircraft)	
Anything that threatens the existing environment	15
Anything nuclear	3
Any industry that dumps waste in our rivers; need a clean environment	2
 Environment - DO WANT	
Reforestation	5
Neutral environmental impact	3
Healthy environment (air, nature, water)	
Enhancement of our present natural resources	5
Clean energy	
Clean air	
Better waste management	
 Government - DON'T WANT	
Waste of taxpayers money and corruption in municipality; stagnation; lack of development	1
To become a huge municipality	6
Political corruption	2
Overburden of taxes	1
Over leverage the municipality to create economic development	2
More privatization (MTO)	
Mishandling of municipal funds	1
Less regulation on privately owned gravel pits	1



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Values as expressed by Community	Score
Higher property taxes Excessive government red tape	4
Government - DO WANT	
Sustainable infrastructure	
Provincial government investment in northern Ontario	1
More timely attention given to building ideas	4
More strategic planning	
More provincially funded municipal infrastructure	5
More local control of assets	
More infrastructure	
Lower taxes - put more thought into it	2
Less red tape concerning special interest groups	
Hydroelectric power run by municipality	2
A really good website	
Health - DON'T WANT	
Vaccines	
Business and Industry - DON'T WANT	
To lose any more businesses	
Sacrifice of "one lake" or watershed to facilitate big business	
Private industry that requires continual government support to survive; unsustainable	7
No heavy industries; e.g.: steel, pulp mills - due to pollution and aesthetics	7
Monopoly on sales of maple syrup (similar to Wheat Board)	2
Mega-projects	3
Industry that is an eyesore; aesthetics, pollution	4
Industry that depends on waterfront property; highest value land is gone; aesthetics	5
Foreign ownership/control of industry and assets	
Big industry	
Business and Industry - DO WANT	
Use of local natural resources	
Sustainable industry	



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Values as expressed by Community	Score
Solar farms in wasteland areas	
Small value-added industries; from forest to produced goods	14
More local processing of natural resources	9
More jobs	3
More internet jobs	
More employment; diverse industry to bring people back	25
Light industry	
Land development	
Jobs	6
Increased economic prosperity	17
Improved economy	1
Create sustainable employment	1
Clean industry; i.e.: value-added forest products	14
 For Seniors - DON'T WANT	
Negative impacts on seniors	
 For Seniors - DO WANT	
Keep hospitals and seniors facilities	4
 Tourism - DON'T WANT	
Too many tourists	
Industry that is solely tourist oriented; too much dependency on one industry	
 Tourism - DO WANT	
Beautify the area; build on our strengths	5
Beautification	2
 Youth - DON'T WANT	
Our children leaving to get an education and to find jobs; family values and loss of family institution	
Lose young people to distant cities (youth out-migration)	
Idle youth	
Brain drain, especially of youth; loss of well paying jobs and well educated people, youth	6



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Values as expressed by Community

Score

Youth - DO WANT

More kids in the community and school
Keep youth in area

1



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Ideas Generated

These were the ideas generated in the latter part of the Community Workshop. These have not been categorized and will be added to the mix of potential initiatives to be considered for the Economic Development Strategic Plan.

- 4G networks to enable local jobs (internet)
- A Tim Horton's in every town
- Access to local education opportunities
- Agriculture
- Be entrepreneurial
- Build houses for people to occupy and move here; creates and increase the tax base, jobs and spirit
- Cash crop processing
- Create a new province of Northern Ontario
- Create fair and responsible development of both resources and land
- Create jobs; after jobs are created the population increases and the community is repopulated
- Cultural and personal enrichment opportunities
- Develop committee/working group
- Eco-tourism
- Elder care/day care
- Elect an MP/MPP of the governing party
- Encourage cottage industries; e.g.: working from home and still raise families
- Enhance infrastructure to support industry development (mining, forestry, energy)
- Enhance tourism
- Fly fishing and fishing camps
- High speed internet for all Huron Shores
- Hire a professional facilitator
- Hire consultants
- Hydroelectric dam on Mississauga River
- Improve municipal website
- Improve the visitors first impression of Huron Shores
- Keep school open
- Landscape with no interruptions from government
- Loan interest programs
- Make Huron Shores a four season tourist destination
- Organic gardening/sustainable agriculture



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Pellet factory

Primary cottage industry

Promote artisan culture

Promote available commercial properties or properties for sale to attract businesses/families

Reduce taxes: smaller municipality; stop "make work projects"; encourage stewardship

Remove entry barriers to agriculture; ie:150 dairy farmers in Algoma Milk Marketing Board reduced to 9

Remove start-up barriers to all businesses, especially for Huron Shores residents

Spend less percentage of funds on roads

Tourism, with regulations to protect the environment

Use HST to fund these ideas

Youth centre/environment



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Paper presented by members of the Community

(reproduced from an electronic copy as provided to the consultants; only minor reformatting made to fit this document structure)

Re: Economic Development of Huron Shores

Submitted October 24, 2011 at the Day and Bright Community Centre

Thank you for the opportunity to express our ideas concerning the future development of Huron Shores.

In pioneer times, this area was referred to as a “Land of Promise”. Often the promise was not fulfilled because people tried to impose their ideas for development that were not sustainable in this area. The area around Maple Ridge is a fine example. In spite of farmers best efforts, the land was just not productive. Eventually, someone decided to exploit the land’s potential and there is a very prosperous aggregate business flourishing there today. Right now maple trees are being cut for lumber and firewood (they require 50 plus years to grow back) instead of using their sustainable production for maple syrup which would provide a yearly income. We should take a lesson from Quebec where maple trees are protected.

This meeting, almost a century and a half later, suggests that our area has become a “Land of Unfulfilled Promises” and that we want to try again to do something to change that. To that end, we would like to make some suggestions that would promote the sustainable development of Huron Shores in a post-industrial age. We must avoid the trap of industrial development that would bring short-term gain with long-term pain. No more broken dreams due to detrimental development schemes that benefit others and that will leave us with a damaged environment and economy for the next fifty years. The only industrial development we will be offered is that which no one else is willing to have near them and for good reason!

Let’s exploit the subtle realities and potential of Huron Shores and the North Shore of Lake Huron as a separate and distinctive region of Ontario. Let’s enhance, protect and share all that the area has to offer.



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It can be done. Remember the example of Elliot Lake. In the ‘boom and bust’ cycle of a natural resource economy, the small, modern city rapidly emptied after the mines closed. It wasn’t a temporary trailer town, so the physical assets couldn’t just be moved to the next boom area. The problem was how to fill the abandoned homes with people who could sustain themselves economically under the new reality of minimal employment opportunities. They cleverly appealed to the growing retiring population of the province who had a relatively fixed but reliable source of income and the leisure time to enjoy recreational activities of all kinds. The major negative reality was the radioactive tailings left from the mines. They have spent millions managing the tailings and assuring the population the remediation is to the level achievable by the best modern technology.

In Huron Shores, we have not had a ‘boom’ that damaged the surface or subsurface. We are in a far stronger position for sustainable, successful development. BUT, we cannot entertain the temptations of mega-projects that would create construction jobs for only a few people for a few years and then render the land dangerous for the foreseeable future, way beyond our lifetimes.

Evaluation of Potential Economic Development for Huron Shores.

Physical Assets:

- Unique geology
- Accessible wilderness
- Four distinct seasons
- “Group of Seven” natural beauty
- Trans-Canada highway
- Muskoka-like abundance of lakes
- Lake Huron
- Abundant wildlife
- Proximity to the American border
- Successful Farms

Human Assets:

- Active farming families
- Artisans and artists
- Active retirees with extensive training
- Employable people who are willing to provide services
- People who can telecommute (we need reliable high speed)



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Overall, this area needs an image, maybe like that of New England, to make others aware of:

- Culture and heritage of local First Nations
- The natural beauty
- The unique geology and landscape
- Inexpensive but quality recreational experiences
- Affordable and enjoyable sustainable living for retirees
- Charm of active and vibrant community life such as community suppers, card nights. Christmas concerts and active interest groups
- Special sites that are relatively invisible to visitors and many local residents, such as the Boom Camp Trails, Falls of the Mississaugi, Bell's Falls, Harris Creek. Lake Huron at Dean Lake, the public beach at Little Basswood Lake and the beautifully signed historic trails whose location is a mystery
- Dark skies where the stars can be observed on any clear night of the year
- Hunting and fishing opportunities

The infrastructure is in place for hunting and fishing and this is the only activity that people in southern Ontario are aware of since it is promoted by Algoma Kinniwabi. Most people in Southern Ontario don't fish or hunt.

Why not promote:

- Natural beauty such as the Deer Trail Touring Route but with accessible explanations of what one is viewing?
- Affordable opportunities for artists wanting to experience plein air wilderness painting?
- Educational workshops in arts and crafts for all ages (like those offered by Sheila Currie)?
- Local services required by an aging or non-resident population, such as landscaping assistance (mowing and snow removal), opening and closing cottages, shuttle service between nearby towns, housekeeping, cooking (like Fred Falls), reliable transportation to Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury by Shuttle bus or Budd car?
- The local geology by offering reduced rates to the Geology Departments across North America who come with students each summer? In return, they could provide mini-lectures and field trips for non-geologists.
- Family summer camps or lodge experiences with affordable accommodation and activities for parents and engaging programs for children?
- Shop(s) visible from the highway (not in private homes) offering goods of local manufacture from the Amish, potters, artists, etc. instead of just during the times of the 'tours'?
- The quaint and cozy ambience of the villages by filling in the 'gaps' and consolidating the image?



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- Farm experiences either by offering farm vacations or by having events showcasing aspects of farming life (such as the Barn Tours)?
- Consistent, quality opportunities for resident and visiting children such as travelling Science North events on a weekly basis?
- Development and maintenance of well-signed hiking trails with guides for visitors.
- Boat tours, especially of Lake Huron

Summary:

In order to achieve sustainable development in this area without seriously compromising the beauty and quality of life we have now, we are going to need to train local people in entrepreneurial skills such as bookkeeping and business management. Many will also require financial assistance for awhile. We also will need to provide training opportunities for service providers and their employees so that the level of service provided is reliable, efficient, enthusiastic and sustainable – something in which everyone can take pride because visitors and residents will be more likely to have happy memories of the area and will be more likely to want to return or stay.

A professional facilitator is essential to co-ordinate these activities, aid and encourage small entrepreneurs, find government funding and make our North Shore known and available! This facilitator could be employed by all the municipalities of the North Shore if they share the same vision.

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