

## ***NORTH COUNTRY REDC***

### **WORK GROUP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS REPORT FORM:**

- ❖ *Tourism:*
- ❖ *July 26, 2012:*
- ❖ *James McKenna; Gary DeYoung:*

This form should be used to report the following\:

1. Refinements to existing strategies which are included in the NC REDC Strategic Plan.
  2. New “Strategies” that fit within the NC REDC Strategic Plan “Visions”.
  3. Information about a potential project(s) that implement refined or new strategies.
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1. Review designated “Strategies” and suggest refinements, if need, or a new strategy. If this is a new strategy (ies) please add information justifying the strategy (ies).

#### **“Refined” or “New” Strategy:**

*Strategy 2: Develop tourism infrastructure to transform the region by driving community development and leveraging private investment in tourism hub communities and corridors.*

In tandem with the existing corridor planning initiatives (byways, blueways, trails), a consistent program of community master plans for tourism can provide the framework to inform strategic tourism incentives and monitor performance against regional metrics. This refinement suggests that the NCREDC and State work to define tourism hub communities and encourage the creation of tourism development plans in those communities.

2. Review list of 2012/Year 1 designated “Actions” and suggest refinements, if needed. Note where an action has been accomplished or if an action is currently in progress. If this is a new strategy describe “Actions” that are underway and have to be completed in 2012/Year 1.

#### **Actions that implement the “Refined” or “New” Strategy in 2012/Year 1:**

- *Working with a state agency, develop and define TOURISM HUB program to identify tourism-focused communities and encourage the development of tourism master plans.*

3. Review list of 2013/Year 2 designated “Actions” and suggest refinements, if needed. Note specific actions which have to be accomplished to keep the action on track or if an action is currently in progress. If this is a new strategy describe “Actions” that are underway and have to be completed in 2013/Year 2.

**Actions that implement the Strategy in 2013/Year 2:**

*Outreach to encourage communities to participate in a tourism planning process and compile list of “tourism hub” communities that have organized development and planning around inter-connected tourism initiatives that include public and private investment.*

*Begin to formally recognize communities as regional tourism hubs.*

*Identify needed assistance that will aid communities in meeting their tourism performance goals. (see attached outline of concept)*

4. Review list of “Stakeholder” resources (see Regional Implementation Agenda forms) and suggest revisions and/or additions which advance refined or new strategies and actions.

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5. If your Work Group has information about a potential project(s), please submit as much information as possible in the following format:

Submitted By/Date:	Name: Tourism Work Group	Date July 26, 2012	
Point of Contact:	Gary DeYoung		
Contact Information:	gary@visit1000islands.com		
County/Municipality:			
Brief Project Description:			
Existing NCREDC Project?	Yes	No	
Project Status (Check 1):	Development	In Progress	Completed
Transformational Project?	Yes	No	
Project Type:			
Anticipated State Date:			
Phased Project:	Yes	No	
Industry:			
# Jobs project will create:			
Vision Category:			
Total Project Cost:			
Funding needed:			
Other Funding sources:			

**North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Tourism Hub Community Strategy  
2012 Regional Council Plan**

A tourism destination is a complex web of “attractions” or demand generators and visitor services. Demand generators examples include recreational facilities, historic sites or entertainment venues. Visitor services include lodging, restaurants, transportation and secondary entertainment. Supporting these enterprises demands both traditional public infrastructure and specialized public services.

The goal of the tourism hub designation is to provide a tool by which tourism-focused communities can demonstrate the need to bundle development assistance toward the goal of becoming a destination with the capacity to attract and sustain tourism enterprises. Tourism hub communities would be specifically identified in NCREDC plans. The nomination process would seek to clearly identify communities with significant opportunity for job growth based on tourism.

This program would be expected to mesh with existing corridor programs such as byways and blueways to provide an interconnected tourism planning vision for the North Country. Further, it would build on the work already done in communities that have Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, Mainstreet Programs and existing tourism master plans initiated at the local level. Designated tourism hub communities will demonstrate a commitment to making tourism a key economic driver in their community by having engaged in tourism development planning and having initiated local projects whose primary goal is tourism demand generation. Further, tourism hub communities will have a fundamental resource base necessary to support development as a tourism destination.

Tourism hub communities may have a multi-faceted approach to community development which recognizes facilities supported by sustainable tourism as key creating a livable community with an enhanced ability to attract other types of investment and job growth. However, the process is not intended to identify projects in which tourism is a secondary consideration.

Several communities in Essex and Clinton Counties have already completed tourism master plans that would inform their positioning as a tourism hub. Examples of broader region program also exist. The North Country’s neighbors in Ontario’s St. Lawrence Valley engaged in a tourism master planning process that produced individual, but coordinated plans for communities from Kingston to Cornwall.

To implement the program, the Work Group suggests that the NCREDC seek the assistance of a state agency with community planning and economic development capacity to provide advice, expertise and support services.

As the program is implemented, implementation elements from hub community tourism plans would receive favorable consideration in the CFA scoring. Further, the NCREDC could identify new tourism actions and strategies based on information extrapolated from completed plans.

## Potential Tourism Hub Community Nomination Questions

Demonstrating community commitment to tourism:

- 1) Is the community engaged in local planning efforts to facilitate revitalization based upon tourism? If so, please forward planning document(s).
- 2) Is the community designated as a waypoint or hub community in a regional destination/corridor/tourism development plan? If so, please forward a pdf of planning document(s).
- 3) What are the community's immediate plans to develop its tourism infrastructure?
- 4) Has a feasibility or market analysis been conducted for these proposed improvements? If so, please forward.
- 5) Are private sector partners in place for these improvements?
- 6) What projects/programs is the community currently pursuing for tourism infrastructure development?
- 7) What CFAs or Priority Project requests is the community submitting this year to advance tourism infrastructure or amenity development?

Tourism resource base:

- 1) What unique attractions make the community a destination for overnight visitors?
- 2) What tourism infrastructure currently exists in the community? Provide an inventory of accommodations, dining, retail stores and attractions that currently serve the tourism market.
- 3) Does the community currently market or promote its tourism offerings? If so, how?

Quantifying potential – establishing performance metrics

- 1) Current occupancy tax revenues and goal projections
  - a. Current ADR and REVPAR and goal projections
- 2) Sales tax revenues per household and goal projections
  - a. Direct tourism based sales revenues, by sector?
- 3) Direct tourism based full and part time employment and goal projections
  - a. Average tourism wages
  - b. Tourism wages as a percentage of labor income
- 4) Property tax base of tourism related enterprises and goal projections
  - a. Tourism property tax as percentage of overall assessment in community