

Tourism Advisory Committee September 6, 2019 – 9:00 AM

The Tourism Advisory Committee met on the above date at the County Administration Building with the following members in attendance:

Present: Andrew Siegwart, Jim Halliday, Joel Dawson and Councillors Shirley Keaveney and Sue Carleton

Regrets: Andrea O'Reilly and Jim Diebel

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer, Bryan Plumstead, Tourism Manager; Heather Aljoe, Tourism Marketing and Communications Specialist; Alison Theodore, Tourism Partner and Media Relations Specialist; Tara Warder, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator; and Jacquelyn Morrison, Acting Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

Presentation of Environics Mobile Data – Grey County & Key Communities

Bryan Plumstead addressed the Committee on the results of the Environics mobile data collected within Grey County. It was noted that this data is primarily collected from those users who are utilizing specified mobile applications and have location services turned on. Populations are divided into segments utilizing postal codes which reflect specific demographic, social and economic characteristics. Mr. Plumstead highlighted the segments and how the data fit into these segments.

Mr. Plumstead stressed that this is data collected from mobile devices and the results do not necessarily provide insight into overnight visitation.

Mr. Plumstead spoke to the benefits of mobile analytics, including providing insights into regional visitors and statistics. Mr. Plumstead further detailed the mobile analytics process and the various studies and analysis that can be undertaken from the data.

The Committee discussed the data and its potential.

It is important to note this data is not intended to measure volume of visitors.

Mr. Plumstead spoke briefly to visitation numbers and trends outside of the Environics data and how to track quality of visitor satisfaction. It was noted that a visitor survey has been sent out. Discussion also occurred on the value of reviewing consumer review sites. Mr. Siegwart noted that Blue Mountain Resort is undertaking this review and will advise on the approach Blue Mountain Resort is taking to examine this information.

The Committee discussed the increasing visitation from ethnic and non-traditional groups and the ways in which these groups differ in how they travel and experience their destinations. This subject matter may be the topic of a workshop in the future.

Workshop Planning Discussion

Goals

Mr. Plumstead outlined the goals of the workshop. The intent is to present visitation patterns identified from the Environics data and information on key market segments as well as identify areas for sustainable growth.

Workshop Content

Mr. Plumstead noted that staff will pull together information for the workshop and the Committee can review it and provide feedback. The workshop will focus on presenting an overview of our different visitor segments and discussing how to meet the varying needs of visitors.

The format of the workshop was discussed. It was suggested to include: a concise presentation of the data, possibly a panel to bring real business examples of serving diverse markets, and a roundtable with small group discussions. Committee members could be table leads, and Grey County could discuss where it thinks the focus should be and get feedback from the attendees.

A suggestion was made to interact directly with visitors in the future in order to get insight from them. Grey County can also conduct fam tours and could do this with a focus group. Fam tours have been done in the past with positive results.

There was further discussion on the impacts that visitors have on municipal parks and open spaces in addition to conservation areas and other public lands.

Attendees

The Committee discussed potential attendees, including municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Areas and Downtown Improvement Areas, tourist associations, conservation areas, and the Owen Sound Transportation Company. It is important to have tourist operators there as well.

Tentative Date

A tentative date of mid-late November was suggested, and Meaford Hall suggested as a potential location.

Next Steps

Staff will provide a concise overview of the content of the workshop to the Committee.

Members should think about who to invite from their respective municipalities and provide that to staff who will develop an invitation.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held on November 6th at 9:00 a.m.

On motion by Councillor Carlton, the meeting adjourned at 11:20 PM.

Andrew Siegwart, Chair