

2010



## PRTD RESEARCH REPORT

**BRAIN TRUST**

Marketing & Communications



## JUNE, 2010

Hastings Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Framework (PRTD) project was an initiative endorsed by:

- Hastings County's Economic Development Committee and facilitated by the Planning and Development Department,
- The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU),
- Hastings County tourist industry stakeholders.

Funding for the project came from

- The Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges & Universities, MTCU.
- The Government of Canada

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & RECOMENDATIONS

Hastings Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Framework (PRTD) project was an initiative endorsed by Hastings County's Economic Council and facilitated by the Planning and Development Department, the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU), and tourism industry stakeholders. The funding for the project came from MTCU, the Government of Canada, and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism.

The PRTD was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism to provide a means for tourism destinations to define their competitive position within the tourism marketplace. Premier-ranked is not a formal tourism destination, but rather an internal goal to help destinations become "better than the rest."

### Why Hastings County?

There is a strong desire by the tourist industry and political representatives in Hastings County to improve the destination and the ability to attract a greater number of visitors on a year-round basis. With the recent focus on tourism development in many neighbouring municipalities such as Algonquin and Prince Edward County there is increased exposure to national and international markets.

Today's urban tourists desire to reconnect to nature and are searching for innovative experiences. Hastings County has beautiful natural landscapes, rivers, lakes, trails, minerals and attractive towns and villages, a large artistic community and a rich history. The perfect combination of resources to offer today's travelers.

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism has developed 13 new tourism regions and Regional Tourism Organizations. The organizations are working with tourism partners to enhance and grow the region's tourism products and marketing activities. The majority of Hastings County is in Region 11 while the south including Deseronto, Tyendinaga, Belleville and Quinte West are in Region 9

Tourism is a vital component of the local economy; the natural, cultural and historic attractions have been drawing tourists to Hastings County for decades. Tourism to Hastings County as a whole is a significant contributor to the local economy. In 2007, the county attracted a total of 1,587,000 visitors. Total spending was \$206,991,000.00 which generated \$133,169,000.00 in direct, indirect and induced contributions to gross domestic product (GDP), \$80,026,000.00 in labour income and salaries, and 2,339 part-time, full-time and seasonal jobs. Total taxes generated as a result of visitor spending in Hastings County totalled \$76,214,000.00 including \$5,169,000.00 in municipal taxes.

### The Three Dimensions of Tourism Assessments

#### 1. The Product Dimension

This dimension is achieved by a destination that provides a high quality tourist experience, enabled through the following offerings:

- Distinction Core Attraction
- Quality and Critical Mass
- Satisfaction and Value
- Accessibility
- Accommodations Base





## 2. The Performance Dimension

The performance dimension looks at the destination's success in providing a quality tourist experience. This is validated by examining:

- Visitation
- Occupancy and Yield
- Critical Acclaim

## 3. The Futurity Dimension

Sustainable tourism is vital to any destination. In this dimension, the process looks at the destination's ability to thrive from tourism into the future and its sustainability through:

- Destination Marketing
- Product Renewal
- Managing with Carrying Capacities

The process involves several critical steps along with a serious commitment and investment of time by industry partners. This investment of time and energy is rewarded with specific insights and direction.

### The PRTD Process

The PRTD process was designed to guide the industry through several key steps including database design and collection, evaluation, interpretation and planning.

- A database of "potential" tourism businesses was created and 337 surveys were delivered to companies representing the accommodation, food & beverage, attraction, retail, tour & excursion, agri-tourism, adventure provider & outfitter, festival & event, golf course, marina, and park & trail sectors.
- 205 surveys were completed, representing a response rate of 60.83%.
- Secondary research was also gathered and used to help shape the current picture of the destination.
- The survey data and secondary research were accumulated, entered, clarified, analyzed and evaluated using the PRTD workbook and the Tourism Resource Opportunity Matrix.

### What did the process determine?

Among other things the evaluation process identified a set of Core and Supporting Attractors.

*Core Attractors* are:

- Outdoor Experiences
- Rocks & Minerals
- Arts Culture and Heritage
- Picturesque Villages

*Supporting Attractors* are:

- Motor Sports
- Agri-Tourism , Culinary – Tourism



**The process shed light on other areas relating to Hastings County tourism assets:**

- Product does not have a Positioning Statement
- Products and experiences have both “mass” and “niche” appeal.
- The majority of tourists are from within Ontario borders & stay for less than 24 hours.
- Travel to the destination is pleasant and well signed
- Alternative travel modes are not available
- Most core and supporting attractors are three season
- Hastings County offer a variety of cultural and entertainment experiences
- The destination offers a limited selection of dining experiences; none of the restaurants have recognition outside the area or feature accredited chefs.
- There are no county wide surveys to track guest satisfaction
- Hastings County is in the enviable position of being only hours away from two major urban centres and US border crossings.
- Hastings County destination offers a limited range of accommodations, including 338 roofed accommodation and 2060 camp/ RV sites
- Commercial accommodation occupancy in 2008 for Hastings County (including Belleville and Quinte West) was 57.2% - well below the provincial average of 65%. The average daily rate was \$79.71, compared to the provincial average of \$114.83.
- The average expenditure for guests on day trips in Hastings County in 2008 was \$113, compared to a provincial average of \$175. The average expenditure per capita for overnight trips was \$133, while the provincial average rested at \$310.
- There is no Coordinated County Wide approach to developing the Tourist industry
- Hastings County Economic Development Office provides leadership and funding that supports economic development and tourism initiatives throughout the county, but does not have funding designated solely for tourism. Tourism in Hastings County is overseen by each of the fourteen lower-tier municipalities.
- The Economic Development Offices in Stirling-Rawdon, Tweed, Marmora & Lake, North Hastings, Deseronto, and the Chamber of Commerce in Centre Hastings and Bancroft each decide their own individual approach to tourism. Hastings County DMOs, Chambers of Commerce and Private Tourist Organizations all have their own budgets and apportion a small percentage towards tourism communications and marketing.
- North Hastings are involved in a redevelopment project called “Building Bancroft”
- While customer service training is viewed as important, no region-wide initiatives are in place.
- 64% of surveyed Tourism operators reported total investments in excess of \$9 million over the past two years. The most significant investment were made to the Centre Hastings Skate Park and the Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance at \$2,000,000.00 each. A further 55% percent of survey respondents indicated they planned to modify or expand their operations in the next three years.
- Eighty percent of businesses feel there is a sufficient pool of labour to meet their staffing requirements to accommodate current and projected levels of visitation. (*Based on survey results*)



- Managing the carrying capacities of the natural systems that sustain local ecosystems and quality of life are understood and closely monitored.
- Where the environment or quality of life are at risk or are being impaired, a plan to resolve the problem is being implemented.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following recommendations have been presented:

### Recommendation #1

- Identify who leads and facilitates destination development in Hastings County
- An industry led process – *Hastings County Destination Development Working Group*
- Facilitated by the County of Hastings
- Some human and financial resources required
- Request \$ from EODF
- Add \$ to 2011/12 County budget

### Recommendation #2

- Prepare a Hastings County Destination Development Plan
- A plan built on a “*Better Together*” philosophy
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Destination Development / Marketing / Visitor Services
- The road map for the working group
- Prioritizes the PRTD recommendations
- Paints a clear picture for implementation
- Identifies some quick wins

### Recommendation #3

- Focus attention on the underdeveloped and underperforming assets
- Understanding market readiness
- Better leverage demand generators – 4 season
- Enhance and create new experiences

Minerals & Rocks , Outdoor Recreation , Arts & Culture, Accommodation Agri-Culinary Tourism , Motorsports , First Nations Experiences , Belleville/Quinte West

### Recommendation #4 & 5

- Implement county-wide visitor survey
- Identify service gaps
- Leverage service excellence
- Implement a county-wide customer service training initiative
- Start at the top – owner/operators
- Establish a Hastings County “*Culture of Hospitality Excellence*”



Recommendations # 6

- Facilitate industry-wide tourism training
- Enhance Market Readiness
- Packaging Workshops
- New Media/Internet initiative
- Experience Development Workshops

Recommendation # 7

- Support “Main Street” revitalization
- Small Towns & Villages are a core attractor
- Beautification, streetscape design, animation
- Enhanced visitor services, hours of operation
- Best Practices: / Stirling, Bancroft, Coe Hill, Maynooth

Recommendation # 8

- Understand seasonal residents / cottagers
- Identify characteristics - research
- They are tourists - VFR
- Educate the public on the things to see and do



Center Hastings Skate Park in Madoc



## PREMIER-RANKED TOURIST DESTINATION BACKGROUND

The Premier-ranked Tourist Destination (PRTD) project was an initiative developed by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism in 2001. The goal of the PRTD program is to help destinations across Ontario identify areas for development related to tourism, assess their competitive tourism advantage, and ultimately improve to become a destination of choice.

Being a Premier-ranked destination indicates that it is a place more attractive than the rest, a place the potential tourist should consider first in making travel plans. To be clear, Premier-ranked is not a formal tourism designation, but rather an internal tourism goal for a destination to work towards as it relates to becoming “better than the rest”.

To assist municipalities with assessing and developing their tourism product, the Ministry of Tourism established a tool called the PRTD Framework. This framework assists jurisdictions in assessing their tourist assets, attractions, and amenities and allows them to identify opportunities in tourism development. The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to regions that successfully apply to undertake the PRTD process.

Many regions and cities in Ontario have completed PRTD projects, including the Regional Municipalities of Halton, Niagara, York, Prince Edward County, Muskoka, Peterborough and the Kawarthas, and Durham. The cities of Mississauga, Hamilton, Cornwall, Brockville, Kingston, Gananoque, and Toronto have also completed their PRTD assessments. Most have used the results of their studies in the development of comprehensive tourism product development plans.

The Hastings County PRTD project was an initiative endorsed by Hastings County’s Economic Council and facilitated by the Planning and Development Department, the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU), and tourism industry stakeholders. The funding for the project came from MTCU, the Government of Canada, and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism.

The successful implementation of the recommendations will be based on a thorough understanding, appreciation, engagement, and endorsement from both the private and public sector partners. This is not an initiative of government, at any level. It is a shared process undertaken by industry and government and both must accept the accountability for delivery if it is to be viewed as productive over the long term.

Through funding from MTCU, contract staff were hired to assist in the development and completion of the PRTD resource audit. The resource audit was carried out in the form of a detailed survey of establishments in Hastings County asking respondents to describe their operations, services offered, customer base and tourism awareness.

The survey was mailed to establishments from the accommodation, food and beverage, attraction, arts and culture, outdoor recreation, events, planning, heritage and retail sectors. Survey results were compiled in a comprehensive database maintained by the Audit Team.

The tourism consulting firm BRAIN TRUST Marketing & Communications was retained in 2009 to assist with the introduction of the program, to provide analysis of the audit results, and to prepare the final report. A Community Champions Committee was formed by industry leaders and stakeholders in the tourism business in Hastings County.



The consultant worked with Hastings County , The PRTD project team, and the PRTD Community Champions to review the results, assess current industry strengths, weaknesses, attributes, product/service gaps, factors and conditions that impact existing and future development plans, and identify potential opportunities and partnerships within the tourism industry. Based on feedback, comments, and validation from the Community Champions Committee, recommendations for inclusion in the final report were developed.

**O'Hara Mill Saw Mill & Pioneer Homestead**





## PROJECT TIMELINE

	Hastings County receives approval to undertake the Premier-ranked Tourist Destinations Framework initiative.
August 2009	Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and Ministry of Tourism agree to fund the PRTD initiative
September 2009	Project staff hired and team begins building a database of tourist stakeholders and preparing surveys
October 8, 2009	PRTD team holds a consultation meeting with Northumberland PRTD team.
October 22, 2009	Tourism stakeholders, Project Consultant, Project Supervisor, and PRTD team meet in Madoc and Community Champions are recruited
November 9, 2009	Meeting with Richard Innes and YLM staff to review survey design and develop advertising plan
November 12, 2009	PRTD Community Outreach Clinic begins
December 4, 2009	Core and sector surveys are mailed out
December 10, 2009	Hastings county Planning Committee approves extension of Audit Team's research service to Quinte West and Belleville .
Dec. 2009 – Jan. 2010	Completed surveys are returned and data is entered into the project database
Jan. 2010 – Feb. 2010	Final survey collection and Resource Audit and Opportunity Matrix data collection is completed
January 18, 2010	Project Consultant and PRTD team meet to review survey results
February 17, 2010	Project Consultant analyses the workbook, measures and receives input from the Project Supervisor and PRTD team
February 23, 2010	Community Champions Committee meeting is held in Madoc to provide a project status update, review the initial findings, and gather feedback and validation for work done to date
Mar. 2010 – Apr. 2010	PRTD team and Project Consultant complete workbook and draft final report and recommendations
April 27, 2010	Project Consultant presents draft recommendations to industry for validation and endorsement at Community Champions Committee meeting





## PURPOSE OF PRTD FRAMEWORK IN HASTINGS COUNTY

The PRTD framework process allows Hastings County to analyze base data, benchmark areas of improvement for the future, and work more collaboratively towards a visitor/customer-first philosophy in destination development and in attracting and retaining tourists to its community.

By undertaking the PRTD framework, the leaders in Hastings County's tourism industry are indicating a desire to move their destination to the next level. The process will provide industry with an accurate assessment of the destination's strengths and deficiencies and, more importantly, a clear plan for tourism development and improvement. The project will also help to:

- i. Improve stakeholder cooperation, trust, communication, coordination, and partnerships among communities in our region
- ii. Research and develop a reliable information database to support future priorities
- iii. Educate and inform us regarding the range of attractions in our region, develop pride and knowledge about our region among all stakeholders, enable mutual promotion across the region, and develop marketing packages (e.g. interest-specific activity packages to encourage tourists to stay longer and spend more)
- iv. Attract increased tourism-related investment to our region, increase accommodation availability and variety and expand and improve attractions
- v. Attract greater government funding, acknowledgement and support for increased tourism promotion effort and brand awareness
- vi. Improve communication of Hastings County's brand – an important effort to better define where and what is Hastings County

This project sheds light on development, infrastructure, training, and investment needs. The process defines the destination's strengths. It identifies our major trip motivators and markets, as well as opportunities to work collectively with all those involved in tourism.

The process in itself was deemed to be an opportunity to foster greater communication, networking, and industry relations within the tourism industry, business community and various levels of government.



## HASTINGS COUNTY COMMUNITY PROFILE

With a population of just under 40,000 spread across nearly 1.5 million acres, Hastings County is a getaway from the hectic urban lifestyle, while still offering the modern amenities we desire. Located at the centre of Ontario's Golden Triangle, Hastings County has a myriad of attractions and an abundance of lakes and rivers, rugged outdoor trails and historic mainstreet shops and boutiques.

Hastings County is comprised of 14 lower-tier municipalities and is bordered by Northumberland, Peterborough, and Haliburton Counties to the west, Prince Edward County to the south and Lennox & Addington and Renfrew Counties to the east.

<b>Total Population (2006)<sup>1</sup></b>	38,960 <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Population change (2001 - 2006)</b>	1.1%	
<b>Total Private Dwellings</b>	21,170	
<b>Median Employment Income (2006)</b>	\$23,916	
<b>Age Structure</b>	0-14	6,465
	15-24	4,490
	25-39	5,695
	40-64	15,500
	65 and over	4,650

There are six urban centres throughout Hastings County. Each of these communities offer unique working and living opportunities and bring organizations and individuals together in their vibrant commercial districts.

The following statistical numbers include the entire amalgamated municipality.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Population (2006)</b>
<b>Bancroft</b>	3,838
<b>Deseronto</b>	1,824
<b>Madoc</b>	4,386
<b>Marmora and Lake</b>	3,912
<b>Stirling</b>	4,906
<b>Tweed</b>	5,614

<sup>1</sup> Community Profile statistics from Statistics Canada, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Excludes the Cities of Belleville and Quinte West



## PRTD FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

The Premier-ranked Tourist Destination framework was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism to provide a framework for tourism destinations across Ontario to define their competitive position within the tourism marketplace.

The Ministry of Tourism developed a resource audit and workbook format that outlines the attributes/factors/conditions that are considered prerequisites for a tourist destination to be considered serious in building the economic well being of its destination. Meeting these requirements is essential in order to grow tourism revenues for the destination and its tourism shareholders.

The workbook format provides a simple methodology that communities can follow to ensure consistency, accuracy, and maximum involvement of the key tourism and economic development stakeholders in the process. The workbook's emphasis is on enabling any tourist destination to operate at the highest possible level it can achieve – not necessarily in competition with other operators, but in a complementary context within that particular destination.

It should be noted that being Premier-ranked is *not* an official designation or grading. It is simply a process designed to help destinations improve in their viability and competitiveness as a place visitors want to visit.

The PRTD framework is completed using a workbook that asks specific questions about the destination using a simple methodology. Completion of the workbook is done by sourcing all possible relevant tourism statistics and information. The sources of this information include, but are not limited to, the Ministry of Tourism data and various regional reports along with information gathered by the destinations' research team in a detailed resource audit.

The workbook serves as a manual that:

- Captures the attributes/factors/conditions considered necessary for a tourist destination to be perceived as a Premier-ranked Tourist Destination
- Identifies weaknesses and gaps that must be addressed
- Identifies strengths and opportunities that might be used to create a sustainable competitive advantage
- Provides a focus for building an expanded network of tourism stakeholders and consensus on future priorities for action

The *Resource Audit* is made up of four components:

- Conducting a Tourism Industry Survey: This component of the framework allows a destination to engage the tourism industry stakeholders and to acquire a snapshot of their current product and performance and provide an opportunity to examine in depth their future development plans
- Completion of the Tourism Resource/Opportunity Matrix: The opportunity matrix looks at one hundred and twenty-three opportunities in the areas of:
  - Water-based Recreation Opportunities
  - Land-based Recreation Opportunities
  - Land and Water-based Opportunities



- Natural Resource Opportunities
- Cultural and Heritage Resource Opportunities
- Built Recreation/Commercial Infrastructure
- Travel Trade Resources Checklist
- Transportation Resources Checklist

There are three specific dimensions of tourism assessment included in the study.

### **THE PRODUCT DIMENSION:**

*Premier-ranked Tourist Destinations provide a high quality tourist experience enabled through the destinations' offerings of:*

1. Distinctive Core Attractors
2. Quality and Critical Mass
3. Satisfaction and Value
4. Accessibility
5. Accommodation Base

### **THE PERFORMANCE DIMENSION:**

*The quality of the tourist experience and the destination's success in providing it is validated by:*

6. Visitation
7. Occupancy and Yield
8. Critical Acclaim

### **THE FUTURITY DIMENSION:**

*The quality of the tourist experience and the destination's success is sustained by:*

9. Destination Marketing
10. Product Renewal
11. Managing within Carrying Capacities

Each of the elements A – K is further supported by criteria and performance measures.

The PRTD framework is designed to guide a research team through a three stage process of evaluation, interpretation, and planning. These stages and their respective steps are:

#### **EVALUATION**

- Step 1: Complete the Resource Audit
- Step 2: Measure Destination Product
- Step 3: Measure Destination Performance
- Step 4: Measure Destination Futurity

#### **INTERPRETATION**

- Step 5: Complete the destination performance summary
- Step 6: Determine whether the destination is among the Premier-ranked

#### **PLANNING**



Step 7: Determine the next steps in tourism development for the destination

## EVALUATION

Hastings County’s performance is assessed by a series of measures specific to the Product, Performance, and Futurity dimensions of the destination. The first part of the measure is in the form of a statement, found in the PRTD framework criteria, with an implicit question asking whether you can affirm the statement as *True (YES)*, *Almost True (ALMOST)*, or *Not Yet True (NO)* for the destination.

The second part asks for the facts that substantiate the answer. The responses to the questions are recorded with a check mark in the appropriate box on the work page and then transferred to the Performance Summary Form provided in the PRTD framework.

The Performance Summary Form (Appendix C) displays the logical structure of the framework. Being a Premier-ranked Tourist Destination requires success across the Product, Performance, and Futurity dimensions. As illustrated below, each dimension is supported by Elements, denoted by the letters A through K. Each element has a series of consecutively numbered Criteria – A-1, A-2, etc. Each criterion is supported by Measures, denoted by lower case roman numerals.

As an example, the Product dimension’s element A – Distinctive Core Attractions has two criteria: A-1 and A-2. The first criterion, A-1, has ten measures and the second criterion, A-2, has five measures.

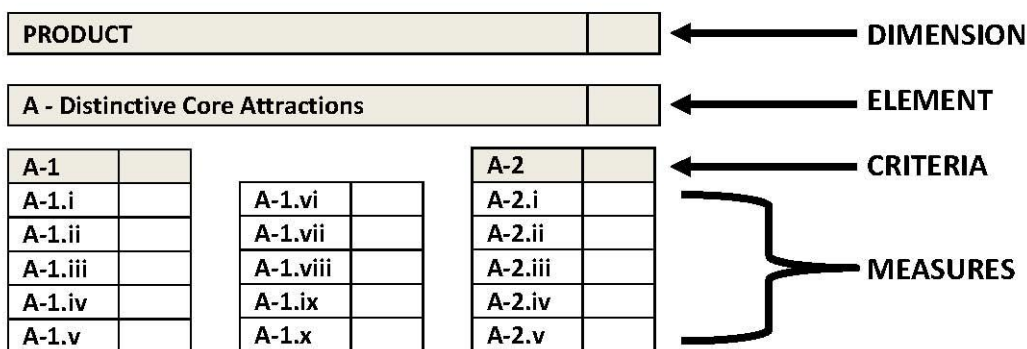


Figure 1: Performance Summary Example

### Tourism Industry Survey:

Using the YLM (trademark – Your Local Marketplace) Hastings County on-line business directory as a resource for identifying target survey recipients, industry surveys were sent out to 337 businesses and organizations involved in providing tourism products, services, or experiences to visitors. All recipients received a core survey and at least one of the 12 additional sector surveys, depending on the nature of the business or organization. The sector surveys included specific questions aimed at the particular sectors, which are as follows:

1. Accommodations
2. Adventure Providers/Outfitters
3. Agri-Tourism

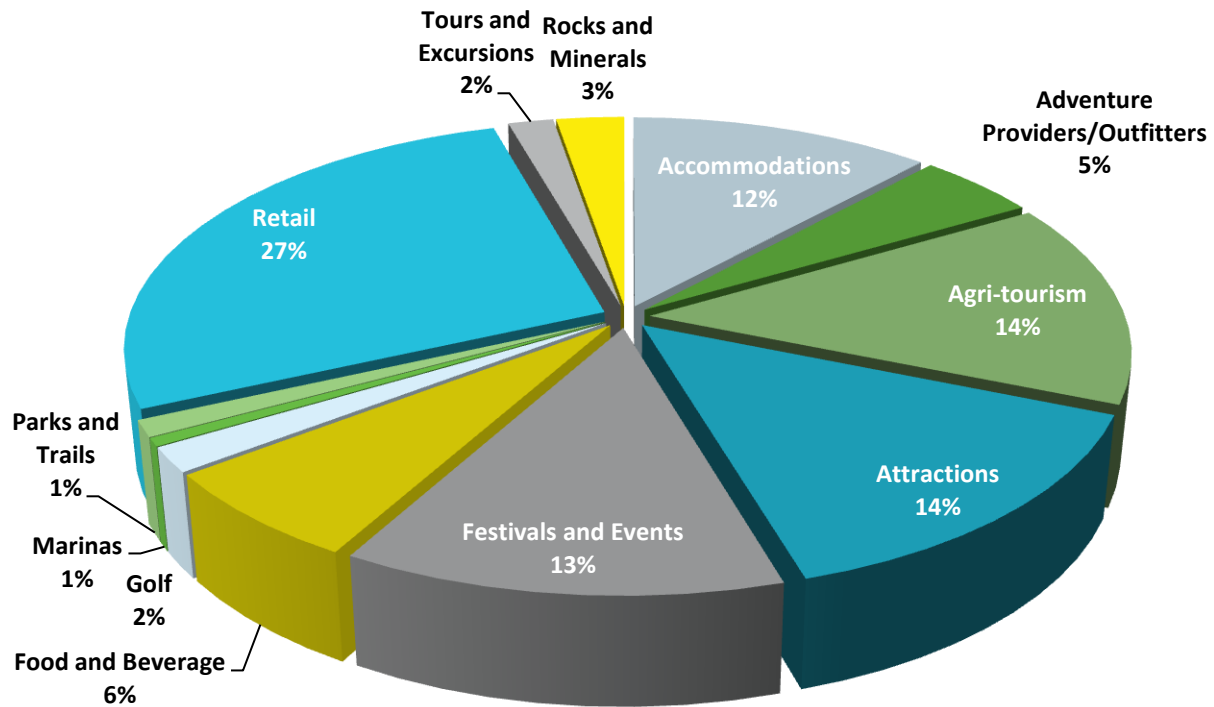
4. Attractions (Cultural, Historic, Natural, Sports, etc)
5. Festivals and Events
6. Food and Beverage
7. Golf
8. Marinas
9. Parks and Trails
10. Retail
11. Tours and Excursions
12. Rocks and Minerals

205 of the 337 businesses and organizations responded by completing their surveys, which represents a 61% response rate. The following charts indicate the response rate by sector and the percentage of responses by sector. It must be noted that in some instances, businesses received and completed more than one sector survey because of the nature of their operation. For example, a resort with a gift shop, restaurant, and marina would have received four sector surveys (accommodations, retail, food and beverage, and marina)

**Table 1 Distribution of core and sector surveys**

Sector	Distributed	Completed
<b>Total Core Surveys</b>	337	205
<b>Accommodations</b>	40	32
<b>Adventure Providers/Outfitters</b>	16	9
<b>Agri-tourism</b>	49	16
<b>Attractions</b>	48	35
<b>Festivals and Events</b>	43	29
<b>Food and Beverage</b>	22	18
<b>Golf</b>	6	4
<b>Marinas</b>	2	1
<b>Parks and Trails</b>	4	3
<b>Retail</b>	92	50
<b>Tours and Excursions</b>	6	2
<b>Rocks and Minerals</b>	9	6





Survey Respondents' Primary Business

*Tourism Resources/Opportunity Matrix:*

The matrix is used in several ways:

1. As a tool to guide consideration of a tourist destination area’s asset base, the resources contributing to its current market penetration, and ultimately, the geographic markets from which it is reasonable to expect future visitation to occur.
2. As an aid to identifying product gaps and opportunities for future product development.
3. As a summary reporting form.

The *Transportation and Travel Trade Resources Checklists* were completed by the PRTD project team using information gathered from local sources.

**PRODUCT**

The product elements, criteria and measures address the features that enable a destination to offer a high quality tourist experience.



**A DISTINCTIVE CORE ATTRACTORS**

The Distinctive Core Attractions criteria and measures assess:

- What it is about Hastings County that makes it stand out as distinct in the marketplace
- How Hastings County ‘s attractions are distinguished
- How Hastings County’s offerings are relevant to market needs

*A-1: The destination offers distinctive core attractions which are linked to its physical amenities and/or history.*

Measure	Yes	Almost	No
<b>i</b> A Resource Audit has been completed.	✓		
<b>ii</b> The Audit distinguishes between core and supporting attractions.	✓		
<b>iii</b> The core attractions motivate tourists travel to the destination ✓On their own <i>and</i> ✓As part of a regional complex.		✓	
<b>iv</b> Opportunities to build complimentary tourism attractions and/or activities with nearby destinations have been assessed.			✓
<b>v</b> The core attractions are linked to the physical setting of the destination.	✓		
<b>vi</b> The core attractions are linked to the history of the destination.	✓		
<b>vii</b> Other Ontario destinations with competitive or similar offerings have been identified.	✓		
<b>viii</b> The destination is considered to stand out as distinct from its competition.		✓	
<b>ix</b> The destination’s offering is superior because it offers a better guest experience.			✓
<b>x</b> The destination has a product positioning statement.			✓

Hastings County’s **Core Attractions** are (no particular order of importance):

1. Outdoor Experiences
2. Rocks and Minerals
3. Picturesque Villages and Towns
4. Arts, Culture, and Heritage

***Outdoor Experiences***

*A Vast Network of Trails:*

Hastings County offers a unique outdoor experience for every wilderness enthusiast. Tourists can enjoy an extraordinary multi-use trail system. The trails wander past scenic villages, historic ghost towns and

clear lakes and streams. The network of beautifully groomed trails offers year-round adventures for ATVs, snowmobiling, skiing, hiking, biking, and birding.

The Eastern Ontario Trails Association (EOTA) trail system was developed using abandoned rail beds and connects with neighbouring Counties as well as many smaller local trails. Since the EOTA trails span such a large land area, travelers can access the trails through one of the six vehicle parking locations in the County (Marmora, Tweed, Coe Hill, Stirling, Bancroft, Maynooth).

As well:

- Hastings Heritage Trail runs north and south from Trenton to Lake St. Peter
- Trans Canada Trail cuts east and east from Tweed to Marmora

North Hastings has a variety of hiking trails catering to all levels of expertise. Whether you are in Coe Hill, Bancroft, or Maynooth, there are trails that wind through a varied terrain with interesting natural features. The trails have been GPS mapped and maps are available online for the following:

North Hastings:

- Vance Park Farm
- Peterson Road Trail
- Eagles Nest Park
- Nellie Lunn Park
- Albion Lake/Card Lake Undeveloped Trail
- Conservation Areas

Central Hastings:

- The Marmora Mine Trail
- The Marmora Crowe River Trail
- St. Matilda Trail
- Green Side Farm Trail

Quinte Conservation Authority:

- I. O'Hara Mills Pioneer Homestead
- II. Vanderwater (cycling trails)
- III. Price Conservation Area - Actinolite

Crow Valley Conservation Authority:

- The Gut
- McGeachie (358 km - excellent for birding)

Provincial Parks:

- Lake St. Peter
- Egan Chutes Provincial Nature Reserve (beautiful waterfalls)

The vastness of Hastings County (the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest County in Ontario at 5,964.5 km<sup>2</sup>) offers thousands of bodies of water where tourists can take advantage of amazing outdoor experiences such as the sunset on beautiful **Limerick Lake**. Tourists can travel to Coe Hill for a breathtaking view of what locals refer to as "**The Gut**", a spectacular rugged gorge, thirty meters high and five to ten metres wide.

**The Gut**



The more adventurous traveler can plan an outback biking trip (using local outfitters such as **Broken Spokes Mountain Bike Club** on some of the many wilderness trails scattered over the 332,478 acres of Crown Land in Hastings County. The more serene outdoor traveler may want to renew their commitment to health and wellbeing with a stay at **The Grail Springs Retreat** (south west of Bancroft) There is something for everyone who appreciates connecting with nature in Hastings County.

*From Caves to Stars and More:*

Tourists visiting Hastings County may want to explore the **Tyendinaga Caverns & Caves** (see picture on page 39). The youngest show caves in Canada , these are privately owned and opened to the public in 2008. Little brown bats are found making their home in the caves.

The **Nutwood Observatory** is located just south of Bancroft and privately owned by Dr. Brian McGaffiney. Tourists can phone ahead to arrange a first-class stargazing experience. The night skies in North Hastings County are crystal clear as there is no interference from the jet stream or light pollution. Viewings are conducted year round in the larger of two domes which houses two telescopes and four cameras. Astronomy students from around Canada come to Hastings County to view the night skies. The Crowe River at Marmora attracts scuba divers from across southern Ontario. The number of interesting rock formations, species of fish and variety of water conditions make this area ideal for training scuba enthusiasts.

**Greenside Farm** in Marmora is a 100 acre spiritual retreat with reported visions of the Blessed Mary. Entrance to the property is free and visitors are encouraged to wander the site. There are Stations of the Cross throughout the property, a picnic area and a kiosk.

The Bancroft and North Hastings Elk Restoration Project is an initiative of the Ministry of Natural Resources, who is closely monitoring the Elk Herd that was relocated from Alberta to Hastings Highlands in 1999/2000. Today more than 400 elk roam freely throughout the area. Elk County Tours distribute brochures and maps with directions to areas where elk sightings are prevalent.

**Greenside Farm Marmora & Lake**



*Hunting:*

Travel Survey of Residents in Canada (TSRC) identifies hunting as being the reason that 3,000 visitors came to Hastings County in 2008 compared to 141,000 visitors came for fishing and 94,000 for golfing. A total of 394,000 visitors came to Ontario for hunting .The majority of “Tourist Hunting” was in the northern area of the province with the exception of Lanark which attracted 22,000 hunters Hunting is a popular sport for local residents and visitors from the surrounding counties however it does not appear to draws visitation in significant numbers

County	Number of Visitors
Northumberland County	1,000
Hastings County	3,000
Renfrew County	8,000
Peterborough County	8,000
Victoria County	9,000
Lanark County	22,000
Thunder Bay District	27,000
Cochrane District	32,000

**Travel Survey of Residents in Canada (TSRC) 2008**

*Fishing:*

Visitors come to Hastings County year round to experience fishing on the County’s many lakes, rivers and streams. Hastings County has 185 lakes and countless streams, smaller ponds and bogs. Hastings County also hosts four major rivers: the **Moira, Crowe, Black** and **York Rivers** and an abundance of forests and wetlands which provide valuable wildlife habitat.

There are 54 recorded species of fish in the waterways of Hastings County. They are well known for the Brook and Lake Trout fisheries, but also for Smallmouth Bass, Lake Whitefish, Yellow Perch, Northern Pike, Muskellunge, and Walleye.

**Table 2 Fishing Tournaments**

Fishing Tournaments	Species	Date	Town/Village
<b>Pike Only Catch Em &amp; Keep Em</b>	Pike	Feb. 13	Marmora
<b>Bancroft Bass Fishing Series</b>	Bass	June	Bancroft
<b>Quinte Walleye Open</b>	Walleye	May 16	Deseronto
<b>Quinte Bassmaster Tournament Series</b>	Bass	June	Quinte Area
<b>Deseronto Yacht Club Winter Derby</b>	Walleye	February	Deseronto
<b>Kids Rock Bass Derby</b>	Rock Bass	July	Faraday

### *Rocks and Minerals:*

Rocks and Minerals abound as a result of the collision and shifting of tectonic plates that occurred over billions of years. The TransCanada Highway (#7) in the Madoc area roughly approximates the point where the Precambrian Canadian Shield emerges from beneath Ordovician limestone formed during the Palaeozoic Epoch.

The **Richardson Gold Mine at Eldorado**, discovered by amateur prospectors in August 1866, marked a turning point in mining history. It was the first gold discovery in the rocks of the Precambrian Canadian Shield and marked the beginning of Canada's first gold rush. By the mid-1890s there were about 100 gold mines operating in and around Deloro, Madoc and Marmora.

Today travelers can take a self-guided tour of what is affectionately known as the "**Miners Loop**". This is reminiscent of years gone by when the miners would travel from one mine site to another for a Friday night drink and to catch up on the local news.

The **Marmora Mine Site** is an open pit mine that has been flooded by an underground spring to resemble a small lake. A groomed walking trail runs beside the mine where one can still find minerals lying on the ground. An observation platform looks out over the green waters of the lake.

**Marmora Mine Site. Marmora & Lake**





*The Mineral Capital of Canada:*

For forty-six years, tens of thousands of mineral enthusiasts have flocked to Bancroft to experience the annual **Rockhound Gemboree**. More than 70 dealers from across the globe come with an endless array of mineral specimens, jewellery and crafts. The most popular features include expert gem identification, a swapping area, gold panning, and mineral talks. Geologists guide mineral collecting field trips to abandoned mine sites daily during the Gemboree. The **Stone Carvers Show and Symposium** is held concurrently with the Gemboree, with stone carvers demonstrating their craft. Mineral sites are open for public exploration from May through to October. Permits are required and can be purchased from the Chamber of Commerce or on site.

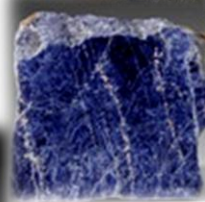
Marble mined in Hastings County was used in the construction of the Parliament buildings in Ottawa and Toronto. The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) displays sixty-two specimens of Hastings County minerals, including marble that was embedded in the Rotunda floor in the shape of a large starburst. Carved into the walls of the ROM are mythical figures sculpted from Hastings County minerals.

In 1854 a Madoc farmer discovered a meteorite in his field. The meteorite was purchased by the Geological Survey of Canada, who exhibited it around the world. Today, the **Madoc Meteorite** is the central part of the Geological Survey of Canada Meteorite Collection on permanent display at Logan Hall in Ottawa.

Other Hastings County attractions related to rocks and minerals include:

- 11 mineral collection sites
- 150 mineral and mine sites
- 2000 different mineral species
- Madoc Mine Hiking Trail
- Miners' Loop Driving Tour
- Mineral Collection Field Trips
- Mineral Display / Exhibit
- 10 granite and marble architecturally-significant buildings
- Mineral retail outlets (jewellery and crafts)
- Rockbound Gemboree
- Stone Carvers Show & Symposium

**Hastings County Minerals**



Hastings County | 2010



### *Picturesque Villages and Towns:*

Touring Hastings County is an adventure reminiscent of days gone by. Century old barns are abundant throughout the county, lush pastures dot the landscape and spectacular views of trickling waterfalls or calm lakes lead to the quaint villages and towns.

The mosaic of towns and villages are best appreciated by experiencing firsthand the many bed & breakfasts, small distinctive shops, summer auctions, amazing mineral finds and nostalgic country fairs. These are places where summer tourists come to visit family and get away from the busy metropolitan centres.

The County offers unique opportunities to purchase original works of art including that of Mohawk artisans and the experience is enhanced by diverse cultural offerings. Visual and performing arts are featured at festivals, events, theatres, galleries and studios. Charming historic buildings, entertainment, and small town dining provide year round experiences in the communities of Deseronto, Stirling, Tweed, Madoc, Marmora, and Bancroft, as well as many small hamlets such as Coe Hill and Maynooth that, in their own right, offer character and diversity to Hastings County travelers.

The Eastern Ontario Trails system winds through the villages and towns and stops at many attractions, which include:

- The Historic Old Hastings Highway
- The Ghost Towns of Hastings County: Eldorado, Millbridge, Glanmire, Murphy Corners, Thanet, Ormsby and Umfraville.
- 3 Cheese Factory Outlets
- 5 self-guided walking tours
- Tyendinaga duty-free shopping route
- 25 antique stores
- 3 antique markets
- 17 cafés
- 47 fast-food restaurants
- 27 mid-price dining establishments
- 3 banquet halls

**Maple Dale Cheese Factory**





The fourteen lower-tier municipalities that make up Hastings County are waiting to be discovered by “off the beaten track” touring enthusiasts. The following is a brief overview of each municipality:

*Town of Bancroft:*

The Town of Bancroft is appropriately known as the “Mineral Capital of Canada”. Over 2000 different mineral species have been identified in this part of the province. Mining and Forestry-related industries make up a large section of the economy, but retail businesses, health services and cultural attractions have been growing as Bancroft continues to develop a strong tourism industry.

*Carlow/Mayo Township:*

Carlow/Mayo Township is a rural area of the County that contains the hamlets of McArthurs Mills, Boulter, Hermon, Fort Stewart, Slabtown and New Carlow. The municipality is a major vacation destination with plenty of activities for cottagers, rockhounds, and wildlife enthusiasts.

*Centre Hastings:*

Centre Hastings is home to Ontario’s fourth largest concentration of artists in a rural community. The very active Artisans Guild and Arts Council help support this strong piece of the local economy. The new skate park and arts facility in Madoc Village is the envy of many other rural communities throughout Ontario. O’Hara Pioneer Homestead on the outskirts of Madoc has the only working water wheel saw mill in Ontario and one of a very few in Canada from circa 1850

*Town of Deseronto:*

Located in the south-eastern part of Hastings County, the Town of Deseronto is just south of Highway 401 and only 20 minutes east of Belleville. The historic downtown district is home to antique stores, artisan craft shops, restaurants, and retail businesses. On the waterfront on the Bay of Quinte you will find the Deseronto Yacht Club, Centennial Park and an abundance of recreational activities.

*Faraday Township:*

Faraday is blessed with numerous bodies of water and a breathtaking natural landscape. Cottagers flock here in the summer to enjoy the lakes, rivers, and forests. In recent years, the winter season has seen an influx of outdoor enthusiasts

**Christ Church , Her Majesty's Chapel of the  
Mohawks National Historic Site**



coming to experience the extensive trail system and excellent ice fishing and hunting. There is a great opportunity for new businesses to take advantage of this growing tourist market.

*Hastings Highlands:*

At the northern edge of Hastings County, Hastings Highlands begins 15 km north of Bancroft and borders Algonquin Park. Maynooth, home of the Maynooth Logger’s Games, is undergoing a downtown revitalization process that will beautify the main street and improve the business climate for local businesses.

*Limerick Township:*

Limerick Township is the quintessential cottage getaway with year-round recreation including boating, swimming, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, skiing and hiking.

*Madoc Township:*

In the centre of Hastings County, Madoc Township is intersected by both Highway 7 and Highway 62. Ontario’s first gold mine was established at the village of Eldorado, which is now home to the Eldorado Dairy Company – Canada’s only 100% kosher cheese producer.

*Marmora & Lake Township:*

Marmora & Lake is known for its rich mining history and is home to the spectacular view across the Marmoraton Mine. The Town of Marmora has a unique mix of downtown retail businesses, including gifts, food, salons and professional services.

Antiquing in HastingsCounty



*Stirling-Rawdon Township:*

The former Township of Rawdon has historically been the most active agricultural area in Hastings County and farming is still its predominant land use. The Village of Stirling is the urban centre of the Township and serves as a commercial and entertainment hub. Stirling's recently revitalized downtown core is a major attractor of people looking for small town charm.

*Tudor & Cashel Township:*

Tudor & Cashel is located in the central area of Hastings County. The expansive wilderness of Tudor & Cashel attracts many seasonal residents and others who are looking for a private getaway.

*Municipality of Tweed:*

The Municipality of Tweed consists of the Village of Tweed, the hamlets of Marlbank, Thomasburg, Stocco, Actinolite, and Queensborough, and a large section of wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas. Tweed is proud of its rich history and strong artistic community. A wide variety of unique businesses line Tweed's main street and a number of festivals and events are well-supported by the local community.

*Tyendinaga Township:*

Tyendinaga Township, located in the most south-easterly corner of Hastings County, has a vibrant agricultural community and an abundance of outdoor recreational activities. Hastings County's extensive trails system weaves through the conservation areas within Tyendinaga Township.

*Wollaston Township:*

Wollaston's main industry is tourism. The Hamlet of Coe Hill is a full-service hamlet with a variety of goods and services, churches, schools and a revitalized main street. The natural amenities of Wollaston make for excellent boating, fishing, hiking, cycling, canoeing, camping and bird watching.



**Ploughing Match in Hastings County**



### *Arts, Culture, and Heritage :*

Hastings County has a flourishing visual arts community and is home to one of the highest percentages of dynamic productive artists in Ontario. Artists seeking a lifestyle change are attracted to the County's appealing landscape, lower housing costs, the presence of other artists and easy access to urban markets. The increased availability of broadband Internet access has recently become an enabling factor as well.

A high concentration of artists naturally leads to the development of art galleries and studio tours. Many artists are amenable to having visitors, although they may not belong to one of the well-established studio tours. Some studios are seasonal, but private arrangements can be made by calling ahead.

The region has three significant arts groups: the **Algonquin Arts Council**, **Tweed and Area Arts Council**, and the **Deseronto Arts Council**. Their membership is made up of all types of artists from visual to performing. The **Art Gallery of Bancroft** is a small public not-for-profit gallery that is operated, administered and staffed by volunteers. Art groups and guilds such as the Bancroft Arts Guild and the Madoc and Area Art & Artisans contribute to the richness of culture in Hastings County.

The highly successful **Artists in Motion (AIM)** is an organization of visual artists, actors, writers, and musicians who collaborate using the arts to build community. **Art in the Park** is an annual event held in both Tweed and Marmora that showcases talented local artists. They provide visitors and tourists with an enriching and friendly experience. This show offers not only direct contact with local artists and artisans but stimulates the local economy and creates a widespread curiosity about the region. The full range of arts tourism attractions includes:

- Over 290 artists and artisans
- Over 10 artists' studios
- 3 annual studio tours
- 2 Art in the Park shows
- 5 annual craft shows/events
- 11 annual art shows

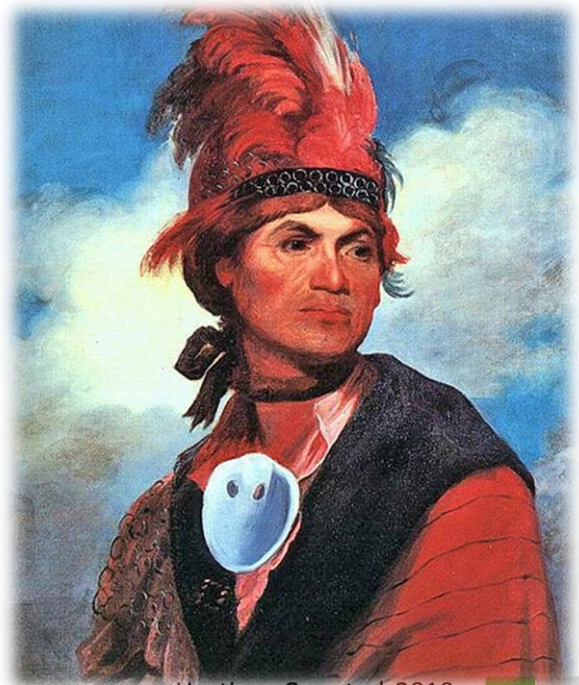
### *Mohawk Artisans:*

Hastings County encompasses the Mohawk Nation of Tyendinaga Territory on the shores of Lake Ontario. The artistic communities there offer a unique shopping experience. Rustic shops offer a variety of unusual hand-crafted mementos for tourists. Dream catchers, moccasins, silver jewellery, paintings, and earthenware pottery are just some of the remarkable souvenirs available.

Located along highway number 2 on historic Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, **Native Renaissance II Art Gallery & Gift Shop** houses 30 talented artists' work and showcases native artefacts. The gift shop has over 3000 square feet of beautiful

**Joseph Brant by artist George Romney 1776**

**National Arts Gallery Ottawa**



Hastings County | 2010



jewellery, crafts, and great gift ideas. Visitors can let their imagination transport them to the past while exploring one of the most beautiful and unique Native art galleries and gift shops. On the second floor of the store is one the largest fine art galleries in the area. Visitors can see and buy original sculptures, reproductions, paintings, and limited edition works by acclaimed native and wild-life artists including award-winning Mohawk sculptor Thomas B. Maracle.

#### *Festivals and Events:*

Hastings County hosts more than **100 yearly festivals and events** that attract in excess of 150,000 people. The Stirling Festival Theater, the historic Marble Church in Actinolite and the Bancroft Village Playhouse offer excellent entertainment experiences for both tourists and local residents. History buffs can enjoy the Hastings County Museum of Agricultural Heritage in Stirling, the North Hastings Museum in Bancroft, the Tweed and Area Heritage Centre, the Deseronto archives and the Historical Society in Marmora.

Hastings County travelers also enjoy rural fairs, unique festivals such as Gemboree in Bancroft and The Water Buffalo Festival in Stirling , brilliant country music festivals and adventure events such as the Rally of the Tall Pines and MACK Fest on the Crowe River. Celebration of the outdoors continues over the winter months with the Marmora Snowfest dog-sled races and the North Hastings Think Snow Weekend which features a fur harvesters and trappers workshop and snowshoe baseball Tournament in Maynooth.

**Mack Fest , Marmora & Lake**



Hastings County's **Supporting Attractions** are (in no particular order of importance):

- Motor Sport
- Agri-Tourism

### ***Motor Sport***

The **Maple Leaf Rally Club (MLRC)** is one of the largest, oldest, and most active rally clubs in Canada. The MLRC organizes some of the most popular rally events in Canada and the USA. The club's events include numerous local road rallies, as well as regional and national performance rally championships. MLRC events range from the **Mini Rally Series**, which gives teams the opportunity to enjoy low-cost, high-enjoyment rallying, to the **Rally of the Tall Pines**, one of the top performance rallies in Canada. These events attract approximately 10,000 spectators annually from near and far. The full list of rally races in Hastings County includes:

- Rally of the Tall Pines
- Maple Leaf Winter Rally
- Black Bear Rally
- Wheel & Tire Mini Series

Rally of the Tall Pines , Bancroft Photo by Andrew Harvey



**Shannonville Motorsport Park** is one of the most versatile and safe motorsport parks in the world. It is used by both professional race teams and car clubs. While Shannonville Motorsport Park facility has potential it falls within the underdeveloped category of the PRTD Project. The Apex Driver Training School uses the track and can provide a turn-key day comparable to Mosport. Accommodation for overnight travelers is readily available in nearby Belleville or Quinte West. The Shannonville facility is leased for:

- High-performance motorcycle racing/ street orientation school
- High-performance industry vehicle testing
- Car racing schools
- Media vehicle testing
- Television programs and commercials
- 30 Transport Canada transport-driver training classes per year (16 students per class)

Shannonville Motorsport Park attracts thousands of race enthusiasts to Hastings County from early April until the end of October. There is a weekly schedule of race events geared toward family entertainment, including:

#### Shannonville Motor Sport

- Drag Racing
- Super Pro Drag
- Pro Drag
- Motor Bike Race
- Junior Dragster
- Race Rider School
- Pay/Lap Car Race



#### *Agri-Tourism*

Agriculture in Hastings County has a deep-rooted, two hundred year old history. The rich farmlands in southern and central Hastings, and some areas of Hastings Highlands, have received national and international awards for innovation.

Today tourists enjoy Hastings County's three cheese factories and one creamery that continue to carry on the award winning dairy traditions. Hastings County is working toward re-positioning the County as a leader in preserving the tradition of cheese making with the "Invest in Cheese" marketing initiative.

The six **Agricultural Fairs** (some of the oldest fairs in Ontario) each summer and fall attract over 21,000 tourists from near and far. The annual **Hastings County Farm Show and Plowing Match** is one of the largest in Ontario, with 19,000 (5,300 from out of region) visitors attending the three day event.

**Harvest Hastings** is a local, farmer-led organization aiming to promote local food and sustainable agriculture in Hastings County through grassroots leadership and cooperation. Harvest Hastings is affiliated with the Hastings Federation of Agriculture, Hastings Stewardship Council and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs.

There are a variety of farm experiences available throughout the County. The best way to find farm produce or farm experiences is to search the Harvest Hastings web site ([www.harvesthastings.ca](http://www.harvesthastings.ca)). The following is a small sample of some of Hastings County's farm experiences:



- The **Kupecz Family Farm** offers **tours** for local schools. Students get to tour the farm and hands-on creative learning suited to their curriculum and grade level.
- **Haggerty Farms’ corn maze** offers a fun adventure for young and old.
- **Trillium Ridge Sugarworks Farm** in Shannonville taps 2,700 maple trees for **maple syrup**, which can be purchased in many local stores and the local cheese factory outlets.
- The **Holiday House Bed & Breakfast** and Farm is a post and beam home built in the 1860’s along the Moira River, on Sugar Island south of Stoco Lake.
- **Cooney Farm Apple Store** is a charming place with that old-fashioned, general store feel and is always brimming with a harvest of apples country theme gifts.
- **Wilson Apiaries** use traditional methods for extracting **honey** and make it in small batches so they can distinguish different types of honey. They also make hand creams from beeswax and special oils, like olive oil or avocado oil that scented naturally with no added chemicals.

Table 3 Farmers Markets and County Fairs

Farmers’ Markets	County Fairs (# of years held)
Deseronto Farmers Market	Tweed/Hungerford Agricultural Fair (128)
Coe Hill Farmers’ Market	Stirling Agricultural Fair (152)
Maynooth Farmers’ Market	Wollaston Agricultural Fair (127)
Stirling Farmers’ Market	Madoc Country Fair (100)
Tweed Farmers’ Market	Marmora Agricultural Fair (119)
Marmora Farmers’ Market	Mohawk Agricultural Society Fair (101)
Combermere Farmers’ Market	Hastings County Farm Show and Plowing Match (21)
Old Farm Farmers’ Market	
Bancroft Farmers’ Market	
<b>Madoc Farmers Market</b>	



ity | 2010

Bancroft Hilly Hundred



### *Links to Attractions*

Hastings County's distinctive core and supporting attractions are part of a regional complex and are linked to both the physical nature and history of the area. The majority of the population lives in the southern part of the County in close proximity to the larger urban centre of Belleville and Quinte West with and easy access to Highway 401.

Deseronto and Tyendinaga, in the south east corner, are on the shores of the Bay of Quinte and have convenient access to Highways number 2, 33 and the 401. The Villages of Tweed, Madoc, Marmora, and Stirling are adjacent to Highway number 7 and have all the urban conveniences to serve the surrounding municipalities.

Highway 7 cuts across the County and intersects with Highway 62, which travels north and south. The town of Bancroft services residents in the northern part of the county. Highway 62 is linked to the 401 in the south and Highway 28 in the north.

Hastings County is surrounded by Nipissing to the North, Renfrew and Lennox & Addington Counties to the East, Haliburton and Northumberland Counties to the West, and the Cities of Belleville and Quinte West in the South.

### *Physical Links to Attractions:*

There is a connection between the identified core attractions and the physical settings of the destination. The core attractions (Outdoor Experiences, Rocks & Minerals, Picturesque Villages and Towns and Arts, Culture, and Heritage) are all closely entwined with the physical geography of the landscape.

Take for example the sheer size and the sparse population of North Hastings . The pristine forests and wetlands that teem with wildlife remain ideal for outdoor enthusiasts. A vast network of railway beds that once thundered with the sound of steam engines heading to and from the mines and lumber mills are now silent and the rail tracks have been replaced with a gentler traveler. Hikers have come from far and wide to experience Hastings County's awesome trails.

The history of mining in North Hastings has left the region with an abundance of rocks and mineral-related attractions that is unique in Ontario.

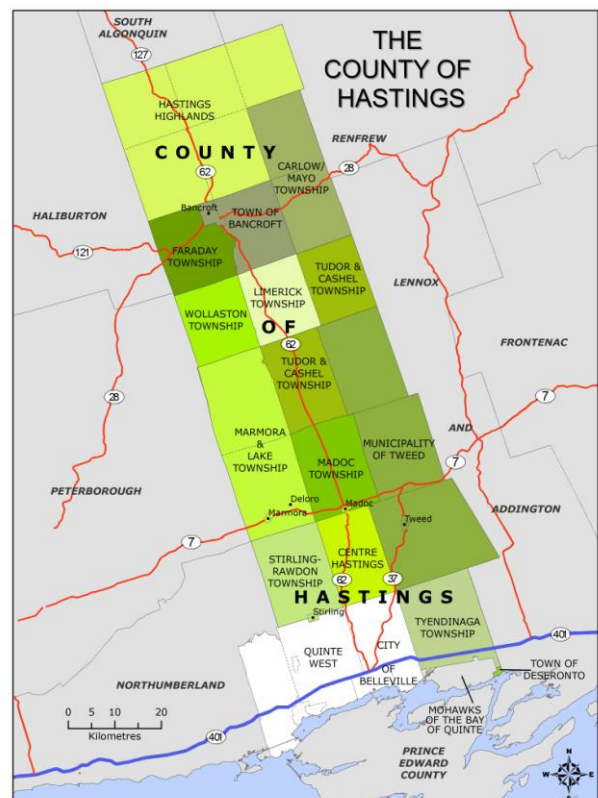


Figure 2 Hastings County map

The geography of the southern portion of Hastings County differs significantly from the beautiful rugged landscape to the north. Rich farmland stretches across the centre and south of Hastings County where agriculture-based villages and towns dot the breath-taking landscapes.

The towns and villages of Hastings County were once company towns, strategically located on the banks of the lakes and rivers that provided a continuous source of water for the growing number of mills. The settlers were a rugged mix of miners, loggers, farmers and merchants.

Many of the prominent historic buildings in Hastings County were built in the Georgian and Gothic-revival styles reminiscent of the buildings familiar to the County's early European settlers. **St Carther's Church and Rectory** in Tweed (1887) is a fine example of the Gothic tradition. The **White Marble Church** in Actinolite, built in 1864-1866, was constructed of marble from a nearby quarry and is a typical example of Baroque-style architecture. The square commercial buildings, with their slightly sloped roofs, that line the main streets are typical examples of Georgian-style architecture. **Goodnight Vienna Antiques** in Stirling is an example of this type of building.

A drive through the backroads of Hastings County will reveal the remnants of many small self sustaining towns and villages. Saw mills hug the shores of many water ways where the large water wheel or turbines milled fresh timber while the grist mills were busy grinding farmers grain and received back ground meal and flour , minus a percentage called the "miller's toll" . **King's Mill in Stirling** and **O'Hara Mill in Madoc** are first-rate examples of restoring and preserving these historic buildings while preserving this part of Hastings County's heritage.

Today the villages and towns contain a variety of the old and the new; Businesses are embracing and in some instances leading the way in alternative and green technology such as the Centre **Hastings Arts Centre** and leading safe waste management practices such as **Donnandale Farms**. There is a broad variety of farm produce grown locally and a renewed emphasis on harvesting quality crops. Agricultural entrepreneurs are continually experimenting with the introduction of different breeds of livestock as well pioneering with new the distinct livestock such as **Scottish Highland Cattle** and **Water Buffalo** Small home based businesses thriving throughout the county, internet access continues to be an issue.

**Bancroft Theater**



*Historical Links to Attractions*

There is a linkage between the Core Attractions and the history and culture of Hastings County. The pioneers who came to Hastings County made their livelihoods from the richness of the land. All of the towns and villages throughout Hastings County were company towns that sprang up on logging, mining and the by-products stemming from them.

Over the decades, industries came and went, but the richness of Hastings County's natural resources continued to sustain the livelihood of residents and provide opportunities for tourists. Changes in the forestry and mining industries resulted in downsizing and eliminated the need for much of the rail lines. Since the year 2000, hundreds of miles of spectacular trails have been enjoyed by outdoor enthusiasts.

Hastings County has some of the finest farm land in Ontario and was once recognized as the Cheese Capital of Canada. Today in the beautiful rolling hills south of Highway 7, travelers can still find award winning cheese factories, including **Ivanhoe**, **Eldorado** and **Maple Dale Factories**.

Scenic view , Stirling Rawdon



Hastings County's rugged landscape has always been a favourite of artists. Today artists continue to come to Hastings County, walking the trails and visiting villages like Queensborough, Marlbank, and Maynooth to be inspired by the beauty of the landscape.

The Mohawk Territory of Tyendinaga (1783) spans more than twelve miles of unique shoreline and has a cultural history all of its own. The name *Thayendanegea* comes from the birth name of Joseph Brant, a famous Mohawk Chief of the Wolf Clan (his mother's clan from 1743 to 1807).

Chief Thayendanegea was granted King's land for Mohawk families in Canada as a result of supporting the Loyalists in the American Revolutionary War. He was an eloquent negotiator who successfully advocated for the needs of his people. Thayendanegea's portraits hangs in many prominent galleries in Canada (National Gallery of Canada), Britain and the U.S.





**O'Hara Mill** is one of the only working water wheel mills in Ontario. The homestead dates from the mid 1800s when Patrick O'Hara one of the original homesteaders in Madoc Township partnered with his son to open a commercial saw mill. The homestead with the original home and many outbuildings gives visitors a real picture of the life of early pioneer families. In 2000 a group of dedicated volunteers rescued the homestead from falling into disrepair. Today the volunteers work with Quinte Conservation to preserve the buildings, the mill and the history for future generations. Tourists visiting the homestead have increased over the years with 10,000 visitors in 2009. Weddings, picnics and special events are held at the homestead.

**Tweed on the shores of Stoco Lake** and the outlying community of Actinolite, Marlbank, Queensborough, Stoco, and Thomasburg have a rich history of farming, forestry and mining dating back to the 1700s. The communities are some of the earliest settlements in eastern Ontario and pride themselves in preserving their history. The **Tweed Heritage Centre** and local galleries host the works of nationally and internationally recognized artists such as Paul E. Shier, Saga Sabin, Gary Miller, Heather Montrose, Amy Keller-Remp, Mark Neal, Donald Fraser and Nori Peter.

The history of Hastings County and the surrounding area comes alive at the **Hastings County Museum of Agricultural Heritage** where displays showcase the early days of cheese making through to modern agricultural technologies. The historic streetscape, a popular exhibit amongst children, has 19 buildings representing a village in Hastings County from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A look inside each store takes one back into the past.

The village of Ormsby is one of six **Ghost Towns** that once existed along the Old Hastings Settlement Road between Madoc and Bancroft. Umphraville, Thanet, Murphy's Corners, and Glanmire have all but disappeared. Ormsby, five minutes east of Coe Hill on Highway 620, still survives. Here in this quaint hamlet the **Old Hastings Gallery** and the **School House Tea Room** welcome visitors to this quaint hamlet. In the other ghost towns of North Hastings, tourists can see the remnants of old buildings, churches and cemeteries.

While Hastings County's core attractors offer collective appeal the challenge now, is to develop and build on the existing assets towards developing a distinctive product. A county wide survey program will identify the successes and challenges facing in the tourist industry. A product positioning statement in County wide advertising and promotional material will assist in immediate tourist recognition.

Tyendinaga Cave is a well-studied over-wintering site of Little Brown Bats as well as a Tourist Attraction

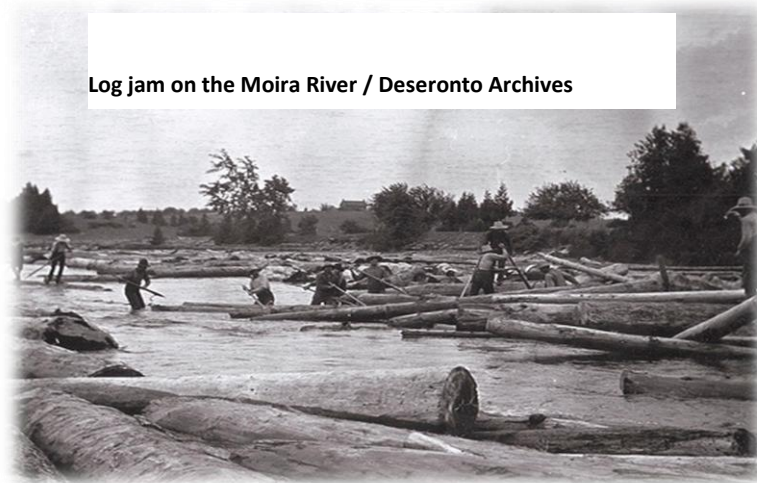


***Historical Links to Attractions:***

There is a linkage between the Core Attractions and the history and culture of Hastings County. The pioneers who came to Hastings County made their livelihoods from the richness of the land. All of the towns and villages throughout Hastings County were company towns that sprang up on logging, mining and the by-products stemming from them.

Over the decades, industries came and went, but the richness of Hastings County's natural resources continued to sustain the livelihood of residents and provide opportunities for tourists. Changes in the forestry and mining industries resulted in downsizing and eliminated the need for much of the rail lines. Since 2000, hundreds of miles of spectacular trails are being enjoyed by local and visiting outdoor enthusiasts.

Hastings County has some of the best farm land in Ontario and once was recognized as the Cheese Capital of Canada. Today in the beautiful rolling hills south of Highway 7 travelers can still find award winning cheese factories, including the award-winning **Ivanhoe, Eldorado and Maple Dale Factories.**



Log jam on the Moira River / Deseronto Archives

Hastings County's rugged landscape has always been a favourite of artists. Today artists continue to come to Hastings County, walking the trails and visiting villages like Queensborough, Marlbank, and Maynooth to be inspired by the beauty of the landscape.

The Mohawk Territory of Tyendinaga (1783) spans more than twelve miles of unique shoreline and has a cultural history all of its own. The name *Thayendanegea* comes from the birth name of Joseph Brant, a famous Mohawk Chief. He was a Mohawk of the Wolf Clan (his mother's clan from 1743 to 1807).

Hastings County has a rich mining history, having claim to many mining firsts. In 1866 the first gold find in Ontario was discovered at The Richardson mine in Eldorado. Many minerals carry local names having been discovered in that particular area of the county. Mining with its ups and downs, was a way of life for business, industries and many families. Today rockhounds, geology students and mineral enthusiasts come from around the world to experience exploring the rocks of Hastings County. The history of mining is being rediscovered by local historians, community leaders and descendants of the early pioneer miners



A : Attractions are relevant to the expectations of identified market segments.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The Resource Audit classifies destination resources and their appeal to Regional, Provincial, National/US, and International geographic market segments.		✓	
ii	Core attractions are relevant to a tourist market base. The base market is considered to be both a mass and niche market.	✓		
iii	Attractions appeal to guests from beyond Ontario’s borders.			✓
iv	The market segments for which the identified attractions are expected to have a compelling appeal have been identified.	✓		
v	A core attraction or set of complementary attractions pull visitation from all segments on a year-round basis.			✓

Hastings County tourism products and experiences have both *mass* and *niche* (or special interest) appeal and provide visitors with a wide variety of things to see and do. Core attractions are relevant to both mass and niche markets. The target markets include touring families, seniors, golfers, theatre and art enthusiasts, outdoor adventurers, rockhound explorers, boaters and anglers.

While the appeal and variety of attractions within Hastings County cannot be disputed, the survey indicated that the majority of the guests’ visitations are from people within the local or regional area and attractions do not bring in a significant number of guests from beyond Ontario’s border.

Table 4 Classification of core attractions

Mass Appeal	Niche Appeal
Outdoor Recreation	Rockhounding
Water base activities	Trails/Hiking/Snowmobiling/Cycling
Attend fairs and festivals	Birding
Touring/sightseeing	Fishing
Historic attractions	Golfing
Camping	Spa Visit
Shopping	Antiquing/Agri-tourism



The tourist market base for the destinations' core and supporting attractors do appeal to a broad range of market segments. The Ontario Tourist Marketing Corporation, for the purpose of market research, has defined the primary markets for Ontario in four segments:

- Adventurers
- Fun-Loving Families
- Retired Roamers
- Young Go-Gos

Combined, the four market segments generated the following number of trips (displayed in Table 5) in Ontario in 2008:

Table 5 Total tourist trips

Tourist Market	# of Trips in Ontario	# of Trips in Hastings County
Boating	6,220,000	151,000
Provincial Parks	5,178,000	61,000
Fishing	4,420,000	141,000
Hunting Trip (overnight)	394,000	3,000
Cultural Performances	4,560,000	29,000
Festivals/Fairs	2,510,000	15,000
Golfing	2,530,000	94,000
Museums/ Art Galleries	3,651,000	19,000
Any Outdoor/Sports Activity	21,128,000	520,000

Core and complementary attractions draw visitors in the spring, summer and fall seasons. Visitations during the winter months include winter activities on the trail system, such as snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, dog-sledding and snow-shoeing. The lakes have an active ice-fishing season and there are a number of winter festivals and events between January and March. The following stats in Table 6, include 2008 visitations from all of Hastings County :

Table 6 Visitation by season in Hastings County

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
247,000	291,000	610,000	378,000





**B QUALITY AND CRITICAL MASS**

The Quality and Critical Mass section addresses the extent to which a destination provides a memorable experience by offering a broad and deep range of options for engaging in core and related activities, as well as entertainment, shopping and dining.

The evaluation has assessed the size of Hastings County’s activity and amenities base and the mass and quality of its entertainment, shopping and dining offerings.

*B-1: The destination offers a range of memorable experience-creating, core and on-theme activities sufficient to sustain interest for more than 24 hours.*

Measure	Yes	Almost	No
<b>i</b> The core destination experience stands out as memorable to the visitor.		✓	
<b>ii</b> The core experience is typically “consumed” over a period greater than 24 hours.			✓
<b>iii</b> A variety of on-theme activities are available to give guests a reason to stay overnight.		✓	
<b>iv</b> The average length of stay at the destination is greater than 24 hours.			✓

It can be said that core destination experiences stand out as memorable to visitors because of their uniqueness and the variety of experiences offered. Hastings County’s endless maze of groomed trails, rich, rolling farm lands, rock escarpments, historical buildings, small town charm and variety of outdoor activities all combine to create memorable experiences. The close proximity is an added appealing feature to the millions of urban travelers.

The diversity of the landscape and attractions – an abundance of lakes and rivers, farm lands, outstanding views, conservation areas, provincial and public parks and historical attractions – is what makes Hastings County stand out from its neighbouring counties. All four core attractors are memorable and are the greatest factor as to why people return to the area.

While many of the core attractions and activities that visitors consume last less than 24 hours, a combination of activities can expand visitation from less than 24 hours to several days. For example, if visitors attend a live performance, they will most likely spend more time dining and a few more hours shopping.

The core experiences and their typical duration are:

**Table 7 Duration of Core experiences**

Activity	Duration
Rocks & Minerals	½ - 1 day
Trails	½ - 1 day
Festivals/Events	½ – 2 days
Driving tours	½ - 1 day

A variety of on-theme activities are available to give guests a reason to stay overnight. Examples of these activities and their typical duration are:

**TWEED**



**Table 8 Duration of on-theme experiences**

Activity	Duration
Golf	6-8 hr.
Museums	2-3 hr.
Antiquing	1-2 days
Performing Arts	1-3 hr.

The average length of stay in Hastings County is not greater than 24 hours. A large number of visitors who do stay overnight are visiting friends and relatives. Being in such close proximity to larger urban centres, visitors find more opportunities for day trips. Hastings County has a limited accommodation capacity.

*B-2: The destination offers a range of memorable experiences creating core and on-theme activities sufficient to sustain tourist interest on a year-round basis.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination offers core activities on a year-round basis.		✓	
ii	The destination offers on-theme activities on a year-round basis.		✓	

Some core and on-theme activities are offered on a year-round basis while others are not. Many trails are maintained year-round for hikers, cross-country skiing, ATVs and snowmobiles. Sport fishing and theatre are also offered year-round. Other attractions and activities, such as golf, museums, camping, rockhounding and outdoor activities are only offered in three or fewer seasons.

*B-3: Core activities are easily accessible to a variety of market segments at a variety of price points and layers of added value (i.e., richer/more expensive options for getting more out of the experience, for example: hiking the trails of North Hastings for free vs. renting snowmobiles for a fee).*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Core and on-theme activities are easy to buy.			✓
ii	There is a range of options and price points available for a variety of segments to engage in core or on-theme activities.	✓		

Some core and on-theme activities are available for Internet purchase; however, the majority require visitors to purchase the product on site. Many of the outdoor recreational activities are free; some festival and theatre tickets can be purchased online or through the local chamber of commerce; accommodations, trail passes, and provincial park bookings can be done on-line; and farm products can be purchased at the local farmers market or by making arrangements directly with the farmers. There is a range of options and price points available for a variety of segments to engage in core or on-theme activities. These are:

**Table 28: Price range of experiences**

Activity	Approximate Price Range
Golf	\$20-\$70
Events	Free - \$75
Trail Pass	Free - \$140
Theatre Performance	\$14 - \$35
O’Hara Mills	Free or Donation
Tweed Heritage Centre	Free or Donation
Rockhound Gemboree	\$5 - \$10

Visitors can enjoy unlimited daily entry to all Ontario Provincial Parks. The purchase of a vehicle pass goes to support and protect these natural national treasures.



- Annual Pass \$140.00
- Winter Pass \$65.00
- Summer Pass \$100.00
- Day Pass \$8.00-\$18.00

*B-4: The destination offers a variety of activities attractive to a variety of market segments at a range of price points and layers of added value. The range extends from basic to multiple layers, including opportunities for relaxation, entertainment, learning, skills development, adventure, and new experiences.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination offers a variety of activities with a range of sub-options for each.	✓		
ii	The range of activities is well promoted to and understood by guests.		✓	
iii	The range of activities is easy to purchase.			✓
iv	Groups have cooperatively invested in programming or animating public spaces, gathering spaces, and queuing areas.			✓

It can be said that Hastings County offers a variety of activities with a range of sub-options. Some of these include:

Table 9 Experiences with multiple price range

Category/Activity	Business Type	Approximate Price Range
<b>Relaxation</b>	Restaurants/Cafes	\$7 - \$35
	Accommodation/B&B	\$50 - \$100
	Spas	\$20 and up
<b>Entertainment</b>	Festivals and Events	Free - \$18
	Theatre/Music Performances	Free - \$65
<b>Interpretation</b>	O'Hara Mills	Free/Donation
<b>Education</b>	Museum	Donation - \$10
<b>Cultural/Historical Understanding</b>	Historic Sites	Free/Donation
<b>Skills Development</b>	Golf Lessons	\$35 - \$45
<b>Outdoor Adventure</b>	Conservation Areas	\$8 day pass
	Trails	\$135 annual pass

The range of activities is almost well promoted to and understood by guests. Hastings County and all lower-tier municipalities have a web site that promotes tourism. The Bancroft and District Chamber of Commerce host a website promoting events and attractions in North Hastings as does Comfort Country

for the Central Hastings area. Hastings County has a Facebook and Twitter page where tourism offerings are often promoted. The local Chambers of Commerce and the Marmora and Lake Tourist Centre also provide information for travelers. The EOTA has a new website with information for travelers including detailed maps of the adjoining trails.

There are also niche publications, produced by a variety of organizations that provide additional information on what is available in the County as outlined in the table below:

**Table 10 Tourism publication in Hastings County**

<b>Publications</b>	<b>Number of Copies / Views / Shows</b>
<b>Harvest Hastings</b>	2,000
<b>Comfort Country</b>	12,300
<b>Bancroft &amp; District</b>	90,000 (sent into the US border states)
<b>Country Roads (private publication)</b>	60,000 (4 issues per year)

**Macarthur' Mills Hastings Highlands**



*B-5: The destination offers cultural experiences and entertainment options from basic venues/shows/events credible at regional to larger scales, over a range of price points.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination offers a range of cultural experiences and entertainment options.	✓		
ii	Events or venues in the last two years included performances by artists with name recognition beyond the local region.	✓		

The destination does offer a range of cultural experiences and entertainment options. These include but are not limited to :

Table 11 Cultural and Entertainment Experiences

Activity	Approximate Price Range
Performing Arts Bancroft	\$17 - \$25
The Village Playhouse Theatre Guild	\$15 - \$25
Laugh Lines Theatre	\$17 - \$20
Stirling Theatre	\$22.50 - \$32.50
Marmora Jamboree	\$15 - \$35
Tweed Music in The Park	Free
Deseronto Waterfront Festival	Free
Crow Valley Country Music Jamboree	\$5 - \$15
Tweed Heritage Centre Art& Artisan Show Site	Free
North Hastings Community Choir	Free
Maynooth Madness & Logger Games	Free
Stone Carvers Show & Symposium	Free
Art Gallery of Bancroft	Free
Lilac Tea & Art Show	\$10



Events and venues in the last two years have included some performances by artists with name recognition beyond the local region. These include:

Table 12 Events with national recognized performances

Event/ Venue	Artists
Tweed Rodeo	Aaron Pritchett
Stirling Fair	George Canyon, Jessie Farrell
Tweed Arena	Aaron Lines
Stirling Theatre	Canadian Tenors, Jillian Cook, Stewart McLean

Stirling Theater , Stirling /Rawdon



B-6: The destination offers a broad range of dining options.

Measure	Yes	Almost	No
i The destination offers a range of dining options at a range of price points.			✓
ii A number of restaurants have wine lists with more than 25 labels.			✓
iii A number of restaurants have trained accredited chefs.			✓
iv A number of chefs/restaurants have name recognition beyond the local region.			✓

The destination does offer a range of dining options. These include:





Table 13 Total dining options

Restaurant Type	Number of Restaurants	Average Entrée Price Range
Dining Cafe	18	\$7.25 - \$ 12.25
Fast Food	46	\$3.00 - \$8.45

Hastings County has a limited range of dining experiences. Most of the restaurants in Hastings County are mid-range businesses. Restaurants are typically rated according to the number of wine labels, the high culinary merit the quality of service and the accreditation the and name recognition of the chef. Local restaurants offer a quality home cooking or fast foods and have basic wines and beers. There a few restaurants on the higher range of mid –service. The chart below gives an example of some of the fine mid-range dining experiences:

Table 14 Quality dining options

Restaurant	Location
Thomas Oliver’s Restaurant	Bancroft
Hideaway Primitive Grill	Coe Hill
Platter’s Restaurant	Stirling
The Granite	Bancroft

#### Rotary Club of Stirling Invests in Restoration of the Historic Grand Trunk Railway Station



B-7: The destination offers a broad range of shopping options.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination offers a range of retail shopping opportunities including clothing, crafts and antiques at a range of price points.		✓	
ii	Stores or galleries in the destination area have name recognition beyond the local region (branded items or otherwise, excluding chain department stores).		✓	

In terms of retail shopping experience, Hastings County has some unique high-range shopping experiences and many interesting mid-range shops. There are numerous antiques shops, farmers’ markets, farm gate sales, day spas and specialty shops.

Table 15 Retail Shopping Experiences

Shopping Destinations	High End	Mainstream / Average	Bargain / Discount	Total
Antique Stores	5	25	7	37
Antique Markets	-	3	-	3
Specialty Shops	3	6	-	9
Bookstores	-	5	-	5
Jewellery Store	-	8	-	8
Farmers Market	-	10	-	10
Flea Market	-	4	-	4
Factory Outlets	3	2	2	7
Liquor Store/ Beer	-	7	-	7
Grocery Store	-	6	-	6
General Variety Store	-	42	-	42
Farm Gate Sales	-	46	-	46
Art/ Gallery Store	2	22	-	24
Day Spas	-	11	-	11



Some stores or galleries in Hastings County have name recognition beyond the local region (branded items or otherwise, excluding chain department stores). Some examples of these are:

- **Ivanhoe Cheese Factory:** The oldest cheese factory in Canada retails in North America's leading supermarkets.
- **Maple Dale Cheese:** Their award winning cheese is shipped to Europe and North American markets.
- **Stirling Creamery:** Ranked as one of the top thirty butters in the world and sold throughout North America, Stirling Butter has been endorsed by several chefs.
- **Gallery 737:** The Gallery houses the largest collection of original fine art for sale anywhere in Canada by major Canadian artists.
- **Old Hastings Gallery:** Located in historic Ormsby, on The Old Hastings Road, the Old Hastings Gallery is a favourite of locals and tourists alike. Six theme rooms of vintage items, candy, and art are available for purchase.
- **Old Tin Shed:** Housed in a 100-year old building, the Old Tin Shed offers a varied mix of antiques and modern items. They offer an online catalogue and have been named a retailer of distinction.

Old Tin Shed , Bancroft



**C SATISFACTION AND VALUE**

The Satisfaction and Value section documents the extent to which Hastings County offers its guests a warm welcome, satisfies their expectations and offers value for money. The evaluation process has identified how guests and outside marketers view the region against these attributes. It also evaluates how Hastings is investing in improving the performance of the areas.

*C-1: Guests feel welcomed into a community that is happy to host, serve, or engage them.*

The answer to this question is unknown as there is currently no County-wide guest experience survey program in place or conducted. However, some individual businesses and communities have completed informal guest surveys.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination is considered “friendly” or “very hospitable” by guests and by travel agents and tour operators packaging experiences at the destination.		✓	

BAPTIESTE LAKE ,THE LARGEST LAKE IN HASTINGS COUNTY



*C-2: The destination offers a highly satisfying experience to its guests.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination carries out regular surveys which track guests’ satisfaction and their perceptions of value and hospitality.			✓
ii	The most recent survey indicated that most guests were very satisfied with their destination experience.			✓

Some businesses have monitored satisfaction levels, but rarely is this information shared throughout the regional tourism industry. The majority of businesses surveyed indicated that they did attempt to obtain some degree of feedback from their customers by a variety of means (comment cards, word of mouth, e-mail, etc). There are therefore no survey results to measure recent guest satisfaction.



C-3: The destination is perceived as offering value for money spent.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination is considered “good value” or “expensive but worth every cent” by guests and by travel agents and tour operators packaging experiences at the destination.		✓	
ii	Key experiences and services prices are monitored and staying consistent or trending up.		✓	
iii	Visitation is trending upwards.			✓

The value or opinion of guest experiences cannot be determined since there is currently no County-wide survey in place for this measurement. Based on the completed surveys, 72% of respondents claimed their prices remained the same, while 6% had an increase in prices and 13% had a decrease in prices.

Table 16 Price ranges for key experiences

Key Experiences	Current Price	Trend
Golf Fees	\$25 - \$50	Steady
Roofed Accommodations	\$50 - \$120	Steady
Niche Retail	Varied	Increase 10%
Restaurant Meals	\$6 -\$27	Steady

Surveys identified that visitations have remained the same. While a host of factors, including a declining economy, high Canadian dollar, increased border security and documentation requirements and a high price of gas have put downward pressure on visitations, there appears to be more travelers from the large urban centres who are touring the rural landscapes which have kept total visitations constant.

Tobe Muir , Ormsby artist



## D ACCESSIBILITY

This section assesses the ease of getting to Hastings County, the transportation modes that serve it and the importance of transportation to the tourist experience. The evaluation process has identified how accessible Hastings County is to tourists and how well that accessibility is being managed.

*D-1: The destination is within a 2 – 3 hours drive from a major population centre or international gateway or a lesser drive time from a regional gateway.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The travel time to the nearest major urban market is less than three hours.	✓		
ii	The population within the three hour drive time is substantial.	✓		
iii	Drive time from the nearest US border crossing or international airport is less than two hours.	✓		
iv	Flight time from the international airport to the nearest regional airport is less than one hour.	✓		
v	Drive time from that regional airport is less than one hour.		✓	

The travel time to the nearest major urban market excluding Belleville and Quinte West is less than three hours. Using Madoc in Centre Hastings as a base the following chart reveals the travel time to major urban markets.

Table 17 Travel time to major markets

City	Population	Distance from Madoc	Drive Time
Greater Toronto Area	5,300,000	219 km	1.5 hours
Kingston	152,358	117 km	1.5 hours
Peterborough	116,579	76 km	1 hour
Ottawa	1,200,000	263 km	2.5 hours

The population within a three hour drive is substantial at more than 7 million. Southern Ontario, being in such close proximity to upstate New York (nearest US border crossing – Thousand Island Bridge – is only 161 km away) and Michigan, provides a much larger market to target tourism. Hastings County also has the opportunity to benefit from seasonal tourists visiting Prince Edward County in the south and Algonquin Park in the north.

There is a small aircraft landing strip in Bancroft. The closest regional airport is approximately one hour’s drive away in Peterborough and another regional airport exists in Kingston, a 1.5 hour drive away.





*D-2: Travel from the nearest urban centre or gateway is not unpleasant and is achievable with minimum effort and discomfort.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Travel from the nearest urban centre or gateway is not unpleasant.	✓		
ii	A direct connection to the destination (e.g. via a shuttle bus service) is conveniently available or travel by private car is over a route(s) generally accepted as direct and well-marked.		✓	

- Highway 62/127, which travels north-south, is a two-lane highway going from the southern tip of Hastings County through to Hastings Highlands.
- Highway 37 is a two-lane highway going north from Belleville to Tweed and connecting with Highway 7.
- Highway 7 travels east-west across Marmora & Lake, Madoc and Tweed.
- Highway 28 travels east-west in northern Hastings County, through Bancroft and connects to adjoining counties.
- Secondary routes are generally well maintained with acceptable road signage. All addresses in Hastings County have 911 signage numbers.

*D-3: The destination is accessible by alternative travel modes and price options.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Alternative modes of travel from the urban centre/gateway are available.		✓	
ii	If located on the water, the destination is accessible to cruise ships.			✓
iii	If located on the water, the destination offers slips to transient boaters.		✓	
iv	If located on the water, the destination's cruise ship and/or transient marina slip dockage are located in or close to downtown or the attraction, with attractive and comfortable spaces between them.		✓	

Travel to Hastings County is primarily done by private and/or rental vehicle. Via Rail service is available in nearby Quinte West and Belleville. Airport shuttle bus and limousine services are available from Toronto airport. South and central Hastings are serviced by Deseronto Transit and Centre Hastings Transit, while Foley Bus Lines has service between Bancroft and Belleville. Greyhound buses travel across Highway 7 and north to Maynooth. Deseronto, on the shores of the Bay of Quinte, has boat access with limited transient slips.

D-4: The destination is investing in making access to it and its attractions visitor friendly.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The transportation check list has been completed.	✓		
ii	A minimum of 9 “Yes” responses have been recorded (a minimum of 6 “Yes” responses are required for an “Almost”).		✓	

Hastings County has a total of 8 “Yes” responses and is considered to be “Almost” accessible for tourists in terms of transportation options.



## ***E ACCOMMODATIONS BASE***

This section measures and assesses the breadth and depth of Hastings County's offerings in terms of the range of accommodation classes available, the range of locations available, and the presence of high-end operators. The evaluation characterizes Hastings County's accommodations base.

*E-1: The destination offers accommodations across a range of types and a variety of quality levels and price points.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination offers rooms at a variety of quality levels and price points		✓	
ii	There is a range of choices in locations relevant to attractions / venues and a range of price points			✓
iii	This inventory includes representation by "branded" (widely known and respected) higher-end operators.			✓

Guests staying in Hastings County have an option of 450 rooms and 1,985 campsites at a variety of price ranges. Accommodation classes range from full service bed and breakfasts and resorts, to campsites and RV Parks, with a variety of options in between.

**Table 18 Total Accommodations**

Accommodation Class	Properties	Rooms/Sites	Price Range
RV Parks & Campsites	23	1985	\$20-\$50
Cottages	13	173	\$50-\$100.
B&B	17	52	\$50-\$100
Resort /Retreat	2	29	\$200-\$697
Lodge	3	64	\$100-\$120
Motel	6	97	\$50-\$128
Motel Chain	1	35	\$110-\$130
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>450 rooms + 1985 sites</b>	



The following properties are in close proximity to core attractors:

Table 20: Distance from accommodations to core experiences

Property	Closest to Core Attractor (distance)
<b>Best Western/Bancroft Motor Inn</b>	Located in Bancroft mineral site district (10km)
<b>RV Sites</b>	Located throughout the County (25km)
<b>2 Retreats</b>	Located in Tweed and Bancroft area respectively (Minerals/ Outdoor) (20km)
<b>4 Lodges :</b>	Located in Centre and Northern Hastings County Within 20km. of core attractors Outdoor / Mineral experiences

Visitors who do not stay in local accommodations often travel to adjoining urban centres for overnight stays. Hastings County’s urban areas are located within a reasonable drive time to Bancroft, however is considerably further at an approximately 1.5 hours. Nevertheless this yields some advantages due to a more independent economic base as a result.

Table 19 Distance from Hastings County communities to nearby urban centers

	Belleville	Trenton	Peterborough	Napanee
<b>Deseronto</b>	38 km	-	-	11.9 km
<b>Tweed</b>	38 km	56 km	-	48.6 km
<b>Madoc</b>	40 km	-	-	-
<b>Marmora</b>	46 km	-	58 km	-
<b>Stirling</b>	22 km	24 km	-	-
<b>Bancroft</b>	105 km	-	91 km	-

Meeting and Reception Facilities:

A variety of meeting facilities, including motels, community halls, service clubs, golf courses, theatres, art centres and museums are available for social or business gatherings throughout Hastings County. Arrangements for catering can be arranged through local clubs, organizations or businesses.

Table 20 Meeting and reception facilities

Property Type	Total	Kitchen On-site	Capacity	LLBO License	Coffee On-site
<b>Community Halls/Centres</b>	17	Yes	50-200	No	Yes
<b>Service Clubs</b>	14	Yes	50-400	Yes	Yes
<b>Golf Clubs</b>	3	Yes	20-150	Yes	Yes



<b>Arts Centres/Theatres</b>	3	N/A	50-160	N/A	Yes
<b>Library</b>	6	N/A	12-40	N/A	Yes
<b>Restaurant</b>	4	Yes	20-60	Yes	Yes
<b>Museum</b>	3	No	10-200	N/A	No
<b>Resort/Banquet Hall</b>	1	Yes	50-250	Yes	Yes

## PERFORMANCE

The performance elements criteria and measures identify the extent to which Hastings County is successful and recognized in the marketplace. Hastings County's performance attributes are compared against its primary competitors in a competitive marketplace context to determine its actual performance. Visitation statistics, accommodation occupancy levels and critical acclaim are all industry standards to measure performance.

The quality of the tourist's experience and the destination's success in providing it, is validated by:

- A. Visitation
- B. Occupancy and Yield
- C. Critical Acclaim

### **F VISITATIONS**

This section assesses Hastings County's market performance in terms of visitation numbers and market share, attractiveness to different market segments and attractiveness of the destination at different times of the year. The evaluation identifies Hastings' absolute and relative visitation performance.

*F-1: The destination draws a significant share of Ontario's total travel to attractions of its type.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
<b>i</b>	The destination attracts a significant number of guests.		✓	
<b>ii</b>	The destination attracts a significant share of the total VFR/Pleasure motivated travel by residents of Ontario.			✓
<b>iii</b>	The destination attracts a significant portion of its visitors from beyond its borders.			✓
<b>iv</b>	The destination's share of visits from all visitors (day and overnight) to the province from markets beyond Ontario's borders is significant.			✓
<b>v</b>	The destination's share of meetings and conventions-motivated travel to Ontario is significant.			✓

<b>vi</b>	Total visitation is not dominated by same day guests.			✓
<b>vii</b>	The destination’s share of visits in Ontario, which includes activities relying on the destination’s core attractions classes, is significant.			✓
<b>vii</b>	The destination’s share of visits identified above is significant in comparison to competitive destinations in Ontario.			✓

Note: Data used in this section, unless otherwise stated, is from Statistics Canada’s Canadian Travel Survey and International Travel Survey (CTS/ITS). 2008 is the most recent year for which official statistical information about visitation is available in Canada.

Hastings County attracted 1,527,000 total guests or 1.5 % of Ontario visitations (759,000 guests on day visits (1.2% of Ontario Visitors ) and 768,000 staying overnight ( 1.8% of Ontario visitors).

In 2008, destination visitations captured 369,000 or 1.2% of the total 43,377,000 (#) VFR/Pleasure motivated trips taken by Ontario residents. The share of day trips were 1.2% and the share of overnight visits were 2.6%.

Table 21 Duration of stays in Hastings County

Duration of Stay	Person visits to Hastings County	% of breakdown visits
<b>Overnight</b>	768000	50%
<b>Same Day</b>	759000	50%
<b>Total</b>	1,529,000	100%

In 2008, overnight guests from the following origin markets accounted for the following proportions of Hastings County’s overnight visitations.

Table 22 Origin markets of overnight visitors

Overnight Visits	Persons visits to Hastings County	% breakdown of visits
<b>From other Provinces</b>	44,000	5.7%
<b>From the U.S.</b>	49,000	6.3%
<b>From International Markets</b>	10,000	1.4%
<b>From Ontario</b>	666,000	86.6%
<b>Total</b>	769,000	100%





In 2008, same day visitors from the following origin markets accounted for the following proportions of Hastings County's same day visits.

Table 23 Origin markets of same day visitors

Same Day Visits	Persons visit to Hastings County	% breakdown of visits
From other Provinces	0	0
From the U.S.	14,000	1.8%
From Other International markets	1,000	.2%
From Ontario	709,000	98.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>759,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Also in 2008 destination visits by guests from the following origin markets accounted for the identified share of out-of-province visitations to Ontario:

- 0.4% of total trips to Ontario were made by guests from other provinces
- 0.39% of the total trips to Ontario were made by guests from the United States
- 0.95% of the total trips to Ontario were made by international guests

Hastings' share of meeting and convention-motivated travel to Ontario is not significant. In the year 2007, the region attracted 82,000 meeting and convention-motivated trips, or 1.52% of the total meeting and convention-motivated trips to Ontario.

The total visitation for same day guests to Hastings County was 53.9% and overnight visitors accounted for the remaining 46.1%.

Hastings County's destination visitation in 2007 included the activities identified below. There was no significant impact on the total visits in Ontario where visitors participated in the same activity.

Table 24 Total visits to key activities

Top Key Activities	Total Visits to Ontario	Total visits To Hastings	Hastings County % share of trips
Parks /Trails	5,039,000	82,000	1.6%
Festivals/ Fairs	2,200,000	18,000	0.8%
Historic Sites	4,526,000	43,000	0.95%
Fishing	4,902,000	228,000	5.8%
Cultural Performances	2,915,000	45,000	1.6%
Museums/ Galleries	3,735,000	31,000	0.82%



The table below shows overnight visits to Hastings County in comparison to Ontario and neighbouring counties.

Table 25 Activities drawing overnight visitors

Activity on Overnight Visits	All Ontario Overnight Visits (000)	Hastings County	Northumberland County	Frontenac County	Peterborough County	Renfrew County
Visiting friends/relatives	19,150,000					
Festivals/fairs	1,932,000	15,000	24,000	94,000	59,000	21,000
Cultural Performances	3,162,000	29,000	27,000	95,000	78,000	29,000
Museums/Art Galleries	3,382,000	19,000	11,000	117,000	62,000	32,000
Zoos/Aquariums	1,133,000	4,000	4,000	47,000	46,000	4,000
Sports events	1,875,000	38,000	46,000	54,000	88,000	19,000
Casinos	2,323,000	12,000	5,000	38,000	24,000	1,000
Theme Parks	1,250,000	8,000	6,000	59,000	7,000	8,000
Fed./Prov. Nature Parks	4,779,000	61,000	69,000	209,000	168,000	49,000
Any Outdoor/Sports Activity	14,972,000	520,000	309,000	447,000	884,000	349,000
Boating	6,035,000	151,000	59,000	241,000	437,000	176,000
Golfing	1,600,000	94,000	30,000	54,000	147,000	30,000
Fishing	4,195,000	141,000	41,000	130,000	306,000	106,000
Hunting	234,000	3,000	1,000	5,000	8,000	8,000
Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding	897,000	8,000	10,000	6,000	32,000	36,000

The destination’s share of the visits identified above is not significantly higher in comparison to competitive destinations in Ontario. In 2007, the shares identified above compare favourably to the shares held by other competitive destinations.



*F-2: The destination offers draws multiple markets segments.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination attracts visitors from different visitor profiles.		✓	

The destination attracts visitors with different visitor profiles including the following market segments:

- Families
- Upscale Adventures
- Young Go-Gos
- Retired Roamers

*F-3: The destination's offering draws from market segments over more than one season.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Visitation is distributed among multiple market segments over more than one season.	✓		

Quarterly distribution of total visitation is distributed as follows:

**Table 50 : Total visitations by quarter**

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
9%	27%	41%	23%



**St. Matilda's Ruins, Marmora**



## G OCCUPANCY AND YIELD

This section assesses Hastings County's market performance in terms of accommodation occupancy and guest expenditure levels. The evaluation compared occupancy and expenditure performance against industry and provincial averages.

*G-1: The commercial accommodations occupancy rates are in excess of 40%.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The annual average accommodations occupancy rate is over 65%.			✓
ii	Occupancy is spread throughout the year.			✓

Occupancy rates for accommodations in Hastings County are not spread evenly throughout the year. During the winter season there is a significant drop in accommodation attendance according to Premier Ranked Tourist Destination survey results which captured 2008 occupancy rates. It is important to note that 40% of accommodations respondents operate on a seasonal basis from May to December. The high fall rates could be attributed to seasonal hunting and fishing. The results shown below are based on those industry members who participated in the survey.

**Table 26 Accommodations occupancy rates by quarter**

Occupancy in 2008	Annual %	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
		54%	81%	85%	75%
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	48	26	39	41	36

*G-2: The destination attracts a significant share of total provincial expenditures.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The average expenditure per capita for guests on day trips to the destination is equal to or greater than the Provincial average.			✓
ii	The destination's share of the expenditure by guests on overnight trips is equal to or greater than its share of overnight trips in Ontario.			✓

In 2008, the average expenditure per capita for guests on day trips in the region was \$113, or 86% of the provincial average of \$130. The average expenditure per capita for guests on overnight trips was \$133, or 67% of the provincial average of \$196.

While expenditures per capita for both day trips and overnight visitors to Hastings County are below the provincial average, this is not a characteristic unique to Hastings County. Neighbouring "Getaway Country", a six region area in Central Ontario that includes Durham and Peterborough and the Kawarthas, also has visitor expenditures below the provincial average. This can be explained, at least in part, by the lack of convention and conference facilities in these areas compared to large urban centres



like Toronto. Higher spending habits and durations of stay by guests attending conferences and conventions tend to skew the provincial average upwards.

The total amount of visitor spending from day trips to Hastings County in 2008 was \$172,158,000 or 1% of the total spending for Ontario day visits. Total spending by overnight guests was \$102,341,000 or .8% of the total spending by all tourists on overnight trips to Ontario .

Table 27 Total and average spending by category

Regional Tourist Profiles 2008 Total Visitor Spending: Category								
Expenditure Category	Total Visitor Spending (000s)				Provincial Average (000s)			
	Ontario	Other Canada	USA	Overseas	Ontario	Other Canada	USA	Overseas
<b>Total</b>	144,919	9,503	12,922	4,814	75,963	9,503	12,127	4,749
<b>Public Transport</b>	1,797	121	65	92	1,379	121	62	92
<b>Vehicle Rental</b>	0	0	1,641	33	0	0	1,641	33
<b>Vehicle Operations</b>	36,443	2,225	1,012	338	21,344	2,225	888	338
<b>Local Transport</b>	469	8	0	77	454	8	0	77
<b>Accommodation</b>	18,088	1,267	3,758	1,017	18,088	1,267	3,758	1,017
<b>Food &amp; Beverage (Total)</b>	32,860	3,874	3,264	1,626	21,684	3,874	2,888	1,609
<b>At Stores</b>	11,388	1,798	981	632	9,198	1,798	894	626
<b>At Restaurants/Bars</b>	21,472	2,076	2,282	995	12,487	2,076	1,993	984
<b>Recreation/ Entertainment</b>	9,593	562	1,449	515	5,031	562	1,297	506
<b>Recreation</b>	6,430	374	453	60	3,468	374	405	59
<b>Culture</b>	3,163	188	996	454	1,563	188	892	447
<b>Retail/Other (Total)</b>	45,668	1,446	1,733	1,117	7,983	1,446	1,592	1,078
<b>Clothing</b>	11,623	1,424	903	552	4,353	1,424	839	539
<b>Other Retail</b>	34,045	23	830	565	3,629	23	753	539



## H CRITICAL ACCLAIM

This section addresses the extent to which Hastings County is recognized as a must-see destination, has a profile that contributes to the attractiveness of Ontario and Canada as a destination and is “top-ranked” place to visit. The evaluation identifies if Hastings County is recognized as standing out from its competitors.

*H-1: The destination is considered as “must see/must do” and is recognized as a symbol of its type of travel experience.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination is at or near the top of the list of places out-of-town guests must be taken or things guests must do when “seeing the sights” in the wider travel region.			✓
ii	The destination is at or near top of mind when considering “must see/must do” places or activities offering similar types of travel experience as the destination.		✓	

It cannot be said that the destination is at the top of the list of places out-of-town guests must see. Depending on their point of origin, there may be various places guests would visit before coming to Hastings County. If guests have specific interests, the destination does offer unique experiences such as:

- Mineral experiences, Digs, Rockhounding and Gemboree Festival
- Outdoor Trails Experiences, Birding, Hiking and Spelunking
- Kayaking/Canoeing, Boating, and Fishing
- Scarecrow building at O’Hara Mills Pioneer Homestead
- Hastings County Annual Farm Show and Plowing Match, Community Farmers’ Markets, and Hastings County Museum of Agricultural Heritage
- Art Galleries, Live Theatre , (Stirling Theatre , Bancroft Playhouse) and Ghost Trails

In terms of being at the top of the list when compared to other destinations, it can be safely said that the destination offers a variety of experiences that would compare favourably to other areas in the province. This is especially true when considering the unique mineral and rockhounding experiences offered and the extensive trail systems, the agricultural experiences, the treasured villages and the vast amount of lakes and rivers.

The following list of experiences and features in Hastings County is included on the Ontario Tourism website as a “must see”:

- Bancroft and district - part of “Getaway Country”
- Grail Springs Health Resort, Bancroft



H-2: The destination has a role in branding/marketing Ontario and/or Canada.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Destination imagery and/or text about the destination or its core attractors is used in promoting Ontario and/or Canada.			✓

H-3: The destination or its attractions have been ranked “Best in Class” or “Top Tier” in consumer or industry rankings.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	The destination or its core attraction(s) has been ranked as “Number 1”, “Best in Class”, or “Top Tier”.		✓	
ii	Other products or experiences in the destination have been ranked as “Number 1”, “Best in Class”, “Top Tier”, or otherwise recommended.	✓		

Table 28 Officially recognized attractions

Attraction	Recognition Details
Nutwood Observatory	Astronomy News Today
Old Tin Shed	Retailer of Distinction
Madoc Skate Park	Ontario Trillium Foundation Great Grant Award, 2007 Community Futures Development Corporation Provincial Youth Initiative Award , 2008 June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award, 2008
Hastings County Museum of Agricultural Heritage, Stirling	June Callwood Award, 2008
By-The-Way Café, Tweed	Vision Award 2009, Eastern Ontario & Quebec
Gail Springs Retreat, Bancroft	Readers Choice Award, Spa Finder Canada, 2009
Antique Auto Flea Market	Canadian Old Autos Newspaper, 2008
Christ Church	Chapel Royal, 2004 Order of St Mellitus, 2007
Railway Creek Farms	Member of the Quinte Organic Farmers Co-op Premiers Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence, 2009



	New Co-operative of Distinction Award, Ontario Co-op Association, 2007
<b>Eastern Ontario Trails</b>	Land o' Lakes Vision Award Trail Builder Award, Ontario Trails Council
<b>Ontario Water Buffalo Company</b>	Regional Winner , OMAFRA Premier Award for Agricultural Food Innovation Excellence, 2009
<b>Aquarose Gems &amp; Minerals</b>	Industry Award, Central Canadian Federation of Mineralogical Societies, 2009
<b>Popular Golf Club</b>	Wise Owl Award for Top Business
<b>Trillium Ridge Sugarworks</b>	Grand Champion Reserve, Royal Winter Fair

Scenic route Tweed



## FUTURITY

The futurity elements, criteria, and measures identify the extent to which the destination is investing in its future as a place with viable and continuing attractiveness to evolving markets.

### *I DESTINATION MARKETING*

The Destination Marketing criteria and measures identify the extent to which Hastings County targets viable markets, invests in managing and promoting its tourism marketplace and consults with the travel-trade operators and agents serving area visitors and residents. This section identifies whether and how the destination is actively matching its products to the expectations of the tourism marketplace and taking advantage of the skills and knowledge of its travel-trade assets.

*I-1: The destination's product offerings are created and packaged to attract significant market segments with prospects for stability, if not growth.*

Measures		Yes	Almost	No
i	There is a market demand for the destination's type of offering.	✓		
ii	Market demand to the destination's type of offering is stable or growing.	✓		

The Travel Activities and Motivation Study (TAMS) on Canadian and American travelers was conducted between January and June of 2006. In the previous two years (2004-2005), 84% of adult Canadians and 79% of adult Americans had taken an overnight trip.

In the case of Hastings County, the 2006 TAMS indicates that the destination has what the traveler wants in varying degrees and that there is a market demand for the destination's type of offering.

**Table 29 Motivated trips to Hastings County by activity**

Activity	Motivated Trips
<b>Outdoor/Sport Activity</b>	39%
<b>Fishing</b>	18%
<b>Boating</b>	14%
<b>Provincial Parks/Nature</b>	6%
<b>Hunting</b>	2%
<b>Festivals &amp; Fairs</b>	1%
<b>Cultural Performances</b>	3%



There is definitely a stable market demand for Hastings County’s offerings. This demand trend can be illustrated by looking at two activities that are high on the list of visitors to Hastings County.

*Participation in Sport/Outdoor Activities:*

Outdoor and recreational activities are growing in popularity for their health benefits and the urban traveler’s growing desire to experience nature first hand. Travelers are discovering Hastings County’s vast multi-use trail system and enjoying the unique adventure of rockhounding.

Hastings County captured 525,000 or 2.76% of the 19,257,000 person-visits from Canada to Ontario that included participating in sports/outdoor activities. The Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance reported over 15,000 people traveled their groomed multi-use trails in Hastings County in 2009 and the Bancroft Outdoor Retailer Store reported 10,000 person visits.

With over 332,478 acres of crown land in Hastings County there are endless opportunities for outdoor experiences. Over the last two years, 61.6% (15,269,616) of adult Canadians participated in outdoor activities while on an out-of-town pleasure trip of one or more nights.

As the number of outdoor activities pursued while on trips increases, there is a corresponding increase in the number of outdoor activities undertaken while not traveling. Those more active in outdoor activities were also more likely to have participated in culture and entertainment activities while on trips.

Travelers who are very active in a wide range of outdoor activities are much more likely to use the Internet to plan and book trips. For example, 74.3% of those who participated in six or more types of outdoor activities used the Internet to plan or book travel, while only 39.9% of those who did not participate in outdoor activities used the Internet to plan travel (Canadian Travel Market, 2007)

*Fishing:*

Hastings County offers a variety of fresh water lakes and rivers for year round fishing experiences. Over the last two years 17.6% (4,351,708) of adult Canadians went fishing while on an out-of-town overnight trip involving one or more nights. Fishing was the fifth most common outdoor activity undertaken by Canadian pleasure travelers. Fresh water fishing (15.3%) on trips was more common than ice fishing (3.9%) salt water fishing (3.1%), and trophy fishing (0.5%). Among those who fished on trips, almost one half (48.6% or 2,115,688 adult Canadians) reported that fishing was the main reason for taking at least one trip (Canadian Travel Market, 2007).

Ice climbing Bancroft



*I-2: There is a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) in place with funding sufficient to sustain awareness and motivate travel target markets.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	There is a DMO in place with a focus on the local destination vs. a larger travel region.		✓	
ii	The DMO is funded at a level sufficient to reach target markets through print and electronic (e.g. Internet, toll-free phone lines, etc) media.			✓
iii	The DMO conducts surveys that track the influence of marketing on guests' visits.			✓

The Hastings County Economic Development Office provides leadership and funding that supports economic development and tourism initiatives throughout the county, but does not have funding designated solely for tourism. Tourism in Hastings County is overseen by each of the fourteen lower-tier municipalities.

The Economic Development Offices in Stirling-Rawdon, Tweed, Marmora & Lake, North Hastings, and Deseronto, and the Chamber of Commerce in Centre Hastings each decide their own individual approach to tourism. Hastings County DMOs, Chambers of Commerce and Private Tourist Organizations all have their own budgets and apportion a small percentage towards tourism communications and marketing.

Comfort Country is a marketing and promotional committee that represents the Municipalities of Centre Hastings including **Madoc , Marmora & Lake , Stirling /Rawdon and Tweed** . Stirling carries out their own promotion in addition to using Comfort Country to advertise the village resources, events, and activities. Madoc actively promotes sport and looks to Comfort Country for tourism promotion. Marmora has a new visitor centre that provides visitor information for the area. Tweed does some of their own promotion, but mainly looks to Comfort Country to promote the region.

Bancroft and North Hastings are involved in a redevelopment project called "Building Bancroft" that aims to develop and promote the area's resources and attractions. The Bancroft Chamber of Commerce promotes various tourist ventures including The Bancroft Gemboree.

There are individual organizations such as Bay of Quinte Tourism, Harvest Hastings, Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance, Land-o-Lakes Tourism and other County Tourist Organizations that promote individual resources. These organizations all produce visitor publications and detail tourism experiences online, as well as service visitors in the geographic areas and municipal borders of their respective destinations.

The lack of direct tourism funding is just one of the major roadblocks in developing and supporting the tourist industry in Hastings County. Tourism in Hastings County does not have a County-wide focus or vision. The resources that have adequate funding to hire staff are in a position to develop and promote their product, while many of the volunteer-run organizations that may have an excellent tourist product are left with the daunting task of applying for funding, promoting and marketing their destinations.

Some steps are being taken to form partnerships in an approach to share resources. Comfort Country is attempting to bring together marketing resources for central area of Hastings County while Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance is preparing to include the North Hastings trails in their maps and online resources.



Table 30 Economic impact of tourism in Hastings County

Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model (TREIM) for Hastings County		% in Ontario
Person Visits	1,587,372	1.5%
Domestic	1,506,498	1.7%
USA	59,380	0.4%
Overseas	21,493	1.0%
Visitor Spending	\$206,990,647	1.2%
Domestic	\$186,354,154	1.7%
USA	\$ 13,234,642	0.4%
Overseas	\$7,401,851	0.3%
Economic Impact in the Region	\$164,323,000	
Tourist Employment	2,760 jobs	
Tourist Tax Revenue	\$ 89,513,000	

Hastings County does not conduct formal surveys to track consumer response indicators (i.e. the influence of marketing tactics or ad campaigns on guest visits). Some of the villages and individual businesses have conducted their own surveys and/or monitor their website traffic.

*I-3: Travel-trade operators and agents have been contacted for advice on product and package development opportunities.*

Measure	Yes	Almost	No
i The Travel-trade Resource Checklist has been completed.	✓		
ii A minimum of 10 “Yes” responses have been recorded (a minimum of 7 “Yes” responses are required for an “Almost”).			✓

In 2008, McCoy Bus lines, a local tour operator took four tour groups to see plays at The Stirling Theatre and shop in downtown Stirling. The average group size was 45-55 per tour. The Travel-trade Resource Checklist was completed and the tour operators who bring groups to Hastings County were contacted during the resource audit to discuss product and package development opportunities.





I-4: A tourism development and marketing strategy is in place to develop the tourist industry in Hastings County.

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	A destination development and marketing strategy on growth in visitation and/or yield has been developed and is being implemented.			✓

At this point, Hastings County does not have a tourism budget or plan for proceeding with developing the tourism industry. The PRTD project is the first step in identifying what tourism resources are available in the County. The key objective of the implementation plan is “our commitment to provide leadership for the overall economic well-being of tourism within Hastings County”.

*I-5: Performance towards the development plan’s objective is being monitored.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	A program for tracking progress towards objectives is in place.			✓

There is no overall long-term strategy currently in place for destination development, nor is there a mechanism in place to identify and measure goals.

*I-6: Customer service training programs are in place.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	There is a customer service training program in place at the key experience/activity providers, as well as programs for the service community in general.			✓

There is a customer service training program (available upon request) provided at Loyalist College in Belleville; however, few tourist operators reported taking advantage of it. No region-wide training programs are in place on a regular basis.



**J PRODUCT RENEWAL**

This section measures and assesses the extent to which Hastings County is making capital investment in its attractiveness for the future. The evaluation documents the status and magnitude of Hastings County’s investment in the future.

*J-1: Reinvestment and new investment is occurring to enhance, revitalize, or develop facilities relevant to the quality of the tourist experience.*

Measures		Yes	Almost	No
i	In the past five years capital has been invested in facility renewal, expansion, or development.		✓	
ii	A significant portion of that investment occurred in the past two years.		✓	
iii	Core attractions demonstrate an ongoing commitment to reinvesting in programming and other improvements in order to enhance the visitor experience.		✓	

Within the past five years 64% of the businesses who participated in the survey indicated that they have invested capital in their business to improve or expand their facility. 55% of the total businesses surveyed identified the following amount of investment in their business:

**Table 31 Recent business investment by industry**

Industry	Investment
Trails/Parks	\$3,415,000
Festivals/Events	\$1,910,500
Attractions	\$1,771,500
Accommodations	\$929,350
Retail	\$718,310
Food & Beverage	\$165,000
Agri-Tourism	\$407,000
Marinas/Golf	\$100,000
Rocks/Minerals	\$35,000



The reported investment totalled \$9,451,660 with a significant portion of that investment occurring within the past two years. A further 53% of respondents indicated that they planned to modify or expand their operation in the next three years. Examples of such investments made within the last five years:

Table 32 Recent investment in outdoor experiences

Location	Investment
O'Hara Mills Volunteer Association	\$5,200
The Old Tin Shed	\$15,000
Allure Day Spa	\$20,000
Deseronto Flea Market	\$30,000
Limerick Lake Lodge & Marina	\$40,000
Rita's Retreat Cottage Gallery	\$50,000
Grail Springs Health Spa & Wellness	\$60,000
Hastings County Museum of Agricultural Heritage	\$75,000
United Restaurant Inc.	\$100,000
Chesher's Outdoor Store	\$150,000
Trudeau's Park Resort & Banquet Facilities	\$250,000
Ontario Water Buffalo Co.	\$300,000
Rotary Club/Stirling Historic Train Station	\$400,000
Tweed & Area Arts Council	\$1,000,000
Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance	\$1,000,000
Marmora Jamboree	\$1,000,000

Centre Hastings Park and the Municipality of Centre Hastings invested \$2,000,000 in building a unique multi-purpose facility for the enjoyment of both local residents and visitors. The facility features a skate park, playground and splash pad. A building constructed from sustainable materials houses the Centre Hastings Arts Centre and is located at the park.

The Marmora Country Jamboree is an annual four-day event where local, national and international country music artists perform. The site is located south of Marmora and can accommodate 8,000 including camping accommodations. The Marmora Jamboree will celebrate its ninth year and recently invested \$1,000,000 to upgrade equipment and make improvements to their facilities.

The Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance is committed to maintaining the network of trails that passes through Hastings County. The trails link with local trails throughout Hastings County and neighbouring counties.

*J-2: Investment and reinvestment in underdeveloped or underperforming assets is occurring.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Underdeveloped and underperforming assets (or the absence of same) have been identified in the Resource Audit.	✓		
ii	Investments and/or reinvestments are being made in developing or revitalizing underdeveloped or underperforming assets.			✓

Through the Resource Audit and consultation with tourism industry leaders, it has become very clear that Hastings County has underdeveloped and underperforming assets. Examples of underdeveloped assets include:

- **Town of Bancroft:** The Building Bancroft Project was successful in acquiring funding to create a sustainable redevelopment plan for Bancroft and the surrounding area. A consulting firm has been retained to present options to the community.
- **Downtown Revitalization:** Many of the urban centres, villages and towns in Hastings County have been engaged in revitalization efforts to renew downtown areas and restore them to their former prominence as a centre of community activity. The redevelopment of Stirling’s downtown has made it an attractive shopping destination and is often cited as the best case scenario.
- **Arts Route:** Hasting County is in the initial stages of consulting with the local arts community to develop an Arts Route that will identify and map the artists in Hastings County.
- **Harvest Hastings:** The local agricultural community is developing and improving the agricultural experiences for travelers by improving signage for farm gate sales and developing other promotion material.
- **Deloro Mine Site:** The Municipality of Marmora & Lake has established a Mining Heritage Working Committee that will focus on developing a mining heritage plan to preserve and promote the mining history of Central Hastings. While the first priority is to complete the cleanup of the mine site, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is working with the community, heritage organizations and other provincial Ministries to preserve and promote the important natural, industrial, social and environmental history of the Deloro Mine Site. A heritage plan will be developed for the site that will include the preservation of several remaining structures on the site and the possible creation of on-site walking trails and commemorative plaques once the cleanup is complete.
- **Cheese Route:** Invest in Cheese is a four-County investment marketing initiative that aims to capitalize on the high-growth business opportunities in artisan cheese making. Hastings County and neighbouring Prince Edward County are home to three award winning cheese factories and are in the process of developing a local Cheese Route.

## **K** *MANAGING WITHIN CARRYING CAPACITIES*

This section measures and assesses the extent to which Hastings County is aware of and manages within its capacity thresholds, specifically of its local economy, ecosystems, soft services infrastructure, guest satisfaction levels, hard services infrastructure and administrative systems. The evaluation documents Hastings County's ability to manage the system that sustains it and its attractiveness to the tourist marketplace.

*K-1: Destination visitation generates economic benefits to the host community.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Guests visits and expenditures make a net positive contribution to the local economy	✓		
ii	Benefits and costs are balanced equitable across municipal boundaries			✓

### *Economic Benefits:*

Tourism brought an estimated \$206,991,000 in economic benefits to Hastings County in 2008 according to Travel Survey Residents of Canada (TSRC) and the International Travel Survey (ITS). This included \$92,343,000 in direct, indirect, and induced contributions to GPD, \$80,026,000 in labour income and salaries and \$5,169,000 in municipal taxes. 2,339 direct and indirect jobs were created in the tourist industry. From this data it is clear that guests' visits and expenditures make a net positive contribution to the local economy.

Hastings County Economic Action Plan of 2007 identified Tourism as one of the competitive strengths of the County: this emerged from discussions through public consultation. Employment in Arts/ Entertainment, Accommodation and Food Services during the period between 2001- 2006 saw an increase of 57% employment in Hastings County compared to an Ontario increase of 13%.

The same proximity to major urban centres that helps the manufacturing sector also adds greatly to the potential for visits from urbanites looking for small town and outdoor experiences. Thousands of tourists attend Hastings County's major festivals and events, country fairs, mineral adventures and beautiful outdoor experiences. Tourism is a clean industry and strength for small centres that rely on the summer tourist season. It is a growth industry – especially if viewed as marketing to the Greater Golden Horseshoe area and passing traffic on the 401. Tourism growth can be a strong boost to industrial development since visitors who become familiar with the Municipality's assets may relocate their businesses there and tourists can attract owner-entrepreneurs.

Though it cannot be disputed that tourism benefits the entire destination, it also cannot be stated with any degree of certainty that those benefits and costs are balanced equitably across all Hastings County municipal boundaries. There is not a County-wide vision or plan to promote the region as a distinct tourist destination. Each of the fourteen municipalities has an individual approach to tourism that will need to be coordinated in developing a County-wide tourism strategy.

*K-2: Visitations do not consume local resources or increase their values to an extent that the local population is negatively affected.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	Attractiveness of the destination to recreational, retirement, or investment markets has not bid up the cost of housing to the extent that it is unaffordable to the locally employed population.			✓
ii	Where housing cost impacts are occurring, a plan to resolve the problem is being implemented.			✓
iii	Servicing guest visitation, or the investment to attract and accommodate it, does not consume labour or materials to the extent that their cost or availability to other sectors is impairing those sectors' profitability.			✓
iv	Where resource cost or availability impacts are occurring, a plan to resolve the problem is being implemented.			✓

The attractiveness of the region to recreational retirement, and investment markets has not significantly bid up housing costs to the extent that it is unaffordable to the locally employed population. Because the housing market is so small, relative to other areas, reliable data is difficult to obtain. While Hastings County's real estate prices have gone up over time, prices are still reasonable compared to other areas in Ontario. Statistics Canada's 2006 Community Profile for Hastings County indicated that the average house price for an owner was \$181,719, below the Provincial average of \$297,479.

**Riding the Trails Carlow /Mayo**



Photo Credit: [unreadable]





<b>The Economic Impact of Visitors Spending in the region</b>				
		Impacts retained in CD 12	Impacts that accrue to other parts of Ontario	Total impacts of CD 12's visitor spending in Ontario
		[A]	[B]	[A+B]
GDP (Gross Domestic Product) (\$ 000s)	Direct	92,343	6,669	99,012
	Indirect	19,101	13,105	32,206
	Induced	21,727	11,377	33,104
	Total	133,169	31,154	164,323
Wages and Salaries (\$ 000s)	Direct	53,626	4,302	57,928
	Indirect	12,936	8,677	21,613
	Induced	13,466	7,271	20,737
	Total	80,026	20,253	100,279
Number of Jobs	Direct	1,791	100	1,891
	Indirect	275	175	450
	Induced	272	147	419
	Total	2,339	421	2,760
Taxes (\$ 000s)	Direct	54,141	2,825	56,966
	Indirect	12,209	5,572	17,781
	Induced	9,863	4,903	14,766
	Total	76,214	13,299	89,513
	Federal	39,425	6,830	46,255
	Provincial	31,620	5,113	36,733
	Local	5,169	1,356	6,525



*K-3: Trained labor is available to serve visitation demands at a level that maintains guest satisfaction.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	There is a labor pool sufficient to accommodate current and projected levels of visitation.	✓		
ii	Where labor pool constraints are occurring, a plan to resolve the problem is being implemented.		✓	
iii	Guest surveys confirm satisfaction with hospitality and service			✓
iv	Where dissatisfaction has been identified, a plan to resolve the problem is being implemented.			✓

Survey results from the Resource Audit indicate that 80% of the businesses feel that there is a sufficient pool of labour to support their staffing requirements and to accommodate current and projected levels of visitation.

A recent study released by the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) shows that “in the years ahead, the challenge of finding enough people to fill tourism jobs will intensify – so much so that missed opportunities and the inability to meet potential business could cost the industry billions of dollars. By 2025, the potential labor shortage could reach 384,000 full-year jobs. This shortage represents the cumulative effect of missed opportunities and unfulfilled demand from 2005 to 2025”.

In order to service the tourism industry in Hastings County the local business owners (accommodations/restaurants) have indicated that the lack of public transportation is a barrier to attracting a ready and willing labor force of young workers that live in outlying or rural areas. There is often a high turn-over in the hospitality sector due to the lower pay and seasonal nature of the work.

As no County-wide guest surveys or customer satisfaction surveys are currently performed, it is not possible to confirm the level of visitors’ satisfaction with hospitality and service received while visiting the destination. Although the survey indicated that individual respondents do currently conduct surveys of some kind, they are typically for their own internal use and are reluctant to share their findings with others in the industry.

**: Arlington Hostel , Maynooth**



*K-4: Carrying capacities of the natural systems that sustain local ecosystems and quality of life are not overwhelmed by destination visitation.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	There is an environmental monitoring program in place which provides early warning that the quality of the resource or the visitor experience is at risk of being impaired.	✓		
ii	There is a community health and well-being monitoring program in place that provides early warning of whether quality of life impact thresholds are being approached.	✓		
iii	Evidence from formal monitoring programs or informal observations indicates that no capacity/thresholds are being exceeded.	✓		
iv	Where the environment or quality of life are at risk or are being impaired, a plan to resolve the problem is being implemented.	✓		

There are a number of organizations that have environmental monitoring programs and community health and well-being monitoring programs in place. These programs provide early warnings and ensure that the quality of the resource (air, drinking water, etc) or the visitor experience (beach water testing, mosquito/West-Nile monitoring, etc) is not at risk of being impaired or impacted. Some of these organizations include:

- Hastings & Prince Edward County Health Unit
- Ontario Ministry of the Environment
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (Lake St. Peter Park)
- Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, and Forestry
- Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy
- Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Invading Species Awareness Program
- Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan
- Trent Conservation Coalition on Safe Drinking Water
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs
- Environment Canada
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Quinte Conservation Authority
- Bancroft Sustainable Community Planning

Evidence from formal monitoring programs and informal observations indicates that currently no capacity/thresholds of community health are being exceeded. Occasionally there may be isolated situations/occurrences identified from monitoring programs; however, there have not been any long term or recurring problems.

Where issues concerning damage to the environment or quality of life are at risk or are being impaired, a plan to resolve the problem is being implemented. For instance, there are approximately 5,695 cottages in Hastings County. Water-based cottages, which include seasonal/recreational dwellings that

are first-tier or second-tier on a lake or river, amount to 4,583 units in Hastings County. This represents 80% of all cottages. An overwhelming majority (98%) of water-based cottages are classified as first-tier on a lake or river. The Municipalities with the greatest proportion of water-based cottages are Hastings Highlands (1,548 cottages; or 34% of total), Marmora & Lake (607; 13%), and Faraday (531; 12%).<sup>3</sup>

There are many endangered or at-risk species within Hastings County. These include various trees, plants, insects, birds, and animals. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) works closely to protect the biodiversity of their habitat. Alien species (also known as introduced, non-native, or exotic species) are plants, animals, and micro-organisms introduced into areas beyond their normal range by human actions. The MNR co-ordinates and manages invasive species programs and projects to prevent the introduction and spread of these non-native species.

*K-5: Growth in visitation to the destination is not threatening the experience enjoyed by current visitors.*

Measures		Yes	Almost	No
i	Overcrowding, overuse, diminished quality of the environment, or diminished quality of the guest experience is not being raised as issues by guest surveys or by managers of facilities and resources.			✓
ii	If issues are raised, they relate to one or two peak weekends only.		✓	
iii	A response to identified issues has been defined and is being implemented.			✓

Overcrowding, overuse, diminished quality of the environment, or diminished qualities of the guest experience are not being raised as issues by guest surveys or by managers of facilities and resources. If issues are raised, they relate to one or two peak weekends only.

There has not been a significant number of issues raised relating to overcrowding or the diminished quality of experience by tourists caused by visitor volume. The one critical issue has been raised is the lack of broadband access in many rural areas of the County. The Rural Connections Broadband project in Bancroft has completed Phase 1 of its expansion into the L'Amable area in August of 2009; Bell Aliant announced they could deploy additional DSL services into two sites - Faraday Township and Hastings Highlands. Installation occurred in the early part of 2010, and both sites went into service in late March. Joint funding has been approved (in 2009 ) to go ahead with the creation of an Eastern Ontario regional broadband network as proposed by Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus a plan . Other Issues that have been raised are summarized in the table below.

<sup>3</sup> Hastings County Resource Management Report, 2008



Table 33 Issues related to overcrowding

Area	Issue	Period
<b>Bancroft</b>	There are limited accommodations, parking space, and no late night restaurants open.	Two weeks around the Civic Holiday in August during Gemboree.
<b>Tweed</b>	Parking issues /traffic congestion in the downtown core	July /August tourist season
<b>Stirling</b>	Parking congestion in downtown area	July/August tourist season

*K-6: Infrastructure is available to accommodate current or projected levels of demand without exceeding carrying capacities.*

Measure		Yes	Almost	No
i	There is current/planned water treatment and delivery capacity to accommodate current and projected levels of visitation.	✓		
ii	There is current/planned sewage treatment and trunk capacity to accommodate current and projected levels of visitation.	✓		
ii	There is current/planned road, transit, parking, and trail capacity to accommodate current and projected levels of visitation.	✓		
iv	Assessments of the environmental effects of infrastructure expansions have been completed, with effects considered manageable and acceptable.	✓		

Hastings County has treated drinking water systems in all the villages and towns, however most of the outlying residents and businesses have dug or drilled wells. All commercial facilities require water treatment systems as well as many family homes are installing their personal filtration systems. Tourist operators in rural Hastings County need to plan and budget for supplying clean water and waste treatment facilities. Municipalities have 20 year plans to meet growing needs in villages and towns in Hastings County. Local municipalities are taking the initiative to develop tighter regulations to assist businesses and residents to maintain safe drinking water. The high density of local minerals requires professional advice on where and how wells should be dug. Conservation authorities and the ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Natural resources set policies for property owners to abide by.

All villages have updated waste water treatment facilities as well as treatment wetlands. An increase in tourism in these communities would not exceed the capacity.



All facilities in rural areas follow strict building codes when installing and maintaining septic systems or holding tanks. Tourist operations need to plan and budget for the added cost of waste removal costs. Increase in tourism to outlying facilities would require updated services.

Hastings County has well maintained roads and bridges the following is a sample of some of the continued investment being made to maintain the roads .

Carlow/Mayo, Township	Replacement of Alder Creek Bridge	\$164,333	\$493,000
Faraday, Township	Implementation of township waste diversion	\$5,000	\$15,000
Hastings Highlands, Municipality	Rehabilitation of Soble Road Bridge	\$62,500	\$187,500
Marmora and Lake, Municipality	Replacement of South Twin Sister, Riverview Crescent and Mary's bridges	\$400,000	\$1,200,000
Stirling-Rawdon, Township	Upgrades to the Stirling Sewage Lagoon	\$303,333	\$910,000
Tweed, Municipality	Replacement of Kennedy's and Marshe bridges	\$367,667	\$1,103,000

George Offshack enjoying Limerick Lake

