



**Economic Development &
Tourism advisory
Committee (EDTAC)**
Annual Report 23'-24'



About EDTAC

Mandate & Purpose:

An advisory committee of Council established to offer guidance and recommendations to Council, as well as support and provide local perspective and expert strategic advice in the delivery of economic development and tourism services in the Town of Wasaga Beach.

First meeting of this Council term: May 2023

8 Committee Members with Diverse Backgrounds:

- Steve Harlow, Chair
- Guy Patric Charrier, Vice Chair
- Ellen Timms, Council Rep.

Committee Members:

- Peggy Harris
- Dan Kardos
- Talbot Biermans
- Carrie Plater
- Jennie Elmslie, Chamber of Commerce rep. (From May 2023 to June 2024)
- Leslie Farkas, Chamber of Commerce rep.(as of June 2024)

Meeting Summary:

- 26 Committee and Sub-Committee meetings held to date
- Members volunteered a total of 347 hours combined


Activity	Number of Meetings	Duration per Meeting	Number of Members	Total Time per Member	Total Time Combined
Regular Monthly Meetings	12	2 hours	8	24 hours	192 hours
Meeting Prep for Regular Meetings	12	1 hour	8	12 hours	96 hours
Chair Prep with Staff	12	30 minutes	1	6 hours	6 hours
Sister City Sub-Committee	4	1 hour	2	4 hours	8 hours
50th Anniversary Committee	5	1 hour	4	5 hours	20 hours
Christmas Market Committee	5	1 hour	5	5 hours	25 hours
Total Combined					347 hours

Year One Summary

Updating the Terms of Reference

- Formerly known as the "Advisory Committee on Tourism," to include a broader focus on the economy as a whole. In August 2023, the new terms of reference were approved, and the committee's name was updated to the Economic Development Advisory Committee.
- In June 2024, the terms of reference were updated again to add more members, ensuring the committee has broad representation from the entire economic landscape of the community, not just tourism.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

	Committee	Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC)
	Type	Advisory Committee
	Approval Date	May 28 th 2019
	Revision Date	June 13 th 2024
	Committee Resource	Office of the CAO

Mandate and Purpose

The Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) is an advisory committee of Council established to offer guidance and recommendations to Council, as well as support and provide local perspective and expert strategic advice in the delivery of economic development and tourism services in the Town of Wasaga Beach.

Responsibilities and Tasks

The mandate of EDTAC is to provide advice to Council on matters relating to the delivery of various economic development and tourism services in the Town including, but not limited to:

1. Review and/or participate in the development of policies, programs and initiatives for the purpose of encouraging job creation, sustaining employment and business development in Wasaga Beach.
2. Remain informed and act as a strategic planning advisor on tourism projects, businesses and industrial developments in the community, as well as proposed future local and county projects which could affect the community's economic growth.
3. Investigate and recommend to Council funding opportunities that may be available for tourism and economic development initiatives, with such recommendations subject to the budget approval process.
4. Identify market sectors supported by the Town with sector experts as they change, shift and expand.
5. Provide guidance on business retention, attraction and expansion opportunities, programs or strategies.
6. Work in partnership with local economic development partners to actively assist in fostering and promoting a positive community image and a healthy business environment for existing and prospective businesses.
7. Identify barriers and opportunities in the community to guide strategic direction.
8. Assist in the communication of the Wasaga Beach brand.
9. Act as a resource, available to assist Town staff in hosting incoming dignitaries, media representatives and travel trade.

Tourism Destination Management Plan (TDMP)

- Reviewed and refreshed to guide next three years
- Focused on evolving tourism from day trips to multi-day visits
- Emphasized need for public and private sector investments



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**2024 – 2027
Tourism Destination
Management Plan Refresh**

June 14, 2024

BRAIN TRUST



Wasaga Beach Provincial Park

- The committee sees this as the most important tourism asset – over 1 million visitors per year
- Developed a viable 5-point plan to better realize tourism objectives that will require Provincial support
- Recommend a new governance and operating model that would ensure this is a "premier tourist destination" by establishing a commission similar to Niagara Parks and St Lawrence Parks
- There is a compelling legacy case

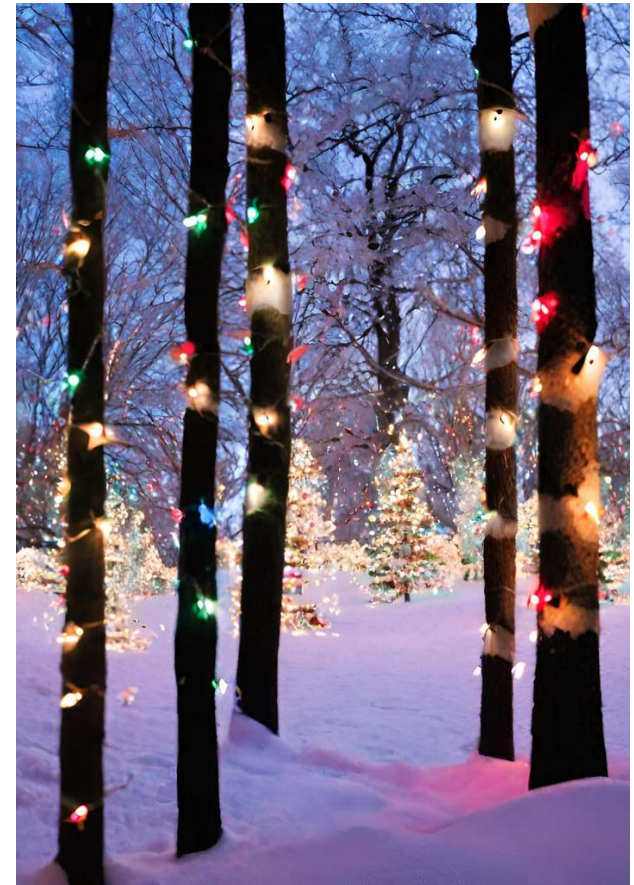


Festivals and Events

- Discussed purpose and value of festivals
- Met with event staff to be informed of various events
- Recommended development of a stand-alone festival and events strategy through the TDMP

Christmas Market Sub-Committee

- Working group comprised of 4 committee members and 3 community members that volunteered their time to provide advice to staff on the newly introduced Christmas Market.



50th Anniversary

- Formed a subcommittee for brainstorming and advise
- Engaged community and businesses
- Recommended a special logo and visual identifier be created



Looking Forward

Support Staff in the Implementation of the TDMP

With the approval of the TDMP, the Committee will begin work to provide advice on prioritizing and implementing recommendations set out in the Plan.

The next year's action items:

- Facilitate public TDMP launch sessions (assist staff in spreading the word)
- Partner with WBPP to address service/infrastructure gaps, including facility maintenance and repair, regular garbage collection, and added services
- Assist in educating the public on MAT and assist in the recommendation on MAT
- Begin to explore tourism development with regenerative tourism principles



2024 – 2027

**Tourism Destination
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BRAIN TRUST

- **Festival and Events Strategy**

- Serve as a resource and sounding board for the events strategy.

- **Trails Promotion and Enhancements**

- The Committee would like to identify opportunities for community trails, such as boardwalks and river parades, and explore the feasibility of developing an organization to improve and operate local trails.

- **Small Business Strengthening & Business Gap Analysis**

- Explore the feasibility of a business gap analysis could identify opportunities to enhance local business success.

- **Indigenous Community Connections**

- Our committee would like to focus on our Indigenous heritage and engage with our community's Indigenous members. We will reflect on ideas from the July 13th Council meeting report and make recommendations on how to collaborate with Indigenous leaders.



- **Information**

- We will recommend data sources to better understand our tourism target markets, including their demographics, experiences, and preferences.

- **Film and Live Music**

- We will provide input on attracting these industries to our community and assist staff by reviewing any policies brought to the table.

- **Other Matters as Requested**

- Providing input and advice on other matters as needed throughout the year to build a stronger, diversified economic base and a year-round tourism profile.

We will prioritize the most pertinent areas and ensure sufficient time and effort are committed to developing sound, evidence-based advice. While the list above is extensive, we recognize that not all topics may be addressed this year and will revisit and reprioritize them in 2025-26.



Thank You

