

Oakville Tourism Partnership Strategic Business Plan - July 2011

Acknowledgements

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The Oakville Tourism Partnership appreciates the financial contributions and support provided by the Town of Oakville as well as the following tourism partners:

Country Inn and Suites
Holiday Inn
Monte Carlo Inn
Town of Oakville
Hilton Garden Inn
Canadian Golf Hall of Fame
Oakville Arts Council
Ontario Parks
Fairfield Inn Marriot
Staybridge Suites
Quality Suites
Downtown Oakville BIA
Kerr Village BIA
Bronte Village BIA
Oakville Chamber of Commerce

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Executive Summary

On July 31, 2009, in recognizing that tourism is a key contributor to the economy and vitality of the town, the Town of Oakville entered an agreement with the Oakville Tourism Partnership (OTP). The agreement stated that both parties share a commitment to develop and implement a sustainable business plan for tourism and a destination management organization (DMO) in the community.

Oakville tourism's vision is for Oakville to be the premier destination in the Greater Toronto area for visitors to find their own unique experience in which to indulge. In pursuit of this vision, Oakville Tourism Partnership must focus its efforts on strategic marketing, visitor and community services and facilitating tourism industry development.

The financial model for OTP's business plan was impacted in early 2009 by the creation of Regional Tourism Organizations throughout the Province, which eliminated the ability to collect a local destination marketing fee as a means to fund local tourism operations. As a result of the provincial changes, the OTP requires an on-going funding amount of \$37,500 annually from the Town of Oakville, along with \$20,000 from tourism industry partners, in order to coordinate local tourism efforts and leverage new provincial resources for marketing and product development.

The Tourism Industry

Tourism is a vibrant industry on a global, national, provincial and local scale. Tourism is a \$75-Billion sector in Canada, and tourism activity accounted for 2% (\$30 Billion) of Canada's GDP. In 2008, 1.86 million people were employed in tourism, representing 11% of national employment.

Source: Industry Canada, 2008 figures

Canada ranks as one of the world's top tourist destinations with Ontario leading all provinces in tourist visits and expenditures. In 2008, total tourism receipts in Ontario reached over \$22 billion. Tourism in Ontario employs over 300,000 and is the largest single employer of young workers. Every \$1 million spent by tourists creates 14 jobs and generates \$553,400 in wages and salaries.

Source: www. <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca>

The Government of Ontario recognizes the economic importance of tourism and its role in contributing to an innovative economy and increasing the quality of life of Ontarians. There are many opportunities to take advantage of the worldwide growth in the tourism market.

Source: 2002-2010 Ontario Tourism Strategy

The tourism industry is the total of all businesses that directly provide goods or services to facilitate business, pleasure and leisure activities away from the home environment.

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture defines tourism as the following:

- one or more nights away from home, or a day trip of over 40 km
- foreign and domestic travelers
- includes many industries, e.g. accommodation, attractions, food and beverage, recreation, culture, entertainment, transportation, and retail.

Tourism in Oakville

Oakville is a vibrant community boasting unique downtowns, state of the art recreation facilities, theatres, authentic dining, championship golf courses, notable events, historical buildings, trails and an accessible waterfront. Visitors are an essential part of the economic success of many of the town's businesses and help to sustain Oakville's unique character. Essentially, visitation allows Oakville to use or leverage other people's money to support its businesses and facilities.

**In 2009 Oakville's 982,000 visitors generated \$45.3 million in direct economic activity (GDP).
With a resident population of approximately 170,000 people, each resident would have to spend an additional \$266 per year to maintain the unique shops, restaurants and cultural facilities that they value and enjoy.**

Oakville's points of differentiation include:

3 Distinct Downtown Areas

Downtown Oakville is a sophisticated shopping and cultural district noted for the upscale retail mix, professional businesses and exceptional dining in picturesque Olde Oakville. The Downtown Oakville Business Improvement Area is home to over 450 businesses and is a fascinating heritage, art and entertainment destination. Downtown Oakville's fine collection of retail boutiques include art galleries, restaurants, gourmet food purveyors, high fashion and design houses, health, wealth, and wellness centres and all the desired brand names. Each year the Downtown Oakville BIA's businesses host events including the ever popular 'Sidewalk Sale', 'Midnight Madness', the famous 'Downtown Oakville Jazz Festival', and 'A Taste of Downtown Oakville' which happens twice a year in February and September.

Kerr Village offers a one-of-a-kind experience, this vibrant destination point is a worthwhile stop for travellers and locals alike. Nestled in the heart of Oakville, quaint "mom and pop" shops offer unusual items including home décor, handcrafted furniture, antiques and artwork. Specialty retail stores boast a diverse range of musical instruments, books, stylish clothing, children's accessories and athletic apparel, as well as hobby supplies, pet paraphernalia and gifts for collectors. When it comes to the neighbourhood eateries, nothing better illustrates the richness and diversity of this trendy community. Whether meeting for a

cappuccino, enjoying a gelato, listening to local entertainment, watching a sporting event, or sitting down to an ethnically-inspired meal, visitors to Kerr Village will be treated to “forks and corks” from every corner of the world.

Established in 1834, Bronte Village is one of the oldest Ontario communities. It was commercial shipping centre for grain and timber but evolved to a commercial fishing port by the 19th century Bronte’s marine heritage, "small-town" specialty shops with "big-city" health and professional services, dining options, shopping, exciting events and location midway between Toronto and Niagara, makes Bronte a great place to visit. Visitors can stroll Bronte’s spectacular harbour, pier, Boardwalk, lighthouse, beaches, parklands, walking trails, picnic and children’s play areas. Bronte Harbour is a main access point to the Waterfront Trail system and is home to the See historic Sovereign House on Bronte Bluffs and the Fishermen’s Memorial at the Pier. Each year Bronte Village welcomes residents and visitors by hosting events such as Canada Day, July 1st. with Fireworks, Art in the Park August , Harbour Days Music Festival August and Autumnfest,

World Class Golf

Recognized as the ‘home of the Canadian Open’, Oakville has become internationally known as a destination for first-class golf. Although no longer the only location for the Canadian Open, Glen Abbey continues to receive international recognition. Golfers from around the world ensure this golf course is on their list of “must play” courses.

Canadian Golf Hall of Fame

The Canadian Golf Hall of Fame and Museum is a great place to discover the real game of golf, from its champions and championships. This is the only golf hall of fame in Canada and is open year round. Everyone from the serious golfer to history buffs and children can enjoy a round in the 18-hole exhibit gallery. Visitors can immerse themselves in the history of one of Canada’s oldest and most popular games. Situated on the scenic grounds of the Glen Abbey Golf Club, host to many thrilling Canadian Opens.

Arts and Culture

From live theatre and music to garden tours and galleries, Oakville has an extremely vibrant arts and cultural community. Oakville is home to many talented artists who create in many different genres. With a roster of local, national and international talent, the Oakville Centre offers the finest in music, drama, comedy, dance, and family entertainment. Galleries in Oakville offer a feast for the eyes and ears. Many provide accompanying audio tours to give you the complete experience as you walk and explore.

Heritage

Visiting Oakville is like taking a step back in time where one can savour a town steeped in history and culture. The Town of Oakville owes its existence to the vision of Colonel William Chisholm (1788-1842), an enterprising merchant and shipbuilder. In 1827, he bought 960 acres of land from the Crown at the mouth of the Sixteen Mile Creek on Lake Ontario to establish a port, shipbuilding yard and the village of Oakville.

Oakville takes great pride in the preservation of its heritage in all of its forms – natural, built and cultural. Oakville has numerous heritage sites including Erchless Estate, the original home of the Chisholm family which has been authentically restored. Stroll through the historic streets of Old Oakville with its classic architecture. Visitors can learn about significant periods in Canadian history including Oakville's role in the Underground Railroad and visit Sovereign House in Bronte Village West. Visitors can visit many of Oakville's cultural and historical sites on during the annual Doors Open Oakville in September.

Waterfront

Oakville is a boater's paradise. Boasting two spectacular scenic harbour – Oakville Harbour in downtown Oakville at 16 Mile Creek and Bronte Harbour at the mouth of 12 Mile Creek – Oakville attracts boats from all over the Great Lakes. The harbours and marinas are within walking distance of Oakville's three shopping and dining districts (downtown Oakville, Bronte Village and Kerr Village).

Tourism Businesses

The following is a snapshot of the core and related tourism businesses in Oakville:

- 600 Food & Beverage establishments
- 97 Retail establishments
- 27 Sports & Recreation facilities
- 16 Cultural and Agri-tourism Attractions
- 14 Accommodations
- 12 Major Festivals & Events
- 7 Golf Courses
- 3 Spas
- 1 Campground

Source: Halton Tourism Study, PKF, 2011

The Town of Oakville Economic Development Strategy, 2009-2019 report indicated the following businesses by Industry in 2007:

Industry	Total Employment	%
Accommodation and Food	4,235	3.2
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,635	1.6
Information and Cultural Services	3,045	1.5
Retail Trade	9,045	7.1
Total tourism related businesses	17,960	13.4

Tourism Visits in Oakville

In 2009, 928,000 tourists came to Oakville and spent \$107.3 Million in the area. Of these:

- More tourists were on same day excursions
- 59% same day vs. 41% overnight
- More money was spent by overnight tourists
- 62% overnight vs. 38% same day
- 951,000 nights were spent by tourists in Oakville
- Average length of overnight visitor's stay = 2.6 nights

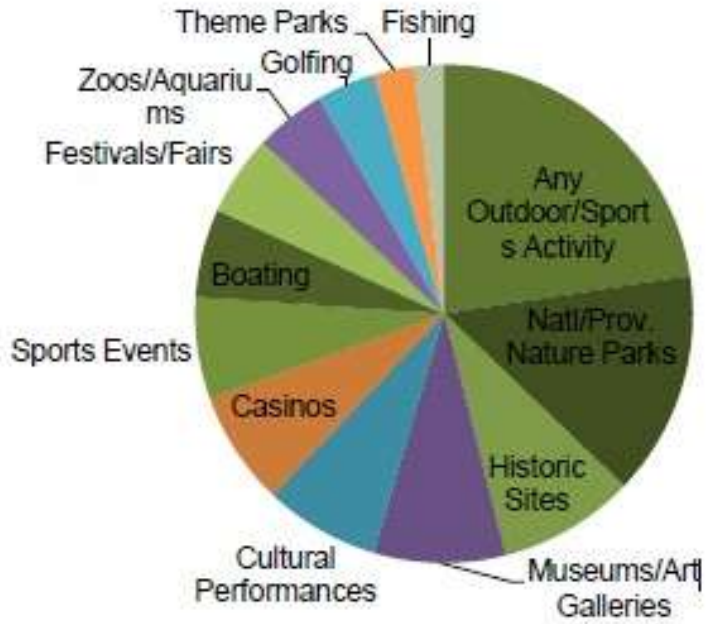
Source: Halton Tourism Study, PKF, 2010

Purpose of Travel to Oakville for Overnight

- 198,000 or 53% travelled to visit friends and relatives and spent \$27.5 Million in Oakville
- 128,000 or 34% were travelling for pleasure/vacation and spent \$13.4 Million in Oakville
- 43,000 or 11% were travelling for business and spent \$23.9 Million in Oakville

Source: Halton Tourism Study, PKF, 2010

Activity Participation by Overnight Visitors to Oakville in 2009



Source: Halton Tourism Study, PKF, 2010

Accommodations in Oakville

Oakville Accommodation	Address	No. of Rooms
Holiday Inn Select Hotel and Suites	2525 Wyecroft Rd.	144
The Homewood Suites, Hilton @Toronto-Oakville	2095 Winston Park Drive,	108
Fairfield Inn Toronto/Oakville	2937 Sherwood Heights Dr.	65
Country Inn by Carlson	2930 South Sheridan Way	71
Hilton Garden Inn	2774 South Sheridan Way	97
Holiday Inn at Trafalgar	590 Argus Road, Oakville	145
Monte Carlo Inn Oakville Suites	374 South Service Rd. E.	74
Oakville Inn	Downtown, 162 Lakeshore Rd. E	10
Quality Hotel and Suites	745 Bronte Rd. Oakville	80
Staybridge Suites	2511 Wyecroft Road	105
Walnut House B&B	134-136 Forsythe Street	3
Melford Cottage B&B	155 Douglas Avenue	2
Haslemere House B&B	46 Cameo St	3
Lynbrook House B&B	South East Oakville	3
TOTAL HOTEL ROOMS:		910

Year	Oakville Hotel Occupancy Rates and Revenue per Available Room		Ontario Hotel Occupancy Rates and Revenue per Available Room	
	Hotel Occupancy Rate (%)	Average Daily Room Rate (\$)	Hotel Occupancy Rate (%)	Average Daily Room Rate (\$)
2009	55.3%	\$ 112	57.1%	\$ 119
2008	59.9%	\$ 118	61.5%	\$ 127
2007	58.3%	\$ 112	62.8%	\$ 126

Source: Oakville figures, PKF Consulting. Ontario figures, Ministry of Tourism, 2009, Regional Tourism Profiles

Economic Impact of Tourism in Oakville

- \$45.3 million in direct economic activity (GDP)
- 925 direct jobs in Oakville
- 1,569 direct, indirect and induced jobs province-wide (including the jobs generated in Oakville).
- \$47.8 million in Federal/Provincial/Municipal taxes (direct, indirect, and induced) province-wide, including \$1.5 million at the Municipal level.

Social Impact of Tourism in Oakville

- Tourism provides investment in sustainable community development through tourism-related infrastructure (i.e. Burlington waterfront development).
- Tourism produces more attractive surroundings for residents as a place to live, work and play.
- Tourism helps to instill a *sense of pride* in the community.
- The high volume of visiting friends and families helps to increase the area's exposure as a tourist destination of choice, and has led to more overnight stays year over year.
- Tourism provides an increase in the variety and types of festivals & events that capitalize on natural and heritage assets, but also caters to visitor preferences and cultural backgrounds, and provides more educational opportunities for residents.

The Vision for Tourism in Oakville

Tourism is a significant driver for the social and economic development of Oakville. It is not just about the direct benefits of visitor expenditure, but about the impact on quality of life for Oakville's residents and the awareness and image of the town.

Oakville Tourism Partnership's vision is for Oakville to be recognized as the premier destination in the Greater Toronto area for visitors to find their own unique experience in which to indulge.

Mission

To focus on tourism activities in Oakville that will improve the overall positive image of the Town of Oakville and position the Town as a desirable place to visit and invest time and money. The Oakville Tourism Partnership will work to encourage tourism development to create a positive economic benefit through increased visitor spending. These activities will improve the overall quality and pride of place for Oakville residents.

Goals

Advocacy, customer service training and coordination, destination development through partnerships and new products and strategic marketing initiatives and activities.

Oakville Tourism Partnership: The Organization

The Oakville Tourism Partnership is an incorporated, not-for-profit organization and acts as a destination management organization operated through a Board of Directors comprised of Oakville Tourism stakeholders. The Oakville Tourism Partnership acts cooperatively to achieve tourism goals and direction for tourism development and marketing as noted above. In January 2010 OTP developed a Policy & Procedures document which outlines the responsibilities of the Directors of the Oakville Tourism Partnership Board of Directors. This document is included as Appendix A.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall be comprised of up to 14 voting Directors including the Chair. The Board of Directors shall include: (2) individuals from tourism attractions; (3) individuals from the Business Improvement Areas (BIA), defined as one from each BIA; (3) individuals from accommodations, which is defined as (1) hotel sales and (2) hotel management; (1) individual from a Bed & Breakfast; (1) individual from the Oakville Chamber of Commerce; (1) individual from the Oakville Arts Council; (1) individual from the Oakville Sports Council; (1) individual from Oakville Town Council. Non-voting support positions/representatives include a Town of Oakville Economic Development staff representative and Oakville Tourism Partnership contracted consultants.

2011 Board of Directors

Chair	Richard Messer
Attraction	Bill Nesbitt, Museum Supervisor, The Town of Oakville
Attraction	Jill MacInnes, Sheridan College
Accommodation – Hotel Sales	Bonnie Anderson, Holiday Inn at Trafalgar
Accommodation – Hotel Management	Satish Pallaseri, Quality Suites Hotel
Accommodation – Hotel Management	Eddie Stark, Fairfield Inn
Tourism Industry at Large	Colonel Guy Smith
BIA – Bronte Village	Ann Sargent
BIA – Kerr Village	Richard Messer
BIA – Downtown Oakville	Suzy Godefroy
Oakville Chamber of Commerce	John Sawyer**
Oakville Arts Council	Megan Whittington
Oakville Sports Council	Ron Bidulka
Oakville Town Council	Councillor Keith Bird
Past-Chair	Karen Hewson, Canadian Golf Hall of Fame

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)

Destination Marketing Organization: A company or other entity involved in the business of increasing tourism to a destination or improving its public image.

In the past DMOs focused their attention primarily on marketing initiatives that would increase tourism activities and receipts in their communities. Over the past few years, destinations in Ontario have started to expand their focus to also include destination development initiatives. This shift mirrors that of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Canadian Tourism Commission who are developing strong tourism experience brands which rely heavily on new products and experiences that can be promoted as unique or iconic.

The success of marketing and destination development hinges on the level of involvement of the tourism industry stakeholders and the ability of the DMO to affectively engage and coordinate. One of the major roles of the DMO is to develop a cohesive approach among stakeholders to enable the collective to achieve results that the individual businesses would not be able to on their own.

Most communities throughout Ontario have well established DMOs. The operation, size and function of the various agencies in the province vary, however, the primary objectives of advocacy, industry training, destination development and marketing activities are typically standard.

An example of well established neighbouring DMOs include the following:

Tourism Burlington

Tourism Burlington Inc. is a strategic partnership dedicated to increasing the community's tourism potential by attracting increased numbers of visitors throughout the year, optimizing community and industry economic benefits and increasing our tourism industry's capacities. It is a not-for-profit incorporated business governed by a 16 member volunteer Board of Directors representing various tourism sectors and economic development organizations. This is a partner based organization which does not charge a membership fee and serves the city of Burlington and tourism partners both within the city and in outlying Halton area. There is representation from the tourism sectors with approximately 560 partners.

Tourism Hamilton

Tourism Hamilton is the City of Hamilton's destination management organization with a mandate dedicated to significantly increasing new and return tourist visitation to Hamilton. Tourism Hamilton is a not for profit organization with seven directors represent private sector tourism businesses; three directors represent public sector tourism organizations; three directors are members of Hamilton City Council and one director is ex-officio. The organization does not have a paid membership.

Tourism Brampton

Tourism Brampton is a division of the Economic Development Department at the City of Brampton. The vision of Tourism Brampton is to generate greater economic impact from targeted tourism segments with a mission to focus on markets of opportunity which relate to Brampton's value proposition. In partnership with local business associations, City departments, senior levels of government, dining establishments and hoteliers, Tourism Brampton promotes the City's tourism destinations, such as the historic downtown; floral and building heritage; arts, culture and entertainment venues; parks, forests, sports activities, beaches and pathway systems; and environmental/agricultural areas.

Tourism Brantford

Tourism Brantford's mission is, "Tourism Brantford is a destination marketing organization that seeks to effectively market the multitude of unique attractions in Brantford and area to maximize tourism potential."

Tourism Brantford has served as a Destination Marketing Organization for over sixteen years providing leadership and strategic direction to the development of the tourism industry in Brantford and area. Tourism Brantford's mandate falls within the municipal structure of the corporation of the City of Brantford. Tourism Brantford is a division of the Economic Development & Tourism Department, which is part of the Community Development Commission.

The Oakville Tourism Partnership has a strong level of engagement from a collective of tourism industry partners who seek opportunities like those of its neighbours to collaborate and grow tourism activities in the Town of Oakville.

A Comparison of Municipal Funding for Tourism

Municipality	Pop.	DMO	Type of Organization	Municipal Funding *	Partner Revenues & co-ops
Oakville	165,613	Oakville Tourism Partnership	Partnership	\$ 37,500	\$ 20,000
Burlington	164,415	Tourism Burlington	Fee-for-service	\$ 330,100.00	\$ 62,500
Halton Hills	55,289	Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce	Fee-for-service	\$ 33,700	\$ 33,700
Milton	53,939	Milton Chamber of Commerce	Fee-for-service	\$ 33,400	
Hamilton	504,599	Tourism Hamilton	Public with Industry Committees	\$ 1,449,707	\$ 200,000
Brantford	96,689	Tourism Brantford	Public with Industry Committees	\$ 866,000	\$ 47,500
Brant County	34,415	County of Brant Tourism	Pure Public	\$ 130,000	

* Based on 2010 or 2009 figures as available

Regional Tourism Organizations

In December 2009 The Ministry of Tourism announced the formation and development of thirteen Regional Tourism Organizations across Ontario. RTO 3 includes ten partners, involving the Cities of Hamilton, Burlington and Brantford; the County of Brant, the Towns of Milton, Oakville and Halton Hills; the Region of Halton; the Six Nations of the Grand River; and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

RTOs will be independent, industry-led, not-for-profit organizations responsible for building and supporting competitive and sustainable tourism regions. They will help attract more visitors, generate more economic activity, and create more tourism jobs across the province.

The Ministry of Tourism www.tourism.gov.on.ca

The Ministry of Tourism has allocated \$40 million annually to be divided among the 13 RTOs and of this funding, \$1.15 million has been allocated to RTO 3 for 2010/11 and again in 2011/12.

Active development of these Regional Tourism Organizations began in late 2009. The work to date has involved both organizational development and initial marketing program initiatives with direction from a Task Force made up of a cross-section of industry representatives and DMOs from throughout RTO 3. RTO 3 Incorporated in December 2010, established an interim Board of Directors and completed a Strategic Plan based on input from Industry Stakeholders.

The intent of the Ministry of Tourism is that the local DMOs will continue to perform their local responsibilities while partnering with the new RTO to enhance tourism and increase capacity. Similar to the DMO concept where greater things are possible through collaboration, the regional approach is designed to further enhance that ability.

In 2010/11 OTP levered regional initiatives valued at \$805,000:

- \$250,000 Fall and Holiday Campaign (www.theheartofontario.com)
- \$100,000 War of 1812 Project
- \$50,000 Photo Library
- \$30,000 Travel Trade Project
- \$25,000 Travel Journalists Familiarization Tour
- \$200,000 dedicated to other initiatives (possibly Mobile Apps)
- \$150,000 contingency for projects

RTO 3 has launched both a consumer website (shown to the right) as well as an industry website (on following page) that provides background information and details about collaboration, training and priority projects at www.region3tourism.ca.

RTO 3's Vision

RTO 3's market area will become a compelling tourism destination in Ontario based on its unique offerings, marketing and the cohesion of the industry in its area. This outcome will be achieved in part by focusing its marketing and products on the tourists travelling between Ontario's two primary tourist destinations – Toronto and Niagara Falls, which lie on each side of RTO 3 with the major connecting travel corridor traversing RTO #3. The tourism industry in RTO's area will be a significant economic driver within the region's economy.

Regional Tourism Levy (RTL)

Beginning in 2012 with the approval of provincial legislation, RTOs will have the opportunity to collect a regional tourism levy to augment the funding allocation from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The RTL would be voluntarily collected by each region if majority of hoteliers agreed. The RTL if passed would be up to 3% on room rate and would be remitted to province and then directed to tourism regions to be used for regional initiatives.

The RTL replaces the Destination Marketing Fee (DMF) that was formerly in place and collected in several Ontario destinations, including Burlington, Hamilton and Toronto. At the time of entering the agreement with the Town of Oakville, OTP had anticipated rallying the tourism partners in Oakville to implement a DMF that would allow for a sustainable industry-funded funding model for OTP. The recent changes in legislation mean that destinations can no longer collect local DMFs and must wait until the 2012 RTL vote to determine if and how a regional levy will roll out. With over 900 hotel rooms in Oakville, the hotel sector representatives are actively engaged in RTL discussions.

The Role of OTP within RTO 3

Since January 2010, OTP has been an active member of the RTO 3 collective with DMO input at the early stages of development and throughout the 2010-11 marketing projects and initiatives. OTP board members Karen Hewson and Satish Palasseri are members of the RTO 3 interim board of directors.

Given the mandate of the Ministry of Tourism to generate some quick wins and create experiences to promote the region, RTO 3s development and marketing initiatives to date has relied completely on the local DMOs and their networks within their own communities. When opportunities arise DMOs are required to collect the appropriate information or identify opportunities in their communities that relate to the initiative so that they can leverage the collaboration. Without a local DMO or administrative body who is connected to the grass roots tourism industry, communities will not reap the benefits offered by the RTOs. In RTO 3 this would translate to the inability to leverage the \$1.15 million annual product development and marketing initiatives that will roll out over the next 2 years.

Communities are now sitting at regional tables throughout the province and using RTO funding to develop new products, enhance existing products and promote this to their key target markets. Most regions in the province rely on the GTA as a main target market. It is critical for Oakville to stay 'top of mind' to these markets. Oakville can't take for granted visitation that has supported its businesses and infrastructure.

The Tourism Structure in Ontario



Functions of the Oakville Tourism Partnership

As Oakville's DMO, OTP will function as the hub that connects the tourism industry in Oakville to multi-faceted opportunities. On the industry side, there are primary businesses in which tourism represents the majority of their revenue, such as accommodations and attractions sector, but there are also secondary businesses that generate a significant amount of revenue annually from visitors who support them (including retail, dining, arts and culture venues, and recreation facilities).

Opportunities come in the form of revenue generation (economic impact) and pride of place (social benefits). The chart below illustrates the types of opportunities that exist ranging from independent travellers seeking to visit Oakville to groups and hotel developers. The reality is that inquiries from potential visitors will flow into Oakville regardless of whether a formal tourism organization is equipped to handle them. Having a dedicated tourism agency allows Oakville to be able to respond to inquiries professionally and use the opportunities to benefit the community as a whole.

In order to maximize tourism opportunities Oakville Tourism Partnership should focus on three primary areas of function; marketing, visitor and community services and industry services.

Marketing

OTP's marketing goal is to create awareness of Oakville as a great place to live and to visit nationally and internationally. The marketing plan should build a mix of market segments that together will deliver an ideal visitor mix of high yield, business all-yearround, with good geographical distribution across the town. The aim of the marketing strategy should be to position Oakville as a desirable destination and deliver new business using the most cost-effective way, making best use of a limited budget and leveraging the RTO 3 marketing projects.

Oakville's brand is 'Indulge in a little Oakville'. The brand essence reflects Oakville as a welcoming, contemporary community of quiet pride of place, history and purpose with a hint of exclusivity.

Oakville is a unique town of quietly dynamic attributes and activities that might be best characterized as a welcoming boutique destination – a place shaped by heritage and purpose that retains its small town feeling, harmony with the land and water, yet offers cultural urban appeal.

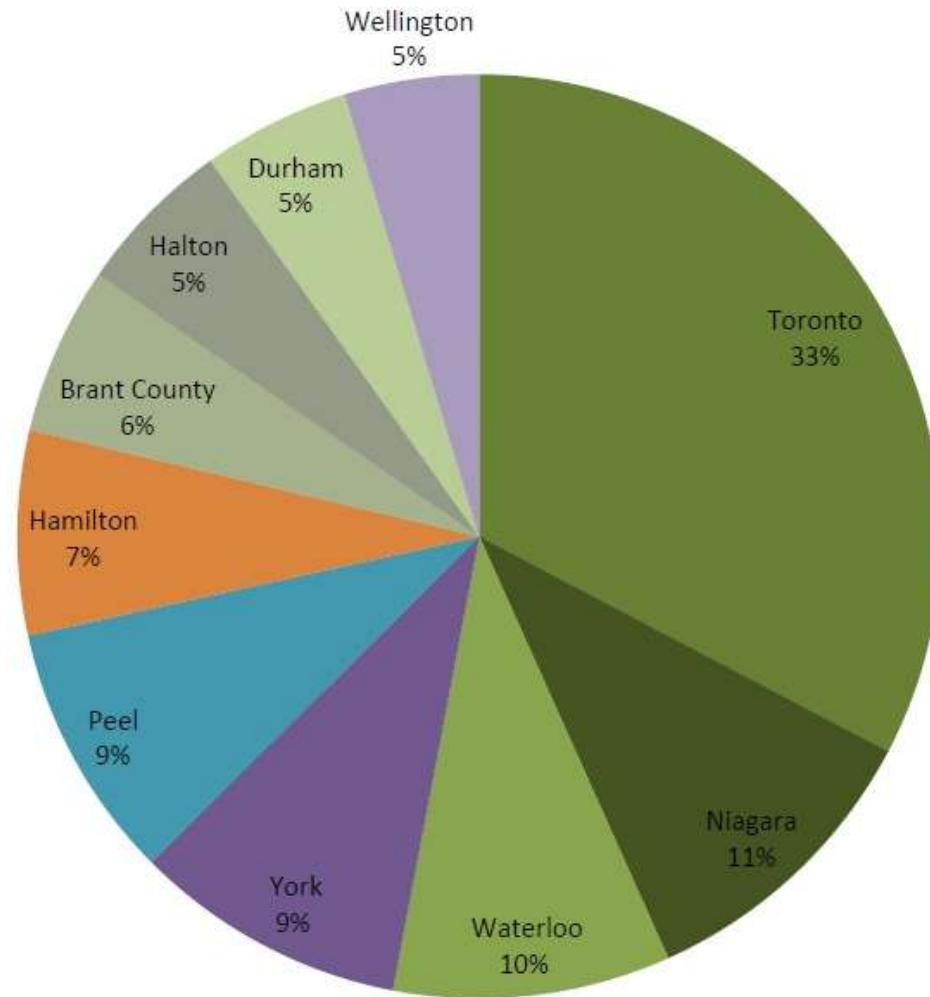
Key Brand Character Traits:

- Sophisticated but welcoming
- Proud but not snobby
- Prestigious but not elitist
- Contemporary but infused with heritage
- Well-developed but harmonious with its natural wonders
- Both discrete and discreet but not exclusionary

Brand Emotional Attributes:

- Spirited
- Restorative/rejuvenating/reconnective
- Soul satisfying
- Memory creating
- Brag appeal
- A unique quiet discovery

Top 10 Ontario Markets to Halton in 2009



Source: Ministry of Tourism, Regional Tourism Profiles, 2009

Visitor and Community Services

The aim of OTP's Visitor and Community Services is to leverage the tourism potential of Oakville, by connecting visitors and residents to the experiences, businesses and facilities within the town. The end goal is to maximize spending in the community and encourage repeat visits and recommendations to friends, relatives and social networks. This is where there is an overlap with the marketing efforts mentioned previously in this report.

Visitor Needs/Experience	Tactics
Awareness about Oakville's experiences and inspiration to visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites • Calendar of Events • Social media • Brochure distribution in key markets • E-mail newsletters • Printed literature • Packages and suggested itineraries
Inquires from potential visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail and telephone responses • Information packages for groups • Familiarization tours
Inquiries from visitors already in Oakville who are looking for experiences or advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor information centre • Information displays with Oakville collateral and surrounding area. • Mobile web • Maps, guides
Resources for visitors in Oakville from tourism industry partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation reception desks/in-room info • information points/displays • tourism resources/collateral • Ambassador Training for industry (accommodations, retail, restaurants, attractions etc.)
Post-visit Recommendations to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-newsletters • Word of mouth • Customer Relationship Management

Industry Services

Currently OTP has 14 industry partners. Partners receive value for their financial contributions through visitor services, business development, local product development and marketing. OTP provides the functionality to engaging the industry in a common effort to market Oakville as a destination through participation in marketing projects and product development by providing coordination, support and advice to businesses to help them maximize their profitability. There is an active Hotel Subcommittee who meet to discuss shared strategies. This group has representation on the OTP Board of Directors and the RTO 3 Board of Directors. Industry services include:

- Seek out and facilitate workshops that are relevant to the needs of local operators
- Celebrate and encourage business excellence.
- Partner Administration
- Business Advice
- Ambassador Training
- Local promotions and print
- Engaging the community
- Coordination with RTO 3
- Industry updates, newsletters
- Collaborative Marketing Opportunities
- Research

Recommended Tactics and Performance Measures

	Area of Focus	Description	Measure of Success
Administration	Hire Tourism Coordinator	Hire Tourism Coordinator, establish office and introduce to tourism industry and town departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position to be posted by October 1, 2011 • Position to be filled by November 1, 2011
	Financials	Ensure a balanced budget and accounting of all OTP funds according to approved annual budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financials to be reported to OTP at monthly meetings • OTP year-end to be completed by January 15, 2012 • Generate targeted partner contributions
	Board Administration	OTP Board meetings, hosting of AGM, posting of minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board meetings to be held 10 times per year minimum, AGM to be hosted annually by April 30th. Distribution and posting of all minutes to board and on partner area of website.
Marketing	Visitor Guide	Publish an annual visitor's guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be released by May 1 annually • Advertising sales to generate income for OTP
	Visitor Guide Distribution	Ensure guide available locally at tourism information centres along 401 corridor and QEW, and in key target markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute by May 1 annually • Re-stock throughout the year
	Electronic Newsletter	Subscription based, offering updates on current events, weekend getaway ideas, meeting packages, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate a mechanism to gather e-contacts • Send out monthly newsletter by Jan 1, 2012
	Social Networks	Establish pages / promotions on social networking sites including Twitter, Facebook, U-Tube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up social networking sites by October 1, 2011 • Ensure weekly feeds and posts to maintain interest

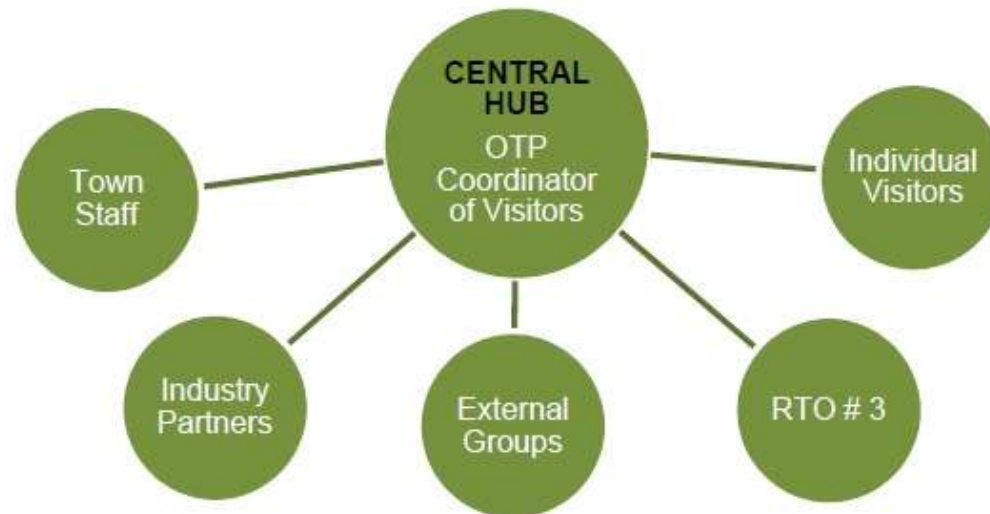
	Area of Focus	Description	Measure of Success
Marketing	Website Enhancements	Ability to sign up for newsletters / updates, ensure more info that available in the guide, all tourism businesses to be listed monthly events calendar, build own packages, meeting room info, etc., tie in a mapping function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace current pdf's on the site with imbedded content by October 2011 • Enhance YLM listings to enable searching by tourism business type by December 2011
	Online Ads	(based on product demand generators / programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie in to website, establish by November 1, 2011
	Seasonal Lure Brochures	Spring /Summer, Fall / Winter. Distribute throughout GTA, sell advertisements, direct to website for more info. Postcard / brochure format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 lure brochures or similar tactic to be completed annually
	Destination Video	Creation of video that can be used online, at tradeshow / events, etc. Collect existing videos from events, attractions – post online as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a video library by August 2012
Visitor and Community Services	Travel Information Centre	Provide all collateral and stock visitor information area to support Service Oakville Create welcome banners and re-organize brochure area to condense and improve aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going requirement
	Training	Service Oakville staff will be trained to communicate with guests to ensure needs are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of training program by October 2011 • Implement training program November 2011
	Ambassador Training	Roll out training program to Oakville Hotel Properties and Attractions Provide collateral tools for staff to assist visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2012
	Events Calendar	Updated and complete database of events in Oakville to allow for creation of on-line event calendar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch on website by February 2012 (to replace current simple listing)
	Newcomers Program	Establish relationship with Oakville Newcomer's Association to ensure awareness of all to do in Oakville (include VFR program). Collect registrations for e-newsletters, passport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish by April 1 , 2012
	Tourism Week	TIAC – first week in June. Use this event to promote tourism through networking sessions, media releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be held annually

	Area of Focus	Description	Measure of Success
Industry Services	Packaging	Assist partners in creating overnight packages that can be promoted on Oakville tourism website and RTO 3 website and through social media channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed twice per year to promote spring/summer and winter/fall
	Celebrate Ontario	Assist partner organizations with Celebrate Ontario grant applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed annually
	Communications	Ensure Oakville's tourism partners are kept up to date with industry news and RTO initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be sent out as information is available
	Hotel Sub-Committee	Meetings with local hotels to discuss market status, action plan success, tactics, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be held bi-monthly throughout the year
	Electronic Newsletter	Industry related news – partner announcements, industry announcements, statistics and reports, regional tourism initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be send out b-monthly throughout the year
	Website Page	Area to include research links, presentation links, grant information, possible job/resume posting opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed by November 1, 2012
	Networking	Opportunity for tourism industry to meet, tour facilities, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host tourism networking events (annual AGM and a winter event)

Resources Required

Human Resources

To leverage the opportunities, Oakville needs a dedicated tourism coordinator, reporting to and guided by the OTP board of directors. The position would require the dedication of 25 hours per week.



The coordinator is an important liaison between local industry stakeholders such as the hotel partners, restaurant owners and the BIAs and the Town Staff, External Groups and the RTO. Coordination with Town Staff allows the tourism industry to further support Town facilities such as sporting and cultural venues by attracting visitors to offset operating costs. OTP coordination with the Tourism Industry encourages collaborative opportunities. OTP has an active Hotel Subcommittee who have identified shared opportunities such as new packages and events that require coordination to develop and take to market. The Tourism Coordinator fills a need when inquiries come from within and outside Oakville about tourism. Oakville needs to take a proactive approach to visitor attraction so that we can demonstrate the level of sophistication visitors expect. The tourism coordination with the RTO is critical to leverage the Provincial finding that has been allocated for product development and marketing initiatives in Region 3. The RTO presents opportunities for not only product development, but also industry training and research that Oakville has not had access to in the past.

In order to support a coordinator position, OTP requires the following resources:

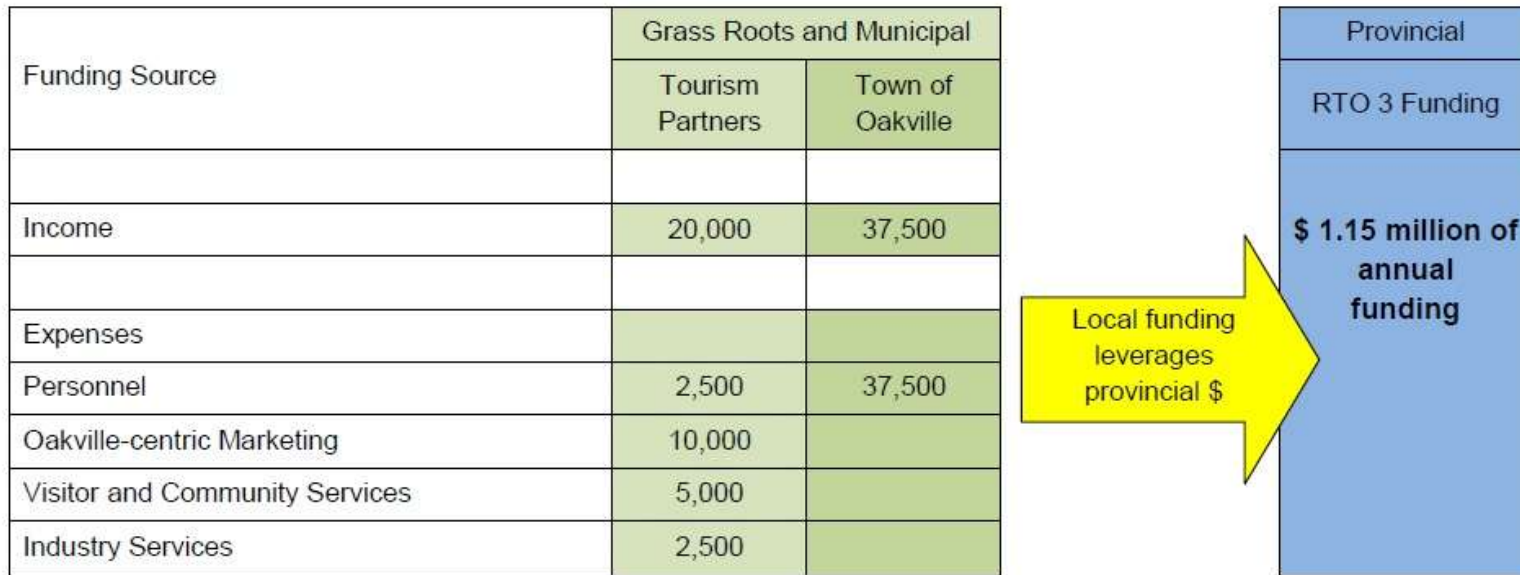
Town In-Kind Contribution	OTP Support
Desk to be located at Town Hall for tourism coordinator	Regular meetings with OTP Board and subcommittees to provide direction and guidance to Tourism Coordinator
Phone with dedicated phone line	
Computer with Town e-mail address	
Service Oakville to act as initial point of contact for calls and walk-ins	Ambassador Training to be provided to Service Oakville by the Tourism Coordinator
Physical website as part of town's web infrastructure	Website content and social media presence
YLM business listings through economic development	Approval of tourism businesses for inclusion, information filters

OTP is requesting that the Town of Oakville continue to provide an equipped workspace for a new tourism coordinator. Town Hall is the most logical tourism information centre location from a geographic as a central location and with easy access from the QEW. Visitors and residents typically expect tourism information in a municipal centre. There is a benefit to both the Town and OTP in a collaborative effort. Service Oakville had been providing service to walk-in visitors and responding to phone calls and e-mails. They have both the infrastructure and the human resources necessary to fulfil the role as the first point of contact. To further support the Service Oakville team, the tourism coordinator would take on the responsibility of providing the tools, collateral, training and resources to Service Oakville necessary to provide service to visitors including:

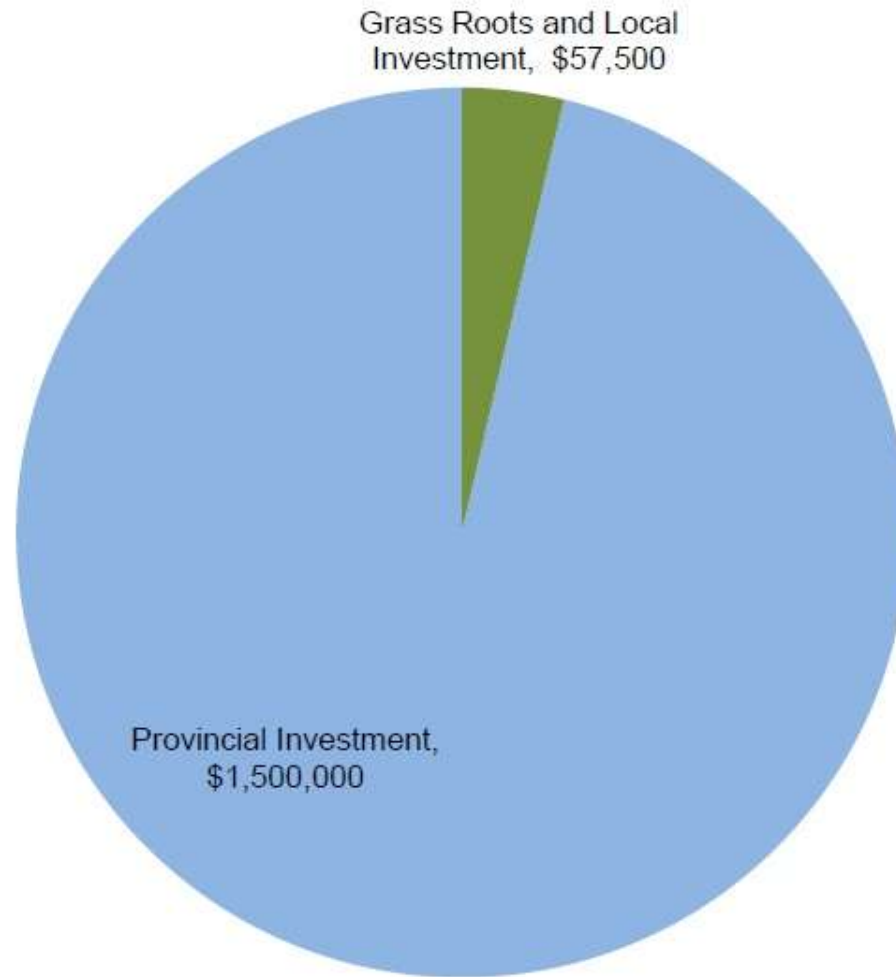
- Visitor's guide and maps, and other tourism resources
- Content on the website
- Compiling the annual Calendar of Events
- Social media presence
- Brochure distribution in key markets
- E-mail newsletters
- Packages and suggested itineraries
- E-mail and telephone responses
- Follow-up Information packages for groups
- Ambassador training for Service Oakville staff

Financial Resources

The chart below illustrates that \$57,500 of local investment allows Oakville to leverage a share of the Regional Tourism Organization’s annual \$1.15 million budget.



Oakville Tourism's Functions and Access to Regional Programs by Funding Amount



In Conclusion

The Oakville Tourism Partnership is looking forward to continuing the momentum that they have generated in creating a partnership of tourism stakeholders who are interested in collaborative ways to promote and develop tourism. The continuation of these efforts is contingent on securing a base level of funding that will ensure the existence of a tourism coordinator position. An annual funding amount of \$37,500 along with industry support of \$20,000 allows Oakville to achieve that. A formal tourism agency with coordination resources can then leverage the \$1.15 million in annual provincial funding at the regional level. This is a model that will allow Oakville to remain competitive in the tourism marketplace.

The Oakville Tourism Partnership Board of Directors supports this direction and will continue to provide their time and expertise to direct tourism initiatives in the town for the benefit of all tourism stakeholders.

Appendix A

Oakville Tourism Partnership Policy & Procedures

The following is an outline of the responsibilities of the Directors of the Oakville Tourism Partnership Board of Directors.

Vision

Oakville will be recognized as the premier destination in the Greater Toronto area for visitors to find their own unique experience in which to indulge.

Mission

Tourism activities in Oakville will improve the overall positive image of the Town of Oakville and position the Town as a desirable place to visit and invest time and money.

The Oakville Tourism Partnership will work to encourage tourism development to create a positive economic benefit through increased visitor spending.

These activities will improve the overall quality of place and pride of place for Oakville residents and support the town's commitment to make Oakville the most livable town in Canada.

Goals

Advocacy – Increasing / improving support for tourism within all levels of government.

Customer Service – Coordinating / improving customer service(s)

Destination Development – Developing / creating tourism partnerships / products

Strategic Marketing – Implementing marketing initiatives / activities

Definitions

General Membership

Oakville Tourism Partnership Members are defined as any business located within the Town of Oakville with a stake in tourism to include accommodations, retail, dining, recreation, attractions, among others.

GENERAL POLICY

1. The Oakville Tourism Partnership is an incorporated, not-for-profit organization and acts as a destination management organization operated through a Board of Directors comprised of Oakville Tourism stakeholders. The Oakville Tourism Partnership acts co-operatively to achieve tourism goals and direction for tourism development and marketing as noted above.
2. The Board of Directors shall be comprised of up to 14 voting Directors including the Chair. The Board of Directors shall include: (2) individuals from tourism attractions; (3) individuals from the Business Improvement Areas (BIA), defined as one from each BIA; (3) individuals from accommodations, which is defined as (1) hotel sales and (2) hotel management; (1) individual from a Bed & Breakfast; (1) individual from the Oakville Chamber of Commerce; (1) individual from the Oakville Arts Council; (1) individual from the Oakville Sports Council; (1) individual from Oakville Town Council. Non-voting support positions/representatives include a Town of Oakville Economic Development staff representative and Oakville Tourism Partnership contracted consultants.
3. The Board of Directors shall control and manage the overall operation of the Oakville Tourism Partnership, determine all policies and supervise the affairs of the organization and liaise with the Town of Oakville.
4. Directors have a duty to act in good faith and to act in a view towards the best interests of the corporation. The term of Directorship shall be no greater than three (3) years, provided that the representatives continue to be qualified. Terms normally expire at the last Board meeting prior to the Annual General Meeting which is typically held in February.
5. A Vice-Chair shall be elected annually by a vote of the Board and serve for a one-year term. The following year, the Vice-Chair will assume the role of Chair. The outgoing Chair will then assume the role of Past-Chair. Should the Vice-Chair not be able to fill the role of Chair or the Chair unable to complete their term, the Board will elect a Chair for the duration of the term and follow procedures to fill a vacancy (as per point 12 below).
6. Elected Directors to the Board shall normally be limited to serving a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms; unless otherwise determined by the Board.
7. Directors must maintain residency or primary occupation within Oakville throughout the term of appointment.
8. Where possible, terms of appointments of Directors shall be staggered to provide for ongoing continuity within the Directorship.
9. Directorship shall be rescinded should the member be absent from three consecutive meetings or absent from over 50 per cent of the meetings in one year, unless the Board determines otherwise.

10. In the event of a resignation of a Board Member, the resignation shall be submitted in writing through the Chair.
11. In the event of illness, leave of absence or resignation, the quorum shall be reduced by the number of those absent for the above reason.
12. Notification of a vacancy shall be made to the General Membership either by way of the newsletter or by special notice within 90 days of the occurrence of such vacancy. A nomination form shall be attached to the vacancy notification. Included with the nomination form will be information to allow potential candidates to determine if they have the ability to fulfill the obligations of serving as a Member of the Board. Interested Members shall notify the Oakville Tourism Partnership in writing fifteen (15) days prior to the next Board meeting. The Board may elect by vote a person who has consented to accept the position of Director of the Oakville Tourism Partnership. The position will be filled in accordance with the composition of the Board as noted in point 2 above.
13. Any person who is elected to the Board of Directors shall be deemed to have accepted these by-laws and shall be bound by them all.
14. No member of the Board of Directors shall receive remuneration or any form of consideration for acting as such, but may upon resolution of the Board of Directors be reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses incurred by fulfilling their Board of Directors duties.
15. A Board member shall declare a conflict of interest, disclose this interest and shall not vote when that Member of the Board has a personal interest in any matter in which the Board is concerned. At the discretion of the Board the individual may participate in the discussion related to the matter and / or may be requested to not be present during said discussions.
16. Should any Member of the Board, a family member of the Board member or a professional associate associated with a financial interest with that member provide services to the Board that requires payment, the request for payment shall be brought to the Board of Directors for approval.
17. For the purpose of these Policy & Procedures, the pecuniary interest of a parent, spouse, child or professional associate with whom the member has financial interests of the Board member shall be deemed to be also the pecuniary interest of the Board member.
18. The Board of Directors is accountable to the General Membership of the Oakville Tourism Partnership and shall hold an Annual General Meeting within 15 months of the last Annual General Meeting to review Oakville Tourism Partnership Financial Statements of the previous year.

19. For a duly constituted Board meeting a quorum must be present, A quorum shall be 50%+1. A majority vote of those Directors present at a duly constituted Board Meeting shall be necessary to give effect to any action or expense, except for expenses approved in the budget or governed by a Board Policy, of the Oakville Tourism Partnership. Directors of the Board may, if they are going to be absent, submit their proxy to the Chairperson to achieve quorum as long as five (5) Directors of the Board are present at the Board meeting.

20. Board meetings shall generally be scheduled on a monthly basis. There will also be an Annual General Meeting. An agenda will be provided in 5 days in advance and meeting minutes will be circulated electronically to the Oakville Tourism Partnership stakeholders.

a. The Board may postpone, cancel or re-schedule any regular meeting, upon resolution of the Board, provided it convenes eight (8) meetings within the calendar year.

b. Additional Board meetings may be called by the Chair, manager or Executive Committee or any three (3) Board Directors, with the approval of the Chair, with notice to all Board Directors at least five (5) days prior to the meeting date.

c. An emergency meeting of the Board may be called by the Chair, Manager or Executive Committee with twelve (12) hours notice to all Board Directors.

21. Directors of the Board shall receive minutes from the previous Board meeting at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to each regularly scheduled Board Meeting.

22. Board Directors are required to attend and participate with special events and presentations to council when issues pertaining to Oakville Tourism Partnership are scheduled for discussion.

23. Board Directors shall participate on no less than one (1) sub-committees and other Town of Oakville, Halton Region committees pertaining to tourism in Oakville.

24. Questions and issues arising at any meeting of the Board shall be decided by a majority of votes. In the case of a tie, the Chair shall have the deciding vote. If deemed appropriate, a vote may be taken by secret ballot.

25. The Board shall contract professional services and/or staff under such terms and conditions it deems advisable and may delegate to this person the authority to manage and direct the day to day business and affairs of the Board.

26. Decisions of the Board are final and should be supported by all Board Directors regardless of their personal feelings and views.

27. All correspondence claiming to represent the interest of the Board or the Oakville Tourism Partnership General Membership must be on appropriate letterhead and have the signature of either the Chair or Manager. A copy of all correspondence will be kept on file at the Oakville Tourism Partnership office.

28. The Chair and senior staff person (or appointed designate for each) are the Official Spokespeople for the Board of Directors and Oakville Tourism Partnership. No other person has authority to speak on behalf of the Board or the Oakville Tourism Partnership.

29. These Policies and Procedures may be amended at any Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting of the Oakville Tourism Partnership by a majority vote, provided that notice shall be given to the General Membership, stating the proposed amendments in full, not less than ten days prior to the meeting, at which time such amendments to these Policies and Procedures are to be voted upon. These Policies and Procedures may be amended at any meeting of the Board providing such amendment receives the approval of seventy-five percent (75%) of the Board and further provided that notice shall be sent in writing or by facsimile or by electronic mail to the General Membership stating the proposed amendments in full, not less than ten days prior to the Board meeting, at which such amendments to these Policies and Procedures are to be voted upon.

30. The Board shall elect a Nominating Committee comprising of at least three Directors and shall designate a member of such Committee as the Nominations Committee Chair. The Nominating Committee shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting of Oakville Tourism Partnership or until their successors are elected by the Board. It shall hold meetings from time to time whenever it shall deem necessary and a majority of its members shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of any meeting. In the event of an inability to serve out their term and perform the duties of the office, the Board shall elect a successor to serve until the next Annual General Meeting of the Oakville Tourism Partnership. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to solicit nominations for members of the Board to succeed those incumbents whose terms of office have expired. Before a person is nominated for election as a Director, the Nominating Committee shall secure the approval of such person. Nominations for the Board must be submitted in writing. The General Membership shall be notified at least five days before the next Annual Meeting of the Oakville Tourism Partnership of the nominations for the Board. It shall also be the duty of the Nominating Committee to make recommendations to the Board regarding candidates for appointment.

This document has been approved by the Oakville Tourism Partnership Board of Directors on January 15, 2010.