

Prince Edward Island Strategic Plan for Tourism 2016-2021

Stage 2 - Vision and Strategy Outline
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Prepared for



Tourism Development
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Situation Analysis

Conclusions (1)

- ▶ Organization structures are top-heavy with unnecessary duplication and fragmentation
- ▶ Need for a sector-neutral destination management body for the province
- ▶ PEI's tourism product has stayed relatively constant in the past two decades
- ▶ The island currently offers a surprisingly thin portfolio of outdoor soft adventure
- ▶ Current PEI marketing presents a rich summer time product, without a very strong brand positioning

Situation Analysis

Conclusions (2)

- ▶ Resources devoted to visitor servicing are very considerable. Proliferation of printed material which have questionable impact in generating additional business
- ▶ Traffic volumes on the Confederation Bridge have been virtually static. Marketing activity by the bridge appears to have largely ceased
- ▶ Improved operation of the ferry service is strategically critical to the island's tourism success
- ▶ Expansion of air services is a priority
- ▶ Strong case for considering whether dollars spent on accommodation and related licensing system could be spent more effectively

Situation Analysis

Conclusions (3)

- ▶ Considerable range of Government operated investment supports. One missing support is the non-availability of personal tax incentives for third party private equity investment.
- ▶ Where labour force supply is concerned, one of the most pressing issues which needs to be addressed is the supply of summer season operatives.
- ▶ Industry decision-makers need to be better served by relevant clearly communicated market research, as distinct from statistics.

Recommendations

- ▶ A new Vision is proposed for the PEI tourism sector
- ▶ Significant institutional changes are proposed.
- ▶ The product development strategy for PEI will comprise a combination of **product consolidation** based on existing products and **product diversification** based on new products and experiences.
- ▶ The **PEI Coastal Circuit** is proposed as a flagship project.
- ▶ Five major product development initiatives are proposed.
- ▶ In terms of human resource priorities, the issues identified in TIAPEI's 2014 Strategic Business Plan continue to require implementation.
- ▶ PEI needs to position itself as a lifestyle brand which offers life-enriching experiences.



Vision Statement (1)

By 2021, PEI will be recognised throughout North America and further afield as a **premier maritime and island tourism destination**, centered on its **unique island environment**, a **living cultural heritage**.

This will reflect the emergence of the Canadian nation from the original **indigenous community** and the British and French peoples, best-in-class **customer service and experiences**, and an authentic **tradition of hospitality**

Vision Statement (2)

- ▶ The island will no longer be seen primarily as a short season beach destination.
- ▶ The development of unique visitor experiences will appeal to discerning mid to high-value markets across the continent and to special interest travellers from longer-haul markets.
- ▶ Tourism will notably increase its contribution to provincial economic growth and development, by attracting visitors over a longer season than heretofore and by offering more value-added product.
- ▶ The focus will be on diversity and increasing yield from incoming tourists, not just total number of arrivals.

Principles

- ▶ Partnerships, Collaboration and Cooperation - Federal and Provincial Government; Municipalities; Parks Canada; Industry and Communities
- ▶ Product Development based on Flagships, Clusters, Trails/Circuits and Events
- ▶ Market Positioning and Targeting
- ▶ Best Practice Exemplars Aligned to Proposed Positioning

Strategic Objectives

- ▶ Creation of unique, high quality **visitor experiences** based on the island's rich mix of cultural and natural product
- ▶ **Strengthen data collection and market research capabilities** to better understand the demands and preferences of emerging key markets
- ▶ Use research and funds for **marketing** to optimally target and communicate with these markets
- ▶ **Rationalise structures** and reduce unnecessary duplication and administrative burdens
- ▶ Ensure a committed, skilled and **professional industry leadership and workforce**
- ▶ **Improve visitor services** to fulfil the promise of those expanded and more targeted marketing efforts

Strategy - Outline Recommendations

Pillar 1

- **Leadership** - Institutional Architecture and Responsibilities

Pillar 2

- **Product Development** - Offering Authentic Experiences

Pillar 3

- **Market Positioning and Communications**

Pillar 4

- **Access and Infrastructure Facilitation**

Pillar 5

- **Human Resource Priorities**

Pillar 1 - Leadership - Institutional Architecture and Responsibilities

Significant changes are proposed:

- ▶ Tourism PEI should evolve into an Independent Corporation style **Destination Management Organisation** for the Province.

- ▶ Funding for Visit PEI (Working title) from
 - Government - core ongoing activities
 - Private sector licensing levy
 - Partners on a co-operative marketing basis

- ▶ Rationalisation of TIAPEI - as a representative and professional development body for the main constituent groupings within the tourism industry

- ▶ Reduce other regulatory and administrative burdens



Pillar 2 - Product Development

Offering Authentic Experiences (1)

Development strategy involves a mix of proven approaches including:

- ▶ 'Flagship' tourism project
- ▶ Nature-based/soft adventure
- ▶ Major product development initiatives (including creation of 'themes', 'hubs', and 'clusters')
- ▶ Supporting initiatives



Pillar 2 - Product Development

Offering Authentic Experiences (2)

Flagship Tourism Project - PEI Coastal Circuit [Working Title]

Project will involve an exercise in product consolidation based on PEI's three existing coastal drives - PEI's leading experience brand

- ▶ Increase visitor numbers to PEI, extend the tourism season and extend visitor dwell time.
- ▶ Create a visitor experience capable of playing a key role in the differentiation of PEI as a unique and distinctive island destination.
- ▶ Reinforce the particular strengths and characteristics of PEI's coastline while offering visitors a compelling reason to visit.
- ▶ Establish a tourism product/experience of critical mass and address issue of product fragmentation



Pillar 2 - Product Development

Offering Authentic Experiences (3)

Flagship Tourism Project - PEI Coastal Circuit

- ▶ Enhance **linkages between existing attractions** and facilities.
- ▶ Establish a **platform for PEI**, tourism enterprises and product providers to 'showcase' their offer.
- ▶ Establish a **platform for major (new) product development initiatives** (such interventions are far more likely to have an impact as part of a 'cluster' initiative)
- ▶ Assist in the **spatial spread of tourism** by directing visitors to less visited areas.

Pillar 2 - Product Development

Offering Authentic Experiences (4)

Major Product Development Initiatives

Soft Adventure Activity Provision



First Nations - Mi'kmaq Sustainable Tourism Initiative



Pillar 2 - Product Development

Offering Authentic Experiences (5)

Major Product Development Initiatives

Waterfront Development Initiative



Pillar 2 - Product Development

Offering Authentic Experiences (6)

Major Product Development Initiatives

Confederation Trail
Facility and Linkage
Development



June/Spring
Festival





Pillar 2 - Product Development

Offering Authentic Experiences (7)

▶ Supporting Initiatives

- “Reap and Reward Yourself”-Food Tourism experience
- Canada *Fleadh Cheoil* and Celtic Music Fiddling Festival
- Acadian Musical banquet
- Calendar of sports events (participants + spectators)

Pillar 3 - Market Positioning and Communications (1)

Marketing Objectives

- ▶ **Improve the Island's value proposition and industry productivity** by repositioning from a solely summer destination to a wider, experiential product offering covering a longer season
- ▶ **Increase the desire, intention and delivery of travel to PEI** in key market segments using branding and social media to communicate clear and positive stories designed to meet consumer needs
- ▶ **Increase sales opportunities for commercial partners selling the Island** through well researched campaigns, making it easy for customers to choose PEI through the most favourable communication channels and partners
- ▶ **Increase access options by targeting additional air and cruise traffic**

Pillar 3 - Market Positioning and Communications (2)

Key Requirements to Deliver on Objectives

- ▶ A refocussing of the use of marketing resources to remove duplication and confusion
- ▶ An increase in marketing resources AND
- ▶ Parallel intensive product development and investment in service quality

Pillar 3 - Market Positioning and Communications (3)

Brand Personality

In comparison with its competitors in the Atlantic Provinces, the following features can be described as truly unique about PEI:

- ▶ The best food and beaches in Canada along the Island coastline
- ▶ Island landscape -Unique Island coastline views including North Cape Rock Reef
- ▶ Home of Anne of Green Gables.
- ▶ Charlottetown - vibrant capital town on the waterfront and birthplace of the Canadian Confederation
- ▶ The unique spirit of PEI Islanders themselves.
- ▶ Compact Island, many small-scale places to visit, short driving distances.



Pillar 3 - Market Positioning and Communications (4)

Positioning Statement

*Prince Edward Island with its magnificent
coastline and multiplicity of things to do **offers**
a different pace of life where you can
rediscover yourself*

Pillar 4 - Access and Infrastructural Facilitation

- ▶ Introduction of wholesale season pricing promotion for the Confederation Bridge
- ▶ Improved operation of ferry service from Nova Scotia
- ▶ Provision of lay-by viewing points as part of the development of the PEI Coastal Circuit
- ▶ Unified campaigning to improve broadband services
- ▶ Continued improvement in air access

Pillar 5 - Human Resource Priorities

- ▶ Priorities identified in TIAPEI's 2014 Strategic Business Plan require implementation AND...
- ▶ Small **adjustments to the academic calendar**, especially at UPEI, to ease the problem of the “cliff” in labour force availability come the 1st September
- ▶ Potential entrants to the hospitality labour force need to be more actively and specifically **targeted** and assisted by selective programmes
- ▶ Opportunity to employ **European students** who do not return to college until late September, by modifying the rules of the *International Experience Canada* (IEC) programme
- ▶ **Succession planning** in rural areas needs to be promoted via a tax code to encourage the continuance of family businesses



Next Steps

Stage 3 - Tourism Strategy and Road Map

- ▶ Feedback from Working Group and stakeholders
- ▶ 'Fine tune' strategic recommendations
- ▶ Growth targets
- ▶ Action Plan

Project completion: November 2016