



## **AGENDA**

### **Magnetawan Economic Tourism Committee (METC)**

**Amended** Wednesday March 26th, 2025, 8:00am

#### **Electronic Participation**

[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_ZDcwODkzNmQtMTFIZC00NWJmLTlhZWltMTA1YzM2NTU1ZTFk%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2208b51777-b34d-460b-b150-16ffe7acad9b%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%222323b1f3-d1c0-4f55-9a85-c26216570721%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ZDcwODkzNmQtMTFIZC00NWJmLTlhZWltMTA1YzM2NTU1ZTFk%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2208b51777-b34d-460b-b150-16ffe7acad9b%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%222323b1f3-d1c0-4f55-9a85-c26216570721%22%7d)

Meeting ID: 241 806 937 678 Passcode: zL2DU6sm

#### **OPENING BUSINESS**

- 1.1 Call to Order
- 1.2 Adoption of the Agenda
- 1.3 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- 2.1 March 22 Focus Groups - Post Event Debrief
- 2.2 Focus Group Presentation Update
- 2.3 **Ontario Tourism Education Corporation - Tourism & Hospitality Workforce Survey - 2025**  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/tourismworkforce>

#### **FOR INFORMATION**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- 3.1 Confirm the Proceedings of Committee and Adjourn

**METC Focus Group**  
**March 22, 2025**  
**Summary Notes for Different Categories**

<b>Events and Activities</b>	
With 164 responses to the Magnetawan Tourism Attraction Survey, many new and existing events were suggested for Magnetawan.	
<i>Can you suggest new events not identified on this list that might further Magnetawan as a year-round place to visit?</i>	
<b>Votes</b>	<b>Ideas</b>
	Activities for kids (rainy day)
	Promoting and supporting existing events
1	Experiential focus (e.g. maple syrup, tours with experts, unique to Magnetawan)
2 (+4)	Self-guided map and / or audio app (e.g. Art Trail / Studio Tour, including link to Group of Seven; Historic / Heritage sites) <i>NOTE: Same example listed under Arts and Culture received additional votes</i>
	Contests (e.g. photo, video, talent); maybe host on youtube
	Partnership Packages
	Karaoke in the Park
	Shoulder Seasons – focus on developing activities during this timeframe
	Theme events (e.g. Camo Days, Plaid Days)
1	Fishing Derby
6 (+1)	Food Truck Festival <i>NOTE: Links with Food Festival which received additional votes</i>
1	Mini golf
2	Bike riding group for seniors
2	Woodcarving group
3	ATV rides
	Weekday events (e.g. Tuesday, Wednesday for weekly renters vs just weekends when renters are packing up or checking in)
	Kayak, canoe, etc. races on Mag lakes
2	Pride Event – fly flags that were given out to businesses and municipalities (Mag, Burks Falls and Dunchurch)
	Summer Cooking classes – kids and adults
3	Chili cookoffs - teams
	Volunteers needed
3	Walleye Tournament (check out NOWT)
1	Big Buck Contest weekend
5	Skating path – similar to Arrowhead

	Turkey Shoot
	Fishing Tournament (Port Carmen activity)
	Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) & Kids Fishing Day (Port Carmen activity)
	Safety Day (Port Carmen activity)
	Fall Fair (Agricultural Society activity)
	Santa Claus Parade
	Winter Carnival
	Snowmobile Club hosts a 'trail lunch BBQ' yearly at Community Centre
	Learn to Swim
1	Snowmobile Tour events – stops / pop-ups along the trails in certain areas
1 (+6)	Smoker / Food Festivals / Rib Fest, etc. (what is the Mag known for?) <i>NOTE: Links with Food Truck Festival which received additional votes</i>
	Summer Kickoff
<b>Training / Industry Support</b>	
<p>Knowledge is power and the tourism industry is constantly evolving. Equipping our stakeholders with the right skills, resources and support is essential for sustainable growth.</p> <p><i>Can you suggest training courses, information sharing sessions, partnerships that would support Magnetawan staying competitive and sustainable?</i></p>	
Votes	Ideas
1	Food Handlers Course
1	<p>Different Topics with Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using social media; developing websites</li> <li>Accessing grants, funding and programs (e.g. employment, student workers, marketing)</li> <li>Estate and succession planning</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: all of these ideas could be blended into this category about hosting information sessions on different topics</b></p>
1	Developing experiential business
	Training of summer staff to promote the community
	Peer to Peer Forums
1	Host Funders Forum (and other government supports)
	Showcase Success Stories
	First Aid
	WHIMIS
	Job site for all employment opportunities in Mag and surrounding area
	Teaching canoeing and small craft boating safety
<b>Arts and Culture</b>	
<p>Arts, culture and tourism create powerful opportunities for growth in economic development.</p>	

*Can you suggest ways that Magnetawan can support and enhance the arts and culture community through events, marketing or other means?*

Votes	Ideas
	Art Walk
	Photo Show and sale
3	Art Trail / Studio Tours – include links to Group of Seven
1	Historic / Heritage sites – develop map to locations
	Art by the water – a participatory activity
	Yoga by the water
	Cultural Days (outside groups e.g. indigenous partners)
6	Dinner Theater annual summer event
4	Art in the park – provide shelter for numerous artists on a weekly basis
	Art installations around town
6	Local artisans offering training / courses (art) e.g. painting, ceramics, candles, glassblowing, soapmaking, photography)
2	Need to promote ‘Church on the Rock’
10	Launch and run a music festival that helps put Magnetawan on the map, such as Jazz festival that draws people from a wider area
3	Quilt Tours – how to demoring; different products of quilting; supplies

#### **Tourism Infrastructure**

Often times, hosting tourism events can be challenging when hard infrastructure (physical infrastructure) and soft infrastructure (services/systems) are not available.

*Can you identify infrastructure gaps that could help support more visitors to the area?*

Votes	Ideas
	Identify missing community assets – common needs for area service clubs / groups?
1	Party tent – outdoor covered area
	‘4 Corners’
	Maximize ‘empty’ spaces
2	Library hours - expand
	Crown land – can we capitalize on it? (fyi some signs say private land)
	Additional public washrooms
	Space for ‘cooperative retail’
1	Pop-up stores
	RV Parking – opportunity for ‘Walmart’ stays?
	Snowshoe trails
3	Hiking trails
	Watercraft rentals
	Brochure racks
	Internet – fibre – Ahmic Lake Road, Nipissing Road

1	Expand Farmers' Market venue so not just sales but promo booths for other businesses (e.g. kayak rentals)
	Open up community kitchens for business use
4	Parking at Old Man Falls
9	Longer hours for locks being open – into Fall
	Outdoor space for music / movies, etc.
	Parking for visiting sledders and their trailers
	More gas options for sledders – on or very near to trails
2	More food / restaurant options – a sledder destination spot
<b>Market/Municipal Awareness/Communication</b>	
Knowing what draws a visitor to a community is just as important as knowing where that visitor finds information about that community.	
<i>Can you suggest how the tourism industry can optimize publication platforms while also creating engaging content?</i>	
<b>Votes</b>	<b>Ideas</b>
13	<b>Signage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor Information Centre</li> <li>• Directional Signage</li> </ul> <b>NOTE: During session moved into broader call for Visitor Information Centre with dedicated staff, brochures, etc.</b>
	Banners on lightposts – more options
4	Social Media
	Website – increased web presence (target page on municipal site)
2	Destination Maps / brochures of events
	Capitalize on existing promotional vehicles (e.g. Great Canadian Wilderness, booth at summer Farmers' Market)
1	Post cards with local images
4	Welcome packages – coupons, info, maps, local businesses, event notices (for visitors and new residents). Provide to STRs and accommodations
1	Swag – distributed at places like the locks
	Capitalize on Magnetawan shirt – share photos from around the world
	Local version of 'Wrap Up Almaguin'
	Common template – same look and feel for different things (e.g. where to stay, where to play)
1	Business discount card for local area businesses to sell / offer clients
2	Welcome Americans type of banner
13	Promote Mag as the new place to be e.g. out with Muskoka and in with the Mag; be more options (e.g. ATVs allowed on roads, crown land). Develop a tagline – contest for tagline

**Parking Lot (issues identified during Focus Group that fall outside of METC mandate)**

- Policy reviews – review different policies that may have unintended consequences
- Attraction of new businesses
- Signage rules (what are they)
- Capitalize on Crown land – monitor and map
- Internet – fiber
- Red tape for businesses
- Trail postings around usage



# *2025 Focus Group Input on Future Direction*

*MARCH 22, 2025*



**Municipality of  
Magnetawan**

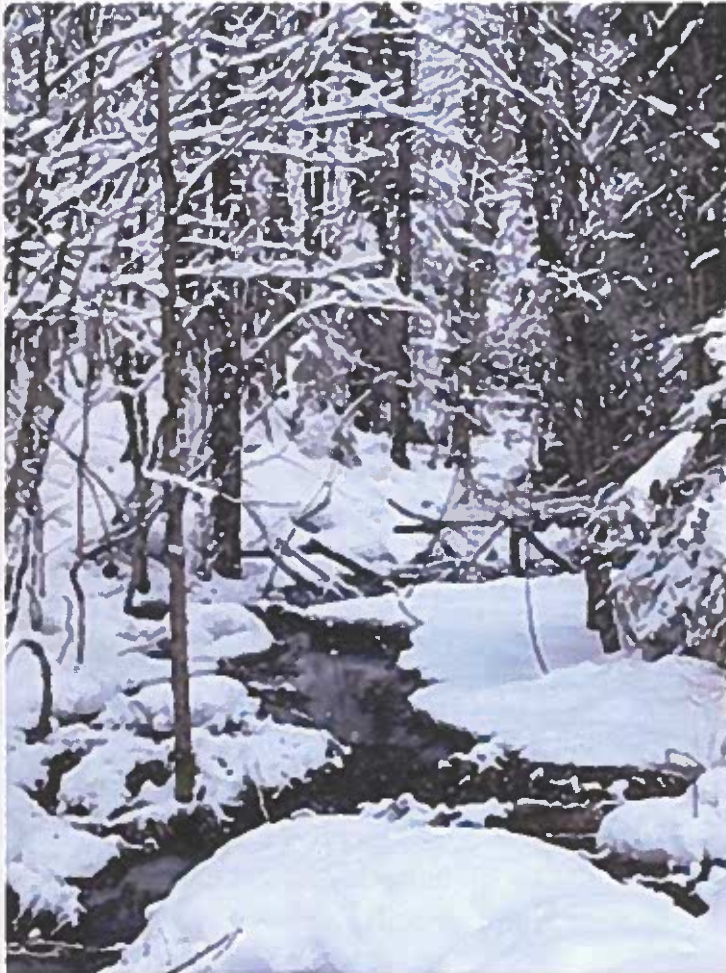




## *AGENDA*

- Icebreaker and Introductions
- METC Mission and Mandate
- Background and input received to date
- Work to date & key learnings
- Feedback on Project Ideas & Prioritizing
- Next Steps





### *MISSION STATEMENT:*

*To market and promote the Municipality of Magnetawan as a tourism destination for long-term, year-round sustainable growth within the municipality's visitor economy. By working collaboratively with and with support from accommodation providers, local businesses, tourism operators, community service organizations, retail establishments, food and beverage providers, the committee will actively research, develop and implement destination and promotional programming that will support and grow Magnetawan's tourism industry.*

### *MANDATE:*

*To promote tourism in Magnetawan (which includes the development of tourism products)*

## *METC BACKGROUND & INPUT RECEIVED TO DATE*



- 2024 survey respondents indicating an interest in participating in a committee were invited to submit application for METC
- High level survey results
  - 163 surveys completed
  - 39.5% primary residents; 58% seasonal residents; 2.4% other (work in Magnetawan / transient tourists)
  - 74% between the ages of 55-64+
  - 73% would like to see tourism sector grow; although cautionary approach noted (e.g. Calls to maintain “quiet small-town atmosphere” and “without ruining the natural environment and small-town charm”
  - Local tourism information sources: Facebook (66%); word of mouth (59%); municipal website (58%)
  - Many felt summer months reasonably busy; focus on shoulder season
  - Project ideas noted: refrigeration unit for ice surface; increasing hiking trails and add snowshoeing on trails; kayak rentals; sidewalk chalk art; rubber duck races over the locks; fishing derby; ‘rainy day’ activities for children; expansion / support for current businesses; development of downtown core (‘four corners’) and the ‘island’

# *METC WORK TO DATE*

- Initiated tourism asset inventory (evergreen document)
- Wrap up Almaguin
- Networking (e.g. Tourism summit; Almaguin Highlands Chamber of Commerce; Explorers' Edge; FedNor; etc.)
- Review of previous studies
- Budget 2025 submission
  - Signage
  - Event Participation
  - Publication Advertisements
  - Focus Groups

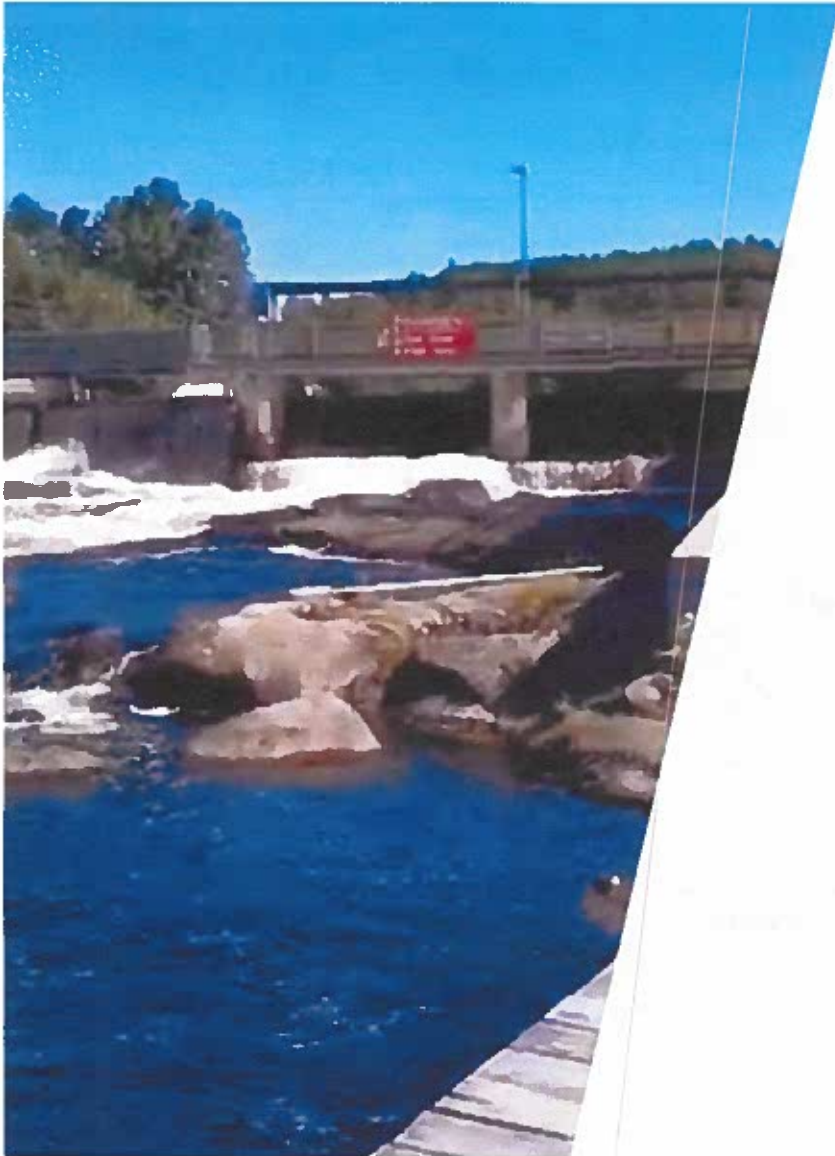






## *KEY LEARNINGS*

- We are just beginning – change will take time
- Realization of how much this community has to offer
- Focus on “high yield” visitors
- Limited commercial services for travelling public – focus on serving cottagers
- “Regenerative Tourism” (Explorer’s Edge- constantly create and nurture the conditions for people, planet and economies)
- “Experiential Tourism” – meaningful and authentic experiences
- This is a team sport – can’t do it alone, we need partners, local and beyond



## *FEEDBACK ON PROJECT IDEAS & PRIORITIZING*

- Factors to consider:
    - Projects vary in size and scope
    - Some projects are longer term in nature
    - Limited resources/restraints
    - Looking for early wins to help build momentum
- 1) What are we missing?
  - 2) What do we prioritize first?



## *Prioritization results*

### Top 5

- Food Truck / Food Festival
- Music festival
- Locks open longer (hours and into Fall)
- Visitor Information Centre – signage, dedicated staff, brochure racks, etc.
- Develop tagline to promote Magnetawan

## *NEXT STEPS*

- Collaborative Team approach needed
  - METC is volunteer committee
  - Cannot do it alone
  - Opportunity for sub-committees with external participation
- Recruiting new members
  - Municipality has put call out seeking additional volunteers





*THANK YOU*

METC Committee

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