

First Impressions Community Exchange

Community Visited: Allenford, Sauble Beach, Hepworth, and Warton

Date of Visit: June 5, 2008

Visit Completed by (community): Economic Development Consultants
Blenheim, Guelph and Woodstock



First Impressions Community Exchange

Final Report

Community Visited:

VISITING TEAM PROFILE

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Name:		Age:		Gender:	
Address:					
Phone:		E-mail:			

Date of visit and time spent: 9:30 am – 5:30 pm

Weather on date of visit: Cool and overcast June day. Heavy rain mid-day.

PRIOR TO YOUR VISIT

What was your perception of the community before the visit? What were you expecting to see? Please comment on your prior knowledge of this community.

- Expected small rural agricultural communities.
- Knew that Willie was from Wiarton
- Perceived that Wiarton is the gateway to the Bruce Peninsula
- Rugged landscape and beautiful water / lakes
- Major tourist region – Sauble Beach

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Ease of getting information by mail and telephone about the community visited:

- N/A

Level of satisfaction with the quality of the information received:

- N/A

Timeliness of arrival of the requested information (if appropriate):

- N/A

Ease of obtaining information on the community through a web search:

- Very impressed with web site, **particularly that it included “all” communities in drop down menu.** Bit of confusion when googled “South Bruce”, it drove us to the Municipality of South Bruce which led us to Mildmay and Teeswater **rather than South Bruce Peninsula**
- Both Wiarton and Sauble Beach have individual web pages focusing on respective towns (not as informative as full site)

Quality of the community’s online materials and information:

- South Bruce Peninsula site: Very impressed with level of information and eye appealing look. Liked links to other agencies, example “Bruce Peninsula Tourism, Owen Sound Transportation Co”

THE “FIVE MINUTE” IMPRESSION

After taking a five-minute drive through the community, without stopping, the following reactions were noted:

- Hepworth Sauble Beach and Wiarton were active, clean, busy communities with apparent pride and potential for vibrancy
- Allenford **very quiet – virtually little / no activity (by locals / visitors) Generally tired looking and no apparent reason to stop**

COMMUNITY ENTRANCES

The following observations were noted when entering the community from major entrances:

Observations (Allenford, Hepworth, Sauble Beach and Wiarton)

- Inconsistency across all four communities – in some cases no signs except Provincial signage
- Allenford had no community signs

NOTABLES: Wiarton had a very impressive large gateway sign
Sauble’s entrance sign to the beach was unique

OPPORTUNITY; to develop a brand → transfer branding to all signs, gateways, brochures, events

1 2 3 **4** 5 6 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

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HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Overall quality, affordability and availability of housing in the community:

All four communities to have a very good range of choice and quality of homes. Allenford too had older well maintained homes. Apartment buildings noted in all four communities.

1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

Quality (scale of 1 to 10)	Type of Housing
9	Existing/Older Homes
4-9	Senior Citizen Housing
7	New Construction
4-8	Apartments/Rental Housing

NOTEABLES: Warton senior complex and Hepworth's new subdivision

Comments:

- Senior's housing in Allenford appeared marginal thus the lower rating – on the other end the facility in Warton was excellent reflecting the higher rating

Affordability (adequacy of housing to suit a variety of income levels):

- Price ranges looked reasonable

Comments: Saw very few homes for sale reflecting a stable market

Most appealing and least appealing features of the housing:

- All stately homes were well maintained and pride of ownership

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- Good mix of newer homes and sub-divisions noted
- Some run down properties



Quality and availability of residential infrastructure (e.g., roads, sidewalks, lighting, public transportation, green space):

- In general sidewalks, lighting and roads in good repair.
- Allenford could use a bit of sidewalk work
- No visible sign of public transportation

NOTABLES: Wiarion had beautiful Victorian lights in the downtown
 Very good green spaces in all 4 communities
 Playground facilities for young children were very adequate

Overall Appeal of Housing (scale of 1 to 10)	Group
4	Single Young Adults
7	Young Families
7	Middle Income
4-8	Senior Citizens
5	Upscale/Professional

Comments:

- Fairly good mix overall, perhaps lacking in the Single Young Adult category (particularly for Allenford and Hepworth)
- Seniors gravitate to Wiarion due to availability of amenities and services

EDUCATION, HEALTH, SOCIAL AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Education (availability & appearance of schools)

Preschool/daycare:

- Excellent day care facilities noted in Sauble Beach and Wiarion. Smaller facilities in Hepworth and Allenford.

Primary/elementary:

- Awesome facility in Wiarion for full Peninsula (J-K thru 12) Also excellent facility in Sauble Beach.
- Basic Elementary school in Hepworth – none noted in Allenford

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High school:

- See above

Comments: The architectural design and outside of the former High School lends itself for retro-fitting into Youth Centre, Theatre; alternative uses

College/university:

- No college / university noted.

Residents' (young and old) opinions about the quality and availability of the local school system:

- General sense from Warton and Sauble Beach - very pleased with facilities available to their students

Comments: Swings and bike racks lacking in Hepworth elementary school

Rating of adequacy of schools for a community of this size:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8** 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent



Health Care Services

Availability and Apparent Quality of Health Care Facilities:

Hospitals:

- Excellent hospital noted in Warton
- Family Health Team in Sauble Beach



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Physician and dentist offices and clinics:

- All located in Wiaraton, Sauble Beach, none noted in Hepworth
- Allenford – Natural Health Clinic

Long-term care and nursing home facilities:

- State of the art facility in Wiaraton, marginal facility in Allenford
- None noted for Hepworth and Sauble Beach (not seen)

Other health services:

- Chiropractic care and massage therapy facility noted in Wiaraton, Sauble Beach

Rating of the adequacy of Health Services for a community of this size:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8** 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

Comments:

- Appears to be quite adequate

Social Services

Social services available in community:

- Community Living as well as a Community Employment Resource Centre was noted in Wiaraton
- No social services noted in Hepworth, Sauble Beach or Allenford

Availability of not-for-profit organizations and clubs:

- Service clubs well represented in Wiaraton, Hepworth and Sauble Beach.
- Horticultural Societies also appear active in the three main communities.
- Garden Club did landscaping SHOW outside the community centre in Sauble Beach



Rating of social services for a community of this size:

1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

Comments:

- Community Employment Resource Centre doesn't project a positive image (**needs attention**)

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Emergency Services

Adequacy of fire, ambulance and policing services from the perspective of residents:

- All three were visible with the exception of Allenford and Hepworth
- Nice facilities for Sauble Beach and Wiarton



LOCAL ECONOMY

Downtown, Retail, Industry, Commercial, Professional Services and Tourism

Initial impressions of the health of the local economy:

- Wiarton and Sauble Beach appeared very active and busy, however noting that Sauble Beach would be seasonal in scope.
- Allenford and Hepworth were considerably weaker– lacking in basic amenities such as pharmacy and grocery store
- Hepworth Tim Horton's was quite busy, encouraging people to stop and possible opportunity for additional niche stores

Downtown Area

Ease of locating the downtown:

- All four communities – downtown's easily located and varied in size and amenities. Sauble Beach and Wiarton gravitates toward beach in terms of "tourist type" commercial activities.

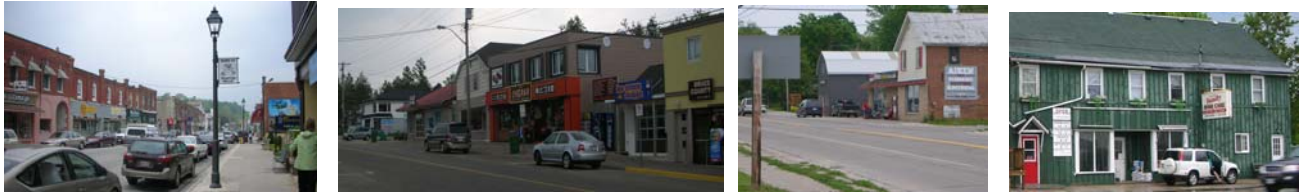
Comments: Directional signage to Sauble Beach's downtown either missing or not obvious

Overall appearance of the downtown area:

1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Wiarton, Hepworth and Sauble Beach were somewhat inviting to stop and browse
- Allenford – not so much
- All four communities could use a "brightening up" with eye appealing benches, planters, waste containers and LARGER banners.

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NOTEABLES: Veterans Memorial and Mural in Wiarion
 Walk ways to off main street parking in Wiarion (opportunity to develop a creative welcoming place)
 Veterans Park in Hepworth
 Wiarion Willie footprints on sidewalks



Variety of shopping in the downtown area:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Needs Urgent Attention		Satisfactory				Excellent			

- Quite good in Wiarion and Sauble Beach, but lacking in variety in Hepworth and Allenford

Customer service at businesses visited:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Needs Urgent Attention		Satisfactory				Excellent			

- In both Wiarion and Sauble Beach's customer service was very good as well as Suntrail Outfitters in Hepworth. Both citizens and clerks were very helpful and knowledgeable in assisting

Signage in the downtown area:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Needs Urgent Attention		Satisfactory				Excellent			

- General speaking signage was poor and banners were too small and too infrequent
- Wiarion and Sauble Beach- wee bit tired, little eye appeal
- Allenford and Hepworth – lacking on all fronts for signage



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Comments: Could use improvement, utilizing a “common look and branding” though-out all four communities on signs and banners



Window displays in the downtown

1 2 **3** 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Needs improvement particularly in vacant buildings
- Many of the window displays are tired and uncreative (missing opportunity to entice people to stop)

NOTEABLES: County of Bruce Community Employment Resource Centre very uninviting

Variety and quality of merchandise in the downtown area:

1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Basic needs being met certainly in main two centres of Wiarton & Sauble Beach. Hepworth and Allenford need multi-purpose variety stores



Mix of facilities and services in the Downtown:

- Basically good mix of services, retail and professional in Wiarton and Sauble Beach
- Other two communities lacking

Quality and availability of parking:



- Excellent parking availability in all four communities, usually 2 hours. Well signed and free with exception of Sauble Beach (pay meter)

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- Wiarton had very good parking behind stores with walk ways that have potential to be more eye appealing and gathering place (needs benches and murals)
- Passage ways make it a very walkable community and key link to the beach, tourist office and sports facilities

Quality of lighting:

- Victorian lights in Wiarton very nice – perhaps need to carry this type of lighting into other communities

Role and potential of the downtown in tourism:

- Potential in three of the communities – they are “transit thru” types of communities → with niche type stores tourist would stop to browse on their way to cottage, beach, ferry

Residential housing mix in downtown:

- Quite good in Wiarton and Sauble Beach certainly with cottages and rental units available. In Hepworth appeared to be apartment on main corner close to downtown

Desirability of the downtown as a place to live:

- Has potential in certainly 3 out of the 4 with Allenford being the exception

General Information about Overall Retail

Overall mix of retail shopping:

- Quite good in Wiarton and not bad in Sauble Beach. Needs further consideration in Hepworth and certainly Allenford

Retail goods requiring travel to other communities:

- Children’s & men’s wear, computer or electronics, jewellers

Missing stores or services that we expected to find locally:

- Local bakeries, ice cream shops, candy – niche type stores
- Specialty shops such as motorcycles and bicycling stores

Unusual or unexpected stores or services for a community this size:

- Surprised to see two / three ladies wear stores in Wiarton
- Suntrail Outfitters shop and lifestyles, kitchen and bath design centre in Hepworth
- Scrap booking store and Rankin River in Wiarton



High quality/desirable retail stores in the community (ones we would travel 40 km or more to patronize):

- Wiarton - Josie’s and scrap booking store
- Hepworth- Suntrail Outfitters shop

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Overall Condition of the Retail Sector:

1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

Local Industries

Major industrial sectors in the community:

- Seems to be fair number of industries in fabricating, manufacturing and quarry

Major employers in the community:

- Unknown

Major types of manufacturing in the community:

- Fabricating & Quarry

Major types of primary industry in the community:

- Agricultural and Tourism

Industrial park or serviced land where manufacturers could locate or expand:

- Two areas identified in Warton
- None visible in the other three communities- exception the business centre in Allenford



Apparent dependence on one type of industry?

- Tourism
- Quarry & stone

Are industrial facilities well maintained?

- Unknown

Potential of community as an attractive location for manufacturing development:

- Warton Airport under utilized asset for attracting investment



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PROFESSIONAL, COMMERCIAL AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Professional Services

Convenience of banks and ATMs (location and hours):

- Wiarnton had two major banks (Royal and TD Canada Trust) Sauble Beach had RBC. ATM's were available in some stores and in some cases difficult to find
- No financial facilities in Hepworth or Allenford. Possible ATM's but not seen.

NOTEABLES: Very impressed with the architectural design and façade of Royal Bank in Wiarnton



Adequacy of financial services:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

Other available professional services:

- Lawyers and accountants, insurance, real estate located in Wiarnton, Sauble Beach
- Lawyer located in Allenford at seniors complex
- Funeral service, vets, spa all available either in Wiarnton / Sauble Beach

Service gaps:

- Pharmacy (Hepworth and Allenford), Sports Equipment and Repair

Commercial Services

Types of commercial businesses serving the local community (high-speed internet provider etc.):

- Three service providers appear to be available (BMI, Sitewaves and Teledynamics)
- Lots of construction providers (paving, painting, building etc)
- Wiarnton has local newspaper



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Commercial service gaps:

- Did not see dry cleaners

Governmental Services

Location of municipal offices:

- Located in Warton on main street downtown
- Good parking and signed public washrooms

Availability and quality of information:

i) Community brochure/guide

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Needs	Urgent	Attention		Satisfactory				Excellent	

- Bruce Peninsula Booklet
- Unaware of South Bruce Peninsula Community Brochure

ii) Business directory

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Needs	Urgent	Attention		Satisfactory				Excellent	

- On-line directory was quite thorough, however fairly limited in scope of information provided (basic address and phone number only) NO LINKS to their business sites which would have been helpful

iii) Community profile

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Needs	Urgent	Attention		Satisfactory				Excellent	

- On line community profile – impressed it showcases all communities **but basically a “historical overview”** rather than current information
- The **Economic Development** profile is “generic” in nature – not very detailed. No indication to the type of industries in municipality – number of jobs, socio-economic data
- No real details about communities or enticement to invest or move to the region

Adequacy of information for investment decisions:

- **The link to the South Bruce and Sauble Beach Chamber of Commerce provides quite good information and contacts.**
- Links on main Municipal site- quite good

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PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING

Public Infrastructure

Public Transportation:

1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Did not see any direct awareness to public transportation although there is taxi service available according to web site
- Excellent commercial airport perhaps under utilized for investment attraction

Sidewalks:

1 2 3 4 5 6 **7** 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Some area in Allenford needs attention / repair
- Very impressed with wide sidewalks in Warton and painted Willie paw prints

Streets:

1 2 3 4 5 6 **7** 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Allenford; residential streets needed attention



Landscaping, Trees:

1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Generally public spaces particularly on main streets were lacking – the reason might have been seasonal

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NOTEABLES: Allenford Heritage Plaque/ picnic area
 Hepworth Veteran's Park
 Warton waterfront area



Public Restrooms:

1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- No apparent public rest rooms with the exception of Warton (Signage from the street poor)
- Apparently public rest rooms in beach area in Sauble Beach (Signage was very poor)
- No apparent washrooms in Hepworth or Allenford

Street Signage:

1 2 3 **4** 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- POTENTIAL AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT – utilizing a “standard / common theme or branding and or colours” in all 4 communities

Pay phones, drinking fountains, benches, etc.:

1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

- Benches were lacking in all four communities and in Warton they were not uniform or inviting
- Drinking fountains and pay phones were difficult to find
- Waste containers were not easily identifiable
- No planters were visible

Comments: Potential to have benches, planters, waste containers all in a coordinated theme

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Planning

Conflicting land uses?

- No observations

Appropriateness of land use (commercial, residential, green space, etc.):

- Warton had an excellent use of waterfront green space for sports complex and amenities
- Sauble Beach was very clean and well maintained



Traffic or pedestrian congestion?

- Not apparent

Are community facilities and infrastructure generally accessible for people with disabilities?

- Overall basically yes – might have been some exceptions in Sauble Beach needing a review

TOURISM

Is there a strong tourism sector?

- Absolutely – very strong in this area and has development potential as well
- In Warton – boating could be an increased opportunity with great marina

Community slogan/brand:

- Continuity of brand slogan. Currently confusing brand messaging → “Home of Warton Willie”, “Warton Willie Country”, “Ontario’s Natural Retreat”. Which one?

Is there a well-known attraction or event/festival? Are the events/festivals held annually?

- Certainly Warton Willie event in late Winter → Groundhog day in February

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Availability and selection of overnight accommodations in the community:

- Good accommodation opportunities in Sauble Beach namely cottage rentals, and motels. Motels in Wiarton and B&B's as well – no significant hotel chain present (i.e.: Comfort Inn)

Availability of facilities to accommodate a conference and/or a large number of visitors?



- Wiarton and Sauble Beach had excellent facilities for larger events. Hepworth has a nice Legion and Allenford had the curling club.

Quality and accessibility of the public restrooms:

1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory
 Excellent

- See previous comments

Quality and variety of restaurants:

Quality

1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

Comments:

- Wiarton's Green Door was excellent

Variety

1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8 9 10
 Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

Comments:

- Restaurants in Sauble Beach were not open but appeared to be enticing (Two Chicks and Macbeth's)
- Really enjoyed eating at the Green Door

Recommendations by local residents on where to stay, eat, and visit:

- Sauble Beach; Recommended to go to South Hampton and Walker House
- Encouraged to stay at the Whispering Pines
- Waterview On the Bay was recommended

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Restaurants, specialty shops or attractions that would bring you back to this community in the near future:



- Suntrail Outfitters
- Scrap Booking Store
- Waterfront

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

What events are popular with residents?

- Groundhog Day

Do the residents feel there is a lack of community events?

- Unknown

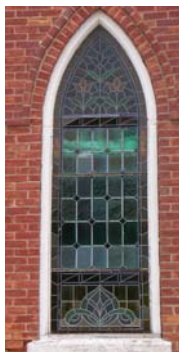
Does the community have heritage buildings? Are they well maintained?

- Warton; Former high school, Royal Bank, Post Office, Train Station, Churches, Houses
- Sauble Beach; not apparent
- Hepworth; Spencer House, Burn's Lodge (Kitchen and Bath Design Centre)
- Allenford; Victorian House, Churches, Stone Veranda House

FAITH/RELIGION

Number, appearance, and selection of religious buildings in the community:

- Excellent selection and appeared in good condition



Architectural or design features of religious buildings visited:

- Very eye appealing and cared for

NOTEABLES: Exceptional Stain glass windows in Allenford –St. Andrews Presbyterian

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Overall impression of religious buildings:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8.5** 9 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

RECREATION

Recreation Facilities

Availability of and appearance of parks:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

NOTEABLES: Veteran's Memorial Park in Hepworth

Availability and appearance of public recreation facilities:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10
Needs Urgent Attention Satisfactory Excellent

NOTEABLES: Wiarton and Sauble recreational facilities were great (Central Complex) Allenford; Children's playground by the ball park



What do people in this community appear to do for recreation?

- Sauble Beach; Lawn bowling, tennis courts, yoga, mini golf, amusement park, bridge club, studio tour, golf course
- Wiarton; Ball diamonds, cycling, outdoor swimming, arena, tennis courts, golf course
- Allenford; Ball park, curling club
- Hepworth; Ball park, flea market, golf course

Surprising recreational facility (private or public) in this community:

- Whispering Pines bike and hiking trails



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Recreational activity or facility gaps:

- Location of Amusement park in Sauble Beach – bit of a distance to the beach
- Skate Boarding park
- Outdoor Movie Theatre

Suitability of recreational facilities for the following populations:

Overall suitability of recreational facilities (scale of 1 to 10)	Group
5-8	Single Young Adults
7	Young Families
7	Middle Income
9	Senior Citizens
4	Upscale/Professional

Comments: Higher scoring applies to Sauble Beach and Wiarton. Lower Scoring applies to Allenford and Hepworth. Difficult to rate for winter activities.

USING YOUR SENSES

Tastes (any specialty food item, bakery, restaurant, or candy store to remember?):

- Green Door Restaurant

Smells:

- None noticed

Sounds:

- None noticed

Sights:

- Suntrail Outfitters

Overall environmental health of the community:

- All four communities were clean. Allenford lacked sense of activity and vibrancy.

Any experiences that affected the way the community felt to us:

- Allenford appeared to be a forgotten village with little activity from a business to social point of view. For a visitor there is little reason to stop.

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WRAP-UP

Was your perception prior to the visit accurate? In what ways was it different?

- Thought Sauble Beach would be busier and impressed at the cleanliness of the beach
- Disappointed a little with the feeling of the downtown in Sauble Beach (expected freshly painted, colourful and cheery)
- Impressed with Hepworth with outstanding potential for growth

Did the information you collected prior to the visit accurately reflect what you experienced?

- N/A

What is the most outstanding feature of this community?

- Wiarton waterfront and recreational facility
- Schools in Sauble and Wiarton
- Geography and topography
- Health and long term-care facilities

Would you consider this community as a suitable location for a young family?

- Yes

Would you consider this a suitable location for a retired person?

- Yes, depending on the age and needs (may wish to relocate to centre such as Wiarton)

Would you consider this a suitable location for a young single adult?

- No

Would you consider experiencing this community as a tourist?

- Absolutely

Would you consider locating your retail or service business here?

- Yes, definitely perhaps with further consideration/review regarding Allenford

Would you consider locating a manufacturing business here?

- Not likely – too far from major transportation routes unless marine oriented

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Five positive things about this community

1. Attractive waterfront for Warton
2. Tourism – only route to the Bruce
3. Captive potential clients to the Bruce
4. Geography and Topography- natural beauty
5. Green spaces and recreational facilities



Potential opportunities available to the community:

1. Willie Country- Capitalize in the whole municipality
2. Outdoor Movie Theatre(s)
3. Expand the waterfront and events relevant to the water
4. Enhancing the walkways and all things leading to the water
5. Artisan community in Allenford



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Five biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community

1. Getting people to stop on route
2. One attractive brand and theme implemented through out the whole community
3. Making each community warm and eye appealing (benches and banners)
4. Make Allenford feel a part of the municipality
5. Lack of municipal service centre in each community

What will you remember most about this community six months from now (positive or negative)?

- Schools and Health and long term care facilities
- Recreational facilities in Wiarton and Sauble Beach
- Heritage and Historical homes and gardens
- Wiarton waterfront

What things have you observed here that have changed your impression of your own community?

- Appreciate efforts of service clubs and local organizations in the upkeep of public spaces –public meeting spaces and parks

ONE idea we will borrow for use in our own business/community and how we will start to implement it within the next 72 hours!

- N/A

Other comments:

- All four communities have huge potential if they implement one colour, one theme and one brand
- All four communities need to be eye appealing to get people to stop!

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South Bruce Peninsula

Allenford, Sauble Beach, Hepworth and Wiarton



Presented by:
Barbara Burgess & Sue Powell



Prior to the Visit

- Expected small rural agricultural communities
- Knew that Willie was from Wiarton
- Perceived that Wiarton is the gateway to the Bruce Peninsula
- Rugged landscape and beautiful water / lakes
- Major tourist region – Sauble Beach



First Impressions Report



The 'Five Minute' Impression

- Hepworth, Sauble Beach and Wiarton were active, clean, busy communities with pride and lots of potential



- Allenford very quiet – virtually little-to no activity (few locals/visitors). Appears tired looking and lacks retail shops/restaurants



First Impressions Report



Community Entrances

OBSERVATIONS:

- Allenford, Hepworth, Sauble Beach and Warton
- Inconsistency across all four communities – in some cases no signs except Provincial signage
 - *"Warton Willie Country"*
 - *"Voted Best Beach in Ontario"*
 - *"The Gateway"*
 - *"Ontario's Natural Retreat"*
- Allenford had no community signs

NOTABLES:

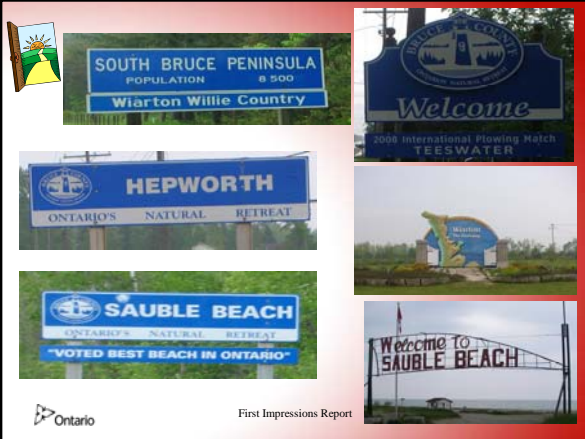
- Warton had a very impressive, large gateway sign
- Sauble's entrance sign to the beach was unique

OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Develop a brand** (implement brand on all signs, gateways, brochures, marketing materials and events)



First Impressions Report



First Impressions Report




Housing & Residential Areas

- Variety & quality homes
- Price ranges looked very reasonable
- Stately homes well maintained with pride of ownership
- Good mix of newer homes and sub-divisions noted
- Some run down properties
- Apartment buildings located in all four communities



First Impressions Report

Housing and Residential Areas



OBSERVATIONS:




- Sidewalks, lighting and roads in good condition
- Allenford could use a bit of sidewalk work
- No visible sign of public transportation


NOTABLES:

- Warton's senior complex was very impressive
- Hepworth's subdivision

COMMENTS:

- Senior's housing in Allenford appearance was unappealing


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Housing & Residential Areas



NOTABLES:

- Warton had beautiful Victorian lights in the downtown
- All 4 communities had good green spaces
- Playground facilities for young children were excellent

COMMENTS:


- Fairly good mix overall, perhaps lacking in the single young adult demographic (Allenford and Hepworth)
- Warton- Amenities & services make it a more appealing centre










First Impressions Report

Education



- Excellent day care facilities noted in Sauble Beach & Warton. Smaller facilities in Hepworth and Allenford
- Exceptional J-K to Grade 12 in Warton for entire Bruce Peninsula
- Excellent public school facility in Sauble Beach
- Basic Elementary school in Hepworth – none noted in Allenford


First Impressions Report



Education

COMMENTS:

- Architectural design of old High School lends itself for retro-fitting into Youth Centre, Theatre, Artist studios, etc.
- No college and university noted
- Swings and bike racks missing in Hepworth Elementary School



First Impressions Report



Health

- Excellent hospital noted in Wiarton, Family Health Team in Sauble Beach
- Physicians, Dentist, Chiropractic and Massage therapy in Wiarton, Sauble Beach
- Allenford- Natural Health Clinic

Long Term Care

- State of the art facility in Wiarton, marginal facility in Allenford
- No long-term care facilities seen in Hepworth and Sauble Beach
- Health Services appears to be quite adequate



First Impressions Report



Social & Emergency Services

- Community Living & Community Employment Resource Centre in Wiarton
- No social services noted in Hepworth, Sauble Beach or Allenford

OBSERVATION:

- Community Employment Resource Centre does not project a positive image

Emergency Services:

- All three visible with the exception of Allenford and Hepworth
- Nice facilities for Sauble Beach and Wiarton







First Impressions Report

Local Economy - Downtown

NOTABLES:

- Veterans Memorial and Mural in Wiarion
- Veterans Park in Hepworth
- Wiarion Willie footprints on sidewalks
- Wiarion and Sauble Beach customer service was very good as well as Sun Trails in Hepworth
- Citizens and clerks very helpful & knowledgeable

Ontario First Impressions Report

Local Economy - Downtown

Variety and quality of merchandise

- Basic needs being met in Wiarion & Sauble Beach
- Hepworth and Allenford need a variety of stores

Mix of facilities and services

- Basically good mix of services, retail and professional in Wiarion & Sauble Beach
- Lacking in Hepworth and Allenford

Quality and availability of parking

- Excellent parking availability in all four communities, usually 2 hr limit
- Well signed and free with exception of Sauble Beach (meters)

Lighting:

- Victorian lights in Wiarion very nice!

NOTABLE:

- Wiarion had very good parking behind stores with walk ways. Passage-ways make it a very walkable community with a key link to the beach, tourist office and sports facilities!





Ontario First Impressions Report

Local Economy - Downtown

OBSERVATIONS:

- Generally, signage was poor and banners seemed **too small** and infrequent
- Allenford and Hepworth - lacking on all fronts for signage
- Wiarion and Sauble Beach- lacked curb appeal
- Window display needs improvement particularly in vacant buildings
- Many of current window displays not up-to-date and uncreative (missing opportunity to entice people to stop)
- County of Bruce Community Employment Resource Centre very uninviting





Ontario First Impressions Report



Local Economy - Downtown

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Walkways to off-main street parking in Wiarton-bright lights, benches, murals, flowers, waste containers



- Victorian lighting (Wiarion) would be an assets in other communities
- Develop a "common look and branding" though-out all four communities

Ontario First Impressions Report



Local Economy - Downtown

Role and potential of the downtown in tourism

- Potential in 3 communities – all are "transit thru" communities. Nice niche type stores would encourage tourist to stop and shop!

Residential housing mix in downtown

- Quite good in Wiarton and Sauble Beach certainly with cottages and rental units available. In Hepworth, apartments appeared to be on main corner close to downtown

Desirability of the downtown as a place to live

- Has a potential in certainly 3 out of the 4 with Allenford being the exception

Ontario First Impressions Report



Local Economy - Retail

Overall mix of retail shopping

- Quite good in Wiarton, not as good in Sauble Beach
- Lacking in Hepworth as well as in Allenford

Retail goods requiring travel to other communities (Wiarion)

- Lacking children's & men's wear, computer or electronics, jewellers

Missing stores or services (Wiarion)

- Local bakeries, ice cream shop, candy – niche type stores
- Specialty shop such as motorcycles and bicycling stores

Unusual or unexpected stores or services

- Pleasantly surprised to see two – three ladies wear stores in Wiarton
- Scrap booking store and Rankin River in Wiarton
- Sun Trail Adventure Shop & Lifestyles, Kitchen and Bath Design centre in Hepworth

High quality/desirable retail stores

- Wiarion - Josie's and scrap booking store
- Hepworth – Sun Trail Adventure shop



Ontario First Impressions Report

Local Economy - Industries



Major industrial sectors in the community:

- Seems to be fair number of industries in fabricating, manufacturing and quarry

Major types of manufacturing in the community:

- Fabricating & quarry

Major types of primary industry in the community:

- Agricultural and tourism

Industrial park or serviced land could locate or expand

- Two area identified in Wiarnton
- None visible in the three communities - exception the business centre in Allenford

Apparent dependence on one type of industry

- Tourism
- Quarry & stone

Potential of community as an attractive location for manufacturing development

- Wiarnton Airport under utilized asset for attracting investment





Ontario First Impressions Report

Professional, Commercial & Government Services



Convenience of banks and ATMs:

- Wiarnton - RBC & TD Canada Trust
- Sauble Beach had RBC. ATM's were available in some stores and in some cases difficult to find
- No financial facilities in Hepworth or Allenford – perhaps ATM's

NOTABLE:

- The architectural design and façade of Royal Bank in Wiarnton

Other available professional services:

- Lawyers and accountants, insurance, real estate located in Wiarnton, Sauble Beach
- Lawyer located in Allenford at seniors complex
- Funeral service, vets, spa all available either in Wiarnton / Sauble Beach

Service gaps:

- Pharmacy (Hepworth and Allenford), Sport Equipment and Repair


Location of municipal offices:

- Located in Wiarnton on main street downtown
- Good parking and signed public washrooms




Ontario First Impressions Report

Public Infrastructure





Public transportation not readily seen, taxi service indicated on web site

Impressed with wide sidewalks in Wiarnton

Some residential roads in Allenford needs attention/ repair

Hepworth Veteran's Park, green spaces in Sauble and Wiarnton waterfront area very inviting

Public restrooms were noted in Wiarnton (signage poor from the street) and beach area in Sauble Beach, none visible in Hepworth or Allenford


OPPORTUNITIES:

- Benches lacking in all four communities; need more benches, uniform and inviting
- Wiarnton - Waste containers should be easily identifiable
- Recommend planters on sidewalks/ hanging baskets
- Beautification of walkways

Ontario First Impressions Report

Public Infrastructure

- Wiarion - excellent use of waterfront green space for sports complex and amenities
- Sauble Beach was very clean and well maintain
- Allenford, Sauble Beach and Wiarion all had public facilities

Ontario First Impressions Report

Tourism

- Strong tourism sector but still room for development

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Wiarion- enhance marina and waterfront
- Sauble/Wiarion- water sports/events, sand castle building
- Geocaching
- Increase winter sports
- Promote cave exploration
- Promoting flea markets, outfitters store, bike and hiking trails
- Outdoor theatres on the beach/marina

Ontario First Impressions Report

Tourism

Underdeveloped attraction:

- Marina and waterfront in Wiarion
- Wiarion Willie museum
- Sauble Beach development of a flea market

NOTEABLES:

- Wiarion's has a lovely historic railway station as tourist centre – signage was not seen
- Tourist centre closed in Sauble Beach
- Wiarion and Sauble Beach had excellent facilities for larger events
- Hepworth has a nice Legion and Allenford has the curling club
- Wiarion's *Green Door* restaurant was excellent
- Restaurants in Sauble Beach were not open but appeared to be enticing (*Two Chicks and MacBeth's*)

Ontario First Impressions Report

Heritage and Culture




Events popular with residents:

- Groundhog Day

Heritage buildings:

- Warton: Former high school, Royal Bank, Post Office, Train station, Churches, Houses
- Hepworth: Spencer house, Burn's Lodge (Kitchen and Bath Design centre)
- Allenford: Victorian House, Churches, Stone Veranda House
- Sauble Beach: none observed






Faith and Religion



Religious buildings in the community

- Excellent selection and faith represented

Architectural or design features

- Very attractive, unique, appealing and well cared for

NOTEABLES:

- Exceptional Stain glass windows in Allenford- St. Andrews Presbyterian





Ontario First Impressions Report

Recreation



Excellent appearance of parks

- Veteran's Memorial Park in Hepworth

Very good appearance of public recreation facilities

- Warton and Sauble both recreational facilities were great (Central Complex)
- Allenford's children's playground by the ball park was exceptional

Recreation

- Sauble Beach: Lawn bowling, tennis courts, yoga, Mini golf, amusement park, bridge club, studio tour, golf course
- Warton: Ball diamonds, cycling, outdoor swimming, arena, tennis courts, golf course
- Allenford: Ball park, curling club
- Hepworth: Ball park, flea market, golf course

Surprising recreational facility

- Whispering Pines with mountain bike trails and hiking trails

Recreational activity or facility gaps

- Location of Amusement park in Sauble Beach
- Skate Boarding park
- Outdoor Theatre





Ontario First Impressions Report



Using Our Senses

- **Tastes:**
 - Green Door Restaurant, yummy food and great customer service
- **Sights:**
 - Sun Trails Outfitters, great selection of high quality merchandise
 - Georgian Bay - waterfront
- **Overall environmental health of the community:**
 - All four communities were very clean
- On the outside, Allenford appeared to be forgotten village with little activity from a business to social point of view. For a visitor, there is little reason to stop.



First Impressions Report



The most outstanding feature...

- Sauble Beach - impressed at the cleanliness of the beach
- Impressed with Hepworth- outstanding potential for growth
- Wiarton - waterfront and recreational facility
- Schools - in Sauble and Wiarton
- Natural environment - geography and topography
- Health and long term-care facilities in Wiarton



First Impressions Report



Five positive things...

1. Attractive Waterfront for Wiarton
2. Tourism – only route to the Bruce
3. Captive potential clients to the Bruce
4. Geography and Topography – natural beauty
5. Green spaces
6. Recreational facilities



First Impressions Report



Five biggest challenges...

1. Getting visitors to stop on route
2. Developing one brand and theme throughout the municipality
3. Making each community warm, appealing and inviting (*benches and banners*)
4. Better integration of Allenford as part of the municipality (*website*)
5. More accessibility of municipal services in each community



First Impressions Report



Five potential opportunities...

1. Willie Country – Capitalize throughout the municipality
2. Outdoor Theatre(s)
3. Expand the waterfront and events
4. Enhancing the walkways
5. Artisan or creative arts community



First Impressions Report



Community Brand

- Develop a brand/slogan



The Town of South Bruce Peninsula encompasses some of the best natural recreation opportunities in the Province. For those in search of... well there accommodations and services wherever you choose to arrive. As the best getaway to the Bruce Peninsula, the adventure starts here.



First Impressions Report



First Impressions Community Exchange *Report-Back*

*Allenford, Hepworth, Sauble Beach and
Warton Exchange*

Thank you!

Nancy, Barb & Sue



August 14th, 2008
