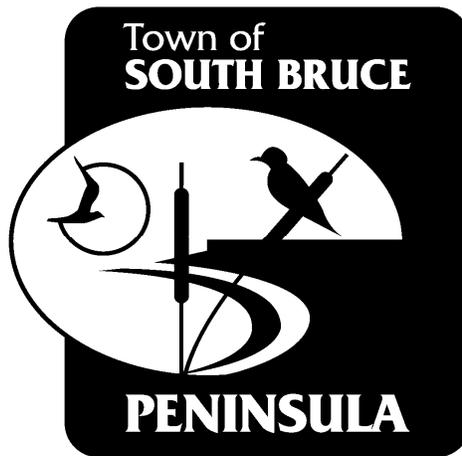


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# Downtown Revitalization Strategic Plan

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## 1.0 Overview

The Town of South Bruce Peninsula is a lower tier municipality in the County of Bruce, located in the southern portion of the Bruce Peninsula. The municipality was formed in January 1999 with the amalgamation of the former Townships of Albemarle and Amabel, the Village of Hepworth and the Town of Wiarton.

The Town of South Bruce Peninsula is the gateway to a natural wonderland and home to just under 8,500 full-time residents located throughout the urban centres and rural areas of the municipality.

The southern boundary of the municipality runs from Alvanley to Elsinore along Highway 21. Bruce County Road 10 forms the east boundary extending north from Alvanley where it meets Highway 6 at Hepworth. Highway 6 becomes the easterly boundary as far north as Wiarton. The remainder of the east boundary is formed by 580 kilometers of beautiful Georgian Bay shoreline. Lake Huron forms the western boundary in the northern portion of the Town while the remainder of the western boundary is not marked by a traveled roadway.

The Town of South Bruce Peninsula is flanked on the north east by the Chippewas of Nawash First Nation Reserve, on the south west by the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation Reserve, on the north by the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula and on the east by the Township of Georgian Bluffs.

The four urban centres of the Town with definable 'downtowns' include Sauble Beach, Wiarton, Hepworth and Allenford and are the subject of this plan.



## 1.1 Context

Downtown or 'main street' areas represent the origins of our communities and reflect local community development, public life and rich heritage. Often downtown areas are where we find buildings of historical significance, streetscapes, local monuments and public areas that shape a community's heritage and identity.

Allenford, Hepworth, Sauble Beach and Wiarton all boasted vibrant business communities in the early stages of their development. Commercial and residential properties, heritage buildings, public institutions, parks and prime waterfront constitute the assets and strengths of our current downtown areas.

In the past fifty years, we have witnessed a decline in the health of downtown areas, largely due to the fact that people no longer viewed downtowns as prime destinations for shopping and community gatherings and as 'big box' stores continued to promote 'one-stop' convenience shopping. With changing demographics, we are witnessing the changing of community attitudes regarding where one wants to live, socialize and shop. People want to be part of communities that have an identifiable sense of place.

A healthy and vibrant downtown is a key component in defining a community's identity. The largest population growth shift over the next several years will be in the 30-40 year age group and in the 60 -75 age group. This demographic is more apt to shop closer to home in stores that emphasize uniqueness, quality and friendly service. It is important to plan strategically for this demographic shift and the attitudes that accompany the changes.

Downtowns can no longer rely solely on traditional office and retail development. A diverse mix of retail, commercial, cultural, institutional, hospitality and residential uses are required to ensure the vitality and success of downtown neighborhoods.

The Downtown Revitalization Plan and public consultation process was initiated to identify immediate and long term needs and to develop a 3 - year timeline for feasible and approved projects to be implemented. The plan does not go into detail in regards to long term planning, branding, streetscapes, market assessments, cultural mapping, development of public areas and linkages, etc. It is recommended that at some point a more comprehensive plan be developed to include such content as:

- **Market Assessment:** determine retail concentrations that the downtowns could support, create destinations, identify desired businesses for downtowns and map out locations, create densities of like businesses, building critical mass, etc.
- **Integration:** integrate retail with public spaces, pathways, gathering areas, monuments, arts & culture (murals), neighbourhoods surrounding downtowns and waterfronts where they exist.
- **Branding:** develop a brand; look, feel and character for the downtowns, update the streetscape guidelines in accordance with the Community Improvement Plan, develop streetscape guidelines in communities where none currently exist and initiate a marketing plan.
- **Culture:** identify cultural and historical assets and create programs to promote these assets, determine whether downtowns could support cultural facilities and create social gathering spaces.

- **Public Infrastructure:** determine whether there is adequate parking, washroom facilities, traffic control, visible pedestrian pathways and crosswalks, lighting, garbage and recycling and linkage to waterfront and proper signage for the above.
  - **Community Involvement & Non-Profit Organizations:** determine what roles the public and community groups can play in implementing improvements to downtowns. Develop partnerships with the Chambers and BIA to provide cost sharing, fundraising and sustainability to on-going downtown improvement projects.
- 

## 2.0 The Economic Development Committee

### 2.1 Vision Statement

The vision for the Economic Development Committee and the Town of South Bruce Peninsula is to have safe and vibrant downtown areas that are sustainable and that promote and preserve their natural heritage whereby creating a sense of community pride.

### 2.2 Committee Function

The Town of South Bruce Peninsula initiated an Economic Development Committee in 2007 with the objective of strengthening the economy of the municipality. Early in the process, the Economic Development Committee recognized that downtown revitalization was key to creating a sense of community in which people will shop, dine and enjoy life in their own community. In September of 2007, the Economic Development Committee initiated planning sessions for the purpose of developing a plan for improvements to the four downtown “urban” centers in the Town of South Bruce Peninsula, namely Allenford, Hepworth, Sauble Beach and Wiarton.

In addition to downtown revitalization, the Economic Development Committee has also investigated Bluewater Park in Wiarton for further development. The committee recognizes that Bluewater Park when fully developed will act as a pull factor, pulling traffic off of the highway and into the downtown and waterfront areas. The idea is to intensify the use of the park with improved public spaces for recreation and increased commerce and to reconfigure the park to become more accessible to the downtown core. The development of Bluewater Park is the subject of a separate study but deserves mention in this strategic planning document.

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## 3.0 Public Consultation

### 3.1 Community Comment Forum

The Economic Development Committee initiated a series of meetings to discuss downtown revitalization. Public meetings were facilitated in each of the four “urban” areas (Allenford, Hepworth, Sauble Beach and Wiarton) to determine the assets, challenges and priorities of each of the four different downtown areas. Moving forward from

the consultations, the Town could then develop a plan for downtown revitalization in the four designated areas. As a result of these initial consultations, it became clear that the issues and strategies for revitalizing the downtown areas in the Town of South Bruce Peninsula varied depending on the size, location and population mix.

The public consultation sessions were facilitated by Cheryl Govier (formally Brine), Economic Development Consultant with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs and the Economic Development Officer for the Town of South Bruce Peninsula.

It was explained to the participants that the results from this plan would be used to rationalize improvements to the downtown core areas over a projected three year period. The premise of planning was explained as a necessary step to allow the Town to have a clear understanding of its future growth to aid in budgeting and program funding.

Participants were lead through the planning session developed by the Economic Development Committee. In order for the group to be operating from a common understanding, the plenary group was asked to identify the geographic area of the downtown in each community. Participants then broke into smaller groups to discuss the following questions:

1. What are the assets of your downtown?
2. What are the challenges facing your downtown?
3. What would you like your downtown to look like in the future?
4. What three priorities would you like addressed and what are the steps that need to be taken to address these priorities?

Early in 2008 the Economic Development Committee convened a second round of public meetings in each of the four areas to confirm the results of the initial consultation. These meetings informed the residents of initiatives that the Town was prepared to undertake in 2008 and to establish a process for keeping downtown revitalization on the agenda. These meetings also put in place a process for moving revitalization issues forward.

Because of the distinct historic, geographic and cultural differences, the Economic Development Committee believes that the four downtown cores should maintain separate planning priorities which illustrate a distinct image for each of the areas. While the importance of unification was noted, residents from each of the areas felt strongly that they wanted to maintain their unique identity. The four groups felt that features such as common signage could provide Town wide unity while other features could promote the uniqueness of each area.

## 3.2 First Impressions

While the first round of public meetings was taking place, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs began a "First Impressions" evaluation of the municipality. The purpose of the evaluation was to obtain a structured and unbiased first impression of the community's appearance, services and infrastructure prepared by people from outside the municipality. This type of evaluation can be the basis for positive community action focused on downtown revitalization, tourism development, investment attraction, quality service improvements or broader community strategic planning efforts.

The visiting team consisted of staff members of the Ministry who had varied backgrounds, ages and social status. They spent several hours gathering information individually or in pairs. The team then prepared a report and

presented it to Council. Unfortunately, the team only evaluated the areas of Sauble Beach and Wiarton and did not visit Allenford and Hepworth.

This second evaluation included the areas of Allenford, Hepworth, Sauble Beach and Wiarton and was presented to the Economic Development Committee at their August 2008 meeting. Again, the evaluating team consisted of Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs staff from various age and interest groups. This evaluation proved to the Economic Development Committee that the comments made at public consultation mirrored what was identified under the First Impressions visit. It identified a lack of cohesion with signage in the four areas, the need for a more visually pleasing streetscape and highlighted the abundant green space and recreational facilities. The report to the Economic Development Committee is attached as Appendix A.

### 3.3 Allenford Consultation

In the early years, Allenford was a hub of business activity from the rural telephone and telegraph company, grist and sawmill to the blacksmith, wagon and shoe shops. In Allenford one could shop at the general stores, rest in the hotel, send and receive mail at the post office or travel via stage coach or railway. Long before it was fashionable for women to be in business (1929), the Strang sisters started the Allenford Broom Factory. The sisters produced a quality product that sold for more than double the cheapest broom. One of the sisters continued to produce this product until 1946. Other factories in the area flourished; a furniture factory opened in 1886 and in the late 1800's, there were several cheese factories. "Allenford Cheese" won fifth prize at the Chicago World's Fair.

Churches and schools were not only the centre of religious life and education but also served as the social hub of the community. Today, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church and the Allenford United Church are still open for Sunday service. Much of the social activity takes place at the ball park and the Allenford Curling Club, which hosts special events year round.

Allenford is a unique community which straddles two different municipalities and in light of this fact, the Council of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie was also invited to participate. The downtown core of Allenford was determined to be Highway 21 between Sideroad 10 to Sideroad 25.

Participants identified Allenford's assets as being the people, families, buildings, businesses, parks, churches social activities, curling club, health clinic and the retirement home.

Challenges facing the downtown area were identified by the participants as an area lacking "people friendly" amenities such as lighting, snow removal, wheelchair accessibility, crosswalks, playgrounds, beautification, improved signage and sidewalks. Other challenges include the dual jurisdiction of the community, the traffic speed on Highway 21, river flooding, the lack of a municipal sewer system, road improvements, properties not being maintained and the lack of attractions and businesses which would encourage people to stop.

Not surprising, many of the suggestions for what the participants would like their downtown to look like in the future addressed the above challenges. Many suggestions focused on improving the people friendly aspects such as beautification, sidewalks, picnic areas, children's activities, street lighting, gathering areas, welcoming signage, library and community centre facilities, a day care facility, more playgrounds, speed limit reductions and trees. "Clean and quaint" would capture the essence of how residents envision their community. The priorities could be synthesized into three general areas of beautification: welcoming signage, improved sidewalks and safety.

A second meeting was held in Allenford in February 2008 with the objective of clarifying the priorities identified in October of 2007, outlining initiatives that are presently in progress and developing a process and options to maintain momentum and move the initiatives forward.

Participants at the second consultation expressed disappointment that Allenford had not been included in the First Impressions evaluation and they stressed the need for the whole Town of South Bruce Peninsula to be evaluated. Since the first meeting was held in October of 2007, Allenford had received two different grants to develop two different playgrounds in the community. An ad hoc community group, with assistance from the Town of Arran-Elderslie, received a grant from the Trillium Foundation to erect a playground at the ball diamond and the Town of South Bruce Peninsula received a grant from Hydro One to construct a playground at the Allenford Curling Club.

Subsequent to the meeting, a small core of residents agreed to meet with the intention of establishing a citizens group. As a result, a community citizens group was formed under the Allenford Improvement Association. The Economic Development Officer and staff from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs facilitated the first meeting and assisted in developing a draft terms of reference for the group.

Council and staff representatives of both the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie and the Town of South Bruce Peninsula agreed to meet for the purpose of providing a coordinated approach and a “one stop shop” for the residents of Allenford.

### 3.4 Hepworth Consultation

Hepworth began in 1865 with an inn established to accommodate travelers and settlers. The name “Hepworth” honors the birthplace of John Wesley in Epworth, England. The story is that the England birthplace was pronounced with an “h” by the English settlers and so the “h” was added as the official spelling.

Hepworth was and continues to be the crossroads leading to Sauble Beach, the Bruce Peninsula, the Bruce Trail, Owen Sound and other southern communities. As a crossroads, Hepworth has several variety stores, a building centre, craft shop and an outfitters store where one can rent canoes and camping gear, among other things. Hepworth is also home to one of the busiest Tim Horton’s locations in Ontario. Residents also enjoy the use of the ball park and the small community centre.

At the Hepworth consultation there was considerable discussion around what constitutes the downtown core. It was generally agreed that Highway 6, from Stone School Road to Spring Creek Road, County Road 8 from Legion Road to Highway 6 and County Road 10 from the Hepworth Central Public School entrance to Highway 6 should be considered the downtown core of Hepworth.

The assets of the downtown could be categorized in the following areas: businesses, parks, community centre, school, legion, churches and a golf course. Another definite asset of the downtown area is the fact that Hepworth is a crossroads location; one has to pass through Hepworth to go to Sauble Beach and to Tobermory.

The challenges were identified as a lack of infrastructure, not a destination, lack of accommodations, need signage to mark the community, buildings in disrepair, no industrial area and a general lack of community spirit.

The discussion of what participants would like the downtown to look like in the future included welcoming features. It was suggested that the area had plenty of gathering places but nothing to increase retention. Participants

talked about quaint lighting, signage, unique shops, improved sidewalks, beautification, picnic areas, and a farmers market. People felt a branding theme was needed as well as the creation of community events, parades and festivals to bring people to the community. Priorities were identified as beautification, infrastructure and light industry.

Bruce County began a major upgrade of County Road 8 which includes paved shoulders and sidewalks. This will mean that the basic concept of the street will transform from a rural design to an urban design. As well, the Town will be reconstructing storm sewers and implementing street lighting.

### 3.5 Sauble Beach Consultation

The history of Sauble Beach starts at the River. The River was first explored by the Indians and later by the French explorers. La Riviere Aux Sable was its original name, which means "River to the Sand". This title was used on maps until 1881, when it was changed to Sauble River. The name for the beach itself was quick to follow as it proved to be the perfect descriptive name, Sauble Beach, which when translated means Sand Beach or Beach of Sand. The Sauble River was home to thriving industry; a sawmill and a hydro electric plant. The first cottager was John Eldridge who built near the river in 1877. As people began to build cottages, the development continued to grow steadily to the south and eventually east to what it is today...the "Number One Beach in Ontario" as voted by Toronto Star readers and "One of Canada's Top 10 Beaches" as voted by the readers of MacLean's Magazine and more recently nominated as the best fresh water beach in Canada by Readers Digest (June 2007).

Often compared with the Mediterranean resort areas, Sauble Beach is the second longest fresh water beach in the world with over eleven kilometers of the softest sand and most pristine waters in Ontario. The beautiful sand dunes of Sauble Beach are part of an ecosystem that has evolved over thousands of years. The dunes provide natural shore protection and are home to many rare and unique birds, plants and grasses. Our aboriginal neighbors to the south, the Chippewa of Saugeen, administer South Sauble Park. This stretch of the beach is the only one in Ontario that allows visitors to experience driving on the beach. In 2006, Sauble Beach received the internationally recognized and exclusive "Blue Flag" eco-label. As determined by Environmental Defense, Sauble Beach has met 27 defining world class standards for water quality, safety, environmental management and education. Sauble Beach has an active Chamber of Commerce and a vibrant commercial sector with restaurants, shops and boutiques, cottage rentals, motels, campgrounds and B&B's and an excellent supermarket.

In 2003, a Sauble Beach Vitalization Committee was formed with the purpose of providing direction from community members for improving Sauble Beach as a tourist destination. The report formalized by the Committee was submitted to the Council of the Town of South Bruce Peninsula in April 2004 and over 80 recommendations were made covering areas such as traffic, pedestrian safety, roads and maintenance, parking issues, garbage issues, water and sewer, environmental issues, the downtown, public safety, by-law enforcement, planning and financial issues.

Over several months, Council reviewed the report and the recommendations. Parking issues were referred to the Paid Parking Pilot Project Committee. Many issues were dealt with through the municipality, some recommendations were deferred and others were considered to be out of the jurisdiction of the municipality or too costly to implement.

The section of the report relating to “downtown” focused on the appearance and found the downtown to be lacking in continuity, design and theme. The first recommendation was to work in co-operation with the business community to develop a phased plan for the renovation of the existing downtown area based on a predetermined theme. Other recommendations were made regarding a performance facility, a revamped visitor information centre, and more information kiosks at the north end of the beach and at Sauble Falls, a tree planting program along the County Road 8 entrance, development of a parkette, signage improvements, refurbishing the Sauble sign, historic plaques at Sauble Falls, and the development of brochures and quality souvenirs.

Since the report was presented, some of these recommendations have been addressed. As a result of a grant from Bruce Power Generation, the Town has designated \$25,000 to the refurbishing of the Sauble sign. A visitor’s centre will be incorporated into the new Sauble Beach medical clinic which is anticipated to be operational for the 2009 season. Historic signage at Sauble Falls was put in place in 2007. An overall policy, design, style guideline and messaging of wayfinding signage will begin in co-operation with Bruce County in 2009.

In a renewed effort to look at the issues presented in the 2004 Sauble Revitalization report, the Town of South Bruce Peninsula initiated a series of public consultations in 2007. The group identified the “downtown core” to be Main Street from the D Line to Lakeshore Blvd. and along Lakeshore Blvd. to 3rd Ave. The assets could be grouped as those associated with the beach, retail and social structures.

The challenges were identified as a lack of infrastructure (water sewers, sidewalks, lighting), short season/seasonal focus, uncertainty regarding land claims, traffic flow, limited public washrooms, parking, no public transit, no system of bike paths and the lack of beautification such as flowers, benches, banners, garbage accumulation, community information boards, etc.

The discussion of what the participants would like the downtown area to look like in the future resulted in recommendations related to the beach and the streets. Ideas included a dock or pier, roped off areas for children, pedestrian only areas, lighting, banners, signs, flowers, benches, picnic areas and barbecues. Participants also talked about underground hydro and phone cables, they questioned the status of the vitalization report of 2004 and suggested that a beach theme needed to be developed.

Participants also discussed what the immediate priorities are, and agreed that a theme for future development was a necessary first step. Lighting was considered to be the priority.

## 3.6 Wiarton Consultation

In 2005, Wiarton celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> birthday, but it was in 1855 that a town plot was initially laid out on recently acquired Native land. Wiarton was named after the English birthplace of Sir Edmund Head, Governor General of Canada (1854-1861). Wiarton was a thriving community with sawmills, Grand Trunk Railway, furniture factories, a vibrant fishing industry and even a sugar company. Declining forestry industry, ravages of the fish population by the introduction of the eel, fires, competition and the closing of the railway were factors in the disappearance of the large industry in Wiarton.

Today, business opportunities are abundant in Wiarton. Community planners have developed policies and zoned areas to facilitate the development of clean industry, and home based business. The population served by Wiarton significantly exceeds the actual population. The South Bruce Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and Wiarton BIA are active in commerce in the area and the local Wiarton-Keppel International Airport boasts the best runway between Sault Ste Marie and Toronto

Warton has a vibrant community life, beginning in Bluewater Park, with a back drop of Colpoys Bay and the majestic Niagara Escarpment. Special attractions in Bluewater Park include the Warton Willie statue, historic train station, pirate ship play structure, tennis courts, ball diamond, outdoor swimming pool, beach, boat launch, picnic pavilion and campground. The park is a short walk to the library, Warton Willie's home, a full service grocery store, the liquor store and the downtown area of Warton.

Warton is home to the Warton & District Agricultural Society Fall Fair, Rotary Village Fair, Shore to Shore Road Race, fishing derbies, weekly euchre games, jamborees, and dinners sponsored by churches, women's institutes, the Legion and the Propeller Club to name a few. Winter activities include snowmobiling the extensive trail system, cross county skiing, curling, skating, hockey and numerous activities at the Outdoor Education Centre. Last but definitely not least is the Warton Willie Festival, held the first days of February each year. As Ambassador of the area, Willie leads residents and visitors alike through a winter break and holds them in anticipation as to whether spring will come sooner or later. Prediction morning dawns dark and early on February 2<sup>nd</sup> and the national media are out in full force to record Willie's prediction. Much of the community participates in the annual festival celebration and activities take place throughout Warton.

The first consultation meeting in Warton was held October, 2007 in Municipal Council Chambers. The discussion of what constitutes the "downtown core" met with lively debate. In the final analysis, it was determined that "downtown" was from the top of the south hill to the top of the north hill on Berford Street.

The assets of downtown Warton are many and varied. Interestingly enough, many of the assets identified fall outside of the defined downtown core. Assets such as recreational amenities located in and around Colpoys Bay and Bluewater Park, Warton Willie, the Library, the Meeting Place, cemetery, funeral parlour, seniors residences, some historical buildings, the airport, liquor store, and the hospital. Assets in the downtown core include streetlights, sidewalks, washrooms, a wide variety of stores and commercial enterprises, banks, a Post Office, churches, restaurants, Community Living, professionals and artistic related businesses.

Many of the challenges identified had to do with the image of the Town. Issues such as the lack of property maintenance, the lack of pride and Town spirit and the need for a central theme were identified. They identified a need for increased and improved signage, improved storefronts, relief from traffic congestion, poles and wire give appearance of clutter, sidewalks get "rolled up at 6:00pm" and the need for more consistent beautification with benches and sidewalk repairs. While a tremendous amount of traffic travels through Warton, it is a challenge to get people to stop and eat or shop. The discussion of what the participants would like Warton to look like in the future incorporated the following ideas: develop a theme for the downtown core that includes lighting, benches, facades, information boards, trees, murals, banners and planters. Other suggestions included tying the waterfront to the downtown, a farmers market, historic designations and signage at the entrance to the Town. Still other suggestions looked at initiatives the merchants could employ. There was strong urging to revisit the former Façade Study and the Cause Study. The whole idea would be to make the downtown inviting by providing a quaint and pretty environment in which people would want to stop, look around and spend some time.

In March of 2008, a second meeting was convened and the priorities determined at the October meeting were confirmed with some clarifications. The issue of waterfront development was raised and the group was informed that while it is important to tie the waterfront to the downtown area, the actual development of Bluewater Park will be dealt through a separate study and consultation process.

The outcome from this meeting was that the group was anxious for the Town to host another meeting in April to do a visioning exercise. A visioning exercise was scheduled on April 29, 2008, and was facilitated by Cheryl

Gover from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Participants were asked to look down the road and envision what they would like Warton to look like in 2015. Much of the discussion focused on two previous studies; the Cause Study and the Façade Study as the blueprint for what Warton should look like in the future.

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## 4.0 Identified Priorities

### 4.1 Priorities and Goals

The goals and priorities of the consultation groups, although similar, represent the uniqueness of each community. These goals and priorities give a clear indication of the progression of the community area and insight into the future development of these areas.

The priorities are categorized and defined as follows:

Beautification	The method in which a community can present a visual showcase
Infrastructure	The erection of physical structures to support the improvement
Administrative	The research, planning and reporting required nourish change
Safety	Initiatives to improve the overall health and well being of the community
Other	Marketing and economic development strategies to strengthen the community

### 4.2 Allenford Priorities Identified:

#### Beautification

- Planters
- Benches
- Banners
- Christmas Lighting
- Trees
- Property Standards
- Path along River
- Historic Designations

#### Infrastructure

- Sidewalks
- Playgrounds
- Picnic Areas
- Signage
- Library/Community Centre

#### Safety

- Reduce Speed Limit
- Crosswalks
- Lighting

School Bus Signs  
Neighbourhood Watch

### **Administrative**

Establish Community Organization  
Better Working Relationship Between Municipalities  
Children/Teen Activities

### **Other**

Community Gathering Places  
Inviting to Stop  
Arts/Crafts Shops  
Restaurants  
Develop a Theme for the Downtown  
Branding Theme

## **4.3 Hepworth Priorities Identified:**

### **Beautification**

Develop a Theme  
Picnic Areas  
Welcoming Signs/Signage  
Christmas Lights/Wreaths  
Flower Boxes  
Garbage Disposal

### **Infrastructure**

Old Fashioned Street Lighting  
Sidewalk Improvements  
Improved Parking  
Outdoor Rink

### **Administrative**

Parades, Festivals, Etc.  
Children's Activities

### **Other**

More Retail  
Museum

## **4.4 Sauble Beach Priorities Identified:**

### **Beautification**

Lights  
Banners  
Flowers

## Additional Garbage Cans

### Infrastructure

Water and Sewer to Downtown Core  
Sidewalks  
Underground Hydro and Telephone  
Dock or Pier  
Sauble Sign  
More Washrooms  
Town Square  
Performance Facility  
Lighting – New Bulbs and Light Standards  
Bike/Walking Path  
Picnic Areas  
Splash Areas for Children  
Swimming Pool  
Signage  
Maintenance of Flower Baskets  
Recycling Containers on Main Street  
Permanent Tourist Information Centre  
Electronic Sign at Bannister Park  
Crosswalks on Main St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and Lakeshore Blvd.

### Administrative

Safe Streets  
Develop a Theme for the Beach  
Investigate Keeping Washrooms Open After 10pm in July and August  
OPP Foot/Bicycle Patrol in Downtown Area  
Additional Policing to Control Traffic at Parkway Lights  
Ambulance Site in Sauble Beach  
Town Planner Specifically for Sauble Beach

### Other

Twelve Month Designation  
More Restaurants

## 4.5 Warton Priorities Identified:

### Beautification

Flowers  
Planters  
Benches  
Banners  
Trees  
Streetscaping (Cause Study)  
Quality Christmas Decorations  
Building Retrofits and Facades (Façade Study)

Historic Murals  
Historic Signage

### Infrastructure

Extend Ornamental Lighting  
Event Board  
Information Kiosk  
Town Gates/Entrance  
Signage – Regulatory and Business  
Link Downtown with Waterfront  
Eliminate Overhead Wiring

### Administrative

Consistent Maintenance Schedule  
Ambassadors  
Enforce Property Standards  
Traffic Rerouting  
Off Street Parking Signage

### Other

Use Empty Stores for Artisan Displays  
Focus on More than Warton Willie  
Merchant Initiatives – Vouchers, Stay Open Later  
Heritage Application to Street Naming  
Encourage Community Pride  
Seniors Drop In Centre

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## 5.0 Action Plan

### 5.1 Planning

In February of 2009 the Economic Development Committee went through a planning exercise facilitated by Cheryl Govier with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs. Members of the committee reviewed the priorities from the public consultations and determined whether each:

- Fell under the umbrella of Economic Development
- Related to 'Downtown' Improvement
- Feasible to be completed within a 3-year timeline
- Feasible project to recommend to Council for budget allocation

The committee took into consideration projects that have already been completed to date and as such those priorities have not been included in the 3-year implementation timeline. Projects that are happening under other departments that relate to downtown revitalization have been included but do not reflect a budget amount. The committee also considered other economic development initiatives planned for the next few years that will dictate

the timing of improvements. For example, the Town will be undergoing a branding exercise in 2009 that will have an impact on the look of banners, planters, benches and signage; therefore it made sense to schedule those projects in years two and three. The table below outlines 'beautification' and 'infrastructure' priorities. Administrative, safety and 'other' issues outlined in the priorities list will be commented on in the 'Next Steps' portion of this plan.

### 3-Year Timeline for Implementation

Through a strategic planning exercise the Economic Development Committee recommends the following priorities and timeline for implementation:

	2009	2010	2011
<b>Allenford</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete sidewalk repair</li> <li>- Investigate sidewalks between Elizabeth and Alice Streets</li> <li>- New entrance sign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benches</li> <li>- Planters</li> <li>- Banners</li> <li>- Flowers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signage Implementation</li> </ul>
<i>Downtown Budget Allocation</i>	<i>\$3,300</i>		
<b>Hepworth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New light standards</li> <li>- New Christmas lighting</li> <li>- Improved picnic area (add. Parking)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benches</li> <li>- Banners</li> <li>- Hangers</li> <li>- Planters</li> <li>- Outdoor skating rink</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signage Implementation</li> </ul>
<i>Downtown Budget Allocation</i>	<i>\$6,700</i>		
<b>Sauble Beach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water &amp; Sewer improvements</li> <li>- New light standards</li> <li>- Sauble Beach sign upgrades</li> <li>- Transportable washroom facilities</li> <li>- New Christmas lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Town Square</li> <li>- Benches</li> <li>- Banners</li> <li>- Planters</li> <li>- Recycling boxes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signage Implementation</li> </ul>
<i>Downtown Budget Allocation</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>		
<b>Warton</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement Community Improvement Plan</li> <li>- New Christmas lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benches</li> <li>- Planters</li> <li>- Banners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signage Implementation</li> </ul>
<i>Downtown Budget Allocation</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>		

\*Note that budget allocations are related to the Economic Development budget only and reflect 2009 (year one), years two and three are yet to be determined.

An immediate priority identified by all communities was the need for new Christmas lighting. At this time Allenford does not have the required poles or authority from the Ministry of Transportation to hang up Christmas lighting and therefore no budget allocation has been made in that regard.

## 5.2 Implementation

The budget for proposed projects/improvements under Downtown Revitalization must be approved as part of the Town's overall budget for that particular year and will be allocated where most appropriate, not necessarily under the Economic Development budget (ie. sidewalk improvements would be allocated under Public Works). The

budget set out each year based on individual community needs and priorities and is not intended to be an 'even split' or equally shared by each of the communities involved. However, this plan has the ability (having a broad range of priorities identified) to be flexible. A priority outlined in the 3-year timeline could be revised if it makes sense to do so. The budget being reviewed on an annual basis will accommodate to revisions or additions.

The budget for each project/improvement for the 3-year plan will be researched and reviewed on an annual basis with recommendations made to Council for final approval. Allocated funds must be distributed in accordance with the Town's purchasing by-law. The Town will make the final decision on design, location, contractor and any other details of the proposed improvements.

For 2009 the Town has allocated \$30,000 for Downtown Revitalization.

### 5.3 Next Steps

The Economic Development Committee will continue to work with the individual communities to implement improvements set out in this plan. Some priorities identified under the categories of "Administration", "Safety" and "Other" do not require budgeting but will be addressed by working with Town Staff and the community groups involved. As an example; working with staff to improve property standards and communicating with Ministry of Transportation on highway and traffic congestion issues.

A number of planned initiatives will play a role in shaping the outcomes outlined in the 3-year timeline. These initiatives include:

- **Branding:** In the summer of 2009 the Town will be undergoing a branding exercise that will involve each of the urban centres within the Town. The branding exercise will address the issue of developing a 'sense of place' or commonality between the towns.
- **Signage:** The Town is in the initial steps of working with the County of Bruce in developing a signage strategy that will bring consistency, meaning and control to signage throughout the municipality and county.
- **Bluewater Park Development:** The Town currently has a 10 year (phased approached) plan in place for the development of Bluewater Park. The plan as it develops will relate to downtown revitalization in Warton.
- **BR&E:** The undertaking of a Business Retention and Expansion Study will allow for a complete inventory of the Town's businesses to be developed and will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) that our businesses face today. This will be the first step in re-establishing the downtown cores as vibrant and viable urban centres.
- **Community Improve Plan – Façade Program:** The façade improvement incentive program (grant) will encourage local business owners to renew and make improvements to their storefronts. This will add another component to the downtown revitalization initiatives and will allow the private sector to play a role as well.
- **Special Events Coordinator:** The Town has decided to work with a contractor to coordinate special events for one year. The coordinator will take into consideration issues identified such as

seasonality and 'things going on after 6pm', and will look at ways to build up community pride through special events.

- **Market Assessment:** After the BR&E is completed, the next step will be to do a 'Market Assessment Study' which will look at where opportunities lie for new businesses and how to go about attracting those businesses.
- **New County Partnership:** Although always supportive of local initiatives to beautify and revitalize, the County has taken a step further and formed a staff team to assist municipality with the planning for revitalization projects. The team consists of planners, landscape architects and tourism professional and will be invaluable in carrying out our plans for Downtown Revitalization.

The Downtowns of the Town of South Bruce Peninsula will see a revival over the next few years. As the demographics of this region change we have set in place a number of initiatives, all outlined in this plan, to allow us to meet the needs of those changing demographics. Naturally, the revitalization of the downtowns will also increase the viability of our existing small businesses; increase the chances of attracting new business and all the while developing a new sense of community pride and sense of place.