

Background

The economy of the Lake Placid / North Elba region, and Adirondack Park as a whole, has been dependent upon tourism since the turn of the 20th Century. During the early 1900's the region



marketed itself as a way to escape urban environments and the heat of summer. After the 1932 and 1980 Olympics, the marketing thrust changed and the emphasis was placed on athletic contests and challenging activities. Today, a primary driving force of tourism is outdoor activities in the Adirondack Park. Most of these activities take place during the summer and winter months. To help fill the void during the off-peak tourist seasons, the Town has been successful in drawing visitors to the region through special events and conventions. While this general strategy remains successful there are societal fluctuations that need to be addressed.

First, populations of the nation and the region are aging. As a result these older, more economically secure visitors tend to demand more value for their experience while at the same time the number of talented young people available to live and work in the community and provide that value decreases.

A second major change involves technology. New marketing tools and technologies allow businesses and areas to communicate and cooperate more effectively. This opens the door to regional and area marketing strategies, allows for penetration into new markets, and gives businesses new methods to reach consumers.

Finally, people have a heightened sense of their impact on the environment. Businesses and products are often promoted as "eco-friendly" and "sustainable." Since many visitors come to the region to enjoy the unspoiled environment this trend provides another challenge and opportunity.



4.3 William H. Chetani's store, c. 1904. Saranac Lake Free Lib.

Vision for Economy and Tourism

Lake Placid / North Elba continue to meet the changing demographics and expectations of today's traveler through enhanced customer services, and the use of new marketing technologies that are provided in an eco-friendly and sustainable way.

The community maintains a thriving economy comprised of small businesses that collaborate and utilize new technologies to provide opportunities for the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Goals, Objectives and Implementation Measures

Goal #1: *Enhance the customer and visitor experience by creating an educated workforce capable of meeting/exceeding our customers' expectations.*

Objective 1: Identify community-wide customer service training resources and needs.

Implementation Measures

- Create a *Tourism Readiness Committee* comprised of key stakeholders to conduct an assessment of existing customer service training.
 - Develop an inventory of public and private customer service training resources.
 - Identify gaps in existing inventory.

Objective 2: Implement recommendations of the Tourism Readiness Committee.

Implementation Measures

- Seek funding to establish a community-wide customer service training program.
- Create a Tourism Readiness Committee that develops and promotes a certification program for successful completion of training. Each business can create and implement a customized training program/package resulting in an enhanced employee resume.

Objective 3: Educate front line, customer service personnel with seasonal training relating to area experiences/activities/offerings, and training on how to access this information.

Implementation Measures

- *Tourism Readiness Committee* facilitates:
 - Bi-annual/seasonal events to inform front line service personnel of upcoming activities and community events.
 - Bi-annual/seasonal events to inform the community at large of upcoming activities and community events. Consider new marketing technologies such as social media.
 - Awareness about where and how to get information community-wide.

Goal #2: Continue to promote Lake Placid and the surrounding area as an eco-friendly residential, business, and tourism destination.

Objective 1: Enhance, promote and increase awareness of the eco-friendly offerings in the area.

Implementation Measures

- Educate businesses, residents and visitors on ways to implement eco-friendly practices and services.
- Acknowledge, promote and reward area businesses implementing green practices.
- Enhance waterfront access and run water-based tourism that coordinate with environmental concerns (See Environment - section 7)

Objective 2: Increase visitor awareness of area events, information and activities.

Implementation Measure

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- Promote the destination website (<http://www.lakeplacid.com>) through local marketing campaign within Lake Placid area, reminding visitors and residents of where to find event/activity information.
- Utilize social media to promote area events and activities.
- Develop an "Master Plan for Marketing" that creates an integrated, efficient approach that establishes a cohesive message among all parts of the community.

Objective 3: Increase internet connection/access to encompass Lake Placid by 2015.

Implementation Measures

- Assemble a committee to assess the availability and scope of area to be covered.
- Assess costs and affordability involved. Research/seek sponsorships, grants, paid advertising and using Lake Placid as an Olympic destination should be considered.

Goal #3: Grow and sustain our workforce focusing on all ages and abilities.

Objective 1: Encourage the creation of new business start-ups and/or the continuation of existing businesses.

Implementation Measures

- Build ownership of community by encouraging "under 40" age group to participate in community projects, attend town meetings, and participate on committees.
- Involve local education institutions, colleges, workforce boards, Lake Placid Business Association and career training centers to implement, ensure awareness, and encourage entrepreneurial training courses and mentoring programs.
- Partner with local employers to identify specific training needs of potential employees at all levels, and tailor educational offerings to meet those needs.

Goal #4: Help small businesses to develop and grow..

Objective 1: Enhance small business growth through increased connections, cross promotion and marketing.

Implementation Measures

- Establish an *Economic Development Committee* to advance Business to Business (B2B) communications, promotion of local businesses, organize events, and develop resources.
 - Implement a campaign to promote local small businesses - encourage buying locally in support of the community.
 - Develop, plan and execute a business-to-business expo promoting a community-wide awareness benefits.
 - Encourage cross promotion through social media and email blasts.
 - Develop a master directory of local businesses, including contact information, services offered and/or products available. Distribute to every home and business.
 - Promote and market the current availability of technological resources to the businesses and communities of Lake Placid and surrounding areas.
 - Continue to host educational seminars on how to use/increase awareness and availability of new and existing technological resources.
 - Determine product and service needs that can be shared and discounts offered to increase profits by buying in bulk.

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- Promote benefits of being self-employed, but working outside the home.

Goal #5: Maintain a dynamic downtown business district and adjacent commercial areas.

Objective 1: Increase business and commercial activity along Main Street in the Central Business District (see Appendix 1).

Implementation Measures

- Work with business owners to explore establishing a Business Improvement District (BID).
- Create and maintain the cleanliness of public restrooms and other amenities.

Objective 2: Increase appropriate commercial development to extended business areas outside of Main Street – Saranac Ave, Mill Hill, and Sentinel Road.

Implementation Measures

- Encourage merchants in the various areas to continue to meet and discuss common concerns.
- Consider business and commercial activity that complement the central business district.

Objective 3: Encourage cooperation between commercial businesses located along Main Street and adjacent commercial areas.

Implementation Measures

- Encourage cross-promotion activities and events.



Goal #6: Promote sharing of services and office space to increase efficiency, productivity and success.

Objective 1: Utilize available empty real estate space to unite small business owners, entrepreneurs and/or visitors in need of temporary and/or 'away from home' work space.

Implementation Measures

- Create an Economic Development Committee to assess interest and opportunity to create a 'co-op' office space or utilize existing space for small businesses to share 'like' office needs.
- Identify and pursue underutilized existing sites with usage potential.
- Present opportunity of spending money to save money as a 'win-win' for both the private business owner, and the small business community.

