

2018-19

TOURISM NORTHERN ONTARIO

Tourism Wayfinding Programs



tourismnorthernontario.com



WAYFINDING

(Noun) Signs, maps, and other graphic or audible methods used to convey location and directions to travelers. — www.dictionary.com/browse/wayfinding

TOURISM NORTHERN ONTARIO'S TOURISM WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

"Our region is only as good as the stories that are told about it."
— Northern Ontario Tourism Wayfinding Strategy 2014

Especially in remote areas, visitors are looking for reassurance that they're in the right place or headed in the right direction as well as for information to make their experience more enjoyable. This is particularly true in a region such as Northern Ontario where distances between communities are often vast.

Studies have clearly shown that well-planned and well-executed wayfinding results in longer stays, more money being spent by travellers and higher visitor satisfaction, encouraging positive word of mouth and return visits.



**PARTNER
WITH US**

Tourism Northern Ontario is looking to partner with communities interested in undertaking bilingual tourism wayfinding signage programs. We have matching funds to assist in wayfinding planning and/or implementation as well as a tourism wayfinding signage toolkit to provide planning guidance and signage standards to our partners.

TOURISM NORTHERN ONTARIO TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE (TIC) SUPPORT PROGRAM

TNO recently completed a Northern Ontario Visitor Information Strategy and is now working to fulfill the recommendations of the strategy. Initiatives in support of Northern Ontario's TICs include:

Training – In 2016 TNO offered the region's TICs the opportunity to participate in the Ontario Tourism Education Council's online training program, Service Excellence Dynamics. Based on evaluations received to date, it is likely that this program will be offered again. Based on stakeholder input, other training programs may be offered as well.

"Thank you so much for connecting me with this resource. I have completed the training and have found it exceptionally beneficial in my work here."

— **Regan Neall, Travel Counselor, Dryden Visitor Information Centre**

TNO HAS ALSO PROVIDED TICs WITH A ONE-PAGE TIP SHEET ON HOW BEST TO SERVE VISITORS.

"Know Before You Go" – TNO has developed an information piece for TIC staff (reviewed annually) on the rules around border crossings as well as links to reliable resources.

Staffing Support – TNO has helped to extend the operating season of TICs by topping up funding for students employed under the Province's Summer Experience Program.

Print – One common theme observed at TICs across Northern Ontario is that, regardless of other channels being used by visitors, they almost always carry a printed reference with them as well. With this in mind, TNO has addressed a number of the wayfinding strategy's recommendations regarding print.

Maps – Through TNO, 800,000 copies of the Ontario Road Map are imprinted with NorthernOntario.travel, driving visitors to this popular web portal. As well, TNO has created a single wayfinding map standard for all TNO and sub-region-supported communications with graphic standards that apply equally to printed, digital and signage applications.

Reaching Out – TNO reaches out on a regular basis to our region's VICs to determine their key issues and needs. TNO staff attend the annual Ontario Travel Information Services conference and will be supporting VIC staff to attend its annual Northern Ontario Tourism Summit. In addition, TNO is working to develop its online VIC Hub whereby VICs can share information on hours of operation, area attractions and other topics.

Display Kiosks – TNO is researching opportunities to provide TICs with kiosks to best present information to visitors.

Common Language Toolkit – TNO has developed recommendations with respect to organizing visitor guides so that key information on crossing the border appears consistently and offers a common language toolkit, Know Before You Go, to support DMOs in producing these guidebooks.

"Thanks for this common language toolkit. Excellent work. We'll utilize it on our website and in our publications."

— **Paul Pepe, Manager, Thunder Bay Tourism**

Digital – Discover ON mobile app aggregates events and destinations based on the current location of the user; this could be the tool on which Northern Ontario operators increasingly rely, since the infrastructure has already been created. TNO is now working to increase the Northern Ontario presence on DiscoverON and to ensure that DiscoverON is inclusive of all tourism experiences, accommodations and dining in the North.

OTIC Conference – Tourism Northern Ontario attends and encourages Northern Ontario's TICs to attend the annual Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership TIC Conference.



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**LET'S
TALK**

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