

Wednesday April 13, 2016

Attendees: 30

Identified Community and Regional Assets

- Four arenas within 6 km
- Three golf courses within 10 km
- Four gymnasiums within 6 km
- Rainy Lake and Rainy River
- International border: Two communities
- Ball diamonds, sports fields
- Parks
- Tennis & Pickle Ball courts
- Squash courts
- Swimming pools
- Marina
- Snow machine trails
- Curling Club
- Bowling alley
- Outdoor Rinks
- Cross Country Ski Trails
- Skeet, rifle and archery ranges
- Skate Park
- Dedicated volunteers
- Emo Raceway
- Motocross trails
- Horse Show grounds

- Emo fairgrounds
- Five full service fishing tournaments in the Rainy River District
- Pow-Wow grounds
- 2 Dragon Boats, enough equipment for 60 people
- Waterfront, walking paths, trails
- Airfield
- Sister Kennedy Centre
- Stratton Bike Rally

Current Sports Tourism Activities (What we Do)

-International Dragon Boat Festival

-Bowling Tournaments

-First Nations Hockey Tournaments

-Swimming Meets

-Junior Hockey (Fort Frances Lakers)

-OFSAA Championships

-FF Canadian Bass Championship

-Emo & District Fall Fair

-Borderland Racing

-Emo Walleye Fishing Tournament

-Dart Tournaments

-ATV Off-Road events

-Figure Skating competitions

-Cross Country Skiing

-Men's & Women's Curling

-Cross Country Motor Racing

-First Nation Pow-Wows

-Golf Tournaments

-Sportsman's Club

-Tae-Kwon-Do

-Triathlon

-Kickboxing

-Sailing

-Dance

-Minor Hockey Tournaments

-Senior Summer Games

-Car Shows

-Mini-marathons

-Snowmobile Events

-Baseball & Softball

-Summer Hockey Schools/ Hockey

-Elementary/High School Sports

-Manitou Fish Fry

-Soccer

-Ultimate Frisbee

-Squash tournaments

-Dragon Boat clinic

-Badminton tournaments

-Skateboard competitions

-Volleyball

-Football

-Skeet Tournaments

-Swimming Camps

-Hockey & Athletic Camps

-Kayaking

-Judo

-Stand-up paddle boarding

-Sportsman's Club

-Tae-Kwon-Do

-Triathlon

-Kickboxing

-Sailing

-Dance

-Minor Hockey Tournaments

-Snowshoeing

-Hunting/Fishing/Bird watching

-Motorbike Riding

-Shuffleboard/Pool/card tournaments

Sports Tourism Barriers

- Marketing events
- lack of volunteers/volunteer burnout
- Creating a brand that's reputable and recognizable
- Lack of support from people that already live here
- Hotel rooms
- Passports/border control
- Costs (participating/attendance)
- Sponsors (local and corporate)
- Aging population
- Declining population
- Political will (3 levels of government)
- Red tape
- Collaboration with other communities
- Exchange rates
- Understanding of the value of tourism
- Activities guide/advertising/other potential tourism & marketing materials/ community calendar
- Lack of information
- Consistency in what we offer
- Health insurance/medical attention
- Not having permanent structure at waterfront

Overcoming Barriers

- LOCAL information package/calendar of events/coupons
- Planning and advisory committee/brainstorming session
- Change is good, be open to creative new ideas
- Grant money, funding
- Partnering of competing events
- More support for ideas, recruiting youth
- Marketing workshops
- Volunteering
- Management, budgeting
- Developing local skill, training locals
- Pay it forward programs
- Listing local resources
- Change in attitudes/working together/defeat apathy and complacency
- Establish events
- Network with other successful organizations
- Local government networking group/learn to like each other
- Access to money other than grants, financing/crowd financing
- Advertising, social media
- Supporting other communities, building relationships, regional support
- District calendar
- Cross border partnerships
- Event partnerships (not just sports related)

Identifying Opportunities

Fishing-Related Initiatives and Events:

Fort Frances Bass Tournament/Expand Fishing Tournaments/Increase Prize Money for Bass Tournament

15 votes

Hockey-Related Initiatives and Events:

Hockey Tournaments/Major Hockey Tournament/Rec Hockey/Minor Hockey Tournaments/Summer Hockey/Summer Hockey Schools/Expand Junior Hockey Tournament

16 votes

Fun Run/Racing-Related Initiatives and Events:

Running Race/Mud Run/Triathlon/ Fun Run

15 votes

Dragon Boat Festival

12 votes

Host a Provincial or National Event:

Ontario Summer Games/Aboriginal Summer Games/OFSAA

6 votes

Curling

6 votes

Breakdown of Votes

Hockey-Related Initiatives and Events (Tournaments, Minor Hockey, Rec Hockey, Junior Hockey, Summer Hockey, Hockey Schools, etc)	16
Fun Run/Racing Initiatives and Events (Mud Run, Triathlon, Fun Run, Colour Run, Mini marathon, race, etc)	15
Fishing- Related Initiatives and Events (FFBC, Expand Fishing Tournaments, Increase prize money for FFBC, etc)	15
Dragon Boat Festival	12
Host a Provincial or National Event (Ontario Summer Games, Aboriginal Summer Games, OFSAA)	6
Curling	6
Water Sports (Paddle boarding, canoeing, sailing, kayaking, boating)	6
Soccer	5
Create a Summer Festival to showcase multiple events (not solely sports)	3
Winter Adventure Events	3
Baseball	3
Swim Meet/Camps	2
Bird Watching	2
High School/Elementary Sports	2
Cross Country Skiing	2
Gymnastics	1
Fishing	1
Hunting	1
Fun in the Sun	1
Golf Tournaments	1
Expand Waterfront Activities	1
Bring in a national/international athlete for a motivational event	1
Tennis/Pickle ball	1
Day activities within town limits	1
Youth Summer Sports	1
Utilize Lake and River more	1
Permanent tent structure at marina	1
Basketball	1
District Tours	1
District wide Olympics	1
Boundless kids	1
Better and open facilities to engage more	1
Pow Wow	1
MMA/Martial Arts Tourney	1
Ultimate Frisbee	1
Snowmobile	1
Borderland Racing	1
"Quit Saying no to any idea right off the get go"	1
Sailing Regatta	1

Hockey-Related Opportunities:

- Adults or children?
- Audience: Thunder Bay-Winnipeg-Minneapolis
- Capacity? Volunteers?
- Recreational Tournament?
- Interest in Fort Frances hosting a competitive tournament?
- Hockey Camps

Fun Run/Racing-Related Opportunities:

- Biathlon, "Splash & Dash", Tough Mudder, Warrior Dash, Spartan Race, Colour Run
- "Mud/Colour Runs" already have structure in place
- Do not need much space for a "tough mudder" style run
- Establish landscape
- "Fun," inclusive event
- Freeze yer Gizzard partnership? Talk to them about barriers, etc.
- Mud Run in the cold could be unique and interesting
- Run in conjunction with another event

Dragon Boat Festival

- Bring attention to local Dragon Boat Club. Increase numbers (from 2 boats, 25 per boat to 4 boats, 25 per boat)
- Marketing materials
- Sponsorship, corporate sponsors
- Training, building sponsorship cases
- Minimum 25 teams at event for corporate sponsorship
- Information package ("What to do/see/eat/etc in Fort Frances)
- Self sustainability
- Incorporate other events/activities into Dragon Boat Festival (will be run in conjunction with this year's Relay for Life)

Observations

BROCHURE/FACT SHEET

Multiple groups expressed interest in a community brochure/fact sheet that could be distributed at numerous tournaments and events. It could include sections such as *WHERE TO EAT*, *WHERE TO SHOP*, *WHAT TO DO*, *WHAT TO SEE*, etc. The brochure could also include coupons or discounts for certain businesses or events. This would be mutually beneficial for businesses, restaurants, and events, and help those staying in town for events discover more about Fort Frances. These brochures could be handed out with registration packages at hockey tournaments, dragon boat festival, bass tournament, etc.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

There was discussion about having a widely available community calendar that is available to all in the district and easily searchable online. Having a listing of all events in one place that is easy for people to find would be beneficial.

FORMING PARTNERSHIPS

There was a lot of talk of hosting multiple events in one weekend, and forming partnerships to work with other events. For example, this year's Dragon Boat Festival will coincide with the Relay for Life. A "tough mudder" fun run could coincide with a music festival, Dragon Boat festival, etc.

MARKETING KNOWLEDGE

Local sporting groups and organizations expressed a desire to better understand how to market and promote their events. A workshop or event dedicated to marketing and promoting might be useful and allow them to do that independently.

VOLUNTEER BURNOUT

Those in attendance identified "Volunteer burnout" as a major barrier to planning and implementing sporting events in the region. It was also observed that volunteers are often the same group of people working multiple events. How do we attract new volunteers? How do we prevent "volunteer burnout?"