



Collaborations in Rural Tourism Research

Working with Communities to Better Understand the Impacts of Accommodations in Rural & Remote Manitoba

Overnight accommodations are essential for communities seeking to tap into the tourism sector, as hosting overnight guests - and facilitating events - has a significant impact on the local economy

By working with communities, we will be identifying how those working within the tourism sector view these efforts, and explore current needs



Please see the Project Findings here, and we look forward to sharing more this November

If you're interested in learning more about research in rural spaces, make sure to visit the *Journal of Rural and Community Development*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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BRANDON UNIVERSITY

WHY EXPLORE RURAL?

The tourism industry is vital for smaller communities, as it fosters economic diversification

However, rural and remote communities face different realities when working to market communities, and host overnight guests

In order to better support these communities, we must understand how these realities differ from urban spaces

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

6 Communities **13** Interviews

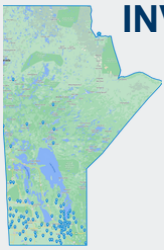
We conducted 7 Interviews with General Managers working in the accommodation sector, and 6 Community Members who facilitate and/ or support local events

We have also worked with participating General Managers to administer written surveys to accommodation guests at participating locations



MEET THE RESEARCHERS

- Michael Juce | *Manitoba Hotel Association*
- Dr. Doug Ramsey | *Tourism Research Centre*
- Dr. Wayne Kelly | *Rural Development Institute*
- Nicole Breedon | *Rural Development Institute*
- Logan Young | *Rural Development Institute*



INVOLVED COMMUNITIES

- Brandon
- Dauphin
- Falcon Lake/
The Whiteshell
- Onanole
- Russell
- Winkler

THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN RURAL & REGIONAL ECONOMIES

All Community Members noted that hosting events in community raises overnight visitation, positively impacting the local economy

The following table demonstrates workforce data with regard to the following sectors: Accommodation and Food Services, Amusement and Recreation Sector, and Heritage Institutions

Participating Communities	Region of Manitoba	Total Jobs in the Tourism Sector	% of Workforce in the Tourism Sector
Dauphin Russell Onanole	Parkland	1340	13%
Brandon	Westman	4269	13%
Winkler	Pembina	1785	10%
Falcon Lake Whiteshell	Eastman	3049	11%

(Data from RMED, 2023: Parkland, South Central, Southeast, and Southwest Economic Profiles)

However, there are still many challenges and barriers for those in the tourism sector

“ People don't realize that many of our hotels in Manitoba, or across Canada, are still having after effects from Covid. Right? ”

- Survey Participant 7

As well, communities that do not maintain a “municipality” title face difficulty in accessing funding and financial assistance to build on local tourism (e.g., hosting events, or enhancing infrastructure)



WHEN ASKED ABOUT CAPACITY

2 General Managers indicated their community needs more hotel capacity. In contrast, 5 Community Members indicated their community need more hotel capacity - but for specific annual events

All 13 Participants believe their community needs more capacity to build on local tourism

“ They need the capacity for local tourism, and it's education and grass-roots movements. That's what needs to happen. It starts with education and understanding the economic impact. ”

- Survey Participant 1

MARKETING IN COMMUNITY

One area folks may need more capacity is marketing

12 Participants engage in marketing

7 participants noted difficulty in building an online following, and 6 noted the need to rely on local tourism agencies and organizations due to limited capacity

“ You need to have that marketing support. I think that's one of the primary challenges a lot of businesses are facing. Beyond all of the regulatory, amenity, infrastructure, [and] local support. ”

- Survey Participant 1

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

7 General Managers noted that there is deep collaboration in community when it comes to event-based tourism, but 5 Community Members noted that collaboration has been relatively inconsistent

“ ... we need to have a sit down with the local stakeholders and have the conversation about what the struggles are, what we need to see. ”

- Survey Participant 4

ACCOMMODATION TAX (AT)

While ATs do offer an opportunity for financial support for events-based tourism, only 2 Participating Communities Implement AT

4 General Managers noted 3 unique challenges rural and remote communities face when implementing AT:

- Lack of Communication in Use of AT Funds
- Additional Fee Pushback from Overnight Guests
- Price Competition with Neighboring Communities

“ So it's just another tax. Are they happy? No. Do they know where it goes to? No... every municipality is different... in general, I don't think people really understand how that money is handled. ”

- Survey Participant 8



HOW CAN WE SUPPORT COMMUNITIES?

Based on these findings, we have concluded that there are 5 main areas where development is needed to support communities interested in building local tourism:

- Building Overall Capacity
- Enhancing Communication in Community
- Working to Understand Accommodation Tax Use
- Accessing Funding to Support Development
- Enhancing and Supporting Marketing Strategies

We are interested in working with community to explore strategies in addressing these areas of interest



This Brochure was designed and created by the Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Brandon University. RDI is grateful to be affiliated with a variety of communities, agencies, academics and students across Canada and beyond, to engage in meaningful research.