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THINKING BIG.

CRUISE PORT THUNDER BAY

Rural Ontario Municipal Association
January 22 2024





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**“LAKE SUPERIOR IS AS
EXOTIC AS ANYWHERE
ELSE ON EARTH.”**



DISCOVER
MORE
*in the
Great Lakes*



WHY CRUISING IS IMPORTANT

- It brings significant global media attention
- It attracts affluent, educated, influential and curious travellers to our community.
- It helps the community showcase existing and develop new visitor experiences
- Builds community pride of place





CRUISE SHIPPING IS A LONG GAME

- 2009 - 2011 – 22 vessel visits
Pool 6 Cruise Terminal opened
\$250 000 in capital upgrades – lipstick on the pig.
- 2021-2024 – 44 vessel visits
\$3 million in capital upgrades





COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ARE CRITICAL

- It all starts with the cruise lines
- Public, private and not for profit sectors working together is essential and achievable.
- Define roles and communicate among partners.
- The media is a partner too.





MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP

Elected and Administrative Champions are critical to success.

- Engage them early on
- Communicate progress regularly
- Critical advocates for provincial and federal funding supports and regulatory change
- Support the seed capital required to develop

The Cruise Industry notices strong municipal support and leadership in their ports of call.





THINK OUTSIDE YOUR COMMUNITY

Engage in local, regional and even international partnerships to achieve success.

- Tourism Organizations including RTOs
- Indigenous communities
- Rural communities
- Cruise Advocacy Organizations
 - Great Lakes Cruise Association
 - Great Lakes Cruise Coalition
 - Cruise the Great Lakes





CELEBRATING SUCCESSES

- Generated \$10.3 million in economic impact (2022-2023)
- Won Chamber of Commerce “Gamechanger Award”
- One of five global “Ports on the Rise” in Cruise and Ferry Magazine
- Welcomed thirteen cruise media and twelve cruise travel trade representatives





THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

The **Municipal Accommodation Tax** is the most powerful tool available for local tourism development

- Provides top up seed funding to leverage Municipal, Federal and Provincial capital funding.
- Powers global cruise marketing and communications programs, partnerships and visitor shore experience development.
- Support capacity growth with cruise partners.





LESSONS LEARNED

- Make data driven decisions
- Be persistent
- Be nimble to changes
- Communicate progress AND challenges
- Manage expectations





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THANK YOU!

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