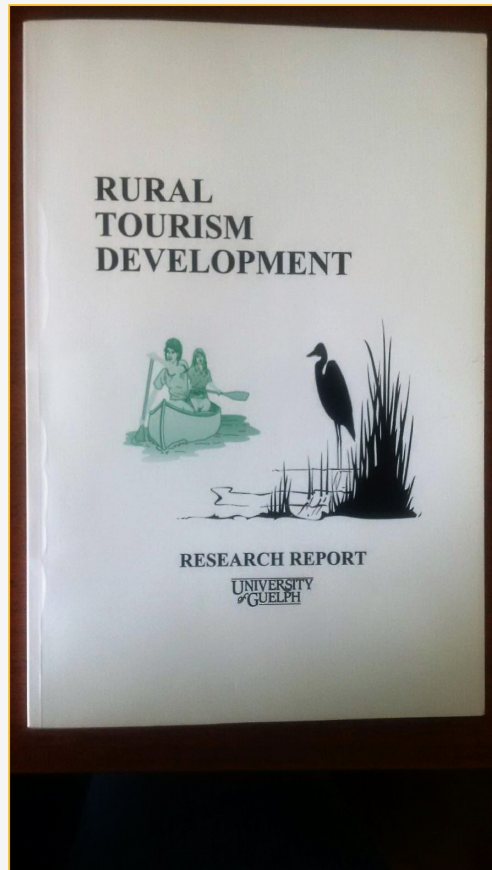# [RE] VISITING YOUR FUTURE

HEATHER MAIR
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

AGENDA

- Setting the context
- The project (1999-2002)
- The Manual
- Assumptions
- New ideas / better ideas?

Reid, D.G., Taylor, J., & Mair, H. (2000). *Rural tourism development research report.* School of Planning and Rural Development, University of Guelph.

IT ALL STARTED IN 1999…

"This analysis investigates the implications of a tourism-led approach to rural community development as it has been undertaken in four communities in Southwestern Ontario."

Reid, Taylor, & Mair (2000, p. 1)

STUDY RESULTS: TENSIONS IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

- Tourism development is organized by a dominant few.

- Deep frustration with tourism impacts (e.g., parking, litter, noise and congestion).

- Conflicting visions and splinter groups (e.g., 'high-end' tourism vs. 'mass' tourism vs. no tourism).

- Economic benefits of tourism development are acknowledged easily by those who stand to gain financially ...and the tension that builds within the community could be alleviated *if only* residents were made more aware of the benefits tourism brings.

- Trade-off between more development and community lifestyle is less and less tolerated by citizens not involved in tourism businesses. Protests, both active and passive, appear.

- Strong emotional resistance to further development (vandalism, confrontation).

- Apathy, disempowerment, and frustration with decision-making process (people do not feel they are being heard).

- Tourism becomes destructive to both community life and to itself (e.g. has an impact on the tourists' experience).

Reid, D. G., Mair, H., & George, W. (2004). Community tourism planning: A self-assessment instrument. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *31*(3), 623-639.

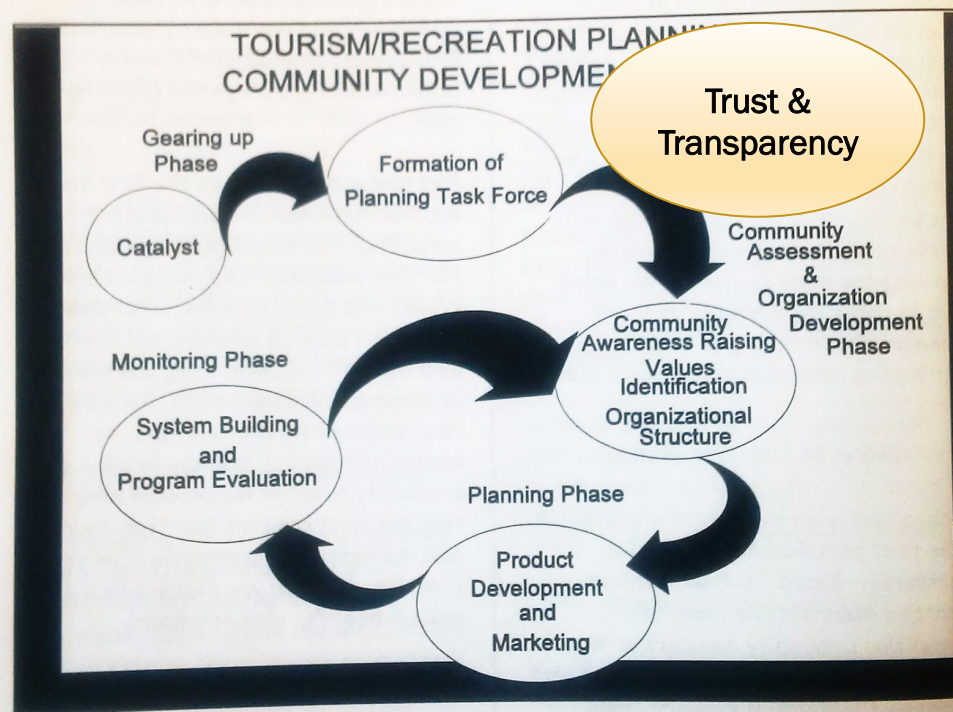"OUR ANALYSIS SUGGESTS …THE DISCORD IS DUE TO THE <u>NATURE OF THE TOURISM PLANNING</u>

<u>PROCESS</u>."

REID, D.G., TAYLOR, J., & MAIR, H. (2000, P. 1).

Figure 1 – Tourism/Recreation Planning Community Development Model

TOURISM/RECREATION PLANNING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Gearing up Phase

Catalyst

Formation of Planning Task Force

Trust & Transparency

Community Assessment & Organization Development Phase

Community Awareness Raising
Values Identification
Organizational Structure

Monitoring Phase

System Building and Program Evaluation

Planning Phase

Product Development and Marketing

Reid, Reid, Mair, George, & Taylor (2001, p. 4); adapted from Reid, Fuller, Haywood, & Bryden (1993)

TOURISM/RECREATION PLANNING CD MODEL

"Tourism development in small communities is usually entrepreneurially-driven and unplanned. It often starts small and grows incrementally. It isn't until a tourism 'critical mass' is reached and produces problems that some members of the community may decide a plan for development is required."

Reid, Mair, George, & Taylor (2001, p. 6)
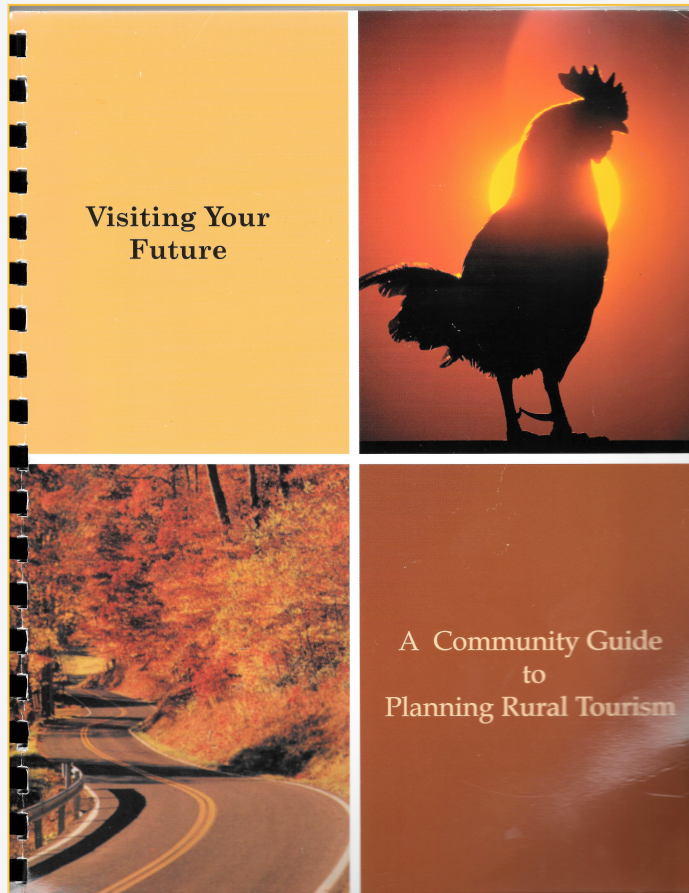
Reid, D.G., Mair, H., George, W., & Taylor, J. (2001). *Visiting you future: A community guide to planning rural tourism.* Ontario Agricultural Training Institute. Guelph.

THINKING ABOUT THE <u>PROCESS</u> OF TOURISM PLANNING

"The aim of this manual is to encourage members of rural communities to take a planned approach to tourism development in their area."

Reid, Mair, George, & Taylor (2001, p. 2)

THE MANUAL

I. BUILDING BLOCKS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM PLANNING

- Defining your community

- Catalysts and leadership

- The task force

- Community awareness-raising and organization

  - Exercises #1-5

II. PLANNING THE TOURISM PRODUCT

- Creating a tourism vision
  - Community visioning and the search conference model
- Tourism product development
  - Community input and information gathering
- Creating a community-based vision
  - Exercises #6-8
- Evaluation, monitoring and future planning

USING THE MANUAL

TOURISM SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE & COMPOSITE COMMUNITY

Tourism Self-assessment Questionnaire

Circle the number that best indicates your feelings about the statement in the left column.

	strongly disagree	mostly disagree	moderately agree	mostly agree	strongly agree
1. I can see the problems identified in the composite community (page 6) unfolding in our community at this very moment.	1	2	3	4	5
2. There is a person or small group of people in the community who are readily identifiable and give leadership to a tourism and community planning process.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Tourism plays a predominant role in the economic life of the community.	1	2	3	4	5
4. There is need for the community to be better organized to meet any tourism development needs that may arise.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Tourism is a well-developed industry with a long but rocky history in our community.	1	2	3	4	5
6. We do not have a clear process for solving problems as they arise.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Tourism development is out of control and too dominant in our community.	1	2	3	4	5

	strongly disagree	mostly disagree	moderately agree	mostly agree	strongly agree
8. The residents do not want to see any more tourism development take place in our community.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The residents and business community are not in agreement about how tourism should develop in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Everyone in the community needs to be involved in tourism development; it should not just be left to the business community.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Most residents would be willing to attend a community meeting to discuss an important tourism issue.	1	2	3	4	5
12. If tourism proposals are developed by certain people in the community, they are automatically opposed by others.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Everyone is willing to pitch in and help when we have a tourism event.	1	2	3	4	5

(Add the numbers circled) Score _____

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

WHAT WERE THE ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OUR WORK?

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THOSE ASSUMPTIONS?

IS THERE A BETTER WAY?

HERE YOU GO!

Was it (really) a DYI document?

...(1) uncertain and uninformed about policy opportunities and consequences, yet believing that others "know better"; (2) cynical about the promise of their own participation and deferential to those with expert, official or investor status, consenting through deference, not participation; (3) doubting their own social and community capacities for cooperation, and trusting instead in the good faith of professionals or the hidden hand of market advocates; and (4) confused about and distracted from planning and policy options that could address social needs in more than a "trickle down" fashion.

Forester, J. (1989) *Planning in the Face of Power*, Berkeley, California: University of California Press. (p. 80)

FIELD OF DREAMS

What were our assumptions regarding who would/could participate?

- *There are, however, increasing concerns among community groups and scholars that the current plan-making process, particularly in developed countries such as Australia, is dominated by powerful politicians, senior bureaucrats and professional planners who are principally concerned with pre-determined standards, targets, time-frames and economic imperatives.*

Mahjabeen, Z., Shresha, K.K., & Dee, J.A. (2009). 'Rethinking community participation in urban planning: The role of disadvantaged groups in Sydney metropolitan strategy', *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies*, 15(1): 45–63. (p. 46)

WHO KNOWS BEST?

What knowledge(s) were we privileging as valid and relevant?

IMPLICATIONS AND NAGGING QUESTIONS

- Are communities who used 'our' process any different than before?
- Did we 'alleviate' any of the tensions we identified in phase 1?
- Did we prevent any tensions from developing?
- Did we make things worse?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE …

IS THERE A BETTER WAY?