

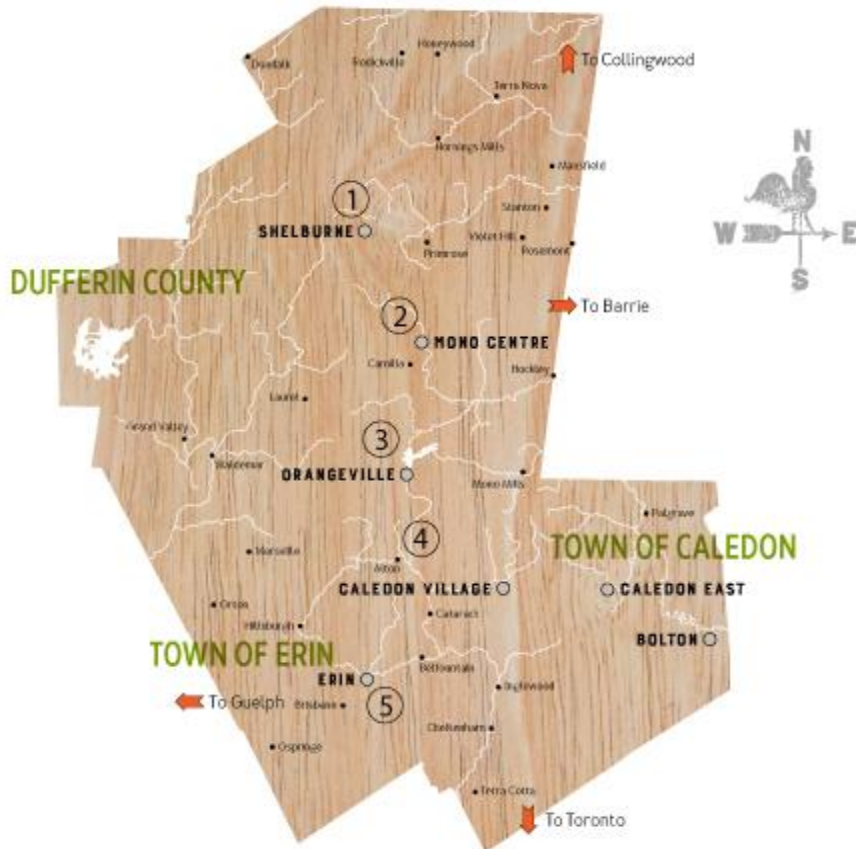
**HEADWATERS**

# **2016/17 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW**

MARCH 24, 2016



# HEADWATERS



**VISION:** to position Headwaters as Ontario's premier rural tourism destination.

**MISSION:** To integrate tourism into the regional economic development strategies of our partner municipalities, helping to build a robust and thriving tourism industry by working directly with tourism stakeholders across the region.

## **BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF 2015/16**

Headwaters Tourism had a banner year in 2015/16. Successes included:

- Launch of new consumer brand
- Significant media & marketing impact
- Economic Developers Council of Ontario – 2015 Award for Best Publication in Ontario (print or digital)
- Recognition as 2015 Award of Excellence for Community Service (Dufferin Board of Trade)
- Completion of highly successful Headwaters Horse Country Ontario Trillium Foundation project
- Headwaters Parade of Horses Pan Am Games legacy project (awarded by Creative Cultural Event 2015 by the Town of Orangeville)
- Launch of Headwaters tourism industry business-to-business resource website
- Confirmed 2016-2019 municipal service agreements with all municipal partners (Caledon, Dufferin, Erin, Mono & Shelburne)

## KEY AREAS OF FOCUS:

**HEADWATERS  
FUN & FESTIVE**  
Where Ontario gets real.

- Marketing & communications

**HEADWATERS  
FRESH & LOCAL**  
Where Ontario gets real.

- Product development & industry capacity development

**HEADWATERS  
HORSE & COUNTRY**  
Where Ontario gets real.

- Advocacy & partnership development

**HEADWATERS  
NATURE & LEISURE**  
Where Ontario gets real.

- Industry engagement

**HEADWATERS  
ARTS & HERITAGE**  
Where Ontario gets real.

- Municipal economic development integration

- Provincial tourism integration & liaison

# PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

## Nature & Leisure:

- Working with the Greenbelt Foundation identify opportunities to develop cycling routes throughout Headwaters that could link to existing Greenbelt cycling routes
- Working with key stakeholders & municipalities, explore interest in creating a niche sports tourism strategy to focus on elite sports training and extreme outdoor adventure event hosting

## Arts & Heritage:

- Building on the highly successful Headwaters Horse Country Parade of Horses, explore the feasibility of developing another public art project to profile the artistic offerings of Headwaters

## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

### **Festivals & Events:**

- Establish an inventory of planned Canada 150 events across the region, and develop a plan to leverage the impact of these events to increase tourism visitation to the region in 2017

### **Horse & Country:**

- Implementation of committee-approved sustainability plan
- Hosting of Headwaters Horse Country Excellence Awards
- Hosting of 9<sup>th</sup> annual Headwaters Stable Tour
- Finalize ongoing relationship with King Township

### **Fresh & Local:**

- Continue Taste of Maple and Taste of the Harvest programs
- Explore opportunities for Canada 150 “local food” programming

## **PRODUCT / COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Deliver tourism destination development training to near-market ready communities across the Headwaters region. Potential communities may include:

- Shelburne
- Erin
- Hillsburgh
- Grand Valley
- Bolton
- Southwest Caledon tourism operators

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

1. Continue to build on the highly successful 2015 brand launch & ensure all content, marketing & communications channels consistently position the Headwaters “real” value proposition
2. Building on the marketing plan recommendations, focus on the following priorities:
  - Build photo library & including tagging protocols
  - Build visual social media presence (Instagram and/or Pinterest)
  - Explore opportunities for increasing “how-to” and “real moments” videos through partnership
  - Build and implement a crowd-sourcing content development strategy
3. Produce and distribute 2016 edition of Headwaters Four-Season Visitors’ Guide



## **INDUSTRY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Develop & launch LWB development training program
- Identify up to 10 LWB partners to participate in development program – to enhance product development and build on synergies to promote businesses & destination.

## **INDUSTRY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Explore opportunities to provide online training modules for operators not participating in LWB development series
- Explore opportunities for a tourism-focused business retention & expansion program with a goal of identifying key businesses that have potential to expand through the addition of value-added tourism offerings.

## **ADVOCACY & PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

- Continue to work with regional sector, community and business groups to identify synergies, leverage collective impact, and expand programming as appropriate
- Seek out partnership opportunities with non-traditional tourism partners, as appropriate, to expand program reach

## INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

### LEADING WITH THE BEST PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

- Retain current participation rate in LWB program & increase program uptake by 10%
- Build and expand current business listings on Headwaters Tourism website by 5%
- Populate and expand [www.headwatersb2b.ca](http://www.headwatersb2b.ca) as a key resource for regional tourism information



## INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT - ONGOING

- Host a minimum of 3 education workshops throughout the year to support workforce development and tourism training for regional operators
- Continue to expand Leading With the Best program to engage more operators and support business capacity development
- Identify and work with tourism operators that have potential to become “signature experience” status operators and assist with moving them along the continuum to achieve this status
- Recognize tourism industry excellence at annual Taste of Tourism awards

# MUNICIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to work with partner municipalities to integrate tourism development into larger economic development strategies
- Work with economic development committees and staff, as well as sector and business organizations in the Headwaters region to further support business development and capacity building within the Headwaters framework
- Provide regular updates to all Headwaters municipalities through monthly tourism updates (including ED report and Board minutes)
- Annual delegations to all partner municipalities to provide update and seek input on tourism undertakings

## TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT

Headwaters is a self-defined region that crosses regional boundaries. As such, gathering tourism impact statistics is challenging.

- In 2016/17 Headwaters Tourism will work at developing a rural tourism economic impact tool utilizing a “basket of goods” concept to establish a baseline standard.
- Will work with other rural jurisdictions in the province to see if standardized criteria is possible.

# TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

## Regional signage program

- Working with municipal partners, create an inventory of existing gateway and wayfinding signage programs
- Identify gaps and market needs
- If significant interest exists, determine whether there is an opportunity to develop a regional Headwaters signage program to support tourism development across the region



## **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LIAISON**

- Act as an information hub to support tourism development and serve as a liaison to the larger tourism industry (Ontario Tourism, OTMPC, TIAO, OCTA etc) as well as other government agencies and funding sources, as appropriate

# ONGOING ACTIVITIES

## Long-Term Funding & Sustainability

- Continue to co-locate office and share resources, where appropriate, with Dufferin Board of Trade to take advantage of cost and resource synergies
- Leverage core organizational revenue to access funding & grant opportunities, where feasible
- Produce annual report outlining value proposition of partner investment in tourism development (as contracted to Headwaters Tourism)
- Research models and framework for 2016-2020 municipal services agreement

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of March 2016

## MUNICIPAL REPS

**Laura Ryan**  
(Dufferin County)

**Rob Mezzapelli**  
(Town of Caledon)

**John Brennan**  
(Town Erin)

**Sharon Martin**  
(Town of Mono)

**John Telfer**  
(Town of Shelburne)

## INDUSTRY REPS

**Ross Millar**  
(RMG Productions)  
**Horse Country**

**Bill Lidster**  
(Credit Valley Conserv.)  
**Nature & leisure**

**Alison Scheel**  
(OrangevilleBIA)  
**Festivals/Events**

**Adriana Roche**  
(Gourmandissimo)  
**Food/culinary**

## INDUSTRY AT LARGE

**Maria Britto**  
(Maria Britto Real Estate)

**Elaine Capes**  
(Little Creek Ranch)

**Stacey Coupland**  
(Best Western Orangeville)

**Lisa Johnson**  
(BDO)

**Nanci Malek**  
(Dufferin County Museum)

**Ron Munro**  
(Munro's Country Gardens)

**Sigrid Wolm**  
(From the Kitchen to the Table)

## EX-OFFICIO

**Michele Harris**  
(HHTA ED)

**Sandra Dolson**  
(Town of Caledon)

**Robyn Mulder**  
(Town of Erin)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

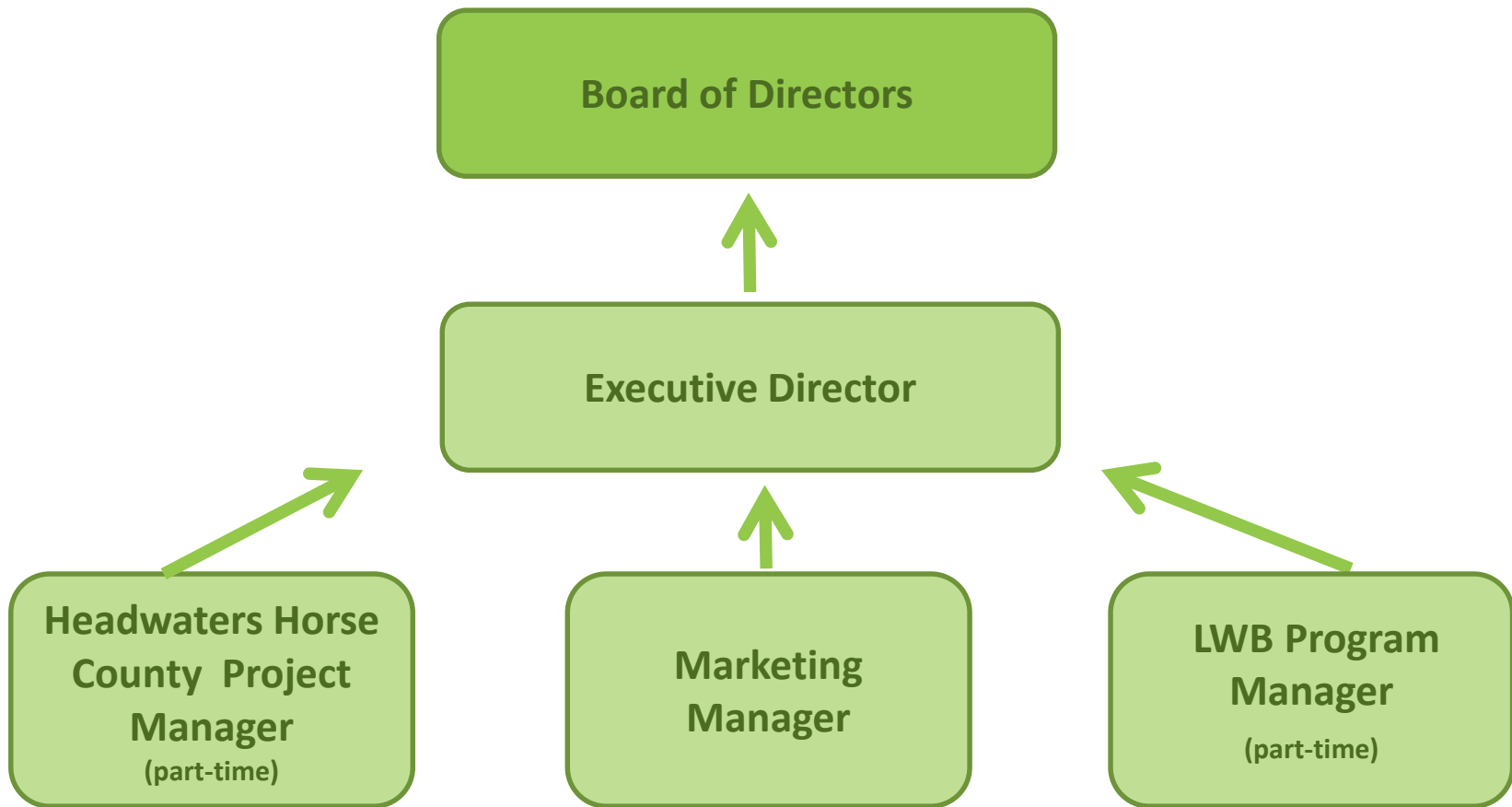
**Stacey Coupland**  
(Chair)

**Elaine Capes**  
(Vice-Chair)

**Lisa Johnson**  
(Secretary/ Treasurer)

**Michele Harris**  
(Executive Director)

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



## QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/FEEDBACK

**Michele Harris | Executive Director**  
**519-942-0314, ext 201**  
[michele@headwaters.ca](mailto:michele@headwaters.ca)

**Stacey Coupland | Chair, Board of Directors**  
[chair@headwaters.ca](mailto:chair@headwaters.ca)