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Peterborough Agricultural Society Strategic Planning 2016

Project Lead: Bronwynne Wilton
Phone: 519-822-7272 ext. 105
bronwynne.wilton@synthesis-network.com

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Introduction:

Our Understanding

The Peterborough Agricultural Society (Ag Society) has undertaken the process to develop a strategic plan. This process is being supported by the City of Peterborough (the City), in order to help the Society advance into the future, establish the parameters for a working relationship with the City of Peterborough, and establish a financially viable strategic plan that will include, but not be limited to, a plan for the Peterborough Exhibition.

The Peterborough Agricultural Society has been operating the Peterborough Exhibition for 170 years. In 1938, Harold Morrow transferred in trust 30 acres on Lansdowne Street to the Peterborough Agricultural Society, and this has been the site of the Peterborough Exhibition. In 1983, the land was deeded to the City of Peterborough from the Morrow Trust, under the terms of the Morrow Park Transfer Agreement. The terms of the Transfer Agreement included provisions for the use of land and buildings for the Peterborough Agricultural Exhibition.

In 2015, an interim agreement was reached between the Ag Society and the City. The terms of the agreement stipulate that motorized events will not be permitted after the 2016 season. The completion of this strategic plan is key deliverable of this agreement as the intent of this process. The intent is that this plan will be used as the foundation for developing a new agreement between the Ag Society and the City to replace the Morrow Park Transfer Agreement.

The stated goals of the strategy planning exercise are to:

1. Develop an economically viable strategic plan for the Society, including its role in Peterborough, its relationship with the City of Peterborough, and its future operations, including the operations of the Peterborough Exhibition.
2. Undertake a consultative strategic planning process, with input from a wide variety of stakeholders, including the City, community members, agricultural organizations, users of Morrow Park, and other stakeholders.
3. Undertake a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis for the Society and its annual exhibition.
4. Develop a shared and economically feasible vision for the Society, including short-term action items that will support long term goals and objectives.



Our Approach

As shown in the visual above, our approach to this process included an environmental scan, the development of strategic options, and public consultation. As part of the environmental scan, several interviews were conducted with Ag Society board members, staff and volunteers involved with other ag societies, community volunteers, staff and politicians at both the City of Peterborough and the County of Peterborough as well as with Minister Jeff Leal, MPP for Peterborough. For a summary of the key themes emerging from the interviews, please see Appendix A.

Based on the findings from the interviews, a draft SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was developed (see below) and presented to the Board of Directors of the Ag Society during a facilitated planning session on January 25th, 2016. The board members were then asked to brainstorm the pros and cons of four strategic options moving forward for the Exhibition.

Two focus groups were planned for February 17th, 2016, however, attendance at the second session was limited due to a number of conflicting events. The first focus group, which included the other tenants of Morrow Park, was well attended and resulted in meaningful input to the process.

An online survey was also developed and distributed via media (traditional and social media) and via direct mail to the neighbours of Morrow Park. The survey was open from January 26th-February 20th, 2016. A public meeting is scheduled for March 22nd and the final version of this report will be updated to reflect any new information that emerges from that event.

Key Findings

Stakeholder Interview Findings

An environmental scan is an important part of any strategic planning process. For the initial stage of the scan, Synthesis interviewed over 30 people representing a wide cross-section of Ag Society stakeholders including: board members, city staff, county staff, local municipal and provincial politicians, and other users of Morrow Park. In addition, representatives neighbouring agricultural societies were also contacted including Norwood, Lindsay, Campbellford-Seymour and Brooklin.

From these conversations, several themes emerged (for a more detailed summary of the interviews, see Appendix A):

1. Agricultural awareness and education is the core mission of the Ag Society and the core expectation of the community.
2. The Peterborough Ex brand has not lived up to expectations in recent years, but the 2015 Ex showed signs of improvement. This presents an opportunity for the rebuilding the agricultural and education component of the Ex.
3. The Ex has relied on the midway and motor sports to draw a crowd (and revenue), but neither of these aspects deliver on the agricultural awareness mandate nor are they sustainable in the long term.
 - a. Motorized vehicle events will stop after 2016 and thus can no longer be relied on as a revenue source.
 - b. The midway component is not well regarded and faces challenges due to decreased attendance and increase competition/expectations from the public.
4. The Ag Society can benefit from rebuilding relationships with the community; there are many willing partners but the Ag Society has tended to act somewhat in isolation in the past.
5. The Ag Society needs to move from focusing on the *letter* of the Morrow Trust Agreement and develop a relationship with the city based on the *spirit* of the agreement.
6. None of the stakeholders (tenants) of Morrow Park that were interviewed seem enthusiastic about the contents of the previous (2011) Morrow Park Master Plan; this presents an opportunity for the Ag Society to work with the City and other stakeholders to propose an alternative plan for Morrow Park.



7. The city appears to be prepared to invest in improving Morrow Park if users of the park can agree on future direction.

Online Survey Results

Synthesis distributed surveys through email, direct mail and social media. Links to the survey were included on both the Ag Society's and the City's websites. Additionally, City staff distributed hard copies of letters inviting residents within the Morrow Park neighbourhood to complete the survey. The survey offered participants the opportunity to provide both short and long answer responses. A full report with all of the responses can be found in Appendix B. In total, there were 178 responses and of these responses, 49% were residents of the City of Peterborough and 18% identified themselves as neighbours of Morrow Park.

One of the strongest findings from the survey was the interest in local food and learning more about the food system. This presents an excellent opportunity for the Ag Society to tap into this interest (81% of respondents think this is important to extremely important). To strengthen this point, 81% of respondents also said they would be more likely to attend the Ex if there were more opportunities to learn about local food.

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, Opportunities)

Based on the findings of the environmental scan, Synthesis developed a draft SWOT to share with the Ag Society Board of Directors (see below). The SWOT was used to develop four strategic options to explore with the Board:

1. Maintain the status quo
2. Change the date
3. Change the location
4. Change the format

This session resulted in a positive and enthusiastic discussion about the possibilities associated with refreshing the Ex with a new format that would be focused on agricultural awareness and education while also providing an enjoyable event for patrons. A brief summary of this facilitated discussion with the board is included in Appendix C.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ag Society Board and volunteers have strong common interest in agriculture and food awareness / education - Long heritage/history of the Ag Society & Peterborough Exhibition (The 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No more motorized events permitted at the Ex. after 2016 (will reduce attendance, difficult to replace) - Past conflict with the City (regarding use and facilities at Morrow Park) - Poor reputation for the Ex. with some

<p>Ex.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Morrow Park is a central location in a growing city (good access for the public) - Morrow Park location nearby public transit (easy access for the public) - Livestock shows have been successful - Marketing in 2015 viewed as successful - Renewed interest / momentum in the past year (Renewal of Board, Bull at City Hall, SkyHawks) - - 	<p>past attendees (too dark, too spread out, safety questions, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ag Society financial position is not strong (need City funding support to break even) - Volunteer burn-out; lack of consistent involvement from full Board of Directors - Several fairs nearby (compete for attendees, vendors, attractions) - Music concerts not likely an option (already many summer concerts nearby) - Mid-August dates can be a challenge (kids not in school, people on vacation)
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Move Ex. location to somewhere on outskirts of City (more room and flexibility; but high cost to set up and run) - Engage with City in a plan to revitalize Morrow Park with improved multi-use facilities - Partner or merge with other nearby fairs - Hold several smaller ag/food educational events throughout the year (rather than just one big event/year) - Partnering with others, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmers Market - Pioneer Village - Trent University - Local Food groups - Business Improvement Assoc. - Local charities - More engagement with schools (to increase family involvement) - Move The Ex. dates (earlier in spring, or to late August/early September) - Local food movement (consumers are interested in where food comes from) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The loss of motorsports in 2017 will leave The Ex financially unsustainable unless a new approach/strategy is implemented. - Loss of livestock “points” shows could reduce participation which would further the perception that The Ex is in decline - Nearby fairs could change their dates (reducing or adding to overlap) - City fatigue with conflict (transformation will be difficult without City and City staff support) -

Focus Group Results

A focus group meeting was held with other users of Morrow Park including representatives from the Farmers Market, Kawartha Gymnastics club, Peterborough Pete’s and the Peterborough Slo Pitch Association.



The Farmers Market appears to be a very successful operation that attracts a significant number of visitors on a weekly basis. The Farmers Market customers do experience some inconvenience / disruption with attending the farmers market when the Ex is operating (main gate not open, parking, etc). These issues can likely be minimized in the future with improved signage, improved layout of the Ex grounds, etc. Given the local food focus of the farmers market, the large number of customers that attend weekly, and the agricultural mandate of PAS, it seems that there is an opportunity for a strong partnership to emerge that can combine the best of both organizations. Ideas to link the market customer base with the Ex. Agricultural education and local food activities should be further explored by both organizations.

The gymnastics club presented a proposal to create a new public-private partnership in conjunction with the City for revitalizing Morrow Park. This proposal includes a partnership between their club, the City, and the Ag Society to finance a new building that could be a slab on grade construction with full accessibility built in for entry, public spaces, washrooms, and change rooms. The gymnastics club would continue to vacate the building during the Exhibition in a spirit of shared tenancy.

The softball association is a regular user of the park throughout the summer. The association is open to collaborating with other users of the Park. Their main concern if changes were to be made to the park is that they continue to have access to ball diamonds in the City to accommodate their needs and schedule. The Peterborough Pete's organization are interested in having a new arena for the hockey club in the future and several studies and discussions are ongoing. The future plans have not been determined, nor has a timing for any decision regarding a new arena.

Analysis

Primary Options Considered

Four major change dimensions that were considered:

1. Change the location
2. Change the date
3. Change the format
4. Maintain the status quo

Option 1: New Location

A number of the challenges with holding the Ex at Morrow Park relate to physical aspects of the park. During the Ex, the residential neighbours complain of congested streets and illegally parked cars, the noise generated by various events including the motorsports, and dust and garbage blowing from the park.

A number of options were considered, including moving to existing city land, Trent University, Kawartha Downs and a joint site with the Lakefield Fair north of the city. There has been a pattern of agricultural fairs in Ontario moving their fairgrounds once they are surrounded by an urban/residential area. Barrie, Brampton, and Lindsay are the most recent examples of fairs that have relocated. However, in each of these examples, the agricultural society owned the fairgrounds and were able to use the proceeds from their sale to fund the purchase and development of a new site. That is not the case with the Ag Society and Morrow Park. The Ag Society has access rights through the Morrow Trust Agreement but ultimately it is the City that owns the property. The primary challenge with creating a new fairgrounds is that the level of investment required to host the fair is difficult, if not impossible, to carry with only the proceeds of the fair.

As an example, the Lindsay Exhibition created a modern, high profile site less than a decade ago. In addition to reinvesting the proceeds from the sale of the old fairgrounds, they required a \$2 million mortgage to complete the facilities. To carry this level of debt requires the facility to be rented out most of the year to successfully cash flow their operations. A number of the events that are now hosted at the Lindsay Exhibition were previously held at Morrow Park; including the East Central Farm Show and the Ontario Snowcross Championships.

The only relocation option that could potentially be financially viable is co-location with either an existing suitable site or a new site being built for other purposes. The potential casino project,



the ongoing build out of infrastructure at Trent University and the Kawartha Downs are all potential options.

Ultimately, a relocation would not solve the core problems facing the Ex and would be a distraction from addressing them. Therefore, relocation is not recommended at this time unless an ideal partner and location present themselves.

Option 2: Change the Date

The date of the Ex has been problematic and has changed more than once in the past decade. The Ex occurs during a prime season for other events in Peterborough and occurs the same weekend as another fair in the general area. Thus it faces competition for both patrons, vendors, suppliers and entries. Two options were considered for changing the date: September and June. These options were selected for consideration because they could potentially tie in with schools to facilitate achieving its agricultural education mandate.

September was the first option examined. September has many advantages:

- The Ex would benefit from having harvested crops available for competition;
- The Ex would be able to work with schools to provide agricultural education to students;
- 4-H Clubs could still use the Ex as their achievement show;
- The Ex could still be the county championship show for the Holstein Club; and
- The Ex would still be able to host beef cattle shows.

However, September has a major drawback – every single weekend is already taken by another local fair. Peterborough would put itself in direct competition with existing fairs being held on their traditional dates. The primary impact would likely be decreased attendance and entries to the livestock shows. It is also likely that Peterborough would lose its status as a “points” show for both the Hereford and Charolais breeds as it would conflict with other well established “points” shows.

June was considered for two reasons. First, students are in school and the Ag Society could improve on its agricultural education mandate. Second, there are significantly fewer competing events scheduled during June. However, June has several drawbacks:

- It is too early in the season to have livestock shows – calves are too young to show and 4-H members haven’t had sufficient time to work with their animals to get them into show condition;
- The Ex would likely lose the county dairy championship show;
- The Ex would likely lose the points shows for Herefords and Charolais; and

- The Ex would lose all the vegetable and crop classes since very few would be ready for harvest.

Essentially, a switch to a June date would eliminate many of the aspects of the Ex that make it an agricultural fair. The two spring fairs in the area rely heavily on the demolition derby and truck/tractor pulls to draw attendance. Given that the Ex has agreed to eliminate motorsports starting in 2017, it is unlikely that the Ex would be a viable event in June.

However, the creation of a second event, in addition to the Ex, focused on providing agricultural education to students in the local system in the spring is something that the Ag Society should consider in the future.

Option 3: Change the Format

The current format of the Ex is not drawing the crowds that it once did nor is it drawing the crowds that comparable multi-day fairs in the area are. The Ex's attendance is only 10% to 20% of the attendance at Norwood, Lindsay and Brooklin. Without changing the format, the Ex is not financially sustainable, even in the short term. Currently, daily attendance at the Farmers' Market during August and September is greater than the total attendance at the Ex over the full 4 days.

The primary format change required is increasing the agricultural content of the Ex. People expect there to be opportunities to interact with animals and learn about agriculture at an agricultural fair. The good news is this is consistent with the mission of the Ag Society and therefore by focusing on its core mission, the Ag Society will move the Ex experience towards the expectations of its patrons.

The Ex needs to create an "Ag Education" tent/area that has interactive and informative displays about the various aspects of agriculture. To do this effectively, the Ex will need to engage with local commodity associations to access volunteers and displays. Most commodity groups have high quality exhibits available for use by their county associations. The Brooklin Spring Fair creates an area called "Agri-land" for this purpose and they would be happy to share ideas and information.

The petting zoo should be retained. The direct interaction with animals is an expected component of a fair. However, feedback from the stakeholder interviews and from the survey indicated that events such as the pig races were not considered to be a positive example of an agricultural attraction. An alternative "performance" that is a combination of educational and entertaining is HorsePower Live by the Ross Millar Group. It has received positive reviews and, as of the writing of this report, they were available for the timing of the Ex.



The other format change that was considered in our analysis was the significant change or elimination of the midway. While a midway has been a standard component of fairs for a long time, the midway experience at the Ex is not viewed as a positive for many patrons. Several comments were made during the interviews and in the survey that the midway is a disappointing experience and is quite likely turning some families away from attending the Ex. The challenge with removing the midway is that net revenues from it provide about 30% of the budget for the Ex. However, if the midway is not attracting the Ex's target demographic (families with children), then the net impact may be acceptable.



One alternative that was voiced during the Board workshop was a “family fun zone” centred on inflatables. There is a wide range of inflatables appropriate for all age groups certified by TSSA available for rent from a number of companies.

The challenge with inflatables is the staffing that is needed – a minimum of one person per inflatable. To deliver an effective size event, the Ag Society will need to partner with other community organizations. One potential structure would be to share proceeds

with local charities in exchange for them providing staffing and helping market the Ex. They could be used to distribute advance ticket sales as well. An analysis of the financial implications of this option is included in Appendix D. One strategy to ensure its financial viability would be to have each structure sponsored by a business. This would make the fun zone a pure revenue maker and allow the price point to be substantially lower than the current midway.

Other ideas raised for changing the format included straw bale mazes, old-fashioned games and contests such as square dancing, pie-making, dog events (e.g. Superdogs), more interesting horse shows and demonstrations, farm equipment displays, examples of innovation in the ag sector, local chef contests, culinary demonstrations, and local music acts. In terms of music acts, some fairs are successfully using local amateur bands as their entertainment. The bands get an opportunity to perform and they also become part of the marketing team for the Ex by reaching out to their fan base as well.



One concern raised was the loss of the “iconic” ferris wheel



– a longstanding symbol of rural fairs – and its clear visibility. When people drive down Lansdowne Street and see the ferris wheel, they know the Ex is on. While it is believed that the inflatables would attract as much, or more, attention than a ferris wheel, if the Ex desires to continue the tradition of a ferris wheel, it can be still be rented.

Option 4: Maintain the Status Quo

Maintaining the status quo is usually an option to consider with any new business proposal, however, in the case of the Ex, not changing means the end of the Ex. Without substantial, fundamental change, the Ex is not sustainable after 2016 due to the change with motor sports and the decline in the financial position, brand image and attendance experienced in the recent past. The status quo is not an option for the Ex.

Strategic Plan Framework



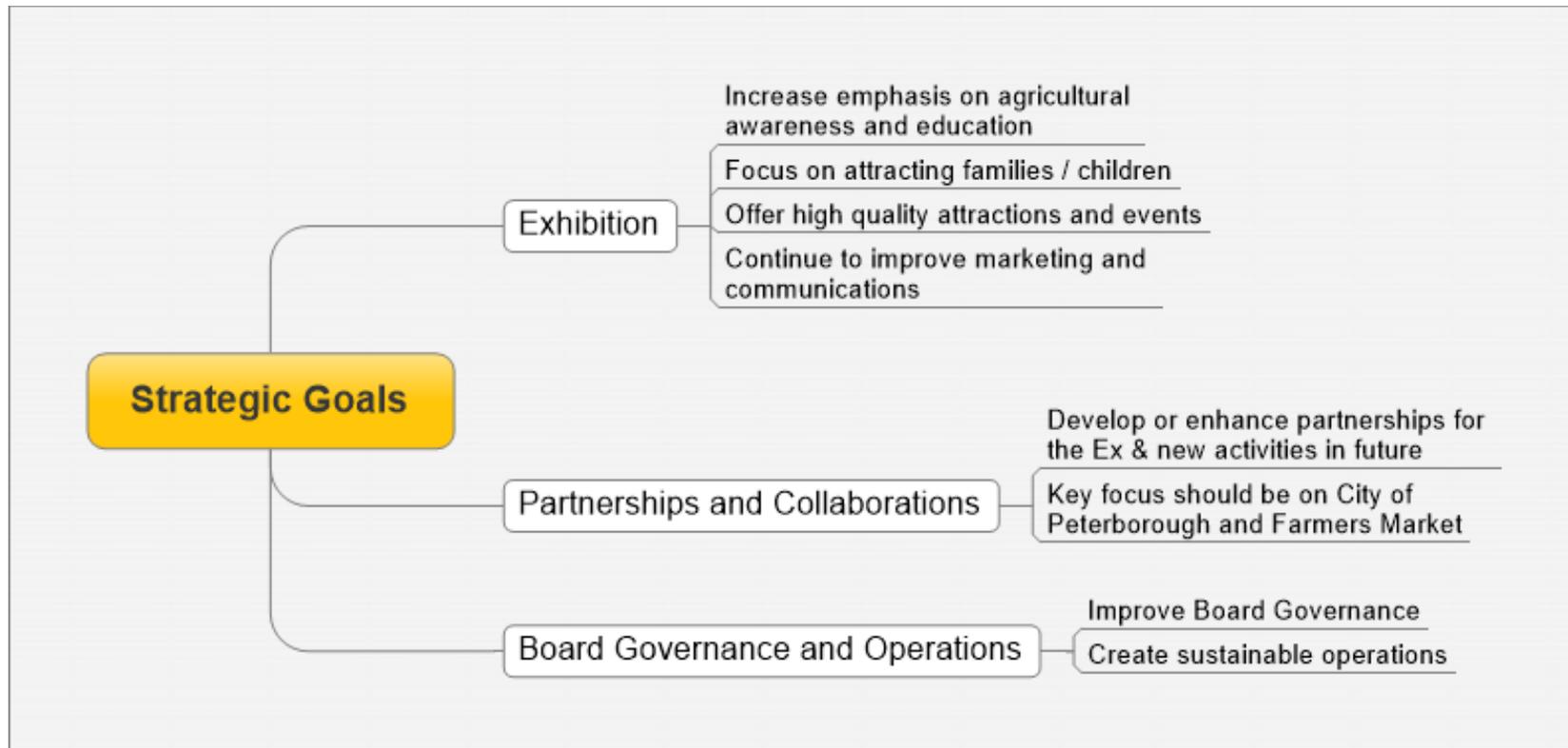


Figure 1: Strategic Goals for the Peterborough Agricultural Society





Strategic Goals	Immediate and Short Term - 2016	Medium and Long Term - 2017+
<p>Exhibition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase emphasis on agricultural awareness and education • Focus on attracting families / children • Offer high quality attractions and events <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve marketing and communications 	<p>Communications Plan – tell your story and start to re-position the Ex. to ag education focus</p> <p>Exhibition Improvement Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue / build on livestock shows - Increase agriculture content - Add local food content - Revitalize the Midway (with other attractions) - Improve grounds layout and signage - Focus on high quality attractions - Recruit volunteers to ensure park and side streets are kept clean - Determine parking management plans 	<p>Communications Plan – continue re-positioning the Ex. and PAS</p> <p>Exhibition Improvement Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue event improvements - Transition fully to event without motorized vehicle attractions - Utilize partnerships to drive attendance and community involvement
<p>Partnerships and Collaborations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop or enhance partnerships for the Ex & new activities in future • Key focus should be on City of Peterborough and Farmers Market • Develop new events (in addition to the Ex) 	<p>Strengthen Primary Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City of Peterborough - Farmers Market (involve in 2016 Ex.) - Tenants & neighbours of Morrow Park <p>Nurture Other Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools - Ag organizations - Local Businesses - Trent University / Fleming College - Provincial and Federal government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build collaborative relationship with the City - Work with the City and other tenants to develop an alternative park Master Plan - Develop new ag/food educational events through partnerships with other organizations, educational institutions and businesses



<p>Board Governance & Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Board Governance • Create sustainable operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial management and process focus (create transferable processes) - Volunteer recruiting and mgmt. to increase support / involvement - Clarify Terms of Reference / Bylaws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek funding for part time staff person - Update Board Terms of Reference, Bylaws & structure to reflect current needs - Board / Membership renewal planning process
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Focus Areas and Action Plan

Exhibition

Agricultural Education Content

Agriculture awareness and education as the core mandate of the Ag Society was the single most important issue identified throughout this process. However, this was also identified this as a weak point of the current Exhibition program. Visitors to the Ex expect to see farm animals and learn about farm related topics at an agricultural fair. It is imperative that Ex significantly increase and improve the agricultural education content of the Ex.

The content needs to be “kid-friendly” and interactive – not just boards and brochures. Each of the major commodity groups in Ontario has some form of interactive exhibit that local organizations can use at events such as the Ex.

Agricultural awareness and education should be conducted in the context of school age children. The date of the Ex makes it challenging to create a long-term relationship with area schools, teachers and students. A well-executed school program serves both the core mission of the Ag Society and as an effective marketing tool. For fairs that happen during the school year, the primary strategy is to host busloads of students from area schools at the fair on a weekday and provide an agricultural education program. This, combined with an active School Division segment to the competitions, provides a great incentive for the students to visit the fair on the weekend.

For 2016, the Ag Society can begin building its relationship with schools by promoting the School Division competitions to teachers along with grade and curriculum integrated material from Ontario Agri-Food Education Ltd (www.oafe.org). The marketing program will then need to remind students and parents of School Division entries in the lead up to the Ex. One method would be to work with local media to ensure coverage of the School Division happens early during the week of the Ex. One possibility for generating coverage is to publicly award the “Grand Champion School” trophy during the opening ceremonies.

In the future, the Ag Society should consider creating a second event focused on providing agricultural education to students. A single day event in mid-June would likely provide the best opportunity for success. To tie the event back to the Ex, a small marketing incentive could be given to each student (discounted or free week-day admission, ride tickets, free snow cone, etc).



Communication Plan

The Ex is competing for people's entertainment dollars in a crowded calendar. The Ex has a unique selling proposition but it has to be communicated to the public. There is no other event in Peterborough where people can come and interact with farm animals and learn about where their food comes from while enjoying themselves. The communications efforts for the Ex in 2015 can be viewed as a positive foundation to build upon. We recommend considering the following tactics and approaches for the 2016 marketing and communications plan:

- Identify target audiences – The core target audience for agricultural and food education is families with young children as well as food enthusiasts. Marketing efforts should be targeted toward those audiences with specific messaging that piques their interest and repositions the Ex in their eyes.
- Social Media – The social media efforts of 2015 are reportedly a success; platforms such as Facebook and Twitter and possibly Instagram should continue to be used to build awareness and understanding of the Ex.
- Co-promotion – Co-promotion with other organizations can be an effective method to promote the event. Possible organizations include schools, service clubs, sports teams, like-minded organizations, and local businesses. The farmers market appears to be a key potential partner because it attracts a large volume of food enthusiasts on a weekly basis. Tactics could include discounts on admission, sponsorship of specific activities at the Ex, joint involvement and demonstrations (e.g. gymnastics demonstration by local group, dance events by local dance studios, local music store to sponsor open stage, sports teams to show sporting demonstrations).
- School involvement – Even though the Ex is not held while school is in session, it may be possible to involve schools in some way through projects, contests, or activities that start in June and are completed or shown during the Ex in August. Topics could include environmental, food/nutrition or science related to farming.
- Public Relations – PAS has been very successful at using public relations in the past (e.g. Bull at city hall, Sky Hawks parachute jump). Again these tactics are very effective and should continue to be a main focus for the Ex.

Exhibition Improvement Plan

Bringing in high profile entertainment acts during any fair rarely has a guaranteed return on investment. Entertainment dollars need to be strategically used to enhance the overall brand experience for fairgoers and for the neighbouring community.

The plan above mentions several options and ideas for enhanced attractions at the Ex, however one of the key decisions that needs to be made this year is whether to continue with the



motorsports or discontinue these events one year earlier than the current interim agreement with the City. The table below outlines some assumptions and pros and cons related to continuing with one more year of motorsports vs. transitioning to a new rebranded format without the motorsports in 2016.

	Scenario A	Scenario B
Primary Consideration	Keep motorsports 2016	No motorsports 2016
Assumption	Attendance is assumed to be similar to 2015	Attendance is assumed to drop significantly from 2015 level
Assumption	Keep midway and enhance with family-friendly attractions	Keep midway and enhance with family-friendly attractions
Assumption	City grant or funding continues at \$50k level (similar to 2015)	City grant or funding continues at \$50k level (similar to 2015)
Financial Forecast	Positive up to \$26,800	Loss in 2016 of up to \$28,200
Pros	Maintain gate receipts from spectators Breakeven or positive financially	Takes advantage of positive momentum from this process; demonstrates true commitment to change; promotes positive relationships with neighbours; allows board to focus on finding new events
Cons	Risk of negative publicity, frustration from neighbours, frustration from City, just delays are inevitable	Possible lower attendance

Note: additional financial projection details are available in Appendix D

Partnerships and Collaboration

Community Relationships

A recurring comment throughout the stakeholder outreach indicated that in the past, the Ag Society has not had the most positive relationships with many community stakeholders including the city. However, each of those stakeholders also firmly believes that the Ex is an important part of the fabric of Peterborough. This is important as collaborations and partnerships are going to be key to rebuilding the Ex.

Key Community Relationships:

- The City – they are willing to work with the Ag Society (and have been) but they need better communication from the Ag Society and participation in the process to redevelop Morrow Park
- The Farmers’ Market – they are a fellow agriculturally-based tenant at Morrow Park and could be a strong ally. The farmers’ market currently out-draws the entire Ex with a single market in August. Currently, FM vendors lose business the weekend of the Ex because of the logistics for customers to get to the FM



- Other agricultural organizations – getting the support and participation of local agricultural organizations will be key to building the agricultural education component of the Ex
- The other tenants of Morrow Park – they are supportive of the Ex but it impacts their use of the park. In the short term, better communication could alleviate some ongoing friction points, and in the long term, the development of a shared vision for the redevelopment of Morrow Park is a possibility
- Neighbours in the surrounding residential area – noise and parking are their primary issues. The parking issue is not unique to the Ex. Any major event at the Memorial Centre creates similar issues to varying degrees. A comprehensive solution needs to be found for the site
- Peterborough Musicfest – they are one of the largest competitors for entertainment dollars during the Ex. Improved communication and co-ordination with the Musicfest may identify some common interests. Morrow Park is a larger venue than Del Crary Park and Musicfest is considering experimenting with paid admission. The Ex may wish to approach Musicfest to create a partnership whereby one or both concerts the week of the Ex are hosted at Morrow Park which already has the infrastructure to limit access to paying customers.

Morrow Park Redevelopment

In 2012, City council had approved several million dollars for the redevelopment of Morrow Park. We believe there is a strong possibility that council would reconsider funding the redevelopment of Morrow Park if there was clear agreement between the Ag Society and city staff on what that redevelopment should look like. The current Morrow Park Master Plan does not have the support of the other tenants of Morrow Park, all of whom would like upgrades to their facilities. The Ag Society should work with the other tenants to propose a workable alternative to the Master Plan.

Summary

For the short term, the Peterborough Agricultural Society should focus on revitalizing the format of the Exhibition to clearly emphasize the value and importance of agricultural education and awareness within the City of Peterborough and the surrounding rural areas. Relationships and collaborations with the City of Peterborough, with the other tenants of Morrow Park, with other agricultural organizations, with schools and with the community at large will be integral to the long term success of both the Agricultural Society and the annual Exhibition. It is expected that the Ag Society will start to develop creative ideas for partnerships with other community stakeholders such as Trent University and local businesses. Having a clear and transparent agreement for the continued use of Morrow Park with the City of Peterborough is a key element for the future success of this volunteer organization. The Ag Society plays a unique role in the community through the delivery of agricultural education and awareness events and it is



expected that moving forward with a clear agreement will allow the Society to fulfill this role more effectively in the future.

