

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This chapter presents an implementation strategy for the Miramichi Riverfront Eco-museum concept. The action plan does not follow any known standard model. It is based solely on lessons learned from other jurisdictions and on speculation of what will work best for the City of Miramichi.

8.1 ACTION PLAN

The first question you need to answer is: how do you sell an eco-museum concept as an effective riverfront planning vehicle? The ambiguity of the term Eco-museum will take a number of years to overcome and even then probably not fully. This unknown factor is not necessarily negative as it will create curiosity about the concept. The term “eco” comes from the Greek for home, it is also the root of *ec*onomy and *ec*ology - the two goals of an Eco-museum concept. In describing the concept it may help to use such terms as “heritage district” or “a museum without walls”.

An Eco-museum is not a gimmick, it’s about working with existing local history and the local environment. It is a unique conservation strategy that embodies local human history and the economy in a sustainable manner forming a sound basis for riverfront planning.

The concept binds the special cultural and natural attributes of the Miramichi into a multi-faceted, yet focused effort creating a strong identity and sense of place. Physically, the Miramichi already has a strong sense of geographic location, but lacks an identifiable image. For this concept to work it must be grass roots oriented. The people of the Miramichi must take hold of the concept as their own - it will not work if it is imposed on them. It will take a number of years to get people involved and to gain the trust of the various associations and businesses. All aspects of the concept are learning based which will foster a deep appreciation for the community. To this end, branding of the image must occur at every level to constantly reinforce the message.

A strong logo will be needed from the outset to establish a recognizable presence of the Eco-museum. Newspaper articles, displays, workshops, demonstrations are but a few of the ways to get the message out to the local community.

Table 8.1 outlines an action plan for implementaing the Miramichi River Eco-museum recommendations. Detailed construction cost estimates are outlined in Section 8.4 and **Table 8.3**.

8.2 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

A project of this complexity will require a dedicated director to champion the concept. Bridges of communication will have to be built between all associations, events, industry and open spaces associated with the riverfront. This natural network of community volunteers and stakeholders must be tapped to generate a “ground up” approach in which the local residents maintain control. A “top down” government run structure would suffer from apathy and not garner the public support so critical to the concept. The director of this “rainbow coalition” of community assets brings the people together to foster partnerships and cooperation. The local associations would retain their autonomy to do their own fund raising and programming. The Eco-museum simply acts as an umbrella structure to the existing situation.

The ambitious task of drumming up support, forming partnerships, obtaining funds and marketing will require a full time effort from an employed director. This position could be funded by the municipal government or shared with an existing association. It may be possible to restructure the tourism and development portfolio to focus on the Eco-museum concept without significantly changing the

responsibilities of the office. Whatever the financial support is, the real keys will be consistency and

Table 8.1 ACTION PLAN	BUDGET
C Present the proposed Strategic Plan to the City of Miramichi and ask Council to adopt the plan as an official direction for the municipality.	N/A
C Form Miramichi River Eco-museum Society as a non profit corporation to champion the project and support organization as a Committee of Council.	\$ 10,000
C Hire or delegate Eco-museum Director position.	N/A
C Achieve support from local associations, groups, agencies and government departments and raise awareness of the scheme through presentations and dispersal of the plan.	\$ 1,000
C Establish guidelines and policies for Eco-museum land use and have MPDC incorporate policy review as part of the approval process.	\$ 500
C Incorporate policies in the Municipal Plan and provisions in the Zoning By-law which will ensure the planning criteria and guidelines are incorporated in the implementation process.	N/A
C Apply to various funding programs for implementation, programming and operation funds.	\$ 500
C Create logo, name and brand for Eco-museum.	\$ 2,500
C Create web page and start to link in existing Miramichi pages (history, parks, community events, etc.).	\$1,000
C Invite a speaker from an existing Eco-museum and conduct workshop on forming an Eco-museum.	\$ 2,000
C Visit an existing Eco-museum as a technical mission to get first hand experience and to benefit from lessons learned by existing operations.	\$ 5,000
C Prepare design and construction documents for theme elements - kiosk, interpretive sign, marker and other site furnishings.	\$ 5,000
C Conduct research on physical, biological and cultural elements of the Eco-museum.	\$ 2,000
C Undertake economic impact study.	\$ 20,000
C Prepare graphic standards. Retain graphic artist.	\$ 10,000
C Construct kiosks at two Gateway Centres (Ritchie Wharf & Station Wharf).	\$ 60,000
C Design & erect directional signage.	\$ 25,000
C Conduct an Eco-museum Tourism Product study to determine what the opportunities are.	\$ 40,000
C Conduct preliminary geotechnical investigation of riverbanks suffering from extensive erosion to determine stability and corrective measures required.	\$ 10,000
C Develop guide (paid for by advertisements) for the Eco-museum features and linkages.	\$ 1,000
C Conduct membership drive of individuals, corporations, agencies and industry.	\$ 250
C Form a committee to communicate with Parks Canada staff in developing Beaubear's Island National Historic Site Management Plan.	\$ 250
C Form Eco-museum Marketing Committee to development tourism planning and marketing, set standards for inclusion.	\$ 1,497
C Form Eco-museum Industry Committee to coordinate initiatives such as tours, research, marketing and site enhancements.	N/A
C Produce marketing materials.	\$ 25,000
C Review status of private boat tour operation and provide interpretation assistance and marketing coordination.	\$ 1,500
C Fabricate markers for site signage and install at secondary sites..	\$ 40,000
C Linkages (trail connections, signage, etc.)	\$ 250,000

Table 8.1 ACTION PLAN		BUDGET
C	Undertake French Fort Cove Master Plan Update Study.	\$ 10,000
C	French Fort Cove	
	Short Term - Selective clearing for views to river, improve signage, construct kiosk, improve parking lot entrances, develop amphitheatre, continue trail development	\$ 215,625
	Mid. Term - Upgrade buildings, construct nature centre	\$ 268,750
	Long Term - potential projects - golf course, curling club, restore Grist Mill as micro hydro electric turbine generator	N/A
C	Beaubear's Island	
	Short Term - Participate in Parks Canada Management Plan process	N/A
	Mid. Term - Kiosk, landscaping	\$ 40,625
C	Ritchie Wharf	
	Short Term - Playground enhancements, winterize buildings, connections to Newcastle Square	\$150,000
	Mid. Term - Shipbuilding centre	\$3,509,750
	Long Term - Acquire property at end of site, construct trail along river to French Fort Cove	N/A
C	Middle Island	
	Short Term - Acquire property south of Water Street, study environmental impact of causeway removal, trails	\$ 243,750
	Mid. Term - Landscaping, kiosk, boardwalks, signage, furnishings, causeway removal, wharf	\$ 381,520
	Long Term - Possible pub/all season building	
C	Waterford Green / Station Wharf	
	Short Term - Rip-rap, wharf face, infill, general sitework, pathways, signage, railings, furnishings	\$ 496,000
	Mid. Term - Landscaping, lighting, Ferry Wharf upgrades, Marina Park	\$ 598,308
C	Historic Water Street District	
	Short Term - Renovate Old Post Office, Water Street streetscape improvements	\$ 975,000
	Mid. Term - Lane improvements, interpretive, finish streetscape improvements	\$ 437,500
	Long Term - Additional property acquisitions	
C	Lowertown & Douglastown Marina	
	Short Term - Ferry Landing improvements, trails	\$ 42,950
	Mid. Term - Interpretive, lighting, furnishing, marina upgrading, landscaping	\$ 189,125
C	St. Andrew's Point	
	Short Term - Road & parking, infrastructure (services), picnic shelters & site furnishings, trees, wharf improvements	\$ 491,035
	Mid. Term - Playground, kitchen shelter, trails, jetty, interpretation building, lookout deck	\$ 479,272
C	Oldtimer's Property	
	Short Term - Gravel parking, trail link, amphitheatre, picnic area, services	\$ 84,938
	Mid. Term - Landscaping, signage, washroom	\$ 86,875
C	Strawberry Marsh & Lagoon	
	Short Term - Trail extension, parking, directional signage, ramp & stairway	\$ 27,750
	Mid. Term - Lookout, signage, furnishings, landscaping	\$ 95,613

C Canadian Point Short Term - Lagoon remediation, parking, trails, interpretive signage Mid. Term - Interpretive building, picnic area, bird blind, observation decks	\$ 250,125 \$ 204,500
Table 8.1 ACTION PLAN	BUDGET
C Bi-Centennial Park & Governor's Boathouse Short Term - Participate in Parks Canada Management Plan. Obtain property if required. Mid. Term - Sitework, boardwalk, parking, ramp improvements, interpretation panel. Long Term - Boathouse/building renovations or new building, exhibits & landscaping.	N/A \$ 175,156 \$ 428,750
C Vye's Beach Short Term - Engineering study, bank stabilization Mid. Term - Asphalt parking, guiderail, stairway, lookout, landscaping	\$ 97,500 \$ 72,413
C Seamen's Hospital Short Term - Re-establish parking area, site furnishings, directional signage Mid. Term - Interpretive signage, gazebo, landscaping Long Term - Purchase neighbouring property (cost not available), install parking	\$ 14,610 \$ 32,500
C Morrison Cove Short Term - Partner with Eagle Forest Products on trails, fence upgrading, bridge repairs, install terrace Mid. Term - Building facade improvements, lighting, landscaping, signage	\$ 53,938 \$ 47,750
C Industrial Lands Short Term - Initiate discussions & coordinate site locations. Mid. Term - Install kiosks & landscape enhancements.	N/A \$ 284,375
C NB Power Property Long Term - Seek out developer	N/A
TOTAL	\$ 11,000,000

dedication to the principles of the concept. This position will suffer from turn-around if not fully supported and financed. **Table 8.2** demonstrates a potential administrative structure for the Eco-museum.

While this is a challenging position, the role should not be one of dominance, but rather one of facilitator. The organizational structure should primarily be formed of volunteers under a charitable non-profit corporation. This format leaves ownership with the local associations and residents and provides a convenient financial structure for fund raising. As a distinct and separate organization there are also tax advantages as a charitable organization.

The organization should be divided into two streams, one based on the product and one on the benefits.

ECO-MUSEUM SOCIETY

Establishing a dedicated group of individuals with interests in local history and nature should be the first task of the director. Ideally the society should be composed from a broad range of backgrounds including nature enthusiasts, school teachers, and local historians. This body will conduct research, initiate education, secure funding for research grants and tackle product development. Once the vision is in place and the conservation ethics documented in the form of bylaws, a second committee on tourism (marketing committee) should be formed.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

As the Eco-museum gains support and recognition, the business sector will look to it for opportunities to enhance local business opportunities. At this time a marketing plan should be put into place to develop a guide book (paid for by advertisements), promote bus tours and tie into the Acadian Village and other neighbouring tourism assets.

The Eco-museum society could sell memberships for a nominal fee to individuals and businesses. Meetings would be conducted each month from a central location in the winter and a roving setup for summer meetings to foster a stronger product familiarity among the members. Once the concept really takes off the theme could be expanded inland to include the communities of Blackville, Doaktown and Boisetown.

INDUSTRIAL PARTNERS

Gaining support from the industrial users of the riverfront at the early stages is critical to establishing legitimacy. Once one or two of the primary companies are on board, a snowball effect should help gain the others. Industrial users and especially those with a long heritage on the riverfront must be convinced that their role is critical to the Eco-museum concept as active participants. This is an opportunity for them to show off their skills, technology and special place in the Miramichi community. For this to work each company must be approached individually to determine what level of public interaction is appropriate, i.e. location of interpretive kiosk, tours, trails, etc. It is rare that a corporation is asked by a community to consider interpretive displays about itself, usually corporations are asked for assistance in projects which have little to do with the industrial product. This approach to the industrial users of the riverfront should go a long way in mitigating the often negative view of resource based industries.

Communicating the message of the Eco-museum could also take the form of public open houses, local cable television and radio interviews and traveling road shows to the individual stakeholders. Consideration should also be given to bringing in a speaker from an existing Eco-museum such as Kalyna in Alberta and/or visiting one and recording it on video.

Fig. 8.2

Figure Not Available at Present

8.3 FURTHER STUDY

The Eco-museum concept is actually all about further study. It is the pursuit of recording and demonstrating one's connection to the community: the following list outlines studies to assist in implementation and programming of the Eco-museum.

- h Economic Impact Study to determine potential employment and financial impacts to the community.
- h Creation of a logo or use of an existing logo.
- h Geotechnical investigations into toe of slope stability from areas identified as highly susceptible to erosion.
- h Genealogical research on emigrants.
- h Historic profiles of old industrial and wharf site along the river.
- h Eco-museum product opportunity study to identify all potential sites, stories, events and tours for the scheme.
- h Flora, fauna, birds and fish inventory studies.
- h Updated master plan for French Fort Cove.
- h Aboriginal heritage study to identify important sites and uses of the resource.
- h Detailed design and construction documents for standard icon structures, i.e. kiosk, sign panel and marker.
- h Inventory of built heritage resources and cultural sites.

It should be noted that three ongoing studies will also influence the recommendations of this Riverfront Strategic Plan including a Port Study, Municipal Plan Update and Recreation Plan.

8.4 CAPITAL COSTS

An estimated \$11,000,000 has been identified to undertake all the recommended infrastructure improvements outlined in the strategic plan. This order of magnitude cost estimate is based on 1999 contractors prices, including all: materials, equipment, labour, taxes, design, tendering, inspections and contingencies. It should be noted that the quantities for cost estimates were derived from conceptual drawings and are not based on topographic or legal land surveys. Modifications during the design stage to reflect more reliable base plan information should be expected. Detailed preliminary cost estimates for each major project outlined in chapter six can be found in **Table 8.3**.

8.5 PHASING

This is a long term strategy and implementation must be well coordinated to ensure that consistency and momentum are maintained. Taking positive and visible small steps at the beginning is important. **Table 8.1** outlined an approach based on the following criteria:

- h** Potential for greatest initial positive impact.
- h** Identifying and communicating the Eco-museum concept.
- h** Status of land ownership or construction readiness.
- h** Opportunity to facilitate partnerships (i.e. Parks Canada, Repap, Irish Cultural Festival...).
- h** Logical design and construction sequence.
- h** Projects with closest compliance to all the goals of the riverfront strategy - as demonstration in the evaluation matrix - should be given higher priority.
- h** Creation of Gateway Centres or at least interim information centres.
- h** Ability to link other open spaces and sites within the Eco-museum.
- h** Steering committee priorities for riverfront projects.

8.6 FUNDING SOURCES

Although the Strategic Plan identifies a number of potential development and programming initiatives, sufficient infrastructure to initiate the Miramichi River Eco-museum scheme is already in place. Funding the recommended components will require a tenacious and thorough search and application process. The financial resources of the Federal and Provincial governments are in a state of adjustment resulting in uncertainty about what funding programs are going to be available for the next couple of years. Prior to applying for funds the plan should be presented for political support. The following list provides a general outline of potential sources for funding:

- h** Memberships - citizens, corporate, agency
- h** Municipal - operating and development funds
- h** Industrial partnerships
- h** Local service clubs
- h** Provincial
 - Economic Development, Tourism & Culture
 - Regional Development Corporation - HRDC, Development Assistance Program
 - Environmental Trust Fund
 - Action North Program
 - Regional Economic Development Agreement
- h** Federal
 - ACOA - Infrastructure Program