



POTENTIAL TOURISM ECONOMY GAME-CHANGERS

The information below was compiled in the Summer of 2019 by the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance for the purpose of identifying opportunities to enhance the tourism economy of the Ticonderoga Area. Research was performed and analyzed by Kayla Barbour, a graduate student in rural economic development at the University of Kentucky with experience developing tourism in a community with assets and demographics that mirrored those in the Ticonderoga area.

The research included extensive in-person and online exploration and data collection within the Ticonderoga Area and throughout the North Country, Vermont, New Hampshire, Kentucky and Ohio. Additionally, we participated in Rural Development conferences, visits to other small revitalizing rural towns, and phone/in-person discussions with other successful rural economic developers across America.

All of the ideas put forth below have been successful revitalization game-changers in similar rural towns with healthy tourism economies.

INFORMATIONAL GAME-CHANGERS:

- **GAME-CHANGER #1** – *New Visit Ticonderoga Area Website – promotes all tourism activities and businesses with details of all the fun things to do in our area and the ability to book those activities, lodging, restaurant reservations from the site. Links to home pages of every featured thing. Co-marketing incentives. Could be created by TACC and Ti-Alliance and ongoing management from the chamber.*
- A dedicated and staffed Visitor's Center - featuring graphic history of the area, info on activities (trails, shops, dining, lodging), an informative and interesting places to visit and get oriented.
- Exciting entrances to downtown – from 9N, from Wicker Street, from Rt. 22 that *announce* that you are entering downtown Ticonderoga, and make you excited to be there. This would take the form of bigger signage, potential archways or other structure, and additional landscaping that clearly provide a first impression of a “place” where you have arrived.

TRANSPORTATION GAME-CHANGER:

- **GAME-CHANGER #2** – *A transportation business that employed a variety of transportation modes to provide for the movement of both tourists and residents throughout town and its destinations in all seasons. A single provider might manage/own a shuttle/trolley, grab and drop bikes/cars/scooters, taxis & Uber. Locations served might include downtown, the Fort, the hospital, the beach, 4-Corners, Ti Golf Club & 5 Nations, Mt. Defiance, Baldwin Dock, and others. It is likely that any single mode of transportation would not be sustainable as a business, but together, would provide good revenues in all seasons and support the needs of both tourist and residents.*

Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance is a 501c3 non-profit, local development corporation whose mission is to restore economic prosperity in the Ticonderoga region by serving as a catalyst for innovative ideas and resources, and for public-private partnerships and investment opportunities.

RECREATION ACCESS:

- **GAME-CHANGER #3** – *Unless you live here or are an experienced outdoors person, it's nearly impossible to safely access these beautiful mountains, trails, and lakes. We MUST have a year-round "outfitter". An outfitter is a tour company that provides trained guides and naturalists, with first aid and safety certifications, to take people on a hike, bike, kayak, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, ice fishing, etc. They don't have to run all of the activities themselves, but can contract to individual guides or other companies for the activities. But they "package" and promote the activities. You can go to their website, book your activities (either scheduled group outings or customized private outings), pay for them, and show up at their office to get your equipment, guide, and transportation (sometimes provided or contracted to the transportation vendor above?). This business would operate year-round offering.*
 - Summer: hiking, biking, kayaking, water skiing, white water rafting, fishing, birding, and other water and mountain sports
 - Autumn: hiking, biking, kayaking, hunting, fishing
 - Winter: cross country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, downhill skiing with Lake Placid and Gore shuttles, ice fishing in Port Henry ice shacks
 - Spring – possibly closed in early spring, bird-banding, hiking, biking, fishing, kayaking in late spring.
- Expand the Ti Wellness Center or Hamsa Healing for additional spa services, yoga/dance/pilates classes, smoothie/juice bar, and retail space for locally made body products, herbs, teas, movement clothing, etc.

LODGING:

- **GAME-CHANGER #4** – *Downtown charming hotel with restaurant – We need downtown accommodations worthy of upscale and demanding visitors to the Fort, Trek, Golf Club, and other attractions. Nice sleeping accommodations, restaurant for upscale dining, casual meetings with clients. Currently under development at Cobbler's Bench, but in need of vendors/employees for hotel management, and restaurant ownership.*
- Accommodations in other formats:
 - Hostel: cheap, fun, great way of socializing and meeting people aimed at a young adult traveler clientele. Small or shared accommodations, near "watering hole". There are several existing properties that could be purchased and upgraded into cool budget accommodations catering to bike, motorcycle, snowmobile, hiking clubs, even corporate team building for weekend getaways. Varied accommodations from a few private rooms to bunk rooms for 6-8 (several bathrooms). Group meals in the restaurant with beer at night, gather around a fire outside (maybe a winter yurt like they have at Gore Mountain Lodge with live music – highly successful year-round), and easy trail access in and out. Links to other successful businesses like this.
<http://goremountainlodge.com>
<https://www.talkeetnaroadhouse.com>
 - Motel: We have several small motels that could be upgraded including the Circle Motel, Stonehouse, Latchstring, Hague Motel, Northern Lake George Resort, and 1084 Wicker Street (across from the entrance to Walmart). All could be turned into themed or charming accommodations with an influx of \$\$ and some good business plans.
 - Bed and Breakfasts: We have some lovely homes along Montcalm Street and throughout the back streets of the downtown area that could be renovated by individuals (with \$\$ from grants) to provide Bed and Breakfast accommodations.

- AIRBnB: many communities (like Lake Placid) have encouraged their Airbnb business when hotel rooms aren't enough. They have put regulation into place and are receiving bed tax for accommodations.

DINING:

- **GAME-CHANGER #5:** *There is no doubt that we need new GOOD restaurants in downtown Ticonderoga with quality food, good service, and talented chefs. Year-round should include both indoor and outdoor seating; create spaces that are welcoming and accommodating, and train good service staff. We will need multiple restaurants of varying cuisines and price-points to support an expanded tourism economy and local/regional residents. Important to the mix of dining opportunities might be:*
 - Farm to Table Restaurant + adjoining market for local meats, cheese, syrups, gourmet foods. Could be in Rathbun Building as Charlotte Harbor has a desire to host this type of establishment and sell some imported food goods.
<https://marksburyfarm.com/>
 - Riverside dining along the LaChute River. Summer decks and beergartens. Potential for new performing arts pavilion behind Montcalm Street in the future.
 - Expand the Co-Op with a business plan that includes good ready-made food and in-store & outdoor dining. Liquor license desirable for wine & beer.
 - Brew Pub – There are several opportunities to develop a brewery or brew pub in town. A regional brewery trail exists throughout the Adirondacks, but we do not yet have a stop in our area. Highly supported by local residents. Must have quality food and beer, summer outdoor dining would be good. Feasibility study for the Agway building outlines a potential model with riverside biergarten. Eddie's Restaurant property includes artesian well. Could also be on the top of the Cobbler's Bench Hotel?
<http://www.schlafly.com/>
<http://countryboybrewing.com/>
<http://bluestallionbrewing.com/location/tap-room/>
 - Cheap eats for NCCC Students and Others – Sometimes you just need cheap eats – and not chain restaurants. Small deli/bakery/coffee place on the north/east end of Montcalm. Needs an “organic” type feel. Could be something like a bagel shop. Good barista is essential.
 - Ethnic food – There is opportunity for nearly every kind of ethnic food in Ticonderoga. Quality, mid- to low-price points and accessibility for all residents are key.
 - Mexican – Most people and children, regardless of how limited their palette can get behind Americanized Mexican food. Even better would be a real sitdown Mexican Restaurant. The one in Saranac Lake is very successful.
<http://www.seoultaco.com/> (funky blend of Asian and Mexican)
<http://southwestdinerstl.com/>
<https://www.missiontacojoint.com>
 - Asian – A combination Asian restaurant with elements from a variety of cuisines would be a good bet.
 - Thai – Thai food is very popular throughout the country and you have to go almost 60 miles to Burlington, or 40 miles to Glens Falls to get it. Highly successful in those markets for both lunch and dinner.
 - Japanese – Millennials, in particular, love sushi. Combined with Japanese rice and noodle dishes, bento boxes, etc. this could appeal to the conservative palettes here.
 - Indian – Indian curry's and breads are remarkable – support an

entire culture. Even Middlebury supports a great Indian restaurant. Would be a great addition to an Asian menu if not a restaurant devoted to Indian.

- Chinese – we need a better Chinese Restaurant. There is one in Ticonderoga already, but the quality is suspect. Whitehall/Fair Haven supports two chinese restaurants.
- Bodette’s is a great location. Could be expanded to include BBQ sit in or take out, and Candy Shoppe could serve really good Adirondack ice cream.
- A coffee shop with long hours and wifi would be welcomed (Starbucks/Peet’s style for evening gatherings)

RETAIL

- **GAME-CHANGER #6** – *Localized specialty shops along Montcalm Street.*
 - Adirondack Merchantile, along the lines of Hudson River Trading Company in North Creek. Fox and Fern and Sugar and Spice provides a good examples of this concept. We need more.
<https://hudsonrivertradingco.com/>
<https://www.hosscountrycorner.com/>
 - Ticonderoga Outfitters (offers sporting equipment sales, rentals, lessons, guided tours, fishing licenses). Offers guided excursions, ability to rental equipment (winter sports, water sports); trail maps, ability to create and purchase Adventure Packages at a discount (partner with local businesses). History, Nature (Bird Watching, Hiking, Scenic Vistas)
<https://www.highpeakscyclery.com/>
 - Extension of Fort Gift Shop - could run OR supply shop owner with products.
 - Look @ shops in Lake Placid - NICE women’s clothing & jewelry (women do the majority of family purchases.
 - Kids clothing boutique and toy store.
 - Antique and memorabilia stores – well merchandised and displayed – Help George and bookstore redo their windows, clean the store, and merchandise their displays.
 - Shoe store (bass, boots for winter, sorrel, outdoor shoes, hiking sandals) – could be part of outfitter store.
 - Cooking store – gourmet foods, supplies, equipment, cooking classes? – could be partnership with Fort Pavilion’s teaching kitchen.

YOUTH & FAMILY ACTIVITIES:

- **GAME-CHANGER #7** – *Adult and kids gym (maybe expansion of Garrison Gym) offers open space with trampolines, obstacle course, rock wall, martial arts classes, cardio kickboxing, classes for kids and adults.* <https://urbanninjaproject.com/>
 - TiTech - Science-themed discovery center with makerspace, cool robotics, interactive exhibits (intellectual) OR- TimeWarp extension [mixed use space - also retail] <https://www.slsc.org/exhibits-attractions/makerspace/>
 - TiBox Theatre Co. & Drama School, costume design, creative writing classes (artistic) in Hacker Building. Theatre offers indoor winterfest and outdoor summerfest. Venue Space / black box theatre / event center. Great for live music, receptions, meetings, and other gatherings for local organizations & visiting groups.
<https://www.osfashland.org/en/engage-and-learn/school-group-activities.aspx>
<https://www.mykct.org/summerfest>
 - Escape Room as part of some other “arcade-type” kidspace. Escape from Rodger’s Rock, colonial themed break-out games with historical clues and challenges

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[https://breakoutgames.com/lexington/?](https://breakoutgames.com/lexington/)

- Old Timey Photo booth in Colonial period and Star Trek costumes