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***Baffin Regional Touris Planning Project -  
Community Tourism Development Plan -  
Cape Dorset***

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BAFFIN REGIONAL TOURISM PLANNING  
PROJECT - COMMUNITY TOURISM  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN - CAPE DORSET  
Sector: Tourism

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Plans/Strategies

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BAFFIN REGIONAL TOURISM PLANNING PROJECT

COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

CAPE DORSET COMMUNITY

KINGNAIT

August, 1982

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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AND TOURISM

GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is The Tourism Study?

In July 1981, the private consulting firm of Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited was hired by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to do a tourism study for the entire Baffin Region.

The three main purposes of the study were:

- i) To help the Baffin Region communities to understand what tourism is and what benefits and other impacts might result from tourism development;
- ii) To find out if the communities are interested in developing tourism; or developing more tourism, and what kind of tourism they would be interested in;
- iii) To examine the resources in and around each community to determine what there might be for tourists to see and do, in order to determine tourism potential.

The study was initiated with full recognition and support by the Baffin Regional Council.

1.2 Purpose of The Report

This report represents a summary analysis of all the information collected during field visits between the months of January, February and March 1982. More detailed information, from which this text was summarized, is provided in the Appendix to this report.

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief summary of the study for the residents of Cape Dorset. The translated summary does not include the Appendix, and thus, does not contain all the information collected.

The summary report discusses the most important factors affecting tourism in Cape Dorset now and in the future. It is important to realize that this study will not necessarily lead to an immediate influx of tourists.

### 1.3 Other Reports

If additional information is required, the following documents (in English) can be obtained from either the Hamlet Office or the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in Frobisher Bay:

a) Appendix to the summary report.

b) Background Information Report

This report contains general information about the Baffin Region. Topics discussed include the responsibilities and programs of government agencies and major Inuit organizations; (land use and ownership), existing economic activity; climate; and tourism resources and activities.

c) Planning Process Report

This report describes, in considerable detail, the methods used to carry out this study.

d) Regional Tourism Development Strategy

This report contains recommendations for tourism development programs involving the Baffin Region as a whole.

e) Technical Appendix

This document includes findings of all the detailed investigations which were a part of this study.

## 2. MAJOR PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### 2.1 Several Important Factors Affecting Tourism Development in Cape Dorset

The settlement of Cape Dorset is located on Dorset Island on the south shore of Baffin Island some 250 air miles southwest of Frobisher Bay.

Three factors have special significance to future tourism development in Cape Dorset. First, Cape Dorset is a larger sized community of approximately 800 people economically dependent on the production of artwork, in the form of carvings, prints and graphics. The West Baffin Eskimo Co-op is the largest wage employer in the community and it's marketing of the Cape Dorset art has created a world-wide recognition of the artistic quality of contemporary Inuit art. Many of the better known Inuit artists live in Cape Dorset. A great archival wealth of Inuit art has been created over the years by the West Baffin Co-op.

Second, Cape Dorset is also the site where the first remains of the ancient Thule culture were found. The Dorset, and Mallik Island areas as well as other coastal locations have a wide variety of ancient and post contact historical sites that would be available for interpretive trips by tourists.

Third, the community of Cape Dorset has had various forms of organized tourism on and off since the Co-op's Camp Dorset in the 1960's. While the Co-op is no longer engaged in a tourism industry it has several possible developments and leased properties that it would like to pursue in the near future. The acceptance of these activities by the community is quite good, as the residents of Cape Dorset understand a good deal about the tourism industry and wish to pursue it as a method of future employment.

## 2.2 Resources of the Land and People

The following subsections outline a summary of major resource related factors affecting tourism development. The three sections of tourism opportunities are the summary conclusions of the resource opportunity evaluation matrices (appendix A3) according to the three activity seasons: Frozen Spring, Open Summer; Frozen Fall.

### 2.2.1 - Tourism Opportunities - Frozen Water - Spring Tourism Season

The spring climate of Cape Dorset is typified by increasingly longer days and cool to cold temperatures. This period is associated with a high degree of mobility by snow machine on the frozen ice surfaces.

- Attractions at this time of year would involve travel by snow machine to view the wildlife and frozen arctic landscape around Cape Dorset.
- Cross country skiing on the still frozen surfaces around the island present a good opportunity.
- Accompanying Cape Dorset residents on day outings on the land to hunt or ice fish, could be a very good tourist activity.
- Visits to the numerous historical sites around Cape Dorset is limited due to poor visibility of the artifacts because of snow cover.

### 2.2.2 - Tourism Opportunities - Open Water - Summer Tourism Season

- The summer period at Cape Dorset is marked by long daylight hours and cool to warm temperatures.
- Summer travel by boat is quite important. Ice and water conditions due to weather can be major constraints to day use of boat travel and poor boating conditions could extend return trips from expeditions along coastal areas.



- Within all time travel zones historical sites are available for interpretive trips. The Dorset Island area has sites that are accessible by overland hiking.
- Wildlife (caribou, walrus, seals) can be seen from a boat along the shoreline west of Cape Dorset.
- Summer would be the ideal time for a fly-in visit to Nottingham Island.
- Several interesting post-contact sites are accessible by boat. These include whaling artifacts in Andrew Gordon Bay and the turn-of-the-century schooner wreck in Schooner Bay.
- Visitors could see and photograph the summer arctic environment by hiking overland and climbing the hills around the community.
- Several bays and lakes, accessible by boat travel were identified as potential open water fishing areas.

#### 2.2.3 - Tourism Opportunities - Frozen Water - Fall Tourism Season

- Many of the attractions available in the summer period are available in the fall, however, boat travel is very limited or impossible due to ice. Overnight stay on the land is constrained by cold weather and snow storms.
- This time of year, the best tourism opportunities are short duration hiking, photography, travel by snow machine, and community centered attractions.
- Cross country skiing would be limited by cold weather and available snow cover.

## 2.3 What Tourism Facilities and Capabilities does Cape Dorset Already Have?

The available infrastructure, skills and plans of the community have a major role in the future potential of the tourism industry in Cape Dorset. A fuller account of community resources and their implications for tourism development is given in Appendix A4. The following provides a summary of the appendix data.

### 2.3.1 - Existing Tourism Facilities (Infrastructure)

At present, commercial accommodation in Cape Dorset is provided by the Dorset Limited Hotel. This facility has 26 beds. The price includes meal service for 3 meals per day. The rooms have 2 to 4 beds in each and a new section has just been opened in the last year. Washroom facilities are centrally located and honey bags. The owner has run tourism groups and convention facilities from the hotel. The West Baffin Eskimo Co-op is interested in operating a full service hotel facility in Cape Dorset. They have the approval of the board of directors to pursue a feasibility study for this, however, details of these plans are not finalized.

Retail food sales and consumer goods are handled by the Co-op store and the Hudson's Bay Store. Two facilities for meal service are available: the new restaurant of the Dorset Limited Hotel, and Fred's Diner for fast foods.

The West Baffin Eskimo Co-op have a extensive art production facility that can be toured on a pre-arranged basis only. Purchase of artworks are accommodated through a retail outlet featuring carvings, crafts and reproduction works.

There are no licensed outfitters in Cape Dorset however, several good sized trap boats are berthed the community and boat trips have been organized in the past as requested by visitors.

Liquor is legally possessed in Cape Dorset, however, there is no retail outlet.

#### 2.3.2 - Special Events

Future Hamlet days may occur to celebrate the new (1982) status of Cape Dorset as a hamlet.

Christmas is marked by games, dances and other special events.

#### 2.3.3 - Special Skills

Special skills of note are the wide based contemporary Inuit artists producing carvings and graphics for the West Baffin Eskimoe Co-op.

There is a good understanding of tourism and the residents are willing to become involved in a tourism industry that could be developed in Cape Dorset, in the future.

#### 2.3.4 - Existing Tourism Activities

Existing tourism in Cape Dorset is quite limited. Tourists in the recent past include wildlife groups and individuals and groups interested in the production and purchase of Inuit artwork.

Several tours include Cape Dorset in their itinerary. However, these tours do not run every year.

In the near future the M.S. Linblad Explorer is scheduled to stop in Cape Dorset on its 1982 Canadian Arctic cruising expedition.

### 2.4 Community Feelings About Tourism

The community of Cape Dorset is quite positive about the future development of tourism in the community and surrounding area.

The community group leaders feel that tourism may be a good way to provide much needed employment to Cape Dorset. Many residents have a good understanding of what tourists require to provide good tourism facilities and services.

In all cases, the groups and individuals that the tourism planner met felt that community control of tourism, both in terms of where tourists go and what they do, was very important.

#### 2.5 Who Should Visit Cape Dorset?

The principle attraction of Cape Dorset should be the community based art industry. This can be reinforced by short duration trips to view the historical sites and the natural features of the West Baffin Island area.

Past experience has shown that wildlife groups are interested in combining a trip to view wildlife with the community based cultural aspects of Cape Dorset on a day trip basis using the existing hotel as a base point.

The Co-op's plans for Nottingham Island may provide an attraction as a hunting and fishing lodge, however, the development of this attraction will be at some future date.

### 3. COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

#### 3.1 How Will Development in Cape Dorset Relate to Development Elsewhere in the Baffin Region?

Cape Dorset should be developed as a Destination Community. A destination community contains one or more attractions and tourism opportunities reflecting, through developments or programs one or more of the community's dominant themes within the settlement. It differs from a destination area in that its basis is community oriented tourism opportunities rather than predominantly community dispersed tourism opportunities. A destination community is attractive enough to allow visitors to spend a major part or all of their vacation trip in this community. A destination community offers many services, facilities, attractions, activities and events to the tourist, but, with a somewhat limited variety.

Destination communities require first quality commercial accommodation in keeping with the amount of time tourists will spend in the community with the hotel as their base of operation. There is an existing hotel in Cape Dorset and the West Baffin Eskimo Co-op is interested in preparing a feasibility study for another full service hotel to tie into their art studios and production centre.

Short duration trips on the land to view and interpret the historic and natural attractions should be developed as additional community based activities. The Co-op may take advantage of its leased property on Nottingham Island to operate a hunting and fishing lodge. This activity would be managed from Cape Dorset however, Nottingham Island is some 80 miles south of Cape Dorset across the Hudson Strait requiring access by float plane.

### 3.2 Development Opportunities and Other Tourism Programs

#### 3.2.1 - What Form Should Tourism Development Take in Cape Dorset

The development intent for Cape Dorset is to provide organized opportunities to view, interpret and purchase the wide diversity of Inuit art production, and to interpret and view the collection of historic artifacts and art collection held by various institutions in the community. Attractions outside the community should include short duration interpretive trips by boat to view wildlife and historical sites.

#### 3.2.2 - Recommendations for Tourism Development in Cape Dorset

The following chart provides a summary of the various recommendations for tourism appropriate to Cape Dorset. The recommendations are based on the available area attractions, the concerns of the community, and the needs of tourists wishing to take advantage of the attractions.

A more detailed series of recommended programs is available in Appendix C.

#### How to Read the Chart

The following chart very briefly describes the recommended tourism development programs. It also indicates the following things.

##### a) How Important is This Program?

#### Priority

The priority of each program shows the importance of that program. For example, if the community has a limited amount of money and time to spend on tourism development, a program with a I priority would be done first, while a program with a IV priority might be done at a later date or might not be done at all.

Time to Implement

This is the time within which each program should be completed or put into effect. It is a rough indication of the order in which things should be done, the speed with which programs should be carried out, and the complexity of each program.

## b) Who Should Be Responsible for Carrying Out this Program?

These four columns indicate the person, agency or other group who should be responsible for carrying out and/or paying for various aspects of each program. Each program has been divided into four parts which may be carried out by different people, agencies or groups.

"Planning" refers to the period before the project gets underway. "Construction" is the actual building called for by the program recommendation. "Delivery" refers to the day-to-day operation of the program once it is planned for and/or built. "Other" refers to any other aspects of the program not covered by the previous three categories.

## c) Approximate Cost

This column indicates the cost of carrying out the recommended program. It includes only initial planning and capital costs. It does not include operating costs.

Training costs to be decided after an approach to adult training for tourism is decided upon.

Cost estimates are based on industry standards, past northern costing experience and best professional estimates. A list of cost estimates used is included in Appendix D.

## d) Jobs Created

This column gives some indication of the number of jobs that each program will create. Part-time jobs are jobs in which employees work less than full days or only a few days each week. Seasonal jobs are those which exist only during the specific seasons. Occasional jobs are those which exist on an irregular basis only when there is a demand for services. Short term temporary jobs are those which are full time for a period of time.

## e) Why is This Program Being Recommended and Why Does it Have This Priority Level?

This column explains why the recommended program is important to the development of tourism in Cape Dorset. It also explains why it may be more or less important than other recommended programs.



APPENDIX A

RESOURCE INVENTORY

LAKE HARBOUR

KINGMIRUT