

# GREEN ADVENTURE & TOURISM OUTFITTERS



## Explore Lake Simcoe Green Tourism Project

205 Lakeshore Drive, Barrie, ON, L4N 7Y9  
705.739.9444 ex 104

*In Partnership with:*



This project has received funding support from the Government of Ontario.  
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# About this Project

## Explore Lake Simcoe

### Helping your business Go Green!

Outdoor recreation is the number one attraction that brings visitors to Lake Simcoe back, again and again – fishing, kiteboarding, treetop trekking. It's the beauty of Lake Simcoe's natural areas that residents and visitors love. And it's on these natural resources that your tourism business depends. As pressures affecting tourism grow, so will impacts on water, energy and climate – and the operating costs of your business.

Let's green our practices to reduce these impacts. By reducing water and energy use in your daily operations you'll save money and the very resource our tourism industry depends on. Let's show visitors we're invested in the protection of Lake Simcoe – for the future.

### It's easy to get started!

First, complete the self-assessment. Then, follow the practical steps offered in this toolkit to get your business started on the path to green practices. We're here to help. Be sure to contact our **Project Coordinator** to assist you in greening your operations at [info@explorelakesimcoe.com](mailto:info@explorelakesimcoe.com).

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### What is sustainable or **Green Tourism**?

Developing and managing tourism in an environmentally, culturally and economically sustainable way that is viable for the long-term.

### What's in it for YOU?

Consumers are increasingly seeking sustainable tourism offers and the need to meet guest expectations will be vital in promoting your business and remaining ahead of the curve. It will position you as a competitive player in a fast-growing market. And you will be recognized for your commitment to protecting Lake Simcoe and benefiting your local community.

### These 7 points demonstrate why going green is great for business!

**Resource Conservation** – Lake Simcoe is the main attraction to the area and it's also most affected by overexploitation and degradation. It makes dollars and sense to take care of the resource your product is based on – Lake Simcoe's natural areas.

**Cost Savings** - The cost of resources such as energy, water and waste disposal will increase as pressures on resources grow, thus any reduction in use will result in cost savings.

This will also improve the efficiency of your business operations. Most buildings can reduce their energy and water consumption by 15% with no adverse effects to their business operations.

The U.S. Green Building Council highlights that sustainability strategies can create:

✓ 30% in energy savings;	✓ 50% less water usage; and,
✓ 35% less carbon output;	✓ More than 90% less waste.

Source: (Hotelsmag.com 2008)

**Consumer Demand** - Consumer awareness of issues regarding sustainability is rising and it's important to remain on top of the trends in order to stay competitive in a very aggressive industry.

**Company Image** – For businesses in environmentally sensitive areas, company image and reputation are very important. Green practices can help differentiate your business from others and increase your competitive edge.

**Employee Loyalty** - Sustainability programs have proved to be an effective means of employee retention, as well as generating enthusiasm and motivating staff.

**Risk Management** - Understanding and staying ahead of environmental issues will save your company money and help reduce financial risk.

**Legal Compliance** - Greenhouse gas emission reduction policies will put pressures on businesses. Climate affects tourism as it influences operating costs, like heating and cooling.

## What about consumer demand?

- Nearly 95% of visitors to the Lake Simcoe area are from Ontario
- In 2012, the Lake Simcoe region had over 24 million visitors, the majority same-day visits
- In 2012, total visitor spending in the region was ~ \$2 billion
- Low-impact outdoor recreation activities such as fishing are primary reasons for visits to the area (Dodds, 2015)
- A recent study of visitors to Lake Simcoe area by Dodds (2015), found that 61% of respondents thought it was extremely or very important for a business to showcase their sustainability initiatives
- Dodds (2015), found that 73% of respondents were extremely or somewhat likely to consider sustainable travel options when deciding on their trip
- Of these, anglers (70%) and outdoor recreation users (68%) felt it was very or extremely important for businesses to showcase sustainability initiatives (Dodds, 2015)

- Anglers spend the highest amount per person, per trip to Lake Simcoe area (\$287 average) second to other outdoor recreation users (\$196 average) on things like accommodation, recreation, food and beverage (Dodds, 2015)

### Primary motivation for visiting the Lake Simcoe watershed

Adapted from Visitor Travel and Spending Patterns Report, Ryerson University, May 2015

Activity	%	Activity	%
Visiting friend & relatives	22	Vacation	5
Outdoor recreation	19	Golf	3
Fishing	12	Shopping	3
Going to a cottage	11	Beach	2
Attending a festival or event	7	Motorized recreation (motorcycling, ATV)	1
Business/work	6	Eating out	1
Boating	5	Other (driving through, etc.)	4

(Dodds, R. (2015). Assessing Visitor Travel and Spending Patterns for Recreation and Tourism in the Lake Simcoe Watershed. Ryerson University, Toronto)

### What are the benefits?

By adopting this toolkit you may be eligible to:

- ✓ Be included in a database of green tourism operators that will be available online as a listing for all to see
- ✓ Be included in ‘green tourism experiences’ that will be created
  - Green tourism experiences will be suggested and marketed to visitors on the sustainable tourism website, [explorelakesimcoe.com](http://explorelakesimcoe.com). Each ‘experience’ will have a certain theme or focus (outdoor adventure, culinary, agritourism, etc.) and will connect to other sustainable options that complement the experience (i.e. connecting restaurants with accommodations, cycling routes and varying activities)
- ✓ Be profiled in digital marketing campaigns highlighting the businesses around Lake Simcoe that are taking steps to be more green

Visit [www.explorelakesimcoe.com](http://www.explorelakesimcoe.com) to learn more

# How to Use this Toolkit

## Step 1

- Rate yourself using the Operator Self-Assessment

## Step 2

- Make an appointment with our Project Coordinator

## Step 3

- Communicate your green actions!

Conversations throughout interviews and workshops demonstrated that in order to move Lake Simcoe towards the green tourism market the crucial first step is to “get our house in order.” To accomplish this, it’s been determined that an operator self-assessment is the most appropriate first step. An operator self- assessment is a manageable starting point – it’s easy, isn’t time consuming and will give you a quick picture of where your business stands among others.

The operator self-assessment is applicable to operators across all sectors, however, if you wish to pursue further sustainable practices in your particular sector, refer to the checklist at the back of this toolkit to determine, short, medium and long term initiatives.

Make an appointment with our **Project Coordinator** to guide you through the process at [info@explorelakesimcoe.com](mailto:info@explorelakesimcoe.com)

# Step 1

- Rate yourself using this Self-Assessment
- Send in your results to get recognized!

## Operator Self-Assessment

Use the following assessment to see how you measure up. As with any change, progress occurs in steps. If you score at least 50%, you are well on your way. Once you have completed your assessment, take a closer look at the results to identify how you want to move forward. Keep your assessment results and complete it again in six to eight months to evaluate your progress.

We are here to support your efforts! Check out the rest of our website for easy tips to get you started. Book an appointment with our Sustainable Tourism Project Coordinator at [info@explorelakesimcoe.com](mailto:info@explorelakesimcoe.com) to discuss your goals and identify where you need support. We can point you in the direction of resources and networking support. See how your efforts can be chronicled under the Green Leaders and Eat/Play/Stay section of the website.

### **BUSINESS PRIORITIZATION OF SUSTAINABILITY**

- You have developed a long-term sustainability plan that considers environmental, socio-cultural, quality, health and safety issues - suitable to your company's scale - 4 Points
- You regularly track progress against established environmental goals - 3 Points
- You have obtained third-party accreditation for environmental initiatives (i.e. Clean Marine Audubon Golf, Green Restaurant Association, Green Keys) - 10 Points

**Total Points: /17**

### **EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION (optional category)**

- Your personnel receive periodic training about their role in managing and supporting your businesses sustainability policies and activities - 3 Points
- You have consulted with staff to identify inefficiencies and set goals for new initiatives - 2 Points
- You have identified a “sustainable tourism champion” who tracks progress and regularly updates staff on progress - 3 Points

**Total Points: /8**

### **CUSTOMER-FACING COMMUNICATION**

- You communicate your commitment to Sustainable Tourism in all your business marketing - 3 Points
- You publicize your business’ sustainability initiatives - 2 Points

- You actively promote at least 2 other local businesses that are working towards being more sustainable (businesses can be in different business sectors to avoid conflict of interest) - 2 Points
- You communicate Lake Simcoe's green tourism objectives to staff (if you employ staff), colleagues, industry and community networks, and you champion the cause - 1 Point

**Total Points: /8**

### **EFFICIENT RESOURCE USE**

- You keep track of your monthly bills (energy, waste, water) and try to reduce them - 3 Points
- You measure your ecological footprint and actively work to reduce it - 1 Point
- You incorporate simple business practices that conserve resources and communicate these practices regularly to staff and or customers (i.e. reduction of use of straws, not automatically giving cutlery, closing blinds on hot days) - 1 Point

### **WATER**

- You use water conserving technology (i.e. low-flush toilets, low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators) - 2 Points
- You carry out business tasks in a way that conserves water (i.e. clean sidewalks with a broom instead of water) - 2 Points

### **WASTE**

- You divert at least 40% of waste from landfills - 2 Points
- You minimize the use of disposable items (i.e. single use water bottles, disposable cleaning supplies), and seek reusable, compostable, or recyclable alternatives - 2 Points
- You actively find ways to reuse business items (i.e. furniture) - 1 Point
- You have an e-waste policy to recycle batteries, printers, computers, etc. - 1 Point
- You compost or divert food waste through collection programs - 1 Points

### **ENERGY**

- You take advantage of energy incentives - 1 Point
- You use recognized energy efficient appliances (i.e. Energy Star) - 2 Points
- You insulate, add weather stripping, use window shades, and adopt similar methods of energy conservation - 2 Points
- You use a programmable thermostat and supplement air conditioning with ceiling fans - 2 Points
- You have renewable energy onsite (i.e. solar, geothermal) - 3 Points
- You have completed an energy audit - 2 Points
- You take advantage of regional climate, vegetation, sun angles and wind to maximize solar gain in winter and shading in summer - 1 Point

**Total Points: /29**

### **LOCAL AND ETHICAL PURCHASING**

- You purposely use suppliers that have environmental or socially responsible policies or practices - 2 Points
- You buy in bulk when appropriate to minimize packaging and you seek out product suppliers that minimize packaging - 2 Points
- You supply organic and fair trade products (i.e. coffees and teas) - 2 Points
- You use FSC certified paper - 1 Point
- You showcase or sell products or art and handicrafts from local vendors - 1 Point

- You support local businesses as much as possible - 2 Points

**Total Points: /10**

#### **LOCAL FOOD SOURCING (optional category)**

- You use at least 20% local food in your dishes - 2 Points
- You grow your own vegetables or herbs for your guests - 2 Points

**Total Points: /4**

#### **HABITAT CONSERVATION AND LANDSCAPING PRACTICES (optional category)**

- You naturalize as much of your property as possible, use plant buffers between land and waterways, and use sustainable turf management practices (i.e. leaving grass clipping on the grass to compost) - 2 Points
- You minimize your use of fertilizer, apply it properly and at the correct time of year - 2 Points
- If you have to water the lawn you do it at dawn or dusk to reduce evaporation (lawns require no more than 2.5 cm of water weekly) - 2 Points
- You use environmentally friendly lawn care products and employ organic lawn-care methods - 4 Points
- You plant drought tolerant plants and therefore do not water them or you water plants from collected rainwater - 2 Points
- You use native plants in your landscaping and remove invasive species - 2 Points
- You use permeable materials instead of asphalt or concrete to allow water to percolate into the ground - 2 Points
- If you have a septic system, you maintain it regularly - 2 Points
- You encourage wildlife on your property (i.e. you have bird/bat boxes) - 1 Points
- You have active involvement of staff/guests in a wildlife/habitat conservation project - 1 Point

**Total Points: /20**

#### **SNOW AND ICE MANAGEMENT (optional category)**

- You use mechanical snow removal to avoid excessive salt use, and you take steps to reducing use of chloride-based ice melter (including using alternatives such as sand) - 2 Points

**Total Points: /2**

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

- You provide or promote car-free transportation options to tourists - 3 Points
- You actively discourage vehicle idling at your place of business - 3 Points
- You offer secure bike racks or bike parking - 2 Points
- You promote local cycling or walking tours in your area - 1 Point
- You support and encourage alternative transportation (either for yourself or employees) by providing amenities such as bike racks, showers, or incentives - 2 Points
- You use a hybrid, electric, or biodiesel powered vehicle/machinery and or have an electric vehicle charging station on site - 4 Points

**Total Points: /15**

#### **COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RESPECT**

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- You regularly provide financial or in-kind support for local not-for-profits 2 Points
- You provide opportunities for staff to pursue professional development or local volunteering for at least 2 days a year (or you do so yourself) - 1 Point
- You showcase your local heritage/promote local heritage places and events - 1 Point
- You donate to community groups in need (i.e. old linens or other supplies) - 1 Point
- If you hire employees, you provide year-round opportunities - 4 Points
- You collaborate with First Nations representatives to promote their heritage and culture - 3 Points

**Total Points: /12**

**VISITOR STEWARDSHIP**

- You review your visitor environmental code of conduct with guests and make it visible - 1 Point
- You offer reusable mugs or water bottles to visitors and promote the use of reusable shopping bags - 1 Point
- You ask visitors to make choices that reduce resource use (i.e. less frequent washing of linens, use of reusable shopping bags) - 1 Point
- You take advantage of opportunities to educate visitors about the natural environment around your business - 1 Point

**Total Points: /4**

**TOTAL SCORE**

**BUSINESS PRIORITIZATION OF SUSTAINABILITY \_\_ /17**

**OPTIONAL CATEGORY-- EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION \_\_ /8**

**CUSTOMER-FACING COMMUNICATION \_\_ /8**

**EFFICIENT RESOURCE USE \_\_ /29**

**LOCAL AND ETHICAL PURCHASING \_\_ /10**

**OPTIONAL CATEGORY-- FOOD SOURCING \_\_ /4**

**OPTIONAL CATEGORY-- HABITAT CONSERVATION AND LANDSCAPING PRACTICES \_\_ /20**

**OPTIONAL CATEGORY-- SNOW AND ICE MANAGEMENT \_\_ /2**

**TRANSPORTATION \_\_ /15**

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RESPECT \_\_ /12**

**VISITOR STEWARDSHIP \_\_ /4**

**TOTAL POINTS \_\_ / (SUM OF POSSIBLE POINTS IN CATEGORIES THAT APPLY TO YOUR BUSINESS)**

**FINAL CALCULATIONS—INSTRUCTIONS TO CALCULATE TOTAL PERCENTAGE**

- Add the total potential points for all of the categories that apply to your business. Please note that all categories marked “optional” can be excluded depending upon the type of business—all other categories are mandatory.
- Add the number of points your business earned in relevant categories.
- Sum the total points that could be potentially earned for the categories that apply to your business. Then divide your total by this potential total to calculate your final percentage.

## Step 2

- Make an appointment with our Project Coordinator

### If you're taking steps – make sure you get recognized!

Once you've successfully completed the self-assessment contact our Project Coordinator to make sure you're featured in Lake Simcoe's green tourism promotions.

Our Coordinator is here to help tourism businesses around Lake Simcoe green their practices. Make sure to get in touch for resources, funding and product information. We will assist you in taking steps to green your operations in the short, medium and long-term.

Aileen MacMillan  
Sustainable Tourism Project Coordinator  
[info@explorelakesimcoe.com](mailto:info@explorelakesimcoe.com) 705.739.9444  
ext. 104

## Step 3

- Communicate your green actions!

The most important part of a successful green tourism strategy is a united vision for the future – and this needs to be communicated to everyone!

Make sure you're communicating your green actions to your employees, community and guests. Social media is a very useful tool and you should make your efforts known on your website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (for tips on employee engagement please see [www.explorelakesimcoe.com](http://www.explorelakesimcoe.com)).

Consider the Lake Simcoe green tourism mission and see if it aligns with the mission of your business. If so, adopt the mission and make the pledge to be a green operator working towards ever increasing sustainability within your business.

Have your mission visible so visitors see you are working to make Lake Simcoe a more climate-friendly community!

Please find communications templates on [www.explorelakesimcoe.com](http://www.explorelakesimcoe.com)

## Energy Incentives and Funding Options

For more incentive and funding options please see [Natural Resources Canada](#).

The [Ontario Ministry of Energy](#) searchable guide is also very useful.

Granting Organization	Program	Description	Potential Dollar Value
Hydro One/Local Power Company	Small Business Lighting and Retrofit programs	Start with an assessment, incentives available for lighting and technology upgrades	\$2,000 and up
Ontario Power Authority	Save On Energy	Pre-approval required, incentives provided for lighting and other equipment	Variable
Union Gas	Energy efficiency programs by industry	From calculators and tips to equipment incentives	Variable
Enbridge Gas	RunRightProgram	Initial assessment to find energy savings and assess applicability for installation incentives	\$10,000 and up

Please contact our Sustainable Tourism Project Coordinator or visit [www.explorelakesimcoe.com](http://www.explorelakesimcoe.com) for more green resources

# ADVENTURE TOURISM & OUTFITTERS CHECKLIST

Have you completed the **Operator Self-Assessment**? Please make sure that you have completed the self-assessment before continuing.

The following section provides you with detailed strategies to improve your efficiency, implement sustainable practices and position yourself as a sustainable tourism leader in Lake Simcoe.

Lake Simcoe's tourism operators are in a position to promote appreciation for the natural environment, local culture and sustainable practices. Outfitters are dependent on Lake Simcoe's pristine wildlife and fish habitat for a viable business. Environmental issues, such as pollution and habitat encroachment, can have a significant effect on the livelihood of operations.

## WHAT ARE MY PRIORITIES?

- ✓ **Strategic Transportation Planning:** Incorporate new technological advancements, like hybrid vehicles and biofuels to improve efficiency and reduce your environmental footprint.  
Electric and compressed natural gas fuels combine efficiency and low emissions.

### What are biofuels?

Biofuels are made from renewable resources, such as plant materials, and produce fewer heat-trapping greenhouse gases than petroleum-based fuels. A common biofuel that is currently used for vehicles is biodiesel.

(Green Your Business: A Guide for Tourism Operators, Parks Canada)

- ✓ Determine an appropriate **Group Size:** Smaller groups (6-10 people) make for better communication, higher visitor experience quality and lower impacts
- ✓ **Respect Nature:** Recognized programs such as Leave No Trace provide lessons for people to minimize their environmental impacts
- ✓ Utilize **Local Business:** Hiring local guides, buying local supplies and eating at local restaurants maximize the economic benefits to the Lake Simcoe area
- ✓ **Staff Education:** Train staff to recognize harmful practices, like idling
- ✓ **First Nations** collaboration: To ensure an authentic and respectful tourist experience, create opportunities for open dialogue and consultation with First Nations communities
- ✓ Visitor **Education:** Give visitors something to take away by educating them on local culture and history, and by developing a code of ethics and conduct for travellers to follow

## TRENDSSETTERS

- ❖ **Free Spirit Tours** has developed policies and initiatives under the framework of The Natural Step. In June 2010, the company established **Free Spirit Gardens**, a not-for-profit subsidiary of the company, to create vegetable gardens in people's backyards and community spaces. The initiative promotes sustainable eating habits, community gardens in the Town of Blue Mountains and Collingwood and an on-site garden demonstration for patrons of Free Spirit Tours. They also plan to convert fleet vehicles to run on waste veggie oil instead of diesel. (Source: Stakeholder interview with Matt Code of Free Spirit Garden)
- ❖ **Thorncrest Outfitters** in Southampton, Paisley and Tobermory puts over 10,000 people on the water annually. All of their stores recently switched to a biodegradable plastic retail bags. Thorncrest provides a shuttle service to pick-up and drop-off customers and their equipment. They also sell customers' used gear on consignment at their stores (Source: [www.thorncrestoutfitters.com](http://www.thorncrestoutfitters.com)).

## Sustainable Strategies



### SHORT TERM

Consider the following strategies to become more sustainable in the next couple of years:

#### *Communications*

- ✓ Create a sustainable tourism mission/vision
- ✓ Post your sustainability mission in plain sight for visitors to read and on your website. The policy should express its aims to be equitable, minimize environmental impacts, contribute to the local economy
- ✓ Begin to write a sustainable tourism policy with clear goals and objectives
- ✓ Distribute sustainable tourism information to your customers through your website and social media
- ✓ Post signage throughout your facility educating staff and guests on how they should participate in your sustainability efforts (i.e. turn off the lights, turn off POS system/computers at night, mark recycling bins, save water, conservation information)
- ✓ Use an email database of contacts to reduce paper mailing of flyers for promotions
- ✓ Develop and deliver environmental education programming in and around beaches, parks and conservation areas; invite experts to speak (i.e. university researchers, First Nations elders, conservation group members)

#### *Products*

- ✓ Purchase 20% of products locally; work with local suppliers
- ✓ Brew fair trade, organic, bird-approved coffee and tea in your office
- ✓ Offer locally-sourced food products and beverages
- ✓ Purchase bulk, reusable and refillable options; avoid individually-wrapped products (soap, milks and creamers)
- ✓ Offer tap or filtered tap water instead of bottled water or pop
- ✓ Ensure paper products are FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified or made from recovered materials
- ✓ Ensure up to 10% of your chemical-technical products are eco-certified (see the Green Resources section of [explorelakesimcoe.com](http://explorelakesimcoe.com) for more information). Products should have neutral pH levels, no known carcinogens, low or no VOCs, biodegradability, less packaging
- ✓ Use only phosphate-free soaps and detergents

- ✓ Use homemade vinegar-based cleaners
- ✓ Use cleaning clothes instead of paper
- ✓ Identify plastics that can be replaced with compostable, biodegradables (bags, food containers, cutlery)
- ✓ Use products that are pump action instead of aerosol
- ✓ Switch at least 20% of light bulbs to low-energy bulbs (LEDs or CFLs). Check for government incentives
- ✓ Ask suppliers about their environmental/corporate responsibility policy; have suppliers take their packaging back

#### *Efficient Resource Use (energy, water, waste)*

- ✓ Begin collecting data for a baseline diagnosis of your resource use to identify opportunities to reduce impacts
- ✓ Set up a system to record energy, water and waste metrics on a quarterly basis and review it annually
- ✓ Implement a leak checking program; regularly monitor and fix leaks immediately
- ✓ Implement an organic collection and composting program
- ✓ Ensure you are properly sorting waste and recycling

#### *Energy*

- ✓ Conduct an energy audit
- ✓ Complete a building envelope assessment
- ✓ Upgrade to energy efficient appliances, i.e. Energy star (check for incentives)
- ✓ Ensure the energy savings features of all electronic equipment are enabled
- ✓ Ensure POS and computers are switched off at night
- ✓ Implement a “lights off” policy
- ✓ Use a programmable thermostat and supplement air conditioning with ceiling fans
- ✓ Optimize the use of heating and cooling to reduce energy costs. In the winter, during daytime hours set to 20 C, while unoccupied reduce to 14 – 15 C. In the summer, set daytime temperature to 24 C, while unoccupied set to 28 C.
- ✓ Weather strip and/or caulk doors and windows
- ✓ Close windows and curtains at the end of the workday
- ✓ Paint wall surfaces a light colour (reduces the need for artificial light); clean windows and light fixtures weekly to ensure efficient light penetration
- ✓ Clean air conditioner or heater filters every month to increase efficiency (replace every 3 to 6 months)

#### *Water*

- ✓ Complete a water audit
- ✓ Fix all water leaks immediately
- ✓ Promote the use of reusable water bottles and mugs

#### *Waste*

- ✓ Conduct a waste audit
- ✓ Divert 20-50% of waste from landfill through composting, recycling, reusing, reducing
- ✓ Provide recycling bins throughout the facility
- ✓ Make the most efficient use of paper; double-side all printing, avoid colour copies, use scrap.
- ✓ Collect used maps and guides in a drop box located at exits for new visitors to reuse
- ✓ Ban plastic water bottles from workplace

- ✓ Compost
- ✓ Avoid individually-wrapped products

#### *Habitat Conservation and Landscaping*

- ✓ Identify and remove all invasive species
- ✓ Thoroughly clean all boots, motors, gear; mitigate adverse effects by avoiding the transfer of invasive species from one area to another
- ✓ Practice safe catch-and-release fishing
- ✓ Compost garden waste
- ✓ Use sprinklers or water only at dawn, dusk and during night to reduce evaporation
- ✓ Apply mulch to hold water in beds
- ✓ Use phosphate-free fertilizers; minimize the use of fertilizers
- ✓ Use low or non-chloride based snow and ice control materials
- ✓ Put up bat and bird boxes on your property

#### *Transportation*

- ✓ Offer secure bike parking (bike racks) for guests and staff
- ✓ Provide or promote care-free transportation options to tourists
- ✓ Promote local cycling or walking tours in your area
- ✓ Encourage and support employees in using alternative transportation (i.e., provide showers, discounted transit passes, incentives for carpooling)
- ✓ Minimize impacts to the natural environment while transporting clients, possibly by maintaining small group sizes

#### *Community Support*

- ✓ Employ local labour and services
- ✓ Provide year round employment opportunities to the local workforce
- ✓ Identify local organizations, community groups and NGOs that would be a good partner to your business
- ✓ Showcase your local heritage/promote local heritage, places and events
- ✓ Connect with local and suggest ways for guests to meaningfully connect with locals
- ✓ Donate to community groups in need (i.e., charity events, office furniture, other supplies)
- ✓ Sponsor, celebrate or participate in local, national and international environmental events such as Earth Day, Tree Plantings and Community Clean Up Days
- ✓ Be an equal opportunity employer

#### *Employee Engagement (Teamwork and Leadership)*

- ✓ Create a Green Ambassador or Green Team (recommended for businesses with 4+ staff) to track progress
- ✓ Communicate the expectations of an adopted sustainability plan to employees
- ✓ Train staff on sustainability and environmental initiatives; host lunch and learns on various topics and the importance of sustainability
- ✓ Suggest employees engage in a “Clean Up Day” with lots of recycling bins on hand
- ✓ Encourage employees to use reusable mugs and to bring “litter free” lunches to work
- ✓ Suggest employees engage in at least 10 volunteer hours per year
- ✓ Plan a team volunteer day for employees to give back to the local community

### *Visitor Stewardship*

- ✓ Offer visitor incentives such as discounts for sustainable transportation practices (i.e. cycling or using public transit)
- ✓ Offer reusable mugs or water bottles to visitors
- ✓ Actively promote nature walks, wildlife talks, local festivals and events
- ✓ Clearly mark recycling containers available to public

**FOR MEDIUM AND LONGTERM STRATEGIES PLEASE BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WITH OUR PROJECT COORDINATOR**

Contact us at: [info@explorelakesimcoe.com](mailto:info@explorelakesimcoe.com)