

Markstay-Warren Awareness Campaign Proposal

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1. Introduction and Executive Summary

In recent years, Markstay-Warren has difficulty retaining businesses due to a declining population. If businesses are to return to the municipality, residential development must be attracted in order to grow the population back to the critical mass necessary to attract and retain business. Fortunately, Markstay-Warren has several advantages that would allow it to attract residential development from the City of Greater Sudbury. It offers the 'small-town' quality of life: a quiet environment, closeness to nature, clean air, safe streets, and friendly neighbours. Economically, it makes sense to build a home in Markstay-Warren. At a time when Sudbury's property values and development fees are rising, Markstay-Warren offers an abundance of cheap land and low development costs. In short, the reasons to come to Markstay-Warren already exist; prospective residents just need to be made aware of them.

The main impediment to further development is that Markstay-Warren currently suffers from a lack of visibility. There is little awareness of the municipality outside of its immediate neighbours, and a negative perception by some causes many to dismiss the municipality without actually visiting it. If new residents and businesses are to be brought into the municipality, Markstay-Warren must engage in a concerted attempt to raise outside awareness of the municipality and its many advantages.

This proposal calls for the implementation of an awareness campaign designed to increase the visibility of Markstay-Warren as a place to live and travel. This campaign will primarily leverage online and multimedia resources in order to reach a broad audience in an effective and cost-efficient manner. This campaign has three main elements: the production of a municipal marketing plan, the production of a video marketing campaign, and an overhaul of the content of the Markstay-Warren municipal website. More specifically, the proposed awareness campaign will attempt to raise the profile of the municipality by pursuing the following objectives:

Marketing Plan Objectives

- The production of a codified marketing plan for the municipality of Markstay-Warren

Video Campaign Objectives

- The production of eight 3-5 minute long videos designed to showcase the attractions of the municipality
- The distribution of these videos over the internet (municipal website, Youtube, etc)
- The production of a promotional DVD, containing these videos and other promotional materials

Website Component Objectives

- Overhauling the "Visitors" Section of the municipal website with the following:
 - o New community profiles, including video components
 - o New comprehensive maps, marked with both businesses and natural landmarks
 - o A more accessible business directory
 - o A new section detailing community events

The following plan outlines the objectives of this campaign in detail, the rationale behind these objectives, a series of action-oriented timelines for implementations, and a subsequent evaluation mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the campaign. This awareness campaign has a scheduled completion date of **August 22th, 2011**.

2. Vision

This campaign is primarily designed to frame Markstay-Warren as an ideal community to live in. To this end, the campaign's mission is to highlight the many advantages that Markstay-Warren has over nearby Sudbury. For example, the municipality has an abundance of comparatively inexpensive land; individuals choosing to build houses in Markstay-Warren can do so for the same construction costs as in Sudbury, but can do so on a much larger lot. Furthermore, the development fees by Sudbury are quite high, while Markstay-Warren currently charges no development fees whatsoever.

With these advantages in mind, the overall message of this campaign is that Markstay-Warren is a **community of choice** which offers a better **quality of life** than any of its competitors. The aim of the campaign materials is to reinforce this message with evidence.

2.1 Visual Style

An important element to any awareness campaign is a consistent visual style throughout the campaign. This visual style indicates to the viewer that there is thematic continuity between all elements of the campaign, and ensures the campaign is putting forward a strong common identity. It also indicates to the audience that all elements are part of the same campaign. The CDC has a strong, simple logo which can be used as the basis for the visual style of the campaign: as such, the colour scheme would thus be gold, navy blue, and forest green. The municipal logo could also be used; however, that logo is more complicated and would therefore have less visual impact.

3. Objectives

There are three main objectives to this campaign: the compilation of a marketing strategy for the municipality, the completion of the video campaign highlighting the municipality's features, and an overhaul of the 'Visitors' section of the Markstay-Warren municipal website. It should be noted that these are not separate initiatives; they are part of a single, focused campaign, and all components are highly interrelated. Developments in one section of the campaign will necessarily inform the others, and the end result will be a unified, targeted campaign that forcefully asserts the identity of Markstay-Warren.

3.1 Marketing Plan Campaign

Marketing Plan Objectives

- The production of a codified marketing plan for the municipality of Markstay-Warren.

As noted, there are many advantages to either move to or simply visit Markstay-Warren. However, to date these advantages have not been well communicated and have never been brought together in a coherent manner. It is the aim of this awareness campaign to raise outside awareness of Markstay-Warren by assessing the assets and advantages that the municipality has, codifying these elements into a brand identity, and then aggressively asserting that brand to the outside audience. To this end, the first element of the awareness campaign is the production of a marketing plan, which will serve as a 'guidebook' for the efforts to raise awareness about Markstay-Warren.

The marketing plan created through this project will compile all of the elements of this brand and the other aspects of the campaign into an easily accessible form. Once completed, this document will serve

as a key resource in all efforts to promote the municipality. It will provide the key “talking points” of the campaign to ensure that the awareness campaign has a single, unified message. Furthermore, it will serve as a resource for future community marketing efforts by thoroughly documenting the steps that were undertaken on the current campaign.

An important part of this initiative is the public consultation phase, which will be used to solicit ideas regarding why Markstay-Warren is an ideal place to live in and visit. While this consultation could take the form of public meetings, other forms of consultation are also effective. Feedback will be solicited through the Markstay-Warren Community Newsletter, as well as through online mediums. The public input solicited during this phase of the project will inform all of the end projects of the campaign.

3.2 Video Campaign

Video Campaign Objectives

- The production of eight 3-5 minute long videos designed to showcase the attractions of the municipality
- The distribution of these videos over the internet (municipal website, Youtube, etc)
- The production of a promotional DVD, containing these videos and other promotional materials

The video campaign is the lynchpin of the entire Markstay-Warren Awareness Campaign. The production of videos designed for a large audience is the most effective way for Markstay-Warren to brand its advantages, communicate them in its own words, and assert its message aggressively. Furthermore, broadcasting these videos over the internet is the municipality’s best chance at reaching a large audience which would not ordinarily come to the municipal homepage. Utilizing the internet to assert the municipality’s advantages ensures that our message is easy to access and widely available.

This plan calls for the production of eight videos, each of which will be between 3 and 5 minutes long. The breakdown of the video contents is as follows:

- **Overview Video**
This video is designed to provide an outline of the entire community and set up the rest of the campaign. If an individual only watches one of the videos in the campaign, it will be this one. The overview video will highlight the best parts of the municipality to hook audience interest and draw them in to the rest of the campaign.
- **Community Profiles**
 - o Community Profile: Markstay
 - o Community Profile: Warren
 - o Community Profile: Hagar and other communities

The community profile videos are designed to give viewers a tour of the villages located in Markstay-Warren by showcasing landmarks, local businesses, and other highlights of the area. Whereas the thematic videos are designed to highlight the reasons why people would be interested in relocating to Markstay-Warren, the community profiles will highlight the assets that already exist.
- **Thematic Videos:**
 - o Residential Living
 - o Community Amenities

- Natural Environment
- History and Culture

The thematic videos are a chance to sell the reasons why a person would want to live or locate their business in Markstay-Warren. The Residential Living video would highlight daily life in Markstay-Warren; it will highlight some of the community events that take place in the municipality, as well as the sense of community engagement that exists within the community. The Community Amenities will highlight the facilities and services that make living in Markstay-Warren an attractive prospect. The Natural Environment video will demonstrate some of the natural landmarks and features located within Markstay-Warren, while the History and Culture will give a sense of community identity by detailing some of the history of the area.

It is important to note that these videos will not simply consist of shots of the municipality overlaid with some text or voice-overs. It is the aim of this campaign to produce an end product with extremely high production values. Furthermore, the videos will attempt to approach the subject in an interesting, creative, and innovative way. Presenting the marketing campaign in a professional, entertaining manner will serve to create interest in the campaign and encourage the audience to watch the videos.

In terms of the format of the videos, there are two main options:

Format A) The Guided Tour:

This format consists of a single “voice of the municipality” who will narrate the videos. This narrator (either featured in the videos or simply a voice-over) will highlight the talking points of the marketing campaign in an effort to sell the municipality to perspective residents or visitors. At the same time, the videos would portray notable points in the municipality to provide visual reinforcement. These videos would be tightly scripted to ensure a strong, persistent message. There are several tones that could be taken in these films; they could be a fairly straightforward tour of the municipality, or they could be thematically or narratively linked in another way. Linking the videos narratively allows for some creative possibilities that could make the videos more engaging; these options will be explored during the initial meetings with the producers in early June.

Format B) The Testimonial:

This format will interview the residents of Markstay-Warren about why they have opted to live in this municipality. This format lends the video authenticity and credibility by featuring actual residents of the municipality speaking about their experiences. However, including the larger number of people requires a longer amount of time to plan, assemble, and film, and would require the project timelines to be revised. Elements of this approach can be included in Format A; the public consultation phase outlined above will yield anecdotes that be integrated into the scripted approach.

Although both of these formats will achieve the desired effect, it is the recommendation of this proposal that the video adhere to Format A. Having the videos narrated by a single “voice of the municipality” will allow the videos to have a more targeted message, and the lower number of individuals involved in production will reduce filming times and help keep the costs low. The estimated timeline in Section 4 is based on following Format A; Format B will take much longer to complete.

The final aspect to the video campaign will be the production of a hard copy of the video campaign on a DVD. This DVD will contain the entire video campaign, as well as other promotional materials that can be assembled. The DVD will be professionally packaged, and can be distributed as a marketing tool to

any potential investors. The budget for this campaign allows for the initial production of 25 DVDs, as well as a master copy that can be used to make more copies at a later date.

3.3 Website Component

Website Component Objectives

- Overhauling the “Visitors” Section of the municipal website with the following:
 - o New community profiles, including video components
 - o New comprehensive maps, marked with both businesses and natural landmarks
 - o A more accessible business directory
 - o A new section detailing community events

A municipal website is more than simply a place to find the dates of next council meetings and the schedules for garbage collection; it is the most visible presence of the municipality outside of its own borders and the first point of contact for any outsiders interested in the municipality. To this end, the municipal website has an important role in informing individuals about the advantages of coming to Markstay-Warren. While there is plenty of information currently available on the website, some important elements are either completely missing or difficult to find. The final element of this awareness campaign will overhaul the sections of the municipal website targeting visitors to the community to make these sections more comprehensive and accessible.

The main element of this overhaul would be the creation of a series of new community profiles to highlight the communities that comprise Markstay-Warren. The current website does not communicate a good sense of what the communities of Markstay-Warren look like or why they are attractive to visit or move to. This campaign proposes the creation of a new set of community profiles, with a detailed description and history of each community, a community-focused business directory, a detailed map of businesses and other community landmarks, a community photo gallery, and videos (outlined in Section 3.2) highlighting the community. These community profiles would serve to better communicate the assets that exist within Markstay-Warren’s communities and position the municipality as a target for investment and tourism.

The second, related component to the community profiles is the creation of new maps of the municipality which can be accessed online. Although there are currently maps available on the website, they are difficult to find and only provide a limited amount of information. This project will create a series of new maps for the communities in the municipality, which show both the businesses and the natural landmarks and attractions located in the municipality. These maps will be linked to the community profiles on the website in order to more completely give a sense of the communities in Markstay-Warren.

The third element in this plan, the creation of a more comprehensive business directory, also ties in to the preceding two objectives. The current website contains the contact information for most businesses in the area; however, the directory is somewhat cumbersome to navigate. This plan calls for the business directory to be redesigned so that it is easier to navigate. Furthermore, the amount of information included in each entry can be supplemented with maps of the business location, photographs, website links, or descriptions. This improvement will make the business directory a comprehensive resource for both community residents and visitors, and would increase the number of visitors to the Markstay-Warren website.

The fourth element of the website overhaul would be the creation of a community calendar and events section. This step is critical to transforming the website into a more community-oriented resource. Markstay-Warren is home to many annual events (the Main Street Fair, the Warren Fair, etc) that have the potential to draw in visitors to the community. However, there is no information about these events available on the municipal website. The addition of a community calendar and events section would provide a place for information about annual community events in the area, as well as smaller events that are taking place. The Markstay-Warren Community Newsletter has had some success publishing this sort of information, but is limited by the fact that the newsletter is only published once a month. A consistently updated list of events would encourage visitors to check the municipal website more often to see what is happening in the community.

The long term objectives of the municipal website improvement project will be supplemented by a series of short-term objectives, achievable within two to four weeks of the projects commencement. These objectives include a review of pages on the website to reduce duplication of content and simplify navigation, an initial update of the existing community calendar, the revision of grammar for all sections, the addition of photographs to appropriate sections, and an updated visitor's brochure to replace the one currently accessible. Most of these objectives will be supplemented by the long term objectives outlined above.

4. Timelines for Completion

The work plan for this campaign calls for the major objectives to be achieved by mid-August 2011. The timelines for each phase are as follows:

Marketing Plan	June 1 st – July 29 th
Video Campaign	June 6 th –August 15 th
Website Component	
<i>Short Term Objectives</i>	June 1 st -June 29 th
<i>Long Term Objectives</i>	July 4 th –August 22 th

The milestones for the project are as follows:

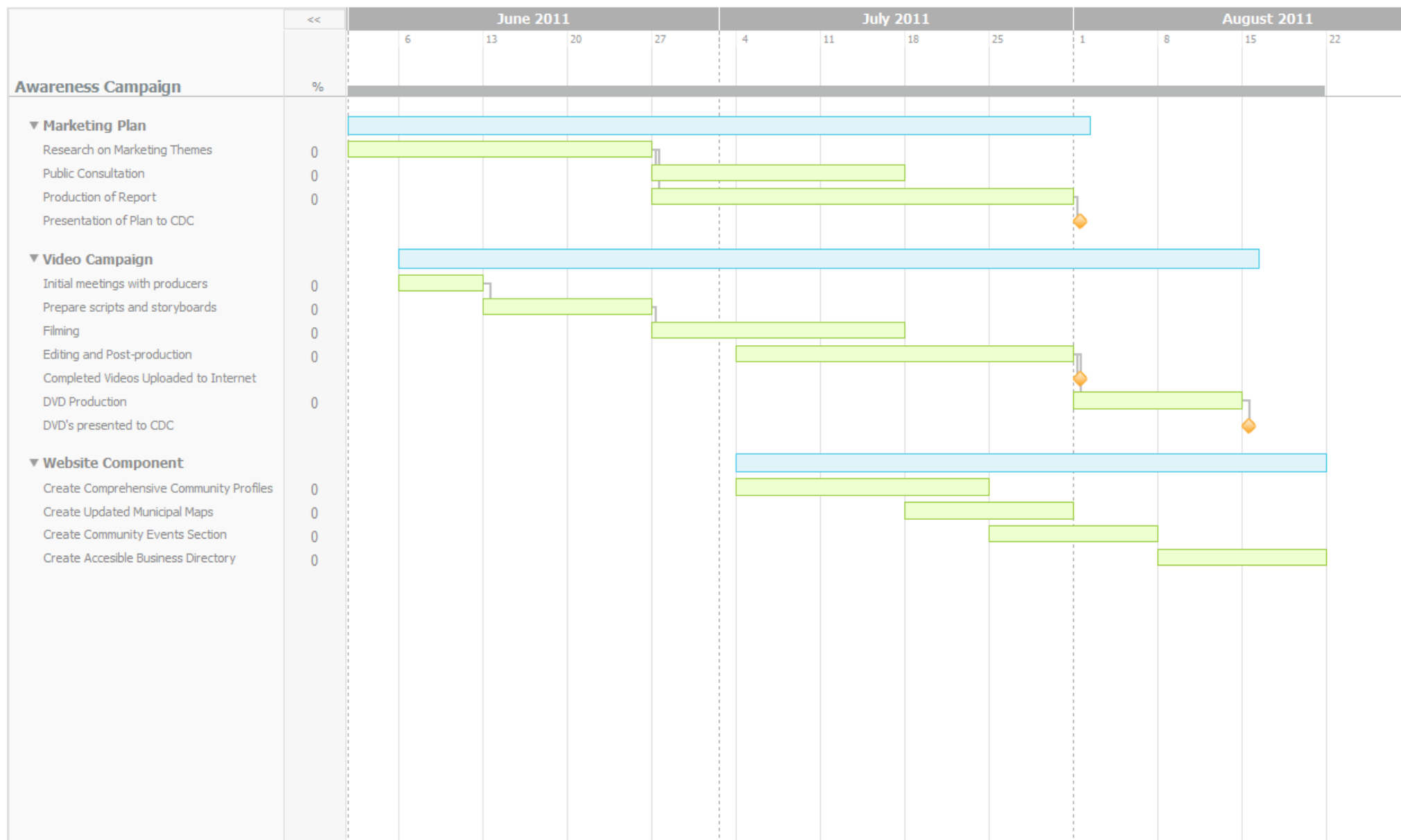
Mid-term status report	Mid-July
Uploading completed videos online	July 31 st
Presentation of Marketing Plan to CDC	Early August
Presentation of Completed DVDs to CDC	Late August

A more detailed breakdown of timelines can be found on the Gantt chart located on the following page. The plan also provides for two weeks of overrun time which can be used in the event that the overall campaign gets behind schedule. Allowing for this time, the entire campaign will be completed by September 2nd at the latest.

The overlap between the timelines of the major objectives has been done out of recognition that are parts of this awareness campaign are interrelated. Overlapping timelines allow developments in one area to be influence outcomes in other areas. For example, the feedback generated through the public consultation phase will have impacts on how the website redesign proceeds, and the visual direction laid out by the marketing plan will impact the final appearance of both the video campaign and the new

website materials. By taking this approach, the Markstay-Warren awareness campaign can develop as a fully coordinated, holistic endeavour, while still maintaining a set of achievable, action-oriented timelines.

4.1 Project Workplan



5. Evaluation

Post-project evaluation is one of the most important, but most overlooked stages of program design and implementation. This stage can be problematic, however; the nature of the Markstay-Warren awareness campaign is such that the results of it will not be immediately apparent. However, consideration must be given to how the success of the program will be evaluated.

The Economic Development Project Coordinator will submit an initial assessment of the implementation of the awareness campaign to the CDC in September 2011. This assessment will provide an overview of the following:

- The preparation and implementation of the campaign
- Obstacles that were encountered during the campaign
- Changes that needed to be made as a result of obstacles
- Initial reaction to the campaign

In the months following the successful implementation of the campaign, the Economic Development Project Coordinator will continue to solicit feedback, most notably in the form of public feedback on the video campaign and user comments on the updated website. This feedback will be submitted to the CDC in an evaluation report six months after the completion of the campaign, in February. This evaluation report will include an assessment of the intermediate-term success of the campaign and recommendations for future action.

6. Budget

As most of the work involved with this campaign can be done in-house by the Economic Development Coordinator, the only element of the campaign that requires a budget is the video component. These costs cover the development, filming, and postproduction of the videos. The producer's fees will also cover the graphic design of any visual elements that will be used in either the videos or the DVD production.

Video Component

Transportation (\$0.47/km)	\$500
Accommodation	\$250
Equipment Expenses	\$150
DVD Production	\$100
Producer's Fees	\$700
Total	\$1700

Markstay-Warren Municipal Website Improvement Project

Work Plan – Visitor's Section

Compiled by James Cox, Economic Development Project Coordinator

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1.0 Summary

The Markstay-Warren Municipal Website has the potential to be a substantial community resource, where both residents and visitors could go to obtain information about the municipality. The basic formatting of the site is very accessible; however, the content of the municipal website needs to be drastically revised and updated if the Municipal Website is to become a well-used community resource.

This project will revise the content of the six existing sections of the 'Visitor's' section of the municipal website, and add two new sections. The initial objectives of the project include an initial update of the existing community calendar, the revision of grammar for all sections, the addition of photographs to appropriate sections, and an updated visitor's brochure to replace the one currently accessible. The specific objectives for each section are outlined in more detail below.

In addition to these objectives, this work plan will review the entire website to simplify navigation and reduce duplication of content. This will make both using and updating the website easier going forward. During this review of the website, a guide will be produced that notes the locations of content, with the aim of ending the problem where content in one place on the website is updated, but the same content in a different place is not.

2.0 Existing Website Sections

This plan calls for the revision of content of the six existing sections of the Visitor's Section of the municipal website. The objectives for each of these sections are divided to short-term objectives (achievable in 2-4 weeks) and long-term objectives (achievable in 1-3 months). Most the long term objectives depend on the completion of other elements of the Markstay-Warren Awareness Campaign.

Website Section	Short Term Objectives	Long Term Objectives
Business Directory	- Link to full directory in 'Municipal' section	- Create a revised, more accessible business directory
Community Events	- Create pages with information regarding annual community events	
Events Calendar	- Update calendar to reflect community-based events	- Create mechanism allowing public to submit content to the community calendar
Library	- Revise grammar of section - Add photographs to section	
Our History	- Revise grammar of all subsections - Add photographs to all subsections	- Upload history video to website
Visitors Brochure	- Upload current version of visitors brochure	- Revise brochure with scale maps

2.1 Business Directory

Objectives:

- Link to full directory in the 'municipal' section
- Create a revised, more accessible business directory

The business directory is one of the key elements of the Visitor's Section of the website; newcomers or visitors to the municipality are going to want to know what amenities they will be able to find there. However, the current link to the business directory in the Visitor's Section only points to a file containing information on starting a new business. This information rightfully belongs in the Business Section of the website. In the short-term, this page will be redesigned to link to the existing business directory in the "Municipal" Section. Over the longer term, the business directory will be updated and substantially revised to be more comprehensive. This will include the addition of short biographies and descriptions of services for those businesses who wish to participate.

2.2 Community Events

Objectives:

- Create pages with information regarding annual community events

Markstay-Warren is host to numerous annual community events. However, there is little information available on these events available on the website. This project will update the community events section with several pages devoted to detailing the annual community events, as well as their usual dates.

2.3 Events Calendar

Objectives:

- Update calendar to reflect community-based events
- Create mechanism allowing public to submit content to the community calendar

The municipal website already has a community calendar; however, it is currently an underutilized resource. The information contained on the calendar is narrowly focused on the activities of municipal government (committee meetings, board of trade meetings, etc), and as such is of limited interest to the general public outside of these committees. This proposal calls for the expansion of the content found on this calendar and transform it into a greater community resource.

This proposal calls for the immediate updating of the community calendar to reflect the special events that are occurring in the community. This calendar is to be continuously updated as the municipality becomes aware of new events occurring in the community. As a long term objective, this project will devise a mechanism whereby community members are able to submit information about their community events (subject to vetting by municipal staff) to be posted on the calendar. This mechanism could be as broad as posting an email address where community members can send information, or could take the form of a more robust system.

2.4 Library

Objectives:

- Revise grammar of section
- Add photographs to section

The Library section of the website is relatively simple. The library maintains its own website with updated information, so the municipal webpage essentially offers a brief history of the library. The content of this section needs to be updated to reflect the current situation of the library branches and the grammar of these sections needs to be improved. The section will also be updated to include photographs of the library branches.

2.5 Our History

Objectives:

- Revise grammar of all subsections
- Add photographs of all subsections
- Upload history video to website (when completed)

There is a substantial amount of content in the History section, and as such it represents an excellent resource to individuals looking to find more information about the community. The content of this section does not require significant updating, but the grammar of this section needs to be revised to improve readability. Photographs will also be added to these sections to provide a visual counterpoint to the webpage content.

The Markstay-Warren Awareness Campaign calls for the creation of a short video devoted to the history of Markstay-Warren. Much of the content of this video will be based on information found in the history section of the website. This video will be posted in the history of section of the website when it is completed.

2.6 Visitors Brochure

Objectives:

- Upload the updated version of the Visitors Brochure to the website
- Revise brochure with scale maps

The Visitors Brochure section of the website is very basic; it simply provides a link where the brochure prepared by the municipality can be downloaded. The current link points to a brochure that is outdated, citing many businesses which no longer exist while omitting newer ones. For a short term solution, a more current version of the brochure will be uploaded to the website. In the long term, the brochure will be revised to feature new maps drawn to scale (see Section 3.2).

3.0 New Website Sections

This plan also calls for the addition of two new sections to the Visitors Section of the website. These sections will provide a significant amount of new content to the municipal website; as such, they will require a longer amount of time to complete. The objectives outlined in this section fall into the long-term objectives category (achievable in 1-3 months).

3.1 Community Profiles

The main element of this overhaul would be the creation of a series of new community profiles to highlight the communities that comprise Markstay-Warren. The current website does not communicate a good sense of what the communities of Markstay-Warren look like or why they are attractive to visit or move to. This campaign proposes the creation of a new set of community profiles, with a detailed description and history of each community, a community-focused business directory, a detailed map of businesses and other community landmarks, a community photo gallery, and videos highlighting the community. These community profiles would serve to better communicate the assets that exist within Markstay-Warren's communities and position the municipality as a target for investment and tourism.

3.2 Municipal Maps Section

Although there are currently maps available on the website, they are difficult to find and only provide a limited amount of information. As a result, there is very little indication from the website what the municipality 'looks like', and where the landmarks of Markstay-Warren are located in relation to each other. This project will create a series of new maps for the communities in the municipality, which show both the businesses and the natural landmarks and attractions located in the municipality. These maps will be linked to the community profiles on the website in order to more completely give a sense of the communities in Markstay-Warren.