



Appendix 2.3 One-Year Tactical Plan

Under the *Provincial Sales Tax Act*, all designated recipients, including designated recipients not subject to the renewal application requirement, must provide specific reports to the Province annually. As such, all designated recipients (or the designated recipient's service provider), are required to complete and submit the following One-year Tactical Plan **no later than November 30th each year for years two through five**.

If the One Year Tactical plan has been completed before November 30th, please submit the plan before the deadline. A Five-year Strategic Business Plan is required in year 1 and the One-Year Tactical Plan would be a part of your MRDT application submission.

The One-year Tactical Plan must be consistent with the Five-year Strategic Business Plan and be based on the calendar year.

A sample Tactical Plan template has been provided below. However, the format of the Tactical Plan may be developed specific to your community needs and resources.

Similar to the Five-year Strategic Business Plan, the One-year Tactical Plan must adhere to the MRDT program principles, regulations and guidelines (see box below).

Please ensure there is alignment between provincial tourism strategies and community tourism efforts. Additionally, designated recipients should make their One-year Tactical Plans available to tourism industry stakeholders.

If you wish to make material modifications to the Five-year goals, strategies or targets, the changes must be identified in the One-year Tactical Plan and may require approval from the Province (see Section 11: Amendments in Program Requirements).

Your One-Year Tactical Plan must contain the following information:

- Key learning and conclusions from the previous year
- An overview of the strategic direction from the Five-Year Strategic Business Plan
- Details about activities and tactics for the upcoming year
- Expected outcomes
- Availability of revenue from other sources to fund projects in addition to the funds from the MRDT tax (Reminder: funds from the tax must be incremental to existing sources of funding. The funds from the tax must not replace existing sources of tourism funding in a community)
- A proposed budget for the year ahead

For questions, please contact Destination British Columbia at MRDT@destinationbc.ca.

*Quick Reference Guide
(from the MRDT Program
Requirements):*

- *The intention of the tax is to assist designated recipients to fund tourism marketing, programs and projects.*
- *Funds from the MRDT program are intended to augment current funding and cannot be used to replace existing sources of tourism funding in a community.*
- *The MRDT program is intended to contribute to the increase of local tourism revenue, visitation, and economic benefits and should be supported by local government and tourism stakeholders.*

The MRDT program principles are:

- *Effective tourism marketing, programs and projects*
- *Effective local-level stakeholder support, and inter-community collaboration*
- *Marketing efforts that are coordinated and complementary to provincial marketing strategies and tactics*
- *Fiscal prudence and accountability.*

One-Year Tactical Plan Template

Designated Recipient: Tourism Cowichan Society

Designated Accommodation Area: Cowichan Valley Regional District

Date Submitted: November 30, 2023

MRDT Repeal Date: July 1, 2027

Five Year Period: July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2027

A description and instructions pertaining to each section is provided in grey text as a guide only. **The format of your One-Year Tactical Plan may be developed specific to your community needs and resources.** If using this template, please delete the blue text and provide your response accordingly. If using your own report template, please ensure it includes the following sections:

Section 1: Overview and Update to Five-year Strategic Business Plan	
Heading	Description
Strategic Direction	<p>Vision: Tourism in the Cowichan Valley region is a significant contributor to the region’s economic and social well-being, with the region being recognized as a premier destination for leisure get-a-ways and vacations.</p> <p>Mission: Contribute to increasing the economic and social benefits of a thriving tourism industry through focused, industry driven and professionally managed marketing and promotion of the region into the nearby markets; and supporting the efforts of regional, provincial, and national destination marketing.</p> <p>Five-Year Strategic Business Plan Objectives:</p> <p><u>Goal 1: Increase revenue from visitation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives: Increased overnight stays; Increased occupancy; Increased Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR); Increased awareness Target: Increase 5% Data Source: MRDT Accommodation Survey, Sentiment Analysis <p><u>Goal 2: Manage growth and benefit through seasonal and geographical dispersion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives: Dispersion of share to shoulder and off-season; Higher off-season occupancy; Higher off-season RevPar Target: Increase 10% Data Source: MRDT Collection, Visitor Centre Attendance, MRDT Accommodation Survey <p><u>Goal 3: Increase stakeholder collaboration and export readiness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives: Increased collaboration between stakeholders; Increased market/export ready product Target: Increase NPS 3%; Increase inventory of operators 5%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Data Source: Number of packaged products, Inventory of trade ready operators, Net Promoter Score
Key Learnings and Conclusions	<p>2023 Activities to Date:</p> <p><u>Boldly Go Spring Campaign</u> A comprehensive spring campaign, <i>Boldly Go</i>, was executed from March-June to motivate Lower Mainland residents to visit the Cowichan Region. Marketing tactics included Connected TV advertising, paid social ads, BC Food and Wine radio segments, as well as sponsored content, display ads, and getaway contests with Vancouver Is Awesome and Daily Hive Vancouver. The Connected TV ad buys included a combination of in-stream and out-stream video ads as well as pause ads, all resulting in impressive engagement rates and click-through rates far beyond industry benchmarks.</p> <p>Spring Campaign Samples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily Hive: 5 incredible outdoor activities in Vancouver Island’s majestic Cowichan ● Vancouver Is Awesome: Contest: You could win a spring vacation package featuring the very best of Cowichan ● Daily Hive Reel: 7 things you can do on your next trip to Cowichan ● Boldly Go Spring Video <p><u>Warm Your Heart Fall Campaign</u> The fall campaign, <i>Warm Your Heart in Cowichan</i>, is running September 15 until November 30, targeting BC and AB markets. Key marketing tactics include Times Colonist e-mail marketing, CTV/Global fall television commercials (15-second and 30-second), Connected TV ads, CTV stakeholder interview segments, BC ferry table-top ads, fall influencer trip, paid social ads, paid search, as well as display advertising and TikTok’s in partnership with Vancouver Is Awesome.</p> <p><u>2023/24 Cowichan Visitor Guide</u> The 2023/2024 Cowichan Visitor Guide was completed in September 2023 with a full redesign to incorporate Cowichan’s new brand voice and tone. The guide is 64 pages and features community editorials, activity editorial pieces, annual events, paid stakeholder advertorial features, a tear-away regional map, and a business directory. The print run will include 60,000 copies which will be distributed throughout the BC and Vancouver Island visitor centre network, BC Ferries (Tsawwassen-Swartz Bay routes), the Coho ferry, and local Cowichan businesses.</p> <p><u>Cowichan Rebrand</u> Tourism Cowichan’s rebrand was completed in March 2023. The new brand identity will allow us to differentiate Cowichan from other destinations on Vancouver Island and BC, establish a stronger brand awareness, and create a</p>

sense of place to attract new and returning visitors. The brand creation included extensive stakeholder engagement sessions and feedback to capture the resident and stakeholder perceptions of Cowichan to create an authentic brand that represents the diverse communities, geographic areas and sectors. The new brand embodies the warmth, authenticity, and unexpectedness of our beautiful region and highlights the heartfelt, founded and quirky stories, places and experiences.

Consumer Website

Cowichan’s consumer website is being completely redesigned to accompany the rebrand. Progress continues to be made; however, it has been slower than initially expected. A branded [landing page](#) was added to bridge the gap until the launch of the new site. The anticipated launch for the new website is November 2023.

Branded Collateral

New branded collateral including pop-up banners, stickers, t-shirts, and tote bags were produced to increase brand awareness and will be utilized for travel media giveaway and special events.

Print Advertising

Tourism Cowichan strategically worked with several publishers on editorial features as well as purchased ad space in printed visitor resources, magazines, and guide books. Print ads focused on inspirational imagery and often included a QR code to provide tracking capabilities. Publications included:

- Destination Greater Victoria 2023 Visitor Guide
- Saanich News Family Day Guide
- 2023/24 BC Wine Tour Handbook
- Vancouver Island Visitor Guide
- GO Vancouver Island Magazine
- Cowichan Grown Farm Map
- Landmark Media Cowichan Map & Vancouver Island Map
- Northwest Travel & Life Magazine
- Edible Magazine (Fall Issue)
- BC Road Trips Guide (Fall Issue)
- Culinary Travels Cookbook Series (Baxter Media)
- Waggoner Cruising Guide

Asset Acquisition

Image acquisition projects were completed in March, July and August to capture photography that embodies the essence of the Cowichan brand, fills content gaps, and supports the launch of the new consumer website. A total of 224 new images were acquired and included photoshoots with 23 stakeholders. New b-roll was also acquired and is being used to create short form videos for organic and paid social amplification, as well as broadcast commercials for shoulder season campaigns. New b-roll was uploaded and made available on the BC Content Hub.

Display & Paid Social - GetintheLoop Partnership

A partnership was launched with GetintheLoop to amplify local agritourism experiences. Tourism Cowichan now has a [dedicated loop](#) on the platform, enabling the connection with both local and province-wide consumers. This partnership gave agritourism stakeholders exposure through GetintheLoop's digital platform and social media accounts. This has proven to be a positive initiative so far, with 41 of our small businesses and 78 live offers onboarded to the platform within seven weeks of launching. The agritourism loop has achieved a total reach of 598,078 province wide.

Organic Social Media

Daily feed and story posts have proven successful in increasing social media followers. Over the summer, there was a high volume of user-generated content on local community events and festivals happening in the region which we were able to re-share. Instagram collaborations continue to result in the highest engagement and follower growth.

Partnership Marketing - Paddle BC

Tourism Cowichan joined the Paddle BC consortium in July to position Cowichan as a paddling destination and target specific visitor markets. View our [community listing here](#).

Partnership Marketing - Island Taste Trail

Tourism Cowichan is participating in the Island Taste Trail campaign which will run October 19-November 9, 2023. The campaign will increase Cowichan's visibility in the island culinary scene, encouraging food enthusiasts from across Vancouver Island to explore local restaurants during the fall harvest season.

Partnership Marketing - Golf VI E-Blast

On June 15, Cowichan was featured in Golf VI's Emerald Club newsletter (over 52k subscribers) to highlight Cowichan as a golf destination. It received an open rate of 41.2% (20,741 opens) and 364 clicks. The highest opens by country location (in descending order) were: USA (72.3%), Canada (20.8%), and Sweden (6.2%).

Travel Trade - Explore VI Event

Tourism Cowichan attended the Explore VI travel trade show event to network with receptive Tour Operators, Travel Agencies and Wholesalers that are looking to expand their business in the Vancouver Island area. This event took place in Cowichan Bay on March 8, 2023. There were 19 Operators/Online Travel Agencies and 35 VI stakeholders (including CDMOs) in attendance.

Product & Experience Development - Events & Festivals Fund

Tourism Cowichan's Events & Festivals Grant was launched on April 20, 2023. The \$100,000 annual fund is designed to fund out-of-region marketing activities for

festival and event organizers to increase visitation and overnight stays in Cowichan, increase the economic and social benefits that flow from tourism to residents, and drive seasonal dispersion through the off-peak seasons (fall, winter, spring). To date, \$80,000 of the grant funding has been administered to 13 events.

Product & Experience Development – Cycling Tourism Strategy

Tourism Cowichan is working with a consultant and in the planning stages for the Cycling Tourism Strategy. The timing of this tactic has been delayed, and the project will now commence in January 2024. A regional cycling strategy will help to position Cowichan as a premier destination for cycling tourism and identify steps for improved alignment across sectors.

Visitor Services

The Visitor Services funding for \$50,000 was administered to the four visitor centres in June 2023: Cowichan Regional Visitor Centre, Ladysmith Visitor Centre, Chemainus Visitor Centre, and Cowichan Lake Visitor Centre.

Industry Development - Stakeholder Workshops

Tourism Cowichan partnered with go2HR to facilitate three complimentary in-person industry workshops for Cowichan stakeholders. The workshops provided learning opportunities for managers, as well as customer service training for front-line tourism staff and volunteers.

- April 19 - Employee Retention & Recruitment Workshop (21 attendees)
- June 6 - SuperHost Foundations of Service Quality (21 attendees)
- June 13 - SuperHost Destination Ambassador (21 attendees)

Industry Development - Victoria Guest Services Network Showcase

Tourism Cowichan attended the Victoria Guest Services Network Showcase on May 23, 2023 at the Victoria Conference Centre to promote the Cowichan region to front-line hospitality staff and volunteer ambassadors in Victoria.

Research - Trail Impact Assessment

Tourism Cowichan has partnered with Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society and Vancouver Island University to conduct a trail impact assessment. The study will assess economic and social impacts of the trail systems and trail users in Cowichan and will take place throughout November and December 2023. This research will support evidence-based land use planning and resource allocation to attract visitors, promote community well-being, and ensure sustainable development of Cowichan’s destination trails.

Research - Resident Sentiment Study

The Cowichan Resident Sentiment Study in partnership with the Vancouver Island University World Leisure Centre of Excellence was completed in March, with the final report delivered in May. The purpose of the study was to better understand

	<p>resident perspectives on tourism development in the region. The final sample size for the research was 338 participants and results indicated an overall positive resident sentiment towards tourism development in the Cowichan region.</p> <p><u>Research – Hotel Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Tourism Cowichan, in partnership with Economic Development Cowichan, is undertaking a hotel needs assessment to evaluate the market and economic potential of hotel development in Cowichan. The study will identify the types and sizes of properties that would be best suited for the Cowichan region and evaluate specific site locations to aid in hotel investment attraction. The project will commence in November 2023.</p> <p>Key Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing outreach to stakeholders has increased awareness of Tourism Cowichan, opportunities available, and business listings on www.tourismcowichan.com ● Partnering with media outlets such as Vancouver Is Awesome has proven to be an effective way to curate an engaged audience, increase consumer email subscribers, and motivate consumers down the path of purchase by driving them to the consumer website for trip-planning information. ● Search engine marketing has been a fairly new tactic for Tourism Cowichan and has been an effective way of attracting website users. Ads consistently produce a high click-through rate, driving users to relevant pages on the consumer website. ● The change in algorithm and the continuous shift towards video and reel content has impacted Tourism Cowichan’s focus on content creation for organic social media. ● One of the key ongoing challenges is a lack of digital readiness amongst stakeholders. Looking ahead, it will be crucial to continue working with stakeholders to increase digital readiness to produce more brand aligned UGC and a stronger and more diverse group of local content creators. ● Our industry continues to face challenges in workforce housing and staff shortages. Targeting campaigns in the off-peak season months (spring, fall, winter) will help to increase seasonal dispersion and reduce pressures on businesses during the peak season. ● Research conducted in the region for 2022/2023 indicated a high level of association with Indigenous tourism, wineries and craft beverages, farms, and outdoor adventures when visitors were asked about the Cowichan region. A focus on these areas is reflected throughout Tourism Cowichans’ annual destination marketing plan.
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Overall Goals and Objectives	Destination Plan Objectives: <u>Goal 1: Increase revenue from visitation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 1: Generate leads for local businesses ● Objective 2: Increase brand awareness <u>Goal 2: Manage growth and benefit through seasonal and geographical dispersion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 1: Build and position destination drivers ● Objective 2: Increase shoulder season occupancy <u>Goal 3: Increase stakeholder collaboration and export readiness</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 1: Improve the visitor experience ● Objective 2: Increase collaboration with and amongst stakeholders and rightsholders ● Objective 3: Position Cowichan as a sustainable destination
Strategies	<p>Tourism Cowichan intends to align its marketing efforts with local, regional, and provincial planning priorities and efforts. Strategic direction has been taken from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Vancouver Island Regional Destination Development Strategy is the regional result of a two-year research and strategic planning initiative led by DBC. Designed to enhance the competitiveness of the region over the next 10 years and beyond, the Destination Development Program is a critical component of Destination BC’s corporate strategy, which has been delivered in partnership with 4VI and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. The regional strategy is playing an important role in helping to advance the destination development process through a unified planning framework. Major planning themes include transportation and infrastructure, exceptional trail experiences, innovation in tourism technologies, labour market development, and experience development. The strategy emphasizes destination and product development in alignment with DBC’s targets. ● 4VI is closely involved in DBC’s Destination Development Program as well as the Co-operative Marketing Partnerships Program. MRDT funding targets are meant to complement and reinforce industry, community and operator planning priorities and in the case of cooperative programs, provincial fund pools. There are many other programs delivered by 4VI such as travel media and travel trade that are built into this application. ● Tourism Cowichan’s (TC) Marketing Partnerships Program has identified increased visitation and expenditures, financial sustainability and DMO effectiveness as core objectives. TC pursues Tier 1 brand alignment with Destination BC. Key strategies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create emotional urgency to visit BC through brand-aligned marketing materials that emphasize a call to action to the

	<p>consumer. There is a focus on agritourism, craft alcohol and culinary experiences, as well as outdoor adventure activities such as hiking and mountain biking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Generate leads for BC tourism businesses and travel trade by focusing on the leisure traveller, in particular the affluent leisure traveller. Elevate TC website to drive conversations and conversions. ○ Encourage sharing the story of Cowichan as a destination with the world through organic social media, programmatic/social media advertising and the consumer-facing website. ○ Use BCRTS Vancouver Island region detailed market segmentation personas for audience targeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Economic Development Cowichan (EDC) is the economic development arm of the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD). The current Strategic Plan outlines a role for EDC through destination and product development that is meant to complement the marketing and industry efforts of Tourism Cowichan. “Champion emerging tourism products that will enhance the growth of the sector and complement the destination marketing focus of Tourism Cowichan Society.” In collaboration with EDC, Tourism Cowichan will take a leading role in advancing tourism product development. EDC also actively promotes the film sector in the Valley (through a subsidiary Film Cowichan) by highlighting locations and film production opportunities, raising awareness of film and by providing film liaison services to businesses, municipalities and incoming production companies. <p>Specific strategies to be undertaken include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to work with and support Destination BC brand and marketing programs. ● Work with Indigenous Tourism BC, as well as Cowichan Tribes, Malahat Nation, Ditidaht First Nation, and Ts’uubaa-asatx Nation to explore increased opportunities for Indigenous tourism experiences for visitors. ● Using a lens of social responsibility, promote sustainability for communities through consumer marketing. ● Conduct strategic advertising and marketing campaigns that promote Cowichan in core regional markets. ● Actively pursue cooperative marketing, and travel trade and media opportunities with 4VI. ● Collaborate with neighbouring DMOs to include Cowichan in touring and sector-based marketing programs. ● Work with local operators and regional partners to improve market and export readiness so that industry is able to provide new experiences, especially in the shoulder and off-season. ● Undertake content gathering, creation and promotion, production and
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	<p>distribution of collateral, digital media and conventional advertising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raise social media activity and conversations to expand awareness and draw more off-peak visitation and outreach. ● Attend industry conferences (i.e., BC Tourism & Hospitality Conference, BC Mountain Bike Tourism Conference) to understand the progression of tourism nationally and provincially, to identify new and emerging market opportunities and to learn about advances in the application of technology and innovations in tourism. ● Support operators to participate in travel trade markets, including attending or helping operators attend trade shows, and learning workshops on the trade market as offered by 4VI. ● Support community organizations in their efforts to develop events that draw visitation to the region. ● Improve visitor market research to improve the deployment of marketing resources and programs. ● In cooperation with 4VI and the Province, develop a marketing preparedness and response framework to help Tourism Cowichan adapt to future emergency events such floods, fires, pandemics, and recessions. <p>Key Content Themes: Wine and culinary, agritourism, outdoor adventures (i.e., mountain biking, hiking), arts, heritage and culture, and Indigenous culture.</p>
Target Markets	<p>From a geographic perspective the focus of effort will be based on research that indicates that the strongest visitation and spending results from British Columbians, Albertans and Washingtonians in that order. The most significant opportunity comes from travellers visiting Victoria and other parts of the Vancouver Island region, as well as Vancouver Island residents. Short and mid-term marketing efforts therefore are focused on the close-in markets with support provided to 4VI and Destination BC in the key markets of long-haul Canadian and international markets.</p> <p>It is noted that Cowichan continues to experience more day-trips from Vancouver Island residents versus overnight stays from beyond. A renewed emphasis on higher yield visitation from elsewhere in BC, Alberta and Washington will generate room revenues (and hotel tax receipts), longer stays and higher overall spending.</p> <p><u>Geographic Targets</u> Primary: British Columbia (Victoria and Lower Mainland) - 80% Secondary: Alberta (Calgary and Edmonton) - 15% Other: Washington State - 5%</p> <p><u>Explorer Quotient Targets</u> Primary: Authentic Experiencers, Cultural Explorers</p>

	<p>Secondary: Free Spirits</p> <p><u>Demographic Targets</u> Primary: 45+ couples traveling without kids (higher income bracket of \$100,000) Secondary: Families and 25-40 solo travelers or young couples</p> <p><u>Activity-Based Targets</u> Wine and culinary, agritourism, arts, heritage & culture, and outdoor adventures (hiking, mountain biking, marine activities, golf)</p>
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Section 2: One-Year Tactical Plan with Performance Measures

Please provide a **Project Plan** for each major activity you will undertake in the year ahead using MRDT funds. Authorized purposes of MRDT funds are tourism marketing, programs and projects and any other prescribed purposes as set out by regulation.

Project plans should include the following information for each activity. The recipient can organize the plan in a manner that best reflects their individual approach. Please note that Destination BC may share relevant tactical information with applicable Destination BC program areas to facilitate increased collaboration and alignment.

1. The **major category** of the activity. Examples could include marketing, destination and product experience development, visitor services, etc.
Marketing, which may include:
 - Media Advertising and Production (for example: print, radio, television, out-of-home, direct mail, email marketing, search engine marketing, paid social media, display ads, etc.)
 - Website - Hosting, Development, Maintenance
 - Social Media Management Platforms and Tools (i.e. Hootsuite)
 - Consumer Shows and Events
 - Travel Trade and Corporate focused Shows and Events
 - Collateral production and distribution
 - Travel Media Relations (for example: story idea creation, media and influencer FAM hosting/ support, attendance at media marketplaces, etc.)
 - Travel Trade (for example: trade FAM hosting/support, etc.)
 - Consumer-focused asset development (for example: curation or production of written content, photography, videography, etc.)
 - Other (these activities must be specified)**Destination and Product Experience Development, which may include:**
 - Industry Development and Training - Enhancing Education and Knowledge (for example: market readiness, digital readiness, industry conferences, packaging and other tourism-related Industry Workshops)
 - Product Experience Enhancement and Training (for example: Itinerary Development, Content Development and Key Experience Creation)
 - Research, Evaluation, and Analytics
 - Destination Development Projects listed within your Planning Area Strategy that are eligible activities
 - Other (these activities must be specified)**Visitor Services, which may include:**
 - Visitor Services Activities (for example: staff wage and benefits, visitor services via social media, digital tools, including mobile apps, kiosks, beacons, etc., roving/mobile visitor services, ambassador programs, FAMs)
 - Other (these activities must be specified)**Meetings, Conventions, Events and Sport:**
 - Examples could include conferences, events, sports, etc.**Affordable Housing, which may include:**
 - Details on affordable housing projects (project description and rationale, authorizing documents, budget, and applicable funding partners).
 - Please complete and attach Appendix 1.8.**Other:**
 - Other activities not covered by the above categories, such as capital expenditures if **pre-approved by government** (prior to application), etc.
2. Please list and describe **the tactics** your community will use to achieve the strategies outlined in Section 1 of your Five-Year Strategic Business Plan. There may be several tactics for each activity.
3. Please provide an **implementation plan** that includes a short description, quantifiable objectives, rationale, action steps, potential partnerships, resources, sources of funding, responsibilities, time frame, budget, and evaluation mechanism.

Project Plan Template

A description and instructions pertaining to each section is provided in grey text as a guide only. **The format of your Project Plan may be developed specific to your community needs and resources. If using this template, please delete the grey text and provide your response accordingly.**

<p>Major Category: Marketing</p>
<p>Activity Title: Media Advertising and Production</p>
<p>Tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on traditional print, broadcast and out-of-home advertising ● Feature BC-Brand aligned photography and editorial content that exemplifies the authentic and perspective-changing experience and maximizes storytelling ● Feature sustainable tourism, Indigenous tourism, agritourism, culinary and craft beverages, outdoor adventures, and events ● Print and out-of-home targeted at Victoria, Lower Mainland, and Washington; broadcast at Lower Mainland and Alberta ● Off-season promotions to tap into drive markets ● Explore partnership opportunities with Nanaimo Airport for awareness campaigns with targeted messaging about direct flight options and proximity to the Cowichan region to drive visitors from BC and Alberta markets
<p><u>Implementation Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: Traditional paid print and broadcast initiatives will target consumers with compelling messaging and inspirational imagery to motivate consumers along the path to purchase. ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase brand awareness and visitation from regional markets ● Rationale: Maximize exposure through media partnerships that reach targeted consumers. Traditional media is still required for generating purchase decisions by some target segments (e.g. older cohorts). ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to refine the visual identity and value proposition of Cowichan as a destination ○ Seek print partnerships where sector-based experiences (such as Indigenous tourism, wineries, culinary, etc.) align with the key demographic of the readership ○ Use radio and television advertising (CTV and Bell Media) in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island to support shoulder season campaigns and increase brand awareness ○ Continue partnership with BC Ferries for table-top ad buys ○ Work with the Nanaimo Airport to strategize goals and objectives, make a plan and implement ○ Call to action leads to https://tourismcowichan.com

- **Potential Partnerships:** Stakeholders, media outlets, creative agency
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT, DBC Co-op Marketing
- **Timeframe:** January to June and September to December
- **Budget:**
 - Television - \$80,000
 - Radio - \$15,000
 - Print - \$50,000
 - Out-of-home - \$30,000
 - Brand Creative - \$20,000
 - **Total - \$195,000**

Performance Measures:

- Distribution numbers and viewership
- Click-through rates to consumer website
- Broadcast reach
- Number of impressions
- Tracking of contests and special promotions

Major Category: Marketing**Activity Title:** Website**Tactics:**

- Use the newly redesigned www.tourismcowichan.com to continually improve the user experience and increase the likelihood of conversion (click through to a stakeholder website)
- Align with partner and operator websites
- Drive social media conversations and activity
- Generate leads directly to tourism businesses

Implementation Plan

- **Description:** Use the new website as the primary marketing tool to move consumers through the path to purchase, while investing in user experience improvements to address changing consumer behaviors of target audiences.
- **Objectives:** Increase website activity, enquiries and bookings, and referrals to operators.
- **Rationale:** The website is the primary source for all call-to-action promotions. It is the number-one marketing tool, therefore responsive design and cutting-edge content is critical for both luring travellers who are planning their trips online and assisting visitors while in the destination.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Ongoing hosting, development, and content additions
 - Integrate social media conversations and content

- Continue to modify and enhance the stakeholder-facing webpage through improved website functionality and content, including the creation of an online ambassador course
- Improve conversions to stakeholder websites through the addition of listing functionality
- Expand website features that support trip-planning, including the addition of an interactive itinerary builder and map functionalities for specific activity themes (including a farm stand tour to increase support for agritourism stakeholders)
- Provide adequate information for each stage of the purchase cycle so the content encourages users through the funnel process from inspiration to operator referrals
- **Potential Partnerships:** Stakeholders, content writers, website agency
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT, DBC Co-op Marketing
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Budget:** \$60,000

Performance Measures:

- Increased time on site
- Increased referrals to operators
- Website metrics including growth of unique visitors to the site, search engine tracking, bounce rate, length of time on site, organic search results, stakeholder listings click-through rate (conversions)

Major Category: Marketing

Activity Title: Social Media & Digital Marketing

Tactics:

- Purchase online display and paid search in targeted digital properties, driving the consumer to the consumer website
- Expand consumer database by partnering with media outlets for newsletter inclusion ads that target a captive and relevant audience
- Utilize social media networks such as: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest to increase brand awareness (organic tactic – always on)
- Purchase social media advertisements on Facebook and Instagram, balancing brand awareness messages with direct call-to-actions to book now
- Continue to use CrowdRiff for the generation of primarily User Generated Content on social channels and participate in Destination British Columbia’s Content Partner Network
- Focus on content creation and digital advertising
- Off-season focus in support of events and festivals, gastronomic, arts/culture/heritage, and outdoor recreation products
- Update image and video content that supports paid social advertising strategies

Implementation Plan

- **Description:** Utilize popular social media channels to enhance awareness of Cowichan and convey unique places and stories.
- **Objectives:**
 - Reach consumers at all stages of the planning cycle
 - Increase brand awareness and conversion
 - Increase social media conversations
 - Cultivate brand ambassadors
 - Increase the number of email subscribers
 - Facilitate the collection of consumer information
- **Rationale:** Enhanced social media content and presence will inform and engage travellers about Cowichan as a destination, reach new consumers, and motivate along the path to purchase.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Use programmatic media to reach target audiences and raise awareness of Cowichan's products, activities, and offers; target based on demographics, psychographics and contextual content surrounding the ads
 - Include media buys, direct digital buys, search engine marketing, retargeting, email marketing, social media and website promotions
 - Negotiate creative buys by leveraging the media buying strategy of partners
 - Deploy quarterly consumer newsletters to highlight seasonal activities and drive leads to stakeholder websites through special offers and content
 - Continue to enhance paid social media campaigns to amplify new visual and written content
- **Potential Partnerships:** DBC, ITBC, stakeholders, media outlets, creative agency
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT, DBC Co-op Marketing
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Budget:**
 - Organic Social Media - \$40,000
 - Paid Social Media - \$75,000
 - Digital Display & Native - \$50,000
 - Paid Search Engine Marketing - \$20,000
 - Email Marketing - \$15,000
 - **Total - \$200,000**

Performance Measures:

- Email: Total delivered, unique open/click rate, unsubscribe rate
- Social: Total follower growth, engagement rate, reach, #ExploreBC hashtag amplification, total consumer use of hashtag #ExploreCowichan
- Website: Reach, click-through rate, cost per click, cost per action, engagements, cost per engagement

Major Category: Marketing
Activity Title: Consumer Shows & Events
Tactics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend consumer shows to generate new sales leads and maximize brand awareness
Implementation Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: Attend consumer shows that provide opportunity to interact with an engaged audience and amplify marketing efforts targeted to specific interests. ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase brand awareness and amplify consumer messaging to put Cowichan top of mind ○ Reach new consumers to generate sales leads ○ Drive conversions for specific activity and passion areas ● Rationale: Consumer shows have engaged audiences and expertise to market specific activities within a destination. ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate available consumer show opportunities: tactics, reach, and therefore value for investment ○ Book exhibitor booths at brand-aligned consumer shows targeting specific interest groups ○ Work with stakeholders to create special offers and packages for consumer shows ○ Design and develop branded collateral to support exhibitor booth display ● Potential Partnerships: Stakeholders ● Resources/Funding: MRDT, DBC Co-op Marketing ● Timeframe: Ongoing ● Budget: \$15,000
Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance at brand aligned consumer shows ● # of consumer interactions ● # of consumer newsletter subscribers added

Major Category: Marketing
Activity Title: Collateral Production and Distribution
Tactics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing provincial and local distribution of the newly designed 2023/2024 Cowichan Visitor Guide ● Design and produce branded collateral (e.g. hats, sweatshirts, t-shirts, etc.) to support brand awareness, promotional giveaways, travel trade, and travel media hosting

Implementation Plan

- **Description:** Print and digital collateral to support cross market initiatives and visitor servicing.
- **Objectives:** Increase brand awareness and desire to visit, drive overnight stays in the shoulder season, and supplement digital communications by driving traffic to the website and social channels.
- **Rationale:** Collateral continues to be in demand through person-to-person points of contact such as visitor centres, brochure racks, and BC Ferries. Ongoing distribution of printed collateral supports brand awareness, trip-planning and contributes to the purchase cycle. It also supports offline access to information as older demographics still prefer printed materials.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Develop distribution plans for each target market; continue partnership with Certified Folder for ongoing print guide distribution on BC Ferries, Black Ball Ferry Line, and throughout the BC Visitor Centre Network
 - Form partnerships with communities and tourism businesses for local guide distribution
 - Design and produce new branded collateral specific to interests of key target markets and value-aligned travel media
- **Potential Partnerships:** Certified Folder, stakeholders, BC Ferries, Black Ball Ferry Line, BC Visitor Centre Network, DBC, travel media, and travel trade
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT, DBC Co-op Marketing
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing (demand based as required)
- **Budget:**
 - Guide Distribution - \$10,000
 - Collateral Production - \$10,000
 - **Total - \$20,000**

Performance Measures:

- Print guides: Annual distribution numbers
- Digital guides: Views, unique views, click-through rate, downloads, conversions

Major Category: Marketing

Activity Title: Travel Trade and Travel Media Relations

Tactics:

- Support Destination BC led travel trade and travel media initiatives
- Partner with 4VI to proactively organize familiarization opportunities for trade and media
- Conduct travel trade and travel media show representation
- Provide 4VI with regular, ongoing product updates
- Develop a Cowichan travel media kit that is aligned with 4VI and DBC efforts

Implementation Plan

- **Description:** Support travel trade and travel media relations in partnership and in alignment with Destination BC, 4VI, and other Vancouver Island CDMO's by providing relevant and current content on products and experiences, hosting press visits and coordinating private sector "in-kind" support.
- **Objectives:**
 - Increase awareness and understanding of Cowichan through trade channels
 - Generate unpaid, earned media coverage
 - Expand partnerships with digital partners
 - Development of new travel trade product opportunities as measured by an increase in the number of travel trade-ready stakeholders
- **Rationale:** Tourism Cowichan can support DBC and 4VI travel trade and media outreach, which helps build awareness across the entire travel planning and booking process. Travel media relations continues to be a key focus across all markets, providing a cost-effective and credible way to increase awareness by generating unpaid media coverage through key media outlets.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Provide relevant and current content on products and experiences, including monthly updates to 4VI and leading up to travel trade and media shows
 - Develop content for and promote themed itineraries targeted at the travel trade
 - Support travel trade and media familiarization tour opportunities
 - Host press visits, journalists, and influencer trips to Cowichan (spring and fall)
 - Align with DGV for trade and media show representation where and when appropriate
 - Support local tour operators to become export ready
 - Provide opportunities for stakeholders to access industry best practices, innovative marketing support and training and industry resources
- **Potential Partnerships:** 4VI, Destination Greater Victoria (DGV), Tourism Nanaimo, stakeholders, travel media and travel trade networks
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT, DBC Co-op Marketing
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Budget:**
 - Travel Media - \$15,000
 - Travel Trade - \$5,000
 - **Total - \$20,000**

Performance Measures:

- Travel Trade and Travel Media contacts
- Referrals to partners
- Unpaid media coverage
- Hosted tours
- Increase in trade-ready products

<p>Major Category: Marketing</p>
<p>Activity Title: Asset Development</p>
<p>Tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contract writers to develop itineraries, articles, and blog posts ● Compile to BC Brand aligned imagery, video, b-roll, drone footage for website and print ● Tie back to target EQ audiences ● Include diversity of models in images ● Continue display campaigns to amplify new visual and written content pieces ● Expand Accessible Travel Guide landing page
<p>Implementation Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: To provide better tools for carrying out marketing and promotional activities and social media connections. Visual assets will align with Tourism Cowichan’s brand and the Destination BC brand, using diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) best practices to expand assets. ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase number of brand-aligned image, video and written content that represents the diversity of Cowichan’s communities and experiences, and supports storytelling for campaigns, social media, and the www.tourismcowichan.com consumer website ○ Share asset database with local tourism stakeholders to further strengthen and align Cowichan’s brand position and value proposition ○ Increase brand awareness and conversion through captivating ads ○ Prioritize diverse representation of travellers in tourism marketing images, including people with disabilities, people of colour, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals ○ Expand accessibility guides and develop content for barrier-free travel experiences to assist travellers in having the best and safest experience ○ Ensure visual assets and written content aligns with the region’s values and goals for social, cultural, and environmental sustainability ● Rationale: A continued focus on expanding compelling visual assets is imperative to building a strong value proposition for Cowichan and supporting digital marketing efforts, moving consumers along the path to purchase from inspired to booked. ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ad buys; create and monitor campaigns ○ Acquire new image and video assets to help fill content and stakeholder gaps ○ Engage tourism businesses to incorporate businesses and products into content ○ Commission content through partnerships with content creators ○ Coordination with DBC Brand Team (if appropriate) ● Potential Partnerships: DBC, ITBC, stakeholders, local photographers/videographers/writers ● Resources/Funding: MRDT, DBC Co-op Marketing

- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Budget:**
 - Written Content - \$12,000
 - Photography - \$23,000
 - Video - \$25,000
 - **Total - \$60,000**

Performance Measures:

- Number of new images/videos acquired
- Number of new blog posts
- Stakeholders engaged in asset acquisition projects
- Costs per unit

Major Category: Marketing

Activity Title: Partnership Marketing

Tactics:

- Sector-based marketing investments

Implementation Plan

- **Description:** Partner with sector destination marketing organizations to amplify Cowichan messaging in marketing efforts targeted to specific passion/activity areas. Destination BC consortiums include AhoyBC, BC Ale Trail, Golf VI, Ride Island, BC Bird Trail, BC Farmers’ Markets, and Paddle BC.
- **Objectives:**
 - Leverage dollars with other communities and sectors to reach new consumers
 - Increase brand awareness for Cowichan amongst provincial and regional destination marketing organizations
 - Drive conversion for specific activity and passion features of the Cowichan region
- **Rationale:** Increase reach for consumer messaging. These well-established consortiums have engaged audiences and expertise to market specific activities within a destination.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Evaluate available sector investment opportunities: tactics, reach, and therefore value for investment
 - Work closely with consortium organizations to amplify priority activity-based messaging
 - Actively participate in planning conversations with tourism sectors in order to maximize exposure for Cowichan region
 - Drive alignment with Destination BC brand
 - Increase image, video and written assets for the Cowichan region

- **Potential Partnerships:** DBC, consortium organizations, tourism sectors, tourism operators, local content creators
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Budget:** \$30,000

Performance Measures:

- Reach, impressions, click-through rates
- Increased campaign results
- Increased referrals to stakeholders

Major Category: Destination & Product Experience Management

Activity Title: Industry Development & Training

Tactics:

- Support professional development of stakeholders and rightsholders through workshops, training, and networking opportunities
- Subsidize stakeholder participation in learning opportunities such as courses offered by DBC and 4VI
- Ongoing 1-on-1 stakeholder meetings and monthly stakeholder newsletters
- Create an online destination ambassador course for front-line staff, volunteers, and residents

Implementation Plan

- **Description:** Provide professional development, training and networking opportunities for stakeholders, as well as ongoing engagement sessions and 1-on-1 stakeholder meetings.
- **Objectives:**
 - Increase the business acumen of tourism business owners and operators
 - Increase networking opportunities to strengthen industry collaboration
 - Grow strong destination ambassadors that contribute to remarkable visitor experiences and champion the value of tourism for the Cowichan region
 - Build capacity for more inclusive and accessible tourism experiences
 - Improve stakeholder engagement, awareness, and sentiment towards Tourism Cowichan
- **Rationale:** The consumer journey and overall satisfaction of the consumer, is strengthened when businesses have digital literacy, regional knowledge, and best business practices. Networking opportunities within the sector allow for cross-pollination of ideas and the development of packages. Ongoing engagement efforts keep stakeholders informed and ensure marketing and development efforts remain relevant to industry.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Coordinate stakeholder professional development opportunities with DBC, 4VI, and go2HR
 - Offer workshops and networking opportunities to support stakeholder engagement

- Create content and course structure for an online ambassador training program to be integrated onto the www.tourismcowichan.com stakeholder portal
- Partner with Spinal Cord Injury BC to offer accessibility audits and provide DEIA training opportunities for tourism operators
- Partner with ITBC to support engagement and professional development opportunities for Indigenous tourism operators

- **Potential Partnerships:** 4VI, DBC, Indigenous Tourism BC, go2HR, CVRD, Spinal Cord Injury BC, Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce (CGLCC), stakeholders, rightsholders, website agency
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Budget:** \$20,000

Performance Measures:

- Stakeholder attendance
- Stakeholder satisfaction
- # of workshops and networking opportunities held
- Stakeholder newsletter open rate and clicks
- # of 1-on-1 stakeholder meetings

Major Category: Destination & Product Experience Management	
Activity Title: Product Experience Enhancement	
Tactics: Events & Festivals Fund	<p><u>Implementation Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: Enable community members and business owners to access the Events & Festivals Fund, by application, to support marketing dollars for festivals and events in the Cowichan region. ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase and expand events/festivals in the Cowichan region ○ Increase visitation and overnight stays in shoulder seasons ○ Position Cowichan as a preferred multi-night tourism destination ○ Increase the economic and social benefits that flow from tourism to Cowichan residents ○ Support festivals and events that engage with local First Nations to highlight Indigenous culture and foster truth and reconciliation ● Rationale: An increase in event product improves the competitiveness of Cowichan as a destination. Expanding marketing for new or enhanced events, particularly in the shoulder season, will drive hotel occupancy during off-peak travel times. ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Further refine application form and reporting process ○ Promote the opportunity to apply to all community groups, stakeholders, and First Nations ○ Use a predetermined matrix to evaluate and choose events to support financially ○ Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the grant program ● Potential Partnerships: CVRD, Chamber of Commerce’s, BIA’s, community groups and organizations, stakeholders, rightsholders ● Resources/Funding: MRDT ● Timeframe: Applications to open November 2023 for events/festivals in 2024 ● Budget: \$100,000
	<p>Performance Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased attendance at events ● Event attendance from outside markets ● Increased overnight stays ● Number of new and/or expanded events ● Stakeholder satisfaction

<p>Tactics: Tourism Development Fund</p>	<p><u>Implementation Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: Enable community members and business owners to access a Tourism Development Fund, by application, to support the creation and enhancement of incremental tourism product. ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase the amount of tourism product in the Cowichan region ○ Diversify product offerings to attract new and return visitors ○ Improve the competitiveness of Cowichan as a destination ○ New tourism products will contribute to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of residents, communities, and the natural environment ○ Foster opportunities for Indigenous tourism development ● Rationale: An increase in tourism product and experiences improves the competitiveness of Cowichan as a destination and motivates longer stays. Indigenous tourism was recognized as a key opportunity and “motivating experience” in the South Central Island Destination Development Strategy to attract the Cultural Explorers and Authentic Experiencers EQ markets. ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify opportunities and gaps for tourism product development ○ Engage with First Nations to evaluate interest and opportunities in developing Indigenous tourism experiences ○ Determine the grants scope and eligibility criteria ○ Create application form and reporting process ○ Promote the opportunity to apply to stakeholders and First Nations ○ Use a predetermined matrix to evaluate and choose applications to support financially based on decided criteria (including innovation, community engagement, and sustainability) ○ Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the grant program ● Potential Partnerships: CVRD, Chamber of Commerce’s, BIA’s, community groups and organizations, stakeholders, First Nations ● Resources/Funding: MRDT ● Timeframe: 2024 ● Budget: \$50,000
	<p>Performance Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of new and/or expanded tourism products ● Increased visitation ● Stakeholder satisfaction

Tactics: Biosphere Certification	<p><u>Implementation Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: Tourism Cowichan will work towards fulfilling the requirements to become a Biosphere Certified Destination by developing a sustainable tourism destination plan in alignment with the United Nations SDGs. ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure tourism and destination development initiatives contribute to the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of Cowichan and the Vancouver Island region ○ Increase education and awareness of Biosphere and the United Nations SDGs amongst tourism operators ○ Support the development and enhancement of tourism products and experiences that will appeal to a target consumer and align with Cowichan’s sustainability and reconciliation goals ● Rationale: Responsible destination stewardship and sustainability are critical in the work that Tourism Cowichan undertakes in order to ensure tourism is a force for good, contributing to the well-being of residents, businesses and the natural environment. The development of sustainable tourism products will also strengthen Cowichan’s value proposition. ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Become Biosphere Committed ○ Pursue Biosphere Certification status as a destination ○ Develop and implement a Sustainable Tourism Destination Action Plan that guides sustainability projects for the Cowichan region ○ Support 4VI’s Biosphere Certification efforts ○ Advocate and amplify 4VI sustainability stakeholder programming to encourage stakeholders to become Biosphere Committed/Certified ○ Work with stakeholders and local First Nations to support the development and enhancement of sustainable tourism products and experiences ● Potential Partnerships: DBC, 4VI, CVRD, tourism operators, rightsholders ● Resources/Funding: MRDT ● Timeframe: Achieve Certification by September 2024 ● Budget: \$20,000
	<p>Performance Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certification status achieved ● # of sustainable action projects completed in alignment with UN 17 SDG’s ● # of Biosphere Committed and Certified tourism businesses ● # of new sustainable tourism products/experiences

<p>Major Category: Destination & Product Experience Management</p>
<p>Activity Title: Research</p>
<p>Tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct visitor perception research for the Cowichan region ● Refine asset development, content and marketing messages based on key findings ● Adapt target audiences as changing demographics, psychographics and geographics emerge from annual segmentation updates and visitor patterns to Vancouver Island and the Cowichan region ● Integrate geo-targeting into digital marketing through strategic ad groups and dedicated landing pages using postal code indicators from research
<p>Implementation Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: Provide research that encourages evidence-based decision making by Tourism Cowichan and local stakeholders. ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain accurate and ongoing key visitor and market profiles and associated metrics (volumes, spending, demographic and psychographic profiles) ○ Align experience offerings to appeal to key audiences ○ Improve targeted marketing across all channels ○ Identify KPIs for program measurement and organizational effectiveness ● Rationale: Destinations require ongoing monitoring of visitor and market intelligence to adapt to changing consumer behaviors, shifts in demographics and the economy. One-time snapshots of visitor data are not effective in the long-term and an integrated research and insights program requires resource allocation and strategic partnerships. ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review Destination Canada, DBC, BCRTS, and sector research resources and information ○ Identify local research gaps ○ List potential geo-fence areas for visitor analysis (14-acre cap per geo-fence) ○ Conduct visitor perception research ○ Purchase STR reports for the Cowichan Region ○ Identify target audience groups by highest potential from both visitor and market analysis ○ Apply key findings to marketing strategy and monitor over time ○ Disseminate key findings to operators to inform their experience design and marketing ● Potential Partnerships: DBC, 4VI, stakeholders, provincial organizations, Vancouver Island University, BCRTS research services, Symphony Tourism Services ● Resources/Funding: MRDT ● Timeframe: Ongoing ● Budget: \$20,000

Performance Measures:

- Increased campaign results
- Resident and visitor satisfaction
- Positive online word-of-mouth advocacy
- Increased Net Promoter Score

Major Category: Visitor Services

Activity Title: Visitor Services Operating Expenses

Tactics:

- Support visitor servicing in static and mobile visitor servicing sites
- Work with community partners to increase engagement with visitors while in market
- Provide training and familiarization to front line staff in accommodation properties and visitor centres

Implementation Plan

- **Description:** Provide support to static and mobile visitor centres for overall staffing costs to ensure friendly and knowledgeable staff are available to answer visitor inquiries, provide itinerary suggestions, and create exceptional experiences for visitors.
- **Objectives:**
 - Improve the in-market experience for visitors
 - Support increased length of stay
 - Upsell of retail, restaurant and tour opportunities
 - Increase capacity for Cowichan-based visitor centres
- **Rationale:** Visitor centres play a critical role in the consumer journey. The in-market consumer may access points of engagement with visitor centre staff and front-line staff that will help them have a more memorable and longer stay.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Work with visitor centres to identify partnership opportunities in training and familiarization for front-line staff and volunteers
 - Work with front-line accommodation and tour operator staff to provide training and familiarization opportunities
- **Potential Partnerships:** DBC, CVRD, go2HR, community groups, visitor centres
- **Resources/Funding:** MRDT
- **Timeframe:** Provide funding by July 2024
- **Budget:** \$50,000

<p>Performance Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased visitor counts ● Stakeholder satisfaction and referrals ● Increased partnership opportunities ● Increased capacity and visitor centre operating hours
<p>Major Category: Other</p>
<p>Activity Title: Potential Recession Response</p>
<p>Tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support initiatives of 4VI and DBC in anticipation of a potential recession ● Align marketing with key markets with a renewed focus on short getaways, activities to do for free in the area (hiking, mountain biking, etc.) ● Align with partners on specific short-haul market offers
<p><u>Implementation Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description: Prepare campaign to align with short-haul, quick getaway, incentive-based offers. ● Objectives: Mitigate tourism businesses losses ● Rationale: Headwinds of a potential recession both in Canada and the USA, combined with increasing inflation have impacted the spending potential of visitors. While a visitor may still choose a vacation, they might be inclined to reduce their spending in market. Aligning opportunities for short-haul quick getaway style vacations, mixed with opportunities for free and paid attractions will allow for the perception of ‘more bang for the buck’ by choosing the Cowichan region. ● Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inventory existing activities and summarize/update for website content ○ Prepare campaigns for alignment, if necessary, that pivot to quick getaway drivers ● Potential Partnerships: 4VI, DBC, tourism operators ● Resources/Funding: Local government contributions, MRDT ● Timeframe: 2024 (if required) ● Budget: \$30,000
<p>Performance Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Click through rate to stakeholder listings ● Search engine tracking ● Increased overnight stays

Overall Performance Measures	
<p>Output Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On-time completion of each tactic ● # of brand aligned visual assets ● Organic social media follower growth and uses of #ExploreCowichan ● # of social media referrals ● # of consumer email subscriptions ● Stakeholder newsletter open rate and clicks ● Distribution numbers for print guides ● Website analytics (page views, bounce rate, and time on site, etc.) ● Advertisements in right-match media outlets ● Unpaid media coverage ● # of Travel Trade/Travel Media FAM's hosted ● # of stakeholder workshops and networking opportunities organized ● # of Biosphere Committed and Certified businesses ● # of sustainable action projects completed in alignment with UN 17 SDG's ● Biosphere Certification status achieved 	<p>Outcome Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased # of overnight stays ● Increased average length of stay ● Increased average visitor spending ● Increased accommodation revenues ● Increased consumer awareness ● Increased stakeholder awareness and sentiment towards Tourism Cowichan ● Increased # of engaged stakeholders ● Positive resident sentiment towards tourism in the Cowichan region ● Increased # of press visits and journalists ● Increased # of trade trade tariffs featuring Cowichan ● # of new sustainable tourism products/experiences ● Increased tourism and event products ● Increased Net Promoter Score