

**T O U R I S M P L A N N I N G W O R K S H O P**  
**L O W E R C O L U M B I A**

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## **1.0 Introduction and Methodology**

The following draft Community Tourism Plan for the Lower Columbia area (Trail, Warfield, Rossland, Montrose, Fruitvale and Area A and B of the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary) summarizes the conclusions and implications developed during a planning session held on November 17, 2015.

The Plan that follows recommends, where appropriate, access/infrastructure strategies, product/experience development strategies and marketing and sales strategies in support of the Lower Columbia's objective of growing the local tourism economy. As well, recommendations are made regarding how best to organize and fund implementation of this plan.

### **Background**

The communities of Trail, Warfield, Rossland, Montrose and Fruitvale have embarked upon a collaborative tourism planning process with continued support from the Destination British Columbia Community Tourism Foundations program. Both Trail and Rossland have previously accessed Destination BC support for individual community tourism plans (Trail – May 2009; Rossland – December 2006 and September 2012) and as implementation of these individual plans has progressed there has been growing recognition of the opportunity to work collaboratively on various initiatives promoting a broader collection of visitor experiences. As well, the Lower Columbia Community Development Team Society has identified development of the tourism economy as a priority opportunity and sought to access advice and expertise from Destination BC to facilitate a tourism plan for the Lower Columbia communities.

This Community Tourism Foundation program provides resources to assist communities in developing just such a comprehensive community tourism plan. These resources include the services of professional facilitators to assist in the planning process. Suzanne Denbak of Cadence Strategies was given the assignment of working with a group of local tourism stakeholders in order to prepare a comprehensive tourism plan for the Lower Columbia that encompassed both destination development and market development. She had previously facilitated the development of the Community Tourism Plans for Rossland and has worked extensively with communities in the Kootenay region.

This tourism plan for the Lower Columbia incorporates the discussions and agreements reached during a one-day tourism planning session held on November 17, 2015 in Trail. The facilitator had previously toured the region and visited many of the natural and cultural attractions. A diverse range of tourism interests were represented in this group including local tourism operators (RED Mountain Resort, accommodators, restaurants, retailers, heritage attractions, Charles Bailey Theatre), local government representatives, the Arts Council, the Trail Society, the Chamber of Commerce, the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation and Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association.

### **Priorities for the Community Tourism Foundations Program:**

The priorities for the Community Tourism Foundations Program plan were identified in the Expression of Interest submitted to Destination BC as follows:

- Work collaboratively as an entire region to develop a strategic tourism plan and move forward united by a common vision/direction with regional, rather than individual, marketing promotion where such partnerships are anticipated to yield higher collective returns.

During the workshop, attendees also identified the following objectives and opportunities:

- Improve service and amenities for guests on a year-round basis;
- Pursue reliable air access and improved access/connectivity by road, shuttle, transit
- Brand and message the area as a whole positioning a collection of Lower Columbia experiences – focus on the ‘iconic’ experiences available and the area’s unique competitive advantage
- Develop and promote reasons and encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more at all times of year – make it easy to understand the wealth of things to do, how to get here and why to consider the Lower Columbia communities as a multi-night destination
- Coordinate and promote events in all communities
- Further develop and promote culinary and agri-tourism experiences
- Develop and promote Columbia River experiences
- Develop and promote motorized outdoor adventure (where appropriate) such as side x sides, dirt bikes, dual sport etc.
- Improve access to the Trail Visitor Centre
- Increase camping capacity
- Develop and promote a regional biking experience – Lower Columbia, Castlegar, Nelson, Kaslo, Slokan Valley and beyond
- Engage, communicate and educate residents on the value of the tourism economy, visitor experiences available so everyone becomes an ambassador
- Undertake collaborative market research to inform implementation and regular updates to strategic/tactical direction

Destination British Columbia oversaw this project working together with the facilitator and a core group of local tourism stakeholders. Participants at the one-day planning session contributed their ideas, experience and wisdom in the development of this plan update and their efforts are acknowledged and greatly appreciated. Participants in the planning session were:

Name	Organization
Don Goulard	Trail Regional Airport
Deanne Steven	Tourism Rossland
Kristi Calder	Tourism Rossland
Nicole Briggs	RED Mountain Resort
Petri Ratio	Rossland Beer Company
Daniel Haley	Casa Di Cioccolato
Audrey Lochrie	Trail Chamber of Commerce
Terry Van Horn	Lower Columbia Initiatives Corp
Chris Bowman	Flying Steamshovel
Geno LeRose	Best Western Trail
Joelle Hodgins	Rossland Museum
Nadine Tremblay	Charles Bailey Theatre
Trisha Davison	Trail Parks and Recreation
Scott Forsyth	KC Trail Society
Gina Ironmonger	Sustainable Local Agriculture Committee
Carol Dobie	Trail City Council
Ann Damude	Rossland Arts Council
Norman Moll	Birchbank Golf Club

The plan that follows is intended to serve as a guide for Tourism Rossland as they undertake tourism initiatives on behalf of the Lower Columbia collective and their funding partner Lower Columbia Community Development Team Society (LCCDTS). It should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect changing tourism objectives, priorities and market conditions.

## 2.0 Tourism Strategic Planning Process

A Strategic Tourism Plan answers the following key questions:

- What business objectives related to tourism does the community expect to achieve?
- What type of tourism does the community want to achieve? In the short term? Over the longer term?
- How will the community achieve these objectives? Through what tourism products? Through what type of visitors? Through which marketing initiatives?

In preparation of the Tourism Plan, the following principles were considered:

- Visitor Needs. BC communities must be responsive to the needs of visitors. Communities need to understand visitor needs first, develop tourism experiences to meet those needs, and then market the appropriate tourism experience to the appropriate type of visitor.
- Inclusiveness. To address the issues and opportunities facing the tourism industry, consultation and collaboration across all areas of the province and all levels of the tourism industry need to form the basis of plan development.
- Effective partnerships. Tourism can be a fragmented industry and effective partnerships among tourism operators, sectors, destination marketing organizations, educational institutions, and all levels of government are essential to building a cohesive, strong and sustainable industry in BC.
- Sustainability. Tourism in BC will be developed in a sustainable manner, recognizing the need for economic, social and environmental sustainability.
- Community Support. To be successful, tourism development in communities needs to be supported by all areas of a community, including businesses, local government and residents.

Once the tourism plan is completed and implementation begins, results need to be tracked regularly so that an updated plan, with learning from the current year's activities, can be even more effective in increasing benefits to the community. Objectives and strategies should be regularly reviewed, with most of the updates occurring on the detailed tactics. The planning cycle can be illustrated as follows:



## 3.0 Lower Columbia Tourism Objectives/Operating Principles

### Objective

The objective of this community tourism plan for the Lower Columbia is:

“To increase overnight visitation to the Lower Columbia area by attracting visitors who stay longer, spend more and return again and again throughout the year.”

The pursuit of this tourism objective is intended to support the broader economic development initiatives of the area and contribute to the development of a vibrant and engaged resident base.

### Operating Principles

The implementation of strategies in support of this objective will occur in a manner that is:

- Efficient
- Effective
- Sustainably funded

Specific and measurable goals should be established for these tourism objectives and processes put in place to permit regular tracking and reporting of progress to the community. The measurable goals of this plan include:

1. Percentage change from a common baseline (accommodation revenue; golf rounds; skier visits)
2. Growth in MRDT (in Rossland and entire area if enabled)

Additional indicators to be tracked include:

3. Visitor Centre statistics (number of visitors/number of parties, area of origin, length of stay)
4. Ticketed event attendance (Charles Bailey Theatre and other venues)
5. Airport passengers
6. Border crossings

Destination BC through its Research, Planning & Evaluation department offers tools to assist communities and tourism businesses with measuring results and tracking trends in the value of the local tourism economy. An example is the Community Value of Tourism model that quantifies the total value of tourism spending in the local economy arising both from overnight and day visitors. It is recommended that this be measured annually. A Commercial Accommodation Survey could track monthly occupancy and average rate on an aggregate basis for all accommodation providers including a three-month forecast of anticipated business levels. Both these tools could collect data on a strictly confidential basis from accommodation providers. As well, Destination BC offers how-to guides in the ‘Resources for Researchers’ section of the DBC website including measurement of impacts associated with festivals and events at <http://www.destinationbc.ca/Research/Resources-for-Researchers/How-To-Guides.aspx>. Kootenay Rockies Tourism can provide assistance and further information regarding the tracking and research tools that may be available for the Lower Columbia.

It is recommended that a baseline for these measures be established with 2015 data and that regular measurement and reporting occurring thereafter.



## 4.0 Market Research

A wide range of market intelligence provided by Destination BC was reviewed in the development of this Community Tourism Plan for the Lower Columbia area including:

- Value of Tourism in British Columbia (2013) – February 2015
- Kootenay Rockies Regional Profile – January 2015
- Market Profiles (2012/2013) – October 2014
- Activity Sector Profiles

Copies of these research reports are available on [www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx](http://www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx). Highlights from this market research are as follows:

### 4.1 Macro Environment

- Tourism is an international industry
- British Columbia's product offerings are in demand but the Province is a relatively small player in the growing, highly competitive international environment
- In the short term, tourism performance can be volatile as it is highly tied to uncontrollable events, such as weather conditions or rapid changes in security and economic events
- In the long term, healthy growth is forecasted – UNWTO forecasts global growth in international tourist arrivals annually until 2030<sup>1</sup>

### 4.2 Consumer & Travel Trends

- Fluctuating world economy continues to create uncertainty resulting in continued lower levels of consumer confidence/outlook and impact on discretionary spending; some signs of increasing consumer confidence arising from positive outlook for US economy
- Declining fuel prices increase the affordability of drive vacations and support the potential for increasing travel from the drive markets such as BC, AB and nearby US states (WA, MO, ID)
- Recent declines in the value of the Canadian dollar increase the attractiveness of Canada to US travellers
- All things considered, travel interest is on the rise

### 4.3 BC Tourism Trends

- In 2012, there were 17.9 million overnight visitors in British Columbia, an increase of 1.1% over 2011, who spent \$8.6 billion, a decline of 2.2% from 2011
- Over half of the visitors (58.5%) were British Columbia residents
- Visitors from other parts of Canada accounted for 17.6% of all visits
- International visitors accounted for the remaining 23.9% of visitor volume (US 16.4%; Asia/Pacific 4.0%; Europe 2.8%)
- British Columbia has been experiencing steady, reliable growth from BC residents and from the rest of Canada with more volatility in other markets

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<sup>1</sup> Tourism Towards 2030, World Tourism Organization UNWTO, 2011

- The greatest proportion of overall visitor spending is from BC residents (37.7%); the rest of Canada represents 23.9% of expenditures; while US resident spending represents 17.9%; Asia/Pacific 10.5%; Europe 7.9%
- While BC residents spend less per visit, they still represent an attractive target market because they:
  - Experience less volatile travel patterns
  - Travel year-round
  - Accept varying qualities of facilities
  - Are willing to explore the Province

#### 4.4 Kootenay Rockies – Regional Profile (2014)

In 2012, overnight tourism in British Columbia generated 17.9 million person-visits and \$8.6 billion in related spending. The Kootenay Rockies tourism region represents 10% of provincial overnight visitation and 7% of related spending. It is important to note that visitation to the Lower Columbia area may differ from these regional trends due to proximity to the US border, distance from the Alberta border and the international appeal of RED Resort.

The Kootenay Rockies tourism region received approximately 1.8 million overnight person-visits in 2012 and generated over \$607 million in related spending. Alberta residents make up the largest share of overnight visitation (53%) and spending (50%). The second largest market is BC residents (27% of visitation and 22% of spending). Combined, these two markets represent 90% of visitation and 72% of spending. The top five markets by area of origin for the region are:

	Area of Origin	Share of Visitation	Share of Spending
1	Alberta	53%	50%
2	British Columbia	27%	22%
3	Washington	3%	3%
4	Saskatchewan	2%	2%
5	United Kingdom	1%	2%

On average, domestic travel parties in the Kootenay Rockies tourism region stayed 3.7 nights and spent \$132 per night during their trip. US travel parties stayed 3.3 nights and spent \$239 per night during their trip, and other international travel parties (excluding the US) stayed 4.9 nights and spent \$167 per night during their trip in the region.

Most people travelled in the Kootenay Rockies tourism region during the peak summer months. More US residents and other international travellers travel to the Kootenay Rockies during the spring months of April to June compared to other markets of origin. British Columbia residents and other Canadians are more likely to travel during the ski season (October to December).

Top five trip activities of visitors to the Kootenay Rockies tourism region often include a range of outdoor activities as well as museums, art galleries and historic sites.

Top 5 trip activities:

	<b>BC residents</b>	<b>Other Canadians</b>	<b>US residents</b>	<b>Other international</b>
<b>1</b>	Camping	Hiking or backpacking	National, provincial or nature park	National, provincial or nature park
<b>2</b>	Hiking or backpacking	Camping	Historic site	Historic site
<b>3</b>	Beach	Beach	Museum or art gallery	Museum or art gallery
<b>4</b>	National, provincial or nature park	Boating/ kayaking/ canoeing	Camping	Camping
<b>5</b>	Wildlife viewing or bird watching	National, provincial or nature park	Downhill skiing or snowboarding	Zoo or aquarium

## 4.5 Visitor Characteristics – By Market

Destination BC provides market research related to visitor characteristics by their area of origin as well as by the activities in which travellers participate. Detailed reports are available on <http://www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx> and summary highlights are provided below:

### 4.5.1 British Columbia Residents

- British Columbians took 10.5 million overnight trips within BC in 2012
- All age groups are represented – 38% are aged 18-34
- 74% have some post-secondary education
- Affluent – 44% have household incomes over \$100,000
- 2.9 night average stay for a trip in 2012
- Beaches, hiking and camping are most popular activities

### 4.5.2 Albertan Travellers

- Alberta travellers took 2.1 million overnight trips to BC in 2012
- Peak travel is summer months – July/August
- Largest age group was 25-34 in 2012 representing 25% of travellers
- Affluent – 54% had household incomes over \$100,000
- 72% have at least some post secondary education
- Alberta visitors spent 5 nights on average during their trip in BC
- Beaches, hiking and camping are most popular activities

### 4.5.3 Ontario Travellers

- Ontario travellers took 562,000 overnight trips to BC in 2012
- Peak travel is summer months – July/August

- Largest proportion of travellers are 18-44 years of age
- 74% had household incomes over \$100,000
- 79% had at least some post-secondary education
- Ontario visitors spent 6.2 nights on average during their trip to BC
- Visiting parks, hiking and visiting museums and galleries are the most popular activities

#### **4.5.4 US Travellers**

- In 2013, almost 3 million Americans visited BC and stayed overnight
- Washington (41%) and California (14%) accounted for over half of the total overnight US visitation in BC
- Travellers 55 years and older accounted for almost half of travellers from the US in 2012 although the proportion of younger travellers is rising
- June, July and August were the most popular travel months for US visitors in 2012 accounting for almost 50% of visitation
- Shopping and sightseeing were the most popular activities for US travellers in 2012; increasing participation rates in sports or outdoor activities since 2009 data
- Gravitate to Vancouver, Coast & Mountains region (Vancouver/Whistler) and Vancouver Island

#### **4.5.5 United Kingdom**

- In 2013, almost 650,000 UK residents travelled to Canada; 30% entered directly through BC
- In 2012, over 50% of UK visitors to Canada were 55 years of age or older;
- In 2012, UK travellers to Canada spent on average 15 nights in Canada and 12 nights in BC
- Most frequently, UK visitors to Canada stayed one to two weeks
- Almost half of UK residents visited Canada in June to August
- Sightseeing and shopping remained the most popular activities for UK travellers to Canada

#### **4.5.6 Germany**

- In 2013, over 300,000 Germans travelled to Canada; just over one-quarter entered directly through BC
- In 2012, almost one-third of German visitors to Canada were young adults (20-34 years)
- In 2012, German travellers to Canada (who also visited BC) spent on average 20 nights in Canada and 15 nights in BC
- Nearly 30% of German travellers spent three to eight weeks in Canada
- In 2012, almost 70% of German visitors Canada arrived between May and August and three-quarters arrived in July and August
- In 2012, sightseeing (87%) and shopping (79%) were the most popular activities for German travellers

### **4.6 Visitor Characteristics – By Activity**

Destination BC also provides market research on visitor characteristics defined by the activities they participate in while travelling. Detailed reports are available on

<http://www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx> and summary highlights of the most relevant activities for the Lower Columbia area are provided below:

- Hiking, April 2009
- Downhill Skiing/ Snowboarding, May 2014
- Cycling and Mountain Biking, April 2009
- Touring, May 2014
- Outdoor Adventure, May 2014
- Golf, October 2009
- Fishing, April 2009
- Heritage, April 2009
- Aboriginal Cultural Tourism (various dates)

Highlights of this research by activity are as follows:

#### **4.6.1 Hiking (2009)**

- Canadian day hikers skew female; Canadian overnight backpackers skew male
- American hikers – both day and overnight skew male
- Majority are aged 18-34; American hikers have larger number of older participants aged 45 years+
- Well educated; moderate to affluent income
- Hiking travellers also enjoy visiting natural wonders, swimming in lakes (Canadians) and visiting heritage sites/museums (Americans)

#### **4.6.2 Cycling and Mountain Biking (2009)**

- Male skew to those participating in cycling activities, particularly from US (63% male); Canadian 55% male
- 40% of Canadian cyclists are aged 18-34; US participants older with the largest group aged 45-54 (30%)
- Canadian travellers motivated by mountain biking skew younger and male with 42.8% aged 18-34 years and 74.5% male. They are affluent and educated with 46.6% having household incomes of \$100,000 or more and 64.2% having completed post secondary education
- US travellers motivated by mountain biking are 73.8% male;
- Majority (48.3%) of motivated US mountain bikers are aged 18-34 years; like their Canadian counterparts, they are affluent and well educated with 32.7% having household incomes of \$100,000 or more and 59% having completed post secondary education
- US overnight touring cyclists are skewed male as well – 82% of those travellers motivated by overnight touring are male
- Canadian and US cycling travellers can be considered frequent travellers when compared to the overall travelling population
- Cycling travellers also enjoy swimming in lakes, strolling the city/seeing buildings, visiting parks, natural wonders, sitting on a beach/sunbathing, visiting historic sites. Many travellers who participate in cycling also enjoy hiking.

#### **4.6.3 Touring (2014)**

- Approximately one-third of Canadian touring travellers are aged 18-34 years; US touring travellers tend to be older with approximately one-quarter over the age of 65 years;
- Approximately one quarter of both Canadian and US touring travellers are in adult-only households

- American travellers more likely to take guided tours than Canadian travellers
- Touring travellers are also interested in city strolls, visiting national/provincial parks, historic sites, natural wonders

#### **4.6.4 Heritage (2009)**

- Canadian heritage travellers tend to be younger than their US counterparts – 31% of participating Canadians are aged 18-34 years; largest group of participating Americans is over 65 years of age (25%)
- 32% of US travellers motivated by heritage are over age 65; only 15% of motivated Canadian heritage travellers are in this same age group
- Motivated American heritage travellers are relatively affluent when compared to the overall population of travellers to BC and are on average more affluent than motivated Canadian heritage travellers
- Heritage travellers also enjoy city strolls, visiting national/provincial parks, sunbathing/sitting on a beach, visiting well-known natural wonders

#### **4.6.5 Downhill Skiing / Snowboarding (2014)**

- Male skew for travellers from both Canada and the US participating in and motivated by skiing/snowboarding; this skew is more heavily pronounced in the American visit base; snowboarders also skew more heavily male.
- Nearly half of Canadians are younger (18-34 years); One third of American travellers are in this same age group; more American than Canadian travellers are in the 34-55 year category
- American and Canadian skiers and snowboarders are affluent and well educated – this is more pronounced with motivated skiers
- Frequent travellers; BC is rated very highly by both Canadians and Americans
- Other activities enjoyed by Canadian alpine travellers– swimming, sunbathing, sitting on a beach
- Other activities enjoyed by American alpine travellers – strolling through a city, visiting heritage sites
- Activities also enjoyed by Canadian and American alpine travellers include swimming in the ocean, same day hiking trips, visiting National/Provincial parks

#### **4.6.6 Fishing (2009)**

- Predominately male; 18-34 and 45-54 years of age
- Reasonably affluent, educated
- Majority come from adult-only households
- Fresh water fishing dominates Canadian market (BC residents have a higher salt water fishing rate)
- Other activities – swimming, motor boating
- Show some interest in ‘natural wonders’, visiting national/provincial parks

#### **4.6.7 Golf (2009)**

- Two thirds of golf pleasure travellers from both Canada and the US who had been to BC in 2004/05 and participated in a golf activity were male – this male skew is even more pronounced amongst those motivated to travel for a golf activity
- Canadian travellers who had participated in a golf activity while on a trip were younger than their American counterparts. Nearly 49% of Canadian participating golf travellers were aged between 18 and 44 years compared to 38% of Americans

- Participating golf travellers tend to be high-income earners with over 43% of Canadians and over 50% of US travellers earning \$100,000 or more per annum. The proportion is even high for those motivated to travel by golf activities
- The majority of golf travellers are well educated
- Canadian travellers motivated by golf tend to be older than the general population of Canadian travellers to BC with 37% aged 55 years or older
- Other popular activities in addition to golf include sunbathing/sitting on a beach; swimming in lakes; strolling to see city buildings; visiting a nature park; visiting historic sites/buildings; and swimming in oceans
- Hiking skiing and fishing were the most common complementary sports-related outdoor activities of interest to golfers
- Impact factors for US golfers when choosing a destination include: quality of golf course; value for money; availability of multiple courses and weather conditions.

#### **4.6.8 Outdoor Adventure (2014)**

- In 2005, over 1.2 million people participated in British Columbia commercial outdoor adventure tourism, an increase of 24% from 2001
- US visitors (35%) and BC residents (29%) are the heaviest participants in outdoor adventure tourism in BC
- The most popular outdoor adventure activities for Canadians are day hiking (18%), road biking (16%) and car camping (12%)
- Approximately two-thirds of Canadians enjoy being in the wilderness, however a large portion has fears about remoteness
- British Columbia's outdoor adventure travellers are younger than other travellers, with an average in the mid-30s. The majority are male and single / never married. More than a third are university educated
- Generally, BC males are significantly more likely to participate in road biking, camping, freshwater fishing and mountain biking whereas women are more likely to participate in soft outdoor adventure activities including beach activities, nature viewing/ scenic photography, bird watching and whale watching
- US residents who are outdoor enthusiasts are slightly more likely (55%) to be male, almost half (49%) are married, and 38% have a post-graduate degree/college diploma

#### **4.6.9 Aboriginal Cultural Tourism**

- In 2010, 3.7 million overnight visits to BC included an Aboriginal cultural experience – almost double the number from 2006
- Approximately half of these visits are by Canadians
- Average Aboriginal cultural tourism visitor to BC tends to be female, middle to late aged, well-educated and earns an upper-middle income
- Aboriginal cultural tourism visitors under the age of 50 prefer active experiences such as canoeing, kayaking, dog-sledding and horseback riding while visitors aged 50+ prefer less vigorous experiences such as hiking, walks, nature observation and indoor activities

## 4.7 Market Research Implications

### 4.7.1 Sector/Market Implications

The review of market research confirms that the Lower Columbia has a range of experiences to offer visitors from a variety of geographic markets who participate in a variety of activities. There is a unique heritage and culture in Lower Columbia communities which, when combined with the wealth of year-round outdoor activities for all ages and skill levels, create compelling reasons to travel and stay here. Further, the sports facilities and infrastructure found in the Lower Columbia area are capable of attracting and hosting a wide-variety of regional, provincial, national and international tournaments and events.

However, this wealth of experiences also creates a challenge for the Lower Columbia. As a destination, the Lower Columbia must precisely define and target its markets with clear and compelling messaging (narrative and imagery). Messaging that the Lower Columbia ‘has it all’ or ‘has something to do year round’ will not sufficiently amplify above the noise of the competition.

Therefore, the execution of all recommended marketing strategies must consider each market being targeted with specific information for them. This tactical execution can still occur under an ‘umbrella’ brand for the Lower Columbia that captures the unique ‘essence’ of the place and experience while leveraging the brand equity already developed by both Trail and Rossland.

A further implication of this research and the need to speak to various markets in very specific and distinct ways, is that marketing efforts should be weighted towards lower cost web/social media based approaches rather than more traditional print collateral and advertising to permit cost-effective customization.

From the perspective of target markets for Lower Columbia, the implications of this market research for the tourism plan are as follows:

- The Lower Columbia area is positioned to secure drive traffic from the Lower Mainland, Okanagan region, Alberta, Washington State, Idaho, Montana as well as Oregon and California (longer touring trips)
- BC Residents are an attractive target market for the Lower Columbia – their younger demographic will appreciate the wealth of outdoor activities accessible from Lower Columbia communities
- BC Residents are also most likely to travel throughout the year and venture into all regions of the Province
- American visitors are motivated by several specific activities such as golf touring, motorcycle touring and downhill skiing, all of which are readily accessed from the Lower Columbia as a hub
- Canadian hiking travellers represent a good segment for the Lower Columbia – especially those based in BC and Alberta. Their interests are consistent with the product offered in and around the area and they have above average income and education.
- Downhill skiers and snowboarders are an important winter market and the Lower Columbia’s ability to pair RED Resort with Whitewater Resort and one or more of the many cat ski operators in the area gives it a unique advantage
- Canadian and American golfing tourists are affluent and represent a significant opportunity for the Lower Columbia to position itself along the ‘Kootenay Golf Trail’ and to establish the Lower Columbia as a hub for several nights on a golf tour



- Travellers motivated by mountain biking and road cycling represent a potential target market for the Lower Columbia
- Lower Columbia’s unique biking product including the ‘rails to trails’ experience is an excellent anchor to attract bicycling tourists. Average income levels are moderate (Canadian) and more affluent (American), and many bicycling tourists also enjoy day hikes so there is an opportunity to create multi-activity packages and experiences
- Motorcycle touring visitors will enjoy the many day trips and circle routes that are easily accessed from the Lower Columbia. These visitors are skewed male and have moderate income levels. Some also enjoy fishing.
- Fishing tourists are also a potential target market for the Lower Columbia although care should be taken when considering the American fishing market since many of these visitors tend not to travel outside of the United States. BC residents and Canadian anglers may yield stronger returns from promotional investments.
- Regional, provincial, national and international sport events will find all the facilities, services and amenities they need in the Lower Columbia area to host a successful event

## 5.0 Lower Columbia – Current Situation Analysis

In order to develop strategies to achieve the objective of growing overnight visitation, length of stay and visitor spending on a year round basis, an assessment of the current situation of the Lower Columbia area from a tourism perspective is also required. The following analysis considers access and infrastructure for visitors, existing visitor experiences, current marketing and promotional efforts and the manner in which the Lower Columbia is currently organized to pursue tourism opportunities.

### 5.1 Access and Infrastructure

#### 5.1.1 Access to the Lower Columbia

The communities of the Lower Columbia are easily accessed by road; however, travel times from large urban centres such as Calgary, Vancouver and Spokane could be an initial disincentive to travel until the visitor understands the quality and value of experiences available – both upon arrival of final destination and on-route to. Travel times are as follows:

Visitors Traveling To Trail, BC From	Travel Times per Drive BC
Calgary	620 km; 6 hours 44 minutes
Vancouver	654 km; 7 hours 46 minutes
Kelowna	334 km; 4 hours 40 minutes
Spokane	203 km; 2 hours 42 minutes

Airports servicing the Lower Columbia include the West Kootenay Regional Airport located in Castlegar serviced by Air Canada and by private airlines/airplanes, in Trail serviced by Pacific Coastal and the Spokane Airport.

The regional airport in Trail was recently taken over by the City of Trail and a series of improvements have been implemented or are underway including:

- GPS approach has been lowered by 1,000’ allowing for much higher successful landing percentages
- Canada Border Services has approved Trail as a port of entry for the US for aircrafts with 15 or fewer passengers

- A new terminal building is planned for construction in summer 2016 and will include areas to display information on the Lower Columbia area
- A new runway and taxiway is planned for 2016 (this will likely necessitate a 6-8 week airport closure)

Visitors arriving by air must rent a private vehicle to continue their trip as there is limited public transit and no private shuttle services currently operating. Rental vehicles typically are not equipped with winter tires and the lack thereof can pose a safety risk for winter travel.

US border crossings require a passport or enhanced driver's license.

Visitors can also travel through Cranbrook's Canadian Rockies' International Airport. This airport offers connecting flights to Vancouver and Calgary on Air Canada and Pacific Coastal. Transfer time from Cranbrook is approx. 2 1/2 hours.

### **5.1.2 Visitor Infrastructure**

The Lower Columbia offers a range of infrastructure to support visitor experiences including a variety of accommodation options, restaurants and retail shops. Outdoor experiences/ infrastructure include RED Mountain Resort and an extensive trail network (including the epic Seven Summits biking trail and groomed cross-country trails), parks, lakes, campsites. Infrastructure to support sport tourism hosting is also extensive. Trail has been a Communities in Bloom winner provincially in 2004 and nationally in 2006 and 2010. In 2015, Trail won the Communities in Bloom International Challenge (medium).

Highlights of this infrastructure are as follows:

#### **Accommodation**

While accommodation contributes to the visitor experience, it is rarely a motivator for travel in and of itself. Rather it serves as the base from which visitors engage in travel experiences. Consequently, it is considered a form of visitor infrastructure since it must exist in sufficient quantity and quality to support growth in visitation.

In the Lower Columbia area, there is a wide range of accommodation options. Trail offers a variety of motel properties and one larger, recently renovated hotel – the Best Western. Rossland offers a wide-range of resort accommodation including condominiums, hotels, inns and B&B's. Fruitvale and Genelle also offer some limited accommodations. A web-based review lists the following:

Accommodation in Trail per [www.trailchamber.bc.ca](http://www.trailchamber.bc.ca):

- Best Western Plus, Columbia River Hotel
- Glenwood Motel
- RayLyn Motel
- Trail Motel & RV Park
- Beaver Falls Motel & RV Park (between Montrose and Fruitvale)
- River's Edge Bed and Breakfast (not listed on Chamber site)
- River Haus B&B
- Grape Escape Guest House

Accommodation in Rossland per [www.tourismrossland.com](http://www.tourismrossland.com):

- Red Shutter Inn
- Canadian Ski Quest – Guest House

- Mountain Shadow Hostel
- Red Barn Lodge
- Rossland Motel
- Casa Alpina
- Aladar's Guest Cabin
- Prestige Mountain Resort
- Sweet Dreams Heritage Inn
- Mountain Town Properties
- The Flying Steamshovel Inn
- Angela's B&B and Guest House
- Rams Head Inn
- Red Mountain Resort Lodging
- Red Mountain Village Lodging

As well, a new \$35 million luxury boutique hotel is under construction at the base of RED Mountain with 107 rooms and conference/meeting space.

Fruitvale accommodation includes:

- Villager's Inn Hotel

Genelle accommodation includes:

- Genelle House B&B

Campgrounds within the Lower Columbia area are as follows:

- Rossland Lions Campground
- Champion Lakes Provincial Park
- Beaver Creek Provincial Park
- Beaver Valley Family Park/Marsh Creek Campground
- City of Trail Campground and RV Park

The property types range from full-service to basic facilities. While additional camping capacity is desired and there is a need for facilities that accommodate large RV's, this existing inventory of accommodation appears to support the objective of increasing overnight visitation, length of stay and visitor spending on a year round basis.

## **Sport Tourism Infrastructure**

Trail has a notable history of producing champions and has earned its tag 'Home of Champions' producing world-class athletes in many sports. As noted in the May, 2009 Community Tourism Foundations plan for Trail, the City has exceptional sport facilities and has a strong record of being able to attract an impressive range of national and provincial sport events. Trail's infrastructure is complimented by Rossland's reputation for ski racing and its ability to host 'on snow' events and various mountain biking competitions.

A summary of sport tourism facilities includes:

- Trail Memorial Centre – complex includes Cominco Arena; 2,500 seating/3,200 total capacity for sporting events, concerts and conferences; children's rink; 1,000 seat gymnasium; 8 sheets of curling ice + full lounge services; meeting rooms; racquetball and squash courts; home of the

Trail Smoke Eaters – a junior A ice hockey team and part of the British Columbia Hockey League

- Trail Aquatic and Leisure Centre – full service 3,000 sq.ft. fitness centre; 8-lane/25m competition pool; diving boards; 152 ft water slide; free-form leisure pool, whirl pool and steam room
- The Will Krause Fieldhouse – 14,000 sq.ft. structure houses a rubberized track; full track pit facilities; two full-sized basketball courts that can be easily converted for tennis or badminton. Full area can be converted into two 7,000 sq.ft. rooms and can host indoor soccer matches and floor hockey. Includes a batting cage and golf driving net.
- Butler Park – baseball park with a seating capacity for 1,200+
- Haley Park Complex – three softball/fastball diamonds – two of which are lighted; soccer pitch; 8-lane 400 metre rubberized track with full field facilities
- Andy Bilesky Little League Park
- Beaver Valley Arena
- Beaver Valley Curling Club
- Thin Air Disc Golf

RED Mountain Resort also has a history of producing champion ski racers and is well positioned to host ‘on-snow’ sporting events. RED has 4,200 acres of ski terrain – in 2013 nearly 1,000 acres of mostly-intermediate terrain was added on Grey Mountain. RED typically receives 300 inches/7.6m of annual snowfall and has 2,919 feet/890m of vertical. The Legacy Training Centre at RED opened in 2014 and offers outstanding facilities for ski race training and event hosting. The Centre was accompanied by an investment in snowmaking that allows RED to now host training and events in November/December as well as April.

## **Restaurant/Retail and Visitor Services**

Much like accommodation, visitors require a range of restaurant and retail options to support their experience. The website [www.hellobc.com](http://www.hellobc.com) notes that there are more than 30 restaurants/cafes and lists the following food and beverage options in Trail (some listed are actually located in Rossland):

- Misty Mountain Pizza (Rossland)
- Foxy’s Fine Food and Drinks (Trail)
- Glenwood Café (Trail)
- Rock Cut Pub (Rossland)
- McDonalds (Trail)
- Caffe Americano (Trail)
- Fresh Café (Rossland)
- New Edition Café and Books West (Rossland)
- Sunshine Café/ Dake Sushi (Rossland)
- Arlington Bar & Grill (Trail)
- Redstone Resort Restaurant/The Clubhouse at Redstone Golf Resort (Rossland)
- Village Restaurant/Ying Café (Rossland)
- The Flying Steamshovel (Rossland)
- Paradise Lodge (Rossland)
- The Garage (Rossland)
- Clansey’s Cappuccino (Rossland)
- Sourdough Alley at Red (Rossland)
- The Colander Restaurant (Trail)
- Redroom Lounge at the Prestige Hotel (Rossland)
- Rafters at Red (Rossland)

- Subway (Rossland)
- Idgie's (Rossland)
- Subway (Trail)
- Alpine Grind (Rossland)

Additional dining options listed on [www.tourismrossland.com](http://www.tourismrossland.com) include:

- Ying Café (Rossland)
- New Edition Café & Books
- Gabriella's at Red
- Rossland Beer Company
- Mook Thai Cuisine
- Fresh Café and Apres
- Gabriella's Prestige
- Aka Dake Sushi
- Caffè Gabriella

TripAdvisor lists 43 restaurants in the Trail area – additional dining experiences not already noted above include:

- Panago
- Ace of Taste Chinese Restaurant
- Arlington Bar and Grill
- A&W
- Benedict's Steakhouse
- Trail Creek Bistro
- Trail Coffee & Tea Co
- Double Happiness Restaurant
- Cornerstone Café & Deli
- Chrissy's Bitery at the Rex
- Lil-T's Café
- Morning Perk Coffee Co.
- The Spot
- Montrose Garden Restaurant
- Canton Café
- J & V Restaurant
- Riverbelle
- Café Michael
- Bagels & Brew
- Canadian 2 for 1 Pizza
- Tim Hortons
- Spud's – Arena Food Shack
- Di Gabriella's
- Maria's Fine Foods
- The Rustic Crust
- Dominga's Café
- Tunnel Pub
- Two Bakeries – The Pastry Shop and City Bakery
- Arlington Hotel
- Morning Perk

Fruitvale restaurants listed in the community business directory include:

- Fruitvale Kitchen
- Milano's Pizza & Ribs
- Subway
- Villagers Restaurant
- Villagers Pub

Clearly there is a wide selection of dining options to meet every taste and budget. As well, to further compliment this culinary variety, there are two wineries (Columbia Gardens Vineyard & Winery and SOAHC) and an award-winning brewery (Rossland Brewing Company). The brewery is currently planning a significant expansion.

Both Trail and Rossland offer a range of retail experiences that support both visitor needs for basics (fuel, groceries, pharmacy), and for interesting local items. Some of the more unique retail offerings include local crafts/artwork at the Artisan Craft Coop, Unforgettables, The Doorway, Ye Olde Flower Shoppie, Sonsie, Mabue and Co., Curiosity Clothing and Gifts, Treasure Mountain Jewel Shop, Delicious Baby and Toddler Boutique, Legacy Gift Room & Brew Shop, Out of the Cellar, Bear Country Kitchen, and the boutique chocolate shop Casa Di Cioccolato. Authentic Italian foods are available along with other high quality grocery items at Ferraro Foods located in both Trail and Rossland as well as at Star Grocery and Maria's Fine Foods. Trail is also home to several 'big box' stores such as Walmart, Canadian Tire, Home Hardware allowing it to also serve as a shopping destination for outlying regional areas. Rossland also offers a number of ski and bike shops to support travellers motivated by their passion for these activities. A small selection of retail is also available in Fruitvale. Beer and wine is available at Frosty's Beer & Wine, Crown Point Beer & Wine, Warfield Beer & Wine, Montrose Beer & Wine and Fruitvale Beer & Wine as well as in several locations in Rossland.

### **5.1.3 Conclusions/Implications – Access and Infrastructure**

The Lower Columbia has good road access and, for most of the year, direct air service is also reliable. The closest large urban market is Spokane, WA, (population 208,916 per 2010 census) however this market must deal with border crossing delays and the need to travel with a passport. Both Vancouver and Calgary are approx. 7 hours away – much more than a day trip and more than most travelers will accept for a weekend getaway. Kelowna (population 179,839 per 2011 census) is 3 ½ hours drive.

The existing accommodation, retail and restaurant services offer an excellent range and mix of options to achieve the tourism objective of growing overnight visitation, length of stay and visitor spending on a year round basis. Consequently, the focus of the following tourism plan will be primarily on identification of opportunities where the collection of Lower Columbia communities can best work together in order to build year round business and fill existing business capacity.

## **5.2 Existing Visitor Experiences**

Visitor experiences available today have been considered by nature of the experience.

Except where noted, the majority of this information has been extracted from [www.tourismrossland.com](http://www.tourismrossland.com) and [www.trailchamber.bc.ca](http://www.trailchamber.bc.ca). Other experiences may be offered but were not listed below unless readily found on the internet.

## Summary of Experiences

Activity	Visitor Experience
Arts, Culture and Heritage	<p><b>Rossland Museum and Discovery Centre</b> (the Rossland Museum recently secured \$400,000 funding for renovations and improvements to both the Museum and Visitor Centre);</p> <p><b>Rossland Miners’ Hall</b> – home of the Gold Fever Follies is receiving a facelift in 2016</p> <p><b>Rossland Art Gallery</b></p> <p><b>Rossland Heritage Buildings</b> – picturesque main street and walking tour of heritage buildings</p> <p><b>Trail’s “Little Italy”</b> – area of Trail renowned for its rich Italian heritage and traditions of the immigrants who came to build the railways in the 1900’s. Has unique steeply terraced homes and bright gardens tucked along winding streets with false front heritage buildings in the gulch;</p> <p><b>Trail Covered Stairways</b> – Little Italy includes 7,000 covered steps. Originally built uncovered prior to the 1920’s, they were covered to enable miners to walk to work in the winter</p> <p><b>Trail Rock Walls</b> – unique in BC, Trail has a series of rock walls that were built to hold up roads, yards, gardens and are in integral part of the City’s Italian heritage; a walking tour/brochure of these walls and covered stairs has been developed.</p> <p><b>Trail Museum</b> – open June – August</p> <p><b>Riverfront Centre</b> – Library and Heritage Centre has been approved for construction in Trail</p> <p><b>Charles Bailey Theatre</b> – largest performing arts venue in the region for 300 km; seats 721; currently in Year 2 of its strategic plan and will invest in new marquis signage; new lounge/bar area; new sound/lighting systems, air conditioning and an on-line ticketing system</p> <p><b>Pedestrian Bridge</b> – across the Columbia River under construction to open in September 2016</p> <p><b>Teck Interpretive Centre/Plant Tours</b> – open July/August – presents the history of Teck Trail Operations and its current activities</p> <p><b>VISAC Art Gallery (in Selkirk College)</b> – various displays or artwork</p> <p><b>Roze Gallery (Fruitvale)</b> – local artists’ works</p> <p><b>Music in the Park at Gyro</b></p>
Festivals and Events	<p>Trail Festivals and Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music in the Park (summer in Gyro Park)</li> <li>• Silver City Days Festival (May)</li> <li>• Art Walk</li> <li>• Festa Italiana (Saturday in June)</li> <li>• Santa Claus Parade (Saturday in early</li> </ul>

	<p>December)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trail Market on the Esplanade (summer months)</li> <li>• Red Roof Duathlon</li> </ul> <p>Rossland Festivals and Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gold Fever Follies (July/August)</li> <li>• Rossland Golden City Days (Sept)</li> <li>• Rossland Mountain Film Festival (Nov)</li> <li>• Rossland Winter Carnival (Jan)</li> <li>• Beer Goggles (March)</li> <li>• Rossland Rubberhead Enduro (July)</li> <li>• Huck'en Berries Bike Jam (Aug/Sept long weekend)</li> <li>• Spirit of Christmas (early December)</li> <li>• Rossland Rubberhead Enduro (August)</li> <li>• Broken Goat – 50 km Trail Run (July)</li> <li>• Farmers Market (June to October)</li> </ul> <p>Montrose Festivals and Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May Days</li> </ul> <p>Warfield Festivals and Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May Days</li> </ul> <p>Fruitvale Festivals and Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaver Valley May Days</li> <li>• Farmers Market (May to October)</li> <li>• Fruitvale Mountain Music Festival (August)</li> <li>• Annual Craft Fair (November)</li> </ul>
Parks	<p>Gyro Park – Trail  Nancy Greene Provincial Park  Christina Lake  Champion Lakes  Montrose Skate Park recently upgraded  Beaver Valley Family Park</p>
Cycling/Hiking Trails	<p>Significant network of trails throughout Lower Columbia including amongst many others:  200 km of maintained, labeled and authorized single track including epic 7 Summits;  Countless hiking trails for all ability levels (e.g. Red Top Rossland; Mt. Roberts; McQuarrie Creek Trail; Gorge Creek Trail etc.)  Columbia &amp; Western Rail Trail nearby (162 km long from Castlegar to Midway); Trans Canada Trail along Columbia River;  Beaver Falls (hike from Fruitvale)</p> <p>Excellent road biking opportunities throughout Lower Columbia</p>
Water Activities – Swimming,	Columbia River (the Onions); Champion Lakes, Nancy



Boating, Kayaking/Canoeing/ Stand Up Paddle Boarding	Greene Lake Centennial Pool Warfield Pool
Angling	Columbia River (Dolly Varden, bull and rainbow trout, walleye); Beaver Creek, Nancy Greene Lake
Golf (within 45 minutes)	Redstone Resort Birchbank Golf Course Castlegar Golf Club Little Bear Golf Course (Castlegar) Granite Pointe Golf in Nelson Christina Lake Golf Club Salmo Golf Club (9 hole) Champion Lakes Golf Course (9 hole) Cascade Par 3 (Christina Lake)
Horseback Riding	Owl Mountain Ranch; Harding Heights Ranch
Cat Skiing	Big Red Cats
Downhill Skiing	Red Mountain/Rossland; Whitewater/Nelson
Backcountry Ski Touring/Hiking	Rossland Range Rec Site cabins being renovated
Cross country/Nordic	Black Jack XC Ski Club – 40 km of professionally groomed trails Paulson XC Ski Area – 45 km of trails Le Petit Fromage – X-country skiing/fondue dinner
Snowmobiling	Beaver Valley Snowmobile Club; Kootenay Snogoes at Paulson

**Meeting/Conference Facilities include:**

Best Western Trail	3,000 sq.ft. of meeting space; capacity up to 150
Cominco Gymnasium	Capacity not available at time of writing
Fruitvale Community Hall	Capacity not available at time of writing
Riverbelle Trail	Capacity not available at time of writing
Prestige Mountain Resort Rossland	4,500 sq.ft. of meeting space; capacity up to 300
New Boutique hotel under construction at RED	TBD
RED Mountain Resort	Conference Centre ; capacity of 120 persons; Sourdough seating capacity of up to 200; Rafters 240 person reception capacity;

**5.2.2 Conclusions/Implications of Existing Visitor Experiences**

There is a wealth of visitor experiences in Lower Columbia that encompasses both outdoor activities and arts/culture/heritage. Travellers wishing to engage in a variety of different activities can be pursued as well as visitors who are passionate about a single activity and wish to pursue their love.

The myriad of outdoor experiences is well complemented by unique and authentic cultural and heritage offerings including a wide-range of talented artists, local history that can be experienced first hand in each Lower Columbia community as well as in several festivals and events such as Silver City Days, Rossland Film Festival etc. It is helpful to categorize the Lower Columbia experiences based upon whether they are trip ‘motivators’ or serve to ‘enhance’ the visitor experience while not necessarily being the original purpose of the trip:

Lower Columbia Trip motivators:

- Skiing/snowboarding at RED Mountain and/or Big Red Cats
- Mountain biking
- Regional road biking
- Golf
- Meetings/conferences
- Sporting events/training
- Select festivals/events such as Winter Carnival, Silver City Days, Golden City Days, Huck’en Berries Bike Jam, Broken Goat Trail Run, Beer Goggles, Enduro
- Select performances such as ‘big ticket’ events at the Charles Bailey Theatre e.g. Jan Arden
- Touring through region (including motorcycle touring)
- Visiting friends/relatives
- Regional shopping destination (Walmart, Canadian Tire box stores) and/or unique retail, arts and crafts

Lower Columbia Trip enhancers:

- History and heritage – museums, mine tours, walking tours, pedestrian bridge over river
- Arts, culture including unique retail, farmers markets
- Culinary experiences (restaurants, winery, brewery)

### 5.3 Current Visitation to Lower Columbia

A summary of Visitor Centre statistics for the period from 2011 to 2015 is as follows:

Rossland Visitor Centre (open year round Wednesday-Saturday 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. and July/August seven days per week from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.):

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Total Parties	1,766	1,398	1,736	1,772	1,975
Total Visitors	4,722	3,223	3,519	3,496	4,064

Area of origin statistics for Rossland indicate the following:

Area of Origin	2015
Local residents	627
BC	246
Alberta	44
Other Canada	75
Washington	58
California	2
Other US/Mexico	33
Europe	47
Asia/Australia + Other	40

Trail Visitor Centre (open year round – Winter Monday-Friday 9:00 to 5:00; Summer 7 days per week 9:00 to 5:00):

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
Total Parties	2,154	2,201	2,127	2,895	3,194
Total Visitors	3,192	3,692	3,711	4,499	4,641

Area of origin statistics for Trail indicate the following:

<b>Area of Origin</b>	<b>2015</b>
Local Resident	1,348
BC	535
Alberta	76
Other Canada	61
Washington	27
California	4
Other US/Mexico	22
Europe	37
Asia/Australia and Other	24

Visitation to both the Rossland and Trail Visitor Centres is relatively small and static. The Rossland Visitor Centre is located on the highway outside of town inside the Rossland Museum. As noted above, funding has been received for significant improvements to the facility that will undoubtedly draw more visitors. The location of the Visitor Centre in Trail is described as less than ideal. While the Trail Visitor Centre is central to downtown Trail, it is difficult to access and there is limited parking for oversize vehicles such as RV's.

It is likely that many close-in regional visitors to the Lower Columbia do not utilize the services of the Visitor Centres as they are already familiar with the area, so these statistics are of limited value in terms of understanding total visitation, area of origin and motivating activity. The visitors that do stop in Trail are primarily interested in maps and directions. Information on the Teck Interpretive Centre is frequently provided. The visitors that stop in Rossland are also interested in maps and directions as well as tours and attractions.

The Visitor Centre data may still be used to indicate trends in visitation and can offer a readily accessible baseline measure from which to track progress towards the plan objectives until a more robust and comprehensive measure is developed and established.

At the Trail Visitor Centre, BC and Alberta residents represent the two largest markets utilizing the Visitor Centre, followed by Other Canada. International visitors are more frequent than those from the US. At the Rossland Visitor Centre, BC residents also predominate with a cross section of other markets from Other Canada, Washington State and Europe.

Trail Visitor Centre statistics indicate that in 2015, 483 or 63% of those utilizing the Visitor Centre were same day visits. Similar statistics for the Rossland Visitor Centre indicate 47% of those utilizing the Visitor Centre were same day visits.

There is a significant opportunity to reach travellers during the planning stages of their vacation in order to showcase to them why the Lower Columbia area can be the overnight base (rather than day experience) for all their regional experiences.

## 5.4 Existing Marketing and Promotion

### 5.4.1 The Provincial Context – Destination BC

Destination BC is an industry-led Crown corporation that works collaboratively with tourism stakeholders across the province in coordinating marketing at the international, provincial, regional and local levels. Destination BC has been mandated to fulfill several key marketing and leadership responsibilities critical to the long-term, sustainable growth of the provincial tourism industry.

Over the next three years, Destination BC will be focused on three important goals for growth, as identified within their new Corporate Strategy<sup>2</sup>:

- Secure the highest Net Promoter Score in North America
- Lead Canada in growth of overnight visitor expenditures
- Build a collaborative, insight-driven, results-focused team

In addition, the corporate strategy identifies five iconic experiences that showcase BC in a compelling way: Canadian Rockies, Rainforests, Cities in Wilderness, Ocean Coast and Skiing.

A few key Destination BC initiatives that may impact the Lower Columbia area include:

- Launch of BC's new tourism brand creative and guidelines. There is significant effort being placed on industry leveraging and amplifying the BC destination brand with the tagline Super, Natural British Columbia<sup>3</sup>
- Launch of new application-based provincial Co-operative Marketing Partnerships Program<sup>4</sup> which will replace the current Tourism Partners, Community Tourism Opportunities and Experiences BC programs. The new program will be an application-based program of which the Lower Columbia can apply directly to Destination BC for funding
- Launch of EQ program for tourism operators. Register with Destination BC: [tourismresearch@DestinationBC.ca](mailto:tourismresearch@DestinationBC.ca)
- Launch of the new Remarkable Experiences pilot program. The goals of the program are to support businesses over a period of time to: improve their digital and social media marketing skills; increase their Net Promoter Score<sup>5</sup>, and enhance the visitor experience of each individual business, but also the collective experience between businesses
- New Marketing Strategy with a focus on Captivate, Advocate and Generate<sup>6</sup>
  - Captivate: Create an emotional connection with BC in the minds of global consumers. This strategy will drive visitation by fostering an emotional connection between the target

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<sup>2</sup> Our Corporate Strategy, Destination BC: <http://www.destinationbc.ca/cmspages/getfile.aspx?guid=55651809-3ab6-4f0e-ba36-9bffb8de7ef9>

<sup>3</sup> New brand guidelines are available: <http://www.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Resources/british-columbia-tourism-brand/Our-Brand.pdf.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> New program guidelines are available: <http://www.destinationbc.ca/Programs/Regions-Communities-and-Sectors/Destination-BC-Co-op-Marketing-Program.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Background on the Net Promoter Score is available: <http://www.destinationbc.ca/Resources/Monitoring-and-Evaluation/Net-Promoter-Score.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> New strategy is available <http://strategy.destinationbc.ca/our-marketing-strategy/>

- audience and British Columbia through alignment around the BC destination brand, inspirational storytelling to passionate audiences and data-driven marketing
  - Advocate: Amplify traveller advocacy about BC. This strategy will drive visitation by amplifying the power of peer to peer recommendations to influence potential travellers to visit BC thereby increasing reach and impact
  - Generate: Lead generation for BC tourism businesses and travel trade. This strategy will increase referrals for tourism business in BC by leveraging the strength of global relationships and technological capabilities
- A strong focus on Destination Development and planning

## 5.4.2 The Regional Context – Kootenay Rockies Tourism

Kootenay Rockies Tourism is a destination management organization whose mandate is to enhance the regional visitor economy for the benefit of business and communities through destination marketing and management activities. The organization is a non-profit association representing the tourism stakeholders within the region, which includes the southeast corner of British Columbia, a region that is defined by the Alberta border in the east, the US border with Canada in the south and extends north to the centres of Revelstoke and Golden and west to the Thompson Okanagan region.

Kootenay Rockies Tourism is one of five regional destination marketing organizations (RDMO) in BC that are contracted by Destination BC to deliver marketing initiatives on behalf of the region. As part of this contract, each region administers co-operative marketing touring and exploring programs for their respective region. Through the co-op programs, Kootenay Rockies Tourism is able to offer tourism stakeholders within the region the opportunity to participate in marketing initiatives at reduced costs.

A few key initiatives from Kootenay Rockies Tourism that may impact the Lower Columbia area include:

- Kootenay Rockies Tourism will take on a greater role in Destination Development planning and activation for the region moving forward
- Translation of the new provincial tourism brand to the Kootenay Rockies region as a destination. This work will include new ‘on-brand’ asset development such as videos, images and written content
- Alignment to Destination BC marketing strategies of Captivate (10% of effort), Advocate (20% of effort) and Generate (70% of effort)
- Focus on Touring and Exploring markets, including: FIT (Free and Independent Travel) & RV Touring, Motorcycle Touring, Outdoor Adventure, and Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) and destination weddings

## 5.4.3 Sector Marketing Organizations

In BC, there are three sector marketing organizations that help to promote experiences in the Lower Columbia area:

1. BC Golf Marketing Alliance: The BC Golf Marketing Alliance (BCGMA) is a strategic marketing partnership between 54 destination golf courses in British Columbia, regional destination golf consortiums, Destination British Columbia and British Columbia Golf. Several of the golf courses in the Lower Columbia participate in the regional Kootenay Golf Trail golf consortium [www.kootenaygolftrail.com](http://www.kootenaygolftrail.com)

2. Western Canada Ski Areas Association: Destination BC works co-operatively with BC's 13 destination ski resorts on an annual winter ski campaign, with coordination provided by the Western Canada Ski Areas Association (WCSAA). RED Resort is included within these activities [www.skiittobelieveit.com/Ski-Resorts/Red-Mountain-Resort](http://www.skiittobelieveit.com/Ski-Resorts/Red-Mountain-Resort)
3. Mountain Bike Tourism Association: All the trails in the Lower Columbia are represented in the Mountain Bike Tourism Association (MBTA) as a participating mountain biking community [www.mountainbikingbc.ca/community/rossland](http://www.mountainbikingbc.ca/community/rossland)
4. Nordic BC – Cross country trails in the Lower Columbia are represented with this provincial sector organization

#### **5.4.4 Lower Columbia Marketing and Promotion**

Promotion of the Lower Columbia as a collection of visitor experiences is in its infancy. Historically Rossland has held the strongest market presence with the MRDT funds, Red Resort Association funds and Resort Municipality Initiative funding creating a pool of investment funds large enough to have market impact. Tourism Rossland has led implementation of these efforts guided by its Board of Directors.

In 2015, Tourism Rossland on behalf of the Lower Columbia communities undertook several initiatives including Google Business Tours - Google Business Photos and Views Virtual Tours for businesses and organizations that have a physical address, phone number and sell a product. This collaborative initiative was very well received and the Lower Columbia Community Development Team Society (LCCDTS) has again approved funding to assist the Community Directed Funds committee to work towards their goal of “a stronger Lower Columbia community through investment in creative initiatives.” The Community Directed Funds (CDF) Committee has identified that Economic and Tourism Development are one of their strategic priority areas.

The Google Tours Project Report from 2015 is attached as an Appendix hereto along with the annual Tourism Rossland report that showcases Rossland's destination marketing efforts.

For visitors in the trip planning stage, there is no ‘one-stop’ for information on the Lower Columbia. Rather there are several websites for visitor information:

[www.tourismrossland.com](http://www.tourismrossland.com)

[www.redresort.com](http://www.redresort.com)

[www.trail.ca](http://www.trail.ca)

[www.trailchamber.bc.ca](http://www.trailchamber.bc.ca)

[www.findyourtrail.com](http://www.findyourtrail.com)

The Tourism Rossland website is the most comprehensive and easily navigated site providing excellent content on Rossland and area. However, it does not (nor does it purport to) represent the entire Lower Columbia.

Local tourism businesses market themselves with signage, websites, brochures and word of mouth. Several accommodation properties are part of larger chains and benefit from corporate promotional efforts. RED Mountain also offers a very comprehensive website featuring its on-hill experiences and accommodation offerings as well as more general information about the Rossland experience.

Trail and Rossland are promoted by Destination BC as well as by Kootenay Rockies Tourism (the regional destination management and marketing organization). The primary consumer website is

[www.hellobc.com](http://www.hellobc.com) and currently both Trail and Rossland have their own community pages at [www.hellobc.com/trail.aspx](http://www.hellobc.com/trail.aspx) and [www.hellobc.com/rossland.aspx](http://www.hellobc.com/rossland.aspx) .

The Lower Columbia area is also included as part of two Provincial circle routes:

- Mountains/Vineyards
- Great Circle Tour of the Kootenays

The Great Circle Route through Kootenay Rockies region promoted on [www.hellobc.com](http://www.hellobc.com) connects Calgary/Banff/Golden/ Revelstoke/ Castlegar/Rossland/Cranbrook/Kimberley/Fairmont Hot Springs/Invermere. There is a link provided to more detailed information for Rossland.

Both Trail and Rossland have a presence on [www.kootenayrockies.com](http://www.kootenayrockies.com) and the Kootenay APP.

#### **5.4.2 Conclusions/Implications of Existing Marketing and Promotion**

The Lower Columbia area can benefit from the destination marketing and ‘brand equity’ that already exists in the marketplace for both Rossland and Trail. Rossland is known for its skiing/snowboarding/cat skiing at RED and Big Red Cats and for its mountain biking and golf experiences. Trail has a strong reputation for sporting events and is a regional hub for shopping and other services. The most effective use of collective resources in the Lower Columbia would appear to be a focused developmental effort on one or two strategic initiatives that encompass all Lower Columbia communities and promotion of these experiences to target audiences rather than the invention of yet another ‘brand’ for the Lower Columbia.

#### **5.5 Existing Tourism Organization and Funding**

Rossland’s tourism destination management and marketing efforts are led and coordinated by Tourism Rossland. Funding is secured through the MRDT, contributions from the Red Resort Association and leveraged dollars. The community also receives provincial RMI funding (Resort Municipality Initiative).

Trail’s tourism development and promotional efforts are led by the local Chamber of Commerce. However, funding is limited and consideration should be given to the implementation of the MRDT throughout the entire Lower Columbia area to create a sustainable source of funds that in turn can be matched and leveraged with other partners.

Warfield, Montrose and Fruitvale have limited visitor experiences and no formal organization leading tourism development or promotion.

The Lower Columbia Community Development Team Society (LCCDTS) is managing the Community Directed Funds (CDF) Committee. Economic and Tourism Development has been identified as one of their strategic priority areas. An application to the CDF for \$183,018 by Tourism Rossland on behalf of the Lower Columbia communities was recently approved as part of a larger tourism projects budget of \$338,018. While this represents a significant investment in 2016 and 2017, these funds are not considered sustainable over the long term. The professional experience and capacity of Tourism Rossland is a significant asset and the Lower Columbia area should continue to leverage this expertise whenever mutually beneficial.

## **6.0 Summary Tourism Strengths/Weaknesses/ Opportunities/Threats**

The tourism product development and marketing and sales strategies which follow are intended to leverage the following Lower Columbia tourism strengths and seize high return opportunities while being cognizant of the weaknesses and threats being faced.

### **6.1 Strengths**

- World-class outdoor recreation (skiing/snowboarding, mountain biking, network of trails) and scenic touring routes (road biking, motorcycles, auto/RV touring)
- Outstanding sport tourism infrastructure for many different sports and seasons
- Arts, culture, history and heritage opportunities that enhance visitor experience
- Variety of existing festivals and events throughout the region – some of which are or have the potential to become trip motivators generating overnight stays
- Community understanding and support for the importance of the visitor economy
- Professional staff and organization to lead collective tourism efforts in Tourism Rossland
- Central location; close to US border; Regional airport in Trail
- Wide range of accommodation options including condominiums, B&B's, inns, hotels, motels and campsites
- Wide range of food/beverage, retail experiences
- Peaceful, quiet and relaxing
- Warm and hospitable community with a strong volunteer base
- Active participant and winner in Communities in Bloom
- Warm climate in the summer; mild winter weather in town; excellent snow conditions for winter activities nearby (Nordic, snowshoeing, snowmobiling)

### **6.2 Weaknesses**

- Historical lack of inter-community collaboration and communication
- Variable stages of tourism development within the region make collaboration more challenging
- Relatively remote location, difficult to access in winter months

### **6.3 Opportunities**

- Collaborate and showcase Lower Columbia as a visitor destination
- Develop a comprehensive and strategic marketing plan and work cooperatively with all Lower Columbia stakeholders to improve market awareness of Lower Columbia and its visitor experiences – reach travellers in the trip planning phase to showcase Lower Columbia's strengths as a preferred overnight base for multi-night stays
- Leverage marketing funds with partners and identify a sustainable funding model including possible introduction of MRDT to other communities in the Lower Columbia
- Coordinate existing calendar, develop/grow/launch and promote regional events - create several Lower Columbia signature events of the scope and scale to motivate travel and overnight stays
- Grow existing base of sport tourism
- Grow existing base of meeting and conference business
- Leverage declining value of Canadian dollar – promote value to American travellers
- Target young, active travellers seeking a range of outdoor experiences from a central base (these younger travellers will continue to return as they age)



- Target 55+ market touring – captures spring/fall travellers as well as peak season who are seeking soft outdoor adventure, heritage/culture and who have disposable income for travel
- Target European touring travellers and have them include a longer length of stay in Lower Columbia, using the destination as a ‘hub’ to access the entire region
- Target specific segment interested in culture/heritage experiences – leverage growing awareness of Castlegar and Sculpture Walk – Sculpture Capital of Canada

## 6.4 Threats

- Variable weather affecting key tourism attractions (skiing, mountain biking, etc.)
- Economic uncertainties affect disposable income and travel plans

## 7.0 Target Markets

Based upon a review of available market research and knowledge of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for tourism in the Lower Columbia area, the following markets should be targeted and offered specific Lower Columbia experiences so as to achieve the objective of increasing overnight visitation throughout the year (note these target markets/experiences are specifically for the entire region as Rossland in particular has its own destination marketing strategy):

<b>Target Market</b>	<b>Lower Columbia Experience</b>
Regional, Provincial, National and International Sport Tourism Event Organizers	Sport tourism infrastructure + outstanding accommodation, dining, retail experiences
Festival and Event Goers	Coordinated schedule of events in each community; Lower Columbia events such as: Golden City Days Silver City Days Red Roof Dualthon Christmas Winter Market/Parade Culinary Festival (to be developed featuring dining, winery, brewery, Farmers Markets, edible plantings, workshops/seminars etc.) Lower Columbia Film Festival (extension of Rossland Film Festival) Ski/Bike/Run/Swim to be developed and include all communities
Regional Shopping/Getaways	Combination of ‘big box retail’ + unique local arts and crafts combined with accommodation and dining
Regional Golf Touring	Accommodation/dining base with easy access to a variety of golf experiences
Regional Touring	Spring/summer/fall touring market can use Lower Columbia as a base for multi-night stay to experience entire area – feature accommodation, dining, central location along with wealth of outdoor and cultural experiences

Target markets can also be defined by their psychographic traits. The Explorer Quotient is a tool developed by Destination Canada to assist communities and businesses in understanding the psychographics of travellers – the reasons why they travel and the types of experiences they seek. This behavioral knowledge assists in identifying the types of travellers best suited to the product/experience being offered.

Traveller ‘types’ are defined and the destination or business is able to match the ‘type’ with the experiences they offer as a way of focusing marketing efforts on best potential customers and defining the nature of messaging/media tools that will reach and resonate with them. Additional information is available through Destination BC and on-line at [www.en.destinationcanada.com](http://www.en.destinationcanada.com). Destination Canada has identified the following Explorer Types as most attractive for the Canadian marketplace. Destination BC has confirmed that these markets are most relevant provincially:

- Free Spirits
- Cultural Explorers
- Authentic Experiencers

Free Spirits are highly social and open-minded. Their enthusiasm for life extends to their outlook on travel. Experimental and adventurous, they indulge in high-end experiences that are shared with others.

Cultural Explorers are defined by their love of constant travel and continuous opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the culture, people and settings of the places they visit.

Authentic Experiencers are typically understated travellers looking for authentic, tangible engagement with destinations they seek, with a particular interest in understanding the history of the places they visit.

The Lower Columbia current visitor experiences would appear to best meet the experiential needs of Cultural Explorers and Authentic Experiencers.

As marketing efforts progress and specific campaigns are formulated and launched, they should be informed by the additional psychographic intelligence available from the EQ program and data collection in the Lower Columbia area.

## 8. Strategies and Tactics

The following strategies and tactics are recommended to reach these target markets and to achieve the Lower Columbia area’s objective:

***“To increase overnight visitation to the Lower Columbia area by attracting visitors who stay longer, spend more and return again and again throughout the year.”***

- 8.1 Proactively target and secure additional sport hosting opportunities and maximize associated length of stay/spending/repeat visitation
- 8.2 Strategically invest in the development and promotion of new and existing festivals and events during ‘need’ periods
- 8.3 Invest in Lower Columbia marketing assets for use in marketing activities
- 8.4 Create and promote itineraries targeted to regional travellers seeking a ‘getaway’

8.5 Promote the Lower Columbia area as a base for regional golf touring

8.6 Engage with the tourism community in the Lower Columbia area to define a long-term sustainable approach to the funding and delivery of tourism initiatives

Note: These strategies/tactics are intended to supplement rather than replace or duplicate destination development/marketing efforts already underway in individual communities within the Lower Columbia collaborative.

<b>Description</b>	<b>8.1 Proactively target and secure additional sport hosting opportunities and maximize associated length of stay/spending/repeat visitation</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>8.1.1 Update and enhance the comprehensive sport tourism website featuring all sport tourism infrastructure and facilities in the Lower Columbia <a href="http://www.trailrossland.com">www.trailrossland.com</a></p> <p>8.1.2 Ensure content on <a href="http://www.viasport.ca">www.viasport.ca</a> is accurate and up to date and apply for grant assistance as appropriate</p> <p>8.1.3 Provide support to local sports clubs and assistance in bid identification and submission preparation</p> <p>8.1.4 Develop readily customizable flatsheets featuring all local services and amenities for attendees and participants</p> <p>8.1.5 Promote pre-event training opportunities</p> <p>8.1.6 For larger scale events, make available special offers and assist in creating participant welcome package that features dining, shopping, extend your stay offers to maximize attendee length of stay, spending and intention to return</p> <p>8.1.7 Create database of attendees and promote ‘come again’ packages to encourage return visitation</p> <p>8.1.8 Collaborate with other BC communities (Kamloops, Langley etc.) to re-energize and leverage information and resources on previous provincial sport hosting website</p>
Rationale/Objectives	The Lower Columbia has invested extensively in sport hosting infrastructure and facilities and has built market equity and awareness as the ‘Home of Champions’ and home of ski racing excellence. Every additional event hosted will contribute to overnight stays, retail and restaurant spending and offers a significant return to all tourism businesses at all times of year.
Responsibility	Tourism Rossland on behalf of the Lower Columbia area
Timing	Ongoing
Budget	2016 - \$2,000; 2017 - \$2,000; supported by LCCDTS Community Directed Funds
Measuring Success	<p>Number of sport tourism events hosted</p> <p>Increased occupancy vs. baseline</p> <p>Size of database of attendees/participants for future marketing</p> <p>Website traffic to <a href="http://www.trailrossland.com">www.trailrossland.com</a></p>

<b>Description</b>	<b>8.2</b> Strategically invest in the development and promotion of new and existing festivals and events during ‘need’ periods
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>8.2.1 Create one comprehensive, easily navigated calendar of visitor festivals and events (i.e. do not include community events geared for residents)</p> <p>8.2.2 Where multiple events conflict, assist in coordinating and reschedule timing to create a critical mass of visitor experiences worthy of promotion to lure multi-night stays e.g. rather than three events on one Saturday create a Friday/Saturday/Sunday weekend of experiences</p> <p>8.2.3 Work with existing smaller scale events to increase their marketing reach leading to greater overnight attendance and economic impact. Suggested events include Golden City Days; Silver City Days; Red Roof Duathlon; Fruitvale May Days, Christmas Winter Market and events at the Charles Bailey Theatre</p> <p>8.2.4 Increase collaboration between events and the business community to ensure that there are additional opportunities to encourage participants to stay longer, visit local businesses and increase spending</p> <p>8.2.5 Create bi-weekly what’s on/what’s happening/deals of the month and physically distribute in Visitor Centres, hotels, restaurants, cafes, Museums, golf courses, (these will also be used as basis for special offers for event attendees)</p> <p>8.2.6 Engage with tourism businesses/local community organizations/local governments to create a Lower Columbia Events Committee and conduct additional research to identify and potentially invest in 1-2 ‘signature’ Lower Columbia events that will draw overnight visitation. Possible events include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Culinary event featuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Winemaker’s dinner</li> <li>▪ Brewery tours/tastings</li> <li>▪ Farmer’s Markets</li> <li>▪ Walking tours including ‘edible’ planters</li> <li>▪ Dining features at various restaurants</li> <li>▪ Seminars and workshops (e.g. chocolate making by Casa di Cioccolato; sausage making by Ferraro Fine Foods etc.) with associated retail opportunities for presenters</li> <li>▪ Community long table in scenic location</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Lower Columbia Film Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extension of current Rossland Film</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>Festival to build capacity by utilizing venues throughout Lower Columbia area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ski/bike/run/swim through all Lower Columbia communities</li> </ul>
Rationale/Objectives	The coordination of the current calendar and the expansion of existing festivals/events and/or creation of new events to a scope/scale that will motivate travel in regional markets will provide a reason for travellers to visit and stay multiple nights in the Lower Columbia area. Festivals/events have proven to be a successful ‘lure’ in other destinations throughout the Province. Having visited once for a specific event and enjoyed the experience, visitors may return for the event again or at other times of year.
Responsibility	Tourism Rossland on behalf of the Lower Columbia area; Events Committee to include Chamber of Commerce, local governments, community groups etc.
Timing	Ongoing
Budget	2016 - \$10,000; 2017 - \$10,000; supported by LCCDTS Community Directed Funds
Measuring Success	Increased business results reported by tourism stakeholders vs. baseline during festival/event time period Size of database of attendees/participants for future marketing

<b>Description</b>	<b>8.3</b> Invest in Lower Columbia marketing assets for use in marketing activities and build awareness of experiences/reasons to visit and stay multiple nights
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>8.3.1 Review possible names for Lower Columbia that embrace and showcase current brand equity of Trail, Rossland and surrounding communities</p> <p>8.3.2 Create a web presence for the Lower Columbia featuring all participating communities and linking to specific community information</p> <p>8.3.3 Upgrade content on visitor website for Trail</p> <p>8.3.4 Work together on a one on one with local businesses and tourism products to enhance their web presence (Hello BC, Trip Advisor, Google, Bing, Yelp, etc.)</p> <p>8.3.5 Include key words used by travellers to achieve high organic search engine placement, suggest multi-day itineraries, things to do, reasons to stay longer</p> <p>8.3.6 Secure additional photography/video footage in keeping with new provincial guidelines/branding <a href="http://www.destinationbc.ca/Resources/british-columbia-tourism-brand.aspx">http://www.destinationbc.ca/Resources/british-columbia-tourism-brand.aspx</a>.</p> <p>8.3.7 Develop a series of media story starters for the Lower Columbia to be used to secure interest and editorial coverage in key markets/media outlets (print and e-based)</p>
Rationale/Objectives	A foundational investment in a variety of promotional tools is required to build a platform for all future Lower Columbia marketing initiatives
Responsibility	Tourism Rossland on behalf of the Lower Columbia area
Timing	Ongoing
Budget	2016 - \$75,000; 2017 - \$75,000; supported by LCCDTS Community Directed Funds
Measuring Success	Website traffic/analytics Search engine placement Media coverage – number/advertising equivalency of coverage

<b>Description</b>	<b>8.4 Create</b> and promote itineraries targeted to regional travellers seeking a ‘getaway’
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>8.4.1 Create a series of regional promotions in ‘need’ periods (shoulder season) to promote a critical mass of experiences that warrant travel/overnight stay including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of trails for hiking, biking, XC skiing etc. and outdoor adventure activities (angling, water sports etc.)</li> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Dining</li> <li>• Performance at Charles Bailey Theatre or specific festival opportunity</li> <li>• Overnight stay with a variety of accommodation options in various communities at different price points</li> </ul> <p>8.4.2 Promote Lower Columbia getaways in regional media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional newspapers/radio</li> <li>• Lower Columbia website</li> <li>• Select signage/billboards</li> </ul> <p>8.4.3 Attend Outdoor Adventure shows in Calgary and Vancouver</p>
Rationale/Objectives	The Lower Columbia area offers a network of regional trails, outdoor activities and a density of accommodation/ shopping and entertainment options for a large regional catchment area. Creation and promotion of suggested itineraries around outdoor activities, key events (concerts, festivals) will build awareness in these regional markets and motivate travel.
Responsibility	Tourism Rossland on behalf of the Lower Columbia area
Timing	Ongoing
Budget	2016 - \$5,000; 2017 - \$5,000; supported by LCCDTS Community Directed Funds
Measuring Success	Increased business results reported by tourism stakeholders vs. baseline during promotion period Web traffic/landing page visits for getaways



<b>Description</b>	<b>8.5</b> Create and promote itineraries targeted to regional golf travellers seeking a multi-course golf getaway
Specific Initiatives/Actions	8.5.1 Working in association with the Kootenay Golf Trail to promote golf in the Lower Columbia at golf shows and via <a href="http://www.kootenaygolftrail.com">www.kootenaygolftrail.com</a>
Rationale/Objectives	The Lower Columbia area offers easy access to several quality golf experiences alongside a density of accommodation/ shopping and entertainment options for a large regional catchment area. Creation and promotion of suggested golf itineraries will build awareness in these regional markets and motivate travel.
Responsibility	Tourism Rossland on behalf of the Lower Columbia area working together with Kootenay Golf Trail
Timing	Ongoing
Budget	2016 - \$8,000; 2017 - \$8,000; supported by LCCDTS Community Directed Funds
Measuring Success	Increased business results reported by tourism stakeholders vs. baseline during promotion period Web traffic/landing page visits for golf getaways Increased golf rounds vs. baseline

<b>Description</b>	<b>8.6</b> Engage with the tourism community in the Lower Columbia area to define a long-term sustainable approach to the funding and delivery of tourism initiatives
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>8.6.1 Utilize current two-year window of funding by LCCDTS to continue to build relationships and showcase measurable results that can be achieved through collaboration, strategic focus and effective/efficient delivery of tourism services</p> <p>8.6.2 Initiate discussions with accommodation sector to review opportunity for MRDT funding throughout the entire Lower Columbia area</p> <p>8.6.3 Formalize governance structure for Lower Columbia tourism collaborative</p> <p>8.6.4 Formalize relationship with Tourism Rossland or other entity as contracted tourism services provider for the Lower Columbia</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Current funding from LCCDTS expires in two years and momentum in the marketplace must continue in order to generate continued growth in overnight visitation and associated revenues. Sustainable funding and an effective/efficient delivery mechanism are required. Tourism Rossland’s knowledge, expertise and infrastructure can be leveraged to the mutual benefit of all Lower Columbia communities in a longer-term relationship when combined with reliable sources of funding.
Responsibility	LCCDTS/Trail Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Rossland
Timing	Immediate and ongoing
Budget	Existing organization budgets
Measuring Success	<p>Stable, representative and broadly support governance structure</p> <p>Long-term sustainable funding for tourism initiatives</p> <p>Efficient and effective delivery model</p>