

MAKE YOUR
WAY HERE

CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE

2022

TOURISM STRATEGY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It's been said you know it's time for a getaway when you start looking like the person on your driver's license. Get away to your **ADVENTURE HUB** in Maple Ridge – where every day can be an adventure in adrenalized outdoor experiences that lead our tourism story to come. Our supporting actors in the story to come: grown and made-local “farm fresh”, and urban hot spots that celebrate the best of the best in food, entertainment, culture, and shopping. Hike, rappel, race, bike, ride, clip-clop, nosh, imbibe, peruse, watch, and for the wee ones – how about hop, skip, jump. Active verbs lie at the heart of rejuvenation of mind, body and spirit in Maple Ridge.

Tourism success begins and ends with great **PRODUCT**. And our great core products of the future reflect a **VALUE PROPOSITION** that has gut-checked (in the process of creating this Tourism Strategy) to identify the types of experiences that stand out from a crowded world of choice visitors have. We will not be all things to all people, stuck in the generalities of “discover us.” We will celebrate and enhance the best of the best of us. Three inter-connected **TOURISM STRATEGY GOALS** will help us achieve this: 1) Develop Differentiated Tourism Product, 2) Enable Tourism Development; 3) Sharpen Marketing.

Elephants are in the tourism room; many communities are witnessing more visitors but worry about capacity, strain on infrastructure, or having visitors discover the cool places only the locals know. We will proactively and successfully address the elephants: 1) in a “tread-lightly” value system we will ground tourism development, marketing, and communications in to leave positive legacy for our children and grandchildren; and 2) in creation of better understanding of tourism benefits.



TURN OVER
A NEW
ADVENTURE
LEAF

MAPLE RIDGE
MAKE YOUR WAY HERE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – CONT'D

Stop. Stay longer. Spend more. It sounds blunt but nurturing of the broadest set of benefits of tourism economic impact via a carefully chosen, vision-based tourism strategy matters if we are to have tourism development sit closer to the heart of our future. In serving the interests and soulful aspirations our visitors have when they experience Maple Ridge, we also serve our own interests as residents and a community in two key ways:

1) Our tourism path will not be about selling trinkets and postcards to visitors. We will generate meaningful memories for visitors that are authentic to Maple Ridge. In so doing we generate jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. More accommodation. Entrepreneurs who offer guided experiences. Growth of food and beverage manufacturing industry. Purchases from artists and creators, and retailers. Restaurant receipts. Private sector-based community events. Agriculture Land Reserve enablement of more entrepreneur opportunities from local production. Even philanthropy in placemaking, sport, art, and other community investments. There are very serious positive economic benefits of this Tourism Strategy that connects the dots in intent and **ACTIONS**.

2) In pursuit of “beautiful Maple Ridge” in the placemaking that attracts visitors, we also elevate community quality of life for residents. Inspire. Be inspiring. It’s good mantra for a City of Maple Ridge on its ambitious pathway.

THE FUTURE IS WHAT WE MAKE OF IT in Maple Ridge. A spirit to guide our way.

This Tourism Strategy was developed collaboratively with a Tourism Stakeholder Group in 2022 - including document review, sector data analysis, interviews, and workshops.



COOL DOWN AT OUR HOT SPOTS
MAPLE RIDGE -
URBAN HOT SPOTS WORTH A
HUNGRY STOMACH AND
PARCHED THIRST



SOME DOGS DREAM
MAPLE
MAPLE RIDGE - DOG-FRIENDLY



LOCAL CRAFT PRODUCTS GOOD
TO THE LAST SCRAPE
MAPLE RIDGE – FARM FRESH

TOURISM IN MAPLE RIDGE: A SNAPSHOT

WHAT IS A TOURIST?

“The activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.” Src: WTO and UN - https://tiac-aitc.ca/_Library/documents/The_Canadian_Tourism_Industry_-_A_Special_Report_Web_Optimized_.pdf.

Based on Maple Ridge tourism experiences, we can assume the vast majority of visitors are residents elsewhere in Metro Vancouver.

WHY TOURISM?

- Spending in local businesses
- Municipal revenue (e.g. rentals/facility admission fees)
- Entrepreneur opportunities
- Source of new investment and residents: 7% of Canadians say a tourism visit was the major driver of their decision to live where they do now. Src: Zinc Research, statistically representative poll of 1200 Canadians, 2011.

More broadly....and importantly:

Tourism celebrates our community at its best – the elevated experiences that: shape our community pride, quality of life, and happiness; cements what it means to be “home”; and that creates the deeper connection to people and place. For this reason, tourism product development and marketing is a means to an end for locals as well.



WHAT DOES TOURISM LOOK LIKE?

Canada’s tourism industry is comprised of several distinct – but complementary – activities:

- 1) Transportation: including passenger services via air, rail, boat, trail, as well as interurban, charter and tour busses and vehicle rental.
- 2) Accommodations: including hotels, motels, inns, hostels, guest ranches, camping, and short-term rental properties.
- 3) Food and Beverage: (e.g. restaurants, cafes, brewpubs, catering).
- 4) Meetings and Events: conventions and business meetings, major events and festivals.
- 5) Attractions: recreation and entertainment activities, as well as cultural, natural and historical attractions.
- 6) Travel Services (e.g. travel agencies, tour operators, wholesalers, visitor information services).
- 7) Sharing Economy (e.g. peer-to-peer accommodation, peer-to-peer travel experiences, rideshare).

We often under-value the role of tourism in our economies because it is part of many economic sectors.

WHAT DOES TOURISM LOOK LIKE IN MAPLE RIDGE?

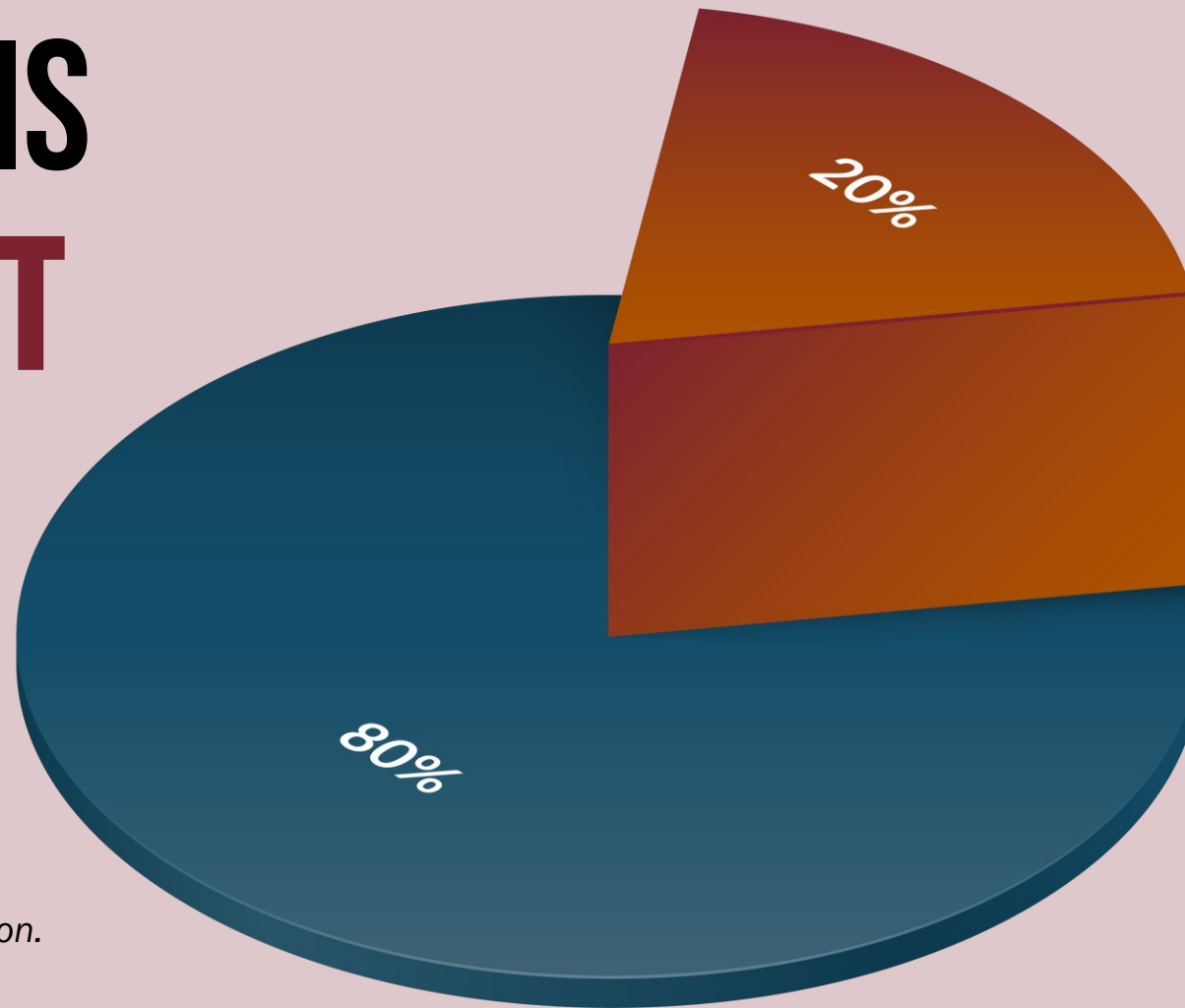
Based on BC Stats sector ratios, sector in Maple Ridge would be the 12th biggest (3.7%) of 20 industry sectors and 10th fastest growing (2012-2021) as a stand-alone sector, with roughly 1200 jobs supported by tourism in Maple Ridge.



THE POWER IS THE PRODUCT

THE PRODUCT

An attractions and experiences value proposition shaped by action in context of vision.



THE STORY

Tourism marketing.

“The Product” in tourism terms represents core, differentiated attractions and experiences. Indirectly, Product represents everything we see and do in a community – from street condition to architecture given tourism visits are linked to resident relocation and investment. Great Product sells itself – the 80%. Great communications – the 20% - is just elegant spin on the ball to put Product success in the right context.

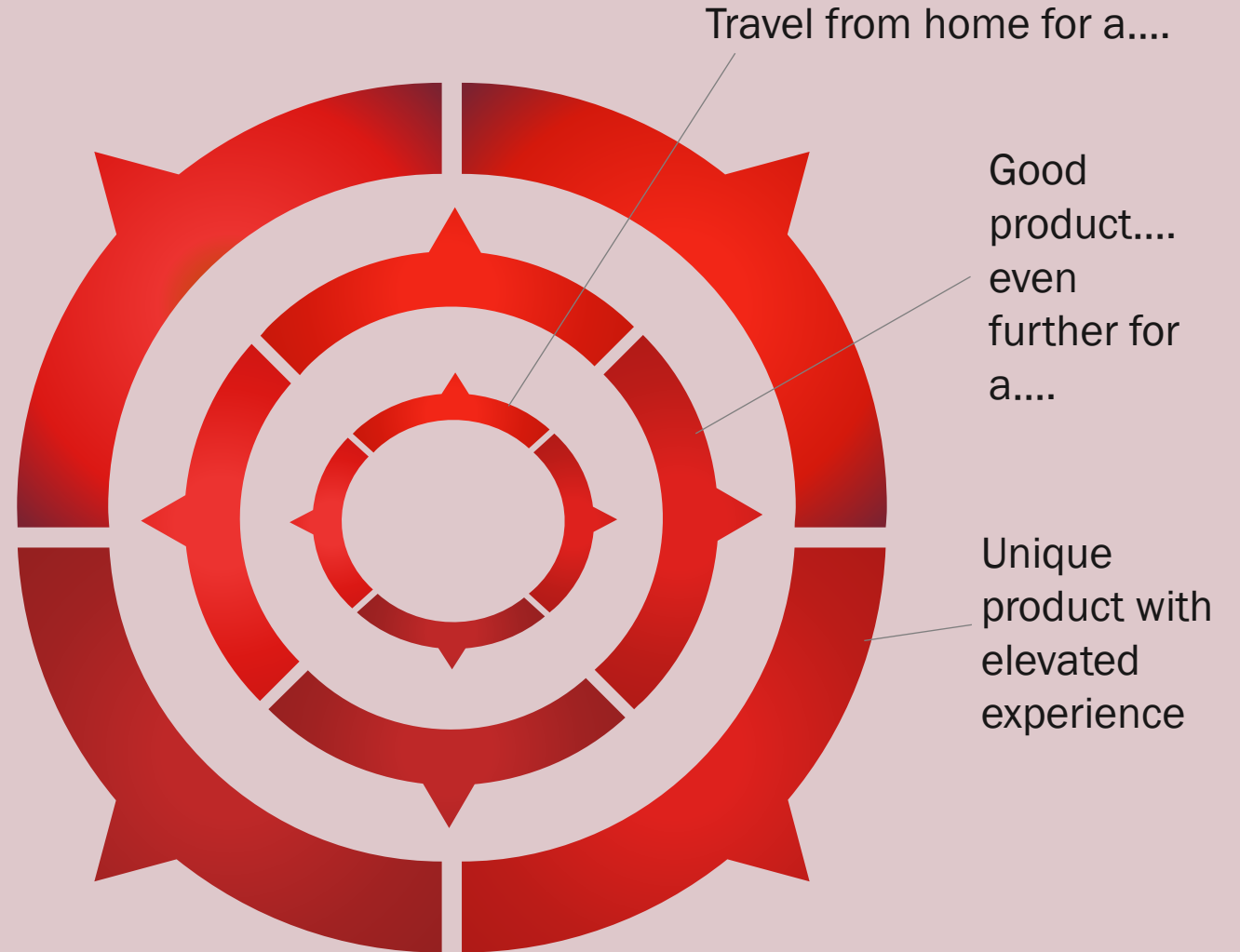


ONE KEY CONCEPT



Strategy Focus

The more unique the product and experience, (value proposition), the further someone will go to pursue it.





**MAPLE RIDGE
-MAKE YOUR WAY HERE-**

OUR TOURISM VISION

The mountains make magic, the rivers run wild, and the land sustains us - inspiring our culture and creativity. In Maple Ridge we celebrate Adventure Hub, Farm Fresh, and Urban Hot Spots lifestyle living, and share the best of us with visitors.

We borrow these spirit places from future generations, and share our core values for the land we love: respect, stewardship, and gentle interaction.

Tourism contributes to a vibrant, sustainable Maple Ridge economy, providing employment and entrepreneurship opportunities while making deep contribution to City quality of life.



VALUE PROPOSITION

WHY DO WE MATTER? Answer this question and 80% of a community's economic development pathway is defined via connection to people and enterprise who best connect with value proposition. And the more unique or powerful the value proposition, the further the lengths people will go to pursue it.

Active Outdoor
Adventure
Experiences

Ag Tourism
Experiences

Specific Urban Hot
Spots With Elevated
Experiences

Value proposition is strengthened by being the nearest destination to westerly, densely urban population in Metro Vancouver.





GOALS

Goals are the way we will **achieve** our Tourism Strategy. These goals are ***inter-connected, ambitious, and pragmatic*** in pursuit of the exceptional.

VALUES...GUIDE OUR PATH FORWARD

IN MAPLE RIDGE, THE MOUNTAINS MAKE MAGIC, THE RIVERS RUN WILD, AND THE LAND SUSTAINS US - INSPIRING OUR CULTURE AND CREATIVITY. WE ARE A PATHWAY FOR PEOPLE'S EXPLORATION OF THEIR SOULFUL DESIRES.... DEEPER AND VISCERAL MEANING OF LIFE TO BE FOUND IN CONNECTION TO WILD PLACES, AND TO PEOPLE. WE ARE AN ENABLER FOR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING THESE CONNECTIONS NURTURE.

WE WILL ENSURE POSITIVE LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS IN DEMONSTRATED AND COMMUNICATED "VALUES IN ACTION": 1) LAND STEWARDSHIP; 2) REGENERATIVE LAND-BASED ACTIONS; 3) NURTURING OF NET ZERO TOURISM OPERATIONS; 4) CIRCULAR ECONOMY DEVELOPMENT; 5) IMMERSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT DEEPEN CONNECTION BETWEEN LAND, PEOPLE, AND FOOD; 6) VISITOR AND RESIDENT ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS BUILDING.

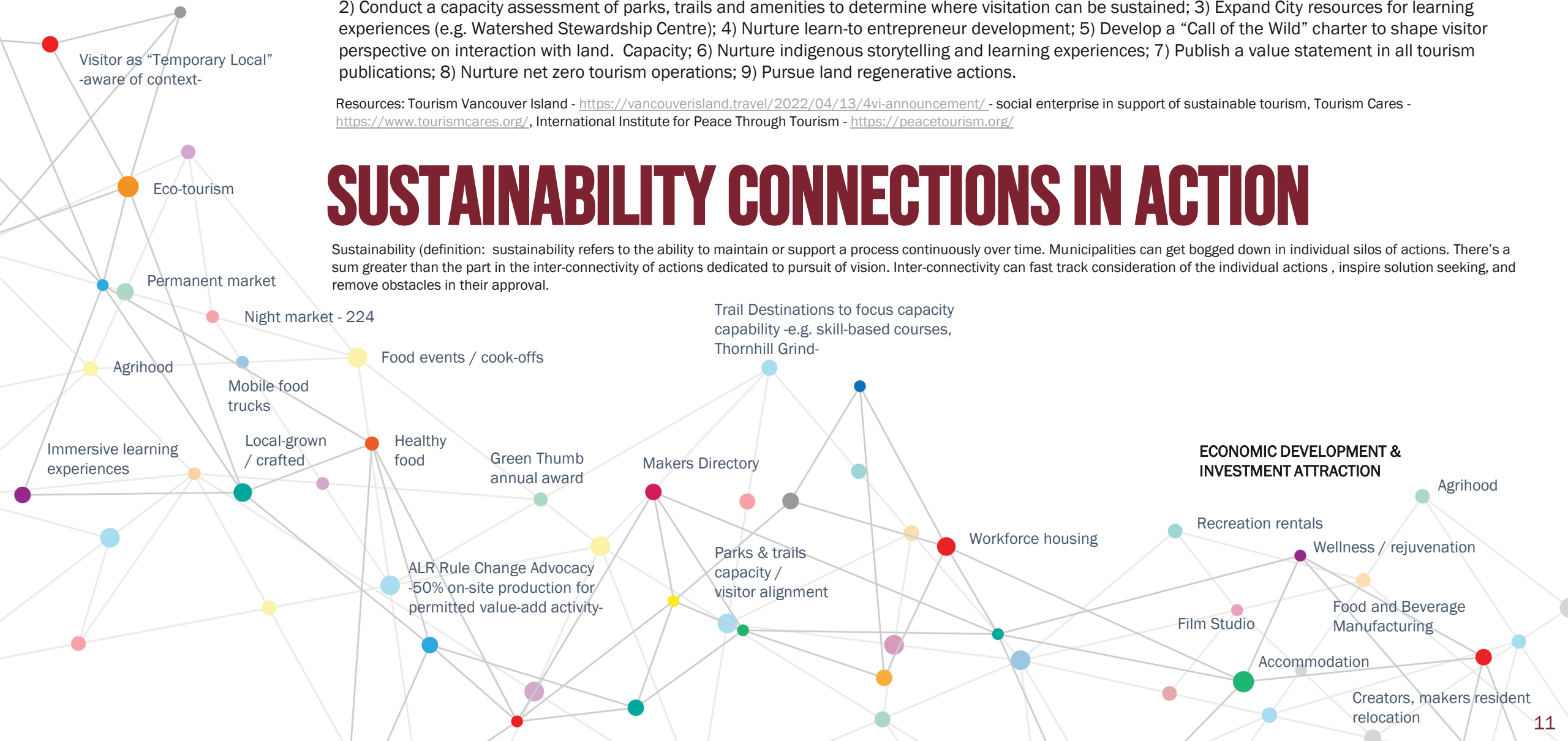
VALUES IN ACTION

ACTIONS: 1) Develop a Respect the City initiative using the City of Dubrovnik as a guidepost - https://tzdubrovnik.hr/lang/en/get/kultura_i_povijest/75284/respect_the_city.html; 2) Conduct a capacity assessment of parks, trails and amenities to determine where visitation can be sustained; 3) Expand City resources for learning experiences (e.g. Watershed Stewardship Centre); 4) Nurture learn-to entrepreneur development; 5) Develop a “Call of the Wild” charter to shape visitor perspective on interaction with land. Capacity; 6) Nurture indigenous storytelling and learning experiences; 7) Publish a value statement in all tourism publications; 8) Nurture net zero tourism operations; 9) Pursue land regenerative actions.

Resources: Tourism Vancouver Island - <https://vancouverisland.travel/2022/04/13/4vi-announcement/> - social enterprise in support of sustainable tourism, Tourism Cares - <https://www.tourismcares.org/>, International Institute for Peace Through Tourism - <https://peacetourism.org/>

SUSTAINABILITY CONNECTIONS IN ACTION

Sustainability (definition: sustainability refers to the ability to maintain or support a process continuously over time. Municipalities can get bogged down in individual silos of actions. There's a sum greater than the part in the inter-connectivity of actions dedicated to pursuit of vision. Inter-connectivity can fast track consideration of the individual actions , inspire solution seeking, and remove obstacles in their approval.



TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP

PRODUCTS

MARKETING

ENABLERS & CATALYSTS

1

Adventure Hub

- Learn To -Guided Experiences-
- Trails
- Eco-Tourism

2

Farm Fresh

- Year-Round Farmer's Mkt / Night Mkt
- Albion Fairgrounds
- Downtown
- Market building
- Mainstreet business representing local craft products
- Art Studio Tour
- Online promo
- Easier/cheaper licensing

3

Urban Hot Spots

- Culture Crawl Map
- Shine a Light on Crafters / Creators / Makers
- Signature Events
- Glow Maple Ridge
- Country Fest
- Art Studio Tour
- Caribbean Festival

EMERGENT / EXTENDED PRODUCT

- Location Map
- Regional Screen Tourism Initiative
- Film
- e.g. Spa
- Wellness
- Niche Tournaments
- Sport
- Indigenous Experiences
- Niches
- Strategy within a Strategy

Itineraries / Packaging / Web

- Dog-Friendly
- Ale Trail
- Maple Trail
- Dine Around The World

Refreshing Campaign Brand

- Placemaking Framework
- Parks, Rec, Culture Master Plan, camping, trails, parks & capacity, sport, performing arts

Value of Tourism

Accommodation

- Hotel(s)
- Short-term rentals
- Camping

Wayfinding

Place-making

BC Summer Games 2024

Leverage Golden Ears Visitation (1M/yr)

Recreation Facility / Public Space Rentals

Organization / Funding

- Regional DMIO
- MRDT

Data

Workforce Housing

ACTION: Hold Annual Key Tourism Stakeholders Workshop to identify successes and gaps, and conduct action brainstorming.

GOAL

1

DEVELOP DIFFERENTIATED TOURISM PRODUCT



LIVE YOUR LIFE BY A COMPASS NOT A CLOCK

Three product experiences “rise above” with enough differentiation to motivate travel to Maple Ridge: 1) **Adventure Hub** – active outdoor (mostly) experiences; 2) **Farm Fresh** - ag-related destinations plus food & beverage products/services that feature locally grown/made product; and 3) **Urban Hot Spots** – curated and promoted “Destination” activities unique enough that people will drive to obtain it: food/beverage, retail, entertainment.

Four emergent product experiences offer tourism development opportunities, but currently lack critical mass for visitors to interact with: 1) **Film**; 2) **Wellness**; 3) **Sport**; 4) **Indigenous Experiences**.

CORE PRODUCTS

Digital first marketing. Dynamic individual experiences descriptions within each core product, with product-based grouping into itineraries. Video and imagery focused on core products and itineraries.

ADVENTURE HUB

ACTIVE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES.

Adventure Experience Anchors: Golden Ears Provincial Park, Trails (visitor-designated) – hike, bike, horse, Thornhill Grind, Air Rec Center, Delta Force Paintball Wildplay Element Park, The Rock Wall Climbing Gym.

Eco-Experience Anchors: Allco Fish Hatchery, Bell Irving Fish Hatchery, Cross's Cabins Park, Davidson's Pool, Jerry Sulina Park, Kanaka Creek Fish Hatchery & Stewardship Centre, Raptor's Ridge, North Alouette Greenway, Kanaka Creek Park Fish Fence, Loon Lake Lodge, Malcolm Knapp Research Forest, Whonnock Waterfowl.

Qualifier: Selected experiences need to be adrenalinizing in mind, body, and/or spirit.

Developmental: Learn-To Guided Experiences.

Enablers: Iconic Outdoor Adventures (rentals), Maple Ridge Cycle.



Equestrian: Seabrook Stables, Maple Meadows Equestrian Centre, Pemberley Riding School, Golden Wings Stable, Triple CCC Stables, Maple Ridge Equi Sports Centre, Paris Equestrian, Empire Equestrian, Ponderosa Stables.



URBAN HOT SPOTS

“DESTINATION” RETAIL BUSINESSES, SIGNATURE EVENTS, CULTURE, FOOD/BEVERAGE, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, AND CREATIVE PURSUITS UNIQUE ENOUGH THAT PEOPLE WILL DRIVE TO OBTAIN IT. CURATED AND PROMOTED.

Anchors: The Act Arts Centre, Albion Community Centre (Performing Arts) – future.

2022 Foodie Curation: Ban Chok Dee, Big Feast Bistro & Retail, Chameleon Restaurant, GM Restaurant, Humble Roots, Kingfishers Waterfront Bar & Grill, Shinobi Sushi.

Live Entertainment: e.g. The Well Public House, The Haney Public House, Kingfishers.

FARM FRESH

AG-RELATED DESTINATIONS PLUS FOOD & BEVERAGE PRODUCTS/SERVICES THAT FEATURE LOCALLY GROWN/MADE PRODUCT.

Farm to Table: Golden Ears Cheesecrafters, S&S Blueberry Farm, Thomas Blueberry Farm, Pacific Northwest Berries & Bees, Meadows Family Farm, Murphy's Christmas Tree Farm (and fruit orchard), Laity Pumpkin Patch – North and South, Golden Meadows Honey Farm, East Ridge Farm, Maple Ridge Farm & Country Craft Shoppe, Formosa Organic Farm.

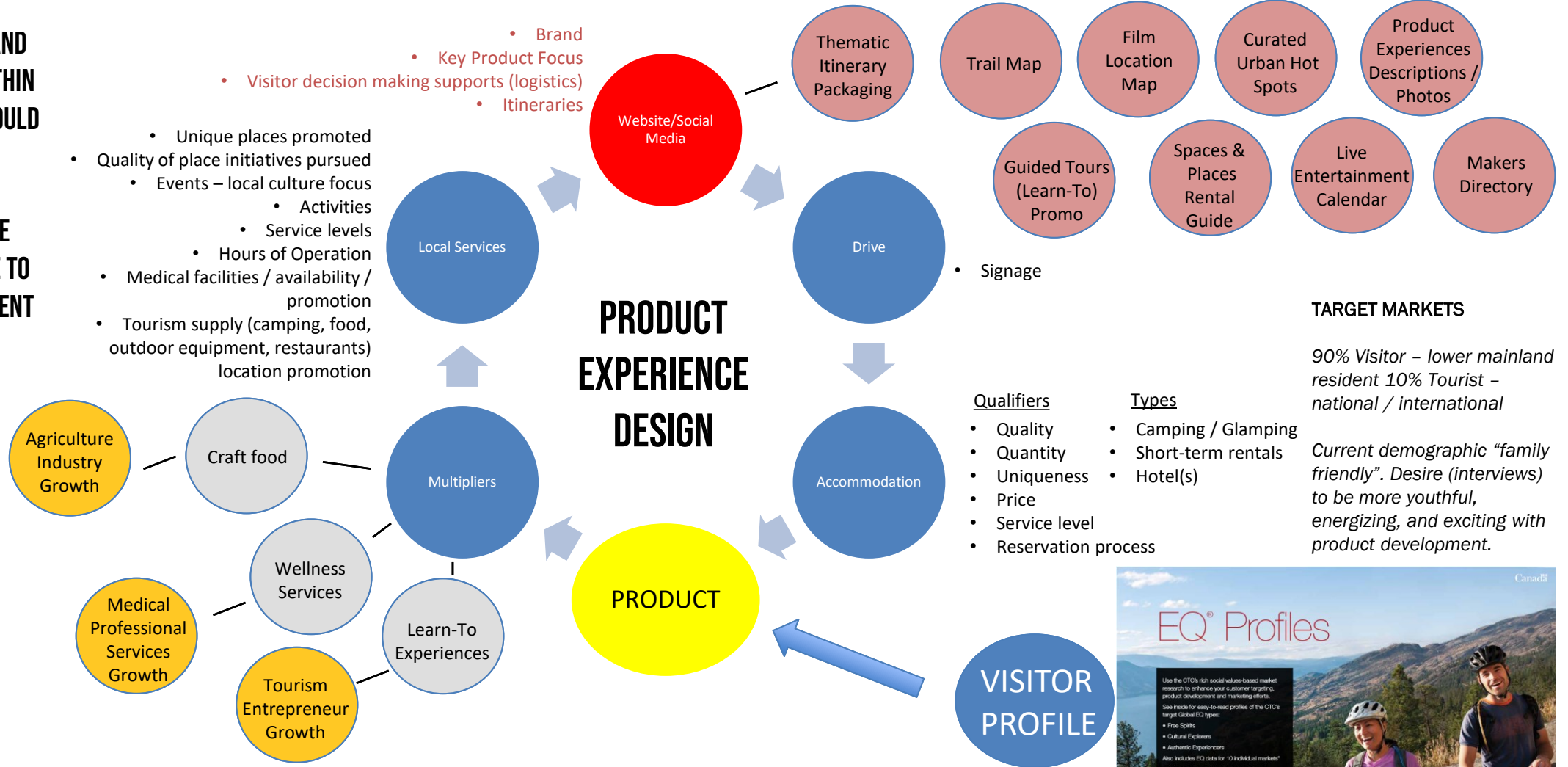
Craft Brewing/Distilling: Maple Meadows Brewing, Silver Valley Brewing, Ridge Brewing, Billy Miner Alehouse & Café, Witchcraft Beer Market, Kingfishers Waterfront Bar & Grill, NorthWest Distilling.

Artisan Bakeries/Deli's: Gratia Bakery, Hansel & Gretel Bakery, Capri Bakery & Bistro, Lynda's Piece of Cake, Kizzy's Macarons, COBS Bread Bakery, Zena's Gluten Free Bakery, Happy Donut, Sabina's Deli.

Farmer's Markets: Haney's Farmer's Market, Bruce's Country Market, Langley Farm, Meridian Farm Market.

PRODUCT EXPERIENCE DESIGN AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

EVERY EXPERIENCE AND EACH ITINERARY WITHIN A CORE PRODUCT SHOULD BE HOLISTICALLY ANALYZED FROM A PRODUCT EXPERIENCE DESIGN PERSPECTIVE TO IDENTIFY ENHANCEMENT PATHWAYS.



ACTIONS: 1) Map Asset Inventory to each Core Product; 2) For each of Adventure Hub, Farm Fresh and Urban Hot Spots, design core product experiences holistically as groupings of itineraries – including consideration of visitor Explorer Quotient (EQ) Profiles: Cultural Explorers and Authentic Experiencers; 3) For each individual experience in each Core Product, design maximized product experience; 4) Map Visitor Guide and Website content to Core Products.

RESOURCE: Destination Canada EQ Profiles - https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/2013-01-01/Tools_ExplorerQuotient_Profiles_2015_EN.pdf



DEVELOP PERMANENT FARMER & MAKERS MARKET

A permanent market connects the dots between a number of strategic directions in the Tourism Strategy: Learn-To / Immersive experiences, greater profile for non-food makers (creative industries), entrepreneurial enablement – particularly for small food crafters, consistent year-round pathway to support agricultural operations. A permanent market offers opportunity for Maple Ridge to “import” producer/crafter/creator activity from other north shore communities with a facility competitive advantage.

ACTIONS: 1) Explore private vs public vs hybrid business models for construction and operation of a market; 2) Construct permanent indoor or covered market. Preferred location: downtown to provide animation. Second option: Albion Fairgrounds; 3) Create weekly night market with 224 St. temporary closure system (e.g. in-ground bollard system); 4) Incorporate “learn to” elements into a Market (e.g. cook, sew, pottery, carve wood, make soap, paint, tie knots, identify plants, identify animal tracks) to distinguish Maple Ridge from other regional markets and further solidify learning experience tourism brand differentiation.

A photograph of two men in a red canoe on a body of water. The man in the front is wearing a grey hoodie and a red life vest, holding a yellow paddle. The man in the back is wearing a green jacket and a red cap, also holding a yellow paddle. The water is calm with light ripples.

DEVELOP ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARN-TO GUIDED EXPERIENCES

People, not product, can be a tourism differentiator. Mass consumer tourism focuses on squeezing the most people into the smallest possible spaces. Elevated experience tourism, aligned with market trends and legacy psychological impact of COVID, will reveal a significant market opportunity in guided learning. This market opportunity represents a distinctly new and younger demographic target that could set Maple Ridge up for more visitation success. The creation of a new realm of tourism entrepreneurs extends the economic impact of tourism. This pathway establishes year-round tourism potential. Experiences can be individually offered, or be linked into themes and booked online. The power of the model lies in entrepreneurialism at the heart; the onus for quality of experience, and all bookings (including fixed roof accommodation), is the responsibility of the entrepreneur-guide vs a destination marketing organization. This approach lends itself well to shoulder and summer seasons in addition to winter. It also lends itself well to extended stays, where multiple guided experiences can be booked in addition to traditional tourism pursuits. Longer stays with deeper immersion in local culture – in the genre of becoming a “temporary local” is a holy grail with respect to the convergence of economic impact and further community acceptance and embrace of tourism development.

ACTIONS: DEVELOP ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARN-TO GUIDED EXPERIENCES

Learn To: fish, hunt, forage, track, cook, birdwatch, identify plants, photograph (scope of activity only limited by entrepreneur passion/skillset)

Learn To Linkages: culinary field to table, indigenous experiences, wellness and spa incl. outdoor yoga, forest bathing, etc.. E.g. forestfix.ca



1

Run Be A Better Guide Training Program (online training for guides and tour businesses), <https://www.beabetterguide.com/> - Vancouver-based

- One day on-site workshop for entrepreneur interests.
- 3-month business coaching program/mentorship.



IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES connect a number of tourism dots for Maple Ridge: eco-tourism and “tread lighter” visitor education as a core tourism value; volunteer tourism experiences (e.g. releasing Chum salmon into the river with KEEPS), Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Center and Bell-Irving Hatchery, Loon Lake experience extension opportunities, indigenous experiences.

DEVELOP TRAIL PRODUCT

Trails are at the core of enablement of outdoor recreation experiences in Maple Ridge. Trail presence in Maple Ridge is extensive. Geography – from dykes to accessible, rugged mountains – is differentiating. Equestrian opportunities are differentiating. There are key experiential gaps: 1) There is lack of single, integrated pathway map/navigation offering. The current offering is fragmented between key resources: Trailforks (out of city), City mapping (city), vancouvertrails.com (regional), Haney Horsemen Association; 2) Modality (e.g. motorbike, bike, walk, equestrian) is not clear; 3) Haney Horseman Association’s pioneering of trail development has created opportunity for additional trail development, and tourism promotion of the “best of the best” trails; 4) There is lack of identification of a small set of differentiated trails that would draw visitors amidst ubiquitous trail options in Metro Vancouver.

ACTIONS: DEVELOP TRAIL PRODUCT

Bike/race event examples: e.g. Tough Mudder - https://toughmudder.com/?gclid=CL_1hZD2osMCFciEfgodgY4AhA; Red Bull - <http://www.redbull.com/ca/en/events> (<https://www.prophet.com/blog/aakeronbrands/140-red-bull>); Canadian Death Race - <http://www.canadiandeathrace.com/>; The Sinister 7 race - <http://www.sinister7.com/>; Snow to Surf Relay Adventure (Comox) - <http://www.snowtosurf.com/>; Trans Rockies Challenge (bike race) - <http://www.transrockies.com/trc/>; Monster Energy Sponsored Events - <http://www.monsterenergy.com/ca/en/events/> (<http://www.sponsorship.com/iegsr/2010/03/01/How-Monster-Energy-Uses-Sponsorship-To-Claw-Past-C.aspx>); The Color Run - <https://ca.thecolorrun.com/>



FILM HAS SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC BENEFIT IN MAPLE RIDGE

IN 2021...

OF PRODUCTIONS: 109 # OF PERMITS: 272

PERMITS AND LICENCE REVENUE: \$32,870

SHOOT DAYS: 350

ECONOMIC IMPACT: \$7.0 M

SRC: *GME 2022*

FILM MAKE A SCENE



While the film industry has significant presence in Maple Ridge, film is an “emergent” tourism product because a visitor can’t directly interact with filming. The tourism opportunity is represented by ability for a visitor to “revisit” filming locations. The depth of the interaction determines the significance of the tourism development opportunity.

Produce a downloadable filming locations map.

1

ACTIONS

Advocate for and promote a Fraser Valley DMO Screen Tourism initiative where immersive, TV/film-themed itineraries enable travellers to live out show story lines via a number of experiential avenues: key location visits, food, cosplay, self-driving tours, themed hotel suites, and private tour companies. Provide links to shows in online marketing to promote viewership.

2

Build higher profile TV/film locations into regional tour programming – e.g. BC Route 7 (<https://bcroute7.com/bc-route-7-hollywood-north/>), Ale Trail.

3

MAPLE RIDGE RECOGNIZES THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES OF THE KATZIE AND KWANTLEN FIRST NATIONS AND RESPECTFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE MANY NATIONS REPRESENTED BY THE URBAN FIRST NATIONS, METIS AND INUIT POPULATION IN THE FRASER VALLEY AND METRO VANCOUVER AREA.

1 ADVENTURE HUB

EMERGENT PRODUCT

NURTURE INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES



Destination Canada indicates strong market interest in indigenous connection. This said, reconciliation will be an enduring process and will be driven by the desires of the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations. Nurturing of indigenous experiences will be a “strategy within a tourism strategy”, with key initial stepping-stones as follows:

- 1) “Cultural keeper” acknowledgements for events – with a range of verbal, song, and cultural performance acknowledgements.
- 2) Partnerships with tourism companies – tours and sharing of indigenous stories.
- 3) Alignment with Indigenous Tourism BC Spark Program to develop indigenous tourism businesses.
- 4) Indigenous inclusion in trail development and maintenance projects (e.g. Experience Fraser Trail Project).
- 5) Nurturing of learn-to and guided spirit of land experiences (e.g. of an enabler - <https://www.stolocf.ca/>).
- 6) Convergence with existing Maple Ridge learning experiences (e.g. Watershed Stewardship Centre, Katzie/Kwantlen salmon classroom program).
- 7) Recognition of physicality of reconciliation in honouring of land and stewardship spirit as a core value in land-based tourism experiences.

1 ADVENTURE HUB

URBAN HOT SPOTS

SHINING A LIGHT ON ELEVATED EXPERIENCES ACCELERATES THEIR GROWTH AND INSPIRES OTHER LIKE-EXPERIENCES, WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENT AND TOURISM GROWTH.



CURATE AND PROMOTE URBAN HOT SPOTS

A visitor to Maple Ridge will not be drawn to urban community offerings that are “same as” other communities. We are drawn to stand-outs....products, services, and creativity that are distinctly different or better. The more distinct the product or service, the further one will travel to obtain it. The more the product, service or creativity is an “experience”, the more memorable it is and the further we will travel to obtain the experience. To achieve this in tourism development context requires:

- Focus on signature experiences/thematic grouping of distinctive and unique experiences to generate enough visit motivation.
- Picking winners. Watering down experiences with a dog’s breakfast of “we’ve got stuff, come see things” experiences similar to “anywhere” will not generate visits, and is a poor return on marketing investment.
- Nurturing of understanding in the business community that “everything” will not be promoted. A retail analogy is the “loss leader” or the “end of aisle” promo – where shiny bobbles are used to motivate the visit. While visiting, multiplier effect spending is felt by a broader range of businesses. ALL business benefits more substantially (all boats rise in the tide) with a focus on a limited number of competitively advantageous experiences people are motivated enough to pursue in Maple Ridge vs elsewhere.

ACTIONS: CURATE AND PROMOTE URBAN HOT SPOTS

CURATION AND PROMOTION OF URBAN HOT SPOTS IS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION INITIATIVE. MAPLE RIDGE RESIDENTS MAY NOT ALL BE AWARE OF ELEVATED SHOPPING, CULTURE, ENTERTAINMENT, AND OTHER LEISURE EXPERIENCES IN THEIR COMMUNITY.



Curate a “best of” Maple Ridge shopping, services, food, art & craft, and entertainment experiences (categories).
Curation options: Chamber of Commerce annual awards, #bestof hashtag social media content posts to encourage public input, “Best of” Committee (e.g. tourism committee), third party curation (e.g. Ridge Restaurants Review <https://www.facebook.com/groups/140513239446561/>).



Create a “Best of” component of a tourism website. (e.g. Visit Calgary <https://www.visitcalgary.com/things-to-do/our-citys-best>).



Create marketing outputs – primarily video - that celebrate elevated experiences. (e.g. Destination Okotoks - <https://www.facebook.com/destinationokotoks/videos/395682504634507>).





DEVELOP SIGNATURE EVENTS

Most communities' events are directed at encouraging local resident participation for its connectivity benefits. Certain events are, by their unique nature of subject matter and/or programming, of interest to visitors. Careful curation and selected development of 2-3 events into "bigger" visitor attraction events generates economic benefit via local visitor spending (with its multiplier effect). To do this requires careful consideration of experiential design, and selection of event additions that are unique enough to motivate visitor travel. A Tourism Workshop in 2022 identified (in order) four potential **signature events**:

- 1) Glow Maple Ridge
- 2) Country Fest
- 3) Art Studio Tour
- 4) Caribbean Festival

The City should also consider support for private sector events that generate regional draw.

ACTIONS: DEVELOP SIGNATURE EVENTS

Spaces & Places Rental Guide



While Maple Ridge has online facility booking (<https://www.mapleridge.ca/1432/Book-a-Facility>), it can be made more customer-centric with location recommendations based on event themes, additional emphasis on outdoor spaces, and a walk through A to Z guide to make the booking process easier. Produce an online Spaces & Places Rental Guide (indoor and outdoor municipal amenities) with customer centric enablement by type of event: e.g. wedding, reunion, birthday, sporting event, picnic, private recreation activities, celebration of life. Pre-identify ideal locations for outdoor special events. Walk through A to Z of all requirements. Enable online booking and payment.

Resources: Vancouver – theme-based use of public spaces for events - <https://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/plan-and-book-an-event.aspx>. Kawartha Lakes – Municipal Event Application Reference Guide - <https://www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/things-to-do/resources/Documents/2020-CKL-Municipal-Event-Application-Reference-Guide.pdf>

Current Events

Glow Maple Ridge
Happenings in the Park
Indigenous People's Day
Twilight Concerts
Canada Day
Caribbean Festival
Celebrate The Night
Country Fest

Earth Day
Cheesecrafters Easter
Extravaganza
Bard on the Bandstand
Art Studio Tour
The Act Arts Centre -
<https://theactmapleridge.org/>

1

Current Event Enhancement



Review each targeted signature event from a product experience perspective and design enhancements and additions.

2

New Events



Develop 2-3 new product-focused events: a) Explore potential for a signature trails race-based event; b) Create 1-2 new food-focused events that connect with, and leverage Ag-Tourism and Learn-To product experiences.

3

4

Event Resources



Secure more logistics resources to support expansion of signature events.





SHINE A LIGHT ON MAKERS

What we make from the soil and from our imagination lies at the heart of human inspiration, and wellness in mind, body, and spirit. Raising the profile of “makers” celebrates our uniqueness, and our creativity. In celebrating and elevating creators, we step into differentiation that motivates travel and spending.

ACTIONS: SHINE A LIGHT ON MAKERS

Permanent Market

Develop a permanent Farmers and Makers Market, with business model considerations including indoor vs outdoor (seasonality), private vs public sector ownership and operation, and location.



Makers Retail Space

Nurture private sector creation of a Makers retail space – e.g. Main Street Market, Okotoks - https://www.facebook.com/mainstreetmarketokotoks/?modal=admin_todo_tour, Canmore Artisan Retail - <http://www.albertasownmarket.com/>.

Craft Brand

Develop a craft brand for manufacturers / creators of local product to use to build local-made product brand recognition.



MAPLE RIDGE

Learn-To Experiences

Incorporate “learn to” elements into a Market (e.g. cook, sew, pottery, carve wood, make soap, paint, tie knots, identify plants, identify animal tracks) to distinguish Maple Ridge from other regional markets and further solidify learning experience tourism brand differentiation.



Makers Directory

Create a Maple Ridge Makers Directory (art, craft) and promote on destination website.



GOAL 2 ENABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

LIFE IS WHAT YOU
MAKE OF IT

A set of key enablers have been identified that are catalysts for accelerated sector growth: value of tourism communication, more accommodation, wayfinding strategy & implementation, tourism data gathering, and formation of a destination management organization.

ว
น
ห
ย
ด

PUBLISH VALUE OF TOURISM INFORMATION

REFRAMING THE VALUE OF TOURISM IN MAPLE RIDGE

We may not think of tourism as being particularly important in Maple Ridge. It doesn't feel prevalent like Whistler. We are a work-a-day community in Metro Vancouver. To strength our valuation of tourism in Maple Ridge, let's reframe what tourism is and does specific to Maple Ridge context in Metro Vancouver.

- 1) Tourism is typically defined as a visitor from 80+ km distance away. Why? Because statistically an overnight visitor spends twice as much/day than a day-tripper. For a time, this is a challenge in Maple Ridge given lack of accommodation.
- 2) A Metro Vancouver resident is not technically a tourist by definition. But practically, a Metro Vancouver visitor spends in Maple Ridge. If the community "imports" spending, this drives a multiplier spending effect that enhances business prosperity and non-residential assessment that helps pay for desired services and amenities, and more broadly enhances community quality of life.
- 3) Maple Ridge residents are not all aware of elevated shopping, culture, entertainment, and other leisure experiences in their community. If they are, and these experiences are pursued locally, the health of the community is enhanced by a number of measures.
- 4) So functionally in terms of impact, let's consider tourism to be a business retention and expansion initiative.

2 ENABLER VALUE OF TOURISM

When we communicate “THE WHY” we open the door to transformative progress because people see – perhaps for the first time, the connectivity of tourism actions to deeper City purpose, ambition, and inspiration.

We want to:

- Inform locals about experiences in their backyard.
- Inform nearby region (e.g. Pitt Meadows, Coquitlam, Mission, Langley) about elevated experiences in their 30 min. area.
- Drive day-trip visitation to Maple Ridge from Metro Vancouver –2.6 M.
- Drive event visitation, which has multiplier impact for local business (meetings/small conferences/sport and cultural events).

To achieve:

- Better business bottom lines/new businesses/business expansion/expanded tax base.
- Quality of life enhancement in pursuit of stand-out experiences.
- Growth of Maple Ridge residents as salespeople for their community in knowing more about what’s in the backyard.
- Municipal revenue growth from facility rentals.
- Event and sport club success via attendance growth and tournament net revenues.

We can add an investment attraction component: New business start-ups attracted to the community by its product development and marketing focus on differentiated experiences (e.g. accommodation, brewpub, culinary, boutique shopping, art gallery).

Tourism celebrates our community at its best – the elevated experiences that shape our quality of life...and happiness, that cement what it means to be “home,” that create the deeper connection to people and place. For this reason, tourism product development and marketing is a means to an end for locals as well. By developing the industry further, we add to the experiential database that further deepens our connection to people and place.

ACTIONS: PUBLISH VALUE OF TOURISM INFORMATION



Maple Ridge Website

Publish a value of tourism article as tourism content on the City of Maple Ridge website.



Value of Tourism Study

Undertake a Value of Tourism Study in 2027 (this assumes addition of accommodation by 2027).



Maple Ridge Social Media

Update value of tourism information periodically and use “value of” vignettes on social media channels.

Resource: Destination BC – The Power of Tourism -

<https://www.destinationbc.ca/who-we-are/the-power-of-tourism-bc/#:-:text=The%20Power%20of%20Tourism%20There%20is%20incredible%20opportunity,whole%2C%20with%20increasin g%20revenues%2C%20employment%2C%20wages%2C%20and%20visitors.>





ATTRACT MORE ACCOMMODATION

An accommodation deficiency in Maple Ridge hampers many forms of tourism and economic development: visiting friends and relatives, sports and cultural events, MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions), and is a key multiplier spending gap (e.g. a City of Fernie Value of Tourism Study in 2017 found that 87% of visitor spending in Fernie is associated with overnight visitors representing 53% of total visitation). While the North Fraser is under-served by accommodation, Maple Ridge has the lowest number of hotel rooms per capita of immediately adjacent communities (Maple Ridge 1.6/1000, Mission 1.9/1000, Pitt Meadows, 4.4/1000, City of Langley 7.5/1000 Langley District 5.2/1000. Maple Ridge currently has 5 Airbnb operations that can host 40 guests. An updated Hotel Study (2021) indicates business model support for a 90-room focused service hotel in Maple Ridge. City of Maple Ridge Economic Development Strategy focus on accelerated growth of the manufacturing sector will provide longer term underpinning of accommodation demand growth by generating a market for Monday-Friday business traffic critical to hotel business models. Accommodation growth can be nurtured with City investment attraction/marketing of product diversification opportunities: 1) Business Hotel; 2) Experiential Accommodation (“urban oasis / wellness & spa”) (e.g. Loon Lake Lodge, Maple Ridge (<http://loonlake.ubc.ca>), Cedarbrook Lodge, Seattle (<https://www.cedarbrooklodge.com/>); 3) Alternative Format Accommodation – e.g. Pangea Pod Hotel, Whistler targeted at young adults and families); 4) Boutique Downtown Hotel (e.g. Josie Hotel, Rossland); 4) Airbnb; 5) Camping; 6) Glamping – e.g. yurts; 7) Home-sharing (<https://files.ontario.ca/home-sharing-guide-for-ontario-municipalities.pdf>)

ACTIONS: ATTRACT MORE ACCOMMODATION

Target market accommodation investment opportunity to hotel chains / entrepreneurs.

Attract camping on private lands via RV Resort investor / operator (incl. consideration of enabling land use designations).

Consider a 3-unit residential “investor” (with rate of investment return) development model on current low density zoning in greater downtown, with second unit long term rental that enables third unit short-term rental.



Publish Accommodation Investment Opportunity sheet.

Evaluate potential for camping on public lands (various business models).

Develop and implement home-sharing policy.



ACTIONS

Commission Wayfinding Strategy, with focus on a) Encouraging movement of travelers to Golden Ears Provincial Park to City amenities; b) Downtown vehicle and pedestrian movement; c) Trails.

1

Fund multi-year, multi-phase wayfinding construction program, including ongoing exploration of grant opportunities.

2

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT WAYFINDING STRATEGY



Wayfinding is:

- 1) A comprehensive, integrated means of navigating “real” geography.
 - 2) A way to acknowledge places, spaces, and buildings that are important to Maple Ridge.
- 1+2 = AN EASIER WAY TO FIND OUR WAY AROUND**

More deeply, wayfinding’s importance is underscored by:

- 3) Communities are still where our HUMAN sense are elevated. “We are not a GPS.”
- 4) A component of a City-Beautiful movement
 - PRIDE (translates to innumerable social and economic impacts).
 - Placemaking and deeper positive impact: beautiful places attract visitors, new residents, and new investment – amidst a fundamental re-positioning of the nature of work. Technology, pandemic, and corporate acceptance of new work models is creating a perfect storm of opportunity for lifestyle-living focused communities.



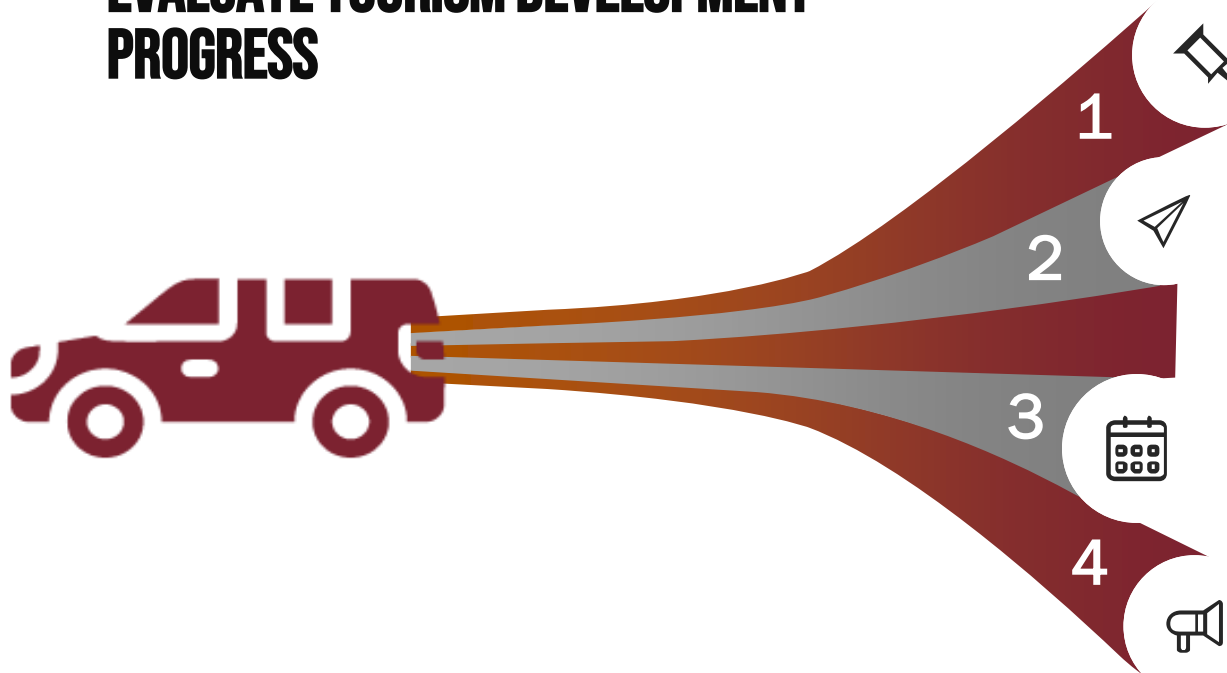
GENERATE DATA

TO EVALUATE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

Data is fundamental to understanding visitor origin, travel motivations, and visitor satisfaction levels. Data is also fundamental to understanding what Core Products resonate more than others, offer pathways to improve core and emergent product experiences, and provides impact measurement of marketing campaigns. The core of this data typically comes from accommodators. Lack of local accommodation and lack of MRDT converge to generate a large data gap for Maple Ridge. This gap can be addressed in two key ways: 1) data sharing and collaboration (with mutual benefit) among key Maple Ridge destinations; 2) online presence and visitor patterns/statistics.

ACTIONS: GENERATE DATA

ENABLER: GENERATE DATA TO EVALUATE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS



Data Gatherers

Create a group of destination data gatherers (e.g. Cheesecrafters, WildPlay, Loon Lake, Golden Ears) and share data.

City of Maple Ridge Website

Enhance City of Maple Ridge website tourism content (<https://www.mapleridge.ca/1908/Discover-Maple-Ridge>), with a critical success factor being presentation of product sub-pages that can be independently measured (Google Analytics) for visitor traction.

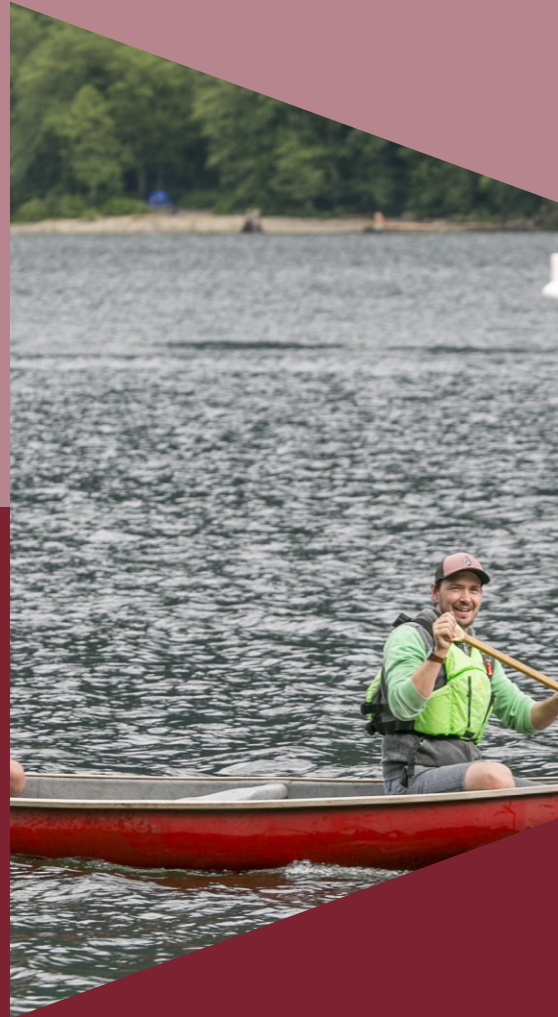
Social Sentiment

Track online social sentiment (e.g. <http://socialmention.com>).

Campaign Hashtags for Tracking

Create tourism-specific campaign hashtag(s) to support tourism content posts, and monitor City social media (Facebook -

<https://www.facebook.com/yourmapleridge/>, Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/yourmapleridge/>).



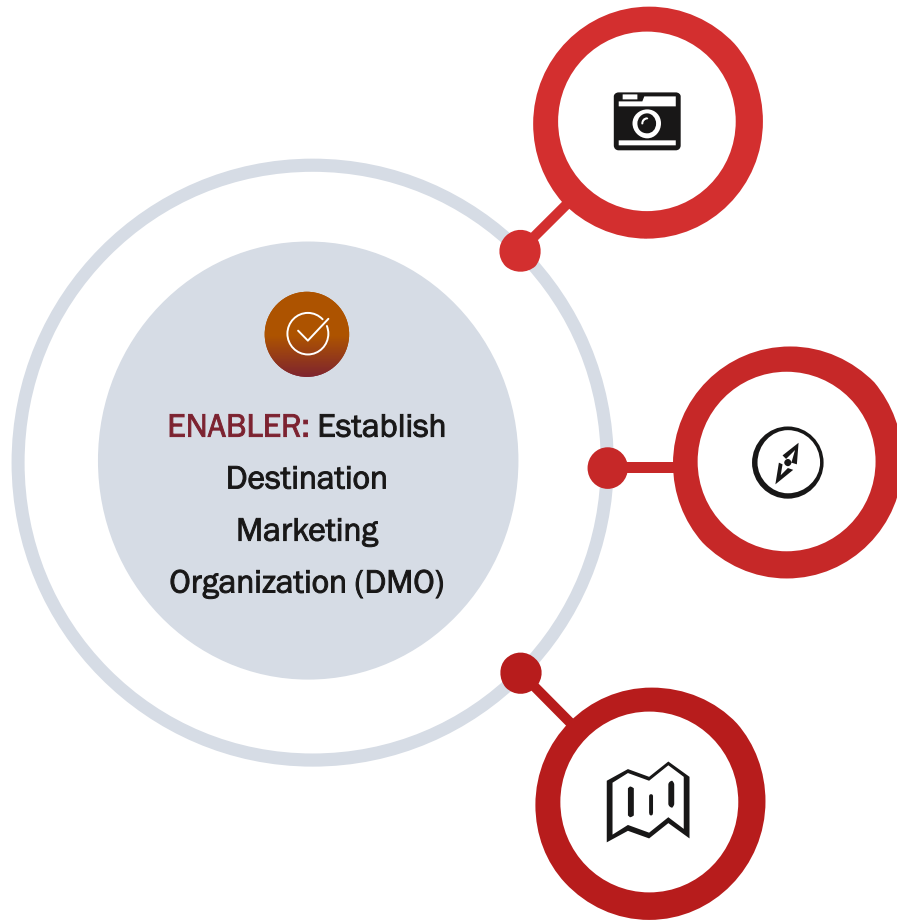
ESTABLISH DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION

Most Metro Vancouver communities are represented by local or regional Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) that collect MRDT (Municipal and Regional District Tax: an up-to 3% tax applied to sales of short-term accommodation provided in participating areas of British Columbia on behalf of municipalities, regional districts and eligible entities to support DMOs in their marketing efforts to attract more visitors, generate economic impact through tourism, and create jobs). Maple Ridge does not collect MRDT, resulting in significant compromise of the City's ability to enhance its tourism and product visibility. The City otherwise has limited staff resources (1 position) to nurture and promote tourism. Marketing enhancement creates a virtuous upward cycle of promotion that encourages product development, which in turn encourages further visitation and further tourism economic opportunity for entrepreneurs and communities.

ACTIONS: ESTABLISH DMO

At a Key Tourism Stakeholder Workshop in March, 2022, 90% of attendees indicated support for affiliation with the Fraser Valley DMO.

DMOs are marketing-first organizations. It's critical that the City of Maple Ridge maintain capacity and resources to pursue product development of its core tourism products.



1

Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) Formation

Form “North Fraser” DMO with Cities of Mission and Coquitlam to enable Municipal & Regional District Tax collection.

2

Municipal & Regional District Tax (MRDT)

Create MRDT for relevant hotel and Airbnb accommodation in Maple Ridge – aided by 50% accommodator support needed to create MRDT is generated on a regional vs local basis.

3

Fraser Valley Affiliation

Join Fraser Valley DMO as North Fraser DMO.

These actions – to be completed in order - have a number of cascading benefits: 1) Pathway for MRDT; 2) BC Route 7 (BCR7) that Maple Ridge currently belongs to overlaps with the Fraser Valley DMO; 3) City would become part of the Circle Farm Tour in direct support of its “Farm Fresh” core tourism product; 4) Fraser Valley DMO tourism product themes have strong alignment with Maple Ridge core tourism products (e.g. ag/culinary, outdoor adventure); 5) There is no additional cost if the BCR7 and Fraser DMO’s merge. The two groups together would be better positioned for funding and advertising; 6) Maple Ridge is the geographic connector between the south and north side of the Fraser River.



Placemaking (“City Beautiful”) has many benefits, including resident pride and quality of life, entrepreneur/resident attraction, and tourism development. “Spinning the ball on beautiful” as a standard is generated by cumulative impact of initiatives big and small + degree of differentiation of each initiative (whimsy, surprise and the art of creation worth talking about).

While placemaking is a broader City initiative, key placemaking initiatives would support accelerated tourism development:

- 224 St. temporary closure system (e.g. in-ground bollard system) to celebrate the heart of downtown via animation such as markets, night markets, café culture, and niche retail.
- Creation of a permanent indoor, covered, and/or outdoor market space(s) (note: there are private and public sector market models).
- Wayfinding focused on downtown vehicle/pedestrian and encouragement of detours on the way to Golden Ears Provincial Park.
- Promote creation of a private sector retail makers space that links art and craft to core tourism products.
- Creativity on display: a) Trail enhancements that pursue display of creativity; b) trail and park infrastructure that demonstrates creativity (e.g. school/artist competitions for garbage can/public washroom vinyl wrap/painting).
- Enhance and further invest in public art program and public art location promotion.



ACTIONS

Advocate for targeted placemaking enhancements.

1

2 ENABLER: PURSUE TARGETED PLACEMAKING

GOAL 3

SHARPEN MARKETING

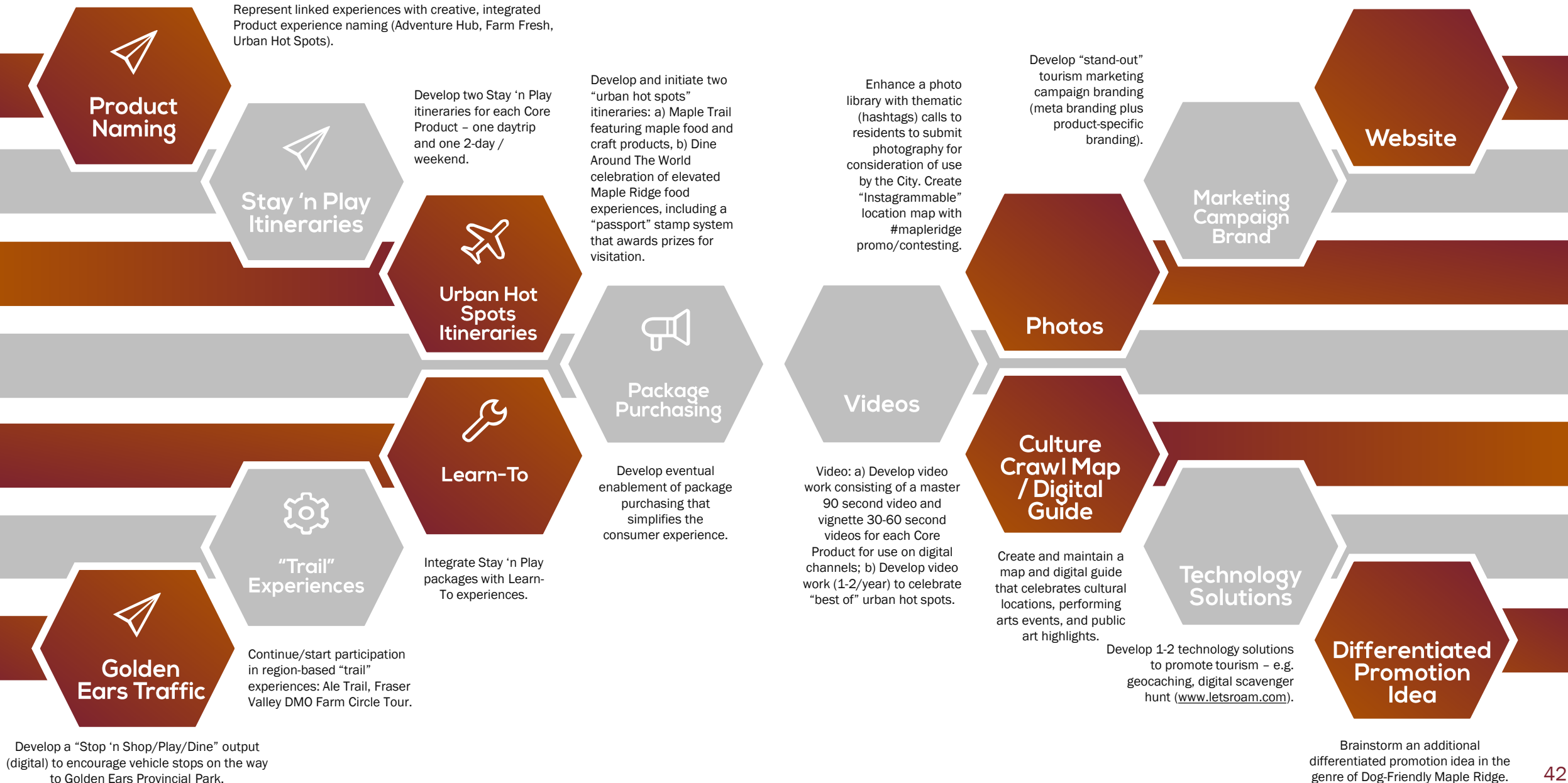
วิ
น
ห
ย
ด

LET YOUR SPIRIT KNOW NO BOUNDS

Successful marketing is: product-focused, emotive, and distinct in a world of noise and competition for limited consumer attention spans. Two key marketing actions will accelerate marketing success: 1) Linking of product experiences into itineraries; 2) Product-focused digital content.

ACTIONS: SHARPEN MARKETING

Step 1) Enhance City of Maple Ridge website tourism content (<https://www.mapleridge.ca/1908/Discover-Maple-Ridge>) or develop stand-alone Visit Maple Ridge destination website with campaign branding visuals, product and itinerary focus, curated urban hot spots, online spaces and places bookings (indoor and outdoor municipal amenities), film location map, guided experiences promo, makers directory, trail map/digital links, and events & live entertainment calendar. Step 2) Create/enhance regional DMO websites with Maple Ridge product information.





KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



1

Rising Net Promoter Score

A score calculated in response to a question: How likely are you to recommend to others that they visit Maple Ridge? Net Promoter score is a common marketing measure of consumer loyalty. Scoring can be tracked over time as a key performance benchmark. While it's not common in municipal government, benchmarking can be used to measure how strong a score is in relation to other communities. Scoring range: -100 to +100. Positive is good. >+50 Excellent



2

Annual increase in digital measures (site visits, likes, shares)

Social sharing of Maple Ridge attractions, experiences and events demonstrates differentiation and elevated experiences.



MAKE YOUR WAY HERE

CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE

