

**tourism**



**Five Year Tourism Strategic Plan  
2021-2026**

**Developed for:  
Application for 3% Municipal & Regional District Tax  
October 2020**

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## Introduction

Tourism New West has developed a five-year Tourism Strategic Plan, which accompanies the application for the 3% Municipal & Regional District Tax (MRDT). If approved, the MRDT tax would be charged by all commercial accommodations in the City of New Westminster. It is also known as the Hotel Tax. This tax is jointly administered by the Ministry of Finance, under the PST law, and Destination BC.

The MRDT program is one of a number of supports available to enhance tourism marketing in BC. The MRDT program is intended to help grow BC revenues, visitation and jobs, and amplify BC's tourism marketing efforts in an increasingly competitive marketplace. To promote a coordinated and efficient use of funds, the following MRDT program principles/requirements exist:

- Effective tourism marketing, programs, and projects
- Effective local-level stakeholder support, and inter-community collaboration
- Marketing efforts that are coordinated and complementary to provincial marketing strategies/tactics
- Fiscal prudence and accountability
- Funds should augment current funding and are not intended to replace existing tourism funding in a community

Tourism New West is applying for the MRDT as an eligible entity meaning the revenues collected by the MRDT are transferred by the Ministry of Finance directly to Tourism New West to execute the tourism marketing, programs, and projects outlined in this strategic plan.

The decision to pursue the MRDT is based on a decision by the Board of Directors to seek sustainable funding for Tourism New West. The City of New Westminster has been consulted and is in support of this initiative.

Tourism New West is an industry-led, non-profit society. Tourism New West has formally existed since 1983 and would be responsible for the management, administration, and governance of the local MRDT funds and the Tourism New West overall strategic plan and budget. Tourism New West's vision and mission statements are as follows:

Tourism New West's vision is to provide visitors with an authentic tourism experience that highlights the City's unique attributes and provides sustainable economic growth through tourism to the community.

Tourism New West's mission is to lead, develop, and promote New Westminster in a way that will attract visitors to enjoy the opportunities in New Westminster as a destination through:

- Strategic partnerships and collaboration
- Innovation and knowledge management

- Effective stakeholder communication and engagement

### Planning Process

The following five-year tourism strategic plan for New Westminster is based on an engagement process with local tourism operators and accommodation providers, industry organizations, and local government in order to both secure the benefit of their knowledge and experience and to build support and ownership for plan implementation. In order to ensure a diversity of viewpoints and a variety of times/formats for participation, the following engagement strategies were employed:

- Tourism New West board meetings were hosted and MRDT was a recurring agenda item to be discussed by board members, who represent the local tourism industry: December 11, 2019; January 29 2020; March 18, 2020; May 27, 2020; and May 27, 2020 AGM
- Individual introductory meetings with four eligible accommodations: Inn at the Quay (Jan 14); Queen’s Hotel and the Met (Feb 4); Arundel (Feb 7)
- An Executive Summary of the draft strategy was made available on the Tourism New West website and the link was shared with 120 stakeholders on the Tourism New West contact list. The stakeholders were invited to video conference sessions to learn more and provide feedback on the draft strategy (due to social distancing requirements, in-person sessions were not held)
- 2 video conference sessions were hosted in order to present the draft tourism strategy and seek input from stakeholders (*in-person sessions were not offered due to social distancing requirements*)
  - Monday June 1st at 1pm - 13 stakeholders attended
  - Wednesday June 3rd at 9am - 14 stakeholders attended
  - Note: an evening session was offered; no stakeholders registered for this option
- A survey with 13 questions was also sent to the contact list, to all registrants before and after attending the online meetings, and the survey was made available online.
- Survey results - 31 stakeholders responded to the Tourism New West survey seeking input to the strategic plan
- The four eligible accommodation providers were provided the MRDT application documentation to review in full and participated in a in-person session (safely physically distanced) on June 29, 2020 hosted by Tourism New West
- Tourism New West worked with a consultant (Laura Plant) and signed a Third Party Authorization Form enabling the consultant to work with Destination BC during the strategy development and application process. Destination BC reviewed the strategy and answered queries regarding eligible uses of the MRDT

The primary reasons for pursuing the MRDT are:

- Sustainable funding source enabling Tourism New West to market strategically, and address destination management/development issues
- Increased funds for marketing will contribute in generating increased year-round overnight visitation, specifically in the shoulder seasons and slower times in mid/high season
- Increased funds for marketing will allow Tourism New Westminster to better compete with other well-funded competing destinations
- Many BC communities collect MRDT either at the 2 or 3% rate (the ability to go to 3% became available in Fall 2015 – MRDT program began in 1987)

## Strategic Context

### Key Insights

- The global COVID-19 pandemic is undoubtedly the biggest challenge faced by the global tourism industry in decades. The COVID-19 situation presents significant impacts on tourism visitation to British Columbia and Canada. Marketing efforts based on recovery of visitation numbers is likely a focus for much of the planning period
- Both the global COVID-19 crisis and the low Canadian dollar provide an opportunity for BC visitors to stay in Canada and respond favourably to staycations related messaging. As it is, 2 of the 3 strongest markets for New Westminister are Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, which leaves Tourism New West well positioned to capitalize during a tourism recovery
- As tourism is competitive globally, destinations are increasingly looking to the execution of strong brands and development of unique product experiences to differentiate themselves and entice visitors. In order to increase its competitive position as a destination, a stronger focus on a unique identifier, a strong unifying theme, is needed for New Westminister
- Destination BC's new 2020-2023 corporate strategy focuses on three strategic imperatives: integrated industry, destination stewardship, and investment in iconics. The strategy encourages alignment with the BC destination tourism brand, provides funding through the Co-operative Marketing Partnerships Program, and offers resources to support the development of Remarkable Experiences
- The digital shift to mobile and social media continues to increase in importance for travel planning and engagement in the destination. It will be critical for Tourism New West to participate fully in the digital space to maximize opportunities to generate awareness, interest, and conversion. In the beginning of the planning period in 2021, we will dedicate resources to visitor insights, visitor perceptions and basic visitor benchmarking. That will well position us to target appropriate markets, programs and messaging

### Local Context

New Westminister is located on the traditional lands of the Qayqayt people. The City was founded in 1859 and called Queensborough until renamed at the suggestion of Queen Victoria. New Westminister was the capital of colonial British Columbia (1859–66) and the province's first (1860) incorporated city.

Today, New Westminister (population ~71,000) is centrally located within Metro Vancouver and bordered by the cities of Surrey, Delta, Richmond, Coquitlam, and Burnaby.

The City, roughly 15 square kilometres (km) in area, is located on a hillside overlooking the Fraser River, 20 km east of Vancouver. The City slopes down from Royal Avenue to the waterfront, offering excellent views upriver to the Garibaldi Mountain Range, southeast to Mount Baker and downriver towards Richmond and Delta and the Strait of Georgia.

Visitors to the City are attracted to the waterfront, Fraser River, culinary scene, heritage, festivals, and events and a vibrant arts and cultural sector. Although New Westminster attracts primarily local and Metro Vancouver residents who are visiting family and friends, there is also a substantial business travel component because of the city's central location within Metro Vancouver.

Locally, Tourism New West partners with stakeholders throughout New Westminster including businesses, Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement Associations, Arts Council, Douglas College, and the City of New Westminster.

Tourism New West continually collaborates with other key communities on co-operative marketing programs and overall industry knowledge through the British Columbia Destination Marketing Organization Association.

In addition, Tourism New West monitors and keeps up to date on activities with two lead organizations on BC's tourism industry, Destination British Columbia and the Tourism Industry Association of BC.

Tourism New West has had a series of personnel changes in the past few years. A long-time Executive Director took a new role in another province. Another person was hired to fill the Executive Director role, but they moved on to another DMO in BC. The lack of sustainable funding for a full-time role will continue to make it difficult to attract qualified leadership for the organization and maintain an on-going social media presence and engagement in partner marketing programs.

Currently a management consultant is on a part-time contract, scheduled to expire December 31st 2020.

The role of the Destination *Marketing* Organization (DMO) has evolved to encompass much more than traditional marketing activities. DMOs are now Destination *Management* Organizations – recognizing that both the marketing and destination development components of their industry are crucial for success. Marketing a community that is not welcoming, promoting business websites that are not functioning or having visitors get lost due to poor signage does not help the visitor economy grow.

This strategy will highlight various marketing initiatives, but also includes recommendations for relationship-building with other destinations and organizations, product enhancement, and community relations. Tourism New West has the opportunity to evolve its role, become a stronger player in the provincial tourism industry and assist the community to grow an important part of the local economy.

### **Visitor Amenities**

New Westminster's accommodation, retail and restaurant services offer a 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.

Accommodation in New Westminster includes the following four hotels representing 197 rooms:

- Inn at the Quay (126 rooms)
- Queen's Hotel (24 rooms)
- The Met (27 rooms)
- Arundel Mansion (18 rooms)

In addition, New Westminster has 191 active short-term rental listings online - either full homes or private rooms. This has increased from ~120 in early 2017. Note: hotels can also list their rooms on Airbnb.

### **Existing Visitor Experiences**

New Westminster offers product experiences year-round, including:

- The Waterfront
- An array of art galleries and museums including the 1865 Irving House, Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame, Community Art Space, Fraser River Discovery Centre, New Westminster Museum and Archives, New Media Gallery, Samson V Maritime Museum, The Gallery at Queen's Park, 100 Braid Street Studios, and Van Dop Gallery
- A variety of public art installations
- Casino & Nightlife
- A range of theatres including Anvil Centre Theatre, Laura C. Muir Performing Arts Theatre, The Columbia, Bernie Legge, Massey Theatre, and Landmark Cinemas
- A variety of dining including international foods, casual dining, pubs, and sports bars including the River Market
- Variety of retailers including bridal shops, antique shops, Queensborough Landing, Royal City Centre
- Paddlewheeler Riverboat Tours
- Q2Q Ferry
- Anvil Centre conference and meeting spaces
- Sports fields and recreation facilities
- A diversity of year-round festivals and celebrations
- Farmer's markets
- Parks, i.e. Westminster Pier Park and Queen's Park

### **Current Marketing Initiatives and Opportunities**

Tourism New West has been actively marketing the destination for many years, with a limited budget. Outlined below are the current activities and the opportunities available with a larger budget and more staff resources:

#### **Print Marketing - Current Activities**

Tourism New West has produced a printed Visitor Experiences guide in the past. It is both a time and resource-intensive project. In addition, Glacier Media also produces a local guide.

#### **Print Marketing - Opportunities**

The opportunity exists to work in partnership with Glacier Media to produce a guide that meets both organization's needs and ensures that local tourism stakeholders are only approached once regarding marketing opportunities.

#### Online Marketing - Current Activities

Tourism New West has a consumer website: [tourismnewwestminster.com](http://tourismnewwestminster.com) and four social media channels:

- Instagram: 6,894 followers ([www.instagram.com/tourismnewwest](http://www.instagram.com/tourismnewwest))
- Twitter: 3,964 followers ([twitter.com/TourismNewWest](https://twitter.com/TourismNewWest))
- Facebook: 3,321 followers ([www.facebook.com/tourismnewwest](http://www.facebook.com/tourismnewwest))
- YouTube: 71 subscribers ([www.youtube.com/user/madeinnewwest](http://www.youtube.com/user/madeinnewwest))

Social media posts have not been consistently maintained and curated since December 2019 due to staffing. This is an activity that could be contracted out to ensure consistent, on-brand messaging. Social media efforts could be further enhanced with a service such as Crowdriff, which enables destinations to find the photos and videos that visitors have taken (user-generated content) and integrate them into their websites.

#### Online Marketing - Opportunities

Visitor information is available on partner websites, such as the local BIAs. There could be an opportunity to share resources and limit duplication.

Search Engine Optimization can be assessed for Tourism New West's destination website and resources shared with tourism businesses to ensure that online marketing is following best practice. With increased resources, contracting support for website maintenance and SEO support could be considered.

In addition, Tourism New West could begin monitoring/responding to visitor queries on travel forums such as TripAdvisor, and consider live chat options for visitors to the consumer website, such as Zendesk Chat ([www.zendesk.com](http://www.zendesk.com)).

HelloBC.com is the provincial tourism marketing website managed by Destination BC. Tourism stakeholders can provide business listings on this site, if they have a TripAdvisor listing. Currently Tourism New West is represented on this website by the following businesses:

- Queen's Hotel
- Inn at the Quay
- The Met Hotel
- New Westminster Museum & Archives
- Paddlewheeler Riverboat Cruises
- Best Vancouver Tours
- Fraser River Discovery Centre
- Pacific Breeze Winery



- The Gallery at Queen’s Park
- Van Dop Gallery
- Starlight Casino

An opportunity exists to encourage other tourism businesses to list on this provincial tourism website and ensure the full list of tourism experiences in New Westminster is represented.

In addition, Destination BC provides Accessible Tourism resources to support tourism business with promoting their accessibility features. Tourism New West could work with local tourism businesses to ensure any accessibility features are showcased on this provincial marketing website.

The Destination BC Co-operative Funding program provided \$4 million in funds to support close to 60 projects around BC in 2019. New Westminster was part of several initiatives:

- BC Ale Trail – New Westminster is featured on BC Ale Trail. Tourism New West contributed \$2,500; Destination BC provided \$273,768 to the program
- Gold Rush Trail – joint project with communities in Cariboo and Fraser Valley; this project required no partner funding from Tourism New West
- Lower Mainland Tourism Alliance (West Coast Foods) – joint project with Coquitlam, Langley, Richmond, Surrey, White Rock, Vancouver, Burnaby and Vancouver’s North Shore; Tourism New West contributed \$5,000; Destination BC provided \$34,400 to the program
- Lower Mainland Tourism Alliance (BC Art Zone) – joint project with Langley, Vancouver, Vancouver’s North Shore, Burnaby, and Whistler; Tourism New West contributed \$5,000; Destination BC provided \$73,500 to the program

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

New Westminster as a destination has many strengths that this strategy aims to build upon. There are areas to improve and challenges faced by Tourism New West. The opportunities outlined provide guidance when developing strategies, keeping in mind there are threats that may be beyond our control, but need to be factored into the analysis.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● State of the art meeting/conference space with unique features on site (galleries and theatre)</li> <li>● A variety of tourism products</li> <li>● Growing social media engagement</li> <li>● Proximity to the markets in Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, and Washington State</li> <li>● Skytrain stations, easy accessibility</li> <li>● Q2Q ferry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of sustainable DMO funding</li> <li>● DMO Understaffed</li> <li>● Limited retail variety</li> <li>● Traffic/vehicle congestion</li> <li>● Past history – reputation</li> <li>● Limited nightlife options</li> <li>● More focus on community scale events than tourism attracting events</li> <li>● Response time – collaborative proposals for group business (i.e., MPI board retreat)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Number and diversity of festivals and events</li> <li>● Walkable, commercial main streets</li> <li>● Very active and passionate DMO, City Council, and Tourism stakeholders</li> <li>● Strong arts, culture, and heritage</li> <li>● Walkable waterfront area</li> <li>● City Hall willing to support events</li> <li>● Small city, less speed, less bureaucracy</li> <li>● Family friendly</li> <li>● Parks, green space</li> <li>● Central location</li> <li>● City of NW utilities dedicated service</li> <li>● Free Wi-Fi in city facilities and meeting spaces</li> <li>● Hotel rooms in close proximity to downtown</li> <li>● Hotel on waterfront</li> <li>● Growing eclectic and good restaurant industry/ growing food &amp; beverage culture</li> <li>● Supportive community</li> <li>● Event facilities</li> <li>● Mobility/accessibility</li> <li>● New Media Gallery</li> <li>● Authentic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Not conducive for active transportation</li> <li>● Limitations of existing tourism products</li> <li>● Simultaneous events</li> <li>● Signage</li> <li>● Outdated recreation facilities/arenas</li> <li>● Greenways not complete which eliminates some recreational tourism opportunities</li> <li>● Marketing and branding of DMO due to lack of budget</li> <li>● Awareness of commercial spaces available for rent</li> <li>● Dominant wedding industry retail</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business operator training – remarkable experiences, customer service, online reputation management, etc.</li> <li>● A relatively small number of tourism business operators means providing one-on-one assistance with social media/web presence/marketing program engagement is possible if resources are allocated as such</li> <li>● Share information with stakeholders to ensure awareness of DMO activities, industry trends, etc. (track MRDT revenue; STR Report, etc.)</li> <li>● Work with partners to support implementation of Metro Vancouver Destination Development strategy</li> <li>● Businesses/Organizations interested in collaboration</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● COVID-19 and business closures; restrictions on travel</li> <li>● Transportation access/accessibility, traffic, road and Skytrain closures</li> <li>● Ongoing perception with regards to safety and overall environment in downtown</li> <li>● Lack of land to build new facilities (recreation and accommodation)</li> <li>● Competition from surrounding municipalities (including Vancouver)</li> <li>● Foreign exchange rates (can impact visitors travel decisions)</li> <li>● Weather</li> <li>● Bridge tolling</li> <li>● Congestion</li> <li>● Construction</li> </ul>

## New Westminster Positioning and Target Markets

## **Positioning**

The year-round products and experiences available within New Westminster that will be the focus of marketing efforts include:

- The Fraser River and the Waterfront
- Culinary
- Performing and Visual Arts
- Culture and the Heritage built environment
- Meetings and Conferences
- Festival and Events, including sport
- Film & Television Production Tourism
- Retail

The following messages are suggested for Tourism New West. These provide the framework for future creative development of all marketing and promotional material and should be considered consistently throughout all strategies and tactics. An example of how the tone and messaging could be executed is provided for consideration by the creative team that would work with New Westminster to execute specific campaigns and develop marketing tools such as the web presence and social media engagement; these should be validated by research.

### **Overarching Messages:**

- Affordable – an experience for all budgets
- Acknowledgement – of the importance of Indigenous History and Culture
- Genuine – locals that welcome you into their community and lifestyles
- Connection – a discovery of Canada’s Royal City, its history and local culture
- Central – a hub connected by all modes of transportation
- Vibrant – a rich arts and culture scene
- Natural – mild climate and abundant green spaces near urban amenities

### **Target Markets**

New Westminster is highly accessible by motorized vehicle, transit and cyclists from Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, and Washington State. Historically, Tourism New West has targeted Metro Vancouver. Marketing campaigns will continue to attract more visitors from the following areas:

- Metro Vancouver
- Fraser Valley
- B.C., Alberta, and the Pacific Northwest

Tourism New West will focus on the following key types of visitors

- Leisure and culture-seeking travellers
- Meetings, retreats, weddings, sports teams, school groups, and corporate
- Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)

Promotion of overnight stay will be key in all marketing activities.

## Tourism Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

### Goal 1 – Destination Marketing

Draw visitors to New Westminster as their destination of choice with its distinctive identity, sense of place, and unique assets.

Objectives	Target
1. Increase awareness of New Westminster as a destination	-Digital Platforms subscription and interactions increase by 10% from 2021 baseline
2. Increase visitation, average length of stay, and perceived value of visit to New Westminster	-2 Accommodation providers report an increase in occupancy and duration of stay from 2021 baseline -Survey data collected show 70% of visitors are likely to recommend New West as a travel destination
3. Growth of local festivals, events, and conferences	-Increase in attendance by 5% per year for 3 key local events -Supply Visitor Service resources to 5 meetings or conferences
4. Greater visitor spending in local businesses	-10 new partnerships are built between accommodation providers, retailers, attractions, and hospitality businesses to bring more foot traffic from visitors to local businesses - 3 key attractions see a 5% increase in foot traffic each year

Strategies	Key Actions
<b>Objective #1</b>	
Develop a Communications Plan	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify priority assets (accommodations and attractions) and experiences to promote</li> <li>2. Review brand guidelines</li> <li>3. Determine where to invest resources and where to focus effort</li> <li>4. Research low cost resources for content generation to attract and influence visitors</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Marketing committee meets regularly to discuss industry trends and evaluate marketing tactics to fulfill plan objectives</li> </ol>
Implement Communications Plan	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue engagement on social media by amplifying and promoting local assets</li> <li>2. Encourage local resident engagement and community pride. ie: use of social media hashtags (#NewWest #MadeInNewWest, #ExploreNewWest and #ExploreBC), sharing Tourism generated stories/information, reviewing local businesses, inviting friends from other places</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update/maintain Tourism New West collateral materials and platforms to ensure they reflect brand identity</li> <li>2. Maintain and secure on-brand marketing assets/content</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Maintain and update destination website</li> <li>4. Stay actively engaged in social media channels</li> <li>5. Maintain branded and integrated print/downloadable collateral</li> </ol>
Establish baseline measurements of all digital platforms and track ongoing changes	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produce a 'snapshot' report on the existing status of social media platforms</li> <li>2. Determine website page views, unique visitors, visit duration, channel traffic percentages</li> <li>3. Determine click through, open rates, unsubscribes for newsletters</li> <li>4. Marketing Committee to finalize a Communications Plan based on above action steps</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor performance of digital platforms through data analysis</li> <li>2. Evaluate performance of each platform to assign resources</li> <li>3. Determine the key areas of interest from visitors</li> </ol>
<b>Objective #2</b>	
Promote accommodations and priority assets and build 'experiences' for overnight visitors	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update and improve Accommodation providers content on the website</li> <li>2. Review and update existing web content in-house and in collaboration with businesses/organizations</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create and share itineraries</li> <li>2. Develop a 'plan your trip' online resource for DIY itinerary building</li> <li>3. Develop an inventory of signature events and build itinerary themes</li> <li>4. Support Destination BC generated travel media</li> </ol>
Partner with accommodation providers to implement guest surveys	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with the four primary accommodations to determine their current data collection practices</li> <li>2. Aim for agreement from hotels to report data</li> <li>3. Baseline data collected for website stats/analytics and current occupancy and Average Daily Rate (ADR)</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Determine industry best practices for intercept or follow-up surveying methods</li> <li>5. Recommend consistent data collection methods and modes to accommodation providers</li> <li>6. Track MRDT monthly income for a year-over-year comparison</li> <li>7. Analyze survey results and hotel stay stats</li> </ol>
<b>Objective #3</b>	
Partner with event organizers to expand their reach, capacity, and access to resources	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with organizers to discuss ways to enhance events, increase attendance, extend stay, cross-promote, package experiences with accommodation, etc.</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Support the City's event data collection efforts at key events and encourage consistent tracking year-over-year</li> <li>3. Continue promoting events through various channels</li> <li>4. Invest in select print and digital advertising to promote key events</li> <li>5. Support partners with a sponsorship program</li> </ol>

<p>Support the meetings and conference markets with resources for organizers and attendees</p>	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with facility managements to explore ways to enhance the conference experience in order to increase registrations and extend length of stay</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a venue inventory that includes detail on capacity and amenities available</li> <li>2. Support conference/meeting targets, with accommodation partners and conference/meeting facilities for future consideration and bidding</li> <li>3. Promote venues and facilities through various channels to extend their reach</li> <li>4. Determine if additional collateral is needed to support conference and meeting attendees and encourage local exploration</li> </ol>
<p><b>Objective #4</b></p>	
<p>Build B2B relationships</p>	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Connect with local BIAs and Chamber of Commerce to learn about member businesses and participate in networking opportunities</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate connections between businesses to develop mutually beneficial experience packages and cross-promo opportunities</li> <li>2. Track conference attendee numbers to share with businesses ahead of time so they are prepared to serve them</li> <li>3. Participate in familiarization (FAM) tours for local frontline staff (e.g. Tourism Passport Program)</li> <li>4. Promote experience packages through marketing channels</li> <li>5. Ensure business promotional materials are available through TNW distribution channels ie: brochures, web links</li> <li>6. Research experiences promoted by other DMOs for new ideas</li> </ol>

## Goal 2 – Visitor Servicing

Ensure visitor information is available when and where visitors need it to enhance experiences and extend stays- whether they are planning their visit online or are in-destination enjoying an event.

Objective	Target
1. Increase total number of visitors served	-Establish 2021 baseline of visitors served
2. Deliver a full-service Visitor Service program as part of DBC's network annually	-Increase number of visitors served by 10% over 2021 baseline annually

Strategies	Key Actions
<b>Objective #1</b>	
Develop and execute annual visitor servicing initiatives	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-apply for Destination BC Visitor Services grant</li> <li>2. Collect required stats to maintain program</li> <li>3. Collect baseline of additional visitor stats</li> <li>4. Research online visitor chat functions for New West website</li> <li>5. Execute mobile visitor servicing at select events</li> <li>6. Train Anvil Centre and seasonal visitor centre staff</li> </ol> <p>Years 2- 5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze visitor stats to refine targets, programs, and services</li> <li>2. Update offerings to ensure valuable and inspiring trip planning</li> <li>3. Update offerings to deliver real-time personalized content. Reassess visitor servicing delivery methods</li> <li>4. Re-assess visitor servicing strategy in context of new Destination BC <i>Visitor Experiences Strategy</i></li> </ol>
<b>Objective #2</b>	
Increase staffing to deliver higher service level	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply for federal Canada Summer Jobs grant for peak season staff</li> <li>2. Analyze existing volunteer resources and research other DMO volunteer programs</li> <li>3. Support local New Westminster <i>Global Greeters</i> program</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and manage a volunteer program</li> <li>2. Provide resources to the Global Greeter network so they are up to date on local offerings</li> </ol>

### Goal 3 – Destination Development

Enhance the quality of tourism services, amenities, businesses, and practices through effective planning and capacity-building to ensure New Westminster is well positioned to make future strategic decisions, address issues, and capitalize on opportunities.

Objective	Target
1. Increase services and satisfaction of local tourism businesses	-Stakeholder satisfaction research – baseline measure -10 businesses have an enhanced online presence per year -Participate in 2 regional campaigns per year
2. Affirm Tourism New West is the local recognized leader in destination management	-MRDT application is approved and collection established -Representatives contribute to 3 external committees or working groups relevant to destination development each year -Board and Committees have members from at least 6 key industry sectors on an ongoing basis

Strategies	Key Actions
<b>Objective #1</b>	
Engage stakeholders & partners to contribute to an enhanced tourism experience in New Westminster	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain tourism stakeholder contact list</li> <li>2. Share tourism resources, marketing opportunities, and best practices</li> <li>3. Review and develop recommendations for participation in the DBC Destination Development Strategy (Metro Vancouver planning area)</li> <li>4. Host tourism industry meet-ups</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct online presence audit with stakeholders</li> <li>2. Explore professional development for local tourism operators (e.g. DBC workshops, SuperHost, FirstHost)</li> <li>3. Provide on-site, first-hand assistance to local tourism businesses to ensure they are found in online listings (e.g. HelloBC, which has over 3 million visits annually)</li> <li>4. Provide marketing opportunities resource for tourism operators (annual flat sheet)</li> <li>5. Advocate for development and community planning at the municipal level that contributes to high quality industry growth</li> <li>6. Evaluate and implement additional research tools with partners that track visitor experience and economic impact</li> <li>7. Ongoing participation in the Metro Vancouver Destination Development process</li> <li>8. Provide support for tourism industry businesses and attractions looking to locate in New Westminster</li> </ol>
<b>Objective #2</b>	
Build organizational capacity to increase impact and enhance profile	<p>Year 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hire permanent organization staff</li> <li>2. Populate and maintain Board of Directors and Committees</li> <li>3. Update organization's governance documents</li> </ol>



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Form partnerships with local Not-for-profits for collaboration</li> <li>5. Conduct annual stakeholder survey</li> </ol> <p>Years 2-5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share mechanisms for local industry to engage, e.g. committees, planning sessions, networking etc.</li> <li>2. Engage with City working groups to bring industry perspective</li> <li>3. Engage with provincial tourism industry and attend industry conferences</li> </ol>
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## Funding Sources

### Current Funding

Tourism New West has historically relied on an investment by the City of New Westminster for its operating budget. The current grant awarded to Tourism New West by the City is for \$73,000 per year each for 2020 and 2021. The grant term commenced on January 1, 2020 and ends December 31, 2021 with a review of status in November 2020 for requirement fulfillment before the second year is paid.

### Estimated Municipal & Regional District (MRDT) Funding

The estimate of the funds that could be generated by application of the MRDT collected on guest folios of all eligible properties available for nightly rental is as follows:

195 rooms @ 65% average occupancy x 365 days x average rate \$150 x 3% hotel tax = \$180,000.

#### Notes:

- *Communities opting to collect the 3% MRDT contribute 0.2 percentage points to a Provincial Tourism Events Program designed to support bids/hosting of events having provincial significance. The above calculation is based on 2.8%, rather than 3% to account for this*
- *The MRDT revenue projections are based on 2019 estimates. Tourism New West will adjust the strategic plan accordingly once 2020 and 2021 accommodation revenue figures are obtained and the impacts of COVID-19 are better understood*

Tourism New West would also continue to explore both federal and provincial programs such as the Canada Summer Jobs grant program, Destination BC Visitor Services grant, and Destination BC co-operative marketing programs.

### Affordable Housing Funding

In Budget 2018, the BC government announced that the eligible uses of MRDT revenues would be expanded to include affordable housing initiatives. At the same time it was announced that online accommodation platforms (OAP) located outside of BC would be enabled to register to collect provincial sales tax and MRDT on purchases of accommodation through their platform.

In keeping with these announcements, the MRDT Program Requirements have been updated to reflect the changes. In particular, the revised Program Requirements include the following clarifications:

- MRDT revenues from online accommodation platforms can be used for affordable housing initiatives

- General or traditional MRDT revenues cannot be used for affordable housing initiatives unless the designated recipient can demonstrate support of tourism stakeholders and accommodation providers

Tourism New West supports affordable housing initiatives and will direct revenue generated from online accommodation platforms (OAP) to the City of New Westminster for affordable housing projects. Traditional MRDT (tax collected at hotels) will be dedicated to tourism marketing and implementation of this strategy.

***The recommended tourism strategy assumes available resources of \$286,200 annually.***

Tourism New West		CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER	
<b>REVENUE SOURCES</b>		<b>REVENUE SOURCE</b>	
Estimated MRDT (traditional sources)	\$180,000	Estimated MRDT (Online Accommodation Providers)	\$85,000
City of New Westminster grant	\$73,000		
Canada Summer Jobs Grant	\$22,000		
Destination BC Visitor Service Grant	\$10,000		
Interest	\$1,200		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$286,200</b>	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$85,000</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Marketing	\$231,410	Affordable Housing	\$85,000
Destination Development	\$13,900		
Visitor Services	\$9,000		
Events	\$15,000		
Administration	\$16,890		
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$286,200</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$85,000</b>

It should be understood however, that there is a delay in both approval of the MRDT application by the Province as well as in the remittance of funds collected. Below is a table with a sample timeline showing that MRDT funds may not be available for approximately 12 months from the application date. The remaining timeline may proceed more quickly, however MRDT approval requires an Order in Council, which is dependent upon the legislative schedule and other approval priorities.

**SAMPLE MRDT application and approval process timeline for New Westminster:**

Action	Date
Application to Destination BC (DBC) for review – required edits made and resubmitted	Summer 2020
Application forwarded by DBC to Ministry of Finance – up to 9 month wait for decision	Summer 2020
Approval by Ministry of Finance	Early 2021
Ministry of Finance to provide accommodators with information on collecting/remitting MRDT and time to adjust systems – 3 months	Late Spring 2021
Collection of MRDT	Summer 2021

Remittance of collected MRDT funds to applicant (Tourism New West) – begins monthly, 3 months after first collection date	Fall 2021, and then monthly thereafter
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Consequently, there is more than 12 months from tourism strategy adoption in which the only funds available for destination marketing and visitor servicing would be those provided by the City of New Westminster (\$73,000).

## Management, Governance and Administration

The City of New Westminster provides \$73,000 annual grant funding to Tourism New West who provides tourism services. The current arrangement began January 2020 and expires December 31, 2021. Grant deliverables include:

- promoting New Westminster as a visitor destination
- running a visitor centre, providing information to benefit visitors and residents
- actively participating in regional visitor/tourism promotion activities

With the current budget - consisting of the grant from the City of New Westminster - there is one part-time Management Consultant (Barbara Fairbrother) and a bookkeeper on contract.

Once a sustainable funding source is secured, human resources at Tourism New West would be based on the annual plan and budget.

- Executive Director (full-time)
- Marketing Coordinator (part-time)
- Contracted support (part-time) – for bookkeeping, social media, website maintenance, graphic design, etc.

Tourism New West is an industry-led, non-profit society and is the proposed Eligible Entity<sup>1</sup> for the local MRDT. Tourism New West will be responsible for the management, administration, and governance of the entire MRDT funds and the overall strategic plan and budget.

When Tourism New West was first set up as a society in 1983, it was known as Royal City '86 Tourist Association).

Tourism New West is governed by a Board of Directors representing industry stakeholders. Each Board Member sits for a two-year term and may serve for no more than three (3) consecutive terms provided however that the Board may, in its discretion, permit a Director to serve up to three (3) additional one (1) year terms for a consecutive maximum of nine (9) years.

The members may elect as many as seven elected directors, using all reasonable efforts to draw candidates from the:

1. Accommodation sector

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<sup>1</sup> A designated recipient is the organization that applies and is responsible to the Province for MRDT within a designated accommodation area. An eligible entity is typically a not-for-profit society such as a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)

2. Arts, Cultural, and/or Heritage sector
3. Conference and Meetings
4. Retail/Other services
5. Food and beverage
6. Transportation
7. Entertainment
8. Attractions
9. Established Business Association
10. Sports

A Councillor from the City of New Westminster shall have the right to serve as ex-officio. The City of New Westminster may also select a staff member who may attend the Society Board meetings.

Tourism New West Committees may consist of Board Members plus other industry stakeholders. The Committee's primary focus is on providing recommendations to the Board and staff that help inform strategic decision-making and planning. The following Committees stand:

- Executive Committee
- Marketing Committee
- Finance Committee
- Governance Committee

2020-2021 Board of Directors:

- Tracy Eyssens, Indigenous Services Canada, Chair
- Stephen O'Shea, Arts Council of New Westminster
- Alejandro Diaz, El Santo Restaurant
- Peter LeBlanc, BC Association of Farmers' Markets
- Debbie Yule
- Lizz Kelly
- Patricia Jecks
- Blair Fryer, Communications & Economic Development, City of New Westminster
- Chuck Puchmayr, City of New Westminster Councillor

## Budget

Revenues		Budget \$
Carry-forward from previous calendar year		\$0
General MRDT (estimate)		\$180,000
OAP MRDT (estimate)		\$85,000
	<b>MRDT subtotal</b>	<b>265,000</b>
Local government contribution		\$73,000
Stakeholder Contributions (i.e. membership dues)		\$0
Co-op funds received (e.g. DBC co-op; DMO-led projects)		\$0
Grants - Federal (Canada Summer Jobs Grant)		\$22,000
Grants - Provincial (DBC Visitor Centre Grant)		\$10,000
Grants/Fee for Service - Municipal		\$0
Retail sales		\$0
Interest		\$1,200
Other		\$0
	<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$371,200</b>
Expenses		Budget \$
<b>Marketing</b>		
Marketing staff - wages and benefits		\$160,650
Media Advertising and production		\$8,000
Website - hosting, development, maintenance		\$5,000
Social Media		\$3,000
Consumer shows and events		\$0
Collateral production and distribution		\$14,000
Travel Media Relations		\$0
Travel Trade		\$0
Consumer-focused asset development (imagery, video, written content)		\$5,000
Other (Co-op marketing)		\$12,500
Other (project contractors)		\$6,110
Other (branding)		\$4,000
Other (FAM tours)		\$2,000
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$220,260</b>
<b>Destination Development</b>		
Destination Development staff - wages and benefits		\$0
Industry and product development and training		\$1,000
Product Experience enhancement and training		\$0
Research, evaluation, analytics		\$7,000
Other (Industry memberships)		\$1,400
Other (Industry conferences/events i.e. BCTIC, BCDMOA)		\$4,000
Other (local industry networking events)		\$500
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$13,900</b>
<b>Visitor Services</b>		
Visitor Services wages and benefits		11,150

Visitor Services activities (remotes, promotions, activation)	\$8,500
Other (volunteer benefits)	\$500
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$20,150</b>
<b>Meetings, Conventions, Events, and Sport</b>	
Event sponsorship	\$15,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>Administration</b>	
Management and staff unrelated to program implementation - wages and benefits	\$0
Finance staff - wages and benefits (accounting contractor)	\$6,500
Human resources staff - wages and benefits	\$0
Board of Directors & Committees costs	\$2,400
Information technology (workstation-related costs)	\$3,500
Office lease/rent	\$0
General office expenses	\$4,140
Travel	\$350
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$16,890</b>
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	
General MRDT revenues	\$0
Revenues from online accommodation providers (OAP)	\$85,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$85,000</b>
Other	
All other wages and benefits not included above	\$0
Other activities not included above (please describe)	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$371,200</b>