



# Maple Ridge Five-Year Tourism Strategy December 2017





### ***Acknowledgements***

We would like to acknowledge that the City of Maple Ridge lies within the traditional and unceded territories of the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations. We recognize and respect that the authentic cultural experiences that these Nations may wish to share with visitors and residents of Maple Ridge must first be determined by these community members, elders and families themselves and that there are areas of these territories, stories and rituals that are sacred and spiritual places/traditions that are not appropriately shared outside of First Nations communities. We will take our guidance related to this from the Katzie and Kwantlen people.

We will continue to build relationships with the Katzie and Kwantlen leadership and community members and hope to provide support as appropriate as their tourism aspirations evolve and grow into market-ready and export-ready experiences. The desire to work together, respectfully for mutual community benefit will guide our interactions.

We would also like to acknowledge that the following five-year tourism strategy and one-year tactical plan was developed with extensive input from the tourism stakeholders and residents of the Maple Ridge. The community's willingness to come together to share ideas and forge a direction for tourism is acknowledged and appreciated.

This strategy was created with Maple Ridge's residents as the primary beneficiary. Tourism attractions, enhanced amenities, and events that attract visitors are also available to residents to enjoy. Marketing and promoting Maple Ridge as a destination also ensures that community attributes are brought to the attention of locals, creating further pride in the community.



### ***Acknowledgements – cont’d***

The Tourism Task Force has invested many volunteer hours deliberating a tourism vision, objectives and priority strategies. Members of the Tourism Task Force are:

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Lino Siracusa and Karen Hansen of Maple Ridge’s Economic Initiatives team provided valuable guidance throughout the planning process. It has been a privilege to work together with everyone in Maple Ridge. Thank you.

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Throughout the plan, the following acronyms have been employed:

**DMO** – Destination Marketing/Management Organization  
**RDMO** – Regional Destination Marketing/Management Organization  
**MRDT** – Municipal & Regional District Tax  
**EDC** – Economic Development Committee  
**TAC** – Tourism Advisory Committee

## Planning Process

The following five-year tourism strategy for Maple Ridge is founded on an engagement process with local and regional tourism operators, arts and culture 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:

- One on one interviews in person and via telephone throughout the entire planning process
- Tourism Task Force meetings held on April 6, May 18 and June 8, 2017
- Community Tourism Forums held on June 12<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup>



As well, several tourism related questions were included in the community survey conducted as part of cultural planning for the City of Maple Ridge.

In addition to the wealth of ideas and knowledge offered by participants in these sessions, the consulting team spent many days 'on the ground' experiencing Maple Ridge from a visitor's perspective.

The recommendations related to the governance and funding model for tourism services delivery that will best serve Maple Ridge are informed by a review of better practices throughout the Province. The definition of Maple Ridge's highest return target markets benefited from the market research made available by Destination BC.

The resulting five-year tourism strategy for Maple Ridge is intended to benefit both residents and local businesses that service visitors. The recommended strategies that enhance experiences and amenities increase the livability of the community for residents, making the destination more enjoyable for visitors. New residents are typically visitors first and this strategy supports the broader economic development mandate of Maple Ridge by creating enhanced opportunity for local employment and by encouraging residents to 'bring their imagination home' and see Maple Ridge as a place for business start-ups and entrepreneurship as well as a home base for a daily commute.

The strategy is structured as follows:

- A Vision for Tourism in Maple Ridge
- Tourism Objectives
- Guiding Principles for Tourism Services Delivery
- Recommended Governance Model and Structure
- Mission of the Proposed Tourism Advisory Committee
- Recommended Funding Model
- Maple Ridge's Unique Selling Proposition and Target Markets

- Recommended Strategies
  - Immediate
  - Year 1
  - Years 2 – 5

Appendices:

- A – Understanding the Visitor Economy
- B – Net Promoter Score
- C – Market Research – The Tourism Opportunity
- D – Maple Ridge – Current Situation Analysis
- E - Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats for Tourism in Maple Ridge
- F - Tourism Forum Notes
- G – Visitor Survey – Golden Ears Provincial Park August 2017

## A Vision for Tourism in Maple Ridge

During the Tourism Task Force meeting held on June 8th, participants reviewed and agreed on many elements of a vision for tourism in Maple Ridge. These key vision elements include:

- Year round visitor economy contributing to the community's economic health and quality of life for residents
- Tourism that is vibrant and sustainable – a vital element of the local economy that is respectful of environmental and social values
- Tourism is community-driven resulting in strong resident support for the industry and recognition of the value of tourism
- Tourism opportunities that provide value to both residents and visitors recognizing that a great place to visit, is also often a great place to live

Based on the recent discussions, the vision statement that was proposed in the 2016 tourism strategy has been revised to the following two-part statement:

***Maple Ridge's remarkable outdoor, rural and cultural experiences offers residents and visitors the opportunity to experience and share stories of our vibrant city centre and agricultural surroundings, set amongst historic rivers and spectacular mountains.***

***Tourism in Maple Ridge contributes to a vibrant, sustainable economy providing opportunities for local employment and entrepreneurship while contributing to the livability and attractiveness of the City for residents.***

## Tourism Objectives

Discipline and focus will be required to build momentum and achieve progress towards this vision for tourism in Maple Ridge. To provide this clarity for both planning and implementation, the following tourism objectives are recommended:

## **Objective #1 – Destination Marketing**

***We will conduct effective destination marketing in target markets with a focus on generating incremental overnight stays in paid accommodation***

Marketing Maple Ridge as an overnight destination in the highest return target markets is a priority as this will lead to:

- Growing awareness of Maple Ridge as a destination of choice
- Increasing visitation
- Longer lengths of stay
- Increasing occupancy levels and higher average daily rates in paid accommodation
- Greater visitor spending in all local businesses.

The recommended tourism objectives (the outcomes to be achieved) associated with this goal statement are as follows:

- Increase in average length of stay and average daily spend in Maple Ridge
- Improved shoulder season occupancy rates
- Growth in the overall value of the visitor economy in Maple Ridge
- If enacted, annual growth in baseline Municipal & Regional District Tax (MRDT) revenues.

## **Objective #2 – Destination Development - Tourism Experience**

Attraction/Retention/Expansion and the Delivery of Remarkable Experiences

***We will encourage investment in tourism businesses and visitor/resident experiences to support longer lengths of stay and increased spending. We will support all visitor experiences in Maple Ridge in the quest to be ‘remarkable’.***

The City of Maple Ridge through its Economic Development team has been investing in tourism and will continue to be involved in plan implementation, with more focus on experience attraction and destination development. The City of Maple Ridge and the Economic Development team will:

- Provide appropriate support for and work to attract an increasing breadth and depth of compelling visitor experiences offered by the private and not-for-profit sectors
- Invest in the necessary infrastructure and amenities for residents that also serve to encourage longer lengths of stay, repeat visitation and favourable referrals by visitors
- Be a conduit for information sharing and communication between tourism stakeholders, residents and the City
- Share information with residents to educate and encourage everyone in Maple Ridge to become a visitor ‘ambassador’.

The recommended tourism objectives associated with this goal statement are as follows:

- Increase in tourism business attraction/growth of existing businesses and local tourism employment
- Investment in infrastructure and amenities (e.g. multi-use trails etc.) that enhance resident/visitor experience
- Increase in resident support for tourism in Maple Ridge
- Increase in Net Promoter Score (as a tool for measuring satisfaction with the overall experience – see Appendix B for more details).

## Guiding Principles for Tourism Services Delivery

Maple Ridge has had a challenging history of tourism services delivery. Until recently, tourism services delivery in Maple Ridge was executed together with the City of Pitt Meadows. Several attempts have been made in the past in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows to secure support from the accommodation sector for the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT).

It is recognized this strategy if focused on a destination that is on the unceded territory of the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations. Much of the area's tourism development has occurred with little engagement with the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations who have lived on these lands since time immemorial. Genuine effort must be made to engage respectfully with First Nations, support their efforts for cultural sharing and renewal and their pursuit of economic development opportunities where and when they decide it is appropriate.

With the leadership of the Tourism Task Force and of the City through the Economic Development team, Maple Ridge has now decided to undertake tourism marketing on its own. Once established, opportunities to partner with Pitt Meadows and others for mutual benefit will be revisited. Moving forward, all stakeholders agree that it is critically important for those involved with achieving Maple Ridge's tourism vision to embrace the following guiding principles:

***Tourism in Maple Ridge will be governed in a manner that is:***

- ***Open and Transparent***
- ***Accountable***
- ***Strategic and Results-Driven***
- ***Flexible and Responsive***
- ***Inclusive and Approachable***
- ***Collaborative***
- ***Innovative***
- ***Efficient and Effective***

It is recommended that these guiding principles serve as a 'touchstone' for all those contributing to the success of Maple Ridge's visitor economy. Regular and consistent communication to residents and tourism business stakeholders will be crucial for success and engagement.

## Community Support for Tourism

### *Cultural Plan Survey*

In 2017, the City of Maple Ridge began developing a ten-year Cultural Plan, in addition to a five-year Tourism Strategy. These documents are designed to guide the City and community's role and investment in cultural services and tourism marketing and development. In order to obtain the community's feedback on the direction and priorities for the future to build a vibrant community for everyone who lives, works and plays in Maple Ridge, a survey was made available to all residents. The City engaged the consultancy Nordicity to administer this survey as a neutral, independent third party.



Over the period of 44 days (from May 1st to June 13th) the survey captured information from 559 respondents who provided at least basic profile information<sup>1</sup>. The survey encouraged a broad canvassing of opinions on key issues related directly to the City of Maple Ridge's planning mandate, designed to guide the City and community's role and investment in cultural services and tourism marketing and development over the next ten years.

In summary, the highest priorities respondents articulated for tourism are support and promotion of festivals, special events and cultural activities, and, developing natural and outdoor amenities. Although still marked as a high priority, partnering with business and investors with goal of creating new amenities and attractions ranked lowest for respondents. In terms of the food culture, several respondents suggested that the City focus on leveraging agritourism to further develop the food culture in Maple Ridge. Some of the ideas put forward by respondents included: more food and drink festivals, fresh and local tasting experiences (food or drink tours) and promoting locally owned/sourced food and beverage establishments.

Numerous respondents indicated that Maple Ridge's diverse history and (related) museum are currently undervalued and should be featured more prominently.

The Maple Ridge Cultural Plan highlights several opportunities that can work in tandem with tourism priorities: a walkable town centre, acknowledging the deep culture of settlement history, furthering relationships with Kwantlen and Katzie First Nations, promoting festivals and events, and capitalizing on agricultural opportunities.

### *Tourism Forums*

Two Tourism Forums were held and were open to the public in order to share information about the tourism strategy and to obtain feedback from Maple Ridge residents. Forums were promoted through municipal communication channels, local media, industry partners and the Tourism Task Force.

Both forums featured guest speakers and provided an opportunity for the audience to share their thoughts on the following questions:

- What do you consider to be the best tourism experiences for Maple Ridge?
- Is there anything that could be enhanced to improve the Maple Ridge experience?
- What opportunities should Maple Ridge explore first to grow visitation outside of the summer season?
- What longer-term opportunities should be pursued?
- What are the constraints to growing the tourism economy in Maple Ridge that should be addressed in the short-term? In the long-term?
- How would the community of Maple Ridge benefit from growth in tourism (the visitor economy)?

Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> at The ACT

6pm to 8:30pm

This forum was based on Adventure Tourism and Cycling and featured two guest speakers:

- Sam Waddington, Chilliwack City Councillor/owner of Mt. Waddington's Outdoors store
- Richard Campbell, BC Cycling Coalition

The session welcomed 37 attendees.

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<sup>1</sup> Note, as respondents were not required to answer every question, the total number of responses (or "n value") varies between questions.

Monday June 19<sup>th</sup> at the Maple Ridge Library  
6pm to 8:30pm

This forum was based on Arts, Festivals & Events, Heritage, Aboriginal Tourism and Agritourism (Circle Farm Tours) and featured two guest speakers:

- Will Harding, Aboriginal Tourism BC Director of Marketing & Sales
- Allison Colthorp, Tourism Chilliwack Executive Director

The session welcomed 16 attendees.

Both sessions resulted in very good input from the residents, Task Force members and business owners in attendance. Summary notes from these two events are included as Appendix D.

## Recommended Funding Model

Sustainable funding is needed to implement Maple Ridge's tourism strategy. Measurable progress against the two identified objectives and the larger vision can only be made with consistent, impactful messaging into target markets. Historically, tourism funding has been sourced entirely from the municipal budget of the City of Maple Ridge. Given the City's many responsibilities and its overarching mandate to service the needs of residents, a modest annual budget of \$35,000 has been allocated specifically to tourism initiatives. For 2017 an additional \$90,000 was allocated to tourism for the purpose of a temporary tourism coordinator and a hotel feasibility study (\$60,000 + \$30,000 respectively).

A request to the City to maintain the \$60,000 contribution for a tourism coordinator and \$35,000 for marketing, totaling \$95,000 over the five-year period was accepted on November 28, 2017. While the City's recognition of tourism as an important element of its economic mix and a contributor to general livability for residents is commendable, this budget places Maple Ridge at a competitive disadvantage relative to other communities that offer similar types of experiences to visitors. This contribution would be best matched by a contribution from the local tourism industry.

In British Columbia today, more than 50 communities have secured the support of their accommodation sector for application of the 2% or 3% MRDT. The MRDT is added to the guest folio at check out and is returned to the community for investment in destination marketing. Additional information on the MRDT program can be found at [www.destinationbc.ca/BC-Tourism-Industry/Municipal-and-Regional-District-Tax-Program.aspx](http://www.destinationbc.ca/BC-Tourism-Industry/Municipal-and-Regional-District-Tax-Program.aspx).

By way of comparison, other communities in British Columbia are accessing the following resources:

Community	Estimated MRDT
Maple Ridge	N/A
Chilliwack	\$275,000
Abbotsford	\$250,000
Squamish	\$190,000
Nelson Kootenay Lake	\$300,000

Discussions with the accommodation sector in Maple Ridge are ongoing and it is the intention of the tourism strategy that follows to clearly demonstrate value to the sector in a manner that secures

their support for the application of MRDT in Maple Ridge. However, recognizing that these discussions will take further time and that once support is in place, there is still a nine to twelve month processing time to enact the MRDT, the recommended tourism strategies for Maple Ridge have been categorized as:

- Immediate (2018)
- Year 1 – (12 – 24 months or upon commencement of MRDT collection)
- Years 2-5

Other communities that have supported application of the MRDT and strategically invested funds in tourism promotion and development have experienced significant growth. An easily monitored measure of this return on investment is growth in the MRDT itself. A sample of community DMOs collecting the MRDT report the following growth:

Community	Reporting Period	Growth in MRDT Experienced
Vernon	2010-2015	114% (\$286,000-\$616,000)
Tofino	2011 – 2015	36.8% (\$680,000-\$930,000)
Squamish	2014-2015	21% (\$149,000-\$180,000)

According to MRDT legislation, the baseline level of City investment must be maintained (i.e. the MRDT cannot replace this core funding). The estimate of the funds that could be generated by application of the MRDT collected on guest folios of all properties in Maple Ridge having four or more rooms available for nightly rental is as follows:

2% MRDT rate:

121 rooms x \$95 nightly rate x 60% (average occupancy) x 365 nights x 2% = \$50,348

3% MRDT rate\*:

121 rooms x \$95 nightly rate x 60% (average occupancy) x 365 nights x 2.8% = \$70,487

The combination of continued City funding and application of a 2% MRDT would provide core funding for tourism promotion and visitor servicing. Typically, other businesses (restaurants, retail, attractions/activities) are also given the opportunity to contribute financially to cooperative marketing programs. This cooperative marketing, along with leveraged funding available through Destination BC is estimated to be an additional \$35,000.

***Therefore, if 2% MRDT is collected, the annual budget available to implement the recommended strategies could be ~\$180,000:***

***\$60,000 City Contribution for tourism coordinator***

***\$50,000 2% MRDT collection***

***\$35,000 City contribution***

***\$35,000 in leveraged cooperative marketing – Destination BC / stakeholder contributions***

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***Total: \$180,000***

***Therefore, if 3% MRDT is collected, the annual budget available to implement the recommended strategies could be ~\$200,000:***

***\$60,000 City Contribution for tourism coordinator***

***\$70,000 2% MRDT collection***

***\$35,000 City contribution***

***\$35,000 in leveraged cooperative marketing – Destination BC / stakeholder contributions***

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***Total: \$200,000***

\*Note: 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.

In-kind support from the City is contemplated with respect to office space, accounting/bookkeeping services, technology services so that the maximum investment can be made in marketing and visitor servicing activities.

The City additionally will continue to make investments in infrastructure, festivals and events that benefit both residents and visitors in keeping with its other planning processes such as the Cultural Plan and the Parks Master Plan.

This core funding and in-kind support can be further leveraged with various partners where mutual benefit will be derived. These partners include:

- Regional partners who similarly would have the opportunity to 'buy in' to select initiatives where promotion of the greater regional experience would have more impact in target markets (e.g. Pitt Meadows, Mission, Fraser Valley, etc.)
- Provincial sector partners (Mountain Biking BC, Ale Trail, BC Lodging and Campground Association, Aboriginal Tourism BC, etc.)
- BC Parks
- Destination BC (open pool cooperative funding opportunities)
- Granting authorities (Summer Student Employment grants, etc.)
- Government of Canada

Should support for the MRDT not yet be forthcoming in Maple Ridge, the recommended strategies that follow below will remain relevant although their implementation will require a longer investment horizon. As part of the journey towards this support from the accommodation sector, it may be necessary to design and offer a number of voluntary cooperative marketing programs first in which the properties are offered the option to 'buy-in' to a marketing campaign. Having voluntarily participated in a number of successful promotional campaigns, they may be more receptive and willing to consider application of the 2% MRDT on an ongoing basis.

## **Recommended Governance Model**

An effective, well-governed structure to lead tourism in Maple Ridge is essential to achieving the vision and tourism objectives noted above. As the City of Maple Ridge is currently the only funding contributor, it is logical that governance in the immediate future resides within the City and Economic Development. In order to support their decision-making process, the continued guidance and direction of the Tourism Task Force is recommended. The role of the Task Force can now



evolve to one of an ongoing nature – an Advisory Committee (or Commission) rather than a limited life Task Force.

Membership on the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) should be reviewed to include the wide range of experiential offerings in Maple Ridge including outdoor adventure, arts/culture/heritage, festivals/events, accommodations, restaurants, retail sector as well as the ideas of the BIA and Chamber of Commerce. This private sector knowledge and market intelligence is essential to strategic decision-making and provides an important link between tourism businesses and City staff and elected leaders.

Moving forward, the recommended governance model for destination marketing and management in Maple Ridge is as follows:

- Governing authority is the City of Maple Ridge who adopts a 5-year rolling tourism strategy and annual marketing plan upon the recommendation of the Tourism Advisory Committee
- Eleven member Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) by appointment of City Council:
  - Accommodation providers (3 seats)
  - First Nations representation from Katzie and Kwantlen (2 seats)
  - 6 additional seats chosen following a skills-based public application process with seats intending to capture broad representation from
    - Arts, culture, heritage, festivals/events
    - Restaurants/retail
    - Activity operators
    - Agri-tourism operators
    - Sport tourism
  - Non-voting liaison seats would be available to:
    - City staff – Economic Development – 1 seat appointed
    - Chamber of Commerce – 1 seat appointed
    - Business Improvement Area – 1 seat appointed
- Implementation of the Tourism Advisory Committee recommended and Council approved, tourism strategy and annual marketing plan by Economic Development staff/contractors
- Regular reporting of results against approved plan to occur formally to Council (semi-annually) along with frequent communication to all tourism stakeholders and interested residents
- Frequent informal feedback from residents/tourism businesses throughout the year along with annual formal Open House opportunities to present past successes/lessons and receive input on future priorities.

This model is felt to best reflect the following principles agreed to be critical to Maple Ridge's success moving forward:

- Utilize open and transparent public process
  - The recommended tourism strategy and annual marketing plan will be presented by the Tourism Advisory Committee to Council in a public meeting and as documents of public record, available to any and all to review
  - Regular reporting of progress and results achieved will also formally occur at scheduled Council meetings and be publicly available

- Leverage private sector knowledge and expertise in destination marketing
  - The Tourism Advisory Committee members will be selected based upon an open and public application process in response to a desired set of skills and representation – applicants will submit their resume detailing their experience in destination marketing, tourism services delivery, strategic leadership etc. and selection will be made to secure a breadth of representation across all sectors of the tourism industry that contribute to the visitor experience in Maple Ridge
- Balance interests of stakeholders and accountability to funders
  - The composition of the Tourism Advisory Committee recognizes the important commitment that the accommodation sector is being asked to make to the growth of the visitor economy in Maple Ridge via their support for the Municipal & Regional District Tax and ensures that their views related to tourism strategy and annual marketing initiatives can be clearly articulated and embedded in recommended strategies and resource allocations
  - The liaison seat on the Tourism Advisory Committee for the City's Economic Development Manager and the vesting of final governance authority in Mayor and Council recognizes the equally significant financial contribution to destination management made by the City and its taxpayers.

As discussions with the accommodation sector continue, this recommended governance model will be reviewed and may be adjusted. As a condition of their support, the accommodation sector may require that the destination marketing funds derived from MRDT be managed outside of local government through a not-for-profit Society with an independent Board of Directors. Better practices around the Province indicate that the composition of such a Board would likely being similar to that recommended for the TAC. Should this modification to the governance model be required as a condition of their MRDT support, the City, in recognition of its financial contribution to destination marketing (now being made to and governed by the Society) would also participate on this Board of Directors through Council appointments to hold the number of seats allocated to municipal representatives.

## **Mission of the Proposed Tourism Advisory Committee**

The key elements of the mission of the Tourism Advisory Committee working together with the City of Maple Ridge were identified through the stakeholder engagement process as follows:

- Build awareness and motivate travel to Maple Ridge as a year round preferred multi-night destination in target markets
- Support the enhancement of visitor amenities and infrastructure working in partnership with the City and others
- Develop mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations
- Build pride, among the residents, about living in and visiting Maple Ridge
- Engage in two-way communication with residents, stakeholders and partners that is frequent, open and honest
- Provide leadership and strategic thinking to Maple Ridge's tourism industry.

The recommended mission statement for the Tourism Advisory Committee is as follows:

***The role of the Maple Ridge Tourism Advisory Committee is to:***

***Increase awareness of Maple Ridge as an overnight destination of choice in identified target markets***

***Support local businesses that service travellers with training and education related to the delivery of remarkable experiences***

***Establish relationships and partnerships within and beyond Maple Ridge that are both respectful and mutually beneficial***

## **Maple Ridge's Unique Selling Proposition and Target Markets**

Based upon a review of available market research, Maple Ridge's current situation analysis and knowledge of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for tourism in Maple Ridge, the following elements of the visitor experience should be considered as foundational to Maple Ridge's unique selling proposition and be embedded in some form in all messaging:

- Outdoor adventure is right here – from safe and easy family-friendly hikes to backcountry touring of an expansive wilderness – Maple Ridge is easily accessible for visitors and residents of the Lower Mainland
- Agricultural tourism options are abundant in Maple Ridge – options may appeal to those seeking farm to table experiences, family outings, farm-themed weddings, etc.
- Urban centre – Maple Ridge has a walkable urban centre/cultural hub that could be even further enhanced with improvements to lighting, pedestrian areas and public entertainment gathering spots, including car-free events
- Home of the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations – living and vibrant communities with unique cultures and stories to share
- Value – Maple Ridge accommodation offers excellent value to travellers while being only 45 minutes from downtown Vancouver attractions/amenities

There are other destinations that offer similar experiences but Maple Ridge's location, mountains, urban centre, authentic First Nations culture and agricultural experiences offer a unique mix:

<b>Community</b>	<b>Proximity to Vancouver</b>	<b>Scenic Mountains</b>	<b>Agricultural product</b>	<b>Walkable Urban Centre</b>	<b>First Nations Culture</b>	<b>Notes:</b>
Maple Ridge	1 hour	X	X	X	X	More work required to improve pedestrian friendly-nature of gathering spots
Squamish	1 hour +	X			X	Limited Main Street exists, with proposed future downtown waterfront development
Abbotsford	1.5 hours	X	X		X	Distinct, spread out neighbourhoods

Markets that should be targeted and offered specific Maple Ridge experiences so as to achieve the objective of increasing overnight visitation, length of stay and visitor spending throughout the year include the following:

<b>Target Market</b>	<b>Maple Ridge Experience</b>	<b>Key Message Elements</b>
Weddings – Lower Mainland	Incredible scenery; all the services and amenities needed for a successful day; excellent value	Picture perfect weddings in Maple Ridge – every service available – every detail taken care of
Small Meetings/Conferences – Lower Mainland	Accommodation/dining/meeting space – at great value	Maple Ridge meetings – big city service without the big city cost
Family Vacations – Lower Mainland market	Memorable family experiences –dike hikes, horseback riding, camping, fun at the lake, farm experiences and exceptional value	All the ingredients for your family vacation are all here – suggested itineraries including access options, range of places to stay, family friendly activities
Hiking	Trails for all skill levels from peaceful dike walks, to easy	Make Maple Ridge your base for your next hiking



	hikes around Whonnock Lake to multi-day backcountry hiking/mountaineering In Golden Ears Provincial Park	adventure. Great value accommodations, all the comforts, services and amenities you need and a great range of dining and shopping options
Road Cycling – Lower Mainland	Ride Port Coquitlam – Pitt Meadows – Maple Ridge road; overnight in Maple Ridge – return next day	Long rides without intersections through scenic countryside/mountain backdrops
Mountain bikers – BC resident market	Part of Fraser Valley Mountain Biking experience	Make Maple Ridge your base to explore mountain biking trails throughout the Fraser Valley
Regional and Provincial Sport Tourism Event Organizers	Local clubs combine with sport tourism infrastructure + accommodation, dining, retail experiences	Maple Ridge has the facilities and amenities to host successful tournaments, races and other sporting events
Festival and Event Goers – Regional Drive Markets	Heritage, culture, live entertainment, family fun at signature events such as Caribbean Fest, Country Fest, weekly Haney Farmers’ Market, summer programming a Memorial Peach park, Festival of BC Films, Golden Harvest – Taste of Maple Ridge	Maple Ridge getaway – enjoy art, culture, live entertainment
Touring Travellers – all geographic markets	Year-round touring market can use Maple Ridge as a base for overnight stay to experience entire area – feature accommodation and close proximity to Golden Ears and other outdoor and cultural experiences	Provincial Park, scenery and local hospitality

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

Traveller ‘types’ are defined and the destination or business is able to match the ‘type’ with the experiences they offer as a way of focusing marketing efforts on best potential customers and

defining the nature of messaging/media tools that will reach and resonate with them. Additional information is available through Destination BC and on-line at [www.en.destinationcanada.com](http://www.en.destinationcanada.com). Destination Canada has identified the following Explorer Types as most attractive for the Canadian marketplace. Destination BC has confirmed that these markets are most relevant provincially:

- Free Spirits
- Cultural Explorers
- Authentic Experiencers

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

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

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

Many of BC's current visitors are Gentle Explorers. Gentle Explorers like returning to past destinations and enjoy the security of familiar surroundings. They seek the most comfortable places and avoid the unknown. They prefer well-organized travel packages and guided tours that care of all the details. They value comfort, structure and luxury.

Maple Ridge's current visitor experiences would appear to best meet the experiential needs of Cultural Explorers and Authentic Experiencers.

As marketing efforts progress and specific campaigns are formulated and launched, they should be informed by the additional psychographic intelligence available from the EQ program and data collection in the Maple Ridge area. In particular, where a database of visitor postal codes can be aggregated, resources invested in a PRIZM5 analysis offered through Environics Analytics can provide invaluable insight into current visitor profiles.

## **Recommended Strategies**

The following table summarizes the recommended strategies to achieve Maple Ridge's tourism objectives and vision. Further detail for each strategy is provided below.

These strategies provide opportunities for alignment with existing City resources and budgets in Parks Recreation and Culture and other departments (e.g. a trail plan will be led by Parks but will support tourism and should include a tourism component)

Strategies related to objective #1 – Destination Marketing are colour-coded green; strategies related to objective #2 – Destination Development are colour-coded gold.

## Objective #1 – Destination Marketing

***We will conduct effective destination marketing in target markets with a focus on generating incremental overnight stays in paid accommodation***

## Objective #2 – Destination Development - Tourism Experience

Attraction/Retention/Expansion and the Delivery of Remarkable Experiences

***We will encourage investment in tourism businesses and visitor/resident experiences to support longer lengths of stay and increased spending. We will support all visitor experiences in Maple Ridge in the quest to be ‘remarkable’.***

Funding available to implement these strategies is estimated to be as follows:

2018: City of Maple Ridge funding only – core funding of \$35,000 for marketing and \$60K for tourism coordination supplemented with cooperative marketing investments by local tourism businesses of \$5,000 = \$10,000 total

Year 2: Upon commencement of a 2% MRDT – combined MRDT funds/City funding/cooperative marketing investments and increased leveraged dollars = \$180,000 total

2018 implementation refers to the next year, while the decision regarding MRDT is made. Year 2 budget begins assuming MRDT collection begins. The budget is based on 2% MRDT collection. If 3% is collected, additional budget is available for marketing, content curation, and leveraging marketing dollars.

Target Market	Strategy	Funding	2018	Year 2 Budget	Years 3-5 Annual Budget
All Markets	Conduct visitor survey at Golden Ears Park understand current visitation, motivators, perceptions, opportunities, etc.  Conduct additional primary market research in years 2-5 to understand current visitation, motivators, perceptions, level of satisfaction and gaps	Core	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
Lower Mainland Weddings Market	Weddings - Design and publish an on-line guide to weddings in Maple Ridge with stunning photography and a list of service providers. Maintain guide by refreshing imagery. Consider attending select weddings shows in years 2-5.	Core + Cooperative Marketing / Advertising Sales	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000

Lower Mainland – Small Conferences Market	Meetings / Conferences - Design and publish an on-line guide to meetings in Maple Ridge with stunning photography and a list of service providers. Maintain guide by refreshing imagery. Consider attending consumer shows in years 2-5.	Core + Cooperative Marketing / Advertising Sales	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Regional / Provincial Sport Tourism	Sport Tourism - Work with local sports clubs to identify and bid for regional and provincial tournaments in fall/winter/spring 2017 including development of special offers/promotions to attendees featuring reasons to come early/stay tournaments in fall/winter/spring 2017 including development of special offers/promotions to later and experience Maple Ridge	Core	Contractor/ Staff Time	\$10,000	\$10,000
Lower Mainland Cycling Enthusiasts (Road and Mountain Biking)	Cycling - Design and promote a Maple Ridge Cycling Guide showcasing trail networks and nearby attractions (restaurants, accommodations); include multi-day itineraries that combine Maple Ridge with neighbouring trail networks in Pitt Meadows and Port Coquitlam; feature on existing website and partner websites (Cyclo Touring BC; Mountain Biking BC etc.)	Core + Contributions from Neighbouring Communities – Possible Destination BC Open Pool application in November 2017	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
All markets	Partnership Marketing – Participate in partnership programs and enhance Maple Ridge profile on existing marketing platforms such as <a href="http://www.hellobc.com">www.hellobc.com</a> , <a href="http://www.mountainbikingbc.ca">www.mountainbikingbc.ca</a> , <a href="http://www.scenic7bc.com">www.scenic7bc.com</a> , <a href="http://www.viasport.ca">www.viasport.ca</a>	Core	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
All Markets	Online Marketing Tools - Content acquisition and curation for all social media channels/ Maintain and enhance web presence	Core	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$25,000
All Markets	Collateral - Produce 2018 Visitor Guide	Core + advertising sales revenue	Breakeven with advertising	Breakeven advertising sale	Breakeven with advertising



			sales		sales
All Markets	Undertake brand development and roll/out – implementation and integration into all activities	Core + MRDT	-	\$30,000	\$10,000
All Markets	Secure imagery/videography content and curate for use in social media channels	Core + MRDT	-	\$ 10,000	\$10,000
All Markets	Actively engage with social media influencers in each target market (host bloggers, Instagrammers, etc.)	Core + MRDT	\$5,000	\$ 5,000	\$5,000
All Markets	Continue to enhance website content, incorporate search engine optimization; geo-targeted advertising	Core + MRDT		\$10,000	\$10,000
All markets	Design and activate visitor servicing program ; rejoin DBC network; mobile visitor servicing options	Apply for Innovation Funding	Staff Time	\$20,000	\$20,000
All Markets	Consider visitor perspective and experiential quality in all ongoing investments in municipal infrastructure (roads, parks, trails, recreation facilities etc.)	Core	Staff Time	Staff Time	Staff Time
Arts, Culture & Heritage enthusiasts – Cultural Explorers	Support Arts/Culture/Heritage events that motivate travel with marketing and promotion including overnight itineraries to encourage longer lengths of stay	Core + MRDT		Staff time	Staff time
Festival & Event Goers	Invest in existing and/or create new signature events with depth of programming content and quality that motivates travel with a focus on shoulder season e.g. Slow Food Cycle Tour	Core +MRDT		Staff Time	Staff Time
Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiences	Continue to build relationships and offer market intelligence to support the development of authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences by the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Cultural Explorers	Expand depth of agri-tourism offerings in Maple Ridge	Core		\$3,000	\$3,000
All Markets	Participate in an update to the signage / wayfinding strategy and represent the perspective and needs of the visitor	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time

Outdoor Enthusiasts	Conduct a Whonnock Lake Master Plan			Staff Time	-
Outdoor Enthusiasts	Participate in a Trails Master Plan that considers strategic connections, interconnectivity amongst communities and supports trail based/cycling visitation to Maple Ridge	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Maple Ridge Tourism Businesses	Invest in experiential quality – training, education – participate in DBC <i>Remarkable Experiences</i> program / Share Destination BC <i>Tourism Business Essentials</i> guides and host workshop	Core +MRDT		\$ 3,000	\$3,000
Residents	Leverage the VFR (visiting friends/ relatives segment)		\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Internal audience	Analyze the role that Airbnb and short term rentals might play in tourism and community economic development	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Internal audience	Communicate progress/successes/ lessons learned from implementation of immediate strategies with residents and tourism business operators	Core	Staff Time	\$2,000	\$2,000
Outdoor Enthusiasts	Encourage recreation equipment rentals	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Outdoor Enthusiasts /Cultural Explorers	Continue to invest in and promote interesting geo-caching sites in locations of heritage significance	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Cultural Explorers	Support City efforts to develop a “Points of Pride” program that provides markers for key locations of interest in the community (including heritage markers)	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Meetings/Conference	Support City efforts related to attraction of an accommodation partner to Town Centre	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Outdoor Enthusiasts	Participate in discussions related to additional camping capacity (both provincially and municipally)	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Cultural Explorers	Participate in discussions related to development of additional tourist accommodation in rural areas	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time

All Markets	Support City investments in downtown vibrancy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daytime family activities (roaming entertainers, temporary installations and public art)</li> <li>Night time entertainment district (create entertainment district: patio dining; evening programming)</li> <li>Pedestrian oriented areas (adding crosswalks, sidewalks and separated bike lanes)</li> </ul> Enhanced lighting and design	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
All Markets	Support implementation of Signage and Wayfinding strategy	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
Outdoor Enthusiasts	Support implementation of Trails Master Plan	Core		Staff Time	Staff Time
	<b>Total Destination Marketing</b>		<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>
	<b>Total Destination Experience</b>		<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>
	<b>Tourism Coordinator</b>		<b>\$47,000</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>
	<b>Total Budget</b>		<b>\$95,000</b>	<b>\$180,000</b>	<b>\$180,000</b>
	<b>Office/Overhead</b>		<b>In kind from City</b>	<b>In kind from City</b>	<b>In kind from City</b>

Detailed activities for each of the immediate and Year 1 strategies follow. Details for Years 2 and beyond will be determined at that time.

*Detailed Destination Marketing Strategies – Immediate (next 12-18 months)*

Description	Primary Market Research
Specific Initiatives/Actions	a. Conduct intercept survey at Golden Ears Park to understand current visitors - who is coming today, what motivates them, what influences them, what do they know about Maple Ridge and how they could be motivated to return, stay longer, come in the shoulder season etc.
Rationale/Objectives	Primary market research enhances understanding of visitor perceptions and destination performance allowing fine-tuning of strategic investments
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Maple Ridge tourism stakeholders
Timing	2018
Budget	2018 - \$5,000

Measuring Success	Primary market research available to inform future planning and marketing efforts Growth in value of visitor economy in Maple Ridge
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Description	<b>Weddings - Design and publish an on-line guide to weddings in Maple Ridge with stunning photography and a list of service providers</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>a. Develop promotional materials and resources for wedding planners and brides (online list of resources for wedding planners – farm and city venues, photographers, caterers, etc.)</p> <p>Using the City of Maple Ridge online business listing, create list of wedding-related businesses on tourism website, for ease of wedding planning. Ensure on-brand imagery accompanies this section of tourism website.</p> <p>b. Develop weddings market strategy (consumer show attendance, publications targeted for media coverage, etc.)</p> <p>Work with wedding market stakeholders (accommodations, venues, photographers, etc.) to determine cooperative Weddings in Maple Ridge marketing tactics. (e.g. <a href="http://www.vancouverweddingshows.com/becoming-an-exhibitor">www.vancouverweddingshows.com/becoming-an-exhibitor</a>)</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Maple Ridge's unique selling proposition revolves around its agricultural/mountain offerings next to urban centre, just one hour away from Vancouver. This provides an ideal setting for cost-effective, farm and/or mountain-themed, short-haul destination weddings from the Vancouver market.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Tourism stakeholders – cooperative marketing/pay to play opportunities
Timing	2018: promotional materials designed/produced Year 2: Wedding sub-strategy development and commence implementation Years 3-5: ongoing implementation
Budget	2018 - \$5,000; Years 2-5 - \$5,000
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media engagement</li> <li>• Wedding bookings through partners (accommodation providers, venues, etc.)</li> <li>• Consumer show attendance/leads generated</li> </ul>



<b>Description</b>	<b>Meetings and Conferences - Design and publish an on-line guide to meetings in Maple Ridge with stunning photography and a list of service providers</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>a. Develop promotional materials and resources for event planners (online list of resources for event planners – forest and city venues including capacities, floorplans, audio-visual suppliers, caterers, etc.)</p> <p>Using the City of Maple Ridge online business listing, create list of meeting/conference-related businesses on tourism website, for ease of meetings/conference planning. Ensure on-brand imagery accompanies this section of tourism website.</p> <p>Examples:  <a href="http://www.tourismvancouver.com/meetings">www.tourismvancouver.com/meetings</a>  <a href="http://www.visitrichmondbc.com/meetings-groups/meetings-and-events">www.visitrichmondbc.com/meetings-groups/meetings-and-events</a></p> <p>b. Develop small meetings/retreats market strategy (publications in which to secure editorial coverage, etc.)</p> <p>Work with meeting market stakeholders (accommodations, venues) to determine cooperative Meetings in Maple Ridge marketing tactics. Work with local government, health care providers, arts, heritage, agritourism, etc. stakeholders to develop a list of potential associations, organizations that host conferences.</p> <p>a. Engage local stakeholders (Loon Lake Lodge, hotel partners, etc.) in discussions on cooperative marketing opportunities and meeting/conference leads, including pre-post opportunities, such as the IOCongress 2018.</p> <p>Vancouver is welcoming ornithologists from around the world on behalf of the International Ornithologists' Union to the 27th International Ornithological Congress (IOCongress2018). The IOCongress2018 Planning Committee is seeking 1-day tour options during the congress as well as longer (multi-day tour options).  <a href="http://www.iocongress2018.com/congress-tours">www.iocongress2018.com/congress-tours</a></p>
Rationale/Objectives	Maple Ridge's unique selling proposition revolves around its agricultural/mountain offerings next to urban centre, just one hour away from Vancouver and from the international airport. This provides an ideal setting for cost-effective, meetings and conferences.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Tourism stakeholders – cooperative marketing/pay to play opportunities

Timing	2018: design/produce promotional materials Year 2 – meetings/conference sub-strategy development and commence implementation Years 3-5: continued implementation
Budget	2018 - \$5,000 ; Years 2-5 - \$10,000
Measuring Success	Social media engagement Meeting bookings through partners (accommodation providers, venues, etc.)

<b>Description</b>	<b>Sport Tourism - Work with local sports clubs to identify and bid for regional and provincial tournaments in fall/winter/spring 2018 including development of special offers/promotions to attendees featuring reasons to come early/stay later and experience Maple Ridge</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>Ensure Maple Ridge content on <a href="http://www.viasport.ca">www.viasport.ca</a> is accurate and up to date and apply for grant assistance as appropriate and available</p> <p>Provide support to local sports clubs and assistance in bid identification and submission preparation</p> <p>Develop readily customizable flatsheets featuring all local services and amenities for attendees and participants</p> <p>Promote pre-event training opportunities</p> <p>For larger scale events, make available special offers and assist in creating participant welcome package that features dining, shopping, extend your stay offers to maximize attendee length of stay, spending and intention to return</p> <p>Create database of attendees and promote 'come again' packages to encourage return visitation</p> <p>Collaborate with other BC communities (Kamloops, Langley, Trail etc.) to re-energize and leverage information and resources on previous provincial sport hosting website</p> <p>Join Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance (CSTA); attend annual conference</p> <p>Work with Sport BC to prepare for the 2020 BC Summer Games</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Maple Ridge has a deep sport tradition and facilities capable of hosting regional and provincial events. New and improved facilities will help support sports tourism. Every

	additional event hosted will contribute to overnight stays, retail and restaurant spending and offers a significant return to all tourism businesses at all times of year, and particularly in shoulder season.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Province of BC recently launched their event hosting resources and associated financial support <a href="http://www.gov.bc.ca/eventhosting">www.gov.bc.ca/eventhosting</a>
Timing	Immediate and Ongoing
Budget	2018 - \$0 (staff time); Years 2-5 - \$10,000
Measuring Success	Number of sport tourism events hosted Size of database of attendees/participants for future marketing Growth in value of tourism in Maple Ridge

<b>Description</b>	<b>Cycling - Design and promote a Maple Ridge Cycling Guide showcasing trail networks and nearby attractions (restaurants, accommodations); include multi-day itineraries that combine Maple Ridge with neighbouring trail networks in Pitt Meadows and Port Coquitlam; feature on existing website and partner websites (Cyclo Touring BC; Mountain Biking BC etc.)</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Convene cycling clubs/enthusiasts in Maple Ridge and together with City staff (Parks/Recreation), design a cycling guide Collaborate with neighbouring communities to showcase connections/trails/routes Identify transportation/access points, restaurants, cafés, places to stay, First Nation place names etc. Suggest multi-day itineraries and promote via social media channels Create a cycling sub-strategy for implementation in Year 1 Secure and utilize on-brand imagery
Rationale/Objectives	There are many cycling enthusiasts in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley and the cycling season is virtually 12 months long. Current information regarding trails and cycling experiences in Maple Ridge is difficult to find and often inaccurate (horse trail routes rather than cycling routes). A clear cycling guide with compelling imagery and suggested multi-day itineraries through Maple Ridge and neighbouring communities that is promoted through social media channels and other means will grow visitation from this sector.
Responsibility	Tourism Advisory Committee/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Tourism stakeholders – cooperative marketing/pay to play opportunities
Timing	2018 – design and produce cycling guide Year 2 – cycling sub-strategy development and commence

	implementation Years 3-5: continued implementation
Budget	2018 - \$5,000; Years 2-5 - \$5,000
Measuring Success	Increase in overnight stays by cyclists Increase in overall value of tourism economy in Maple Ridge

<b>Description</b>	<b>Partnership Marketing - Enhance Maple Ridge profile on existing marketing platforms such as <a href="http://www.hellobc.com">www.hellobc.com</a>, <a href="http://www.mountainbikingbc.ca">www.mountainbikingbc.ca</a> <a href="http://www.scenic7bc.com">www.scenic7bc.com</a> <a href="http://www.viasport.ca">www.viasport.ca</a></b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p><b>Destination BC:</b> Maximize <a href="http://www.hellobc.com">www.hellobc.com</a> – work with the Destination BC Travel Information Management team to ensure Maple Ridge content is up to date and reflective of branding, messaging and unique selling proposition.</p> <p>Explore the opportunity of working with the Consumer Marketing team to develop potential content ideas for a series of Maple Ridge related eDMs to be sent out to those consumers in Destination BC's database that indicated hiking, biking, agri-tourism, etc. are of primary interest</p> <p>Engage with Destination BC's social media channels <a href="http://www.destinationbc.ca/Programs/Consumer-and-Industry/Social-Media.aspx">www.destinationbc.ca/Programs/Consumer-and-Industry/Social-Media.aspx</a></p> <p>Ensure all Maple Ridge events on listed on HelloBC event listings site. <a href="http://www.tourismbc.net/dms/secure/default.aspx">www.tourismbc.net/dms/secure/default.aspx</a> Make all stakeholders aware of the reach of the provincial marketing website and the efforts made to ensure Maple Ridge representation on all marketing channels. Currently four events are listed: Canada Day celebrations, Haney Farmer's Market, Caribbean Festival and Celebrate the Night. <a href="http://www.hellobc.com/maple-ridge/things-to-do/festivals-events/all-events.aspx">www.hellobc.com/maple-ridge/things-to-do/festivals-events/all-events.aspx</a></p> <p><b>Existing cooperative marketing partnerships:</b> Maximize partnerships and update imagery/branding with <b>Scenic 7 and Circle Farm Tours</b>. Create regional cooperative marketing programs together with neighbouring communities as appropriate where a broader regional message is more impactful with targeted travellers (e.g. cycling).</p> <p>Meet with all key marketing partners (Destination BC, Scenic 7, Circle Farm Tours) to share target markets, key messages</p>

	<p>and brand imagery and to ensure Maple Ridge is appropriately represented in partner destination marketing efforts.</p> <p><b>Visitor Centres</b> - Partnerships with Visitor Centres are also important. Front-line staff in surrounding Visitor Centres should be knowledgeable about Maple Ridge.</p> <p><b>Other Partners:</b>  <b>ParkBus</b> – in partnership with BC Parks, ParkBus offers scheduled bus service from Vancouver to Golden Ears Park. An opportunity exists to explore marketing opportunities to ensure visitors to park learn more about Maple Ridge.  <a href="http://www.parkbus.ca/goldenears">www.parkbus.ca/goldenears</a></p> <p><b>BC Ale Trail</b> - representing craft brewing sector – two Maple Ridge businesses currently on the website  <a href="http://bcaletrail.ca">bcaletrail.ca</a></p> <p><b>Mountain Biking BC</b> – explore membership in Mountain Bike BC and receive community profile on website and participate in media trips, social media engagement, etc.  <a href="http://www.mountainbikingbc.ca">www.mountainbikingbc.ca</a></p> <p><b>Camping/RV sector</b> - enhance content related to Maple Ridge camping experiences  <a href="http://www.campingrvbc.com">www.campingrvbc.com</a>  <a href="http://www.gocampingbc.com">www.gocampingbc.com</a>  <a href="http://www.camping.bc.ca">www.camping.bc.ca</a></p> <p><b>Aboriginal Tourism BC</b> – explore Associate Stakeholder membership (\$99/year) to become more engaged with the organization and the tourism business support opportunities  <a href="http://www.aboriginalbc.com/corporate">www.aboriginalbc.com/corporate</a></p> <p><b>Film Commission</b> – continue to work closely with scouts/location to maximize market exposure associated with various film/TV productions  <a href="http://www.creativebc.com">www.creativebc.com</a></p> <p><b>BC Parks</b> – explore the idea of providing “Where to Shop” or “Things to Do” in Maple Ridge when campers reserve their site at Golden Ears Park  <a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/golden_ears">www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/golden_ears</a></p>
Rationale/Objectives	Leveraging resources with other communities and organizations for mutual benefit is necessary with limited funds for marketing and promotion.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging	Other communities, organizations as listed

Opportunities	
Timing	2018 – continued participation in Scenic 7 and Circle Farm Tour; update <a href="http://www.hellobc.com">www.hellobc.com</a> content Year 2 – explore new partnership opportunities noted above Years 3-5 – continued partnership investments
Budget	2018 - \$10,000; Year 2 - \$10,000; Year 3 - \$15,000
Measuring Success	Number of collaborative marketing initiatives executed Growth in value of tourism in Maple Ridge

Description	Online Marketing Tools - Content acquisition and curation for all social media channels/ Maintain and enhance web presence
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>a. Engage residents and influencers in sharing their images and using #DiscoverMapleRidge</p> <p>b. Maintain existing website - update content/imagery, add itineraries on existing City hosted website</p> <p>c. Develop an interactive website showcasing range of experiences – allowing visitors to ‘click’ on their passion to see range of options and itineraries in the area</p> <p>d. Develop several suggested itineraries along various themes for inclusion on website and in social media posts in order to showcase the many reasons to visit Maple Ridge and stay overnight</p> <p>e. Improve existing City website as an interim measure while undertaking the design of a new standalone tourism website. Transfer website content from <a href="http://www.mapleridge.ca/330/Tourism">www.mapleridge.ca/330/Tourism</a> to <a href="http://www.discovermapleridge.ca">www.discovermapleridge.ca</a> and enhance with content specific to target markets (keeping in mind key words/links etc. that will drive high organic search engine placement). Navigation and imagery should reflect target segments/travel motivators and overall brand and messaging. Ensure website is mobile device friendly.</p> <p>Redesign should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home page: “What’s your passion?” – click through directly to hiking, festivals, etc. rather than more generic navigation that lists activities available</li> <li>• Additional photography/videography to convey emotional appeal of experiences</li> <li>• Third party endorsements of experiences</li> <li>• Inclusion of history – First Nations history and place names as well as agricultural history</li> <li>• Suggested itineraries</li> <li>• Package opportunities</li> <li>• Circle routes</li> <li>• Build Your Own Itinerary</li> <li>• Trail maps, cycling maps</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blog content</li> </ul> <p>Utilize Google Analytics to understand website statistics e.g. referral source, unique visits, length of stay; pages visited; page visit duration etc.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Social media campaigns using key words/geotargeting/unique Maple Ridge hashtag</li> <li>Grow audience in social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram with frequently updated and relevant information that, in particular, appeals to target markets (including What's Happening this Week). Follow others with large followings and contribute to their conversations. Commission additional social media content (blog stories, vignettes etc.) regularly to keep followers engaged. Ensure integration of social media tools on website.</li> <li>Set up Hootsuite account to monitor Maple Ridge tourism social media channels and #DiscoverMaple Ridge hashtag. Set up groups (arts, sport, heritage, accommodations, etc.) within Hootsuite to more easily track and share local tourism business social media posts. Tag all partners in posts to ensure more reach.</li> <li>Maintain connections with Destination BC and other DMO social media feeds (Fraser Valley and lower mainland DMOs). See <a href="#">How to Engage with Destination BC's Social Media Channels</a> for more information.</li> <li>Introduce a website blog with 'must do's; highlights of recent trips – integrate with Instagram photo's/stories similar to highly successful campaign 'Whistler Unfiltered' see <a href="http://www.origindesign.ca/instagram-powers-tourism-whistler-s-whistlerunfiltered-campaign">www.origindesign.ca/instagram-powers-tourism-whistler-s-whistlerunfiltered-campaign</a></li> <li>Develop and promote itineraries, for both passion-based (hiking, family activities for young children, cycling, agritourism etc.), and length of time available (half-day, 1-day, 2-3 days).</li> <li>Build an opt-in email database which records activities of interest and begin series of email campaigns with suggested itineraries matching indicated interests</li> <li>Secure editorial coverage in key target markets (print and digital) featuring suggested itineraries</li> <li>Consider introducing contests and build a database for future direct marketing efforts. (See Camping and RV BC "It's my camping story blog contest" as an example - <a href="http://www.campingrvbc.com/contest">www.campingrvbc.com/contest</a></li> </ol>
Rationale/Objectives	<p>Integrated online marketing campaigns that include contesting, paid advertising, email opt-ins etc. and participation in social media that accesses target markets and can create 'viral' excitement about travel experiences in Maple Ridge.</p> <p>High quality experiential photography and videography will</p>

	allow potential visitors to see themselves 'in the activity' and motivate participation.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Destination BC has commissioned new 'on brand' imagery and videography all tourism regions. This new inventory should be reviewed first to determine 'gaps' for Maple Ridge. A potential partnership with neighbouring communities with application to DBC 'open pool' can be considered to secure imagery/ videography not yet available.
Timing	2018e – Encourage local residents to share their Maple Ridge images; update content on current website with new images, suggested itineraries etc. (continue hosting on City platform) Year 2 – Content acquisition/curation and social media campaigns; design/launch new interactive website Years 3-5 – continued content acquisition/curation, social media campaigns, updates to website
Budget	2018: \$5,000; Year 2 - \$10,000; Year 3- \$25,000
Measuring Success	Variety of 'on brand' images representing Maple Ridge experiences for target markets Number of unique website visits Instagram images Number of referrals to stakeholder websites Size of subscribed email database for future direct marketing Contest participation rates Social media 'Likes'/'Follows' and reach Blog engagement

<b>Description</b>	<b>Collateral - Produce 2018 Visitor Guide</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Continue to produce a Visitors' Guide showcasing the many reasons to visit Maple Ridge Incorporate as a downloadable pdf on website Distribute print version in key locations (e.g. Park Bus) Upon completion of branding review – revisit design and imagery to ensure on-brand
Rationale/Objectives	Many travellers still reference a Visitors' Guide to inform their decision making both during the planning stage and while en route
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Advertising Sales
Timing	Immediate and ongoing
Budget	Breakeven with advertising sales
Measuring Success	Increase in average length of stay Increase in overall value of tourism economy in Maple Ridge

<b>Description</b>	<b>Actively engage with social media influencers in each target market (host bloggers, Instagrammers, etc.)</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>Identify key influencers (local celebrity personas; leading photographers; bloggers in agri-tourism/culinary/field to table, weddings, etc.)</p> <p>Engage in and contribute to their social media dialogue</p> <p>Invite select influencers to visit and experience Maple Ridge – host and showcase</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Social media influencers and their opinions are valued by travellers and have more credibility than paid channels
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Possible multi-community fam tour funded together with DBC
Timing	2018 and ongoing
Budget	2018 - \$5,000; Years 2-3 \$5,000
Measuring Success	Social media impressions

### *Detailed Destination Development Strategies – 2018*

<b>Description</b>	<b>Visitor Services – Design and activate visitor services program - rejoin DBC network</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>Rejoin official Destination BC Visitor Centre network (must meet minimum hours of operation and training requirements but can co-locate with City staff)</p> <p>Apply for DBC Innovation funding to support provision of mobile visitor services at key locations such as Golden Ears Provincial Park (800,000 visitors per year); Park Bus Ambassadors; have presence at signature events in order to showcase Maple Ridge businesses and reasons to venture into Maple Ridge/stay longer;</p> <p>Build local volunteer ambassador base among residents – ‘Ask a Local’ program (in return for volunteer perks such as event attendance; recreation passes etc.)</p> <p>Research mobile visitor servicing program possibilities and self-service kiosks for high-traffic areas; Mobile visitor servicing could be via a vehicle, trailer, branded tent, etc.</p> <p>Have tourism staff presence at key locations and events where visitors congregate (sport tournaments, festivals, Haney Farmers Market, etc.)</p> <p>Review transferable lessons available from other communities that have participated in Destination BC</p>

	<p>Remarkable Experiences projects to inform direction for future visitor servicing in Maple Ridge</p> <p>Connect with BC Parks Visitor Services and Community Engagement Manager to discuss ideas/options for mobile visitor servicing.</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Maple Ridge receives many day visitors who may be unaware of the many reasons to venture further in/around Maple Ridge and ideally stay overnight. Rather than requiring them to go to a 'bricks and mortar' Visitor Centre, a program to meet the visitor where they are and engage them will provide information and value.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Coordinator/City
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	DBC Innovation Funding; Summer Student Jobs Programs/Grants
Timing	<p>2018 – rejoin DBC official network using an existing City location that is already staffed; provide annual plan to DBC and meet training and hours of operation requirements; Plan mobile visitor servicing and apply for Innovation Funding in November 2017</p> <p>2018 – Activate mobile visitor servicing program</p>
Budget	2018 – staff time only; Year 2-5 - \$20,000 for mobile visitor servicing/volunteer ambassador program
Measuring Success	<p>Number of visitors intercepted/engaged</p> <p>Resident volunteer ambassador program launched</p> <p>Average length of stay in Maple Ridge extended</p>

<b>Description</b>	<b>Destination Enhancement - consider visitor perspective and experiential quality in all ongoing investments in municipal infrastructure (roads, parks, trails, recreation facilities etc.)</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>Present Tourism Strategy to all Managers/City Managers at City of Maple Ridge to build knowledge and educate that all City departments are part of 'tourism' – all have the ability to enhance/detract from a visitor experience</p> <p>Identify specific initiatives underway (Parks/Trails planning; Public Art; downtown revitalization; road widening etc. etc.) that would benefit from a visitor perspective</p> <p>Engage in each of these initiatives at the planning stage to incorporate 'visitor lens'</p>
Rationale/Objectives	The City of Maple Ridge is already making significant capital investments for the benefit of its residents – these investments can be considered from the perspective of the visitor as well to ensure they serve both markets (resident and visitor) optimally
Responsibility	Economic Development team

Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	All City departments
Timing	2018 and ongoing
Budget	Staff time only
Measuring Success	Visitor perspective considered in project planning

Description	Leverage VFR (visiting friends/relatives) segment
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Educate locals on places to stay/things to do through city website/ mailouts/municipal communication channels</li> <li>b. Promote use of #DiscoverMapleRidge hashtag. Develop contest or promotion to encourage residents to share images/videos from the destination on social media</li> <li>c. Promote website, itineraries, etc. for residents to be the best hosts for visiting guests.</li> </ul>
Rationale/Objectives	Maple Ridge's residents need to be ambassadors for the destination and to be encouraging friends/relatives to visit and to explore.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Tourism stakeholders
Timing	2018 and ongoing
Budget	2018 - \$3,000
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media engagement</li> <li>• Number of resident communiques</li> </ul>

Description	Communicate progress/successes/ lessons learned from implementation of immediate strategies with residents and tourism business operators
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Create and distribute quarterly e-news to businesses to increase understanding of tourism marketing opportunities and successes amongst tourism businesses</li> <li>b. One-page email highlighting recent/upcoming marketing campaigns, website/social media/hashtag stats, Maple Ridge travel stories in the media, contests, etc.</li> <li>c. Educate all residents on the value of the local tourism economy and develop their appreciation of their contribution to the visitor experience</li> <li>d. Incorporate tourism updates/stories into municipal communication channels</li> <li>e. Celebrate Tourism Week each year in June</li> <li>f. Create 'tourist in your own town' programs for locals to experience Maple Ridge restaurants, shops, attractions</li> <li>g. Hold annual Tourism Open House to communicate successes and seek input into strategic plan/tactical plan updates</li> </ul>
Rationale/Objectives	Both resident and business stakeholder support for tourism

	initiatives is essential for long-term success.
Lead Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships and Leveraging Opportunities	Chamber of Commerce, BIA
Timing	2018 and ongoing
Budget	2018 \$0 (staff time)
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased support for tourism in Maple Ridge</li> </ul>

### *Detailed Destination Marketing Strategies – Year Two (commencement of MRDT)*

The Year Two strategies are considered incremental to the immediate efforts identified above, which should also continue:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Primary Market Research</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Endeavour to further understand who is coming today, what motivates them, what influences them and how they could be motivated to return, stay longer, come in the shoulder season etc.</li> <li>c. Conduct annual visitor intercept survey – Golden Ears Park and/or during festivals/events</li> <li>d. Utilize tools such as Explorer Quotient</li> <li>e. Develop a database of visitor postal codes and invest in Prizm5 data analysis</li> </ul>
Rationale/Objectives	Primary market research enhances understanding of visitor perceptions and destination performance allowing fine-tuning of strategic investments
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Maple Ridge tourism stakeholders
Timing	Years 3 and every two to three years thereafter to update
Budget	Year 3 - \$15,000
Measuring Success	Primary market research available to inform future planning and marketing efforts Growth in value of visitor economy in Maple Ridge

<b>Description</b>	<b>Engage with the Maple Ridge community and create/launch a market-research informed destination brand/identity</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Engage brand development consultant and work closely with community define the Maple Ridge ‘personality’ as expressed by the community itself</li> <li>b. Work together with consultant and with City of Maple Ridge, key stakeholders and a consultant/designer to develop a compelling brand identity that captures unique selling proposition of the area from a visitors’</li> </ul>



	<p>perspective. This identity should leverage the iconic and inimitable found only in Maple Ridge. Include consideration of various naming conventions as well as brand attributes.</p> <p>c. Develop several preferred options and review with tourism stakeholders and community at large. Share brand identity with tourism operators to ensure an understanding of brand positioning and how they can align their efforts.</p> <p>d. Build knowledge and understanding of the Canada brand and the British Columbia brand. For maximum impact, ensure brand identity is aligned with provincial brand managed by Destination BC.</p> <p>Destination BC brand video:  <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72lrLtoA7w&amp;feature=youtu.be">www.youtube.com/watch?v=72lrLtoA7w&amp;feature=youtu.be</a></p> <p>e. Commission primary market research in existing and potential target markets to understand brand attributes that will resonate with these markets and motivate/create urgency to travel</p> <p>f. Launch and embed brand attributes, key messaging and identity in all destination development and marketing efforts</p> <p>g. Develop brand standards manual for approved identity to provide guidance to all those authorized to use brand</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Maple Ridge does not have a compelling and memorable brand identity. While an identity alone will not increase visitation, it is an important tool to build awareness and convey the area's unique selling proposition to those considering travel.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Tourism stakeholders, Residents of Maple Ridge
Timing	Year 2
Budget	Year 2 - \$30,000 ; Year 3 - \$10,000
Measuring Success	Research informed, community supported brand identity for Maple Ridge ready for launch in 2017

Description	Secure additional imagery/videography content and curate for use in social media channels
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>Consider a variety of means to secure images/video including contracted photographers/videographers; photo contests;</p> <p>Activate preferred means and secure continual 'stream' of content to be shared with target audiences</p> <p>Secure high-quality on-brand experiential photography and videography that captures compelling images for each market segment targeted and is aligned with provincial</p>

	branding. Destination BC brand video: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72lrLtoA7w&amp;feature=youtu.be">www.youtube.com/watch?v=72lrLtoA7w&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
Rationale/Objectives	The pace of content consumption on social media is rapid and to keep potential travellers engaged, images and video content must be updated frequently
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Maple Ridge tourism stakeholders; consider participation in multi-community Open Pool application to hire professional photographers/videographers
Timing	Years 2 and ongoing
Budget	Year 2 - \$10,000; Year 3 - \$10,000
Measuring Success	Social media following/impressions

<b>Description</b>	<b>Continue to constantly enhance website content, incorporate search engine optimization; advertising</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Continue to invest in website improvements and content updates Ensure key word search terms are embedded in content to garner high organic search engine placement Utilize geo-targeted advertising on key words (e.g. Lower Mainland market searching on 'weddings') to promote Maple Ridge as an option for consideration
Rationale/Objectives	Research confirms that travellers increasingly use the web to plan their itineraries – content must be fresh and engaging and must also be easily found. Geo targeted advertising ensures high return on investment.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Coordinator/City
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	
Timing	Year 2 and ongoing
Budget	\$10,000
Measuring Success	Website analytics

<b>Description</b>	<b>Consider attending select weddings shows in the Lower Mainland</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Review various wedding shows focused on the consumer including their attendance demographics and cost structure  Discuss and review options with Maple Ridge wedding service providers (venues, caterers, photographers)  If stakeholder interest is strong, create a 'Team Maple Ridge' approach to wedding show participation to maximize impact – pay to play basis
Rationale/Objectives	Consumer show attendance as an exhibitor can provide access to a qualified group of motivated travellers

Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Coordinator/City
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Maple Ridge Tourism stakeholders
Timing	Year 2 and ongoing if results warrant continuation
Budget	Year 2 - \$2,000
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified leads</li> <li>• Number of weddings held in Maple Ridge</li> </ul>

*Detailed Destination Development Strategies – Year Two (commencement of MRDT)*

Description	<b>Support Arts/Culture/Heritage events that motivate travel with marketing and promotion including overnight itineraries to encourage longer lengths of stay</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Improve inventory of festivals/events for inclusion on website</li> <li>b. Festival/events inventory can be used for website listing, developing social media calendar and populating “What’s On” weekly flatsheet for stakeholders</li> <li>c. Promote existing festivals and events on website through social media and as part of suggested itineraries</li> <li>d. Ensure all festivals are listed and updated on Hellobc.com</li> <li>e. Incorporate Maple Ridge brand, imagery and hashtag into all festival/event promotions</li> <li>f. Increase the number of festivals and associated opportunities for visitor spending</li> </ul>
Rationale/Objectives	Arts/culture/heritage events in Maple Ridge help define the community and provide reasons to visit and a foundation for the creation of an overnight stay
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Festival and event organizers
Timing	2018 – inventory creation Years 2-5 – promotions
Budget	2018 - TBD
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media engagement</li> <li>• Festival/event inventory completion</li> </ul>

Description	<b>Invest in existing and/or create new signature events with depth of programming content and quality that motivates travel with a focus on shoulder season</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Engage with local businesses/residents to define ‘need’ period and brainstorm possible events that are authentic to Maple Ridge

	Review models of delivery – community owned and produced – community owned and professionally produced – third party owned and produced Create a signature festival strategy and business plan to support funding applications
Rationale/Objectives	A ‘signature’ event can be the first reason to visit Maple Ridge and can lead to return visits both for the event and at other times of year
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Third party event producers
Timing	Year 1 – Engage with local businesses/community to define the ‘signature’ event to be enhanced or created Years 2 - 5 – Deliver and continually improve the event incorporating new elements, expanding and enhancing the scope/scale of programming
Budget	2018 - \$0 (staff time)
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signature event defined for Year 2 launch</li> </ul>

<b>Description</b>	<b>Continue to build relationships and offer market intelligence to support the development of authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences by the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>Meet with Katzie and Kwantlen representatives to discuss tourism opportunity</p> <p>Consider establishing a Memorandum of Understanding to support the development of authentic Aboriginal cultural experiences in Maple Ridge</p> <p>Liaise with Aboriginal Tourism BC (AtBC) and make necessary introductions to access support available through AtBC</p> <p>Provide relevant market research/intelligence to support Katzie and Kwantlen community discussions regarding their interest and willingness to engage with visitors</p> <p>Provide support and assist with business plans/feasibility studies for proposed business ventures, if requested</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Many travellers are seeking authentic Aboriginal cultural experiences. If Maple Ridge works together with the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations and supports their launch of new experiences, this will give many travelling segments a specific reason to stop and potentially stay in Maple Ridge.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Katzie First Nation; Kwantlen First Nations; AtBC
Timing	2018 – relationship building; possible MOU Years 2-5 – ongoing support

Budget	2018 - \$0 (staff time)
Measuring Success	New Aboriginal cultural experiences launched in Maple Ridge

Description	Expand depth of agritourism offerings in Maple Ridge and promote all agritourism experiences
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Highlight farm to table experiences in town (campaign development for existing Golden Harvest event) <a href="http://www.theactmapleridge.org/buy-tickets/other-presentations/golden-harvest">www.theactmapleridge.org/buy-tickets/other-presentations/golden-harvest</a></li> <li>b. Support Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) events (promote use of ALR land for farm to table events, such as farm weddings or socials, farm tour cycle events, barn dances, etc.)</li> <li>c. Connect with ALR stakeholders currently hosting, or interested in hosting, events to explore cooperative marketing opportunities.</li> <li>d. Continue to work with regional partners on cooperative marketing programs for agritourism sector (Circle Farm Tour, Scenic 7, BC Ale Trail, etc.)</li> <li>e. Design and implement Maple Ridge specific agritourism promotions with local businesses</li> </ul>
Rationale/Objectives	Maple Ridge's unique selling proposition revolves around its mountains, its agricultural offerings and its proximity to an urban centre, just one hour away from Vancouver. However, a greater number of agritourism experiences would be beneficial to create motivation for travel and overnight stays. Encouraging new agritourism experiences to open and continuing to support existing businesses will eventually create this density of experiences.
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge Economic Development
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	Agritourism businesses Fraser Valley Circle Farm Tour
Timing	Year 2 and ongoing
Budget	Year 2 - \$3,000
Measuring Success	Number of agritourism experiences in Maple Ridge Cooperative marketing investment

Description	Participate in an update to the signage/wayfinding strategy and represent the perspective and needs of the visitor
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Contribute to City led review of wayfinding and signage throughout Maple Ridge
Rationale/Objectives	Signage and wayfinding contribute to the overall quality of the visitor experience
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge

Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	City of Maple Ridge
Timing	As dictated by process
Budget	2018 - \$0 (staff time)
Measuring Success	Visitor friendly signage and wayfinding throughout Maple Ridge

Description	Preparation of a Whonnock Lake Master Plan
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Conduct a Master Plan that provides a comprehensive long-range vision for Whonnock Lake recreation area
Rationale/Objectives	Providing additional recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors
Responsibility	City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	TAC/Tourism Coordinator
Timing	As dictated by City-led review process
Budget	2018 -\$0 (staff time)
Measuring Success	Implementation of master plan

Description	Participate in a Trails Master Plan that considers strategic connections, interconnectivity amongst communities and supports trail based/cycling visitation to Maple Ridge
Specific Initiatives/Actions	Contribute to City led review of trails throughout Maple Ridge
Rationale/Objectives	Trails are often motivators to travel and the quality and variety of trails will contribute to the overall quality of the visitor experience
Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	City of Maple Ridge
Timing	As dictated by City-led review process
Budget	2018 - \$0 (staff time)
Measuring Success	Trail network within Maple Ridge and connected to neighbouring communities that is highly rated by visitors and is becoming a travel motivator
Description	Invest in the experiential quality offered to visitors
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer industry training to all businesses (i.e. Destination BC – <i>Tourism Business Essentials</i> guide and workshop)</li> <li>b. Work with Destination BC to offer <u>WorldHost®</u> training program to Maple Ridge businesses that focuses on providing exceptional visitor experiences</li> <li>c. Use the Destination BC market-ready checklist as a starting place and further enhance with specific standards and best practices related to Maple Ridge:  <a href="http://www.destinationbc.ca/Resources/Tourism-Planning-Resources/Market-Ready-Standards.aspx">www.destinationbc.ca/Resources/Tourism-Planning-Resources/Market-Ready-Standards.aspx</a>. This tool will</li> </ul>



	<p>help to build understanding of 'market-ready' and 'export-ready' product standards and experiential requirements. Develop a self-assessment checklist for 'market-ready' and 'export-ready' standards and best practice to be used by local businesses.</p> <p>d. Promote <u>Tourism Business Essentials</u> educational tools and online resources available through Destination BC at no charge to local businesses. Offer Online Reputation Management workshop to all businesses</p> <p>e. Ensure local tourism operators are on TripAdvisor and encourage them to actively manage their online reputation. <a href="http://www.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Programs/Guides-Workshops-and-Webinars/Guides/Tourism-Business-Essentials-Guides/TBE-Guide-Online-Reputation-Management-2nd-Edition-Sep-2014-(2).pdf.aspx">www.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Programs/Guides-Workshops-and-Webinars/Guides/Tourism-Business-Essentials-Guides/TBE-Guide-Online-Reputation-Management-2nd-Edition-Sep-2014-(2).pdf.aspx</a></p> <p>f. Request to be part of Destination BC's Remarkable Experiences program <a href="http://www.destinationbc.ca/Programs/Regions-Communities-and-Sectors/Sector-Tourism-Programs.aspx">www.destinationbc.ca/Programs/Regions-Communities-and-Sectors/Sector-Tourism-Programs.aspx</a></p> <p>g. Encourage cross-promotion amongst tourism businesses</p> <p>h. Develop and distribute 'What's On' weekly flatsheet/central calendar to educate business owners and residents. This is intended to influence hours of operation to accommodate visitor needs, while encouraging cross-promotion amongst tourism businesses</p> <p>i. Advocate for government investments in infrastructure improvements</p>
Rationale/Objectives	Enhanced market knowledge and service/training levels will continue to improve the visitor experience creating 'remarkable experiences' that are favorably reviewed on third party platforms and shared across social networks thereby encouraging new and repeat visitation
Lead Responsibility	TAC/Tourism Contractor/City of Maple Ridge
Partnerships and Leveraging Opportunities	Destination BC; Chamber of Commerce; City of Maple Ridge / Economic Development
Timing	Years 2 and ongoing
Budget	Year 2 - \$3,000
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of participants in training programs</li> <li>• Number of members utilizing on-line training resources</li> </ul>

<b>Description</b>	<b>Analyze the role that Airbnb and short term rentals might play in tourism and community economic development</b>
Specific Initiatives/Actions	<p>Review policy direction/better practices of other destinations in BC, Canada and North America</p> <p>Review Maple Ridge presence on sharing platforms like AirBnB, VRBO etc.</p> <p>Draft municipal policy for consideration by Mayor and</p>

	Council
Rationale/Objectives	The sharing economy creates both opportunities and risks that should be understood and proactively managed by a destination
Responsibility	Economic Development/City Planning Department
Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities	City staff
Timing	Year 2 – policy review Year 2 – draft Maple Ridge policy
Budget	Year 1 - \$0 (staff time)
Measuring Success	Policy review complete Maple Ridge specific policy in place

## Appendix A – Understanding the Visitor Economy

Phil Reddy Tourism Strategy Manager Northwest Regional Development Agency 2006

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### Summary

In this report, Phil Reddy, the Tourism Strategy Manager for the Northwest Development Agency reflects on the meaning of the term 'Visitor Economy', a term that is increasingly being used as a replacement for 'Tourism'.

This report builds on the experience gained in the Northwest and draws on the debate amongst academic researchers, regional tourism and visitor economy leaders and officers and cultural sector research specialists which took place at:

*'Convergence: culture, knowledge and the visitor economy in the North West'* – a joint think tank event between the Culture Observatory Intelligence Network, North West Universities Association and Northwest Regional Development Agency on 26 January 2006, Lancaster University.

This report suggests that these two terms mean different but complementary things, and puts forward a working definition of the visitor economy. It emphasizes the importance of those managing destinations having a really good understanding of their visitors if they are to meet expectations. Knowing your customers enables you to design products, services and experiences that they will value, and therefore pay for. The idea that we have the ability to design destinations in a conscious way to meet visitors' expectations is not a novel one, but it is not an idea, or a capacity, that is widely acknowledged or used at the level of a destination. The implications of this bear particularly on tourist boards, but also on local authorities; from being more concerned with promotion (their traditional territory), tourist boards become much more focused on strategic issues of product development. In turn, this new paradigm requires a very different set of skills to those they traditionally possess. The report concludes by emphasising that the many different actors involved in the visitor economy need to work together to achieve the goal that the Regional Development Agency is pursuing; of raising the gross value added that this sector of the economy generates.

### Introduction

The tourism strategy for the northwest of England is based on a vision of the region becoming the best destination for visitors in the country. Quite what being best means is not spelt out, but it is clear that the quality of the experience that the region's destinations offer to their visitors is a critical factor in making them and the region, the best. Visitors' experiences of any trip start well before the journey and cover many different elements, with many different contributors. Many of those who contribute to the quality of the experience will not regard themselves as being in the tourism sector, and much of what visitors experience is also open to a wider public. Having a clear understanding of what we mean by the visitor economy and the roles of the different organisations

in supporting this, will help everyone to deliver the quality of experience we aim to provide. Just like a good private sector, customer focused business, destinations need to design and plan their visitor focused offer with a strong sense of purpose, and with a clear idea of the visitors they seek.

## Understanding the Visitor Economy

The term Visitor Economy is increasingly being used by those involved in developing tourism, and in the marketing of Britain and England as tourism destinations. There is an immediate appeal to the term; the word 'visitor' is a simpler and more inclusive one than either tourism or tourist, while the reference to economy focuses attention on the importance and perhaps seriousness of what is referred to. But to what extent is the term Visitor Economy synonymous with that of Tourism?

Do we need both terms if they are the same? If they mean different things, then how do they differ?

Tourism is defined by the UN World Tourism Organisation, but who is responsible for defining Visitor Economy?

The UN World Tourism Organisation definition reads:

*Tourism comprises 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 not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.*

The decision on whether an individual is, or is not a tourist can be a complex and difficult one to make, though this is by no means always the case. In general, we all recognise that overnight visitors are tourists, and we know that many overnight visitors, particularly in our cities, are business visitors, without knowing enough about them, as distinct from leisure visitors. The real difficulty is in deciding if day visitors are tourists or not. Many day visitors can be properly classified as tourist, but the survey data we have is weak; there is an urgent need for improvement here.

The definition of tourism, and therefore of tourists, matters because without it, there is no possibility of being able to count the money they spend. Tourist expenditure is money spent by, or on behalf of, the tourist before, during and after a tourist trip. Yet tourism is of interest to the Northwest Development Agency, to Local Authorities and to the Government principally because of its economic value; it generates GVA, it provides employment and supports businesses that are important to resident communities, it produces tax revenues, and it has a significant impact on the balance of payments. Given the role of airplanes in global warming and the large numbers of UK residents that fly out of the UK, tourism is increasingly significant in this context too.

All tourists are visitors, but not all visitors are tourists. Current usage is to regard Visitor Economy as synonymous with Tourism, but do we need two terms that mean the same thing? Does using a different term with the same meaning as the one it replaces, help in terms of our policies and actions? Despite its increasingly wide use, the term visitor economy does not have an accepted definition. But if it were to be given a distinct meaning, could we use the term Visitor Economy to broaden our thinking, and to help clarify understanding?

Tourism is well enough defined, and given its international definition, it is not within the power of regional or national organisations alone to change that definition, though there is a degree of choice available when it comes to the interpretation, particularly with respect to day visitors. Tourism is

an economic activity that the Northwest recognises as important. It is the Northwest Development Agencies job to create the conditions that support the growth of that economic activity; that can mean more people, it certainly means more expenditure.

Tourism is an economic activity; it describes tangible, quantifiable, transactional events, but a successful tourism sector depends upon much that is intangible and qualitative in nature. Tourism depends on the qualities of place in particular. Clearly, no matter how good an individual tourism business, it will not thrive as well in a place that is of lower quality, as it would in the best. The opportunities to both attract more customers, and to add value, and therefore generate higher spending, are both dependent on the quality of the broader environment.

## The Concept of the Visitor Economy

The Concept of the Visitor Economy, as defined in this report, recognises the importance of the more qualitative factors and of the wider set of individuals and organisations, to the success of the destination. At the core of the concept of the visitor economy is the economic activity of visitors, but its meaning is broader than this, embracing all of the elements that make for a successful visitor destination, it covers:

- . ☐ All of the things that attract visitors; this means the diverse range of destinations of the region, the natural environment, the heritage and culture, iconic buildings, the retail, sport, leisure and cultural facilities, food, gardens, the events, the scenery; all the things that make the place special, distinctive and capable of engendering pride and interest and a place worth experiencing.
- . ☐ The infrastructure that helps to reinforce and shape the sense of place and make it an easy place to visit; the signs, the transport, parking and orientation, interpretation, public space, amenities, etc.
- . ☐ The services that cater for the needs of visitors (and of residents), that create economic and social activity and increase spending; including the hotels and bars, pubs and restaurants, galleries, the everyday events and the day-to-day services that make the place clean, safe and welcoming. To create a successful visitor economy, it is necessary to manage all of the components in an integrated and long-term way, with a clear focus on the needs of the visitors the destination is seeking to attract. That focus should be summarised in a destination brand, which should capture and summarise all of the experiences within the destination and presents these to the market in a way that influences perceptions and expectations, and persuades people that they are worth trying. A successful brand gives shape and voice to ambition, improves perceptions and, importantly, promises what can be delivered. **Tourism versus Visitor Economy** The important distinction here is between the person-centred concept of a 'tourist', which is defined so as to allow the measurement of the economic activity of that person, and the place-centred concept of the 'visitor economy', which is concerned with the whole environment within which tourists, and other visitors, act. To use a simple analogy, the visitor economy refers to the coral reef, while tourism refers to a specific group of fish that visit the reef. The value of thinking about the visitor economy is that it legitimises, and gives coherence to, a policy interest in all of the areas identified above: the things that attract visitors; the infrastructure that supports their visit, and; the services provided to them. In thinking about the Visitor Economy, the starting point should be the quality of experience that we provide, but the scope of our interest is not limited by the need to define who is or is not a tourist at any point in time; it therefore

embraces both tourists and non-tourists. The quality of the visitor economy matters to tourism and to tourists, as well as to visitors more generally. It also matters to the wider economic and social success of the destination and the region. High quality places help to attract and retain higher level, more economically productive businesses and workers, as well as being attractive to visitors. **Understanding our Visitors** From the point of view of the Northwest Development Agency, it is the economic value of visitors and the visitor economy that is of interest. The goal is to be the best visitor destination, but the reason for this is to generate wealth. Simply providing attractive environments or experiences is not enough if there is no economic value generated. We want visitors who will spend money. We need a good understanding of our visitors and potential visitors; the better we understand this, the better will be our ability to design experiences that succeed in attracting the visitors we want. In particular, we need to understand how we can increase the likelihood of visitors spending money willingly, which means providing them with experiences they enjoy and value. None of this is new or surprising; good, customer-focused companies in the private sector understand this well and act accordingly and the competitive pressures between companies drive innovation and growth. To an extent, the same pressures also apply in the visitor economy; particularly when it comes to the major hotel chains that clearly compete with each other. It happens to a lesser extent in other parts of the visitor economy, and, I would suggest, almost not at all when it comes to the level of destinations.

One way of increasing our understanding of visitors is by grouping similar people together; 2clearly not all visitors are the same, so it makes sense to look for common characteristics between different groups. Segmenting the UK visitor population into distinct groups that share important characteristics helps us to increase our understanding of them. There are many ways of doing this; age, sex, social class, and post code are all obvious. We also segment people on the basis of what they have done in the past. The purpose of doing this is less about promotion, than about taking control of our visitor economy by actively shaping this to suit the visitors we want.

VisitBritain has decided to use the Ark Leisure segmentation model, a values based model, which recognises that many different criteria determine customer behaviour, and which seeks to identify the issues that matter most. These multi-dimensional criteria encompass attitudes, beliefs and values; they are used by the model to group consumers into eight main segments. By getting a better understanding of these criteria and the way different consumer segments operate, VisitBritain is starting to build up deeper insights into what really underpins customer decisions and actions.

The NWDA has recently commissioned research into the day visitor behaviour of people in the region, using the same segmentation model. The insights gained from this, the work of VisitBritain, and other work can help us to shape our places, so that they are more likely to succeed in generating and sustaining growth. The goal is growth in value rather than volume; a better understanding of consumer behaviour helps us to focus on growing value. Using these and other insights should enable us to take control of our future with more confidence, helping us to design and create destinations that will offer the experiences that visitors of the future will want.

VisitScotland's recently published strategy for tourism estimates that gross tourism revenues could increase by 50% by 2015. They believe that this is likely to be driven by an increase in visitor numbers of perhaps 20% by 2015, with the rest of the growth coming from increased spend per head as they get better at offering a wider variety of experiences and products to meet visitors' expectations. They point out that visitors to Austria now, spend half as much again per head as they



do in Scotland.

## The Implications for Local Authorities, Tourist Boards and Others

The Lyons Inquiry into Local Government emphasises the strategic role of local government in “place-shaping”. This encompasses, among other things: building and shaping local identity and; working to make the local economy more successful, to support the creation of new businesses and jobs in the area, including through making the area attractive to new investment and skilled workers, and helping to manage economic change. Lyons suggests that there are a range of actions which councils need to undertake to engage successfully in place-shaping, including: good leadership; building coalitions and consensus about the direction of travel with other agencies and the private sector; effective public and community engagement, and; effective use of legislative powers.

Local Authorities have vital place-shaping roles, and need to carry out these roles using the best advice and information and with a clear strategic focus. The role of Local Authorities is less about attracting visitors, and more about shaping places that will meet or exceed their expectations, working with Tourist Boards and with other stakeholders in the visitor economy. The management of the visitor economy should become a core, mainstream interest for local authorities within the broader context of place-shaping; this is in contrast to the far more common approach that sees tourism as peripheral activity, with a focus on promotion and on the provision of information.

In this context, tourist boards provide expertise in destination development and act as agents of the NWDA in delivering the objectives of the Regional Economic Strategy and the Regional Tourism Strategy. The role of tourist boards is to work with local authorities, to provide advice and expertise, to shape and deliver the brand, and to deliver the right groups of visitors through appropriate promotional activity. In addition, tourist boards continue to have a role as a key interface with tourism sector businesses, especially those within the accommodation sub-sector, and as a provider of channels to market for businesses. These are roles they are familiar with and carry out well.

For both local authorities and tourist boards, the strategic visitor economy roles described involve a new approach, and new skills, with a focus on leading the process of change, and working with others to develop, and help deliver shared visions of the future. The Destination Management Planning process now being used in the Northwest is intended to support the achievement of this.

## Conclusion

Tourism is a necessary and valuable concept, but it is not sufficient to encompass the broader space about which we need to think and in which we need to act if we are to succeed in our ambition to be the best destination in the country. The visitor economy can be used to describe the space in which we need to operate. Mapping and understanding the visitor economy will help to identify who owns the different elements within that space; show how the different elements interact, and; define directions of travel and responsibilities for action. Such mapping, and the partnerships that arise from this, are essential to the success we seek.

Tourist Boards and Local Authorities need to work together, and with other stakeholders in the visitor economy, to develop achievable visions for the future that are consistent with both the Regional Economic Strategy and with the Regional Tourism Strategy.

The NWDA has a strategic role, expressed through the strategies it helps to create, through its role in shaping regional and sub-regional structures, and through the investments it makes. Local authorities are vital place-shapers. Tourist boards are experts in destination management. The cultural communities are owners of, and key contributors to the visitor economy. And of course, the private sector is essential.

The new tourism and economic structures in the region support and strengthen our ability to think strategically, to set clear goals, and to act within a shared framework. Doing this with a clear sense of what we mean by the visitor economy, and of its wider importance, will mean we have the best chance of creating the economic success we all seek.

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## Appendix B – Net Promoter Score

The Net Promoter Score (NPS), developed by Frederick Reichheld and Bain & Company in 2002, is a simple metric that helps organizations monitor the engagement of their customers. It reflects the likelihood that customers will recommend a product/ company/place to friends, family or colleagues.

In the context of the tourism industry, NPS is based on responses to the question, “How likely are you to recommend [British Columbia] as a travel destination to a friend, family member or colleague?” Responses are scored from 0 = “not at all likely” to 10 = “extremely likely”. Respondents are divided into three categories:

- **Detractors** (scores of 0 to 6): Unhappy visitors, unlikely to tell others to visit and might even damage the reputation of a destination through negative word of mouth.
- **Passives** (scores of 7 or 8): Marginally satisfied visitors not excited enough to tell others about their travel experience.
- **Promoters** (scores of 9 or 10): Loyal enthusiasts likely to return and rave about their travel experience.

NPS is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters.

$$\text{NET PROMOTER SCORE} = \% \text{ OF PROMOTERS} - \% \text{ OF DETRACTORS}$$

The intention to recommend a travel destination, reported by the NPS, is a proxy measure of overall satisfaction with the travel experience. Satisfaction with the travel experience and the intention to recommend greatly increase the likelihood of a return visit to Maple Ridge. And word of mouth advocacy, either face-to-face or through social media, is critical for attracting first time visitors to Maple Ridge.

NPS is regarded by researchers as the question that best predicts the future growth of customer

centric businesses like the tourism industry. Many tourism businesses and destination management organizations, including Destination Canada and Destination BC, are also measuring NPS to help monitor and measure efforts to improve customer loyalty.

The original research that developed NPS is described in an article by Frederick F. Reichheld in the Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/2003/12/the-one-number-you-need-to-grow>.

## Appendix C – Market Research – The Tourism Opportunity

A wide range of market intelligence available through Destination BC was reviewed to inform the development of a five-year tourism strategy for Maple Ridge including:

- Tourism Indicators – February 2016
- Value of Tourism in British Columbia 2014 - February 2016
- Vancouver, Coast and Mountains Regional Profile – January 2015
- Market Profiles (2012/2013) – October 2014
- Activity Sector Profiles

Copies of these research reports are available on [www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx](http://www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx). Highlights from this market research and implications for Maple Ridge follow:

### Sector/Market Implications

The review of market research confirms that Maple Ridge has a range of experiences to offer visitors from a variety of geographic markets who participate in a variety of activities. The destination offers year-round outdoor activities for all ages and skill levels which, when combined with easy access from the lower mainland and Fraser Valley, quality amenities and authentic culture create compelling reasons to travel and stay here as a vacation destination or spend an overnight as part of a longer touring itinerary. Further, the sports facilities and infrastructure found in Maple Ridge are capable of attracting and hosting a variety of regional and provincial tournaments and events, including the upcoming 2020 BC Summer Games.

However, this wealth of experiences also creates a challenge for Maple Ridge. As a destination, Maple Ridge must precisely define and target its markets with clear and compelling messaging (narrative and imagery). Messaging that Maple Ridge ‘has it all’ or ‘has something to do year round’ will not sufficiently amplify above the noise of the competition. By the same token, focusing exclusively on one core travel motivating activity such as hiking limits a vast market opportunity for a wide range of travellers having different travel motivations.

Therefore, the execution of all recommended marketing strategies must consider each market being targeted with specific information for each of them. This tactical execution can still occur under an ‘umbrella’ brand for Maple Ridge that captures the unique ‘essence’ of the place and experience. As noted by Phil Reddy (Appendix A):

*“.....a destination brand...should capture and summarise all of the experiences within the destination and present these to the market in a way that influences perceptions and expectations, and persuades people that they are worth trying. A successful brand gives shape and voice to ambition, improves perceptions and, importantly, promises what can be delivered.”<sup>2</sup>*

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

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<sup>2</sup> Culture Northwest 2006, Phil Reddy, Tourism Development Manager, Northwest Development Agency

This is supported by research conducted by Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) in their study *Destination Next*, 2014 where significant trends in destination marketing were identified.<sup>3</sup> Extracts from the top 20 trends in destination marketing that are relevant to Maple Ridge are:

- Social media prominence in reaching the travel market
- Mobile platforms and apps becoming the primary engagement platform for travellers
- Customers increasingly seeking a personalized travel experience
- Smart technology creating new opportunities for innovative new services and processes
- Travellers demanding more information, control, interaction and personalization
- Geo-targeting and localization becoming more prevalent
- Customers increasingly looking for a travel experience that allows them to experience a locals way of life
- Technology enabling faster decision-making by customers, thereby increasing business to a destination
- Consumers becoming increasingly comfortable with ordering products online
- The brand of a destination becoming a more important factor in travel decisions to consumers
- Short-stay trips and mini vacations becoming increasingly popular
- More third-party information providers aggregating content about destinations
- Peer-to-peer buyer influence driving customer purchases
- Customers increasingly going direct to suppliers for goods and services

There are also some clear challenges for Maple Ridge. Its proximity to the Lower Mainland means that much visitation will be day-trippers who return home at night. If the goals related to growing accommodation occupancy and yield on a year-round basis are to be achieved, there must be a focus on travellers who are motivated to stay overnight – for weddings, small conferences, sport tournaments or because the nature of the outdoor or cultural experiences on offer in Maple Ridge are sufficiently compelling to warrant a multi-night stay.

From the perspective of target markets for Maple Ridge, the implications of this market research for the tourism strategy are as follows:

- The majority of visitors to Maple Ridge are from British Columbia itself (Vancouver Island/Lower Mainland/Vancouver Coast & Mountains) followed by Alberta/Ontario
- Maple Ridge experiences seem to fit best with the Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorer traveller types defined by the Explorer Quotient tool utilized by Destination BC
- BC Residents are an attractive target market for Maple Ridge – their younger demographic will appreciate the wealth of outdoor activities accessible from Maple Ridge
- BC Residents are also most likely to travel throughout the year and venture into all regions of the Province
- Touring travellers interest in visiting parks, natural wonders and heritage sites would indicate an opportunity for Maple Ridge
- Canadian hiking travellers represent a good segment for the Maple Ridge – especially those based in BC and Alberta. Their interests are consistent with the product offered in and around the area and they have above average income and education

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<sup>3</sup> Destination Next, A Strategic Road Map for the Next Generation of Global Destination Marketing – Phase I, Destination Marketing International Association, 2014

- Travellers motivated by mountain biking and road cycling represent a potential target market for Maple Ridge particularly when experiences are combined along a circle route that encompasses the Fraser Valley; Slow Food Cycle tours such as [www.fraservalleycycletours.com](http://www.fraservalleycycletours.com) or [www.tourismpembertonbc.com/news-and-events/events/slow-food-cycle-sunday](http://www.tourismpembertonbc.com/news-and-events/events/slow-food-cycle-sunday)
- Regional and provincial sport events will find the facilities, services and amenities they need in Maple Ridge to host a successful event
- Meetings and events capacity in Maple Ridge is limited but sufficient to target regional scale meetings
- Maple Ridge offers a scenic locale for weddings priced far more affordably than elsewhere in the Lower Mainland

### **Macro Environment**

- Tourism is an international industry
- British Columbia's product offerings are in demand but the Province is a relatively small player in the growing, highly competitive international environment
- In the short term, tourism performance can be volatile as it is highly tied to uncontrollable events, such as weather conditions or rapid changes in security and economic events
- In the long term, healthy growth is forecasted – UNWTO forecasts global growth in international tourist arrivals annually until 2030<sup>4</sup>

### **Consumer & Travel Trends**

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

### **BC Tourism Trends**

Tourism Indicators report the following<sup>5</sup>:

British Columbia's tourism industry had an exceptional year in 2016, with a total of 5,532,065 overnight international visitor arrivals to the province, including 3,620,975 visitors from the US, 1,200,481 from Asia Pacific, and 535,238 visitors from Europe. International visitor arrivals were up 12.3% over 2015. This means an additional 605,918 visitors from international markets arrived in BC in 2016 over the previous year.

BC saw increases from key markets, such as Mexico (up 33.4%); Australia (21.1%); China (18.2%); United Kingdom (17.3%) & India (9.9%). The strong growth in the tourism sector can be linked to a number of factors, including the marketing efforts of Destination BC and our industry partners, increased number of direct flights, and the easing of visa restrictions.

<sup>4</sup> Tourism Towards 2030, World Tourism Organization UNWTO, 2011

<sup>5</sup> Destination BC Tourism Indicators and Value of Tourism – [www.destinationbc.ca/research.aspx](http://www.destinationbc.ca/research.aspx)

The beginning of 2017 showed an increase of 9.9% in overnight entries to Canada and 9.2% to BC for January 2017. BC had an impressive increase of 33.4% in entries from Asia/Pacific countries.

- 2015 Value of Tourism Snapshot reports that the tourism industry generated \$15.7 billion in revenue, a 5.3% increase over 2014 and a 37.3% increase over 2005
- While BC residents spend less per visit, they still represent an attractive target market because they:
  - Experience less volatile travel patterns
  - Travel year-round
  - Accept varying qualities of facilities
  - Are willing to explore the Province

### **Vancouver, Coast and Mountains – Regional Profile (2014)<sup>6</sup>**

In 2012, overnight tourism in British Columbia generated 17.9 million person-visits and \$8.6 billion in related spending. The Vancouver, Coast and Mountains tourism region represents 43% of provincial overnight visitation and 57% of related spending.

The Vancouver Island tourism region received approximately 8.2 million overnight person-visits in 2012 and generated over \$4.7 billion in related spending. British Columbia residents make up the largest share of overnight visitation (45%), but has a much lower spending (22%) compared to other tourism regions. In addition, the region has the largest market share of Washington and Californian travellers compared to other regions.

The top five markets by area of origin for the region are:

	Area of Origin	Share of Visitation	Share of Spending
1	British Columbia	45%	22%
2	Washington	10%	6%
3	Alberta	6%	6%
4	Ontario	5%	9%
5	California	4%	5%

On average, domestic travel parties to the Vancouver, Coast and Mountains tourism region stayed 3.4 nights and spent \$155 per night during their trip. US travel parties stayed 3.6 nights and spent \$236 per night during their trip. Other international travel parties (excluding the US) stayed 13.6 nights and spent \$126 per night during their trip in the region.

Same day travellers accounted for 49% of visitor volume and 16% of visitor expenditures – overnight visitors accounted for 51% of visitor volume and 84% of visitor expenditures.

Most people travelled in the Vancouver, Coast and Mountains tourism region during the peak summer months of July to September, but the proportions were more evenly distributed in all quarters for all markets of origin compared to other tourism regions. More travellers visited the

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<sup>6</sup> Destination BC – Vancouver Coast and Mountains Regional Profile, 2015



Vancouver, Coast and Mountains tourism region during the ski season months of October to December and January to March compared to other tourism regions in the province.

Top five trip activities of visitors to the Vancouver, Coast and Mountains tourism region often include a range of outdoor activities (hiking/backpacking, camping, skiing) as well as museums, art galleries and historic sites. Note: these activities could have taken place anywhere on their trip, not just in this region.

Top 5 trip activities:

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

### Visitor Characteristics – By Market

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

#### British Columbia Residents

- British Columbians took 10.6 million overnight trips within BC in 2014
- All age groups are represented – 37% are aged 18-34 years; 36% are aged 35-54 years
- 42% were travelling for leisure; 44% were travelling to visit friends/family
- Average travel party size of 2.7 people
- Average trip length 2.8 nights; 64% staying 1-2 nights; 28% staying 3-5 nights
- 84% travel by auto/camper/RV
- 41% visit Vancouver Coast & Mountains; 24% visit Vancouver Island; 20% visit Thompson Okanagan regions
- Travel throughout the year with peaks in July/August/September
- Beaches, hiking, visiting friends/family and camping are most popular activities
- 26% do not need accommodation; 38% book their accommodation directly
- Explorer Quotient Traveller Type: 36% are Gentle Explorers; 17% are Free Spirits; 16% are Authentic Experiencers; 10% are Cultural Explorers

### **Albertan Travellers**

- Alberta travellers took 2.5 million overnight trips to BC in 2014
- All age groups represented; 39% are aged 18-34 years; 40% are aged 35-54 years
- 55% were travelling for leisure; 35% were travelling to visit friends/family
- Average travel party size of 3.1 people
- Average trip length 4.4 nights; 36% staying 1-2 nights; 40% staying 3-5 nights
- 75% travel by auto/camper/RV; 22% travel by air
- 36% visit Kootenay Rockies; 27% visit Thompson Okanagan; 21% visit Vancouver Coast & Mountains; 7% visit Vancouver Island
- Travel throughout the year with peak travel in July/August (42%)
- 26% do not need accommodation; 38% book their accommodation directly
- Hiking, beaches, visiting parks and boating are most popular activities
- Explorer Quotient Traveller Type: 38% are Gentle Explorers; 21% are Free Spirits; 13% are Authentic Experiencers; 12% are Cultural Explorers

### **Ontario Travellers**

- Ontario travellers took 587,000 overnight trips to BC in 2014
- All age groups are represented; 33% are aged 18-34 years; 33% are aged 35-54 years; 34% are 55 and older
- 43% were travelling for leisure; 26% were visiting friends/family; 29% were travelling for business
- Average travel party size of 2.9 people
- Average trip length of 7.0 nights; 38% staying 3-5 nights; 26% staying 6-9 nights; 15% staying 10-16 nights
- 82% travel by air
- 69% visit Vancouver, Coast & Mountains; 15% visit Vancouver Island
- Travel throughout the year (39% in Nov/Dec/Jan/Feb/March; 44% in June/July/Aug/Sept)
- 26% do not need accommodation; 38% book accommodation directly
- Visiting parks, hiking, going to the beach and visiting friends/family are the most popular activities
- Explorer Quotient Traveller Type: 31% are Gentle Explorers; 27% are Free Spirits; 17% are Authentic Experiencers; 11% are Cultural Explorers

### **Washington State Travellers**

- Washington State travellers took 1.2 million overnight trips to BC in 2014
- 62% of travellers are aged 45 years or older; 45% are aged 55+ years; 23% are 65+ years
- 63% were travelling for leisure; 24% were visiting friends/relatives
- Average travel party size of 3.0 people
- Average trip length of 3.0 nights – 76% stay 1-3 nights
- 83% travel by auto
- 75% visit Vancouver, Coast & Mountains; 20% visit Vancouver Island
- Travel throughout the year with small peaks in July/August
- 16% do not need accommodation; 38% book accommodation directly; 21% use an Online Travel Agency; 19% still use a travel agent
- Shopping, sightseeing, visiting friends/family, outdoor activities are the most popular activities
- Explorer Quotient Traveller Type: 34% are Gentle Explorers; 18% are Authentic Experiencers; 15% are Free Spirits; 10% are Cultural Explorers

## **California**

- California travellers made 419,000 overnight trips to BC in 2014
- 62% of travellers are 45 years or older; 42% are 55 years or older; 20% are 65+years
- 57% are travelling for leisure; 23% are visiting friends/relatives; 13% are travelling for business
- Average travel party size is 2.5 people
- Average trip length is 5.7 nights; 47% stay 1-3 nights; 34% stay 4-6 nights
- 81% visit Vancouver, Coast & Mountains; 30% visit Vancouver Island;
- Travel peaks in June and July; followed by August/September/October
- 56% arrive by plane; 24% arrive by auto; 10% arrive by boat
- 23% of travellers book their air directly; 19% book air through a travel agent; 16% use an online travel agency (OTA)
- 16% of travellers from California do not need accommodation; 38% book their accommodation directly; 21% book accommodations through an OTA and 19% book accommodation through a travel agent
- Sightseeing, shopping, visiting friends/family and visiting parks are the most popular activities
- Explorer Quotient Traveller Type: 29% are Free Spirits; 28% are Gentle Explorers; 19% are Authentic Experiencers; 12% are Cultural Explorers

## **United Kingdom**

- United Kingdom travellers took 192,000 overnight trips to BC in 2014
- 64% of travellers are aged 45 years or older; 46% are aged 55+ years; 25% are 65+years
- 56% are travelling for leisure; 32% are visiting friends/relatives
- Average travel party size of 2.3 people
- Average trip length of 12.5 nights; 37% stay 7-13 nights; 21% stay 4-6 nights; 17% stay 1-3 nights; 13% stay 14-20 nights
- 77% visit Vancouver, Coast & Mountains; 39% visit Vancouver Island; 29% visit Thompson Okanagan
- Travel peaks in July/August with a smaller peak in February (likely ski related); some travel still occurs in April/May/June
- 46% book their flight directly; 26% use a travel agent for flights; 22% use an online travel agency (OTA)
- 23% do not need accommodation; 30% book their accommodation directly; 26% use a travel agent; 17% use an OTA
- Sightseeing, shopping, visiting parks, visiting friends/family are most popular activities
- Explorer Quotient Traveller Type: 24% are Gentle Explorers; 16% are Authentic Experiencers; 13% are Free Spirits; 10% are Cultural Explorers; 10% are Cultural History Buffs

## **Germany**

- German travellers took 82,000 overnight trips to BC in 2014
- 38% of travellers were 20-34 years old; 63% were 44 years or younger
- 66% are travelling for leisure; 17% are visiting friends/relatives
- Average travel party size of 2.1 people
- Average trip length is 14.9 nights; 32% stay 7-13 nights; 21% stay 4-6 nights; 19% stay 14-20 nights

- 83% visit Vancouver, Coast & Mountains; 43% visit Vancouver Island; 43% visit Thompson Okanagan; 25% visit Kootenay Rockies and 16% visit Northern BC
- Strong travel peaks in July and August
- 39% book their flights through a travel agent; 28% book flights directly and 27% use an online travel agency (OTA)
- 13% do not need accommodation; 39% book accommodation through a travel agent; 18% book accommodation directly; 23% use an OTA
- Sightseeing, shopping, visiting parks, outdoor activities and visiting historic sites are most popular activities
- Explorer Quotient Traveller Type: 17% are Cultural Explorers; 15% are Virtual Travellers; 14% are Rejuvenators; 13% are Authentic Experiencers; 13% are Group Tourists

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

Destination BC also provides market research on visitor characteristics defined by the activities they participate in while travelling. Detailed reports are available on [www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx](http://www.destinationbc.ca/Research.aspx) and summary highlights of the most relevant activities for Maple Ridge are provided below:

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

Highlights of this research by activity are as follows:

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

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

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

- Male skew to those participating in cycling activities, particularly from US (63% male); Canadian 55% male
- 40% of Canadian cyclists are aged 18-34; US participants older with the largest group aged 45-54 (30%)
- Canadian travellers motivated by mountain biking skew younger and male with 42.8% aged 18-34 years and 74.5% male. They are affluent and educated with 46.6% having household incomes of \$100,000 or more and 64.2% having completed post secondary education
- US travellers motivated by mountain biking are 73.8% male;
- Majority (48.3%) of motivated US mountain bikers are aged 18-34 years; like their Canadian counterparts, they are affluent and well educated with 32.7% having household incomes of \$100,000 or more and 59% having completed post secondary education

- US overnight touring cyclists are skewed male as well – 82% of those travellers motivated by overnight touring are male
- Canadian and US cycling travellers can be considered frequent travellers when compared to the overall travelling population
- Cycling travellers also enjoy swimming in lakes, strolling the city/seeing buildings, visiting parks, natural wonders, sitting on a beach/sunbathing, visiting historic sites. Many travellers who participate in cycling also enjoy hiking.

### **Touring (2014)**

- Approximately one-third of Canadian touring travellers are aged 18-34 years; US touring travellers tend to be older with approximately one-quarter over the age of 65 years;
- Approximately one quarter of both Canadian and US touring travellers are in adult-only households
- American travellers more likely to take guided tours than Canadian travellers
- Touring travellers are also interested in city strolls, visiting national/provincial parks, historic sites, natural wonders

### **Heritage (2009)**

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

### **Golf (2009)**

- Two thirds of golf pleasure travellers from both Canada and the US who had been to BC in 2004/05 and participated in a golf activity were male – this male skew is even more pronounced amongst those motivated to travel for a golf activity
- Canadian travellers who had participated in a golf activity while on a trip were younger than their American counterparts. Nearly 49% of Canadian participating golf travellers were aged between 18 and 44 years compared to 38% of Americans
- Participating golf travellers tend to be high-income earners with over 43% of Canadians and over 50% of US travellers earning \$100,000 or more per annum. The proportion is even high for those motivated to travel by golf activities
- The majority of golf travellers are well educated
- Canadian travellers motivated by golf tend to be older than the general population of Canadian travellers to BC with 37% aged 55 years or older
- Other popular activities in addition to golf include sunbathing/sitting on a beach; swimming in lakes; strolling to see city buildings; visiting a nature park; visiting historic sites/buildings; and swimming in oceans
- Hiking skiing and fishing were the most common complementary sports-related outdoor activities of interest to golfers
- Impact factors for US golfers when choosing a destination include: quality of golf course; value for money; availability of multiple courses and weather conditions.

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

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

### **Aboriginal Cultural Tourism**

- In 2010, 3.7 million overnight visits to BC included an Aboriginal cultural experience – almost double the number from 2006
- Approximately half of these visits are by Canadians
- Average Aboriginal cultural tourism visitor to BC tends to be female, middle to late aged, well-educated and earns an upper-middle income
- Aboriginal cultural tourism visitors under the age of 50 prefer active experiences such as canoeing, kayaking, dog-sledding and horseback riding while visitors aged 50+ prefer less vigorous experiences such as hiking, walks, nature observation and indoor activities
- Area of Origin:
  - British Columbia residents
  - Canada – Alberta, Ontario
  - US - Washington, Oregon, California
  - Europe – United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands
- Demographic:
  - Aged 35 – 64 primarily traveling without children although a sub-segment are traveling with children
  - Educated with university degree
  - Middle to upper income
- Travel Behaviour:
  - Visiting friends/family
  - Touring vacations (self-drive private vehicles/RV's)
  - Relatively long stay in BC with many having flexibility to change trip plans and stay 1-2 more days in the region
  - Many Aboriginal tourism experiences are not planned in advance of arrival in BC
- Travel Interests:

- Aboriginal museums and art galleries, performing arts/events/ ceremonies, authentic facilities, interacting with local people, learning about the traditional use of the land, and hearing Aboriginal legends, experiencing Aboriginal cuisine
- Other historic sites and buildings, museums
- Natural wonders, parks, outdoor experiences including hiking, fresh water fishing, canoeing, kayaking, water based or wilderness lodges
- The 'dual track' visitor identified in the Blueprint Strategy is interested in outdoor and soft adventure experiences that incorporate cultural interpretation as an enhancement to the experience. While some travelers are primarily interested in Aboriginal culture, a much larger market can be captured by enhancing mainstream tourism experiences (hiking, kayaking, horseback riding etc.) with an Aboriginal cultural element<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy for British Columbia, November 2005 prepared by Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia

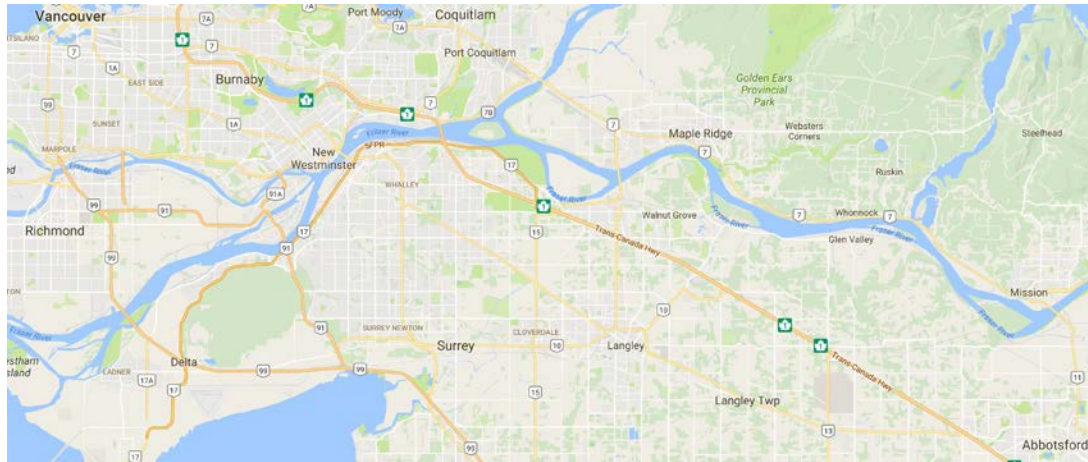


## Appendix D – Maple Ridge - Current Situation Analysis

In order to develop strategies to achieve the objective of growing overnight visitation, length of stay and visitor spending on a year round basis, an assessment of the current situation of Maple Ridge from a tourism perspective is also required to understand how to best to match the needs of possible target markets with the strengths of Maple Ridge's visitor experiences. The following analysis considers access and infrastructure for visitors, existing visitor experiences, current marketing and promotional efforts and the manner in which Maple Ridge is currently organized and funded to pursue tourism opportunities.

### Access and Infrastructure

**Road Access to Maple Ridge** Maple Ridge is located approx. 45 minutes east of Vancouver. While access infrastructure is in place, a deterrent to travel may be volume of traffic during peak commute times. Highway #1 offers more direct route while Highway #7 provides a route with more intersections and stoplights. Volume of traffic can be avoided by choosing the appropriate time of day for travel.



googlemaps.ca

Map:

Highways #1 and #7 are well maintained and offer direct travel to Maple Ridge from the lower mainland and the Fraser Valley.

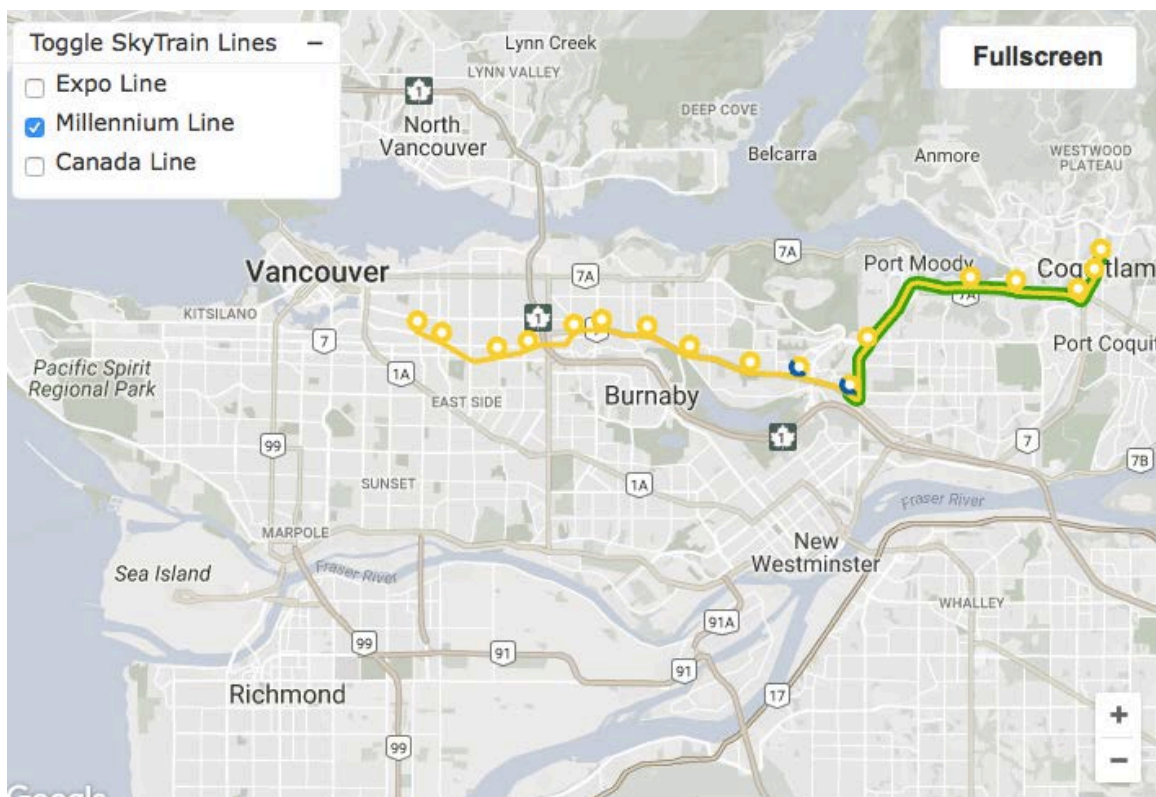
Travel times to/from Maple Ridge are as follows (as per Drive BC – Plan Your Route [www.drivebc.ca](http://www.drivebc.ca)):

To	From	Distance	Drive Time
Maple Ridge	Vancouver	44 km	50 minutes
Maple Ridge	Chilliwack	67 km	1 hour
Maple Ridge	Whistler	163 km	2 hours, 10 minutes
Maple Ridge	Kelowna	355 km	3 hours 50 minutes
Maple Ridge	Victoria	138 km	4 hours

There are also public transit options. The West Coast Express train connects Vancouver to Maple Ridge but only runs from Monday to Friday with eastbound service commencing after 4:00 p.m. daily.



Sky Train service is available on the Millennium Line to Port Coquitlam from which point bus connections are required to Maple Ridge. Riders may bring their bicycles on Sky Train during off peak times (7:00 to 9:00 a.m. westbound and 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. eastbound are considered peak times) and then utilize the trail system from Port Coquitlam to Pitt Meadows.



### Visitor Infrastructure

Maple Ridge offers a range of infrastructure to support visitor experiences including a variety of accommodation options, restaurants and retail shops. Outdoor experiences and activities range from land-based activities within Maple Ridge and nearby Golden Ears Provincial Park, (hiking, biking, camping, wildlife viewing/bird watching, mountaineering) to lake/river based activities

(rafting, kayaking, canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding). Infrastructure to support sport tourism hosting, weddings and small meetings/conferences is also available.

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation in Maple Ridge includes the following hotels and motels:

- Best Western
- Econo Lodge
- Super Suites

There are also two Summer Camp / Retreat Providers

- Loon Lake Lodge & Retreat Centre– primarily summer youth camps, with some adult retreats offered to groups over 10 people, in shared accommodation
- Timberline Ranch Camp & Retreat Centre - primarily summer youth camps, with adult retreats available to small and large groups, in shared accommodation

### **Campgrounds/RV Parks**

Maple Ridge offers an good selection of campsites primarily in nearby Golden Ears Provincial Park:

- Golden Ears Provincial Park:
  - Alouette campground (206 vehicle-accessible sites)
  - Gold Creek campground (148 vehicle-accessible sites)
  - North Beach campground (55 vehicle-accessible sites)
  - Backcountry camping is also available within the park

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

Much like accommodation, visitors require a range of restaurant and retail options to support their experience and encourage longer lengths of stay. Maple Ridge offers a variety of restaurants that include ethnic fare, pubs, family fare and fast food chains.

There is a wide selection of food and beverage options in Maple Ridge to meet every visitor taste and budget. The 12 best places to eat in Maple Ridge according to Trip Advisor (June 13, 2017) are:

1. Big Feast
2. Black Sheep Public House
3. GM Restaurant
4. Billy Miner Alehouse & Café
5. Bruce's Country Market
6. Shinobi Sushi
7. Smile Thai Cuisine
8. Frogstone Grill
9. Ban Chok Dee Thai Restaurant
10. Townhall Public House
11. Home Restaurant
12. Golden Ears Cheesecrafters

Maple Ridge is also home to Maple Meadows Brewing Co. and Ridge Brewing Company, both of which are featured on [BCAleTrail.ca](http://BCAleTrail.ca)

## **Retail Shops**

Maple Ridge offers a range of retail experiences that support visitor needs for both basics (fuel, groceries, pharmacy), and for interesting local items. Some of the more unique retail offerings are featured on the HelloBC.com website ([www.hellobc.com/maple-ridge.aspx](http://www.hellobc.com/maple-ridge.aspx)) including furniture and home accessories at Good Company, specialty toys and clothes at Monkey Business and photos/paintings at Dreamscapes Gift Gallery.

Maple Ridge is also home to several 'big box' stores such as Walmart, Canadian Tire and Home Depot.

## **Sport Tourism Infrastructure**

Maple Ridge has an active sports community that includes:

- Golden Ears Athletics
- Golden Ears Curling Club
- Haney Neptunes Aquatic Club
- Haney Seahorses Swim Club
- Maple Ridge Boxing Club
- Maple Ridge Figure Skating Club
- Maple Ridge Tennis Club
- Maple Ridge Ultimate Frisbees
- Meadow Ridge Barracudas Female Hockey Association
- Meadow Ridge Knights Community Football Association
- Pitt Meadows Paddling Club
- Port Coquitlam Ridge Meadows Ringette Association
- Ridge Canoe and Kayak Club
- Ridge Meadows BMX Racing
- Ridge Meadows Bruins Rugby Club
- Ridge Meadows Burrards Minor Lacrosse Association
- Ridge Meadows Minor Baseball Association
- Ridge Meadows Minor Softball Association
- Ridge Meadows Racers Speed Skating
- Ridge Meadows Renegades Minor Ball Hockey Association
- Ridge Meadows Rustlers Minor Hockey Association
- Ruskin Slo-Pitch
- West Coast Auto Group Football Club

The Albion Sports Complex - a multi-use facility that includes the following:

- Spring and summer: 4 softball (3 lit) and 2 baseball (1 lit) and 2 gravel fields
- Fall and winter: 4 soccer fields and 2 gravel fields (both lit)
- Football field
- Open green space
- Spray park

Maple Ridge Leisure Centre Pool offers:

- Pool (Competition 25 metre, 6 lane)
- Pool (Leisure Free Form 10m x 20m)
- Pool (Teach 25 metre, 4 lane)
- Pool (Wading)

- Concessions
- Family Change Rooms
- Fitness Equipment (Adult)
- Hot Tub/Sauna/Steam Room

Hammond Stadium offers:

- Baseball / Softball Diamond
- Basketball Court
- Bleacher Seating
- Concessions
- Open Green Space/Playground
- Soccer Field
- Tennis Court

Planet Ice is a multi-use facility that offers the following:

- 2 National Hockey League (NHL) size rinks
- Public skating times, private rentals, and hockey leagues
- Seating capacity for 1,250 for sporting events or 2,000 for concert events
- Sports bar and grill
- Pro shop

Hammond Outdoor Pool is open in July and August.

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

Maple Ridge is easily accessed by road and has infrastructure to serve as an overnight visitor destination or an overnight stop on a longer itinerary.

Maple Ridge'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.

Given the adequacy of visitor access and the visitor infrastructure already in place, the focus of the tourism strategy is more appropriately on the identification of opportunities for Maple Ridge to showcase its competitive advantage and work together under the leadership of the Tourism Advisory Committee to achieve the tourism vision and tourism objectives noted above.

### **Existing Visitor Experiences**

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

Except where noted, the majority of this information has been extracted from the Maple Ridge visitor guide and from [www.mapleridge.ca/330/Tourism](http://www.mapleridge.ca/330/Tourism). Other experiences may be offered but are not listed below unless readily found on the Internet.

### **Summary of Visitor Experiences**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Visitor Experience</b>
Arts, Culture and Heritage	The Act <a href="http://www.theactmapleridge.org">www.theactmapleridge.org</a> - professional theatre, popular music, gallery shows, arts programming
	Maple Ridge Museum



	Port Haney Wharf Art Studio Tour Haney House Cemetery and Downtown Heritage walks
Festivals & Events	Country Fest Caribbean Fest Festival of BC Film Music on the Wharf – Monday night performances at the Port Haney Wharf – July 10, 24, August 14, 28 <sup>th</sup> Haney Farmers Market BIA Summer Market – July 1, 29 <sup>th</sup> and August 26 <sup>th</sup> Movie in the Park – July 8, 15, 29, August 5, 12, 19 <sup>th</sup> Twilight Tuesdays – Pops in the Park – July 4, 11, 18, 25 <sup>th</sup> Golden Harvest Festival - October  There are a significant number of community-focused events in addition to those noted above.
Parks	Golden Ears Provincial Park Kanaka Creek Regional Park Cliff Park – waterfalls Malcolm Knapp UBC Research Forest Memorial Peace Park (downtown)
Cycling/Hiking Trails	Hiking – Dike trails; Golden Ears Provincial Park; Kanaka Regional Park; Whonnock Lake, Trans Canada Trail Mountain biking trails – Golden Ears Provincial Park; The Woodlot on Blue Mountain (east of Maple Ridge); Trans-Canada Trail
Water Activities –	Alouette Lake Alouette River - tubing Whonnock Lake Paddleboarding
Golf	Maple Ridge Golf Course – 9 hole executive Hackers – Par 3 9 hole course Golden Eagle Golf Club (Pitt Meadows) – 36 holes Swanese Bay Resort & Country Club (Pitt Meadows) – 36 holes designed by Lee Trevino
Agritourism	Haney Farmers Market – May 13 – October 7 Golden Ears Cheesecrafters Red Barn Plants & Produce Circle Farm Tour
Horseback Riding	Maple Ridge Equi-Sport Centre (hunter jumper, dressage, jumper school) Mustang Ranch – trail rides Equutrails Horseback Ridge – scenic trail riding in Golden Ears Provincial Park
Geo-caching	Six locations launched in June 2017
Attractions	Wildplay Chances Casino

**Meeting/Conference Facilities include:**

The ACT	Main Stage Theatre: 486-seat theatre Studio Theatre: up to 150 people depending on seating configuration (banquets, weddings, meetings, etc.) Conference Room: 14-30 people depending on seating configuration 2D studio: 40 people seated lecture style Craft Studio: informal location for groups of 30
Whonnock Lake	160 people - the centre features a large hall with kitchen, multipurpose room and two meeting rooms in a beautiful park setting.
Econo Lodge	61 hotel rooms; Function room holds up to 80 people
Best Western	56 hotel rooms; no meeting space
CEED Centre	1 meeting room in heritage building for 20 people
Loon Lake Lodge & Retreat Centre	The lodge has 3 separate meeting spaces available to groups in addition to accommodation. Shared accommodation cabins: Walter C. Koerner Forestry Centre sleeps 40 in shared accommodation, conference room; Johnson Cabins (4 bedrooms with 2 beds each); Friends & Alumni Cabin (4 beds in loft; 2 bedrooms, 2 beds each); Thunder Inn (sleeps 8 shared); Pan Abode (sleeps 20 shared); Bentley Family Dining Hall seats 160 in winter with 40 on the deck in summer. Loon Lake Lodge does not host weddings.
Timberline Ranch Camp & Retreat Centre	The Lodge – a western-style lodge with 18 rooms for guest accommodations (2-4 people per room); capacity of 52 people  Western Town – 6 units containing 4 sets of bunk beds and 2 queen beds, to provide sleeping facilities for 10-12 people. Approximately 60-72 people can sleep in the Western Town  Poolside Cabins – each of the 9 heated cabins contains 4 sets of bunk beds and one single bed, to provide sleeping facilities for up to 9 people. Eagle's Nest has an additional single bed, so it has room for 10 people. Approximately 82 people can sleep in the poolside cabins. Each cabin also has its own bathroom facilities.  Town Hall – contains a 60'x40' meeting room, which can be subdivided into 2 units

**Conclusions/Implications of Existing Visitor Experiences**

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



It is helpful to categorize the Maple Ridge experiences based upon whether they are potential trip 'motivators' or serve to 'enhance' the visitor experience while not necessarily being the original purpose of the trip:

**Maple Ridge Trip motivators:**

- Camping / Provincial Park visit - (regional, domestic markets)
- Hiking – BC, domestic markets
- Sporting events and tournaments (Regional and Provincial events primarily)
- Weddings, small meetings/conferences
- Select festivals/events such as Caribbean Fest
- Select cultural offerings at The Act
- Touring through region (including motorcycle touring) – (international, domestic and regional markets)
- Visiting friends/relatives – (domestic markets)

**Maple Ridge Trip enhancers:**

- History and heritage – museums, walking tours
- Arts, culture including unique retail, festivals/events
- Agri-tourism experiences include craft cheese, craft beer / Food & Beverage

**Current Visitation to Maple Ridge**

The Visitor Centre that jointly serviced Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows closed in 2015. Tourism information materials are now provided at the Maple Ridge City Economic Development office. A summary of Visitor Centre statistics for the period from 2011 to 2015 is as follows:

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Total Parties	Closed	5709	5160	5045	4325	3003	2883
Total Visitors	Closed	8936	7676	7363	6474	3840	3897

Source: Destination BC

Area of origin statistics for Maple Ridge indicate the following:

Area of Origin	2015
Local Resident	55.6%
BC	31.5%
Alberta	2.8%
Other Canada	4.9%
Washington	1.1%
California	0.4%
Other US/Mexico	1.6%
Europe	1.6%
Asia/Australia	0.3%
Other	0%

Source: Destination BC

It is likely that many close-in regional visitors to Maple Ridge did not utilize the services of the Visitor Centre as they were already familiar with the area, so these statistics are of limited value in terms of understanding total visitation, area of origin and motivating activity.

The largest source of visitation to the Visitor Centre were locals and BC residents. These visitors were likely either locals looking for information for themselves and/or visiting friends/relatives and those who are touring the region.

### Parks (provincial and regional)

Kanaka Creek Regional Park is a valuable tourism product with a wealth of trail infrastructure and outdoor experience offerings. As well, Metro Vancouver delivers many unique activities and events in the park during peak visitor season.

Kanaka Creek Regional Park Visitors Numbers:

2013 - 413,753

2014 – 365,442 (*note: construction in park (Canyon Trail); closures required*)

2015 – 360,000

2016 – 403,000 (*note: increases over 2015 due to installation of new, more effective counters in park*)

Maple Ridge is home to one of the largest provincial parks in BC – Golden Ears Provincial Park. With 62,540 hectares, over 400 vehicle-accessible campsites, backcountry access, and numerous trails, visitors can enjoy a range of outdoor activities including canoeing, climbing, cycling, hiking and horseback riding.

During the summer, Golden Ears Provincial Park is extremely popular, especially on weekends. The park is subject to periodic closure to day-users and/or boaters when the day-use and/or boat launch parking lots fill to capacity. Closures generally occur on sunny weekends and holidays during July and August, and usually occur between 11am and 4pm.

Although BC's south coast offers a range of camping options, weather and availability affect visitation.

Parks with INCREASED camping use:						
Region	Park	CAMPING				NOTES
		ATTENDANCE				
		2013/14	2014/15	Difference	% Change	
KO	Cathedral Park	2,926	5,412	2,486	85%	Many youth groups camping in July, good weather
KO	E.C. Manning Park	69,903	78,617	8,715	12%	Better weather
KO	Martha Creek Park	12,352	14,374	2,022	16%	Capital upgrades and better weather
KO	Mount Assiniboine Park	7,327	10,324	2,997	41%	No floods, route from Sunshine village now open, low snow
KO	Otter Lake Park	8,442	10,096	1,654	20%	Park opened earlier; had better weather
NO	Kiskatinaw Park	3,187	4,406	1,219	38%	Better weather
NO	Lakelse Lake Park	21,424	25,082	3,657	17%	Large construction projects, shortage of housing in area
NO	Moberly Lake Park	8,710	10,867	2,157	25%	Better weather
NO	Red Bluff Park	2,234	4,010	1,776	80%	2013 sockeye run was cancelled, causing attendance to drop that year.
SC	Cultus Lake Park	79,297	88,162	8,865	11%	Better weather
SC	Golden Ears Park	107,098	120,427	13,329	12%	Better weather
SC	Porpoise Bay Park	11,116	20,337	9,222	83%	Better weather, return to normal levels after abnormally low in 2013
SC	Roberts Creek Park	1,482	2,832	1,350	91%	Better weather
TC	Juniper Beach Park	11,939	13,558	1,619	14%	Good fishing
TC	Paul Lake Park	17,408	20,378	2,970	17%	Park was added to reservation system in 2014
WC	Bamberton Park	13,411	16,326	2,915	22%	Better weather
WC	French Beach Park	22,809	25,645	2,836	12%	Better weather
WC	Goldstream Park	51,097	58,157	7,060	14%	Better weather

The chart below compares Maple Ridge's Golden Ears Provincial Park to neighbouring provincial parks within a 1 to 2 hour drive from Vancouver. Maple Ridge has an opportunity to connect with almost 800,000 annual visitors to Golden Ears Park.

<b>BC Parks</b>					
<b>Attendance</b>					
<b>Park</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>% change</b>
Golden Ears Park	Camping	107,098	120,427	13,329	12%
Maple Ridge	Day Use	596,260	678,517	82,257	14%
409 vehicle-accessible campsites	Boating				
	Park Total	703,358	798,944		
<p><i>As one of the largest parks in the province, Golden Ears Provincial Park is prized for its recreational opportunities. The extensive system of trails within the park provides an excellent opportunity for hiking and horseback riding. Alouette Lake is a popular spot for swimming, windsurfing, water-skiing, canoeing, boating and fishing. The park also has three large campgrounds. Vegetation is typical of the coastal western Hemlock forest of B.C. and the mountainous backcountry is extremely rugged.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/golden_ears">www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/golden_ears</a></p>					
<b>Attendance</b>					
<b>Park</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>% change</b>
Cultus Lake Park	Camping	79,297	88,162	8,865	11%
Chilliwack	Day Use	752,289	820,166	67,877	9%
301 vehicle-accessible campsites	Boating				
	Park Total	831,586	908,328		
<p><i>As one of the most popular destination areas in the Lower Mainland, Cultus Lake Provincial Park is characterized by a large, warm freshwater lake and scenic forest-clad mountains. The park is almost evenly divided between the northwest and southeast sides of Cultus Lake. The northwest portion is mostly undeveloped with the visitor-oriented facilities confined to the southeast portion. Just an hour and a half drive away from Vancouver, visitors will find four campgrounds, a large day-use area for picnicking and boating, and ample opportunity for fishing, water skiing, wind surfing and hiking.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/cultus_lk">www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/cultus_lk</a></p>					
<b>Attendance</b>					
<b>Park</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>% change</b>
Alice Lake Park	Camping	45,618	47,931	2,313	5%
Squamish	Day Use	368,336	426,675	58,339	16%
96 vehicle-accessible campsites	Boating				
	Park Total	413,954	474,606		
<p><i>About an hour's drive from Vancouver, Alice Lake is surrounded by towering mountains, dense forests and grassy areas. There are four fresh water lakes that dominate the landscape and make swimming and fishing very enjoyable pastimes. The trail around Alice Lake is a popular one for an evening stroll and for the more adventurous there is the Four Lakes Trail. There are excellent views of the Squamish River and the Tantalus Range from the DeBeck's Hill Trail. This is a favourite family park.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/alice_lk">www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/alice_lk</a></p>					
<b>Attendance</b>					
<b>Park</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>% change</b>
Rolley Lake Park	Camping	21,402	23,021	1,619	8%
Mission	Day Use	96,786	76,094	-20,692	-21%
64 vehicle-accessible campsites	Boating				
	Park Total	118,188	99,115		
<p><i>Less than an hour's drive from Vancouver, Rolley Lake Provincial Park provides a quick escape from urban life. The park is a predominately flat, wilderness area blanketed with tall, second-growth conifers. The small, warm-water lake provides opportunities for swimming, fishing, and canoeing. Sixty-four campsites are nestled in the trees just minutes from the lakeshore. Visitors can also enjoy picnicking and short hikes.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/rolley_lk">www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/rolley_lk</a></p>					

Source: 2014/15 Statistics Report [www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/research/research.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/research/research.html)

### **Golden Ears Provincial Park – Summer 2017 Visitor Survey**

In the summer of 2017, a visitor survey was conducted within the campground at Golden Ears Park. The delivery dates of the survey were strategically set to coincide with one of the busiest weeks of the year: Wednesday August 23 from 10am to 3pm and Saturday August 26 from 10am to 3pm. On the initial date, two interviewers conducted one-on-one interviews in two locations, the Alouette Lake day-use picnic area and the boat launch. On the second date, three teams were formed and surveys were conducted at the Alouette Lake day-use picnic area, boat launch, North Beach and Lower Falls.

Over the course of the two-day interview schedule, the number of surveys were categorized as follows:

- 242 surveys: 52 surveys were local residents and 190 parties were out-of-town visitors
- 1220 individuals: 272 were local and 948 were out-of-town visitors

### **Key Findings and Recommendations**

- Golden Ears Provincial Park attracts visitors from a variety of places of origin during one of the busiest visitor months in the calendar year – August
- Visitors from communities south of the Fraser River make up the highest concentration of visitors to the park, both in the day-use area and camping area
- 22% of the visitors to the park are local residents, 32% are from south of the Fraser and 17% are from Vancouver/Richmond
- 59% of visitors to the park stopped for services in the City of Maple Ridge, 52% stopped for groceries/picnic items on route to the park and 44% will include a stop in Maple Ridge on their way back to their place of origin
- 22% of visitors to the park will not include a stop in the City of Maple Ridge
- The main motivator for visitation is to enjoy the outdoors and natural beauty of the park
- Relaxing and spending time with friends and family is the main purpose of the visit to the park
- “Word of mouth” is now most visitors have heard about Golden Ears Provincial Park
- Many of the respondents asked questions about the park, the community and region, enabling the opportunity to provide visitors with guides, maps and other information tools
- Most of the visitors to the park from outside BC are from the visiting friends and relatives (VFR) market segment

There is overwhelming evidence that visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park include a stop in the City of Maple Ridge either prior to or after their time spent at the park. The survey results, extended conversations with visitors and review of the park infrastructure provided additional opportunities for future consideration that could result in additional economic benefits for local businesses in the City of Maple Ridge.

The full survey summary can be found in Appendix F. The summary outlines potential activities such as

- Mobile visitor services – “pop-up” visitor centre during peak season to provide information and encourage visits to the City of Maple Ridge businesses
- Partnerships – “pay-to-play” promotions to increase visitation to local business by park visitors
- Wayfinding – orientation may be encourage additional local business expenditures by park visitors



- Communication – community information made available on digital channels to encourage visitor engagement

## **Existing Marketing and Promotion**

### **The Provincial Context – Destination BC**

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

Over the next three years, Destination BC will be focused on three important goals for growth, as identified within their Corporate Strategy<sup>8</sup>:

- Visitors: secure the highest Net Promoter Score in North America
- Visitor Expenditures: lead Canada in growth of overnight visitor expenditures
- People: build a collaborative, insight-driven, results-focused team.

The five marketing objectives are:

1. Achieve annual increases in visitor expenditures and volumes from the top ten markets
2. Amplify and strengthen British Columbia's world reputation
3. Strengthen BC's brand health and resonance
4. Increase brand engagement and traveller advocacy
5. Achieve market leader status for travel trade relationships.

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

A few key Destination BC initiatives that may impact Maple Ridge include:

- BC's tourism brand creative and guidelines. There is significant effort being placed on industry leveraging and amplifying the BC destination brand with the tagline *Super, Natural British Columbia*<sup>9</sup>
- Application-based provincial Co-operative Marketing Partnerships Program<sup>10</sup> which replaced the Tourism Partners, Community Tourism Opportunities and Experiences BC programs
- Explorer Quotient program for tourism operators. Register with Destination BC: [tourismresearch@DestinationBC.ca](mailto:tourismresearch@DestinationBC.ca)
- Remarkable Experiences pilot program. The goals of the program are to support businesses over a period of time to: improve their digital and social media marketing skills; increase their Net Promoter Score<sup>11</sup>, and enhance the visitor experience of each individual business, but also the collective experience between businesses.

<sup>8</sup> Our Corporate Strategy, Destination BC: [strategy.destinationbc.ca/strategy-at-a-glance](http://strategy.destinationbc.ca/strategy-at-a-glance)

<sup>9</sup> New brand guidelines are available: [hwww.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Resources/british-columbia-tourism-brand/Our-Brand.pdf.aspx](http://hwww.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Resources/british-columbia-tourism-brand/Our-Brand.pdf.aspx)

<sup>10</sup> New program guidelines are available: [www.destinationbc.ca/Programs/Regions-Communities-and-Sectors/Destination-BC-Co-op-Marketing-Program.aspx](http://www.destinationbc.ca/Programs/Regions-Communities-and-Sectors/Destination-BC-Co-op-Marketing-Program.aspx)

<sup>11</sup> Background on the Net Promoter Score is available: [www.destinationbc.ca/Resources/Monitoring-and-Evaluation/Net-Promoter-Score.aspx](http://www.destinationbc.ca/Resources/Monitoring-and-Evaluation/Net-Promoter-Score.aspx)

- Provincial Marketing Strategy with a focus on Captivate, Advocate and Generate<sup>12</sup>
  - Captivate: Create an emotional connection with BC in the minds of global consumers. This strategy will drive visitation by fostering an emotional connection between the target audience and British Columbia through alignment around the BC destination brand, inspirational storytelling to passionate audiences and data-driven marketing
  - Advocate: Amplify traveller advocacy about BC. This strategy will drive visitation by amplifying the power of peer to peer recommendations to influence potential travellers to visit BC thereby increasing reach and impact
  - Generate: Lead generation for BC tourism businesses and travel trade. This strategy will increase referrals for tourism business in BC by leveraging the strength of global relationships and technological capabilities
- A strong focus on Destination Development and planning

Destination BC is working with the Visitor Services Network and the entire tourism industry to expand the delivery of visitor services for the future, by creating more contemporary and innovative approaches to serving our guests' information needs as they travel throughout the province.

Usage of the Province's network of Visitor Centres has seen a decline with 740,000 fewer visitors in 2014 than in 2005. The traditional approach of welcoming travellers into bricks and mortar locations alone no longer has the broad economic impact that can be achieved by a strategy that also capitalizes on the many other information channels available to visitors today. Destination BC is encouraging communities to evolve their visitor information services to incorporate forward-thinking online, mobile and crowd-sourcing channels. Destination BC's funding for Visitor Centres will continue for three years however, this is seen as a transition period to allow local Visitor Centres to plan ahead. An Innovation Fund has been established to allow communities to expand the delivery of visitor services and to create more contemporary and innovative approaches to serve visitors' information needs as they travel throughout BC.

In 2016, the application-based Visitor Services Innovation Fund provided \$300,000 in support to full-service member of the Visitor Services Network Program. 52 projects across BC included mobile kiosks, roaming visitor counselors, branded tents and banners for outreach activities, state-of-the-art electronic touch screen kiosks and social media channels. The 2017 fund is once again making \$300,000 available for full-status Visitor Services Network members. New Projects are expected to begin as early as April 1, 2017 and must be completed by December 31, 2017.

The Maple Ridge Visitor Centre is no longer a part of the official Destination BC Visitor Centre network and consequently is not currently eligible for Innovation Funding. As noted in the strategies section, it may be worthwhile exploring re-joining the network.

### **The Regional Context – Vancouver, Coast and Mountains Tourism Region**

British Columbia is divided into six tourism regions. Five regions in BC have a destination management organization whose mandate is to enhance the regional visitor economy for the benefit of business and communities through destination marketing and management activities.

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<sup>12</sup> Destination BC's provincial marketing strategy <http://strategy.destinationbc.ca/our-marketing-strategy/>



The Vancouver, Coast and Mountains tourism region is one of the six regional destinations in BC but it is managed by Destination BC directly, rather than through a separate organization. Through the co-op programs, Destination BC offers tourism stakeholders within the region the opportunity to participate in marketing initiatives at reduced costs.

A few key initiatives from Destination BC that may impact Maple Ridge include:

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

### **Sector Marketing Organizations**

In BC, there are several sector based marketing organizations that can help to promote experiences in the Maple Ridge area. Partnerships with these organizations are considered in the strategy section below:

1. Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC (AtBC) – AtBC promotes Aboriginal tourism operators throughout the Province. See [www.aboriginalbc.com](http://www.aboriginalbc.com) for more information
2. Mountain Biking Tourism Association: The trails in Golden Ears Provincial Park are currently represented on the Mountain Bike Tourism Association (MBTA) website: [www.mountainbikingbc.ca](http://www.mountainbikingbc.ca)
3. BC Lodging and Campground Association [www.travel-british-columbia.com](http://www.travel-british-columbia.com)



## **Local Marketing and Promotion**

Until 2016, Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows combined resources to fund Tourism Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows. That relationship ended and marketing investments since then have been managed by the City of Maple Ridge and have included the Maple Ridge visitor guide, maintenance of website presence on the city's website: [www.mapleridge.ca/330/Tourism](http://www.mapleridge.ca/330/Tourism).

Local tourism businesses market themselves with signage, websites, brochures and word of mouth. Several accommodation properties are part of larger chains and benefit from corporate promotional efforts.

The City of Maple Ridge undertakes marketing efforts associated with Economic Development.

Maple Ridge is promoted by Destination BC on their primary consumer website [www.hellobc.com](http://www.hellobc.com). Maple Ridge has its own community pages at [www.hellobc.com/maple-ridge.aspx](http://www.hellobc.com/maple-ridge.aspx). Overall visitation to Hellobc.com is almost 9 million visitors annually.<sup>13</sup> Of this, there were 43,103 page views of the Vancouver, Coast and Mountains section of the website in 2016, and 4,750 page views of Maple Ridge's section.<sup>14</sup>

A review of this provincial website indicates that Maple Ridge is positioned as 45-minutes east of downtown Vancouver, offering a blend of authentic rural activities and urban amenities, much like neighbouring Pitt Meadows.

The content on these pages notes the greenery-laden, mountain-ringed community next to the Fraser River. The rich past, local historic and heritage sites and festivals and events are all highlighted.

The Outdoor Activities content features bird watching, cycling, fishing, golfing or horseback riding as well as enjoying the [Circle Farm Tour](#).

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

Investments to date have been modest but have set a foundation for additional target market penetration either with the current budget or with a budget supplemented by an approved MRDT. These resources can be leveraged in future with additional cooperative marketing programs accessing Destination BC's open pool funds. As well, the investments made by several Provincial sector organizations (AtBC, Mountain Biking BC, BC Lodging and Campground Association) can be considered for further leveraging of brand and messaging to target travellers.

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<sup>13</sup> As reported by Destination BC

<sup>14</sup> As reported by Destination BC

## Appendix E - Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats for Tourism in Maple Ridge

The tourism strategies that follow are intended to leverage Maple Ridge's tourism strengths and seize high return opportunities while being cognizant of the weaknesses and threats being faced.

### Strengths

(Strengths are characteristics of Maple Ridge that give it advantage over others)

- Proximity to large urban population in the Lower Mainland with relatively easy highway access
- Proximity to US Border
- Scenic beauty – mountains, lakes and rivers including Golden Ears Park, Fraser River, Alouette Lake, UBC Research Forest
- High awareness levels of nearby Golden Ears Provincial Park for camping, hiking, lake and river based activities
- Family friendly activities/infrastructure – dike trails, Whonnock Lake, Memorial Peace Park/programming – Farmers' Market, entertainment
- Walkable downtown
- Agricultural land base and growing number of unique agri-tourism businesses
- The ACT – performance venue and range of cultural offerings
- History and heritage of First Nations and post-contact settlement as stories to be shared with visitors
- Several excellent festivals/events that offer potential as travel motivators if investments are made in scope/scale of programming – Caribbean Fest, Country Fest, Haney Farmers Market, BC Film Festival
- Sport tourism infrastructure in place for hosting regional/provincial/national events
- Thoughtful and passionate residents
- Local MLA – Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture
- Leadership of Economic Initiatives team, Mayor/Council and Tourism Task Force
- Financial commitment by City for tourism coordination and marketing - \$95,000/year 2018-2022

### Weaknesses

(Con are characteristics of Maple Ridge that place it at a disadvantage relative to others)

- Commuter traffic volume from Lower Mainland is a deterrent at peak travel times
- Limited viable public transit options
- Incomplete network of paved multi-use trails connecting Maple Ridge to its neighbours (Pitt Meadows, Port Coquitlam)
- Limited number of experiences available to monetize visitation to Provincial Parks
- Low awareness levels and unclear brand messaging related to 'why visit Maple Ridge'
- Lack of market-ready Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences
- Road cycling infrastructure/wayfinding is unsafe in high-traffic areas

### Opportunities

(Opportunities are elements in the tourism environment that Maple Ridge can exploit to its advantage)

- Strength of US Dollar is encouraging more American visitation and keeping more Canadians at home
- Growing use of social media/mobile technology for information gathering by travellers both in the planning stage of their trip and while in destination

- Growing interest by many travellers in authentic Aboriginal cultural experiences
- Focus on collaborative opportunities and leverage of partnership dollars with Destination BC, Provincial sector-based marketing organizations
- Opportunity to enhance municipal financial contributions with contribution by industry in the form of MRDT (consumer accommodation tax)
- 54 communities/areas in BC have enabled the MRDT making this addition to the room charge of little concern to travellers
- Increasing opportunities and resources to support sport tourism/event hosting  
[www.gov.bc.ca/eventhosting](http://www.gov.bc.ca/eventhosting)
- Segments of travelling marketplace are finding Vancouver too expensive and are looking for more value oriented options, particularly in high season
- Continued inclusion/participation in Scenic 7 and Circle Farm Tour marketing initiatives ([Scenic 7 website](#) recently updated; ensure the leveraging of this investment)
- Leveraging the impact of the 2020 BC Summer Games – ensuring investment spent to secure the sporting event reaches its full potential

### **Threats**

(Threats are elements in the tourism or business environment that could cause trouble for Maple Ridge)

- Variable weather affecting key tourism attractions (mountain biking, snowpack etc.)
- Threats/declines in wildlife populations
- Regulations on access to backcountry
- Impact of global warming and its impact on climate, water level and health of wildlife, in general
- Economic uncertainties affect disposable income and travel plans

## Appendix F – Tourism Forum Notes

### Maple Ridge Tourism Forum – June 12<sup>th</sup> NOTES

#### Best Tourism Experiences

- Dyke access: walking, cycling (safe, family rides/multi-use)
- Dam: trails, tours
- Whonnock Lake: canoeing, kayaking, paddleboarding, paddleboats (clubs and equipment rentals)
- Golden Ears Park: camping, hiking
- UBC research forest
- Horse-riding / trail-riding
- Biking woodlot
- Lots of continuous kms for cycling without intersections and stops – some alignment with agritourism
- Waterways: tubing
- Hot Rocks / Davidson's Pools
- Wildplay
- Agritourism
- Cheesecrafters
- Arts
- Festivals: 35+ (Caribbean Festival, Music on Wharf, Classical Music, Film Fest (2<sup>nd</sup> annual in 2017))
- Opportunities: 256<sup>th</sup> / 272<sup>nd</sup> / Thornhill / Mill Lake / UBC forest for mountain biking

#### Opportunities

- Message to residents: "Bring your imagination home" – live and work in MR, not just commute
- Wider road shoulders for cycling or preferably separate bike lanes / multi-use paths
- Wayfinding
- Apps – Maps – Signage: for cycling and hiking (consistent, accurate and frequent updates)
- Address vehicle congestion when events in downtown core e.g. dance competitions at ACT
- Very little water access on a 30km stretch of water – address rail line restrictions, bridges, etc.
- Lack of knowledge by visitors of trail access; out of date trail map
- East Maple Ridge roads could be enhanced for cycling
- Viewpoints exist: improve access and awareness
- Trail promotions
- Collaboration with neighbouring destinations on cycle routes – ensure amenities every 50 to 60 kms
- Maple Ridge "Grind" hike
- Collaboration with neighbours (Pitt Meadows)
- Collaboration with First Nations
- Municipal campground
- Indoor adventure opportunities
- Welcoming existing adventure providers to Maple Ridge
- Enhancing riverfront/historic areas
- Enhancing industrial areas for adventure
- Agritourism: public experiences (i.e. U-Pick)

- Enhancing evening marketing (drawing the after 7pm crowd)
- Strengthening 224<sup>th</sup> /downtown core
- Utilizing fairgrounds

### **Short-term Opportunities**

- Trail network exists (200km) – build awareness, maintenance, mapping
- Trail map – print/digital on city website (including options to get here – West Coast Express, Skytrain); include regional connections
- Create routes and itineraries for different types of cyclists (families, mountain bikers, etc.)
- Work with Pitt Meadows, Port Coquitlam, Langley to create routes
- Promote “Stay in Maple Ridge”
- Incentivize businesses to offer trail services – rentals, guiding, etc.
- Seasonal offerings in restaurants – eating seasonally
- Maintain town centre/core – avoid sprawl
- BIA + Chamber engagement: get them onside for promotions
- Film Festival – more activities around
- Fishing
- Mountain biking
- Hiking
- Indoor activities – pub crawl, art tour
- Wedding / conference facilities

### **Long-term Opportunities**

- Connecting bike routes
- Partnering between city / local business to encourage
- Water transportation on river
- Utilize Scenic 7
- ETF – Explore the Fraser
- Cell tower in Golden Ears Park
- Infrastructure improvements – extend multi-use trail from Pitt Meadows past 256<sup>th</sup>
- Investigate mountain biking opportunities in Maple Ridge
- UBC research forest (outside of research areas)

### **Constraints to Growth**

- Funding for change/improvements
- Internal mind-shift of citizens – Maple Ridge is good!
- Local youth should be engaged
- Rectify bad press for Maple Ridge
- Political will
- Lack of vision – what is the commitment?
- Residents don’t see our potential
- Older generation holding on to the past – need to promote history of Maple Ridge
- Transit challenges
- Collaboration with Chamber

### **Benefit to Residents**

- Economic Development

- New business opportunities
- Potential for better transit

## **Maple Ridge Tourism Forum – June 19<sup>th</sup> NOTES**

### **Best Tourism Experiences**

- Festivals: Caribbean, Country Fest, Music on the Wharf, GETI (September – sustainability theme)
- Fish hatchery (2)
- ACT / Remembrance Day
- Arts Studio Tour
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Christmas Festival
- Historical Society – museum, Haney House, cemetery walk, downtown walk
- Library – Local Voices program
- “Play box” – get key at Rec Centre – use and return
- Wedding venue – church and Haney House
- Cheesecrafters – retail
- Hopcotts – venue and retail (Pitt Meadows)
- Skye heli glacier dinners (Pitt Meadows)
- Circle Farm Tours
- Winery (Blue Heron)
- Haney Farmers market – opportunity to intercept visitors

### **Enhancements Required**

- weather-protected / rainy day options
- “signature” event in shoulder season – e.g. extreme sport such as Tough Mudder
- National Historic Site needed on this side of the river
- Geo-caching – increase the number (7 sites launched June 2017)
- Need inventory of farm experiences for Circle Farm Tour additions
- Multi-use paths on both sides of the road for cycle tourism to farms (and bridges on horse paths)
- Signage / way-finding
- On-site signage at farm experiences
- Parking at events / businesses (visitor ready)
- Social media promotion – invest in content curation

### **Short-term Opportunities**

- Market what we have - content creation/curation
- Build community pride
- Heritage – stories – markers – tour – app
- Conceptualize signature event
- Engage with First Nations – support launch of authentic cultural experiences – integrate into all programs, marketing’
- Seasonal “Kick-off” celebration to agricultural season
- Farm to table / long table dinners
- Cranberry harvesting (photo opportunities for social media; learning opportunities)

- Pumpkin patch, Halloween experiences
- Seasonal offerings e.g. Easter
- Incorporate Maple Ridge history of agriculture into experiences – social media stories (e.g. Throwback Thursday (#tbt) posts of historical agricultural images
- Promotion of existing opportunities – social media – seasonal messages based on farm cycles
- Venue promotion – off season – e.g. farm weddings/meetings
- Golden Harvest event (October) – promote and enhance
- Buy local programs – support Chamber and BIA events

### **Benefit to Residents and Community**

- Vibrancy
- New businesses / new experiences
- Local employment opportunities
- Community pride
- Enhanced events / amenities used by residents and visitors
- Additional opportunities added each year – increase visitation to local businesses
- Education on food sources
- More support for local farm businesses
- Experiences can be promoted to local school groups as field trips
- Local engagement in Circle Farm Tour - options for visiting friends and relatives



## Appendix G – Visitor Survey – Golden Ears Provincial Park August 2017

# THE CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE



## GOLDEN EARS PROVINCIAL PARK VISITOR SURVEY August 23 and August 26, 2017



**Prepared for:**  
The City of Maple Ridge  
Economic Development Department  
Lino Siracusa, Mgr. Economic Development

**Prepared by:**  
Deborah Kulchiski Consulting



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As identified in the Maple Ridge Tourism Strategy, 2018 – 2020 prepared by the Centre for Sustainability Whistler, and the Maple Ridge Five-Year Tourism Strategy (2017) prepared by consultants Suzanne Denbak and Laura Plant, tourism is a recognized contributor to the local economy, with estimated tourism revenues of approximately \$41 million as of 2015.

Insights to tourism-related opportunities conclude that tourism can help support the City of Maple Ridge growth targets and therefore, gaining a better understanding of the perception visitors have of the area as well as further understanding the visitor needs and preferences will provide direction to marketing decisions, project funding decisions, product development decisions and revenue planning decisions. Research will enable the City of Maple Ridge to make informed decisions and utilize the limited resources to achieve the best results as well as aid in determining opportunities to increase the economic impact of visitors to the community.

One of the goals of the short-term tourism deliverables was to deliver a visitor survey, targeting locations that achieve high visitor volume traffic. Data from BC Parks identified that Golden Ears Provincial Park, ideally located just 14 km from the downtown core of the City of Maple Ridge, is one of the busiest parks in the province. Annual attendance in Golden Ears Provincial Park reached 678,517 day use visitors and 120,427 campers in 2015, an increase of approximately 13% compared to the previous year. \*

Reaching existing park visitors can provide resources that can be leveraged to attract and increase visitation in the City of Maple Ridge.

The delivery dates of the survey were strategically set to coincide with one of the busiest weeks of the year. The dates and times were as follows:

- Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm; 2 interviewers
- Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm; 7 interviewers

On the initial date, the one-on-one interviews were conducted in two locations within Golden Ears Provincial Park; the Alouette Lake day-use picnic area and the boat launch. On the second date, 3 teams were formed and surveys were conducted at the Alouette Lake day-use picnic area, boat launch, North Beach and Lower Falls.

Over the course of the two-day interview schedule, the number of surveys were categorized as follows;

- **242** surveys; **52** surveys were made up of local residents and **190** parties were out-of-town visitors
- **1220** individuals; **272** individuals were local and **948** individuals were out-of-town visitors

Note: This was not a scientific survey, however, still provides considerable information for tourism planning purposes.

\* BC Parks 2014/2015 Statistics Report [www.env.gov.bc.ca](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca)

## INTRODUCTION

The project lead Deborah Kulchiski was hired on contract as a Tourism Coordinator from the period of May 23 to October 20, 2017 to develop and deliver short-term tourism initiatives.

The purpose of the survey was to develop a profile of existing visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park and region. This included determining the demographic of the visitor, the duration of their visit, the length and frequency of their visit, the reason for their visit, what activities they participated in while in the park, how they sourced information about Golden Ears Provincial park and surrounding area prior to their visit, and most importantly, do they include a stop or visit in the City of Maple Ridge during their time in the region and do they contribute to the local economy through purchases of local products and/or services. A copy of the person-to-person survey is attached (Appendix I).

Due to budget constraints, the survey undertaken was not a scientific survey. The representative face-to-face interviews were conducted by a team of the City of Maple Ridge Parks, Recreation and Culture employees. (Refer to acknowledgements, page 10).

This survey acts as an accompaniment to the Maple Ridge Five-Year Tourism Strategy (July 2017) developed by consultants Suzanne Denbak and Laura Plant and City of Maple Ridge Ten Year Cultural Plan. The results of this survey will help to identify and provide some insight to the characteristics, travel patterns and influencers of visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park and the City of Maple Ridge. In addition, the results will ensure the ability to effectively target desired audiences in future destination marketing and program initiatives.

## KEY FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Golden Ears Provincial Park attracts visitors from a variety of places of origin during one of the busiest visitor months in the calendar year; August.
  - o Visitors from communities south of the Fraser River make up the highest concentration of visitors to the park, both in the day-use area and camping area.
  - o 22% of the visitors to the park are local residents 32% of the visitors to the park are from the south of the Fraser River and 17% of visitors were from Vancouver/Richmond.
  - o 59% of visitors to the park stopped for services in the City of Maple Ridge, 52% of visitors to the park stopped for groceries/picnic items on route to the park and 44% of visitors will include a stop in Maple Ridge on their way back to their place of origin.
  - o 22% of visitors to the park will not include a stop in the City of Maple Ridge.
  - o The main motivator for visitation is to enjoy the outdoors and natural beauty of the park.
  - o Relaxing, and spending time with friends and family is the main purpose of the visit to the park.
  - o “Word of mouth” is how most visitors have heard about Golden Ears Provincial Park.
  - o Many of the respondents asked questions about the park, the community and region, enabling the opportunity to provide visitors with guides, maps and other information tools.
  - o Most of the visitors to the park from outside of BC are from the “visiting friends and relatives” (VFR) market segment.

There is overwhelming evidence that visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park include a stop in the City of Maple Ridge either prior to or after their time spent at the park. The survey results, extended conversations with visitors and review of the park infrastructure provided additional opportunities for future consideration that could result in additional economic benefits for local businesses in the City of Maple Ridge.

1. Mobile Visitor Services

- The City of Maple Ridge currently operates a community-level, municipally funded visitor services program within the Economic Development office. The location is difficult to locate and hours of

operation are limited. A “pop-up” visitor service program or “mobile” visitor service program during the peak visitor season could provide valuable information services to visitors to the park. This would include wayfinding (maps), visitor guides and pertinent information regarding businesses and services in the City of Maple Ridge.

## 2. Partnerships

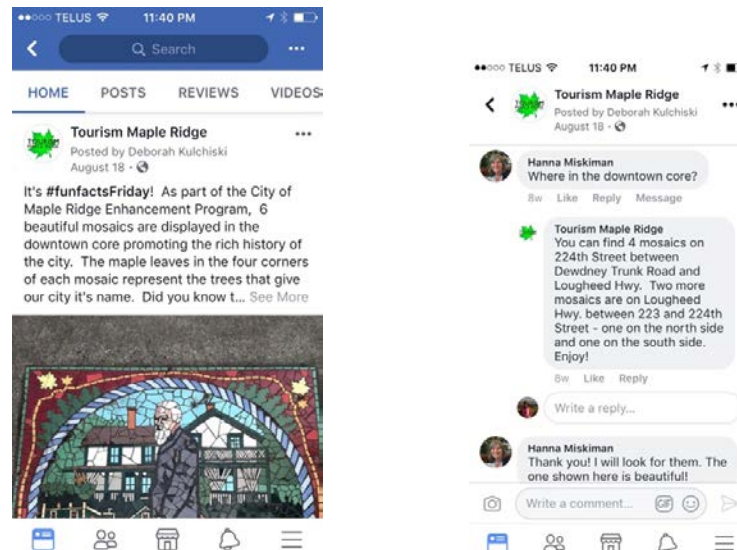
- Develop and implement opportunities for local businesses to participate in promotions aimed at targeting visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park. This may be through “packaging” or “pay-to-play” programs that would increase visitation to local businesses and encourage additional spend. Example: Overnight visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park campsite are eligible for a 10% discount at a local business if they show their campsite receipt.

## 3. Wayfinding

- Enhanced signage and improved wayfinding system to provide ease of travel and better connections between gateways, the downtown core and the road leading to Golden Ears Provincial Park. Orientation of visitors to the park will assist them in navigating their way through the city on route to their destination and may encourage additional local business expenditures.

## 4. Communication

- The internet and digital promotion has revolutionised the distribution of visitor information as it provides direct access to the end consumer. It is recommended to “push” community information on digital channels (Website, Facebook and Instagram) on a regular basis to reach target audience and encourage engagement/conversations with visitors and potential visitors. Example:



## 5. Marketing & Promotion

- Focus on a marketing and promotion campaign, tailoring content and ad strategies to the demographics offering the most potential for growth and increased local expenditures while

at the same time, raising more awareness to the City of Maple Ridge and its local businesses and services.

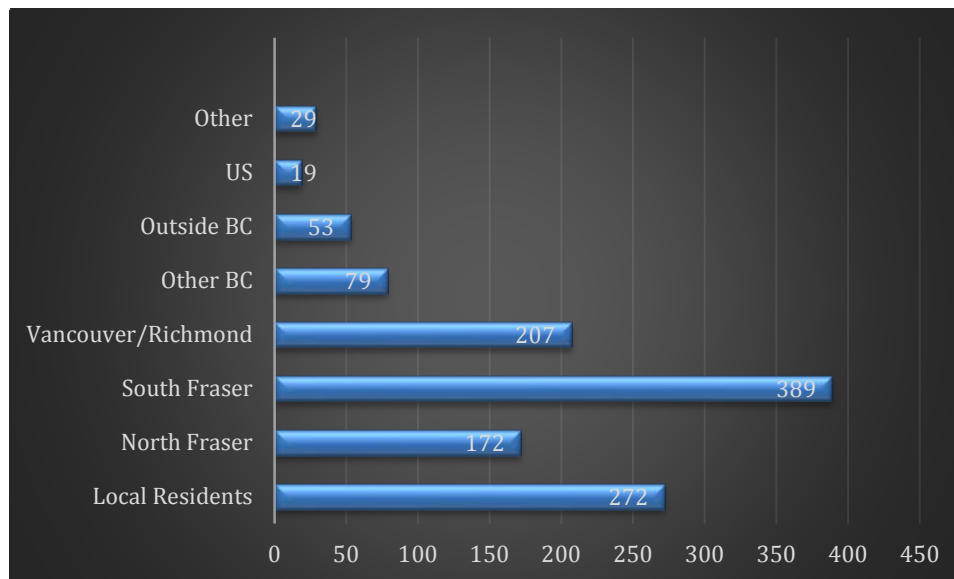
## PART ONE

The following section details the demographic profile of the respondents to the conducted survey. The first five questions related to;

- Visitors place of origin
- How they arrived at the park
- How many people were in their party
- How long they planned to stay in the park, and
- How often they visit Golden Ears Provincial Park on an annual basis.

### Figure 1: Place of Origin of Visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park

*Note: To ensure more detail, this question was evaluated on the total number of visitors (1220). This is because in most cases, the survey parties were made up of visitors from more than one place of origin.*



### Demographic Description:

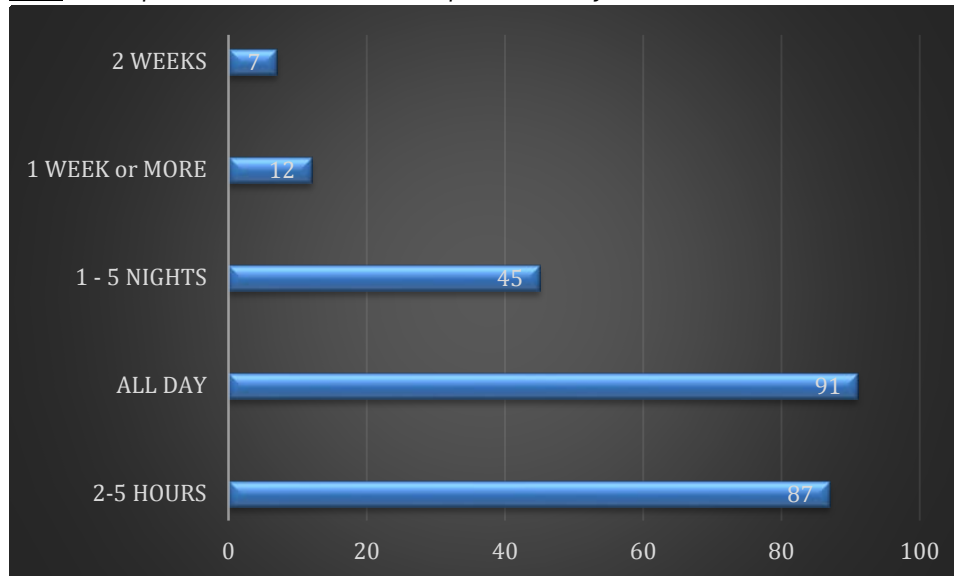
Local Residents	- Maple Ridge
North Fraser	- Port Moody to Hope
South Fraser	- Delta, Surrey, Langley, Abbotsford and Chilliwack
Vancouver/Richmond	- including Burnaby
Other BC	- remainder of BC
Outside BC	- rest of Canada
US	- US states
Other	- other international places of origin

In total, **272** visitors were from Maple Ridge (22%), and approximately 17% of visitors were from Vancouver/Richmond. The strongest demographic travelled from communities within the South Fraser region and made up almost 32% of the visitors to the park. Travellers from other parts of BC made up approximately 6% of the demographic profile.

While the question was asked how visitors arrived at the park based on the available modes of transportation that include “ParkBus” service from Metro Vancouver, 100% of the surveyed respondents arrived by vehicle.

**Figure 2: Length of Stay**

*Note: This question relates to the 242 parties surveyed.*

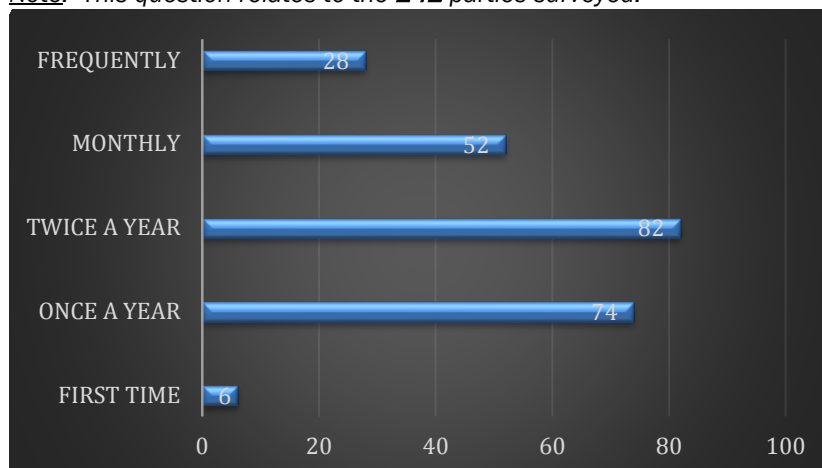


Approximately 38% of the respondents planned to stay for the full day while approximately 36% of respondents planned to stay for a shorter period. Approximately 19% of the respondents were camping in one of the park campsites and staying for less than a week, while 5% of those camping were staying for 1 week or more. The maximum allotted overnight stays in BC provincial parks is two weeks and approximately 3% of those camping was staying the maximum allowable time.

*Memorable note: One party that was made up of 6 family members were evacuees from the Williams Lake, BC area. They chose to camp at Golden Ears Provincial Park rather than settle in one of the evacuation sites. They enjoyed their two-week experience so much, that they had recently returned for another two-week stay as part of their vacation time.*

**Figure 3: Frequency of Annual Visitation to Golden Ears Provincial Park**

*Note: This question relates to the 242 parties surveyed.*

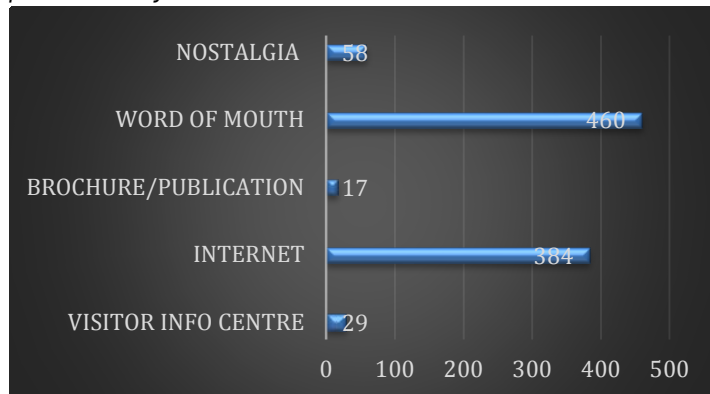


Of the 242 parties surveyed, approximately 34% of respondents visit and experience the park at least twice a year. This was closely followed by approximately 31% of respondents who include a

visit to Golden Ears Provincial Park annually and 21% of those visit the park monthly during the peak visitor months of May through to September. 12% of visitors visit the park more frequently than monthly, while there were a few parties (2%) that were experiencing the park offerings for the first time.

**Figure 4: How Visitors Sourced Information about Golden Ears Provincial Park prior to their visit.**

*Note: This question relates to the total number of visitors and there were multiple responses from the 242 parties surveyed.*

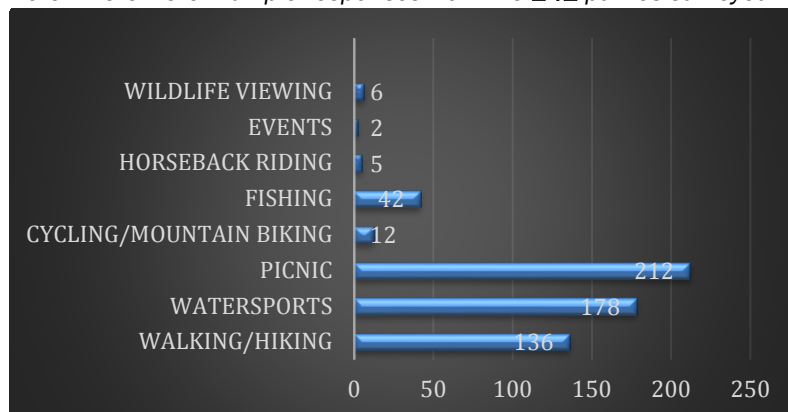


Of the 1220 visitors surveyed, 948 visitors were identified to be from out-of-town. The results of this question reflect those out-of-town visitors, as it can be concluded that residents are naturally familiar with Golden Ears Provincial Park. Approximately 49% of respondents stated they chose to visit Golden Ears Park because they were influenced by other visitors (word-of-mouth) while 40% of those visitors sourced the internet for any information about the park. Only 3% of visitors to the park utilized the services of community Visitor Centres.

*Memorable Note: Upon conversations with the out-of-town visitors, 6% of those surveyed noted they continue to visit the park for sentimental reasons, having fond childhood memories and experiences at the park. They return on a regular basis with their own family and friends. "Nostalgia tourism" is a growing trend in destination development.*

**Figure 5: Primary activities of visitors to Golden Ears Provincial Park**

*Note: There were multiple responses from the 242 parties surveyed.*



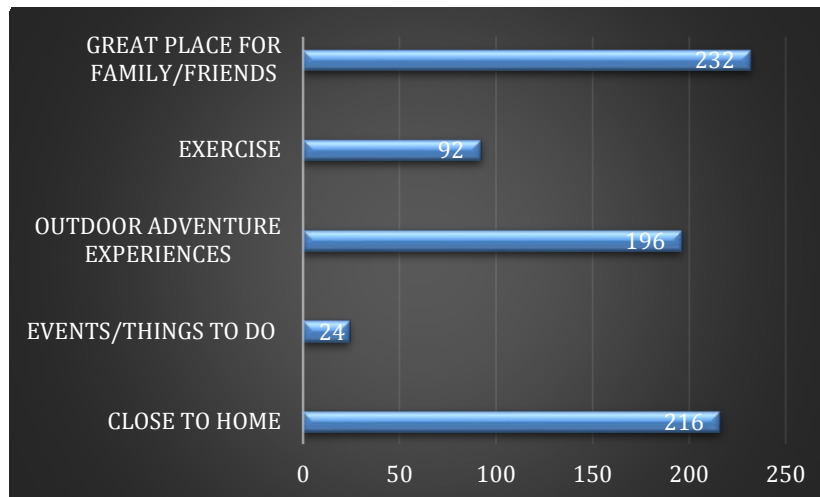
Of the 242 parties surveyed, there were a variety of activities visitors engaged in during their time spent in the park. The results proved to be indicative of the various survey sites. For example: The majority of respondents visiting the Alouette day-use area and North Beach area were including a picnic in their activities. They were most likely to enjoy water activities such as swimming, floating and kayaking.



The majority of respondents interviewed at the boat launch were engaging in watersports. Some were including fishing. Respondents interviewed at the Lower Falls area were engaged in walking/hiking and wildlife viewing activities. Approximately 88% of visitors to the park included a picnic in their time spent, with approximately 74% of those visitors including a walk or hike in their activities.

**Figure 6: Why Visitors Choose Golden Ears Park to visit**

*Note: There were multiple responses from the 242 parties surveyed.*



It has been determined that there are a variety of reasons why visitors choose Golden Ears Provincial Park as a leisure destination. Over 95% of those surveyed agreed that the park is a great place for family and friends. This includes the “visiting family and friends” (VFR) market segment, which accounted for the visitors from the International, US and other parts of Canada places of origin. 89% of the visitors surveyed visit the park because it is close to home. Note: the survey was conducted prior to the bridge toll removal. Visitors did not believe the tolls to be a determining factor when choosing to travel to Golden Ears Provincial Park.

Over 80% of those visitors to the park are seeking nature and the outdoor experience; either soft or hard adventure that includes hiking and watersports.

**Figure 7: Visitors who spent time in the City of Maple Ridge and the purpose of time spent.**

*Note: There were multiple responses from the 242 parties surveyed.*



The results of this question relate only to those respondents who are represented in the **190** out-of-town parties as it can be concluded that the **52** parties (residents) from Maple Ridge locally source their supplies and services.

The survey determined approximately 59% of out-of-town visitors to the park either stopped in Maple Ridge on the way, or intend to stop on the way home for services such as fuel.

Approximately 52% of visitors to the park either stopped or intend to stop for groceries in Maple Ridge and 44% of those visitors will include a stop for either a meal or light snack (i.e. ice-cream, gelato, coffee, etc.).

22% of the visitors surveyed did not stop in the City on route to the park, and at the time of the interview, did not have plans to stop on their way home.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to acknowledge several individuals, for without their assistance and support, the success of this survey would not have been possible;

Joanna Ward, Human Resources Associate, City of Maple Ridge. Joanna was instrumental in coordinating a team of interviewers to assist in the survey project. The survey team was made up of six (6) City of Maple Ridge Parks, Recreation and Culture employees; Youth Workers Ashley Millen, Megan Millen, Elijah Wooten, Robert Harrison and Alysia Bassani, Parks, Recreation and Culture employee Steve Quinlan and City of Maple Ridge Bylaw Officer Rob Letts.

Their professional approach to the interviews and commitment to the project was instrumental to the ability to source quantitative, visitor-centric information.

## APPENDIX i



1. What is your place of residence?
2. How did you arrive here today?    Vehicle/walk/bike/transit/other
3. How many people are in your party?
4. How long do you anticipate staying in the park today?  
\_\_\_\_\_ # of hours                      \_\_\_\_\_ # of nights
5. How often do you frequent this park?  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1x per year    \_\_\_\_\_ 2x per year    \_\_\_\_\_ monthly    \_\_\_\_\_ more frequent
6. Why did you choose this park today?
  - a. Close to home
  - b. Events/Things to see and do
  - c. Outdoor adventure experiences
  - d. Exercise
  - e. Great place to bring family
7. What are the primary activities you engage in at this park

Walking/hiking	wildlife viewing
Watersports	fishing
Picnic	horseback riding
Cycling/mtn. biking	events
8. Did you (or will you) spend time in the City of Maple Ridge? If so, what type of services will you be seeking?

- Supplies
  - Services
  - Retail shopping
  - Food and Beverage
9. How did you source any pre-visit information about the park before your visit?
- a. Visitor Information Centre (location)
  - b. Internet
  - c. Brochure/Guide
  - d. Word of Mouth
10. \_\_\_\_\_M \_\_\_\_\_F      Please tell us your age? \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCAL RESIDENTS:**

11. Do you think the City of Maple Ridge should be increasing their efforts in marketing and promoting the city?
- Why? \_\_\_\_\_ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Aside from Golden Ears Provincial Park, what would you recommend visitors see or experience in Maple Ridge?

**APPENDIX II**

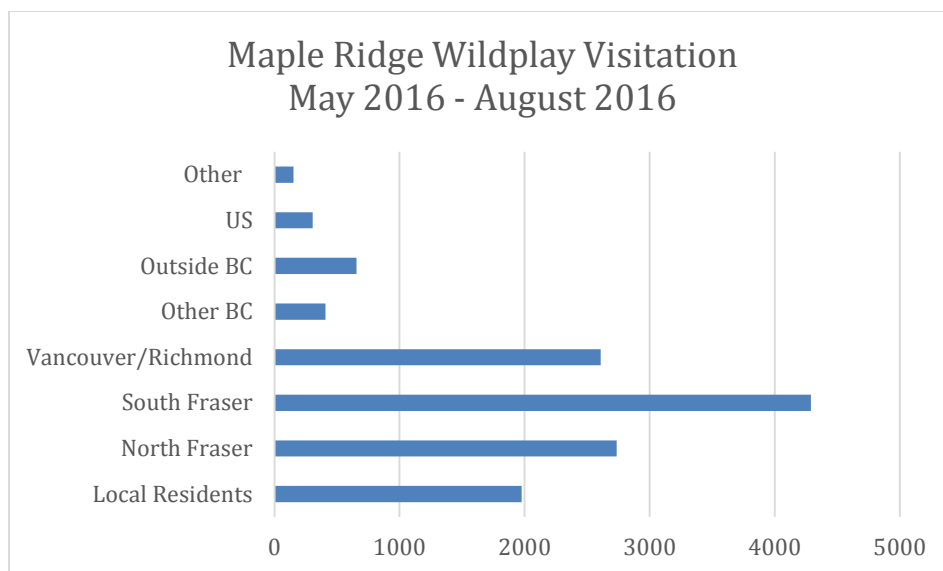
**BC PARKS STATISTICS REPORT    2014/15**  
**Attendance and Revenue by Park**

Region	Park	Activity	Attendance				Revenue			
			2013/14	2014/15	Difference	% change	2013/14	2014/15	Difference	% change
SC	Cultus Lake Park	Camping	79,297	88,162	8,865	11%	\$ 709,637	\$ 772,812	\$ 63,176	9%
		Day Use	752,289	820,166	67,877	9%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Boating	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>831,586</b>	<b>908,328</b>	<b>76,742</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>\$ 709,637</b>	<b>\$ 772,812</b>	<b>\$ 63,176</b>	<b>9%</b>
SC	Cypress Park	Camping	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Day Use	1,415,033	929,982	- 485,051	-34%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Boating	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>1,415,033</b>	<b>929,982</b>	<b>- 485,051</b>	<b>-34%</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>
SC	Desolation Sound Marine Park	Camping	-	3,178	3,178	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Day Use	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Boating	46,739	43,543	- 3,196	-7%	\$ -	\$ 12,362	\$ 12,362	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>46,739</b>	<b>46,721</b>	<b>- 18</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 12,362</b>	<b>\$ 12,362</b>	<b>-</b>
SC	Emory Creek Park	Camping	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Day Use	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Boating	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>
SC	Francis Point Park	Camping	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Day Use	32,325	9,219	- 23,106	-71%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Boating	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>32,325</b>	<b>9,219</b>	<b>- 23,106</b>	<b>-71%</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>
SC	Garden Bay Marine Park	Camping	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Day Use	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Boating	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>
SC	Garibaldi Park	Camping	11,785	11,893	108	1%	\$ 99,514	\$ 100,289	\$ 774	1%
		Day Use	85,366	84,987	- 379	0%	\$ 167	\$ 16,157	\$ 15,990	9594%
		Boating	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>97,151</b>	<b>96,880</b>	<b>- 271</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>\$ 99,681</b>	<b>\$ 116,446</b>	<b>\$ 16,765</b>	<b>17%</b>
SC	Golden Ears Park	Camping	107,098	120,427	13,329	12%	\$ 900,630	\$ 1,012,684	\$ 112,055	12%
		Day Use	596,260	678,517	82,257	14%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		Boating	-	-	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
		<b>PARK TOTAL</b>	<b>703,358</b>	<b>798,944</b>	<b>95,586</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>\$ 900,630</b>	<b>\$ 1,012,684</b>	<b>\$ 112,055</b>	<b>12%</b>

Source: BC Parks 2014/2015 Statistics Report [www.env.gov.bc.ca](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca)

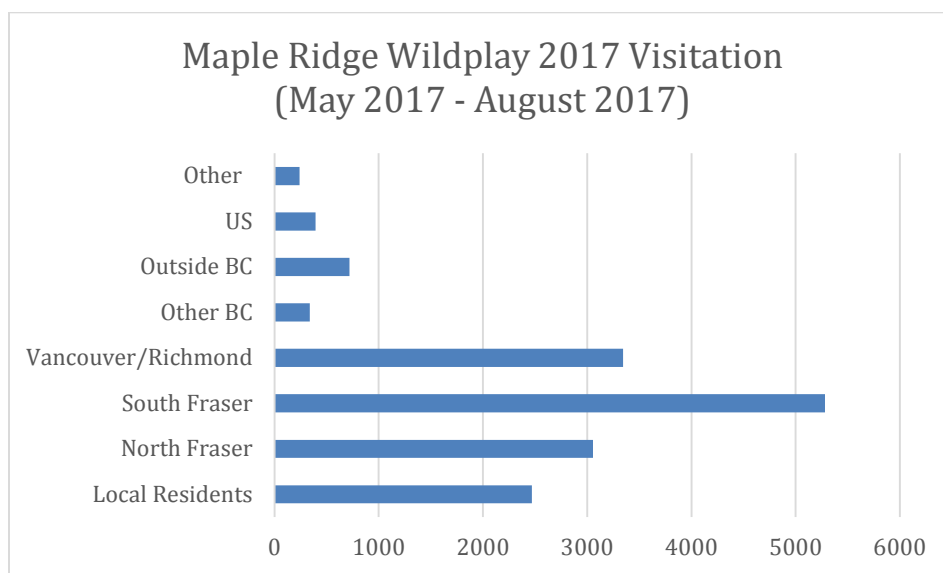
### Appendix iii

An interview with Kailla Bentley, Park Manager at Maple Ridge WildPlay Elements Park in July, 2017 identified that a). there is a high visitation rate from guests at WildPlay who are overnight campers and/or day-trippers to Golden Ears Provincial Park. The Park Manager also explained the strong visitation from out-of-town guest's attributes significantly to the strong retail sales, providing climbing supplies and souvenirs. The following statistics identify the demographics of visitors to WildPlay during the peak visitor months of May through to the end of August for 2016 and 2017.



Local Residents	1,975	Other BC	408
North Fraser	2,736	Outside BC	656
South Fraser	4,290	US	305
Vancouver/Richmond	2,608	Other	152

TOTAL: 13,130 visitors from May 1, 2016 through to August 31, 2016



Local Residents	2,469	Other BC	340
North Fraser	3,057	Outside BC	720
South Fraser	5,283	US	393
Vancouver/Richmond	3,345	Other	241

TOTAL: 15,848 visitors from May 1, 2017 through to August 31, 2017

#### **Key Findings:**

Visitors travelling from the south of the Fraser River (Delta, Surrey, Langley, Abbotsford & Chillwack) accounted for the largest demographic; 33% of the number of visitors to WildPlay in both 2016 and 2017. The second strongest demographic was from the Vancouver/Richmond area (including North Vancouver, West Vancouver

and Burnaby) accounting for 21% of the visitors. This group also experienced the most significant growth of **28% in 2017**.

Guests to the park travelling from the north of the Fraser accounted for 19% while local residents represented 16% of the park's visitation.

Also to note: 2017 compared to the same period in 2016; the local resident market grew by 25%, residents from the South Fraser increased by 23%, and visitors residing in communities on the North Fraser (Coquitlam to Hope) increased by 11%.

Maple Ridge WildPlay experienced an overall increase of 21% in visitation in 2017 for the same period in 2016.