



# Comox Valley Regional MRDT

## 5 YEAR STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN



# Welcome - Thank you - Gilakas'la - ʔimot

*Experience Comox Valley respectfully acknowledges that the land we gather on is on the  
Unceded Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.*

# Comox Valley Tourism Strategy

- The 10-Year Tourism Strategy is a roadmap for local tourism development, supporting economic growth with environmental and social well-being for the region
- The strategy was approved by the CVRD Board on December 9, 2025
- Inspiring & aspirational vision
- Values-led guiding principles
- Regional MRDT 5-Year Strategic Business Plan is the next step



# MRDT Program

## Overview

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- Visitor funded provincial tax program established in 1987 to support the growth and management of tourism in British Columbia
- Currently collected in over 65 communities across British Columbia
- Tax rate of either 2% or 3% levied on fixed roof accommodation properties
  - E.g. hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfasts, cottages and cabins, vacation rentals, and other short term lodging
- MRDT must be renewed every 5 years and a renewal requires the support of the accommodation sector and local government



# MRDT Process

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## Governance



## Partner and Industry Engagement



## Strategic Business Plan



## Industry Support

- Secure support from fixed roof accommodation properties with 4 or more rooms



## Local Government Support



## Submit Application

- Submit MRDT application in full to Destination BC and the Ministry of Finance



## Application Timeline

- 3-6 months to develop
- 6 months from the application submission date to receive funds



Accommodation providers will be notified by the Ministry of Finance when MRDT collection is to be initiated



# 5-Year MRDT Strategic Business Plan

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- Experience Comox Valley is now a destination management organization
- Regional MRDT, expanding the collection boundaries to include the full Comox Valley Regional District in addition to City of Courtenay
  - Excluding Denman Is & Hornby Is
- Increasing MRDT from 2% to 3% with CVRD as designated recipient on behalf of regional partners
- Enhance the Comox Valley Tourism Advisory Committee to include representation from all communities and more sectors
- 5-Year MRDT Plan built on foundation of engagement through the 10-Year Tourism Strategy planning process, plus targeted engagement and industry workshop

# Benefits of Expanded Regional Approach

- Creates a level playing field for all fixed roof accommodation properties
- Lower taxation cost for tourism service
- Increased funding will enable Experience Comox Valley to broaden its programs to include destination development, industry training and destination stewardship initiatives
- Increased collaboration across CVRD communities and rural areas
- Leverage funding and matched marketing dollars from DBC co-op grant
- Maximize opportunity to access revenue to support affordable housing initiatives in our region.
- Creates efficiencies in reporting, planning and project implementation



# Revenue Estimates

*The following revenue estimates are based on a preliminary assessment based on the best available data and a 3% collection rate.*

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| <b>Collection Area</b>                       | <b>Estimated 2027 MRDT Revenue</b> | <b>Estimated 2027 OAP Revenue*</b> | <b>Total Revenue</b> |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Courtenay                                    | \$638,000                          | \$150,000                          | \$788,000            |
| Comox  | \$60,000                           | \$40,000                           | \$100,000            |
| Cumberland                                   | \$29,700                           | \$45,000                           | \$74,700             |
| Electoral Areas (excluding Mount Washington) | \$240,000                          | \$85,000                           | \$325,000            |
| <b>Totals</b>                                | <b>\$1,041,950</b>                 | <b>\$332,000</b>                   | <b>\$1,373,950</b>   |

In 2024 General MRDT revenue was \$462,611 and OAP revenue was \$107,500 for \$570,112 total at 2%.

*\* Online Accommodation Platform (OAP) revenue estimates are rough guesses based on currently available data. It should also be noted that OAP revenue is difficult to forecast due to the impact regulations on the short term rental sector.*





# 5-Year MRDT Plan Targets

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- **Achieve year-over-year growth in overnight visitation numbers** and increase visitor yield (spend per trip).
- **Increase MRDT general revenue** year or year, particularly in the historically lowest revenue months of January/February and October/November and increase awareness of direct flights routes to Comox Valley Airport.
- **Establish a baseline resident sentiment score** regarding tourism, measured through a resident tourism sentiment survey in year 1.
- **Increase the number of publicly accessible water-access points suitable for recreational use**, and advocate for new trails, park pathways, and waterfront access routes that meet accessibility best practices within five years.
- **Develop and publish educational content pieces** co-developed with partners.
- **Achieve a Net Promoter Score of 65 or higher** for Comox Valley as a destination within three years, and increase the number of businesses providing visitor information resources.
- **Recruit and train industry host ambassadors** within the first two years of program launch, and achieve positive visitor sentiment scores through entry and exit surveys at Comox Valley Airport.
- **Increase engagement with ECV marketing materials across all platforms** and all ad buys (i.e. website, search ads, social media, broadcast, display ads, etc.).

# Strategies

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- **Partnerships & Governance:** Strengthen collaborative partnerships, including advancing Reconciliation efforts with Indigenous partners, to ensure the tourism economy reflects community values and is guided by local priorities.
  - **Economic Growth & Resilience:** Cultivate a strong, resilient, year-round tourism economy that attracts sustainable investment, creates quality local jobs, and positions the sector as a vital economic and cultural contributor to the region.
  - **Community & Quality of Life:** Enhance the quality of life for residents by championing inclusivity, supporting accessible tourism businesses, and ensuring communities remain exceptional places to live and visit.
  - **Environmental & Cultural Stewardship:** Implement regenerative and responsible actions that foster environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, and empower visitors and residents to actively participate in shaping the Comox Valley's evolving landscape.
  - **Sustainable Infrastructure & Connectivity:** Invest in strategic tourism infrastructure and seamless transportation networks that reflect community priorities, contribute to decarbonization efforts, and safely connect communities to each other and the world.
  - **Product & Experience Development:** Develop and promote exceptional, unique, year-round visitor experiences that encourage deeper engagement and respect for the Comox Valley's natural, cultural, and community assets.
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A photograph of a golf course. In the foreground, there is a large, thick tree trunk. To the left, a person is on a golf green, and another person is visible further back. The background is filled with tall, dark evergreen trees under a bright sky.

# Online Accommodation Platform (OAP) Revenue

Experience Comox Valley recommends:

- OAP collection proposed to increase from 2% to 3% and be used by communities for affordable housing initiatives
- OAP monthly revenue amount will be reported to the CVRD by the Province as a total number for the region.
- The AirDNA platform will be used to calculate OAP revenue amount collected within each community's boundary
- The CVRD will transfer OAP revenues to communities for the use in affordable housing projects as determined by each community and as approved by the Province



# Next Steps

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- 5-Year MRDT Plan shared with local tourism businesses, local government and partners across the region
- Engagement with accommodation providers and signature collection from eligible properties
- Return to Municipal Councils in March:
  - Report on the number of signatures collected
  - If successful at regional level, Council will be asked for a resolution to provide a letter of support for the CVRD's regional MRDT application
  - If only successful in the City of Courtenay, Council will be asked to pass a resolution that requests the Province continue to levy tax on the City's behalf
- Submit 5-Year MRDP Plan and supporting documents to Province



# Contact Info

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**Calum Matthews, 4EVER Strategies**

[Calum@4Vlgroup.com](mailto:Calum@4Vlgroup.com)

**Tanya Massa, Experience Comox Valley**

[Tanya@ExperienceComoxValley.ca](mailto:Tanya@ExperienceComoxValley.ca)

**Lisa Kilpatrick, Comox Valley Regional District**

[Lkilpatrick@comoxvalleyrd.ca](mailto:Lkilpatrick@comoxvalleyrd.ca)



**Questions?**