

Appendix 2.2 Annual Performance Report

Under the *Provincial Sales Tax Act*, all designated recipients, including designated recipients not subject to the renewal application requirement, must report back to the Province annually. As such, all designated recipients (or the designated recipient’s service provider), are required to complete the following Annual Performance Report as well as a Financial Report (refer to Appendix 2.1) **by May 31 of each year.**

All designated recipients are required to fill in the sections below.

Only those designated recipients that receive the three percent tax rate will be required to report out on additional metrics (as indicated below).

A description/instructions pertaining to each performance metric is provided in grey text as a guide only. Please delete the grey text and provide your response accordingly.

Designated Recipient: City of Courtenay **Report Completed:** 26-04-2023

Designated Accommodation Area: City of Courtenay

Reporting period: Jan 1- Dec 31, 2022

1. Effective tourism marketing, programs and projects	
MRDT-funded tourism marketing, programs and projects maximize the potential for increased visitation and growth in tourism business activity, employment and incremental tourism revenue.	
Mandatory Metric	Designated Recipient Response
MRDT Revenue	\$793,355.95 (\$388,106.77 general MRDT + \$405,249.18 OAP)
MRDT activities, tactics, investment efforts and outcomes (as per your One-Year Tactical Plan)	<p>The City of Courtenay is the largest community of the Comox Valley, which is a diverse region located on Vancouver Island’s east coast in BC, situated between the Beaufort Range and the Comox Glacier to the west and the Strait of Georgia to the east. It stretches from the ocean to the alpine, Fanny Bay in the south to Miracle Beach in the north, including the main communities of Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland. It’s a vibrant mix of urban and rural, cosmopolitan and wilderness, with well-known destinations and hidden gems within a 30-minute drive.</p> <p>Experience Comox Valley marketing positions the communities of Cumberland, Comox, Courtenay, and surrounding rural areas as a premiere destination in British Columbia for outdoor adventure; including ski, mountain biking, hiking and marine experiences, as well as unique farm-homegrown culinary and craft culinary experiences.</p> <p>Like many other Vancouver Island communities, the Comox Valley has limited capacity throughout the summer months but possesses capacity to increase room stays and visitor numbers in the shoulder seasons of early</p>

spring, after the main winter visitation drops off, and in the fall before the snow and alpine attractions open. Experience Comox Valley continuously aims to create stronger seasonal and regional dispersion of visitors to the region to decrease the strains of tourism numbers in the peak seasons.

Marketing strategies include:

- Drive increased overnight volume and visitor expenditures from the BC and Alberta markets through a strong selling proposition;
- Support tourism operators in developing and strengthening tourism product, in particular that appeal to visitation in the off-peak periods;
- Create stronger regional alignment amongst industry and community partners towards a supportive eco-system that enables businesses to succeed, and a cohesiveness of messaging to occur;
- Move consumers efficiently through the path to purchase with clear sales messages, compelling content and further enhancements to responsive website sales pages.

2022 Destination Plan Objectives:

1. Increase revenue from visitation
 - Generate leads for businesses
2. Manage growth and benefit through seasonal and geographical dispersion
 - Build and position destination drivers
 - Invest in market research
3. Increase competitiveness of Comox Valley as a desired destination
 - Improve the visitor experience
 - Increase collaboration with & amongst stakeholders

Print/Magazine:

- 2022 Comox Valley Vacation Guide
 - Full content, design/images input
 - 60,000 distribution
- Vancouver Island Visitor Guide (Black Press)
 - Full page ad
 - 50,000 distribution
- Go VI Magazine (Times Colonist)
 - Content & full page ad
 - 100,000 distribution
- BC's Guide to Arts & Culture
 - 2 page ad
 - 75,000 distribution

- Canada Lifestyle & Travel
- Full page ad
- 50,000 distribution
- SOAR Magazine
- 2 page editorial ad, 2 editions
- 40,800 distribution

Paid Search Ads

- 309,642 impressions
- 33,452 clicks
- 10.80% click-thru rate (CTR)
- \$0.32 cost per click (CPC)

Social Media

Facebook

- 19,182 followers, +3% increase from Dec 2021 to Dec 2022
- 2,826,580 total reach, +159% increase from 2021
- 19,666 total engagements (0.7% engagement rate)

Instagram

- 6,489 followers, 30% increase from Dec 2021 to Dec 2022
- 670,583 total reach
- 42,739 total engagements (6.4% engagement rate)

Paid Social Media

- 496,092 reach
- 0.36% click-thru rate (CTR)
- \$1.02 cost per click (CPC)
- 11,405 engagements

Website - ExperienceComoxValley.ca

- 79,796 users
- Geographic area (in order): Vancouver, Courtenay, Ashburn, Calgary, Surrey, Victoria, Campbell River, Nanaimo, Edmonton
- Traffic sources (in order): Paid Search, Organic Search, Direct, Referral, Social, Display, Email

Asset Development

- Photoshoots occurred throughout the year, in all seasons
- 1,500+ images featuring places to visit, things to do, seasonal activities, tourism businesses and downtown corridors
- B-roll footage captured at most locations

	<p>Visitor Servicing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 13,241 total visitors (10.5% increase from 2021) ● Mobile kiosks (July-August) locations: Comox Marina Park, Downtown Courtenay, and Cumberland
<p>Key Learnings</p>	<p>Completed Projects</p> <p>Traditional Marketing - Print Advertising:</p> <p>Objective: Raise awareness for Comox Valley as a desirable destination and inspiration/ideas for things to do when visiting.</p> <p>Outcome: Print advertising for Experience Comox Valley included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comox Valley Vacation Guides, full content, design/images input - Vancouver Island Visitor Guide (Back Press), full page ad - Discover Magazine (Times Colonist), content & full page ad - SOAR Magazines, content & full page ad, 2 editions total - BC's Guide to Arts & Culture, 2 page spread - Canada Lifestyle & Travel, full page ad <p>Timing: Ongoing</p> <p>Campaign - WestJet's Ready. Set. Comox Valley:</p> <p>Objective: To support air travel through Comox Valley Airport by investment in WestJet's Ready. Set. Comox Valley campaign, which features communities across Canada. To leverage the reach and power of WestJet's own digital channels.</p> <p>Outcome: Experience Comox Valley and the Comox Valley Airport partnered to tailor ads that focus on Comox Valley signature experience(s) and our target audience. Overall the campaign received nearly 4M impressions, 220k video views, and 4,746 clicks from Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. Facebook delivered an overall reach of over 760K unique users. In total there were 3,155 bookings as a direct result from this campaign.</p> <p>Timing: This campaign ran March 10 to April 21, 2022.</p>

Campaign - BC Ale Trail Sip & Stay:

Objective: Offer booking incentive for overnight stays in March & April, with a spotlight on our 5 local breweries.

Outcome: This campaign offered a custom 32oz growler, imprinted with Experience Comox Valley graphic, plus 2 \$25 gift certificates to local breweries when visitors booked a 2-night stay at participating hotels. Facebook posts had a reach of 4,256 and 31 engagement/shares, while instagram posts had 111k reach, 29 engagements/shares and instagram stories reached over 12k weekly. Black Press display ads had 60k impressions. The website landing page had over 722 unique pageviews. Campaign resulted in 12 bookings.

Timing: This campaign ran March 4 to April 25, 2022.

Broadcast - Global News:

Objective: Increase awareness of Comox Valley as a destination and kick-start the hype up to Food Network Canada's Big Food Bucket List episode featuring a local restaurant.

Outcome: Global News mornings featured a contest from March 28 to April 3, 2022 to win a trip to the Comox Valley, a prize pack including transportation, 2-night accommodation, and \$500 in gift certificates to dining and remarkable local experiences. Co-branded 15 second video, social media ads, contest landing page, and live broadcast mentions were featured on Global BC, Global Edmonton, and Global Calgary.

Timing: Completed April 2022.

Broadcast - Food Network Canada:

Objective: Launch Comox Valley onto a National stage through partnership with a Food Network Canada to bring food adventure series, [Big Food Bucket List](#), starring John Catucci to the Comox Valley for an upcoming season 3 episode. Known as a staple series across Canada on Food Network and internationally, the series follows John as he takes viewers on a one-of-a-kind journey across North America and checks out buzz-worthy, crazy, delicious food off his bucket list. In each episode, John visits the restaurants behind these must-eat meals and hits the kitchen to lend a helping hand and learn how the chefs make their mind-blowing creations.

Outcome: Filming took place in Comox Valley in August 2021 for a season 3 episode featuring a local restaurant and highlights BC fresh seafood. 30 second promotional messages aired 27 times between April 18 - May 1, 2022 and delivered an estimated audience of 408,000 in adults 25-54 demographic. A 15 second integrated clip had 110k complete views (98.24% video completion rate), 112k impressions and 75 clicks. Social media posts had 996k impressions, 540k reach, 3,552 clicks and an engagement rate of 1.42%.

Timing: Episode aired April 20, 2022 and digital campaign ran April - June 2022.

Market Research - Comox Valley Positioning study:

Objective: To extract unique characteristics and determine how to position three regions of Vancouver Island (Northern Vancouver Island, Comox Valley and Cowichan Region) to attract tourism to these regions, The three regions were positioned against each other as part of the survey in an attempt to pull out key differentiating factors.

Outcome: An online survey among 4,076 adults (18+) from four key target markets (British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Washington State). Results for Comox Valley can be found [here](#).

Timing: The study was conducted in August/September 2022.

Website rebuild - ExperienceComoxValley.ca:

Objective: To design and launch a new brand-aligned consumer website with a hub of information for travellers looking to plan a trip to the Comox Valley, including optimization for conversion to local stakeholder websites.

Outcome: The [new consumer website](#) is more user and mobile friendly with new features such as free tourism stakeholder business listings in [business directory](#), an [events calendar](#), [trip ideas blog](#) content and more. The consumer journey is optimized for speed and efficiency of movement from one step in the path to the other. Compelling content, and a greater tie into visitor servicing (frequently asked questions, wayfinding tools) will be added.

Timing: New website launched September 2022, ongoing improvements/additions.

Visual Asset Acquisition - Photos & Video:

Objective: Acquire Supernatural BC (BC-Brand aligned) images and video assets for use in marketing campaigns.

Outcome: Multiple photoshoots took place throughout the year to capture seasonal activities including camping, golf, fishing, parks, beaches, festivals, culinary and tourism stakeholders.

Timing: Ongoing

Traditional Marketing - Broadcast

Objective: To bring more awareness to the vibrant downtown areas of Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland, CTV's weatherman Warren Dean was live-on-location in each community for the 5pm & 6pm news. Each night featured 2 interviews (e.g. local business, association member and/or resident), 5 live spots, a text-in contest (for \$400 worth of gift cards), and Experience Comox Valley messaging.

Outcome: One night in each of the 3 locations (see live spot segments below). Downtown Courtenay's spot took place during the Moonlight & Magic event, in Comox shopping local was highlighted, and the eclectic community and various activities were showcased in Cumberland (which due to snow had to be moved indoors to Moon's Records). A 15 second Experience Comox Valley commercial aired 168 times and had a total of 1.5M impressions.

Timing:

Friday, November 18, 2022; 1100 contest entries - [Courtenay](#)

Tuesday, December 6, 2022; 1996 contest entries - [Comox](#)

Friday, December 9, 2022; 1621 contest entries - [Cumberland](#)

Campaign - Tumble into Fall:

Objective: To inspire visitation through fall-themed itineraries and ideas.

Outcome: A digital ad campaign, with google ads, display, and social media ads to drive traffic to the [Tumble into Fall](#) website landing page. Paid Facebook ads had a reach of 668k, over 2.8M impressions, and a click through rate of 0.35%.

Timing: This campaign launched in September and ran until early December.

Campaign - WestJet's 'In Real Life'

Objective: To support air travel through Comox Valley Airport. To leverage the reach and power of WestJet's own digital channels.

Outcome: The WestJet landing page had 1,192 views, 100 clicks, and 69 step two conversions. Calgary was the top performing market in terms of volume of delivery and conversions; however, Edmonton was more cost efficient in terms of reaching our audience. The older 65+ audience generated stronger conversion results on both platforms, while we saw a higher volume of conversions from 35-54. Paid social media ads (on Facebook & Pinterest) had over 2.7M impressions, 14k video views, and 2,673 clicks.

Timing: The campaign ran from November 7 to December 12, 2022.

Visual Asset Acquisition - Mountain Biking Video:

Objective: Showcase the Comox Valley, things to do, and mountain biking.

Outcome: IFHT Films produced a video that features the Comox Valley, its communities, and mountain biking. Their YouTube channel is Mahalo My Dudes. In its first 2 months, the full video has received over 89k views, with USA, Canada, and Germany as the top countries viewers are from, and had a click through rate of 6%. 3 different reels were featured on Mahalo My Dudes social media to promote the full video, with over 246k views and 17k likes.

Timing: Filming took place September 2022, episode aired January 2023.

Social Media - Organic:

Objective: Using photos and reels to inspire visitors and to book now.

Outcome: Facebook has a total of 19,182 followers (3% increase from previous year) and Instagram has 6,489 followers (30% increase)

Timing: Ongoing

Challenges & Successes

Challenges

- Continuing to build a consumer e-newsletter subscriber list and there's a need to develop a communication strategy for e-newsletter marketing
- While we continue to build visual assets, there is a need for broader representation of different backgrounds, abilities, lifestyles, etc.. A diversity, equity and inclusion (DEIA) assessment would be valuable
- The development of the new Events & Experiences Fund began in 2022, but the launch has been delayed to 2023
- Need market research insights on visitor motivations and satisfaction (planned for next fiscal)

Successes

- Social media engagement and followers continue to increase (Instagram up 25% compared to previous fiscal)
- New Comox Valley Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC), formed in March 2022 with 11 members from wide range of tourism sectors, provide direction to destination marketing tactics & strategies
- Stakeholder engagement session and industry workshop, held January 2023, was well attended and had great feedback
- Built a database of catalogued b-roll, and used to make three 30 second promotional videos, with more planned for next fiscal year
- Engaged more tourism stakeholders & partners with free website listings and events calendar (new website features)

2. Effective local-level stakeholder support and inter-community collaboration Designated recipients are responsible for engaging with key stakeholders, establishing local-level support, and seeking out efficiencies through collaborative activities to inform appropriate decision-making regarding investments.	
Mandatory Metric	Designated Recipient Response
Extent of Local-level Stakeholder Engagement	Comox Valley Tourism Stakeholder Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholder e-newsletters are sent out approximately once a month throughout the year ● Collaboration with the Comox Valley Record (Black Press Media) to provide editorial content and images for the 2022 Comox Valley Vacation Guide ● In Spring 2022, Visitor Services staff participated in FAM(iliarization) tours with local tourism businesses, including; museums, galleries, retail, sauna, downtown corridors, campgrounds, parks and beaches. ● In January 2023, an industry engagement session, <i>Building a Sustainable Tourism Economy</i>, was held at Best Western Westerly Hotel in Courtenay. 4VI staff and 50+ stakeholders attended from a wide range of tourism activities including food & beverage, arts & culture, retail, tour operators, transportation and accommodation.
Stakeholder Satisfaction	<i>Only for designated recipients collecting 3% tax:</i> N/A
Community Collaboration	<p>In September, 2021 the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) entered into a Service Agreement with 4VI (formally Tourism Vancouver Island) for; Destination Marketing, Visitor Information Servicing, and Stakeholder Engagement. In September, 2021 the City of Courtenay entered into a Service Agreement with 4VI for the management and expenditure of the Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT) monies, in funding Destination Marketing, Visitor Information Services, and Stakeholder Engagement.</p> <p>The three organizations have a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding to ensure full coordination of all tourism activities. A team of marketing and development professionals at 4VI lead destination management tactics to leverage continued growth in this region.</p> <p>Comox Valley Community Collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular meetings with Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Courtenay BIA, Comox BIA, and Cumberland BIA ● 4VI staff have given presentations to community officials and Council at Comox Valley Regional District meetings and City of Courtenay Council meetings ● Monthly meetings with 4VI and Vancouver Island DMOs; Southern Gulf Islands, Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, Parksville/Qualicum, Tofino, Ucluelet, Campbell River, Vancouver Island North Tourism

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visitor Centre staff provided training to the Comox Valley Airport volunteers, familiarizing them with local tourism businesses, destination activities and unique experiences. ● New Comox Valley Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC), formed in 2022, guides the work of Experience Comox Valley, including advising, reviewing and making recommendations for the annual marketing plans and Comox Valley Destination Plan. The TAC is composed of 11 members from various tourism sectors including accommodations, arts & culture, food & beverage, tour operators, transportation, and indigenous tourism.
<p>3. Marketing Efforts Are Coordinated and complementary to provincial marketing strategies and tactics: Designated recipients are responsible for ensuring their marketing efforts complement and do not duplicate those of Destination British Columbia to avoid overlap at the community level and dilution of BC’s marketing message in key domestic and international markets.</p>	
<p>Mandatory Metric</p>	<p>Designated Recipient Response</p>
<p>Provincial Alignment</p>	<p>In 2022, Experience Comox Valley launched a new website, ExperienceComoxValley.ca, which includes new mobile friendly format, user generated content, events calendar, and trip ideas blog. Brand-aligned visual asset collection (photography and video) continued to be a priority for use online and in print, as well as written content creation for blogs and editorial. Images captured were submitted to the Destination BC Content Hub for a Comox Valley presence in Provincial marketing efforts.</p> <p>Other provincial and regional alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance at 4VI (formally Tourism Vancouver Island) Annual General Meeting ● Attendance at BC Tourism & Hospitality Conference ● Destination BC & Go2HR SuperHost Service For All training ● Destination BC sector consortiums participation: BC Ale Trail, Ride Island, Ahoy BC, Golf VI ● 4VI industry e-newsletter subscription ● Destination BC industry e-newsletter subscription
<p>Coordinated with Destination British Columbia on Travel Media and Travel Trade Activities</p>	<p><i>Only for designated recipients collecting 3% tax:</i></p> <p>N/A</p>

Attachment 1 - 2022 Annual Performance Report

4. Fiscal prudence and accountability All designated recipients must be accountable, transparent, and make fiscally prudent investments in community tourism marketing.	
Mandatory Metric	Designated Recipient Response
Effective Financial Management	See Financial Report Appendix 2.1
Streamlined Administrative Costs	See Financial Report Appendix 2.1
Leveraging of Other Marketing Funds	See Financial Report Appendix 2.1

By signing this form, you certify the accuracy and completeness of the information provided above.

Designated Recipient's Authorized Signing Authority Name	Designated Recipient's Authorized Signing Authority Title
Date	Designated Recipient's Authorized Signing Authority Signature