



ABBOTSFORD

SALES & MARKETING PLAN 2022



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In addition to the regular destination marketing and management activities we normally undertake, this year will have extra excitement as we embark on development of a new five-year tourism strategy and renew the Municipal & Regional District Tax (MRDT) program. Working with residents, business community partners, and key stakeholders like the city of Abbotsford and our accommodation providers will be critical for success. Renewed engagement and a new strategic plan for the community couldn't come at a better time as we move towards a post-pandemic world and recover from the flood events in November.

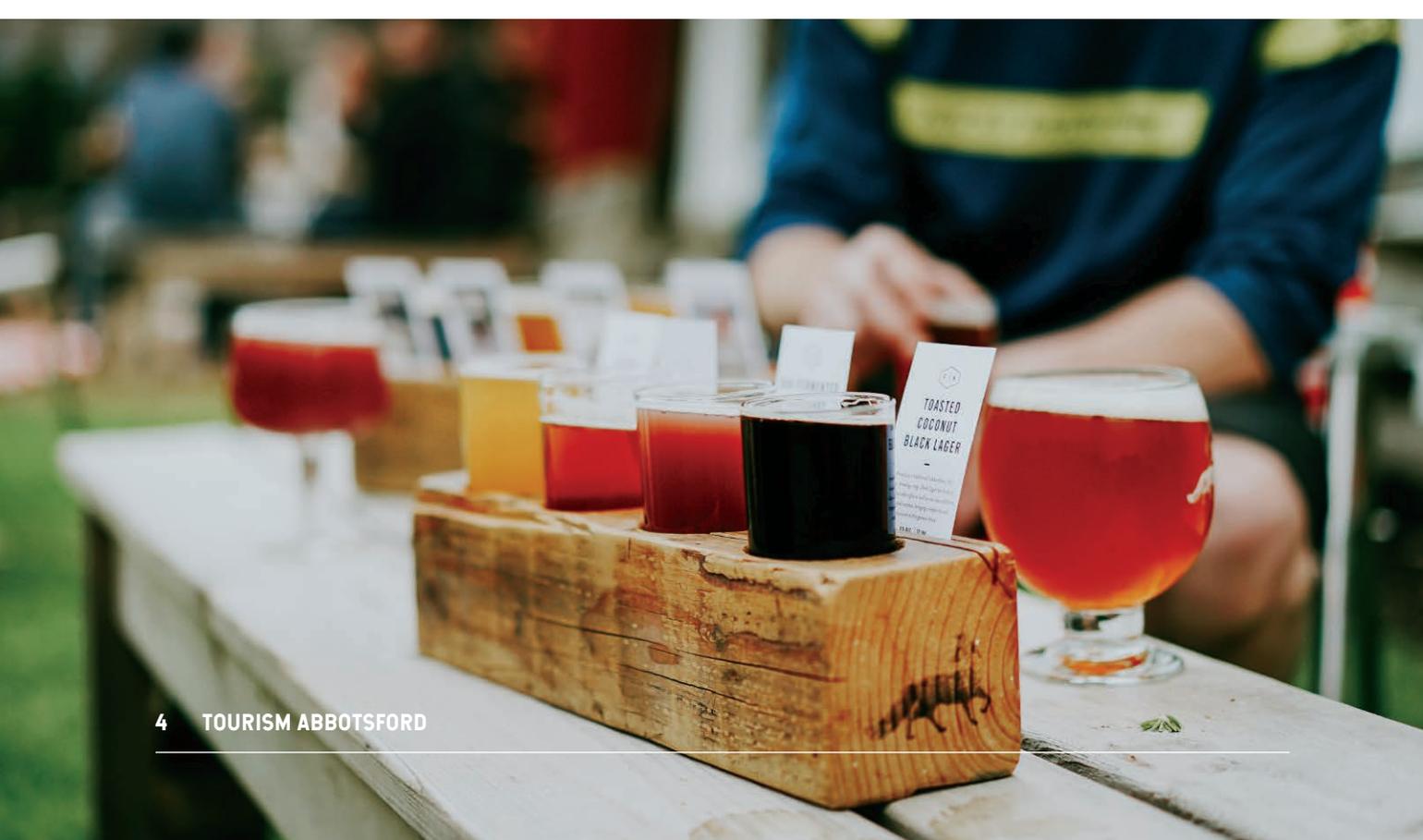
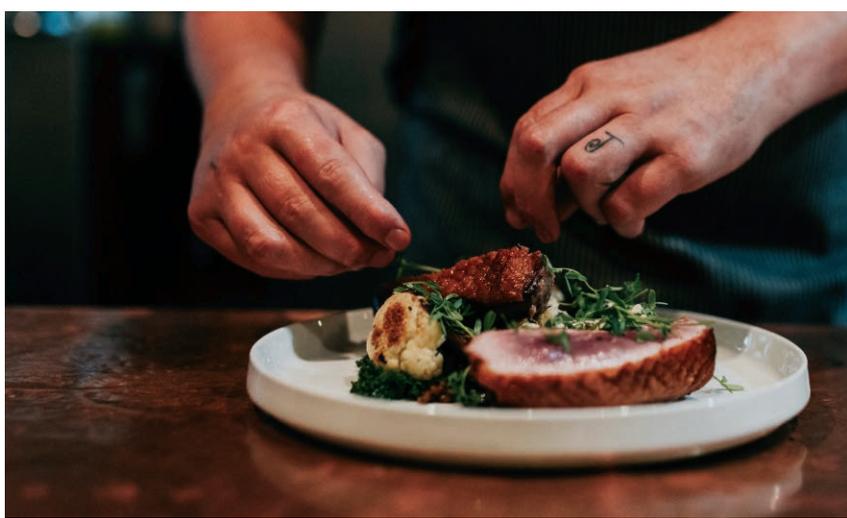
As we look out at the local, regional, national and global tourism landscape, we see there is pent-up demand to get out and experience things and to rebuild connections we've all be missing the past two years. So, before we get to the important foundational initiatives mentioned above, we wanted to highlight some of the marketing and destination development goals we have identified this year in order to take advantage of the pent-up demand and dynamics of today's tourism industry.

2022 GOALS

- Ensure Abbotsford is top of mind for key markets (Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Island, Okanagan)
- Showcase activities that are in line with what people want post-Covid
- Facilitate product and experience development
- Identify opportunities for provincial and federal tourism-related funding
- Engage media to help communicate Abbotsford's strengths and key reasons for visiting
- Strengthen and grow event industry
- Launch Taste of Abby Fall Food Festival
- Provide Visitor Servicing at partner businesses and throughout the community
- Empower partners by creating learning and networking opportunities
- Rebuild our industries lost connections from the past two years

On the following pages, you will find an overview of some specific tactics we will be implementing this year. We'd love to hear what you think or if you have any questions.

**ON BEHALF OF THE TOURISM BOARD,
WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH
YOU THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AHEAD.**



TACTICS

Digital Marketing Content Strategy

Deliver a digital content plan including Day in Abby blog series to create a sense of urgency to visit and let online audience know Abbotsford is ready to welcome them back.

Execute Co-Op Marketing Plan For The Fraser Valley

Increase awareness of the Fraser Valley as a tourism destination, increase overnight stays and visitor expenditures in the region, increase travel in the slower seasons and add more value to the visitor experience.

- Utilize consistent calls to action to increase traffic to partner websites
- Produce Fraser Valley Experiences Guide
- Produce FV Explorer newspaper, partner with Flair Airline to distribute
- Distribute Fraser Valley Wine Guide
- Launch Very Valley Holiday campaign

Media Relations / Travel Trade

Proactively secure media coverage to build awareness in all target markets highlighting key messages and unique selling propositions.

- Provide Partner Media Training to help improve the media hosting abilities
- Continue to host Instagrammers/bloggers and media in support of campaigns and community stories

- Continue building and leveraging relationships with WestJet, Flair, and Swoop
- Media page on website to consistently feature updated and relevant story starters and images

Marketing Partnerships

Leverage existing consumer products (Ale Trail, Bird Trail etc) for our own purposes and increase market penetration.

- Work with BC Ale Trail on packages and special offers
- Stronger focus on BC Bird Trail.
- Continue membership in Mountain Bike BC, participate in media trips and social media engagement
- Host sector roundtable for arts & culture partners to discuss collaborative marketing ideas and partnerships



Grow & Leverage Events

Events are a cornerstone of tourism and economic activity in Abbotsford. There needs to be a renewed focus on supporting existing events and attracting new ones to help stimulate economic recovery.

- Host quarterly Event Advisory Committee meetings
- Attend Canada Sport Events Congress
- Listing on ADRENALIN'S North America Sport Event Research Portal
- Develop cooperative marketing campaign(s) with Canucks to help promote things to do in Abbotsford
- Support and leverage GeoWoodstock and HockeyFest



Taste Of Abby Fall Food Festival

Taste of Abby will help raise awareness about the growing food culture in Abbotsford and celebrate the handmade and homegrown products and producers that call Abbotsford home. By promoting unique events, tasting menus, and limited-edition items over a one-week period, people will feel a sense of urgency to get out and try what Abbotsford has to offer.

- Festival kickoff event on farm
- Restaurants create featured menu item(s) using locally grown ingredients
- Combo's/collab's between restaurants, breweries etc.
- Empower partners leverage Taste of Abby for their own purposes (i.e. new beer or wine release, foraging tour, cooking class, 'only available for the week' menu items)
- Feature unique experiences only available during TOA

Sun & Soil Concert

The concerts are small and intimate (40-80 guests), featuring local artists, and food and beverage providers. The events also provide an opportunity for attendees to meet the farmers hosting.

- In light of the devastation from flooding to many farms on Sumas Prairie, we plan to host one large concert (350+) with proceeds going to support recovery
- Collaborate with other Fraser Valley DMO's to host one S&S concert in each community throughout summer





Product Development

Provincial and federal funding opportunities are available to support tourism recovery. Working with the community, we want to identify shovel ready destination development initiatives and apply for funding.

- Work with City of Abbotsford to explore concept of band shell/performance stage
- Work with community partners to encourage development and awareness of experiences like cycling, garden tourism, and culinary
- Continued collaboration in the Fraser Valley Destination Development Committee - Experience the Fraser will continue to be a focus.
- Support Abbotsford Trail Development Society in development of new trail signage on Sumas Mountain

Destination Management

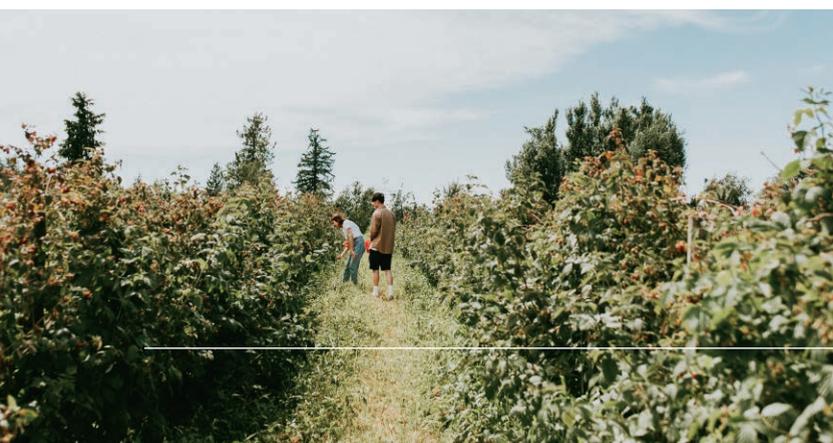
Due to the desire to be in nature and wide open spaces, outdoor activities have never been in greater demand. It is important for communities to provide adequate parking, signage, bathrooms, garbage removal etc. to ensure needs are being met and that neighbourhoods aren't being overrun by users.

- Work with the city to identify pinch points in the user experience and help communicate expectations

Partner Support & Engagement

The tourism industry comprises a network of partners, stakeholders and groups that have an interest in the marketing, development, and management of the visitor economy. We want to create opportunities for local tourism businesses to collaborate, network and to improve industry and market knowledge.

- Host quarterly industry minglers – 'Better Together'
- Create series of tourism business profiles for e-distribution





Continue Working with Indigenous Partners to Explore Opportunities to Develop Indigenous Tourism

Demand for authentic Indigenous experiences has led to Indigenous tourism being one of the fastest growing sectors in tourism. Abbotsford has important Indigenous history and culture, but there is currently limited opportunity for locals and visitors to experience the culture.

- Reconvene regular meetings with Semá:th First Nation
- Collaborate with Semá:th on developing and hosting Sumas Lake partner event
- Work with Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) on an Indigenous Tourism Development Grant program
- Work with Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) and Province of BC to update Stop of Interest Sumas Lake sign at Cole Road exit
- Work with Sto:lo on developing an Indigenous page for TA website



Accessible Tourism

Travellers with accessibility challenges (physical, cognitive or sensory) have additional and more complex information needs at all stages of the journey. Working with the community, we want to develop a comprehensive plan to improve Abbotsford as a destination for people with accessibility needs.

- Develop an accessible tourism plan
- Engage in dialogue with partners and stakeholders on accessible tourism
- Conduct audit of outdoor recreation activities as they relate to accessibility

Visitor Service Presence

We will be as mobile as possible and will activate with a fun and engaging team using both in-person and online presence to engage with our audience when and where they need it.

- Building off success in 2021, work with more partners to identify where we can set up at different locations during the summer
- Develop onsite activation to be more in line with Handmade & Homegrown brand
- Mobile team trained and empowered to manage social media posting when at events
- Use contesting to encourage people to find where we are set up and to stop by and say hello



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