



DESTINATION MARKETING STRATEGY

2022-2026

Contents

2	Introduction
3	Vision & Mission
4	Strategic Context
	Current Economic & Tourism Conditions
	Future Growth of Regional Tourism
	Challenges & Opportunities
	Key Learnings
9	Overall Goals, Objectives and Targets
	Primary Objectives
	Secondary Objectives
	Tracking Performance
	Affordable Housing Initiatives
13	Strategies
	Marketing
	Destination Development
	Visitor Services
	Meetings & Conventions
22	Brand Positioning
23	Target Markets
25	Management, Governance and Administration
26	Sources of Funding



Travel Penticton is a Member driven Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). Our current membership consists of accommodation properties within the City of Penticton, offering 4 or more units and collecting the Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT) along with other tourism businesses, who pay an annual membership fee.

Introduction

Since it was first founded in December 2016, the Travel Penticton Society has been charged with the task of providing external marketing and awareness to potential travellers on a regional, provincial, national and international level. Travel Penticton promotes a collaborative funding model offering a balanced approach to Tourism Marketing utilizing;

- Digital & Social Media Platforms
- Print Mediums
- Media Development & Leveraging
- Event Support & Promotion
- Consumer Direct Shows
- Partnerships with local tourism service providers and attractions
- Destination development

By virtue of the surrounding topography, product mix and communities, Travel Penticton serves as a 'mini-regional' DMO assisting 3 distinct additional areas.



Travel Penticton works in cooperation with
the City of Penticton
Penticton Trade and Convention Centre
South Okanagan Events Centre
Penticton Chamber of Commerce
Downtown Penticton Association
Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association
Destination British Columbia

Vision & Mission

As outlined in our constitution and bylaws the purposes of the of the Travel Penticton Society are:

- to support and market the tourism destination of Penticton and surrounding area in a sustainable manner that strengthens the local economy, and enriches the quality of life;
- to advise, approve and implement the overall marketing direction and strategies on broad tourism issues affecting Penticton and surrounding area AND
- to seek funding opportunities and manage funding for the support and marketing of tourism in Penticton and surrounding area.

Society Mission

- Increase overnight visitation and occupancy rates for Penticton accommodation and local businesses.
- Increase the length of visitor stays and tourism revenue.
- Promote events, attractions and experiences to encourage visitation, with focus on the Spring, Fall and Winter seasons.
- Encourage excellence in tourism service and product providers and offer professional development opportunities to enhance tourism knowledge and skills.
- Work as a 'mini-regional' DMO to promote the areas of Apex Mountain Resort, Naramata and Okanagan Falls.

Guiding Principles of the Society

- Our businesses relationships are a model of trust and integrity.
- We strive for excellence and to continuously improve our effectiveness.
- We value and respect the opinions of our Members and strategic partners.



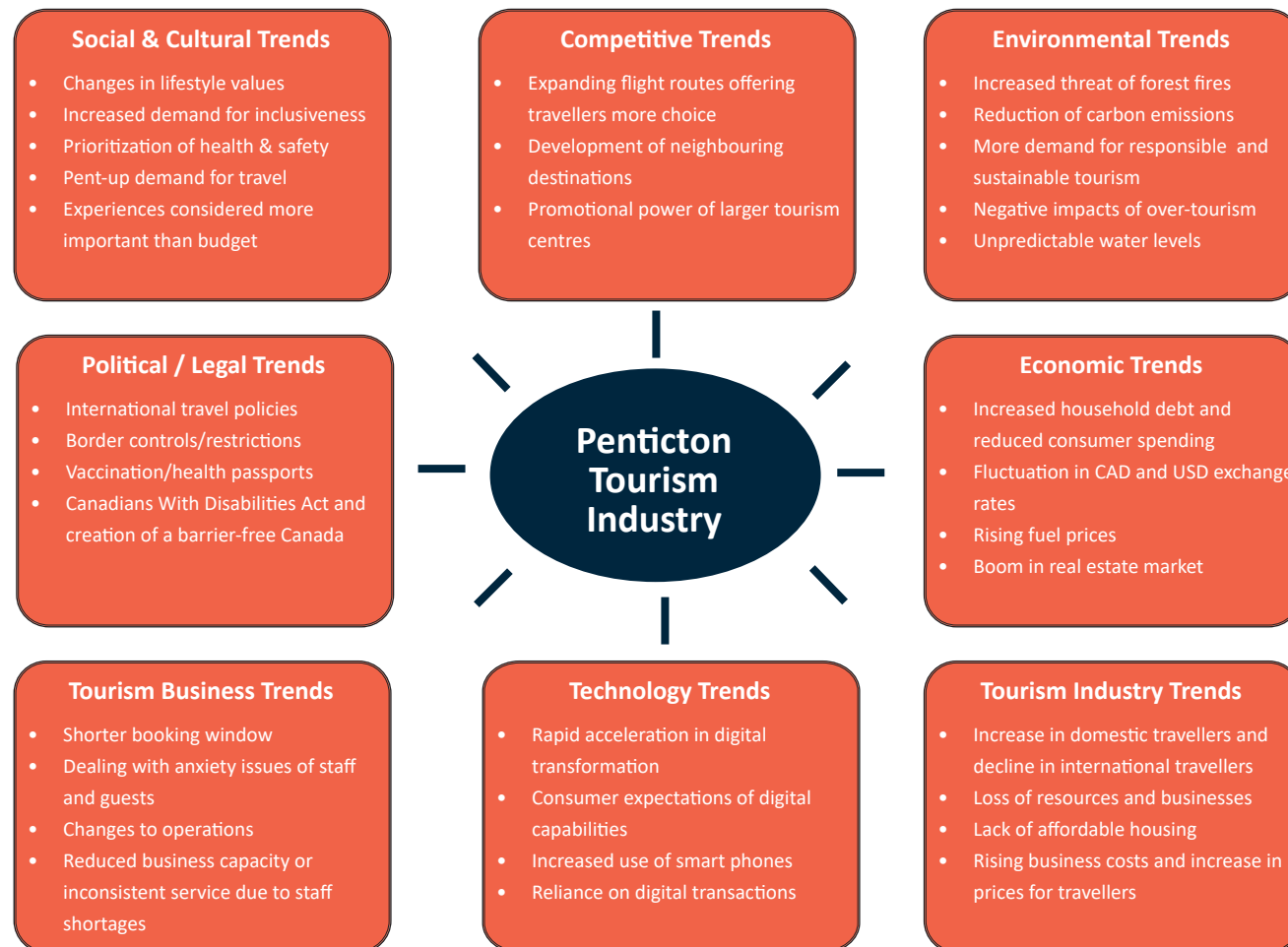
Vision

Travel Penticton will be recognized as
an industry-leading Community
Destination Marketing Organization.

Strategic Context

An in depth situational analysis is a critical step in our planning process, providing an objective foundation on which to build our strategies and tactics moving forward. While COVID-19 has obviously complicated these considerations, we must not lose sight of other external influencers, many of which remain beyond our control.

Current economic & tourism conditions



COVID-19 will continue to be a significant influence on tourism for the foreseeable future. A reasonable global recovery is predicted to take several years.

Future Growth of Regional Tourism

In a pre-pandemic British Columbia, the tourism economy was the third largest sector, representing 19,300 businesses, 161,000 employees and \$21.5 billion in revenue. While there is hope for the future, we must remain realistic regarding the growth of tourism in Penticton over the next 5 years.

Penticton has fared better than many other tourist destinations throughout the pandemic, seeing a lower than anticipated drop in room revenue of 16.8% drop in 2020. However, recent research indicates a global decline in traveller confidence, and a fourth wave in Fall 2021 will contribute to tourism instability expected to continue well into 2022.

Recovery to 2019 levels of travel is predicted to take between from 3 to 5 years and during this time Penticton will be facing significant competition from other regional, national and international destinations. As COVID restrictions lift, our focus will shift from local and regional travellers to key markets in BC and Alberta. Domestic travellers typically make up 90% of the visitors to Penticton and it makes sense to initially concentrate our efforts on these provincial market segments.

Travel Penticton will also endeavour to expand interest in Fall, Winter and Spring travel through support of events, the Okanagan Hockey School and specific traveller markets such as culinary or endurance sports. Collaborations with other DMOs, stakeholders and tourism partners will remain key to our success during the recovery period. The pooling of resources and marketing dollars will enable us to maximise our reach and coverage without over extending our budget.

Travel Penticton also plans to expedite the recovery of our tourism sector by maximising opportunities for our meetings, conference and event facilities through the creation and operation of a Convention Bureau. Working closely with the City of Penticton, Penticton Trade and Convention Centre, South Okanagan Events Centre, event organizers and private facilities, the Convention Bureau will provide a professional and coordinated response for meeting and event planners. This one-stop concierge style service will allow us to maximize the economic impact from each event by tailoring requirements and providing pre and post event offers to encourage extended stays and return visits.



Disasters can fundamentally change the social and economic makeup of impacted communities. The better a community can recognize these impacts, the better they are positioned to take actions that will spur a more rapid economic recovery.

BC Economic Development Association

Challenges & Opportunities

The SWOT analysis below highlights key factors about the area Travel Penticton serves. It covers themes that may influence or impact our marketing strategies and tactics over the next five years. While we remain aware of other provincial, national and even global influences, our focus remains on the tourism attractions, activities and service providers we are responsible for promoting.

Strengths

- Ambient weather during shoulder seasons
- Expanding culinary, wine and craft-beer scene
- Wide range of festivals and events that encourage multi-night stays throughout the year
- Recognized sports tourism destination
- Single, cohesive and recognized brand
- Excellent location - between 2 lakes, easy highway access
- Strong media and social media presence
- Compact region with easy access to a broad range of visitor attractions and outdoor adventure activities

Weaknesses

- Distinct seasonality with limited offerings for visitors during Spring, Fall and Winter seasons
- Lack of tourism industry staff impacting consistency and quality of product offerings
- Difficult path to purchase once visitors are in the region with no central system or process for booking or packaging
- Limited high-end/boutique accommodations to draw more affluent visitors
- Limited budget and resources compared with other regional DMOs

Opportunities

- Capacity to increase visitation in Spring, Fall & Winter seasons through increased marketing/incentives during these times
- Ability to differentiate Penticton as a unique destination based on integrated product offerings (Culinary, Fuel Free, Endurance, LGBTQ2+, Accessibility)
- Maximize Penticton's presence in the MICE sector through the operation of a Convention Bureau
- Enhance our profile and leverage our limited budget through strategic local and regional partnerships

Threats

- Underlying concerns of COVID-19 continuance & hangover
- Increased intensity and frequency of environmental impacts such as forest fires, high water or extreme weather
- Community capacity for visitors - fixed roof and camping accommodation in particular is declining
- Similar products and experiences are being offered by neighbouring DMOs
- Lack of affordable housing and high cost of living makes it difficult to attract and retain tourism industry staff

Key Learnings

Recovery from the COVID pandemic will be steady, rather than immediate and we need to remain focused yet flexible in our marketing activities. Travellers will initially seek out destinations they perceive to be safe and this needs to be reflected in our messaging. Travel Pentiction will continue to advocate for mutual respect between visitors and businesses with regard to COVID safety protocols into the foreseeable future, especially considering the Delta variant and navigating a fourth wave.

Competition over the next few years will be intense and we must be cautious not to be too reactionary in our approach. While package deals and other traveller incentives may seem a good way to stimulate interest we don't want to find ourselves over-discounting and devaluing our product offerings.

COVID forced many people to become more digitally reliant and visitors expectations are shifting accordingly. McKinsey recently noted the US experienced 10 years' growth in digital and e-commerce in the first three months of COVID alone. To remain competitive Travel Pentiction must continue our investment in digital marketing and encourage member participation through education and collaboration.

Historically the majority of our visitation has been heavily concentrated in July and August, but as the following table shows we are starting to see more dispersion into shoulder months, particularly March, May, June and September. We need to continue to release the pressure of 'The Big Summer Squeeze' and lengthen our tourism season rather than compressing eight months of business into two and a half months of the year. There is ample capacity for increased visitation in Fall and Spring as well as significant opportunity for growth over the Winter season (November - February).

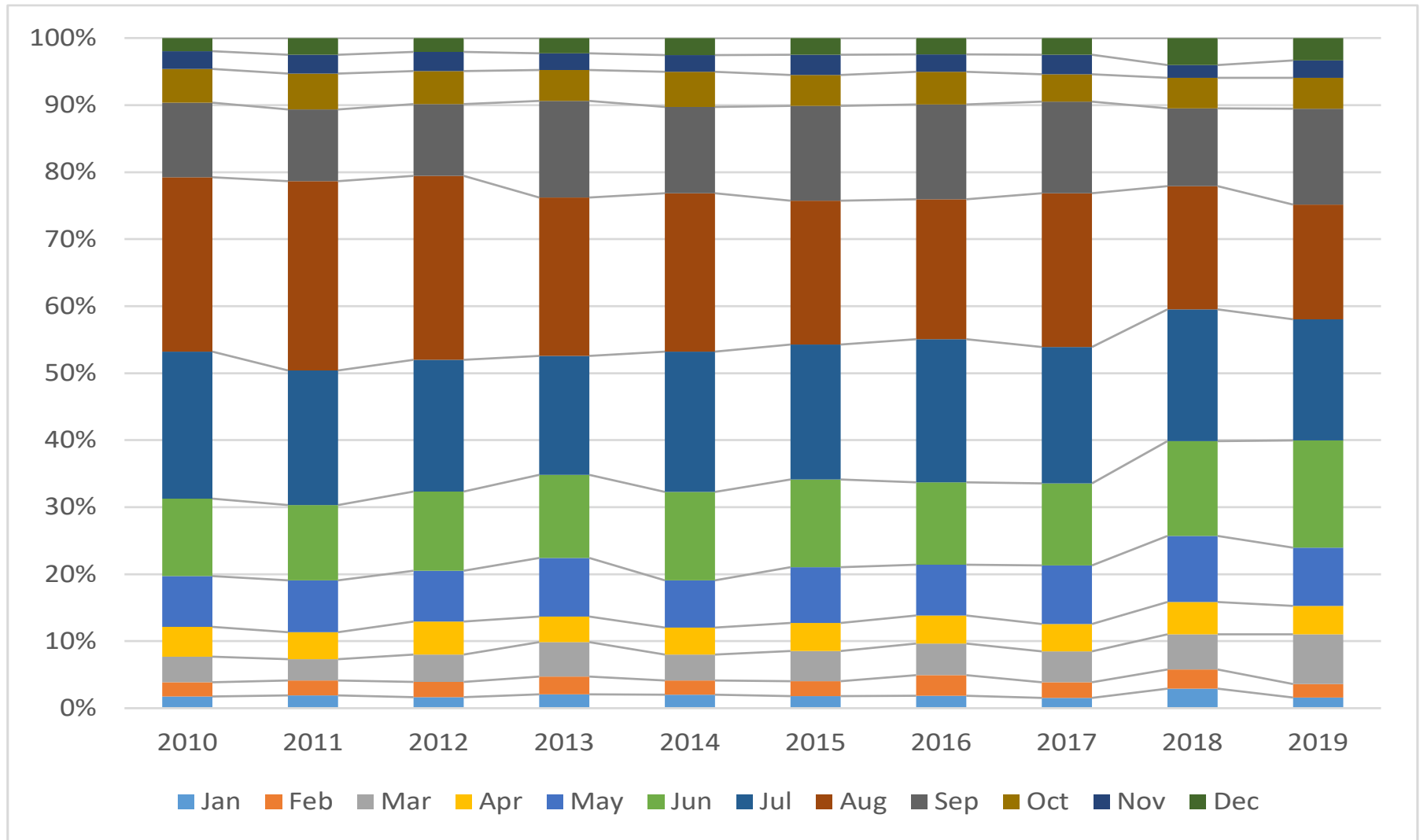
The immediacy of digital communication from both a consumer and media standpoint makes controlling or influencing sentiment extremely challenging. Our 'Real-Time' assets and messaging will continue to play a key role in counteracting less positive media coverage while addressing consumer concerns about issues such as forest fires, road closures or COVID safety.



**“We do not learn from experience....
we learn from reflecting on experience.”**

John Dewey

% of Annual Room Revenue for Penticton by Month



Overall Goals, Objectives & Targets

After conducting a thorough review of our past performance, accounting for the anomalies arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, Travel Penticton has set what we feel are solid achievable and measurable objectives for the next five years.

Primary Objectives

- **Annual average room occupancy rates to return to highest pre-pandemic level of 58% by 2026.**
Generating “Heads in Beds”/overnight stays is the ultimate goal of our marketing activities. MRDT collected will increase as we transition from 2 to 3%, so occupancy rates will be a much more telling measure of success within our tourism sector. Increasing over night stays, expanding shoulder seasons and investment in MICE will all contribute to increased occupancy.

- **Earned media to reach a minimum potential audience of 100 million each year.**
Earned media is a good way to track consumer interest in our region and indicates our destination development activities are effective, as media tends to be interested in what is new or innovative. Development and promotion of our foundational marketing campaigns (Fuel Free, Culinary, Endurance etc.) will be key to offering media new and innovative story ideas.

- **Increase unique visitors to the VisitPenticton.com website by an average of 15% (currently 12.7%) per year from 2022-2026.**
Our consumer website is the hub to which all of our consumer marketing is driven and increased site visits are a solid measure of the success of our marketing strategies. Increased visits are also a significant benefit to our members, driving more traffic to their business and event listings.

- **Attract a minimum of one new large-scale event or conference to Penticton each year from 2022-2026.**
The majority of meetings, conferences and events are held in the Spring and Fall which are currently need periods for accommodators and tourism operators. The per person spending is also generally greater than typical leisure travellers, which will provide an additional boost to the economic recovery of our tourism sector.

Room Occupancy

	Penticton		Thompson Okanagan*	
2017	57.8%	+4.3%	61.9%	+5.3%
2018	54.9%	-5.0%	60.3%	-2.3%
2019	51.9%	-5.5%	60.7%	+0.7%
2020	36.0%	-30.1%	40.2%	-33.8%

* average room rates from Penticton, Kelowna & Kamloops published by Destination BC and provided by CBRE Hotels and STR

Room Revenue (\$000)*

	Penticton		Thompson Okanagan	
2017	30,202	+1.5%	308,494	+8.3%
2018	31,920	+5.7%	312,469	+1.3%
2019	35,998	+11.3%	370,062	+18.4%
2020	27,776	-22.8%	246,310	-33.4%

* Provided by Stats BC and calculated from MRDT tax collected

Secondary Objectives

- **Align our occupancy and room revenue rates with regional averages by 2026.**

For the past 4 years, Penticton has been below the regional average in terms of occupancy and room revenue. Getting closer to the regional average will indicate that our product offerings are as enticing as other regional destinations. Our efforts to extend our visitor season should have a positive impact on annual averages. The addition of new accommodation facilities and renovation of existing properties will also contribute to an increase in occupancy and ADR.

- **Have our earned media for members and events reach a minimum potential audience of 40 million each every year.**

Earning direct media attention for our members and event organizers validates the return on investment made to attract and host media writers. Members will often volunteer time or offer subsidized rates to offset the overall cost of hosting media and we want to ensure that they are receiving recognition for their efforts through media mentions.

- **Maintain an average engagement on Facebook & Instagram of above 5% from 2022-2026**

Engagement is probably the most telling measure of successful social media marketing. An organization can have millions of followers, but if those followers are not actively engaged they are nothing more than a number. Since its inception, Travel Penticton has built up a loyal social media following and we need to remain focused on curating appealing and engaging content, including significant User Generated Content (UGC) gathered through our asset management solution, Crowdriff.

- **Increase Mobile Visitor Centre traffic by an average of 10% per year from 2022-2026.**

Traffic at our bricks and mortar Visitor Centres has declined by an average of 30% per year over the past 4 years and this is a trend across Canada. Our Mobile Visitor Centre allows us the flexibility to position our team at key high-traffic locations and events where they can engage directly with Visitors.



Objectives need to be SMART

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Time-related

Tracking Performance

Travel Penticton is diligent in tracking our performance on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis, as it helps us to:

- Better understand the needs of our tourism stakeholders
- Highlight areas that may need improvement
- Identify trends and plan/act accordingly
- Improve decision making

For the next five years we have identified more than 30 key performance indicators, which will be reviewed and updated on a monthly basis . Below is an overview of the measures pertaining to our primary and secondary objectives.

Room Occupancy & Room Revenue

Tracking method: Recorded monthly using data provided by STR and published on the Destination BC website. AirDNA is also used to monitor vacation rentals activity on a monthly basis.

Earned Media

Tracking method: Recorded weekly using a report from media monitoring agency, Agility PR.

The report provides an overview of articles relating to tourism in Penticton, based on key word searches. The data is transferred to excel and sub-divided into several categories: General Travel News, Event News, Member News, Visit South Okanagan News and Negative Sentiment.

Unique Website Visitors

Tracking method: Recorded monthly using data provided by Google Analytics.

Social Media Engagement

Tracking method: Recorded monthly using Hootsuite, which provides a performance overview for all of our social media channels and activity.

Mobile Visitor Centre Traffic

Tracking method: Recorded manually on a daily basis and input into Destination BC online tourism network report to generate a monthly overview.



“You can’t manage what you can’t measure.”

Peter Drucker

Affordable Housing Initiatives

The level of affordable housing within the City of Penticton is an issue often raised by tourism businesses, particularly those who employ lower income or seasonal workers. During the height of the tourist season many rental properties favour higher-yield, short-term rentals. The reduction of available monthly rental suites makes the labour shortage even more critical.

The 2020 Housing Needs Assessment for the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, highlighted the following:

- The need for affordable housing outweighs availability in Penticton.
- There is a need for more affordable rental units for the growing number of renter households in the City of Penticton.

2022 will be the first time that the City of Penticton have allocated OAP funds towards affordable housing. In recognition of low rental vacancy rates, increasing costs of housing and lack of ability for our tourism sector to find adequate full and part-time employees, the OAP funds will be directed to a newly created Affordable Housing Reserve fund to address the affordable housing crisis in our community. There will be a number of initiatives that the City will be working on in 2022 and will include:

- Creation of an Affordable Housing Reserve for OAP Funds
- Employee Housing Needs Analysis & Action Plan
- Penticton Housing Policy Review

We believe that the first step in moving forward with eventual projects is to clearly identify the need and be provided with recommendations on how to proceed over the coming years. The creation of new housing policy to support increasing the diversity of housing in the community will assist in making it easier for employees to access housing in the community. An implementation strategy will be one of the key deliverables of the project so that in 2023, our community can tangibly move toward responding to the housing crises, specific to the needs of the hospitality industry. In recognition of the short-term needs moving into 2022, the City will be looking to identify short-term solutions such as providing a portion of the OAP funds to accommodators to enable opportunities for employee housing on-site.



The City of Penticton Official Community Plan includes a goal to “increase housing affordability across the housing spectrum from subsidized, social housing to home-ownership options.”

Strategies - Marketing

Strategy 1: Celebrate the unique activities and experiences that Penticton is famous for

Penticton has been a popular destination for all types of visitors for well over 80 years. With our **ICONICS** approach messaging, we honour the city's deep roots of agriculture, craft culture, outdoor recreation and events, and use this blend of experiences to position Penticton as a destination to be visited multiple times within a year.

ICONICS will continue to be a main feature of our visitor website and a focus for garnering attention from travel media and at consumer shows. They will also feature heavily in any new digital asset creation. By their very nature ICONICS are timeless, but we may see a shift in the prominence of certain ICONICS in line with shifting markets and consumer trends.

ICONIC PENTICTON

- **Wine Country:** 80+ Wineries | Vineyards and Orchards within City boundaries
- **Craft Culture:** Breweries, Cideries, Distilleries | Penticton Farmers Market | Downtown Community Market
- **Indigenous Culture:** Home of the Syilx Okanagan nation peoples territory
- **Events:** 30 annual events | Sporting events, natural and cultural showcases
- **Location:** Hub of the South Okanagan | One of two cities in the world located between two lakes
- **'Float the Channel':** 7km river channel between Okanagan Lake and Skaha Lake | Must do activity every Summer
- **Beaches & Water Activities:** 15 acres of premium sandy beaches | Water skiing, wakeboarding, wake surfing & fishing | Canoe, kayak, stand-up paddle board
- **Kettle Valley Rail Trail:** Non-motorized trails connecting Naramata to OK Falls to Summerland | Walking, trail running, hiking, biking or horseback through vineyards overlooking the lake
- **Outdoor Recreation:** +350km of hiking, biking and trail running trails & world class rock climbing | Alpine & Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, pond hockey and fat biking



ICONICS are about answering the question:
What do we want to be famous for?
It's a powerful new way to package and
market our province through flagship
place brands and place making.

Destination BC

Strategies - Marketing

Strategy 2: Establish Penticton as a recognised vacation destination of choice in key markets (Vancouver/Lower Mainland, Calgary/Alberta, Washington/West Coast US)

Our aim is to continue to build a unique brand identity for Penticton & the South Okanagan. In the first half of our five year strategy we will work to develop our established foundational marketing campaigns:

- **Fuel Free (almost):** This unique campaign focuses on the convenience of available recreation and food & beverage facilities in Penticton, all accessible without the need for a vehicle. As well as encouraging health and wellness, Fuel Free (almost) promotes the importance of responsible and sustainable tourism.
- **Culinary/Daily Special:** Being blessed with such an abundant natural pantry, Penticton draws talented chefs from every corner of the globe. Daily Special is a celebration of this community. It is a picture of the Penticton food scene through the lens of locals, where members of the community give newcomers an authentic look at what it's like to eat, drink and enjoy Penticton.
- **Accessibility & Inclusion:** The main objective of this project is to develop experiences, products and locations that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities. This will allow us to confidently promote Penticton as an accessible and inclusive destination of choice.
- **Endurance:** Penticton has a long history of hosting major endurance events including Subaru IRONMAN Canada, Axel Merckx Granfondo and the Peach Classic Triathlon. This campaign aims to capitalize on this combined with our comfortable climate to encourage athletes to choose Penticton as an annual training ground with our 'Train Early, Train Late' messaging.
- **Visit South Okanagan:** This ongoing collaboration between the South Okanagan DMOs, Wine Regions and Destination BC, seeks to promote 'The Okanagan You Remember'. Enticing new and returning visitors to explore more of the diverse experiences the whole region has to offer.

While maintaining their own unique messaging, these elements will be integrated with and build on each other through complimentary themes, content and imagery. Focusing on these already curated programs will help facilitate a speedier recovery for regional tourism and give us a competitive edge over destinations with less market-ready experiences.



Strategies - Marketing

Strategy 3: Optimize the digital presence of Penticton with regard to travel and tourism

Our consumer website VisitPenticton.com, is the hub to which all of our consumer marketing is driven. Our goal is to draw visitors into something more experiential, rather than just informational. By offering rich stories, cultural insights and personal experiences about what Penticton has to offer, based on each consumer's specific interests, we hope to lengthen the time spent on site and experience an increase in conversions/referrals.

With regard to other social and digital marketing channels we will continue to utilize management solutions such as Hootsuite, Google Ads, Telus Insights and Constant Contact for efficient scheduling, distribution and performance measuring. Crowdriff will also play a key role in the curation of our digital assets including User Generated Content, which we have found extremely impactful for creating authentic marketing messages.

There has been a noticeable shift over the past several years away from traditional advertising mediums such as print, television and radio to digital platforms, which we intend to continue for selected initiatives.

Digital advertising is not only the most cost effective in terms of audience reach, it also offers several other advantages:

- It can be instantly updated to reflect current market conditions
- Messaging can be targeted to very specific geographic markets
- Launch of campaigns can be more easily controlled

Throughout our five year strategy, we plan to invest time and resources into reviewing emerging digital technology including Virtual and Augmented Reality. We will also consider technology, to support our "Real-Time" activations, which have proved extremely successful for crisis management during times of wildfires or high water. This may include installing web cams at Skaha Lake or key points on the KVR trail, which would be utilised to promote current conditions.



**62.9% of the population own a smartphone
and on average spend between
3.5 to 5 hours using it daily.**

TrekkSoft 2019

Strategies - Marketing

Strategy 4: Increase tourism revenues and overnight visitation

Generating 'heads in beds' is the ultimate goal of all our marketing activities and while Penticton's tourism sector remains heavily reliant on Summer visitors we are starting to see more dispersion into early Fall and late Spring. Whether this is due to or a result of the availability of more year-round visitor experiences is difficult to say, but it is definitely something we need to capitalize on.

The messaging and imagery for each of our foundational marketing campaigns will be modified to reflect the different seasons of year, as will the listings and information featured on our website. Our visitor guides and other consumer hand outs, such as trail and city maps will also be designed for year-round usage. By providing a broader range of options for visitors, regardless of the time of year, the more likely we are to encourage them to stay longer.

Within all our marketing strategies, consideration must be given to external influences that may directly effect travel to Penticton and the South Okanagan. Most relevant at the moment are:

Climate Change

Hot dry Summers, longer periods of drought, significant increase in wildfire activity, smoke, variable winters & snow conditions all impact traveller decisions.

Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic

Although BC is a leader in vaccinations, many parts of the world are lagging behind or there is a growing resistance to vaccinations and vacc-passports. An anticipated fourth wave due to the Delta variant could still affect global travel well into 2022. The Covid 'hangover' will also be a challenge within the time frame of our 5 Year Strategy.

Labour Shortages

The labour shortage in hospitality and tourism is at a critical level. Government programs designed to assist workers may have produced a negative impact on the number of available workers. Tourism businesses have been severely impacted by variable government restrictions and reduced capacity and operations.



The average annual occupancy rate for hotels/motels in Penticton is currently 55%.
There is ample capacity for increasing overnight stays, particularly during off-peak months.

Strategies - Destination Development

Strategy 1: Continual monitoring, learning and knowledge sharing of Tourism Industry developments

For our tourism sector to be successful and sustainable, we must be willing and able to adapt and change. The best way to do this is to keep well informed about developments within the industry and take advantage of the knowledge and experience shared by industry partners. Travel Penticton will continue to attend the annual TIABC Conference and other relevant tourism based conferences and seminars. We will also subscribe to relevant tourism groups such as the BCDMOA and TOTA to ensure we are receiving the very latest news and information regarding the tourism industry.

At local level we will remain actively involved with the City of Penticton Community Development, Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Penticton Association, seeking out sponsorship and partnership opportunities that will help elevate the profile of tourism.

Strategy 2: Ensure available tourism products meet or exceed the expectation of visitors

Positive consumer sentiment and promotion is an invaluable marketing tool, particularly in our digital age where positive or negative experiences are published immediately. Travel Penticton will develop a plan and schedule based on Member feedback and visitor sentiment to provide support and learning opportunities to help improve their products and services. This will include:

- Working in partnership with local writers and tourism industry businesses to create fresh new itineraries and content
- Providing workshops and training opportunities for tourism industry stakeholders focused on marketing and product development
- Actively encouraging members to claim their TripAdvisor and Google My Business Listing
- Hosting our annual TRUE Penticton Tourism Expo to showcase tourism businesses/activities for upcoming season



“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, not the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.”

Charles Darwin

Strategies - Destination Development

Strategy 3: Change the consumer mindset that Penticton is just about “Peaches & Beaches”

Many visitors to Penticton have pre-conceived ideas of what to expect based on previous experience, or what they may have read or researched. We want to continue to surprise and delight visitors with everything Penticton has to offer today, so there needs to be continuity from the external branding and messaging to in-market delivery.

Our intention is to include in-market activations for our foundational marketing campaigns (Fuel Free, Culinary, Accessibility, Endurance), through the creation of branded assets which can be shared with our local tourism stakeholders. Encouraging tourism community participation will help increase brand awareness and create champions and ambassadors to drive the messaging and delivery of exceptional experiences to consumers.

Travel Penticton will also continue to forge positive relationships and partnerships with local media outlets, who play a very influential role in broadcasting positive consumer sentiment and elevating the profile of Penticton ICONICS and the tourism industry within the region.

Strategy 4: Build a robust and sustainable tourism industry within Penticton

Tourism in Penticton is the third largest contributor to the economy and a robust and sustainable tourism sector will contribute significantly to the City’s long term prosperity. Travel Penticton will continue to share knowledge and ideas with local tourism industry experts and advocate for the interests of tourism stakeholders regarding City developments that impact this sector.

If we hope to attract new accommodation and businesses willing to make a long-term commitment to Penticton’s tourism sector we must work in collaboration with the City of Penticton, Penticton Indian Band and other relevant interest groups on projects that will benefit our tourism sector including the Northern Gateway Development. Partnering with other regional DMOs , TOTA and Destination BC will also be key to ensuring a broad based approach.



**“Those who disrupt their industries
change consumer behaviour,
alter economics, and transform lives.”**

Heather Simmons

Strategies - Visitor Services

Strategy 1: Provide accurate and reliable information to assist visitors at all stages in their purchasing process

Consumers have a wealth of options when travelling and if they're not impressed with Penticton from the outset it's very easy for them to go elsewhere. Working closely with the City, members and tourism partners, we must strive to ensure a consumer's initial experience of Penticton is positive.

The same can be said for those considering relocation. Maintaining a healthy and diverse population is vital to Penticton's economic prosperity and we must constantly encourage new residents and investment. Providing accurate, engaging and informed advice about living and working in Penticton increases our viability and attractiveness as a relocation option.

Strategy 2: Offer a first class customer experience, both externally in the trip planning stages and while in market

One of our main objectives is to encourage excellence in tourism service. As well as providing timely and accurate responses to visitor requests we need to ensure staff and volunteers present and conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Visitor Centre staff and volunteers are often a first point of contact and their expertise and demeanour has a significant influence on a visitor's perception of our destination as a whole. Through standardized, relevant training, constant support and opportunities for improvement we can deliver a first class customer experience.

Strategy 3: Provide a range of service points to meet the needs of a broad visitor base

Competition for visitor dollars is fierce. If we want visitors to stay longer and experience more of what our region has to offer, we must seize every possible opportunity to meet or exceed their expectations. By operating and maintaining all Visitor Centre locations (Main, Peach Satellite, Airport, Mobile) at the same high standard we will leave visitors with a positive, lasting impression of Penticton as a destination that welcomes and appreciates their business.



Experiences are the best part of
travel for everyone.
'When it comes to family travel
experience beats expense.'
Expedia Group 2019

Strategies - Meetings, Incentives Conference & Exhibitions (MICE)

Strategy 1: Assist in the recovery of the MICE sector in Penticton

Penticton's MICE industry is important for a couple of key reasons:

- The majority of meetings, conferences and events are held in the Spring and Fall - times of the year when our hotels and motels have unused capacity.
- Meeting attendees, conference delegates, exhibitors and show attendees, often travelling for business have more latitude for expenses such as restaurant meals, spa services etc. and their spend per person, per day is generally greater than a typical leisure traveller.

Travel Penticton aims to expedite the recovery of our MICE market by serving as a central source of information and first point of contact for meeting and event planners interested in booking Penticton via our newly created Convention Bureau.

The first impression of a destination must be professional, coordinated and responsive or the planner will go no further - they simply will not take the risk. Planners are used to working with one person who develops an understanding of their event requirements and facilitates the gathering of information, suppliers and room blocks and rates. The Travel Penticton Convention Bureau will:

- Co-ordinate an annual MICE marketing strategy which brings all relevant players together to identify and collaborate on priority sales opportunities.
- Build awareness of Penticton as a preferred meetings and event destination in agreed target markets.
- Serve as the central source of information and first point of contact for meeting and event planners interested in booking Penticton.
- Lead a collaborative effort designed to maximise economic impact from each event and each delegate through co-ordination of pre and post off-site event locations and offers.



Penticton is fortunate to have the facilities to serve the MICE market already in place.
Penticton Trade and Convention Centre
South Okanagan Events Centre
Lakeside Resort & Conference Centre
Other large hotels with meeting capacity

Strategies - Meetings, Incentives Conference & Exhibitions (MICE)

Strategy 2: Ensure the survival and continued success of signature annual events

Penticton has a well established reputation when it comes to signature annual events. Peach Festival, Elvis Festival and the Pentastic Jazz Festival, to name a few, have built up a loyal following over the years and draw tens of thousands of visitors to the City.

Recognising the important role signature events have within our tourism sector, Travel Penticton has continued to provide assistance to support external marketing efforts. Our Event Funding program is very well received and always has a full complement of participants, which is encouraging considering many events are run by not-for-profit entities and volunteer boards working with limited budgets and resources.

Travel Penticton intends to re-initiate our Event Funding program for the three years to provide a much needed financial boost to help our signature events re-establish themselves in the marketplace and encourage the return of participants and audience members. In later years the program will become more focused on attracting and assisting new events, particular within the Fall, Spring and Winter months.

Our commitment to Subaru IRONMAN, as a globally recognized brand and important part of Penticton's legacy, will be given unique consideration. As well as highlighting the destination of Penticton on the world stage, IRONMAN will also play a pivotal role in the development of our Endurance (train early, train late) marketing campaign.



Hosting more than 40 annual signature events and festivals, Penticton is fast earning the reputation for being the Event Capital of Canada

Brand Positioning

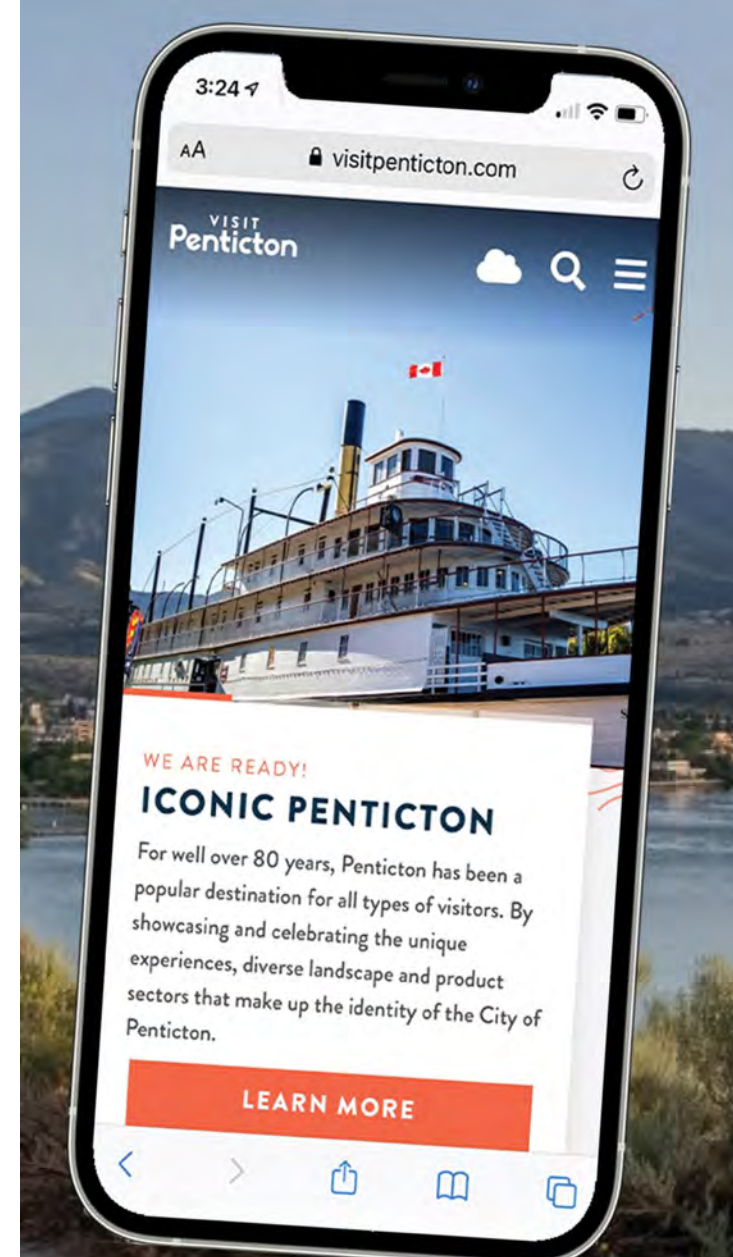
Consistency is key to maintaining and building brand equity. Travel Penticton will continue to strengthen the VISIT PENTICTON brand, through inclusion in all major print, social and digital media marketing campaigns.

The use of relevant tags (@visitpenticton) has also been key to ensure our brand messaging is consistent over all social platforms, in particular, increased User Generated Content (UGC) and cross-section sharing of digital assets and tags. We also strengthen our brand identity through sharing national and regional tourism tags (e.g. #explorecanada, #explorebc, #thompsonokanagan, #visitsouthokanagan).

As the main hub, potential visitors are driven to our VisitPenticton.com website. The site is continuously monitored to ensure the look remains fresh and content is updated and relevant for today's traveller. The site is optimized for mobile usage, which research shows is current the most predominant medium for travellers looking for information.

The Visit Penticton brand is carried through physical attributes such as backdrops, promotional tents, table covers, banners, flags and print collateral for use at various local events, consumer trade shows, media events, promotional programs and visitor information kiosks.

During the latter years of our five year strategy we may consider refreshing the look of the Visit Penticton brand to create a more informal or retro feel, aligned with our foundational marketing campaign brands - Visit South Okanagan, Fuel Free, Daily Special. The website address and social media tags will remain in order to protect the equity we have built up over the years.



VISIT Penticton

Target Markets - Geographic

To optimize our effectiveness in attracting new and returning visitors to our city post COVID-19, Travel Penticton will initially focus on those geographic regions which represent the origin of the highest percent of our visitors. As the graph shows 82% of our visitors come from within Canada, with Europe a distant second at 12%. It does not make sense to consider Europe in the early stages of recovery as the market is so broad and many countries are still subject to travel restrictions. It is likely the US will become the next available viable market, so this will be our secondary focus.

Primary Markets

- British Columbia - with a focus on Vancouver, Lower Mainland Area
- Alberta - with a focus on Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer

Secondary Markets

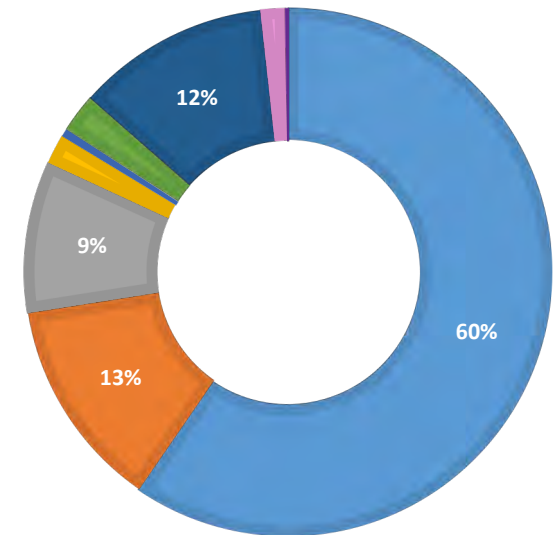
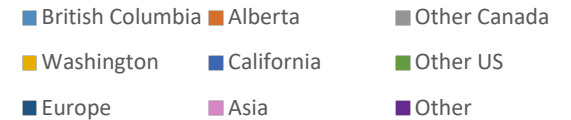
- United States - with a focus on Washington State, Hwy 97 corridor and West Coast

Marketing campaigns will be formulated to compliment each geographic market, perhaps highlighting proximity and safe travel within BC and Alberta and potential cost savings within US markets due to a favourable US/CDN dollar exchange rate.

We must also remain aware visitors from specific regions are more prevalent at certain times of the year. We experience a higher influx of BC and Alberta visitors throughout the Summer and those from other parts of Canada are more inclined to visit during the quieter seasons. The timing of our promotions will be adjusted with this in mind.

Promotion to Ontario will be considered and activated as COVID evolves and travel restrictions are eased and inter-provincial travel is more widely accepted.

PENTICTON VISITOR ORIGIN



Target Markets - Demographic

With a diverse product offering, temperate climate and innumerable recreation opportunities, it's safe to say Penticton really does have something for everyone. However, everyone has their own motivations and desires when it comes to travel. With our foundational and ICONICS marketing campaigns in mind, we need to ensure the overall messaging speaks to those most likely to be incited to action.

These target groups have been identified using Explorer Quotient (EQ) profiles.

ICONIC Penticton: Authentic Experiencers, Cultural Explorers, Free Spirits

Fuel Free (almost): Free Spirits, No-hassle Travellers, Rejuvenators

Culinary/Daily Special: Authentic Experiencers, Cultural Explorers, Free Spirits

Accessibility: No-hassle Travellers, Gentle Explorers, Rejuvenators

Endurance: Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits, No-hassle Travellers

Visit South Okanagan: Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Gentle Explorers

We will also consider each EQ profile contains subsets of Family's, Mature Travellers and Millennials, who will be more responsive to specific messaging at certain times of the year.

With schools being out, Summer is very much a time for family travellers who are typically more value conscious and seeking convenience over luxury. Spring and Fall are key times to target mature travellers and millennials who have more flexibility regarding travel dates and tend to be more incentivised by unique authentic experiences and opportunities for exploration.

Honing our marketing message toward specific demographic groups will help us to generate a greater dispersion of visitors throughout the entire year. This will benefit our tourism sector by offering businesses a steadier income flow, allowing them to remain operational and retain staff longer. This in turn translates to having more experiences available for those shoulder season visitors, building up Penticton's image as a year-round destination.



EQ breaks each geographic market down into psychographic groups called Explorer Types. Each type is identified by particular characteristics stemming from social and travel values, travel motivations and behaviors.
Canadian Tourism Commission

Management, Governance & Administration

Travel Penticton is responsible for, as a Service Provider, providing the strategy and direction for the dispersion of MRDT funds collected within the City of Penticton for external marketing initiatives. In accordance with the MRDT program requirements annual strategy plans, performance reports and budgets are provided to the City of Penticton, as the Designated Recipient, prior to being submitted to the Province for review and approval.

The Society also has Fee for Service Agreement with the City of Penticton pertaining to the delivery of Visitor Services. Quarterly and annual performance reports are presented to City Council and key staff from Finance and Economic Development.

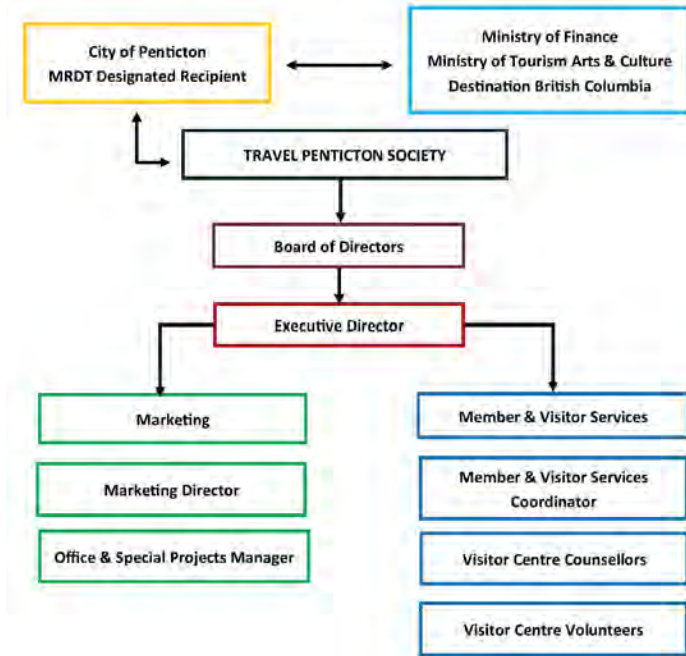
The Travel Penticton Society is a not-for-profit organization with a Board of Directors comprised of:

- 7 elected members representing accommodators collecting MRDT
- 6 elected members representing key tourism sectors
- 3 appointed representatives from key partner organizations (The City of Penticton, Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce, Penticton Indian Band)

The Board is responsible for the stewardship of the Society and approves, on an annual basis, a strategic plan and budget which takes into account the opportunities available to, and risks affecting the Society.

As a member based organization, Travel Penticton is also accountable to our Member tourism businesses and as such we operate in a manner that is consultative and collaborative. Travel Penticton values input for our Members and tourism partners to ensure the most profitable results.

A key goal of Travel Penticton moving forward is maintaining our alignment with our Members and tourism stakeholders as well as relevant regional, provincial and national tourism marketing entities and government ministries.



Travel Penticton is committed to producing results, engaging employees and building a creative and innovative work environment. Attracting and retaining talented and engaged personnel ensures the delivery of first-class services and the ultimate success of our tourism sector.

Sources of Funding

Travel Penticton operates under these main funding streams:

- **MRDT Revenue**
- **OAP Revenue** (retained by the City of Penticton for affordable housing initiatives)
- **A Fee for Service contract with the City of Penticton**
This is a five-year contract aligned with the MRDT application, which covers the operation and delivery of Visitor Services.
- **Travel Penticton Generated Funds**
This includes membership fees, marketing services provided to members, retail sales revenue and income from special projects.
- **Grants & Subsidies**
We will continue to actively pursue viable provincial, federal grant and subsidy opportunities and form co-operative alliances with TOTA, Destination BC, our members and other tourism partners in order to secure the best possible return for our marketing investments.



MRDT revenue represents approximately 55% of Travel Penticton's annual budget. We recognize and appreciate the vital role of accommodators and will provide continued support through our focus on extending our tourism season and increasing overnight stays.

TRAVEL
Penticton

