



2025 SURREY MRDT MARKETING TACTICAL PLAN

Designated Recipient: City of Surrey
Designated Accommodation Area: Surrey
Date Submitted: October 7th, 2024
MRDT Repeal Date: May 31, 2025
Five Year Period: June 1, 2020 to April 30, 2025

One-Year Tactical Plan Template

Designated Recipient: City of Surrey
Designated Accommodation Area: City of Surrey
Date Submitted: October 7, 2024
MRDT Repeal Date: May 31, 2025
Five Year Period: June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2030

A description and instructions pertaining to each section is provided in grey text as a guide only. **The format of your One-Year Tactical Plan may be developed specific to your community needs and resources.** If using this template, please delete the blue text and provide your response accordingly. If using your own report template, please ensure it includes the following sections:

Section 1: Overview and Update to Five-year Strategic Business Plan	
Heading	Description
Strategic Direction	<p>Surrey is at a pivotal moment, driven by rapid growth, strategic location, and a diverse community, positioning it to become a top destination for visitors and investors. In 2025, Surrey aims to boost industry growth, increase revenue, and create positive social impact through collaboration with key partners.</p> <p>Central to this vision is the evolving role of DMOs towards and their effect on Discover Surrey and its partners. While destination marketing remains core, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport encourages DMOs to expand their focus, emphasizing destination development as well. Discover Surrey plans to use 2025 to launch new market-ready group experiences, ultimately filling a gap in our tourism ecosystem.</p> <p>Success depends on seamless cooperation across these entities. Discover Surrey, the City, the SHMA, and the hospitality industry must work together to create engaging visitor experiences and effectively market the city. Aligning efforts and responsibilities ensures a unified tourism strategy.</p>
Key Learnings and Conclusions	<p>Limited Peak Season Capacity: With current peak season accommodations being limited, it's essential to prioritize strategies that boost occupancy during the off-peak season until new properties can increase Surrey's room count. This may mean focusing marketing efforts on pushing Surrey as a four-season destination.</p> <p>Brand and Value Proposition: Surrey's brand and value proposition are still not fully defined or embraced by key partners, both internally and externally. Moving forward in 2025, Discover Surrey must work to better advocate for Surrey tourism with potential visitors as well as residents and key stakeholders.</p> <p>Experience-Driven Promotion: Without a marquee attraction, Surrey should focus on promoting its diverse experiences, events, and facilities to draw visitors.</p> <p>Collaboration and Leadership: Achieving strategic goals requires strong collaboration and clear division of responsibilities among partners to prevent overlapping efforts. Team Surrey must work together to ensure we are all working in collaboration with clear and effective communication strategies.</p> <p>The ongoing partnership between Discover Surrey, the SHMA, and the City of Surrey</p>

	<p>continues to grow, demonstrating the value of collaboration in achieving shared goals. There remains a need to ensure this collaboration is measured and communicated clearly to all stakeholders.</p> <p>In 2024, significant milestones indicate growth in both tourism leadership in Surrey and the overall accommodation sector. A key development was the successful collaboration between Discover Surrey and SHMA on several initiatives aimed at driving leisure and group travel and enhancing Surrey’s tourism offerings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Successful Marketing Campaigns: Team Surrey led targeted digital marketing campaigns focusing on their respective audiences. The SHMA targeted group travelers, resulting in higher engagement and bookings across member properties. These initiatives mark a critical step in positioning Surrey as a group travel destination, especially for travel trade, sports and business events. Discover Surrey focused on showcasing Surrey’s ample greenspace, including year-round outdoor activities such as golf, in addition to continuing to push Surrey’s impressive culinary reputation. ○ Collaboration at Trade Shows: The collaboration at multiple tradeshow by Team Surrey partners such as the recent success at the CMEE conference where the SHMA worked under the Discover Surrey brand demonstrating the value of teamwork across Surrey’s tourism leadership. ○ Infrastructure Development Needs: One ongoing challenge identified was the need for better infrastructure to support data tracking and reporting across SHMA and Discover Surrey campaigns. This has led to plans to enhance data collection and performance measurement strategies. ○ Opportunity for Growth in Group Travel: The focus on increasing group travel bookings was validated by the success of new business event leads and sports tourism initiatives. There is significant potential to expand this segment, especially during off-peak seasons. ○ Need for Additional Partnering: One key conclusion is the need for more partnership across Team Surrey partners in terms of determining how best to manage shared responsibilities concerning conferences and tradeshow to maximize Surrey’s overall access and impact. ○ Better Promote Key Incentives: The SHMA provides funds to parties that support the overnight sector through several key grants, however there are opportunities to better promote these initiatives and streamline the application process overall.
Overall Goals and Objectives	<p>While the core goals from the Five-Year Plan remain intact, these tactical adjustments for 2025 focus on immediate activation efforts and target the newly agreed upon division of audiences among the three MRDT receipts to increase occupancy and enhance Surrey's destination brand.</p> <p>Boost Off-Season Visits and Occupancy: Launch digital marketing campaigns, build industry partnerships, and attend trade shows to drive awareness and increase leisure and sports travel during off-peak times.</p> <p>Drive Group Travel for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibits (MICE) and Group Leisure: Position Surrey as a leading destination for MICE and group leisure events.</p> <p>Build Long-Term Brand Awareness and Affinity: Strengthen Surrey’s position as a vibrant, diverse, community-driven, affordable, and accessible alternative to Vancouver through focused branding efforts.</p>

	<p>Support Sports Tourism and Events: Promote Surrey as a key destination for sports tourism, leveraging top-tier facilities for regional and national tournaments. Assist in growing sports-related overnight stays by administering grants such as the Sports Surrey Grant and the SHMA Sports Tourism Sponsorship Grant, in addition to creating key promotional materials.</p> <p>Engage Target Audiences: Use data-driven insights to create marketing strategies that highlight Surrey’s unique accommodations and experiences for diverse visitor segments.</p> <p>Expand Visitor Services: Promote Surrey's experiences to locals and visitors, enhancing Discover Surrey's profile.</p> <p>Travel Trade: Begin the first phase of an official Travel Trade strategy, including launching bookable market-ready group experiences.</p> <p>Advance Destination Development: Identify and fill gaps in Surrey's tourism ecosystem and work towards filling those gaps by supporting tourism partners as well as continuing with the Veneto Collaboratory Destination Development work begun in 2024.</p> <p>Align Partners: Foster communication and coordination among the City, Discover Surrey, SHMA, local businesses, and community organizations for a unified approach to tourism planning and marketing.</p>
--	--

Strategies	<p>Key Strategies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop the next phase of the Discover Surrey Visitor Services Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover Surrey is at the end of their current lease and in need of larger space to keep up with expanding responsibilities and capacity issues. The need for this new space allows for the exploration of choosing space that is conducive to becoming a brick and mortar location. Taking on community development tasks to support resident sentiment as well as further education on the value of tourism within the community 2. Strengthen relationships with Surrey’s key MRDT partners, Discover Surrey, the SHMA and the City of Surrey 3. Begin the development of a Travel Trade Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This includes launching the final phase of the Tourism Experience Development Program with market-ready product 4. Launch the Destination Development Program 5. Expand the Discover Surrey team to eliminate ongoing capacity concerns 6. Increase Off-Peak Occupancy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary focus for the year will be to boost room bookings during off-peak seasons (October-May) through a balance of activation-focused campaigns and branding initiatives. This strategy is designed to not only fill rooms in the short term but also improve long-term awareness and consideration of Surrey as a travel destination. The goal is to raise off-peak occupancy by 1 percentage point compared to other Fraser Valley competitors in 2025. 7. Key Activation Campaigns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover Surrey and the SHMA will run campaigns designed to drive traffic, boost engagement, and generate bookings. Conversion ads will focus on increasing visits to member properties and tourism partners while positing DS and the SHMA as key resources. Awareness ads will highlight key attractions and promote Surrey as a top destination, especially during off-peak times. The overall objective is to maintain steady occupancy, elevate Surrey’s visibility, and solidify its role as a central resource for both visitors and local tourism partners. 8. Building Brand Awareness and Affinity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover Surrey and the SHMA will focus on enhancing brand distinctiveness in markets outside British Columbia (Alberta, Ontario, Washington State) and building brand affinity in intra-BC markets (Vancouver Island, Fraser Valley, Okanagan, Northern BC). The goal is to position Surrey as a community-driven, diverse, and affordable alternative to the more expensive Vancouver market. <p>Content Themes for 2025:</p> <p>Surrey as a Four-Season Destination Highlight Surrey's year-round appeal by promoting its moderate climate and the availability of activities and experiences that can be enjoyed across all four seasons. This content will focus on Surrey’s versatile tourism offerings, from outdoor fun in summer to cozy indoor experiences during the cooler months.</p> <p>Surrey’s Signature Experiences (Market-Ready bookable group experiences) Promote Surrey’s new Signature Experiences when they are ready to launch. This content will showcase a variety of market-ready, bookable activities, such as guided tours, cultural experiences, and outdoor excursions, appealing to families, corporate groups, and leisure travelers seeking memorable experiences.</p> <p>Internationally Recognized Culinary Destination Continue to position Surrey as a premier destination for food enthusiasts by highlighting its growing reputation in the culinary world. The content will focus on Surrey’s diverse food scene, international cuisines, and the people behind the</p>
-------------------	---

	<p>meals.</p> <p>“Discover” Surrey (Community Awareness) Boost community awareness by promoting the “Discover Surrey” brand and its role in showcasing local businesses, events, and cultural offerings. The content will aim to boost resident sentiment and encourage pride in Surrey’s tourism industry, while also inviting visitors to explore the city’s unique attractions.</p> <p>Over 6,000 Acres of Greenspace Emphasize Surrey’s extensive greenspace offerings by promoting its over 6,000 acres of parks, trails, and natural areas. This content will appeal to nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts, showcasing Surrey as a destination for easy trails, picnicking, and wildlife observation.</p> <p>Business Travel & MICE Emphasize Surrey’s appeal for business traveller and MICE groups by promoting its accessible location, affordable accommodations, and professional infrastructure. This content will be designed to attract corporate event planners and associations looking for venues outside of Vancouver</p> <p>Community & Accessibility Promote Surrey as a community-oriented and accessible destination, emphasizing its diversity and affordability compared to Vancouver. The focus will be on creating a welcoming environment for business travelers, MICE groups, and families</p> <p>Group Leisure Travel A central content theme will be the promotion of group leisure travel for weddings, family reunions, and cultural events, highlighting Surrey’s cultural offerings, scenic spots, and event-friendly infrastructure to attract multi-generational travelers and leisure groups</p> <p>Sports Tourism & Events Surrey will continue to support the growing sports tourism market, promoting Surrey as a hub for regional and national tournaments. This content will focus on Surrey’s top-tier sports facilities and the surrounding amenities that make it an ideal location for team events</p>
--	---

Target Markets	<p><u>Primary Consumer Markets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure day drippers from communities in and around Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR), a couple of night stays Leisure visitors from other parts of BC and Alberta, overnight getaways <p>Desired Length of Stay: 1-3 nights.</p> <p>Business Travelers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC (Lower Mainland), Alberta, Ontario, Washington State Corporate professionals, consultants, government officials, and individual business travelers attending meetings or visiting local businesses Solo business travelers, remote workers, and corporate travellers in need of accommodation during short-term stays in Surrey <p>Desired Length of Stay: 1-3 nights, typically for quick business trips.</p> <p>MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic Focus: BC (Lower Mainland), Alberta, Ontario, Washington State Demographics: Corporate event planners, association representatives, government agencies, and organizations looking for venues to host events Activity-Based Groups: Large groups attending multi-day conferences, meetings, and incentive travel events <p>Desired Length of Stay: 2-4 nights for multi-day conferences and meetings.</p> <p>Group Leisure Travelers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic Focus: BC (Lower Mainland), Alberta, Washington State Demographics: Large groups traveling for leisure purposes, such as weddings, reunions, or milestone celebrations Activity-Based Groups: Groups attending destination weddings, family reunions, or leisure trips around cultural events and festivals in Surrey <p>Desired Length of Stay: 1-3 nights.</p> <p>Secondary Consumer Markets, Transient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drive-through traffic: Surrey is an alternative accommodation choice to Vancouver, Whistler or other destinations Washington State overnight getaways if not a weekend Overnight overflow visitors to Vancouver or other pricier locations around Metro Vancouver <p>Desired Length of Stay: 1-3 nights.</p> <p>Travel Trade (Led by Discover Surrey)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic Focus: Canada, United States, Asia Demographics: International tour operators, travel agents, receptive tour operators working with organized travel groups Activity-Based Groups: Large organized tour groups, international leisure travelers, cultural and educational travel groups. For some key conferences, SHMA may attend as a representative of Discover Surrey <p>Desired Length of Stay: 2-3 nights, typically part of multi-city or multi-region tours.</p> <p>Sports Travelers (Led by the City of Surrey and Discover Surrey)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic Focus: BC, Alberta, Washington State
-----------------------	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demographics: Youth and adult sports teams, coaches, families, and sports enthusiasts attending local or regional tournaments• Activity-Based Groups: Teams participating in organized sports events, including hockey, soccer, baseball, and swimming tournaments <p>Desired Length of Stay: 1-3 nights for multi-day tournaments and competitions.</p>
--	---

TACTICS

Tourism in Surrey is done in partnership between Discover Surrey, the Surrey Hotel and Motel Association (SHMA) and the City of Surrey. Outlined below are the 19 tactics delivered by these three organizations.

1. **MARKETING:** Digital Marketing
2. **MARKETING:** Social Media Management
3. **MARKETING:** Media Relations
4. **MARKETING:** Festivals & Events
5. **MARKETING:** Conference and Trade Show Attendance
6. **DESTINATION AND PRODUCT EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT:** Industry Development and Training
7. **DESTINATION AND PRODUCT EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT:** Product Experience Enhancement & Destination Development Projects
8. **DESTINATION AND PRODUCT EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT:** Research, Analytics and Evaluation
9. **VISITOR SERVICES:** Visitor Services
10. **MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, EVENTS AND SPORT:** Sport Surrey
11. **MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, EVENTS AND SPORT:** Strategic Conference Promotion Initiative
12. **ADMINISTRATION, WAGES, AND BENEFITS:** Tourism Development Coordinator – MRDT Reporting and Financial Reconciliation, Stakeholder Engagement

1. Major Category: Marketing
Activity Title: Destination Marketing
<p>Tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paid Media (Print, radio, television, out-of-home, social media ads, display ads) ● Search Engine and Optimization ● Email Marketing ● Continue to participate in provincially aligned marketing co-ops ● Ongoing website hosting ● Ongoing website maintenance ● Development of written and video content ● Capture new and updated visual promotional content ● Create written and visual collateral ● Off-season campaign
<p>Implementation Plan</p> <p>Short Description: Media advertising and production remain crucial for showcasing Surrey's unique offerings and creating compelling narratives that resonate with our target audiences. A balanced mix of traditional and digital media will help keep Surrey top of mind and drive visitation.</p> <p>A brand-new Discover Surrey website was launched at the end of 2024. The bulk of Discover Surrey's marketing tactics drive back to DiscoverSurreyBC.com so the website must remain up-to-date, accessible, accurate, quick, and easy to load. A key factor of the website is to drive traffic to partner websites and support marketing materials.</p>

In 2024, Discover Surrey worked to start developing our assets and collateral to ensure assets were up-to-date and relevant, in addition to helpful in supporting our campaigns. Significant work continues to be needed to create and update brand assets and ensure Surrey's tourism partners and assets are supported and amplified.

Campaign(s) designed to drive room bookings during the off-peak season through a mix of direct advertising and branding efforts. The focus will be on both immediate conversions and long-term brand positioning.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Engagement in paid campaigns
- Number of paid media placements
- Mentions and placements via different marketing co-op campaigns
- Continue to promote and maintain the new website
- Promote tourism partners and their offerings, acting as an information hub for visitors and residents alike
- Fill the asset gaps in Discover Surrey's current asset library
- Create updated written content promoting Surrey
- Create updated collateral to promote Surrey and fill in any content gaps
- Increase off-peak occupancy by 1 percentage point
- Achieve 700,000 unforced video views (30+ seconds) across key markets
- Generate 34,000+ website visits through property ads
- Drive 1,000+ direct booking inquiries to SHMA member properties

Rationale:

In 2025, continuing to invest in advertising and search engine optimization (SEO) is crucial to maintaining Surrey's visibility in a competitive tourism landscape. Advertising drives immediate awareness, reaching targeted audiences across multiple platforms, while SEO ensures long-term discoverability by improving our ranking on search engines. Together, these tactics are key to attracting new visitors, staying top of mind for repeat travelers, and ensuring Surrey's offerings are easily found when potential visitors are researching destinations. Furthermore, strategically aligning with partners via marketing co-ops allows Surrey to be seen by new audiences through different perspectives, all while strengthening relationships with both community and regional tourism partners.

Discover Surrey's website currently acts as the primary touchpoint for visitor information and trip-planning services. The new website will continue to have a visitor-centric approach, with an emphasis on relevant, easy-to-find information, and efficiently drive traffic to tourism partners. New and refreshed content will depict Surrey's vibrant and authentic experiences, continually updating sections with new stories and assets. Accessible design practices will be followed.

Visually showcasing Surrey through video and photography can be used across all mediums to captivate audiences and to sell the destination through storytelling and experiences. This is especially helpful for up-and-coming destinations like Surrey whose assets have largely been undiscovered. Capturing recent and diverse assets helps share the narrative of Surrey. Creating Discover Surrey-owned collateral rather than solely relying on partner collateral can help Discover Surrey be seen as a tourism expert and leader within the community.

Off-peak occupancy remains a key challenge, and by targeting group travelers (sports and business), Surrey can ensure that the market is activated when room availability is high. The combination of direct conversion campaigns and long-term branding will help build occupancy over time.

Action Steps:

- Customize campaigns surrounding primary content themes with both paid and earned media objectives
- Work with Discover Surrey's digital agency to set goals and budgets

- Increase investments in shoulder periods and pause or decrease decreased investments in peak periods
- Look into out-of-home advertising options to support a more holistic targeting
- Continue to participate with regional marketing co-operatives
- Keep the website up to date with relevant and accurate information
- Drive campaigns back to the website
- Use the website to promote and link to partner sites
- Manage and monitor the new website
- Work with partners to ensure Surrey content and messaging are updated and reflect the new Surrey brand positioning
- Continue to gather footage of Surrey properties, experiences, and partners to supplement campaigns
- Develop property-specific ad content and design
- Create video assets in collaboration with local production teams
- Launch conversion campaigns via Google Performance Max and social media
- Deploy brand awareness campaigns via YouTube and social media platforms
- Monitor campaign performance monthly and adjust strategy based on real-time analytics

Potential Partnerships: Discover Surrey, City of Surrey, SHMA member properties, digital media agency (The Web Advisors), tourism Partners, participating Marketing Co-Op Partners, Surrey tourism businesses, external digital media contractors (graphic designers, visual media marketing agencies, etc.), Event/Festival partners and their vendors/providers, and Surrey residents or visitors through user-generated content

Resources: These activities will be led by Team Surrey with support from external digital media contractors and asset development teams. Discover Surrey leads website activities and SHMA leads the off-season campaign.

Sources of Funding: MRDT

Timeframe: Ongoing throughout 2025; increased spending during off-peak periods

Budget:

\$418,425 (Discover Surrey) - media advertising and production
 \$93,367 (SHMA) - media advertising and production
 \$45,000 (Discover Surrey) - website
 \$16,000 (Discover Surrey) - collateral production and distribution
 \$11,000 (SHMA) - collateral production and distribution
 \$70,000 (Discover Surrey) - consumer focused asset development
 \$40,000 (SHMA) - consumer focused asset development
 \$50,000 (SHMA) - marketing staff - wages and benefits
 \$138,615 (Discover Surrey) - marketing staff - wages and benefits

Performance Measures:

- Campaign Performance
 - Click Through Rates
 - Engagement Rates (Likes, Comments, Shares)
- Occupancy Rates
 - Particularly in the shoulder season
- Unique Website Visitors
- Bounce Rate
- Referrals Click Out to Partners
- Increased brand assets
- Development of new or refreshed collateral and giveaways
- Monthly tracking of key performance indicators, including video views, website visits, direct bookings, and off-peak occupancy rates. Success will be measured by increases in these metrics, particularly occupancy and inquiries.

2. Major Category: Marketing
Activity Title: Social Media Management
Tactics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain Discover Surrey’s social media channels ● Promote tourism partners fairly across social media platforms
Implementation Plan Short Description: Social media serves as a key platform for engaging with potential visitors, sharing real-time updates, and showcasing Surrey’s events and attractions. Due to a more consistent posting schedule in 2024, Discover Surrey’s followers and engagement rates have both continued to increase. Discover Surrey plans to use the momentum earned in 2024 to continue the growth for 2025. Quantifiable Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grow follower counts across platforms, specifically focusing on Instagram and TikTok ● Generate awareness and interest in exploring Surrey ● Grow, track and showcase partner mentions that is used to ensure equity across partners as well as reasoning to work with Discover Surrey ● Grow and use user-generated content Rationale: A strong social presence allows us to build community, respond to audience needs, and amplify campaigns. By consistently managing and optimizing our social channels, we can drive engagement, increase brand awareness, and inspire travellers to choose Surrey as their next destination. Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continuous content optimization and management across platforms ● Organic social posting, maintenance, and community management ● Apply new content to campaigns, focusing on depicting Surrey as a vibrant four-season destination ● Continue to provide valuable and inspiring trip planning information through online and mobile visitor services channels. Ensure local tourism businesses, e.g., hotels, restaurants, etc., and operators are featuring Surrey products and experiences and recommending them to visitors ● Track partner mentions across platforms to ensure equity as well as inform partners of the work being done on their behalf Potential Partnerships: tourism partners (accommodations, events, experience providers) Resources: This activity will be led by Discover Surrey staff but may include external contractors. Sources of Funding: MRDT Timeframe: Ongoing throughout 2025 Budget: \$92,000 (Discover Surrey) - social media Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tourism Partner Mentions across Platforms ● Social Engagement Metrics (Likes, Shares, Comments)

3. Major Category: Marketing
Activity Title: Media Relations
Tactics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct hosted FAM Tours and Media Trips ● Promote earned media articles ● Take part in media associations in both Canada and the USA ● Pitch stories to journalists and media ● Attending DMO or travel writer-centric conferences to pitch Surrey
<p>Implementation Plan:</p> <p>Short Description: Media coverage plays a key role in Discover Surrey’s brand awareness and promotion strategy. The plan works to promote Surrey as a vibrant destination that offers a vast variety of unique and affordable experiences and accommodation options. This activity works as a cost-efficient way of promoting Surrey to ultimately influence and create a positive tourism sentiment.</p> <p>Quantifiable Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend key travel media conferences to meet and speak with travel writers and influencers ● Nurture relationships with media to follow through initial meetings to ensure FAMs are booked ● Earn positive media stories <p>Rationale: Surrey continues to struggle with negative perception and bias, ultimately skewing the city’s narrative. Through investing in media relations, Surrey can craft positive narratives that may appear more authentic and genuine than solely relying on stories promoted directly through Discover Surrey. Leveraging a writer’s credibility and reputation allows Surrey to be seen by different audiences and from different perspectives. This external perspective can help combat negative brand perceptions and media bias surrounding Surrey.</p> <p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend Travel Media Conferences ● Pitch positive stories about Surrey’s vast offerings ● Host travel media writers ● Share earned media coverage <p>Potential Partnerships: Surrey tourism businesses, micro-influencers, travel writers, local Surrey-based media outlets, and media and content teams at DBC, VCM and Destination Canada</p> <p>Resources: This activity will be led by Discover Surrey staff while relying on partnerships via the media and content teams at DBC, VCM and Destination Canada.</p> <p>Sources of Funding: MRDT</p> <p>Timeframe: (when will the tactic begin and end or is it ongoing?): Ongoing throughout 2025</p> <p>Budget: \$20,500 (Discover Surrey) - travel media relations</p> <p>Performance Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of earned media coverage articles ● Number of partners featured in earned articles ● Attendance at key events including the Travel Media Association of Canada Conference, Society of

American Travel Writers, and Travel & Words Conference

4. Major Category: Marketing

Activity Title: Festival and Events: Surrey Tourism Event Marketing Grant & Cultural Celebrations Grant Program

Tactics:

- Manage the Discover Surrey Tourism Event Marketing Grant
- Manage the Cultural Celebrations Grant
- Promotion of Grant-Funded Events:
Cross-Promotion of Events on Partner Websites

Implementation Plan:

Short Description:

Tourism Surrey's Tourism Event Marketing Grant supports well-executed events that attract visitors, showcase Surrey's diverse culture and attractions, and generate spending at local businesses. By hosting and managing a variety of events, Surrey can build its reputation as a vibrant destination, create memorable visitor experiences, and strengthen community engagement. These efforts contribute to the city's overall tourism development and long-term success as a sought-after destination.

SHMA's Cultural Celebrations Grant Program supports festivals and cultural events that celebrate Surrey's diversity. By funding these events, SHMA aims to increase the number of visitors and overnight stays during both peak and off-peak seasons.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Support existing events if they have the opportunity to return in 2025 (e.g. Fusion Festival, Cloverdale Rodeo, and Country Fair)
- Support new events with grant funds
- Fund 3+ cultural events in 2025

Rationale:

Discover Surrey sees opportunities to develop new festivals and events (and improve old ones) that boost overnight stays, increase visitor spending, and highlight our local culture and attractions. To encourage investment in these festivals and cultural celebrations, Discover Surrey will provide direct support for events that can drive overnight visitation, particularly in off-peak seasons, through a grant application process and committee approval. Funding will be allocated specifically for marketing efforts, not event production costs.

Surrey's rich cultural diversity presents an opportunity to draw visitors for unique and authentic experiences. By supporting local cultural events, SHMA helps create tourism drivers that boost both day and overnight visitation.

Action Steps:

- Promote both grants via website, partner relationships, and social media distribution
- Analyze applicants' capacity to increase occupancy at Surrey properties
- Distribute funds to applicants
- Coordinate with event organizers for cross-promotion on SHMA, Discover Surrey, and event partner websites
- Monitor attendance and track overnight stays generated by these events

Potential Partnerships: Tourism Partners (accommodations and/or visitor facing), Event/Festival organizers Discover Surrey, City of Surrey, media outlets, and SHMA member properties

Resources: These grants will be managed by Discover Surrey and SHMA staff and boards.

Sources of Funding: MRDT

Timeframe: Ongoing throughout 2025

Budget:

\$100,000 (Discover Surrey) - Marketing (Other) (Surrey Tourism Event Marketing Grant)

\$45,000 (SHMA) - Industry Development & Training (Cultural Celebrations Grant Program)

Performance Measures:

- Number of event applications and number of events receiving grant funding
- Number of net new festivals to Surrey supported
- Occupancy rates during key events

5. Major Category: Marketing

Activity Title: Conference and Trade Show Attendance

Tactics:

- **Event Lead Generation and Strategic Follow-Up:** By attending major industry events such as **Go West**, SHMA will generate new leads and build relationships with key decision-makers in the MICE and travel trade sectors. The plan will include strategic follow-up on leads from these events, coordinated with Discover Surrey to maximize bookings.
- **Co-Representation of Team Surrey at Key Events:** SHMA will continue to work with **Discover Surrey** and **Sport Surrey**, attending key trade shows and conferences. This approach has already proven successful at the **CMEE Conference**, where SHMA's collaboration with Discover Surrey led to substantial event leads and strengthened Surrey's visibility as a conference destination.
- **Sales & Lead Management:** Continue to manage sales leads from conferences and trade shows. SHMA will work with Discover Surrey and the City to ensure smooth lead distribution and management to member properties.

Implementation Plan:

Short Description: SHMA will continue to participate in major conferences and trade shows as part of Team Surrey, co-representing alongside Discover Surrey and Sport Surrey to generate leads, promote Surrey as a conference destination, and increase off-peak occupancy.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Increase the number of leads from trade shows and conferences by 15-20% over 2024 results

Rationale:

Attending trade shows and conferences allows Surrey to build relationships with event organizers, boost off-peak occupancy, and grow the destination's reputation as a premier destination for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibits), Sports, and Travel Trade.

Action Steps:

- Attend key conferences (e.g., Go West, CMEE)
- Implement a co-representation strategy with Discover Surrey and Sport Surrey
- Coordinate follow-up strategy for leads from each event

- Track group bookings and associated room nights

Potential Partnerships: Discover Surrey, City of Surrey, and accommodations

Resources: SHMA staff coordination

Sources of Funding: MRDT Funds, SHMA Marketing Budget

Timeframe: on-going

Budget:

\$8,000 (Discover Surrey) - travel trade

\$98,000 (SHMA) - Meetings, conventions, conferences, events, sport, etc.

Performance Measures:

- Track leads through CRM systems, measure conference bookings

6. Major Category: Destination and Product Experience Development

Activity Title: Industry Development and Training

Tactics:

- Attend partner-led shows and events to ensure provincial, regional, and community alignment and up-to-date training

Implementation Plan:

Short Description:

Attending partner-led shows and events fosters collaboration and supports staying informed on the latest trends and opportunities. Participating in these events keeps our staff up to date with best practices, emerging industry shifts, and key partnerships, ultimately enhancing our ability to market Surrey effectively. This alignment and continuous learning help strengthen Surrey's tourism sector and create more cohesive strategies with our partners across all levels.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Attendance at shows and events
- Creation of event reports to articulate key learnings and share insights with the team

Rationale:

Attending shows and events provides valuable insights into industry trends, best practices, and opportunities for collaboration. By creating event reports after attending the shows, staff can document these key learnings and share them with the remainder of the team, fostering knowledge transfer and ensuring that important takeaways are integrated into our overall strategies. This approach maximizes the value of attending external events and enhances Discover Surrey's ability to stay aligned with industry developments and partners.

Action Steps:

Attend the following shows:

- Destinations International:
 - Marketing Conference and Annual General Conference
- Tourism Industry Association of BC
- Tourism Industry Association of Canada
- British Columbia DMO Association
- Vancouver Coast & Mountains Conference

Potential Partnerships: Vancouver Coast and Mountains, Destination British Columbia, and SHMA

Resources: This activity will be led by Discover Surrey staff.

Sources of Funding: MRDT

Timeframe: Ongoing throughout 2025

Budget:

\$69,500 (Discover Surrey) - industry development & training

Performance Measures:

- Attendance of key shows
- Post-show reports completed

7. Major Category: Destination and Product Experience Development

Activity Title: Product Experience Enhancement & Destination Development Projects

Tactics:

- Spice Trail
 - Develop the next phase of the Discover Surrey Spice Trail
 - Audit the current Spice Trail Offerings
 - Develop a focused community program similar to the Ale Trail
 - Promote new offerings
 - Investigate new technology that could advance current offerings like the Spice Trail
- Golf Surrey
 - Develop an integrated marketing campaign to showcase Surrey's golf products
 - Work with the golf courses to develop potential Stay and Play packages or deals
 - Improve the Golf Surrey newsletter
 - Investigate the effectiveness of BC Golf Marketing Alliance
- Veneto Collaboratory
- Community Development

Implementation Plan:

Short Description:

Product Experience Enhancement works to improve existing tourism experiences and create new opportunities to ensure the destination remains competitive, fresh, and worth exploring. It supports convincing travellers to re-visit Surrey, even if they have already experienced a version of our offerings.

Destination development continues to be critical for Surrey's tourism growth. Destination development ensures that Surrey not only meets but exceeds visitor expectations, fostering sustainable growth and making the city a more vibrant, competitive, and memorable destination for travellers as well as residents. This approach strengthens Surrey's tourism infrastructure and drives long-term economic impact. It also adds to Discover Surrey's importance and relevance within the community.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Audited Spice Trail list
- Launch of an updated Spice Trail Program
- Earned media from updates to the Spice Trail Program
- Improved relationships with the golf courses
- Launch of a marketing campaign surrounding golf as a main driver

- Increase resident sentiment surrounding tourism
- Increase community awareness of Discover Surrey
- Launch new market-ready bookable experiences

Rationale:

Discover Surrey has a few current campaigns that are getting to the point where a revamp or new offering should take place. Publicity for current offerings only lasts so long and the Spice Trail for example was originally launched in 2020 and is overdue.

Through working with the Veneto Collaboratory, we are able to identify gaps in attractions, services, and amenities, we can help support the creation of new experiences that elevate Surrey's appeal to visitors. We are also able to launch market-ready tourism offerings which Surrey has not been able to do before. With community development, we can promote the value of tourism within the community which will support our efforts in the long term.

Action Steps:

- Look into how to make the Spice Trail more interactive and data-centric
- Audit the Spice Trail Partners
- Create an education piece for Spice Trail Partners
- Create publicity around the new Spice Trail launch
- Develop out relationships with the golf courses
- Attend golf shows to showcase Surrey's golf courses
- Launch the final phase of the Tourism Development Project with market-ready bookable experiences
- Create a Community Development plan to work in tandem with Visitor Services
- Support marketing, sponsorship, and development of initiatives for tourism and community-related products, services, or experiences through the creation of a Destination Development Fund

Potential Partnerships: Restaurant partners, golf courses, external contractors (itinerary generators, official taste testers, etc.), Veneto Collaboratory, Tourism Partners, and Community Partners

Resources: These activities will be led by Team Surrey staff but may include external contractors.

Sources of Funding: MRDT

Timeframe: Third and Fourth quarter of 2025

Budget:

\$84,000 (Discover Surrey) - product experience enhancement and training

\$50,000 (Discover Surrey) - destination & product experience management (other): Destination Development Fund

Performance Measures:

- A robust launch of the Spice Trial Program, ensuring that partners are fully informed and engaged with the trail.
- The introduction of a new feature or phase designed to generate fresh publicity for the trail.
- Campaign metrics of a newly launched golf product; golf show metrics
- 6-8 bookable, market-ready experiences
- Resident Sentiment Index

8. Major Category: Destination and Product Experience Development

Activity Title: Research, Evaluation, and Analytics

Discover Surrey Tactics:

- Continue with:
 - STR
 - Simpleview
 - AirDNA
- Explore Value of Tourism through Destination British Columbia
- Support the City of Surrey in its Destination Development Research
- Work with the city to address barriers related to bureaucratic red tape and city processes faced by event

SHMA Tactics:

- **Development of a Metrics Framework:**

Collaborate with other Team Surrey partners to develop a shared metrics framework to track the performance of key metrics for Surrey’s tourism sector. This framework will establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for evaluating tourism impact, including room nights, visitor engagement, and campaign effectiveness.

- **Collaboration for Data Sharing and Reporting:**

Work closely with Discover Surrey, the City of Surrey, and other stakeholders to ensure data is gathered consistently across tourism efforts. The metrics framework will allow all partners to evaluate and report on the impact of their initiatives cohesively.

- **Periodic Performance Reporting:**

The metrics framework will support regular reporting and reviews, allowing SHMA and its partners to assess the progress of their tourism strategies and make informed adjustments as needed.

City of Surrey Tactics:

- Explore and improve city conditions and processes to make Surrey a great place to do business and hold events/festivals
- Conduct investment attraction research, qualify leads and do business outreach for the entertainment and hospitality sector

Implementation Plan:
Short Description:

The Metrics Framework Implementation will establish a consistent approach to tracking and measuring the success of SHMA’s marketing and tourism initiatives, developed in collaboration with Team Surrey partners. This framework will support periodic data reporting and provide insights into the effectiveness of shared tourism strategies.

The City of Surrey aims to explore and identify entertainment and hospitality business development opportunities; and collaborate with Discover Surrey and SHMA to understand and address barriers related to bureaucratic red tape and city processes faced by event and festival organizers.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Develop a shared metrics framework
- Track the impact of SHMA’s major initiatives using the framework
- List of prospective businesses in the entertainment and hospitality sector
- Increase the knowledge and understanding for the City regarding city processes that create barriers for event and festival organizers

Rationale:

Discover Surrey intends to continuously develop Surrey’s tourism offerings and landscape to the best of our abilities. With concrete data and research, we can ensure we are developing tactics and plans that make sense

for our city and our needs.

A unified metrics framework will ensure that SHMA and its partners can track tourism performance consistently, enabling more effective decision-making and better reporting to stakeholders.

The City of Surrey aims to be an exceptional place for businesses and visitors alike. To achieve this, continuous process improvement and support for businesses navigating city procedures are essential. To build Surrey into a destination, the city needs more unique offerings and businesses in the entertainment and hospitality sector to support year-round tourism and visits.

Action Steps:

- Explore new research avenues such as Destination British Columbia's Value of Tourism database
- Assess if Simpleview is still a viable option to continue with
- Explore Air DNA analytics, especially with new provincial guidelines surrounding short-term rentals
- Collaborate with Team Surrey partners to define key performance indicators and reporting requirements.
- Develop a standardized approach for gathering and analyzing data across marketing campaigns and events
- Implement the framework by mid-2025 and conduct regular reviews to ensure its effectiveness
- Work with Internal City departments to improve city conditions (e.g. Zoning) and city processes to make Surrey a great place to do business
- Keep up to date with any Provincial and Federal changes to the MRDT program and other tourism initiatives and ensure DS and SHMA are updated
- Support City initiatives in investment attraction related growing the entertainment and hospitality sectors
- Conduct meetings with businesses and developers to understand the opportunities to attract more
- Create a list of identified prospective businesses that suit the needs of Surrey's growth

Potential Partnerships: City of Surrey, Discover Surrey, SHMA, accommodators, developers, Destination British Columbia, Vancouver Coast & Mountains, and AirDNA

Resources: Data analytics resources, internal SHMA teams, and collaborative input from Team Surrey partners.

Sources of Funding: MRDT and in-kind support from City staff

Timeframe: on-going

Budget:

\$45,000 (Discover Surrey) - research and evaluation

\$23,054 (City) - research and evaluation

\$25,000 (SHMA) - research and evaluation

Performance Measures:

- KPIs from AirDNA, STR, etc.
- Regular reviews of the framework's effectiveness in tracking key metrics and ensuring data consistency across Team Surrey partners. Performance reports will guide adjustments to the framework as necessary.
- A list of identified barriers in City processes and plan to improve
- Marketing intelligence of opportunities for entertainment and hospitality business development in Surrey
- A list of prospective businesses

9. Major Category: Visitor Services

Activity Title: Visitor Services

Tactics:

- Explore opportunities to expand Visitor Services efforts via temporary leasing or having brick-and-mortar operations
- Partner with key community partners and venues for consistent pop-ups around the community and at major events
- Maintain an ongoing calendar of upcoming pop-ups on the website and social media
- Continue to ensure partners have access to Discover Surrey collateral to be given to visitors
- Conduct Visitor Services Familiarization Tours
- Maintain roaming Visitor Services Infrastructure

Implementation Plan:
Short Description:

Discover Surrey has been running a mobile visitor services strategy for the last few years. This strategy has come with a lot of benefits and has helped grow Discover Surrey's presence in the community. Moving forward however, as Discover Surrey grows both in capacity and staff, there may be a need to examine if switching to a brick-and-mortar Visitor Services center could offer greater resource efficiency and enable expanded community services. Given the fast-paced nature of tourism marketing, weighing the pros and cons of portable versus permanent visitor services will be essential.

Discover Surrey's Visitor Services Strategy to ensure provincial alignment and maximize touchpoints with visitors and residents alike. Grow public knowledge of these offerings via community outreach, visitor services, and hosting familiarization tours.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Interactions on LiveChat, phonenumber, social media, etc.
- Increase in engagement from frontline staff in Visitor Servicing Product Familiarization Tour

Rationale:

Discover Surrey interacts with visitors in many ways – in person, via email, over social media and LiveChat and on the phone. To meet customer service expectations, we need to keep pace with the convenience, speed, and channel availability expected by visitors to Surrey.

Action Steps:

- Execute a robust Digital Services Strategy that is proactive, easy to execute and delivers visitor services to key target markets
- Monitor the LiveChat, Visitor Servicing phonenumber, and social media
- Monitoring and maintaining online presence on Tripadvisor
- Continued participation in the Visitor Centre Network
- Build upon 2024's Visitor Servicing Product Familiarization Tour to invite more front-line staff to experience new tourism offerings and providers in Surrey
- Refresh used and weathered materials such as used t-shirts, worn signage, etc.
- Expand visitor servicing to include broadened events and community partnerships and increase visitor engagements
- Build partnerships to create and reintroduce incentives for increased visitation to Visitor Centre, including coupons and discounts from local suppliers or other Visitor Centres

Potential Partnerships: Destination BC's Visitor Centre Network, Surrey-based Hospitality Co-Operative Programs, Tourism Partners, and City of Surrey

Resources: This activity will be led by Discover Surrey staff but may include external contractors.

Sources of Funding:

- Destination BC Visitor Services Network Program

- MRDT Funding
- Canada Summer Jobs Grant

Timeframe: (when will the tactic begin and end or is it ongoing?): Ongoing throughout 2025

Budget:

\$191,645 (includes staff and operations) - Discover Surrey

Performance Measures:

- Volume of Interactions/engagements with visitors
- Cost per enquiry
- Number of LiveChat conversations
- Number of events attended

10. Major Category: Meetings, Conventions, Events and Sport

Activity Title: Sport Surrey, Sports Tourism Sponsorship Program, and Bidding for National and International Special Events

Tactics:

- Support the Sport Surrey program with collateral and giveaways
- Maintain the Sport Surrey website and social media accounts
- Attend annual Sport Event Congress and generate targeted leads
- Bid on applicable upcoming events in which Surrey meets
- Administer the Surrey sport tourism grant program
- Represent Surrey in regional collaboration efforts on larger events (e.g. FIFA 2026)
- Deliver the *Sports Tourism Sponsorship Program*
- Build relationships national and international event organizer for the future
- Apply to be the official partner for FIFA 2026 to host live activation sites

Implementation Plan:

Short Description:

City staff will lead the implementation of the Sport Tourism Strategy to advance Surrey toward becoming the premier sport destination in the Pacific Northwest. Emphasis on generating leads for sporting events during the off-season of November to March.

Sport tourism serves as a catalyst for economic growth in Surrey's local economy and tourism sector. Discover Surrey will be investing heavily in the Sport Surrey program to ensure they are supporting the development of Sports Tourism in the city.

The *Sports Tourism Sponsorship Program*, managed by the SHMA, is designed to promote Surrey as a premier destination for regional and national sports tournaments. By offering promotional support and incentives, SHMA aims to attract more sports events to the city, thereby driving room nights and boosting off-peak occupancy. These Incentives will assist event organizers in marketing their tournaments, driving attendance, and generating overnight stays. The focus will be on ensuring compliance with MRDT regulations by using funds solely for promotional activities, such as advertising and media outreach.

Special Events, a division under the City's Parks, Recreation, and Culture department, is responsible for and bidding for large national and international events. This initiative aims to generate economic activity, boost tourism and hotel occupancy, and advance the city's reputation as a premier regional destination. Surrey has the opportunity to apply to be the official partner for FIFA 2026 as the City has the space and expertise to host this level of activation. In addition, the City of Surrey will continuously build relationships with event organisers for future opportunities.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Attract sports tourism related events to Surrey, with focus on boosting hotel occupancy during the off season
- Attend Sports Event Congress and follow up with leads, minimum. Attend other Sports conventions as appropriate
- Submit bid applications for sporting events, especially during the shoulder season
- Support 8+ sports tournaments in 2025 with the Sports Tourism Sponsorship Program
- Submit application with City of Surrey plan and budget to be official partner for FIFA 2026

Rationale:

The Sport Tourism Strategy was developed by the City to advance the City of Surrey as a leader in the Sport Tourism industry. Sport Surrey has been jointly developed by the City of Surrey and Discover Surrey to be a resource to assist bid submissions and to support tournament organizers and rights holders ensuring successful events. Sports Tourism services as a catalyst for economic growth in Surrey's local economy and tourism sector.

Sports tourism is a key driver of off-peak occupancy in Surrey, particularly for youth and amateur sports tournaments. The Sports Tourism Sponsorship program will help increase event attendance and overnight stays by providing organizers with the promotional resources they need to market their events effectively.

As one of the most diverse and fastest-growing cities, Surrey values livability and cultural celebration. With a population projected to reach 1 million, the City aims to execute fun, inclusive events that draw both visitors. MRDT funds will support attracting one-off national and international events that will boost off-season hotel occupancy and put Surrey on the global map. While the City may not host main events, the City can be an official partner to create live activation sites that support these events, enhancing Surrey's offerings as it grows.

Action Steps:

- Team Surrey to implement the Sport Tourism Strategy including development of a work plan, identification of short and long-term objectives and action plans, timelines, budgets, deliverables and performance measurement indicators
- Manage dedicated Sport Surrey social media accounts and the Sport Surrey website
- Deploy digital marketing aimed at national and international sports organizations
- Expand print advertising to Sports Events Magazine, Sports Destination Marketing Management, and the Sports Planners Guide
- Continue to develop strategic partnerships and relationships and liaise with various community, regional, provincial, and national sports organizations, accommodation and hospitality businesses, sports facilities, and sponsors to support sport event initiatives
- Actively collect information and provide updates pertaining to sport tourism industry trends, developments, research, funding, events to keep Surrey current and up to date
- Act as a key contact for stakeholders, respond to requests and inquiries, direct inquiries to the appropriate resources and makes industry connections as appropriate
- Highlight bid opportunities to local sports organizations so they can take the lead on bids unless it is a particularly significant event that the City is pursuing
- Manage a shared sport hosting calendar
- Attend Sports Tourism related conferences, events such as the Sports Event Congress
- Provide data reporting on primary deliverables and key performance indicators, such as economic impact, event revenues and expenditures, and service improvements
- Identify opportunities and pursue leads and secure new sport related events in Surrey
- Review bids opportunities

- Develop event bid estimates for project scope, schedule and resource requirements ensuring programs are cost-effective, estimated, and scheduled
- Oversee and administer the City's Sport Tourism Grant Program
- Support sport organizers in navigating City processes
- Allocate grants and incentives to selected sports event organizers
- Monitor event performance through room nights generated and visitor engagement
- Act as key contact with event stakeholders nationally and internationally to identify opportunities for other one-off special events that meet the unique attributes and community needs of Surrey
- Establish performance measures to monitor the success of events. Use findings to refine future event strategies and demonstrate the value of continued investment in event hosting
- Put extra effort into attracting events in the off season that will boost hotel occupancy and visitation.
- Work with other City departments to ensure that the City has the infrastructure to execute and support these events, e.g. venue availability, transportation and logistics
- Promote and highlight Surrey's attractions and amenities
- For FIFA 2026 specifically, collaborate with event organizer to discuss opportunity for Surrey to organize live sites to support the main events
- Discuss opportunity for Surrey to host the BreakOut West Music Festival and Conference in 2025 or in future years

Potential Partnerships: Sport Surrey Staff, City of Surrey, Discover Surrey, SHMA, local sports organizations, accommodation providers, local sports clubs and associations, Creative BC

Resources: The Sport Surrey program is a partnership between Discover Surrey, SHMA, and the City of Surrey. Sports Surrey team is part of the Parks, Recreation and Culture department and will have support from internal City staff. Leading the Sports Tourism Strategy implementation, MRDT will augment existing City funding allocated towards the strategy implementation.

Sources of Funding: MRDT and City internal budget

Current City funding in addition to MRDT: a team of 7 City FTEs in the Special Events division, internal budget for bidding/applications to one-off national and international events.

Timeframe: Ongoing throughout 2025

Budget:

\$90,000 (Discover Surrey) - meetings, conventions, conferences, events, sports, etc.

\$70,000 (SHMA) - industry development and training

\$112,554 (City), including staff

Current City funding in addition to MRDT: \$115,000 (Consulting, Sport Tourism Grant Program, other operations)

Performance Measures:

- Campaign Metrics, if applicable (Clicks, Impressions, Cost Per Click, Clickthrough Rate)
- Number of ad placements
- Sport Congress attendance: number of appointments and leads
- Number of bids pursued, received
- Number of events supported via the Sport Grant Program, dollar value of grants
- Number of RFPs administered for hotels, room nights
- Regular tracking of room nights generated, event attendance, and digital engagement
- Feedback from sports event organizers and participants
- Number of attendees
- Number of partnerships

11. Major Category: Meetings, Conventions, Events and Sport

Activity Title: Strategic Conference Promotion Initiative

Tactics:

- **Incentive Programs for Conferences and Events:**
Provide promotional support and financial incentives to attract conferences, meetings, and corporate events to Surrey, with a specific focus on off-peak events. Funds will be allocated with higher amounts for events occurring during the off-peak season (October to May) to optimize hotel occupancy during slower periods. Support will include room rate subsidies, marketing assistance, and promotions to entice event organizers.
- **Digital Marketing Campaigns for Conference Promotion:**
Execute targeted digital marketing campaigns using Google Ads, LinkedIn, and social media to position Surrey as an attractive and affordable destination for conferences and corporate meetings. These campaigns will target event planners and decision-makers in key regions such as BC, Alberta, Ontario, and Washington State.
- **Strategic Overnight Destination Fund:**
Maintain and activate the Strategic Overnight Destination Fund, a reserve fund dedicated to supporting large-scale, high-impact events that generate substantial overnight stays. The fund will provide flexibility for larger initiatives and opportunities that arise throughout the year and align with Surrey's strategic tourism goals. While the fund may not be fully administered every year, it remains a key resource for significant tourism opportunities.

Implementation Plan:

Short Description:

The Strategic Conference Promotion Initiative is designed to increase conference and corporate event bookings in Surrey, with special emphasis on the off-peak season. The Strategic Overnight Destination Fund serves as a flexible reserve to support larger initiatives that require additional financial backing to generate marked long term growth in overnight stays .

Quantifiable Objectives:

- Support 20 new conferences and business events in Surrey.
- Increase room nights and visitor spending associated with conferences.
- Enhance awareness of Surrey as a conference destination in key markets.
- Activate the Strategic Overnight Destination Fund to support large-scale events with a high potential for tourism impact.

Rationale:

To leverage Surrey's strengths as an affordable and accessible conference destination, this initiative will drive more business events to the area. The focus on promotion and incentives aligns with SHMA's goals of increasing off-peak occupancy and boosting the local economy through business tourism.

Action Steps:

- Open the grant application process for conference and meeting planners.
- Allocate funding to events based on potential tourism impact and overnight stay projections.
- Coordinate with event organizers for cross-promotion on SHMA, Discover Surrey, and event partner websites.
- Monitor attendance and track overnight stays generated by these events.
- Monitor emerging event opportunities that align with Surrey's strategic goals and activate the

Strategic Overnight Destination Fund as needed.

Potential Partnerships: Discover Surrey, City of Surrey, event organizers, SHMA member properties.

Resources:

Marketing and promotional resources, digital marketing platforms, SHMA staff coordination.

Sources of Funding:

- \$80,000 in MRDT funds allocated to support the Strategic Conference Promotion Initiative (SHMA)
- \$40,000 in MRDT funds allocated to support the Strategic Overnight Destination Fund (SHMA)

Timeframe: Q1 – Q4, ongoing

Budget:

\$80,000 (SHMA) - industry development and training
\$40,000 (SHMA) product experience and enhancement

Performance Measures:

- Track new conference bookings, room nights from conferences and meetings secured through the initiatives

12. Major Category: Administration Wages and Benefits

Activity Title: Tourism Development Coordinator – MRDT Reporting and Financial Reconciliation, Stakeholder Engagement

Tactics:

- Create a streamlined reporting system and templates between MRDT tourism partners (City of Surrey, Discover Surrey (DS), Surrey Hotel and Motel Association (SHMA))
- Create a transparent accounting system to track monthly MRDT revenue distribution
- Provide updated accommodation providers list
- Lead the coordination meeting between City, SHMA and Discover Surrey
- City of Surrey representation at tourism events, meetings and other engagement opportunities

Implementation Plan:

Short Description: A new role will be provided by the City of Surrey that will assist with coordination and compilation of Municipal and Regional Distribution (“MRDT”) reporting as there are three parties involved in delivery of the five-year strategic plan – City of Surrey, Discover Surrey, and the Surrey Hotel and Motel Association (“SHMA”). This role will coordinate the reporting requirements of the MRDT program and be the point person for tourism in the City of Surrey for stakeholder engagement.

Quantifiable Objectives:

- MRDT One-year Tactical Plan and budget submitted on time to Destination BC
- Accurate and timely monthly MRDT revenue distribution to DS and SHMA
- Updated accommodation providers list annually
- Attendance at tourism events
- Attendance at DS and SHMA board meetings

Rationale: As the economic recovery from the pandemic progresses, MRDT revenue in Surrey has risen markedly, from \$1.1 million in 2021 to \$2.7 million in 2023. There is a growing recognition of the rapid expansion of tourism in Surrey, emphasizing the importance of enhancing destination development, marketing, and visitor services to establish Surrey as a premium destination. Acknowledging the positive contributions of Surrey’s Designated Marketing Organization, Discover Surrey, and the Surrey Hotel and Motel Association, the City recognizes the necessity of assuming the majority of administrative responsibilities. This will enable

Discover Surrey and SHMA to concentrate on their core competencies: marketing the destination and supporting hotel attraction and group travel. This role has been created to alleviate the administrative duties on our tourism partners.

Action Steps:

Reporting Compliance

- Work with DS And SHMA to create a streamlined reporting system that will ensure timely submissions of the Annual Report and One Year Tactical Plan to Destination BC
- Create a timeline for all entities to submit progress reports, which will allow this role to consolidate all the information in a final report, including budget reconciliation, for submission
- Oversee the funding distribution formula ensuring funding distribution is accurate and tracking monthly distributions with the City of Surrey's Finance Department
- Work with DS and SHMA to forecast MRDT revenue to support all entities in making informed decisions.
- Review reports and financial statements from all parties with internal City Finance Department
- Updating and verifying the local accommodation providers list annually by calling or visiting, every year
- Act as the liaison between the City and Destination BC and the Ministry of Finance

Relationship Engagement

- Collaborate with internal City staff (including Sports Surrey and Parks, Recreation, and Culture), DS and SHMA to facilitate communication and support their respective initiatives
- Attend DS and SHMA board meetings to provide economic development updates
- Collaborate with other tourism industry stakeholders and identify and respond to new tourism opportunities
- Build relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including society partners, community businesses and organizations, DS, SHMA, and members of the public
- Represent the City to internal staff and external stakeholders on tourism and MRDT-related inquiries.
- Provide City perspective on tourism initiatives and projects
- Work with Surrey academic institutions to bring more academic conferences to Surrey
- Targeted outreach to organizations and academic institutions to explore opportunities to host conferences and summits in Surrey, especially during the off season

Potential Partnerships: DS (staff and board of directors), SHMA (staff and board of directors), KPU, SFU, UBC, BC Centre for Agri Innovation, BC Quantum Algorithm Institute

Resources: This role is within the City of Surrey Economic Investment Services division and will have support from internal staff.

Sources of Funding: MRDT and City in-kind support from department staff

Timeframe: Ongoing

Budget

\$63,000 (from June 1 to December 31, 2025) - City

Performance Measures:

- Monthly distribution of MRDT funding is received by DS and SHMA
- Required MRDT reporting submitted on time
- Monthly coordination meetings with representatives from City, DS and SHMA
- Local accommodation providers list is kept up to date
- DS and SHMA spending fewer hours on reporting requirements
- Attendance at DS and SHMA board meetings
- Attendance at tourism industry events e.g. Western Canadian Lodging Conference, Tourism Industry

Association of BC, Metro Vancouver Destination Management Council