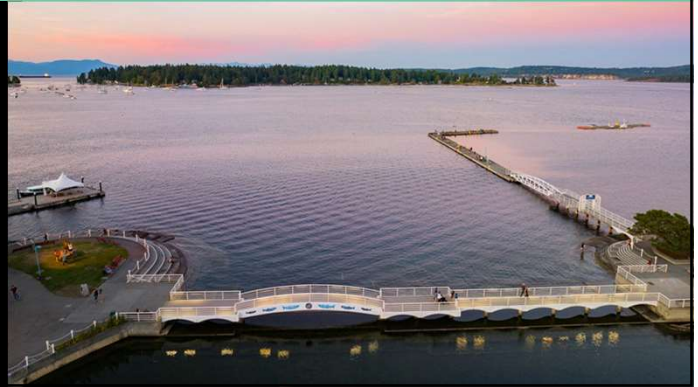




Business Plan

2024 Successes →

The Path Forward in 2025



1

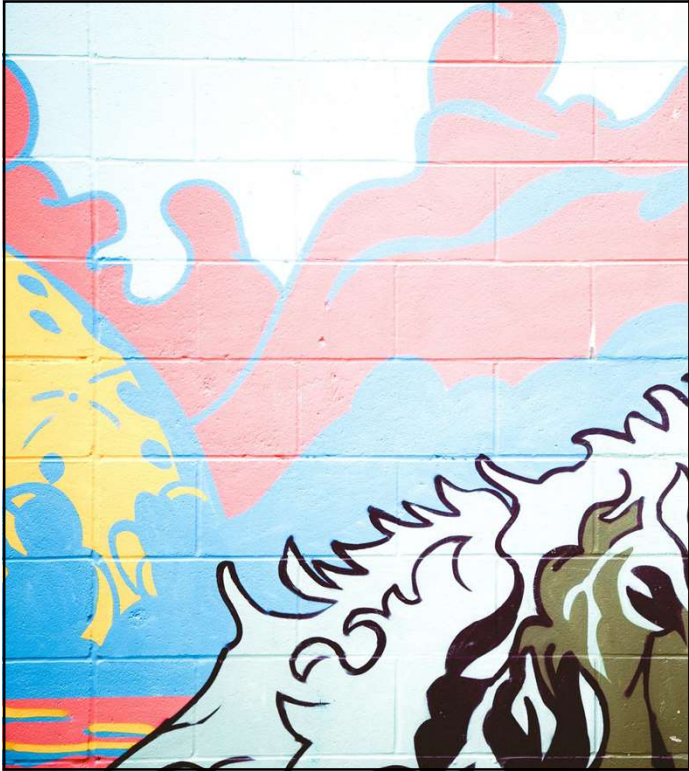
éy swayel →

Good day
It is good to see you all,
thank you for having me.

We honor the Snuneymuxw Nation’s enduring connection to this land and are committed to fostering relationships built on respect, collaboration, and mutual growth. As we work together, we aim to elevate the stories of the Snuneymuxw people, embracing opportunities to connect with the land and its rich history. Our dedication to learning, growth, compassion, and reconciliation guide our efforts.



2



December 4, 2024

As we reflect on the progress and challenges of the past year, we are encouraged by the strides we've made in positioning Nanaimo as a prime destination for both leisure and business tourism.

Despite facing challenges such as fluctuating hotel occupancy, limited direct flights, and lack of demand as we head into the winter, we continue to see growth in key areas, such as group bookings, meetings, and conferences, and valuable PR in partnership with Industry partners. These developments are a testament to the resilience of our local tourism sector, and they position us well for long-term success.

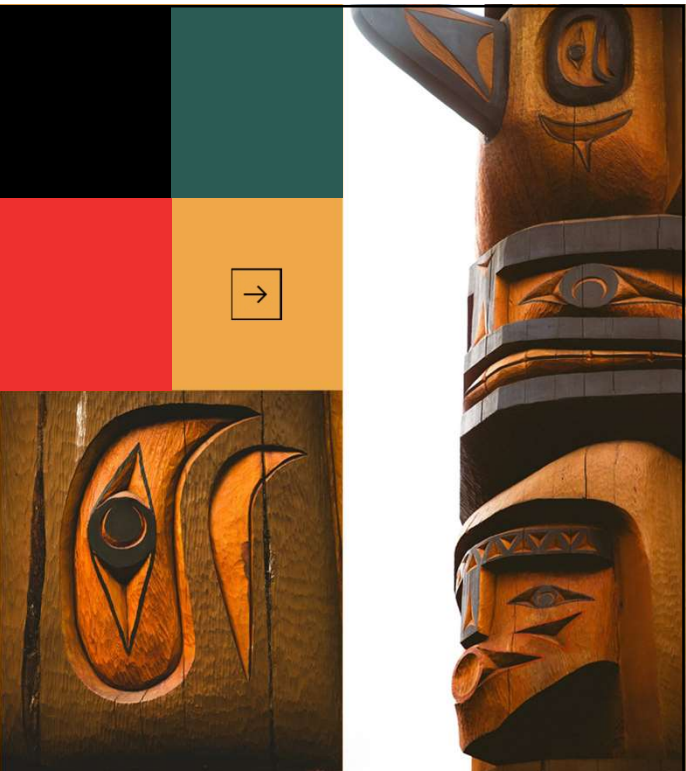
This report highlights the key activities from the past year, including our efforts in marketing, sales outreach, event hosting, and collaboration with partners. Additionally, this will touch on our ongoing considerations and opportunities, aimed at enhancing the visitor experience, securing future funding, and operational points.

As we move into the next year, we remain focused on advancing our goals for 2025 and beyond, with the intention of creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and accessible tourism environment for all.

3

Tourism Nanaimo Mandate

- ✓ To develop and guide the implementation of a 5-year Destination Strategy, which will encompass Business & Meetings Tourism Strategy and Sport Tourism. Annual tactical plans will be based off of this strategy.
- ✓ To create a destination brand that celebrates Nanaimo's uniqueness and appeals to targeted groups of visitors and increases positive resident sentiment.
- 🔄 To support, through investment, the research and development of a vibrant, and sustainable tourism industry.
- 🔄 To increase overnight visitation to Nanaimo, while managing the destination responsibly through strategic marketing, collaboration with industry partners, and city plans.
- 🔄 To strategically invest in destination development initiatives aimed at increasing experiences to draw visitation to the city of Nanaimo.
- ✓ To operate the Visitor Information Centre, to provide visitor-related services that support the Destination Strategy and Tourism Nanaimo initiatives.



4

January 2024
Strategic RFP awarded
Stormy Lake Consulting
Relocated Visitor Services

February 2024
Strategic Planning
Tourism Nanaimo Board

March 2024
2025-2023 Strategic Planning Kick off
Stormy Lake Consulting

April 2024
Industry Workshops
Stormy Lake Consulting

May 2024
5 - Year Destination Development Plan approved by Tourism Nanaimo Board

June 2024
Hosted 30 Media Tours
Marketing Campaigns
36 Pieces of Media Coverage

July - August
Events -
Community Support -
Strategic planning

September
Strategic Planning
Conferences & Events
UBCM

October - November
2025 Planning
2025 Budgeting
Year End Reporting

**Nanaimo BRAND LAUNCH
New Website Launched**

→

Services Timeline 2024

In 2024, Tourism Nanaimo operated with focused intention to align efforts, ensure consistency, and stay committed to long-term goals, avoiding reactive and unsustainable decisions. Guided by industry, and community-driven values, we launched a Nanaimo rebrand, developed a 5-Year Destination Development Strategy, hosted over 30 media tours, in addition to site visits for sports and conference facilities, strengthened community relationships, and strategically planned for 2025.

5

→

Funding Tourism Nanaimo

1. Municipal Regional Tax (MRDT) = Hotel Tax
2. City of Nanaimo
3. Provincial Grants
4. Grants and Other

All the sources mentioned collaborate to ensure the MRDT remains viable and aligns with the Ministry of Finance's requirements. Collected by the accommodation sector, the MRDT tax is designed to support the industry as a whole while leveraging additional funds and partnerships to maximize its impact.

**48.9 %
MRDT**

**30.5 %
City of Nanaimo**

**18.6 %
Grants**

**2%
Other**

Tourism Nanaimo 2025

6



Funding

As a Destination Management Organization (DMO), operations are funded through a varied funding model, primarily supported through local Government grants, Provincial entities and in 2025 the Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT). The primary areas of funding are listed below, but do not encompass additional opportunities and applications that are pursued when available.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The MRDT program is intended to contribute to the increase of local tourism revenue, visitation, and economic benefits and must be supported by both local governments and tourism industry stakeholders.

Funds from the MRDT program should augment current funding and cannot be used to replace existing sources of tourism funding in a community.

The City of Nanaimo as a result secured the MRDT for community by investing directly into the sector annually. This has had an incremental increase annually based on inflation for the last 10 years.

Currently this funding totals \$750,000.00 annually. This funding is in accordance with the MRDT agreement, and is distributed to Tourism Nanaimo quarterly, to support the MRDT program and deliverables outlined in the Annual Tactical Plans, that are submitted to the Ministry of Tourism and Finance.

MRDT

The MRDT program is jointly administered by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, and Destination British Columbia.

The MRDT program is intended to help grow BC's Tourism Sector, to support a coordinated and efficient use of funds to support BC Marketing initiatives Internationally.

Affordable housing was added as a permissible use of funds in 2018 to help address local housing needs. Designated recipients have the flexibility to define, identify, and fund affordable housing initiatives that they deem appropriate to meet local needs. The City of Nanaimo has made use of this, and as such controls the OAP to support housing initiatives within the City, pursuant to Section 8, of the MRDT.

Annual MRDT is forecasted for Nanaimo at \$1.2 Million for 2025

PROVINCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

DBC Co-op Marketing: The Co-op Program enables Community Consortiums and Provincial Tourism Product/ Experience Sector Organizations that share common marketing goals to access private and public funds and achieve greater marketing impact and revenue. Tourism Nanaimo has successfully applied for this annually. This program is moving to a 2 year cycle for secure funding commencing April 2025. Tourism Nanaimo has reapplied for this opportunity funding for the amount of \$250,000.00 (2025 / 2026)

Canada Summer Jobs: The Canada Summer Jobs Program is delivered annually by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). Through CSJ, employers are encouraged to create quality summer work experiences for young people between the ages of 15 and 30. Tourism Nanaimo secured \$22,000.00 in 2024 to offset seasonal costs for hires, an application for 2025 will be submitted.

7



Gathering Momentum



Building on the momentum gained in 2023, Tourism Nanaimo made significant strides in 2024. With a focus on aligning efforts and driving long-term goals, we achieved impactful milestones, laying the groundwork for an ambitious 2025. This forward momentum has positioned Nanaimo well to launch into its next 5-Year Destination Development and Management plan.

8



2024 By the Numbers

MRDT - OAP:

2024 Estimated MRDT
\$1.1 Million

OAP (Affordable Housing)
\$270,000.00

Industry Stats :

- **Nanaimo Hotel** occupancy rate (January - September) 2024 : 65.1% (0.4% growth over last year)
- Average Daily Rate: \$177.00 (January - September)
- **YCD Regional Airport** Passenger's (January - August) : 243,235
- **BC Ferries** Passenger Volume (January - June) : Victoria, Nanaimo, Vancouver Routes = 5,177,069
- **Hullo** Ferry Passengers : 400,000 Yr.1
- **Nanaimo Cruise Passengers** | Nanaimo May & August : 969
- **Visitor Services & Events** : (January - October) : 9,660 overall visitor rate increase 9.59% over last year. 6 Events attended, 25 Volunteers
- **Meetings & Conferences** : 40 Conferences and Conventions which resulted in = 28,000 Delegate Days. Representing \$11,000,000 in Economic Impact Measured in Participant Days that will exceed 65,000

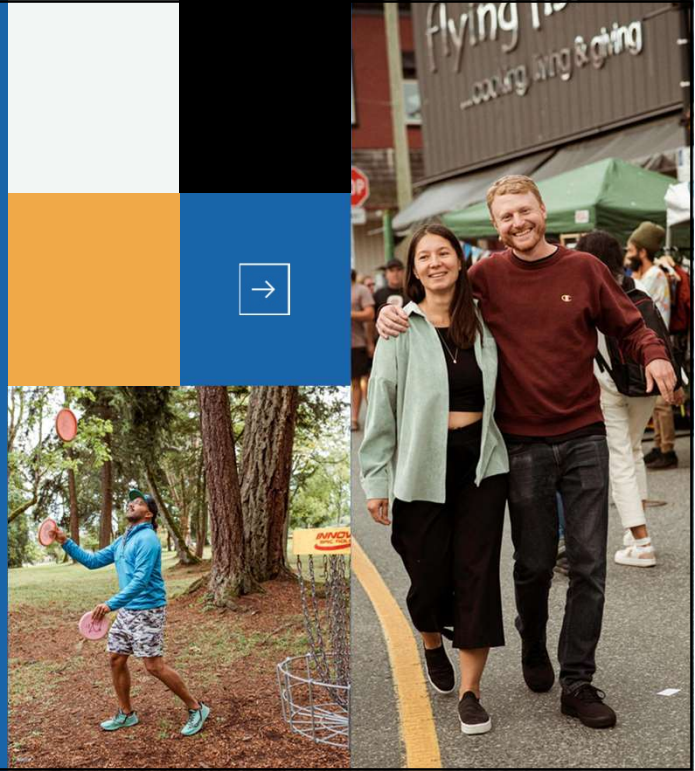
2024 Milestones

- Completed 2025-2030 Destination Development Strategy
 - Completed Communications and PR Strategy 2024 - 2025
 - Facilitated LGBTQ+ Industry Workshops on Inclusion (Spring / Fall/ Winter) for Industry partners
 - Tourism Nanaimo celebrated finalizing Rainbow Registration
 - Issued RFP for Marketing Agency of Record
 - Solidified 'Outside the Box BC' Meetings and Events initiative
 - DBC Co-op Marketing fund awarded, \$180,000.00
 - DBC Indigenous grant awarded \$10,000.00
 - Canada Summer Jobs awarded \$22,000.00
- *All of the above grants were awarded, by being able to leverage source funding*
- Brand Launch in partnership with the Prosperity Group
 - Launched a new Tourism Website
 - Industry Brand Toolkit: Collaborative Messaging
 - Meetings and Conventions Industry Tool Kit created
 - 2025 Annual Planning completed, department resources finalized
 - DBC Co-op Application with 8 Industry Partners submitted for a 2-year funding term for 250,000.00 per year.
- *To be awarded in April 2025 if successful.*



Considerations & Opportunities

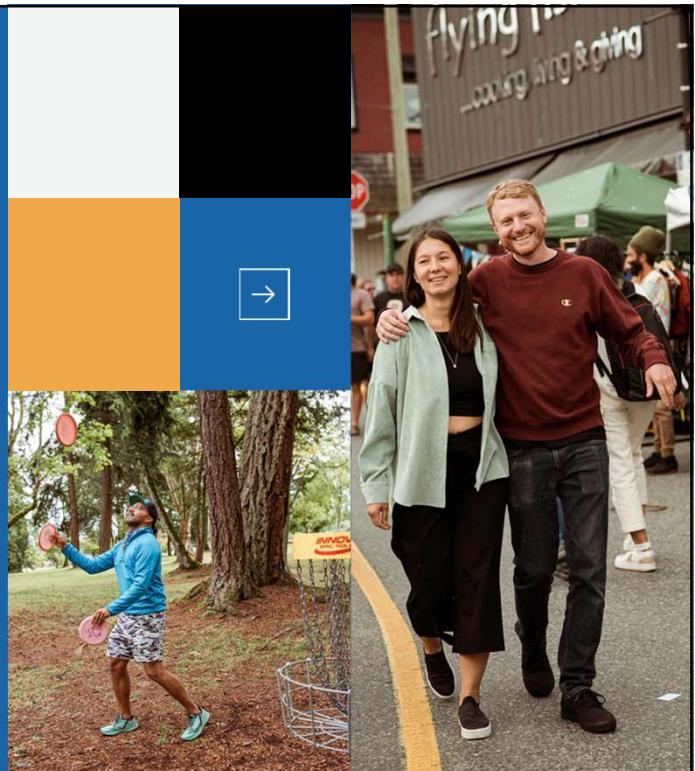
- Continue collaborating with the Vancouver Island Conference Centre and local hoteliers to attract group business and host multi-day conferences, driving economic growth.
- Work closely with the accommodation sector to stabilize average daily rates and improve occupancy levels, ensuring a sustainable and competitive hospitality market.
- Establish a VIP program for conference delegates to encourage higher economic impact within the community and increase patronage at local businesses.
- Integrate sustainability practices, such as utilizing low-impact venues and implementing waste-reduction strategies, to align with Nanaimo Reimagined environmental goals.
- Collaborate on initiatives that prioritize inclusion and accessibility across meetings, events, and sports to align with Nanaimo Reimagined priorities and ensure diverse and representative experiences for residents and visitors.
- Develop all-inclusive packages for events, incorporating accommodations, dining, and recreational activities to enhance experiences for teams, spectators, and visitors.



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Considerations & Opportunities

- Partner with sports organizations to secure regional and national tournaments, positioning Nanaimo as a premier destination for competitive and recreational sports events.
- Capitalize on the success of previous events to establish Nanaimo as a leading sport tourism hub, fostering repeat visitation and long-term growth.
- Provide robust support for the 55+ BC Games in 2025 and evaluate opportunities to host the next large-scale annual event to further enhance Nanaimo's event portfolio.
- Collaborate with provincial marketing campaigns targeting Alberta snowbirds, Washington State ferry users, and BC residents seeking year-round getaway options, aligning efforts to boost visitation.
- Strengthen Nanaimo's reputation through strategic media engagement, familiarization trips, targeted publications, and ongoing outreach to share the city's story regionally and provincially.
- Conduct visitor research to measure economic impact and behavior, using the data to inform annual planning and address priorities outlined in the 5-Year Destination Development Plan.



12



Overarching Intent 2025 - 2030

01 Strategic Intentions:

The key pillars include inclusivity, sustainability, and alignment with the Snuneymuxw First Nation, local industry partners and Nanaimo's Reimagined Plan. The aim is to foster a unique, authentic experience for visitors and residents alike while supporting community-driven tourism.

02 Tactical Application:

Each department will integrate these pillars by prioritizing inclusive and diverse lenses, ensuring accessibility across visitor services, leveraging partnerships to create authentic marketing narratives, integrating community values into meetings and events, and ensuring that our messaging is in fact actionable and demonstrated in all of the work that we do, propelling the Destination into a new era that changes perceptions and attracts capital investment in experiences, and product; strengthening our value proposition in leisure and business.

Our Intentions =

- We will be a strong ally for our residents and partners, particularly the Snuneymuxw First Nation.
- We will be guided by the principles of sustainability, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as we authentically showcase and encourage people to visit the real, unique Nanaimo.
- We will only support tourism that is for the benefit of our community.

Pillars of our Work

- Be a Strong Ally
- Better Together
- Build out the Real Nanaimo
- Elevate the Destination

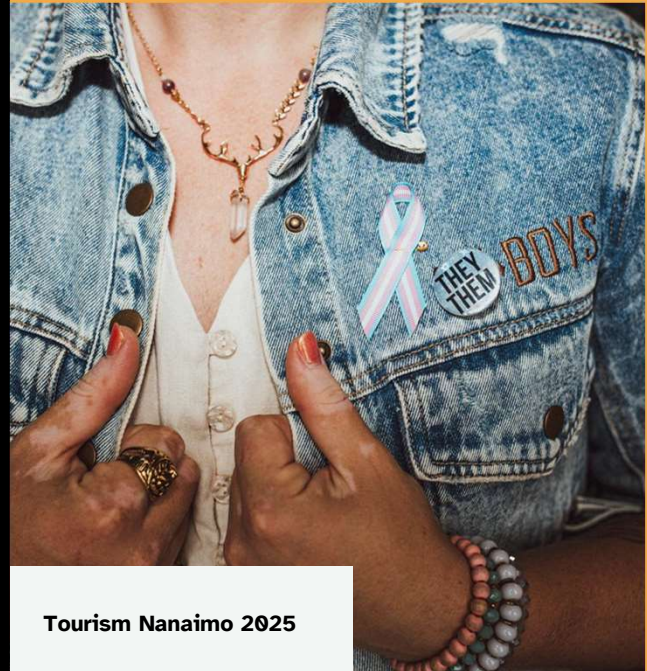


→ Cross Pollinating Elements

1. Be a Strong Ally
2. Better Together
3. Build out the Real Nanaimo
4. Elevate the Destination



1. = Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility
2. = Relationships, Alignment, Collaboration
3. = Industry, Resident Engagement
4. = Data-Driven Decision Making



Tourism Nanaimo 2025

2025-2030 Guide Posts



Tourism Nanaimo 2025

Goal 1: Enhance and diversify Nanaimo's tourism offerings to create a comprehensive, unique visitor experience that captures the essence of the city and its surroundings.

Goal 2: Transform Nanaimo into a leading accessible tourism destination and a premier hub for sport tourism.

Goal 3: Strengthen industry collaboration and align tourism development initiatives across all sectors in Nanaimo to enhance the community's competitive edge as a tourism destination.

Goal 4: Elevate the brand visibility and recognition of Nanaimo as a vibrant cultural hub and premier destination for meetings and events.

Goal 5: Establish Nanaimo as a model city for inclusivity and support in tourism, fostering strong partnerships and community cohesion.





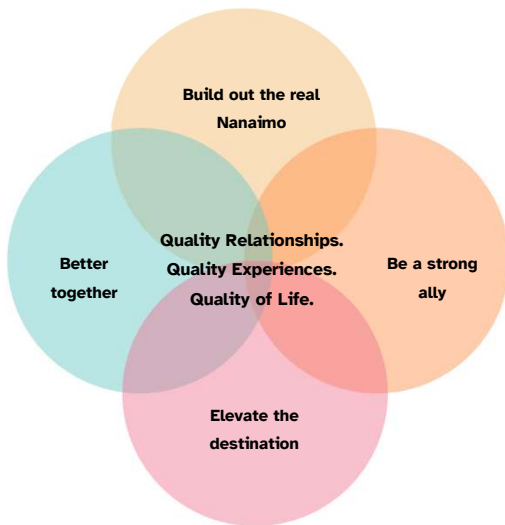
Strategy Always Strategy



Intentional planning must consistently guide our actions. Without strategy, efforts can become scattered and ineffective. A well-defined strategy provides the roadmap for achieving long-term goals, ensuring that every decision, whether data-driven or community-focused, aligns with the broader vision. It's the backbone that turns intentions into measurable success.

17

Strategic Framework



Be a strong ally

- Focus on our relationships with the Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Build relationships with local community and cultural associations
- Amplify and support the number of accessible and inclusive experiences
- Invest in community engagement

Better together

- Create strong connections within the tourism industry
- Build industry capacity and expertise
- Advocate for tourism infrastructure

Build out the real Nanaimo

- Develop tourism itineraries supporting multi-day visits
- Encourage the growth of the accommodations sector
- Improve destination accessibility

Elevate the destination

- Build the Nanaimo destination brand
- Increase awareness in regional markets
- Enhance Nanaimo as a meetings and events destination
- Grow the capacity for Sports Tourism
- Improve destination placemaking and way-finding

18

TOURISM NANAIMO

At the conclusion of our annual tactical planning, the Tourism Nanaimo team remains confident that we are collectively creating the foundation of a tourism ecosystem that enriches not only the experience of our visitors but also the lives of our residents and the broader community.

The Tourism Nanaimo Board, has a strong influence on this work, alongside Industry, and we collectively, look forward to our continued collaboration as we work to make Nanaimo a premier destination for both tourism and business events.

THANK YOU

Carly Perchison

Executive Director, Tourism Nanaimo

