

FIVE YEAR

2024-2028

Vision 2029: A
Roadmap for
Tourism in
Squamish

TOURISM 
SQUAMISH
HARDWIRED for ADVENTURE

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We humbly acknowledge that Tourism Squamish is located within the traditional territory of the Squamish Nation, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw.



WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

Tourism Squamish is a Destination Management Organization. We are focused on developing strong tourism foundations for our community through collaboration and community support.



OUR MISSION

Our mission focuses on three key areas:

1. To work collaboratively with partners to execute strategic marketing and sales programs that deliver both more visitors and higher yield visitors to Squamish businesses in the shoulder seasons.
2. To foster and support remarkable visitor experiences that celebrate and preserve our natural and cultural history and secure broad benefits to our residents; and
3. To provide industry leadership and create awareness within our community of the value of tourism by actively measuring the impact of the products and services that we offer.



OUR VISION

Tourism Squamish has a vision to become the premier adventure destination in British Columbia known for Sea to Sky experiences that highlight the rich natural surroundings and enhance local lifestyle.



OUR STRATEGY

Our team works diligently to create destination brand awareness through inspiring and engaging marketing campaigns that motivate visitors to plan their trip to Squamish during off-peak times of year (October to May). We support the traveller experience with our visitor centre and mobile visitor servicing teams, while supporting visitor management with our Destination Stewards. As an organization we work hard to engage all levels of government to advocate and support sustainable destination development and infrastructure projects that enhances both our community and the overall visitor experience.

AS A TEAM, WE ARE GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- **Collaboration** - we are stronger together
- **Reconciliation** - respect for the people, land and their history
- **Sustainability** - respecting the natural limits and leading by example
- **Equity** - welcoming to all, while striving for improved accessibility and inclusivity
- **Authenticity** - not trying to be something we are not and a love for this place we call home



DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

The tourism industry today is addressing far more than just marketing and promotions. Tourism Squamish has evolved into a destination management entity, actively involved in sector management, advocacy, research, community engagement, and destination stewardship efforts aimed at fostering lasting benefits for residents, the environment, and local cultures.

DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP

- Destination Stewards program
- Responsible recreation education
- Crisis management
- Policy development
- Economic resiliency

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

- Advocate for tourism needs in community-transportation hub, water access, additional accommodation, and meeting space
- Research and analytics-resident sentiment, economic impact, tourism dashboard
- Support the development and enhancement of remarkable experiences
- Sea to Sky Destination Management Council

DESTINATION MARKETING & VISITOR SERVICES

- Explore Squamish website
- Social media channels
- Travel Media Relations
- Travel Trade Relations
- Digital marketing
- Cooperative marketing
- Visitor services – maps, visitor guide, online chat on website, visitor centre, street team
- Increase shoulder season visitation and visitor dispersion

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

- Membership engagement and support
- Stakeholder survey
- Work collaboratively with local community organizations
- Attend industry conferences and events - learning/sharing with BC tourism industry partners

“Make no mistake about it, over the long term, our corridor is going to continue to grow. Doing so wisely is going to be our predominant challenge. Over the next months and years, Tourism Squamish will be morphing beyond our current marketing mandate into an organization that rolls up its sleeves and gets deeper into the gritty work of destination development and management.

As an organization, we see a future where thoughtful infrastructure improvements, local entrepreneurial endeavours, and meaningful member engagement come together to further enhance the quality of life for all of us who live in and love Squamish and its surrounds. That may sound lofty and esoteric, but it is at the core of our purpose. People choose to visit and live in special places where the natural beauty is matched by the quality of life of their communities. The stronger the bonds we can help build within our community and between the communities of the corridor the better off we are. The more we nurture the natural environment and offer sensible solutions to keeping our ecosystems intact in the face of population growth the prouder we can all become of the legacy we will leave to our children.”

– Kirby Brown, Chair, Tourism Squamish





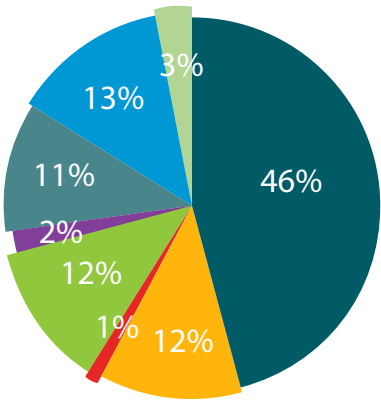
HOW ARE WE FUNDED?

The primary source of funding for Tourism Squamish is the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT), a 3% “hotel tax” that overnight visitors pay on eligible stays. Other funding sources include a District of Squamish partnership agreement, contract fees for management of the visitor centre, membership fees, retail sales, and Destination BC co-op and visitor centre grant funding. Tourism Squamish has successfully sought, and will continue to seek, grants and partnership funding programs to leverage our budget and achieve program goals.

Tourism Squamish's budget varies annually due to variations in MRDT revenues, with an average budget of approximately \$1 million. Here's a snapshot of our key revenue sources and expenses for 2023, showing the percentage each contributes to our overall budget.

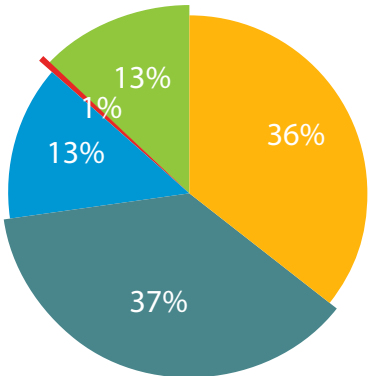
2023 FY Revenue Sources

General MRDT (i.e. hotels)	46%
OAP MRDT (i.e. short term rentals)	12%
Membership Dues	1%
District of Squamish Partnership Agreement	12%
Provincial Visitor Services Grants	2%
Co-op Marketing	11%
Retail Sales	13%
Other	3%



2023 FY Expenses

Marketing	36%
Destination Development & Stewardship	37%
Visitor Services	13%
Meetings & Conventions	1%
Admin	13%





PART 1

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

NAVIGATING THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY



2019 was a record year for the tourism industry in British Columbia and in Squamish. The pandemic in 2020 significantly affected visitor numbers and had a negative impact on local businesses. However, as borders reopened and the desire to travel returned, the tourism industry began its economic recovery. By 2022, Squamish saw a return to pre-pandemic levels and continues to demonstrate resilience. ¹

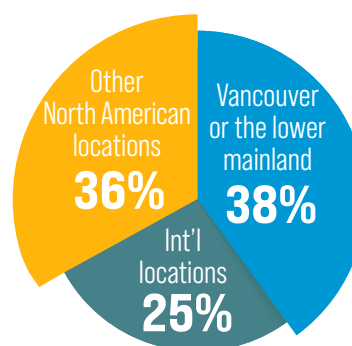


OUR VISITORS

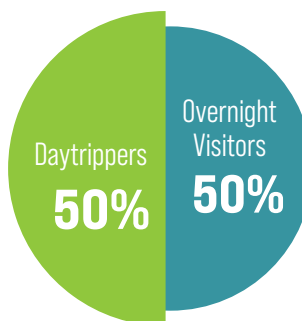
Squamish welcomes guests from our nearby neighbouring communities to long-haul international travelers. Over 600,000 visitors come to Squamish annually, either for day trips or overnight stays.

Different types of visitors, however, make different contributions to this economic impact. Day-trippers and those staying with friends and family account for 50% of all visitors; however, they contribute just 21% of the spending.

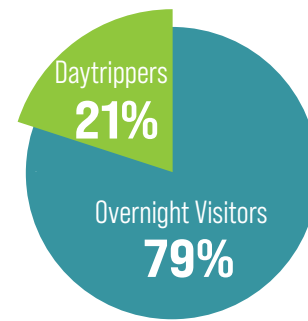
The other 50% of our visitors are overnight guests in Squamish's ~975 hotel/motel rooms, accounting for 79% of annual visitor spending.²



Visitors



Visitors



Annual Visitor Spend

¹ Van Santvoort, A. (2021, June 18). BC hotels see light at the end of dark COVID-19 tunnel: 80% of British Columbians now believe it's safe to travel to other communities. BIV: Business Intelligence for BC.

² Crane Management Consultants. (2020, February). Squamish Tourism Sector Economic Impact Analysis. Squamish, BC: District of Squamish, Tourism Squamish, and Squamish Chamber of Commerce.



DID YOU KNOW?

Most visitors to Squamish are here for the outdoor adventure: sightseeing, hiking, rock climbing, and mountain biking. However, the majority of visitors also partake in other experiences, such as local restaurants, festivals, the farmer's market, and attractions (i.e., Sea to Sky Gondola and Britannia Mine Museum)

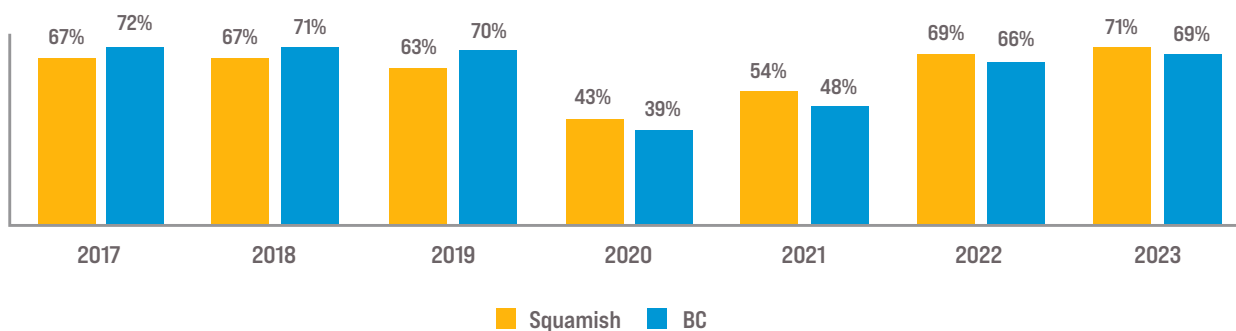


Tourism Squamish aims to increase the number of overnight visitors as an important strategy for increasing tourism revenue in the local economy. However, there are limited spaces available, with occupancy rates at an all-time high.



Regardless of their reason for visiting, the majority of visitors to Squamish reported high satisfaction. The community received a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 68, where 70 and above is considered exceptional and 50 or higher is considered excellent.³

HOTEL OCCUPANCY | SQUAMISH VS. BC



³ Net Promoter Score® measures customer experience - subtracting the percentage of Detractors from the percentage of Promoters yields the Net Promoter Score, which can range from a low of -100 (if every customer is a Detractor) to a high of 100 (if every customer is a Promoter).

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SQUAMISH'S VISITOR ECONOMY

Squamish's visitor economy has grown significantly over the past several years, supporting a diverse network of tourism and hospitality businesses, entrepreneurs and small to medium-sized enterprises. Together, these businesses provide experiences and services that connect visitors with Squamish while creating employment, economic activity and opportunities for the local community.



**ATTRACTIONS
AND EXPERIENCES**



**RETAIL AND SMALL TO MEDIUM
ENTERPRISES (SME)**



**ACCOMMODATION AND
TOURISM TRANSPORTATION**

**SQUAMISH TOURISM
RELATED SECTOR**

296 LOCAL
BUSINESS

EMPLOYED

2,710 LOCAL
WORKERS

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Business Counts, Location Level, Custom Tabulation, December 2024 and InterVISTAS Consulting Inc. (2026). Tourism Squamish Economic Impact Study 2024. Prepared for Tourism Squamish.

Tourism is an important contributor to Squamish's economy. Visitor spending supports local businesses and jobs, generates economic activity and tax revenues, and contributes to the vitality of the community. The scale of the visitor economy also reinforces the importance of managing tourism thoughtfully so that its benefits are shared while supporting the places, experiences and community that make Squamish distinctive.

2 MILLION
VISITS IN 2024

\$408 MILLION
IN DIRECT VISITOR SPENDING

\$208M
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

\$160M
IN EMPLOYMENT INCOME

\$85M
IN TAXES

Source: InterVISTAS Consulting Inc. (2026). Tourism Squamish Economic Impact Study 2024. Prepared for Tourism Squamish/

OUR STRENGTHS

- Squamish has experienced significant growth in the past decade. The area has become a focal point for **outdoor recreation** and an internationally known location for mountain bikers, climbers, hikers and kite-boarders.
- With the support of Tourism Squamish's marketing activities, there has been an **increase in daytrippers** from the Lower Mainland coming to the area to enjoy Squamish's **natural beauty** and outdoor adventure. The **Sea to Sky Gondola** has further enhanced this reputation, providing an opportunity for visitors to enjoy the alpine environment. The number of BC Parks within or adjacent to the District is also an important draw.
- **Squamish is a "real town"** with an economy beyond tourism, and this is a key strength. The recent influx of newcomers, particularly young families, many of whom have opened businesses in the community, is also an asset. This has brought more **diverse culinary offerings**, such as a craft beverage scene and a variety of baked goods known for their quality and creativity, further enhancing the appeal for both visitors and residents.
- Tourism Squamish's staff and their **relationship** with the Board of Directors are one of the organization's main strengths, ensuring the organization's ability to evolve going forward.
- Tourism Squamish's **website, social media, and customer service staff** provide high quality connection opportunities for visitors.
- Successful engagement with provincial marketing programs has leveraged Tourism Squamish's marketing budget to ensure the best experiences in Squamish are showcased in **partnership** with groups such as Mountain Bike BC, The BC Bird Trail, and Fishing BC, among others.
- Tourism Squamish has successfully developed a **Destination Steward program** about traveling and recreating responsibly.



OUR CHALLENGES

- **Infrastructure limitations** pose a significant challenge for Squamish's tourism industry and the broader community, which has struggled to meet the needs of our growing population.
- **Insufficient ocean water access points**, with over 1,000 boaters and businesses relying on a private launch deemed unsafe and inadequate.
- **Lack of waste management and public washrooms** for van dwellers and campers, leading to environmental concerns.
- **Limited camping facilities**, resulting in unauthorized campsites and waste in wooded areas and along rivers.
- **Lack of regional transportation options** result in most day-trippers bringing their vehicles, leading to parking shortages at parks and recreation sites.
- **Insufficient parking** causes residential streets to be congested with out-of-town vehicles and unsafe parking along the highway.
- **Accommodations** pose a challenge, with high summer occupancy rates, the Woodfibre LNG project, and a decrease in options due to short-term rental regulations. As well, staffing a new hotel remains difficult due to high housing prices and rents in Squamish for workers.
- **Squamish's current offerings to visitors are limited**, with few hotels, little evening entertainment, and limited attractions for less active visitors. Improving and expanding commercial accommodation offerings and attractions is essential to attract more spending from day-trippers and encourage longer stays from overnight guests.
- **Tourism Squamish regularly defends the need for tourism infrastructure and planning**, struggling to make both decision-makers and the public recognize tourism's economic importance. The organization faces challenges in overcoming **negative perceptions of tourism**, often blamed for overcrowding, traffic, and limited access to attractions.



DID YOU KNOW?

Just under 50% of visitors to Squamish are either day-trippers or those staying with friends/family. These individuals make up only 21% of visitor spending. Increasing the number of overnight stays in commercial venues (79% of tourist spending), expanding the length of stays and/or enticing day-trippers to spend more while in Squamish are all important goals for Tourism Squamish.



TOURISM INDUSTRY TRENDS

Tourism Squamish works hard to support our local tourism businesses when times are good, and we double down when times get tough. Through our communications channels, we continue to share relevant news, research and insights, resources, grants, and partnership opportunities.

As part of our ongoing commitment, Tourism Squamish has consistently monitored trends so we can guide our members and partners on what lies ahead. The tourism industry has always embraced change, but its pace has now accelerated. Below are many of the trends that our team at Tourism Squamish are monitoring - and adapting to - along with our local, regional, provincial, and national tourism partners.



MACRO TRENDS⁴

Economic Pressures

The economic impact of COVID-19 had a dramatic effect on the global tourism economy, leaving many tourism businesses with depleted reserves, limited access to capital and liquidity challenges to support operations.

Climate Change

There is increasing global urgency to adapt to climate change by implementing sustainable and competitive business practices. Travel and tourism accounts for about 8% of global climate emissions.⁵

Diversity and Inclusion

Equal opportunity and participation for everyone - regardless of age, ability, gender, sexual orientation or culture. Key to creating a more sustainable, equitable and representative society that the tourism industry must embrace for the future.

KEY INDUSTRY TRENDS

Destination Management

As marketing channels increase and awareness grows, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) are shifting to be more engaged in also managing destinations. DMOs aim to balance the needs of residents, visitors, and nature to ensure long-term viability.

Labour and Skills Shortage

Labour market analysis indicates acute worker shortages will continue to strain the tourism and hospitality sectors in Canada, resulting in service limitations and decreased quality of experience offerings.

Higher Costs

Supply chain shortages coupled with increasing costs of materials and higher demand has resulted in higher costs for airfare, fuel, food, hotel stays, experiences etc.

KEY MARKET TRENDS

Regenerative Tourism

Increasing desire to connect in meaningful ways with places visited by actively contributing to the well-being and restoration of the local destination.

Working from Anywhere

More and more professionals can work from anywhere now, creating potential for longer stays as business is mixed with pleasure.

'Coolcationing'

With the intense, record-breaking temperatures of recent years, many are considering booking 'coolcations' in more temperate destinations further north.

Community Pride

We love where we live and want to benefit from tourism but minimize negative impacts.

Connection with Nature

Pandemic fueled the desire for wild spaces and outdoor adventure to support positive mental and emotional wellbeing.

Craft Breweries & Local Flavours

Visitors and residents alike are curious to experience local food and drink and support local economies.

Accessibility

It's not only about human rights, but it's a business opportunity for destinations and businesses to ensure tourism products and services are accessible to all people regardless of physical limitations, disabilities, or age.

Indigenous Experiences

Increasing demand for authentic Indigenous experiences reflects the growing recognition of the importance of meaningful reconciliation.

Active Transportation

Climate change and wellness have accelerated need for more active transportation choices in communities.

Wellness Travel

From cold water plunges to silent retreats and digital detoxes, travelers are seeking journeys that rejuvenate both the body and mind.

Blue Tourism

Travel centered around water-based activities and destinations, including water sports and marine wildlife experiences, with a growing focus on sustainability and conservation.

Slow Travel

Sustainable tourism practice involving longer stays with less travel in a single place.

Company Retreats

Getting away from Zoom fatigue. Remote workers still desire to connect with their colleagues.

Generative AI

Artificial Intelligence is dramatically altering the consumer and marketing landscape. Travelers will increasingly use generative AI (i.e. ChatGPT) to help plan their trips.

Pet Travel

The pandemic fueled rapid pet adoption, making destinations with pet-friendly initiatives highly sought-after by those seeking seamless travel with their beloved animals.

⁴ Tourism's Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry, Destination Canada, November 2021

⁵ <https://globaltravelfootprint.wttc.org/reports/TheEnvironmentalImpactofGlobalTourismOct2023.pdf>



PART 2

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

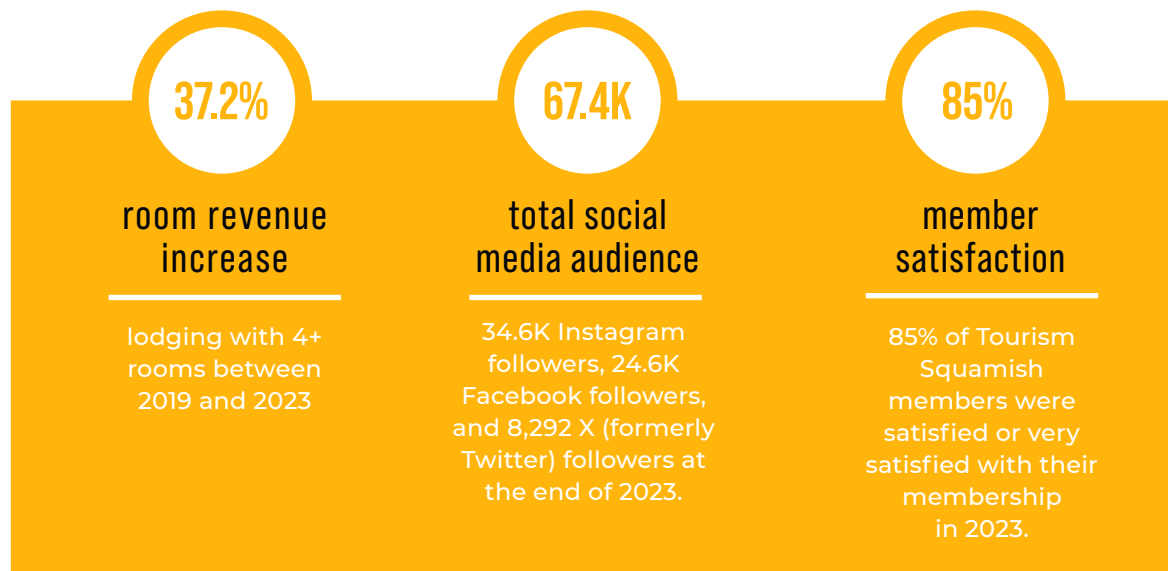
PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

The following are key achievements made:

- Tourism Squamish launched the Destination Stewards program in 2021 to encourage safe and responsible recreation, interacted with over 20,000 people and spent 4,200 hours in the field in 2021 and 2023 (May to August).
- Welcomed 480,803 visitors to the Adventure Centre between 2019-2023, representing a 43% increase in qualified visitors.
- On average Tourism Squamish hosted 10 media and social influencers per year that resulted in numerous travel articles about the area generating dozens of high value publications and broadcast outlets, annually.
- Increase in organic growth of user generated content as a result of the over 100K uses of the #ExploreSquamish hashtag.
- Consistent growth in Tourism Squamish membership, providing increased opportunity for member engagement, events and learning opportunities.



The following are key performance measures related to tourism in Squamish:



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Destination Stewardship

Commitment to Sustainable Tourism

Tourism Squamish is dedicated to sustainable tourism that enhances community well-being. As visitation impacts the qualities that make Squamish a great place to live and visit, our stewardship efforts focus on visitor management, education, and responsible recreation. These initiatives aim to preserve natural resources, support local businesses, and maintain cultural and environmental integrity.

Key Initiatives:

Destination Steward Program

In response to the exponential growth of recreation users and record-high visitors, Tourism Squamish developed the Destination Steward Program to address environmental, wildlife, cultural, and visitor experience impacts. Now in its fourth year, the program recruits and trains a team of Destination Stewards, who are stationed at key high-use trails and recreation areas from May to September. These stewards promote responsible recreation, outdoor safety, and proper travel etiquette, while providing valuable visitor information and advice.

Visitor Management

Tourism Squamish actively participates in monthly/biweekly Visitor Management round-table meetings with provincial, regional, and local agencies, as well as non-profits. This collaboration helps us to maintain consistent messaging, stay update on developing issues, and strategize effective visitor management solutions for the benefit of our community.

Visitor & Resident Education

Tourism Squamish focuses on educating visitors through targeted communications and providing on-site information. By promoting responsible recreation and travel etiquette, we aim to minimize environmental impact and ensure visitors respect local culture and wildlife. An example of our educational approach is our involvement in the *Don't Love It to Death* campaign alongside neighbouring communities. The aim is to encourage residents and visitors to enjoy the beauty of the Sea to Sky corridor, while acting responsibly to avoid overuse that can strain our environment, communities, and facilities. dontloveittodeath.com



DID YOU KNOW?

Divers for Cleaner Lakes and Oceans removed over 225 lbs of trash from Cat Lake in Squamish in 2023 and the first half of 2024, including 521 beverage containers.

Source: Henry Wang, Divers for Cleaner Lakes and Oceans



Destination Development

Commitment to Sustainable Growth and Community Well-Being

Tourism Squamish advocates for sustainable growth and development that enhances visitor experiences and supports the local community. We influence policies and practices to make Squamish an even better place to live and visit, maintaining strong community support and positive resident sentiment.

Key Initiatives:

Advocate for Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

Tourism Squamish actively advocates for infrastructure improvements to enhance visitor experiences and we work with government and partner organizations to secure funding and support for projects. Our advocacy ensures that infrastructure development aligns with sustainable growth principles and addresses the needs of both residents and visitors.

Social License and Resident Sentiment

Tourism Squamish believes that the success of tourism development depends on the support and goodwill of the local community. We focus on understanding and addressing views on tourism through community meetings, surveys, and feedback. Our aim is to foster positive resident sentiments and ensure our tourism initiatives align with community values and supports local businesses. This open dialogue aids in maintaining the social license vital for a sustainable visitor economy.



In a 2022 resident survey by Tourism Squamish, 86% of respondents agreed that tourism plays a significant role in our local economy

Tourism Squamish Key Advocacy Areas

- Building safer pedestrian highway crossings
- Providing more active transportation options
- Expanding parking
- Enhancing signage and wayfinding
- Offering more public washrooms
- Creating easier water and trail access
- Increasing accommodation options

Destination Marketing

Focus on Off-Peak Travel

Tourism Squamish is dedicated to reducing seasonality and increasing off-peak and mid-week visitation, particularly in the fall, winter, and spring seasons. Our goal is to add greater resilience to the local industry and encourage year-round employment. We no longer actively promote visitation in the summer, instead focusing on educating visitors about responsible travel through our various channels.

Key Initiatives:

Seasonal Campaigns: Sip and Savour

Tourism Squamish runs various seasonal campaigns to boost off-peak travel. One example is the annual "Sip and Savour" campaign, which promotes local breweries, restaurants, food venues, and craft makers, during quieter times of year. Approximately 21 local food and beverage establishment participate annually offering set menus, along with hotels offering special rates. This initiative helps drive traffic during the off-season, supporting small and local businesses in Squamish.



Main Call to Action: ExploreSquamish.com

Our newly launched website in 2023 serves as the primary call to action, offering a comprehensive and user-friendly platform for visitors to plan their trips. The website highlights key attractions, events, and travel tips, making it easier for visitors to explore Squamish.

Destination Awareness Activities

Tourism Squamish increases destination awareness through various activities annually, including:

- Exhibiting at the annual Vancouver Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show.
- Hosting travel writers and collaborating closely with Destination BC and Vancouver, Coast & Mountains tourism region.
- Leveraging the power of cooperative marketing working collaboratively with neighbouring communities and specific sector groups (i.e. Mountain Bike BC, BC Ale Trail, Paddle BC, Re:BC, and the BC Bird Trail) to align with provincial marketing efforts and create greater impact in the marketplace.



DID YOU KNOW?

Squamish was among the highest visited community web pages in 2023 on mountainbikebc.ca

Visitor Services

Commitment to Exceptional Visitor Services

Tourism Squamish is dedicated to delivering exceptional visitor services, providing innovative and responsible travel advice through multiple channels, including the Squamish Adventure Centre, mobile visitor servicing teams, and digital touchpoints. Our goal is to increase travel consideration, overnight stays, and repeat visits in the shoulder seasons, thereby boosting tourism revenue for Squamish businesses.



Key Initiatives:

Revitalized Squamish Adventure Centre

In 2023, the Squamish Adventure Centre, housing the Visitor Centre, underwent a \$700,000 modernization project. Led by the District of Squamish and funded by a provincial grant, the renovations included upgrades to the Visitor Centre, retail store, theatre, and meeting and event spaces, transforming it into a vibrant community gathering space.

Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Story - Experience Enhancement Project

As part of the Adventure Centre revitalization, Tourism Squamish is leading the installation of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Story - Experience Enhancement Project. This initiative engages visitors with our region's cultural history and environment, raising awareness of Indigenous traditions in the Sea to Sky corridor. The work is being completed in collaboration with the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and will include accessible interpretive experiences. A large Provincial Destination Development Fund grant made this initiative possible.

Visitor Services

Tourism Squamish enhances the visitor experience through a range of initiatives. We promote responsible travel with the "Explore Squamish Responsibly" Code of Conduct and provide essential visitor information via maps, mobile servicing teams and the Destination Stewards. Our multi-channel approach, including digital touchpoints and on-site engagement, ensures visitors receive comprehensive trip advice and support.

From 2019 to 2023, Tourism Squamish saw a substantial 43% increase in qualified visitors at the Adventure Centre, underlining our successful strategic initiatives.

Industry & Community Engagement

Commitment to Member Engagement

Tourism Squamish is dedicated to actively engaging with its ~130 members, who represent a diverse range of sectors, including food & beverage, accommodation, experience providers, and events. Our goal is to support local businesses and foster remarkable tourism experiences.

Key Initiatives:

Member Events & Training

Tourism Squamish hosts product knowledge nights for members, providing opportunities for businesses to present their offerings to our staff and visitor centre personnel. Industry training opportunities are also provided, and sector round tables are hosted to discuss common issues and opportunities. During election times, we host all-candidate meetings to keep tourism top-of-mind amongst our local, provincial and national representatives.

Communication & Information Sharing

To keep our members informed and engaged, Tourism Squamish prioritizes regular communication through various channels:

- The Wire e-Blast: Sent monthly, it provides updates on Tourism Squamish programs, industry educational opportunities, grants, and more
- Visitor Insights: sent monthly and quarterly, this update provides short-term rental figures, and expanded hotel occupancy and revenue figures linking to our visitor insights dashboard
- The Pulse: A weekly (summer) and monthly (rest of the year) resource listing events, promoting responsible recreation, and highlighting food and beverage experiences; members are encouraged to print and post it or share it digitally

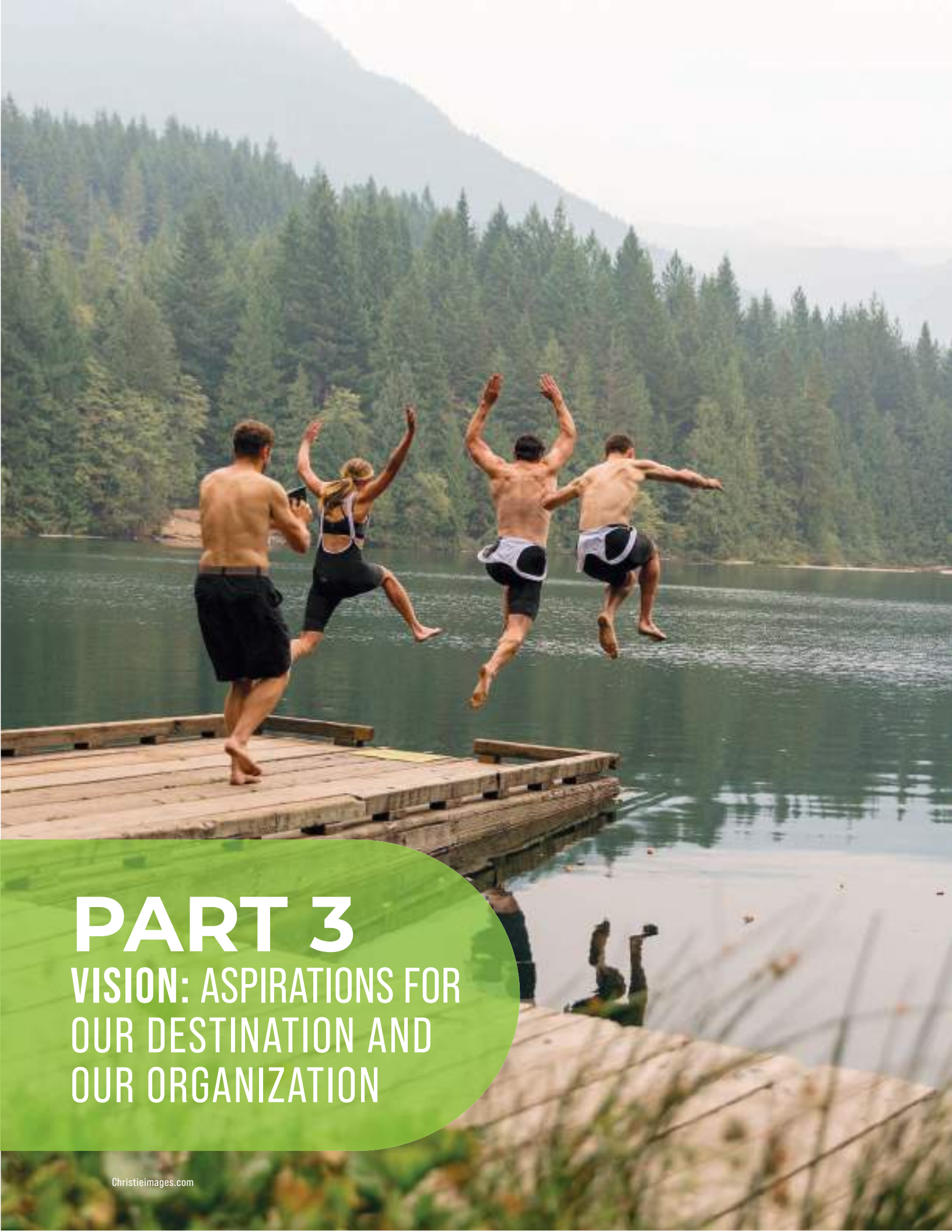
Annual Stakeholder Survey

We conduct an annual stakeholder survey to gather feedback and insights from our members, helping us to continually improve our services and support.

Community Collaboration

Tourism Squamish collaborates with community groups, including the Squamish Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Squamish Business Improvement Association, on initiatives such as training and joint advocacy. Additionally, given the abundance of outdoor adventure, events, and cultural experiences in Squamish, we work closely with local sector associations and not-for-profit groups to strengthen the visitor economy.

85% of
Tourism Squamish
members
were satisfied or
very satisfied with
their membership
in 2023.



PART 3

VISION: ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR DESTINATION AND OUR ORGANIZATION

VISION: ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR DESTINATION AND OUR ORGANIZATION

Tourism Squamish envisions a future where our community is a vibrant tourist destination, thriving through sustainable development and enriched by diverse offerings. Achieving this vision will require long-term collaboration with various partners. By aligning our efforts locally and with national (Destination Canada) and provincial (Destination BC) sustainable tourism initiatives, we are committed to sustaining a regenerative, four-season tourism economy.

01

OUR VISION
of Squamish
as a vibrant
Tourist
Destination

IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION

Come to
Squamish and
leave your car
behind

02

We envision reliable public transit, including passenger trains, regional and local buses. Hop-on, hop-off buses will offer cultural tours, and ride and car-share services will be easily accessible. Squamish will have walkable streets with safe crossings on Highway 99, bike lanes, and electric bike rentals promoting sustainable travel. Pedestrian access will be seamless, especially between the Squamish Adventure Centre and the oceanfront.

The Adventure Centre will reach its full potential, becoming a bustling transportation, accommodation check-in centre, and visitor hub with nearby paved parking facilities for cars and buses. A pedestrian and bike corridor will extend from the Adventure Centre, providing easy and safe routes to local neighbourhoods, downtown, the waterfront, and other attractions.

03

**THE SQUAMISH
ADVENTURE
CENTRE**
A Community
Hub

DIVERSIFIED ACCOMMODATION

Housing our
guests and
the Staff who
welcome them

04

Squamish will offer a variety of accommodation options to meet the needs of all travelers. This will include a new commercial hotel, smaller boutique hotels, and a new campground to reduce wild camping. Waterways will feature unique accommodations such as houseboats.

All these accommodation options require staff. Like Whistler, Squamish will continue to maintain a Community Housing Authority to provide affordable rental and ownership options for long-term locals, ensuring short waitlists for workers. Existing hotels will collaborate to provide staff accommodations and new hotels will offer on-site staff accommodations at reasonable rates.

NEW & ENHANCED TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES – A THRIVING, DIVERSE INDUSTRY

Tourism Squamish envisions strong infrastructure supporting a thriving tourism industry in our community, with diverse offerings all year round:

We envision ample weather-independent attractions, including arts, cinemas, theaters, and Indigenous events. A new historical museum featuring exhibits on geology, Indigenous history, and town history will complement the existing ones. Concerts and sports tournaments will attract off-season visitors. Activities like bird watching and nature painting will cater to diverse visitors. Dining options will range from farm-to-table and craft distilleries to high-end experiences, including a Michelin-starred restaurant. Film tourism will thrive as visitors explore locations from popular shows and movies.

01

CULTURAL TOURISM

EMBRACING OUR SEASIDE SPIRIT

02

Squamish is a known mountain town, but it's time to remind everyone that we're also a coastal town. We envision a new boat launch, a dredged Mamquam Blind channel, paddling and other sea experiences operated out of Rose Park and another marina. Multiple water access points will support thriving tour businesses on Howe Sound, backed by a strong boating and sailing community. Parks will offer diverse water sports access, and a waterfront hotel and conference center will highlight Squamish's coastal identity.

Entrepreneurial Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw members will be supported to provide tourism experiences and businesses in the community. Cultural events will be hosted within the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw territory, particularly at a shared museum. Visitors and residents will have many opportunities to learn about Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw first-hand. Tourism Squamish will support Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw members, and they will be represented on Tourism Squamish's Board of Directors.

03

SKWXWÚ7MESH ÚXWUMIXW Squamish Nation

EDUCATIONAL TOURISM

04

An institute similar to the Aspen Institute will provide educational opportunities on a range of topics for executive visitors, supported by a conference and training center that brings visitors from around the world.

We envision Squamish as a premier destination for major conferences and conventions. With its beautiful surroundings, world-class attractions like the Sea to Sky Gondola, and proximity to Whistler and Vancouver, Squamish is the ideal location. A new hotel will be developed to cater to this industry, offering world-class facilities, dining options, and views.

05

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

TOURISM SQUAMISH – A DESTINATION ~~MARKETING~~ *management* ORGANIZATION

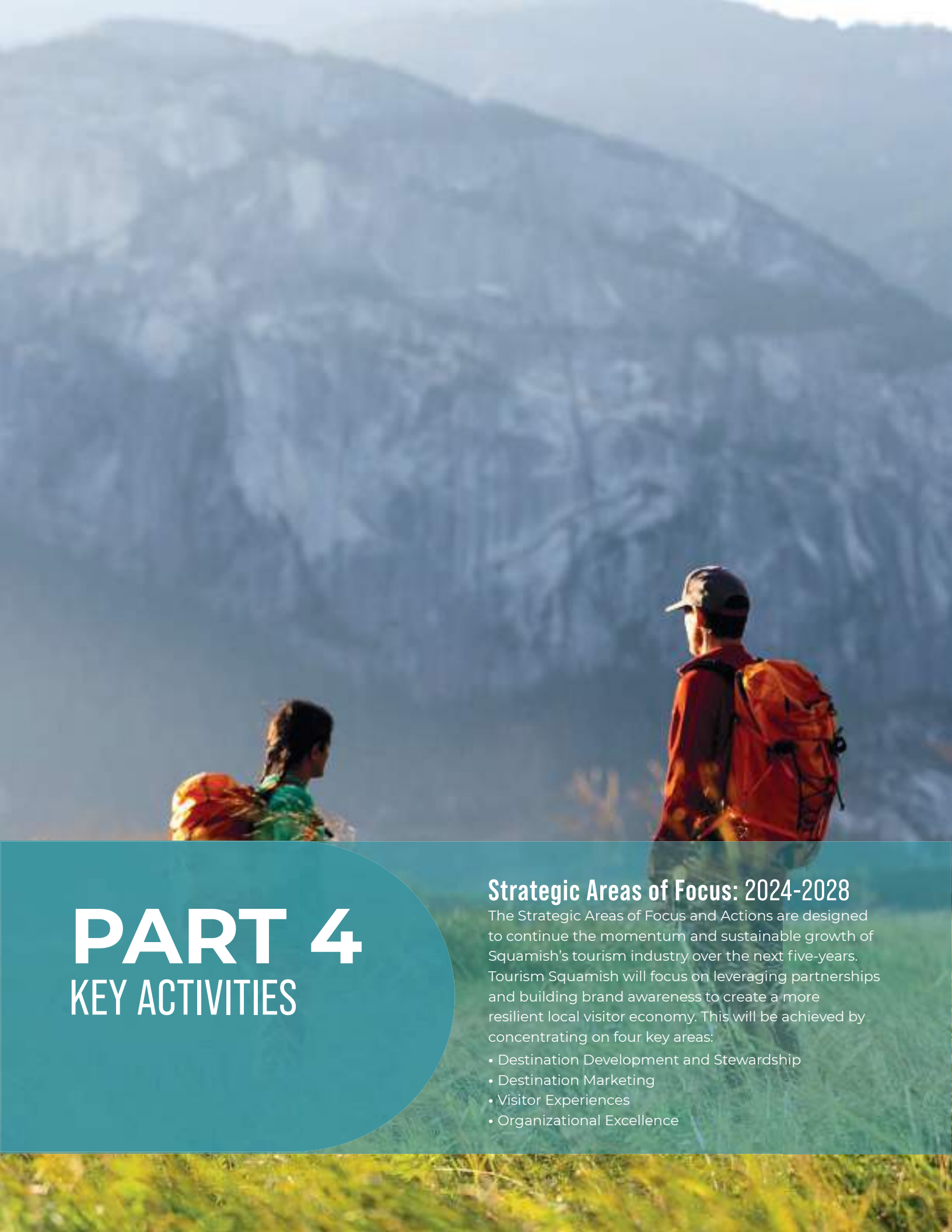
In our future vision for Tourism Squamish as an organization, we have fully transitioned to a tourism management entity, focusing on sector management, advocacy, research and development, destination marketing, and community engagement.

Our vision for the future includes:

- **Strong, positive, and collaborative** relationships between Tourism Squamish, local government, politicians, and Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) leadership.
- **Proactive and frequent** engagement between the District of Squamish and Tourism Squamish on tourism-related matters.
- Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and Tourism Squamish work **collaboratively** on projects to **enhance Indigenous Tourism**, with Tourism Squamish providing marketing or other support at the Nation's request.
- Tourism Squamish **advocates** for incorporating tourism facilities into development plans and ensures that green **spaces and parks** benefit the town as a whole.
- Tourism Squamish **supports and promotes** the efforts of Howe Sound Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region, showcasing this unique area to both visitors and residents.
- **A long-term Tourism Master Plan aimed at reducing** reduces tension between residents and the tourism sector by improving transportation and waste management, creating jobs and affordable housing, and fostering **pride and ambassadorship** among residents for tourism and our town.
- Tourism Squamish continues to offer **educational programming** that instruct residents and visitors on **respecting and protecting** the natural environment, ensuring the **well-being** of our community and **safety for all**.
- Tourism Squamish leads tourism operators to adopt **green practices** including **net-zero operations** as well as ensuring **accessibility and inclusivity** for all.
- Squamish becomes known as a **green tourism destination**, ultimately, leading to a greater sense of trust in visitors by local community members.

Shifts in Tourism Squamish's branding efforts further support a sense of pride in the town. Slogans like, "The Coolest Fjord in North America" and "Find Your Element" increase local identity and link to the natural environment. Visitors who come and enjoy their experience become Ambassadors enticing their friends and family to make the journey to Squamish.

All of these changes help create a greater space for Slow Tourism: a Sustainable Tourism practice involving longer stays with less travel in a single place. Additionally, Tourism Squamish creates market-ready packages to entice longer stays. More international visitors arrive to experience these packages and stay longer.



PART 4

KEY ACTIVITIES

Strategic Areas of Focus: 2024-2028

The Strategic Areas of Focus and Actions are designed to continue the momentum and sustainable growth of Squamish's tourism industry over the next five-years. Tourism Squamish will focus on leveraging partnerships and building brand awareness to create a more resilient local visitor economy. This will be achieved by concentrating on four key areas:

- Destination Development and Stewardship
- Destination Marketing
- Visitor Experiences
- Organizational Excellence

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT & STEWARDSHIP

FOCUS 1

Tourism Squamish's role extends beyond promotion, encompassing destination development and stewardship. By focusing on visitor management and education, advocating for infrastructure improvements, and fostering partnerships, we aim to create regenerative and positive experiences for both residents and visitors. To guide its activities, Tourism Squamish will rely on research-based decision-making, ensuring that its initiatives contribute to the long-term health and well-being of the community and environment.



ACTIONS

- 1 Regularly produce and share visitor insights, conduct an economic impact study, and conduct an annual resident sentiment survey to inform marketing and understand resident perspectives.
- 2 Continue Destination Stewards program at key locations to provide visitor services, promote responsible recreation and safety, and educate about 'Leave No Trace' principles.
- 3 Maintain active participation on the Sea to Sky Destination Management Council and continue to collaborate on the *Don't Love It to Death* campaign to minimize the social and environmental impacts.
- 4 Advocate for sector-specific issues and local infrastructure improvements to enhance the visitor experience, prepare for growth, and improve residents' quality of life.
- 5 Continue to engage in Visitor Management round-table meetings with various provincial, regional and local organizations.
- 6 Develop a Squamish Tourism Master Plan to guide future growth and ensure sustainable development.
- 7 Seek grant funding for destination development activities.



DESTINATION MARKETING

FOCUS 2

Tourism Squamish will continue to work effectively with provincial (Destination BC) and regional (Vancouver, Coast & Mountains tourism region) partners to leverage marketing efforts. We will encourage visitation during non-peak periods and mid-week, focusing on addressing seasonality and filling need periods. Tourism Squamish will continue to use its marketing channels to educate and emphasize responsible and regenerative travel, playing safe, fire safety, bear awareness, and camping responsibly.



ACTIONS

- 1 Continue to enhance online presence and utilize data to gather insights and inspire visitors to explore Squamish via consumer website, social media, blogs, and email marketing.
- 2 Execute off-peak (Oct -May) marketing campaigns to address seasonality and encourage increased length of stay (i.e., Stay & Play, Sip & Savour, Find Your Element).
- 3 Be a trusted steward of the land and utilize all marketing channels to educate and encourage responsible tourism.
- 4 Leverage the power of partnerships by aligning marketing efforts with provincial and regional partners.
- 5 Partner with key groups and members to showcase Squamish at select consumer shows (e.g., Vancouver Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show).
- 6 Partner with key events to extend stays and promote pre/post visitation and assess the economic impact of signature events.
- 7 Target and host relevant trade and media in the off-season in partnership with Destination BC.
- 8 Attract more meetings and group travel to Squamish, with focused growth on off-peak periods.



VISITOR EXPERIENCES

FOCUS 3

Tourism Squamish aims to refine the end-to-end visitor experience, focusing on regenerative tourism and visitor education. From dreaming of a visit to arriving in Squamish, we strive to lead in innovative visitor engagement. Our goals are to drive longer stays, encourage repeat visits, and have visitors recommend Squamish as a premier destination, while ensuring a positive impact on our residents, community, and local businesses.



ACTIONS

- 1 Continue to implement the *Future of Visitor Servicing in Squamish Plan*.
- 2 Maintain a multi-channel approach to visitor servicing using technology to capture travelers' attention online and provide trip advice and suggestions before, during, and after their visit.
- 3 Create and distribute key collateral pieces (i.e., hiking and biking maps) that can assist with visitor dispersion throughout the community; maps also include messaging on 'when to go' and 'where to park' to avoid the peak times.
- 4 Produce and share the Explore Squamish Responsibly (Code of Conduct) and/or the outputs from the *Don't Love it to Death* educational campaign.
- 5 Continue the Destination Ambassador/Street Team and Destination Stewards programs at key visitor sites and events within the community.
- 6 Complete the revitalization of the Adventure Centre, including the new Skw̓xwú7mesh (Squamish) Story Exhibit.
- 7 Operate The Squamish Store retail outlet in the Adventure Centre, featuring local artisans and products.



ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

FOCUS 4

Tourism Squamish recognizes the importance of strong governance and the requirements of the organization's core funding mechanism – the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT). Maintaining strong relations with members, as well as elected officials and key user groups, is vital to the tourism industry's success in Squamish.



ACTIONS

- 1 Ensure financial monitoring, annual planning and all MRDT reporting is completed in a timely and transparent manner.
- 2 Ensure the Board of Directors and its committees continue to provide effective governance and act as an ambassador for Tourism Squamish in accordance with our constitution and bylaws.
- 3 Engage in ongoing work to increase diverse representation on Tourism Squamish board to more accurately reflect the community and tourism partners.
- 4 Continue to offer value to members and the wider community by delivering regular communications, sharing resources, insights, educational programming, and partnership opportunities.
- 5 Continue to strengthen relations with elected officials from the District of Squamish and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) to encourage ongoing communication and collaboration.
- 6 Meet regularly with District of Squamish staff and key Ministry program staff to represent tourism interests, inform decision-making, and promote collaboration.
- 7 Continue to strengthen partnerships with regional and provincial tourism organizations (e.g., TIABC, Destination BC) by attending relevant meetings and conferences, and sharing learnings with Tourism Squamish members and partners.



TOURISM SQUAMISH SCORECARD

Strategic Focus	Key Action/ Desired Outcome	Year 1 (2024) Target	Year 5 (2028) Target
Destination Management	Increase in grant funding	Sustain 2023 levels	5% increase
	Improve resident sentiment scores	2% increase	3% increase
	Support implementation of the Sea to Sky Destination Development Strategy	Implement signage activities for destination development initiative	Continue seeking grant and partnership opportunities to further implement objectives in the Destination Development Strategy
	Develop and Implement Squamish Tourism Master Plan	Consultant hired and planning approach designed in 2024	Squamish Tourism Master Plan complete by end of 2025
Destination Marketing	Grow off-peak season occupancy	5% increase	25% increase
	Leverage marketing partnerships	Maintain participation in cooperative marketing programs at 2023 levels	Increase participation in cooperative marketing programs by 25% beyond 2023 levels
	Increase consumer website traffic in target markets	5% increase	25% increase
	Increase engagement with consumer communications	2% increase in open rates for blogs and consumer newsletters Increased engagement with existing social media channels	10% increase in open rates for blogs and consumer newsletters Increased engagement with existing social media channels
Visitor Experiences	Increase visitors serviced at the Adventure Centre	5% increase	25% increase
	Increase visitors serviced by the destination stewards	5% increase	25% increase
	Develop and implement the Squamish Story exhibit for the Adventure Centre	Grant funding secured	Squamish Story exhibit complete end of 2024
Organizational Excellence	Increase Tourism Squamish membership base	2s% increase	10% increase
	Increase open rate of <i>The Wire</i> member newsletter	2% increase	10% increase
	Partnership agreement with District of Squamish	Maintain agreement	Maintain agreement

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TOURISM 
SQUAMISH
HARDWIRED for ADVENTURE