

# City of Langford Five-Year Tourism Strategy 2023 - 2027

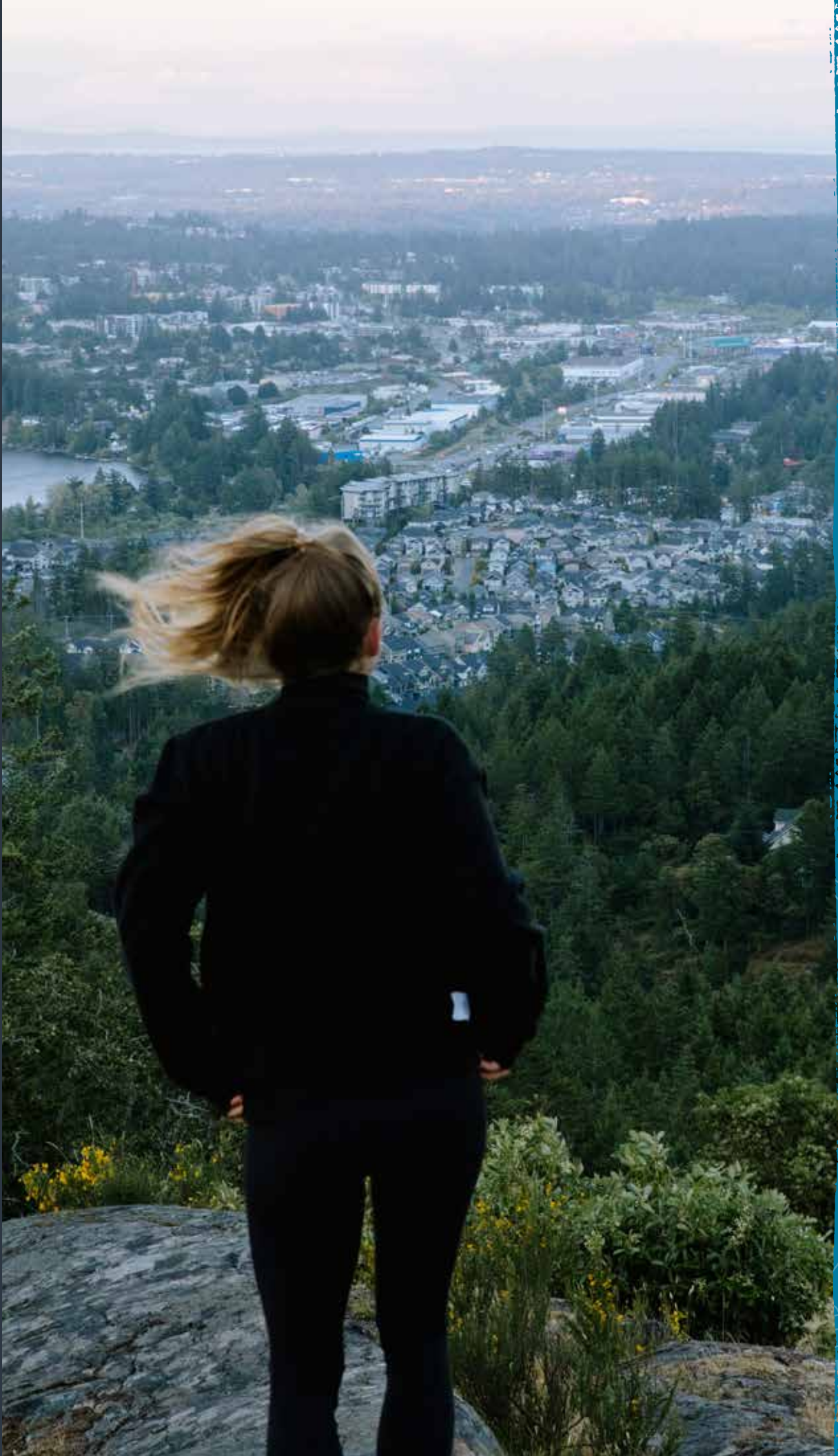
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## VISION

To be known as a sustainable, year-round accessible, event and cultural destination that actively welcomes visitors to responsibly enjoy the facilities, amenities, and active lifestyle that the community of Langford offers.

## MISSION

Our mission is to work with local businesses and residents and collaborate with partners to create a strong tourism economy that is sustainable and inclusive for all in the City of Langford.

## STRATEGY

Our team works diligently to create destination brand awareness through inspiring and engaging marketing campaigns that motivate visitors to plan their trip to Langford or to host their events in our community. We support the traveller experience with our mobile visitor centre van and work closely with industry and sector partners to leverage our marketing dollars and to responsibly increase overall visitation and overnight stays. Further, we encourage and support sustainable destination development that strengthens the local economy and enriches the quality of life in the City of Langford.

*The City of Langford acknowledges and honours the traditional territories of the Coast Salish, specifically Xwsepsum (Esquimalt), Lekwungen (Songhees), Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay), and the WSÁNEĆ Peoples represented by the Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tsawout, Tseycum, and Malahat Nations. We thank them for sharing this beautiful land.*



# Supporting Langford’s Tourism Economy

The City of Langford currently collects a 2% Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) - this is a tax paid by consumers on eligible accommodation stays and is collected in over 60 communities across the province.

The tax was first introduced in Langford ten years ago on November 1, 2013 and is renewed every five years. MRDT is a leading funding mechanism used by the City of Langford to execute innovative and competitive strategies and tactics that provide direct benefit to Langford’s tourism economy. The City of Langford is focused on elevating destination competitiveness by fostering strong partnerships and community support and by concentrating on the following four key areas of destination management:

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT			
DESTINATION MARKETING	DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT	VISITOR SERVICES	SPORTS & EVENTS
Langford website Instagram channel Digital marketing Travel media relations Travel trade relations Cooperative marketing partnerships	Product development that aligns with Langford’s unique sense of place  Supporting and encouraging more accessible and inclusive tourism offerings  Encouraging environmental stewardship and responsible tourism principals  Indigenous tourism partnerships	Mobile Visitor Service Van  Visitor education and inspiration  Marketing collateral – visitor guide and map	Actively engaging in sport event bidding and hosting  Supporting event host  Actively seeking new annual events that feature arts, culture, diversity and inclusion

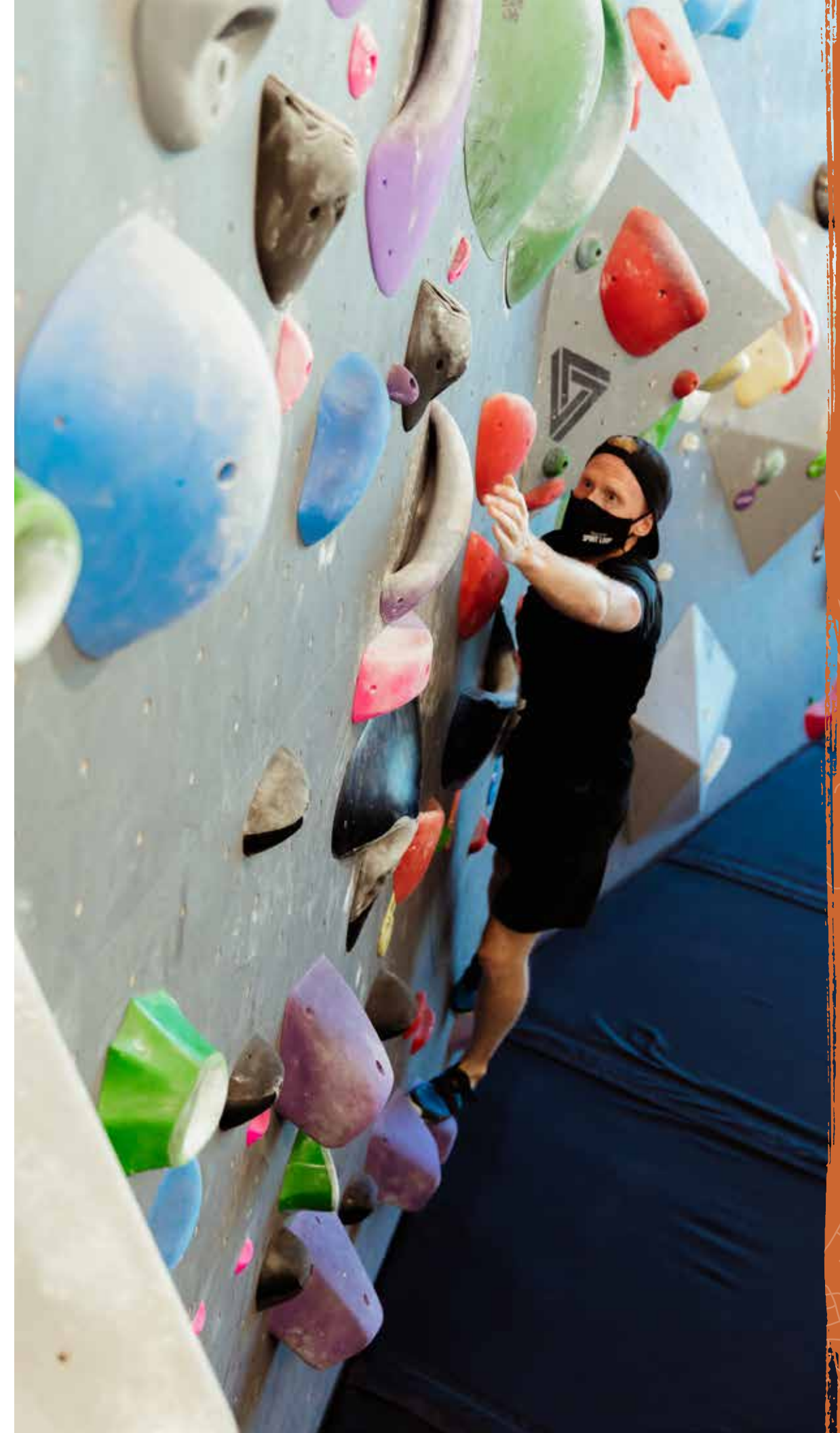
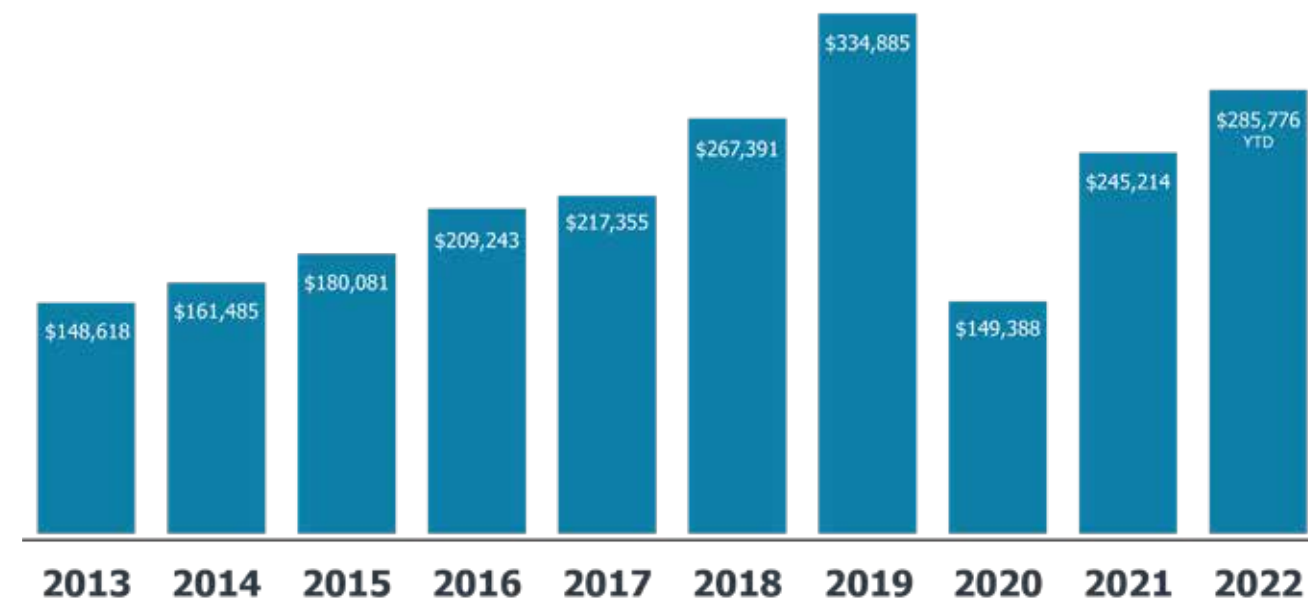
# Program Funding

From 2013 to 2021, the City of Langford has collected an average of over \$250,000 MRDT per year. Revenue is expected to surpass pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2022. Other funding sources include Destination BC co-op funding and federal summer job grants.

The City of Langford provides in-kind program support, including a dedicated tourism staff position, office space, and administrative and management functions (i.e., accounting, insurance, etc.).

Further, Langford also actively seeks grants and partnership funding opportunities to leverage our budget. Since 2019, Langford has secured almost \$325,000 in federal, regional, and private grant funding.

## 2% MRDT (HOTEL TAX) REVENUE







# Tourism Industry Conditions & Trends

Tourism as an industry was seeing unprecedented growth pre-pandemic, but since that time has met challenge after challenge from wildfires, travel restrictions, flooding, and chronic labour shortages.

Langford worked hard to support local tourism businesses when the times were good, and we doubled-down when times got tough during the pandemic. Through communications channels we shared every bit of news, information about resources, grants, government programs and ever-changing rules. We did this through online channels, over the phone, and in-person whenever we were allowed to.

On the following page are many of the conditions and trends that we are monitoring - and adapting to - along with local, regional, provincial, and national tourism partners.

# CONDITIONS

**The Canadian tourism industry is experiencing a strong recovery, following a sharp decline during the COVID-19 Pandemic.** Current recovery scenarios are projecting a return to 2019 revenues by 2025 with the domestic market continuing to drive recovery.<sup>1</sup>

**Tourism plays a significant role in British Columbia’s economy.** Pre-pandemic, British Columbia’s tourism industry generated revenue of \$22.3 billion in 2019, an increase of 5.8% over 2018, and a 67.8% increase from 2009. Further in 2019, tourism contributed more to GDP than any other primary resource industry. (Tourism: \$7.4B, mining: \$5.0B, oil & gas: \$4.8B, forestry & logging: \$1.6B, and agriculture & fishing: \$3.3B.)<sup>2</sup>

**There were 19,748 tourism-related businesses in BC, in 2019, employing over 130,300 people and paying \$5.1 billion in wages and salaries.** Labour market analysis indicate that acute worker shortages will continue to challenge Canada’s post-pandemic labour market as the baby-boom generation continues to move into retirement age. Roughly 23% of the working age population is expected to be 65 years or older by 2024.

Further, shifts in labour markets during the pandemic mean there won’t be enough unemployed workers to fill in gaps, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sector.<sup>3</sup>

**Continued growth of the sectors means we need to pay attention to both the costs and the benefits that tourism can bring.** Sustainable growth is about making sure the people who live in the province continue to reap the rewards

of a well-managed tourism industry. This includes management strategies such as encouraging visitors to travel in all four seasons and into every corner of the province, visitor use management, pricing, and coordinated local and regional destination development to proactively manage growth.<sup>4</sup>

**The majority of British Columbians agreed that the tourism industry plays an important role in British Columbia’s economic recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic (84%).** Tourism supports a greater diversity of amenities (such as restaurants, attractions, recreation facilities, and events) than would otherwise exist in their community (79%). Further, most tourism businesses buy goods locally, hire locally, and retain their profits locally.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Source: Destination Canada Tourism Outlook Spring 2022

<sup>2</sup>Source: Destination BC’s Power of Tourism Fact Sheet 2022

<sup>3</sup>Source: BC Chamber of Commerce, Focusing Forward 2022 -2023 Policy, and Positions Manual

<sup>4</sup>Source: Province of BC, The Strategic Framework for Tourism 2022-2024,

<sup>5</sup>Source: Destination BC Power of Tourism Fact Sheet 2022





## TRENDS

### OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

**The pandemic has fueled the growing demand for wild spaces and outdoor adventure.**

Travelers are seeking the freedom of being outdoors and the positive impacts on emotional and mental health.<sup>1</sup> Langford provides this type of getaway offering a range of outdoor adventure - golfing, biking, hiking, fishing and over 2,200 acres of green space and parks.

### WORKING FROM HOME

**Increased need for corporate team-building meetings.** As more British Columbians and people from around the world are working from home, businesses are seeking ways to connect their dispersed workforces. Langford's meeting facilities, outdoor adventure and range of transportation options make it an ideal location to explore these corporate markets.

### NEW RESIDENTS

**Census data indicates an opportunity to showcase Langford to new residents.** According to Statistics Canada, British Columbia had a 7% population growth over the past 5 years, one of the highest provincial growth rates. Further, the Langford area also had very high population growth, ranked as the fastest-growing municipality in BC and the third fastest-growing in Canada. As a result, there is a new and growing domestic market that provides an opportunity for Langford to attract new visitors and convert them into returning visitors, creating new traditions – golf getaways, hiking, biking, and events, etc.

### INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES

**Indigenous tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in Canada.<sup>2</sup>** It creates sustainable employment for Indigenous communities while enriching travellers' experiences through the sharing of culture, history, and tradition. To support meaningful reconciliation through tourism, there is an opportunity for Langford to further engage local Indigenous partners regarding the preservation and promotion of the rich Indigenous history of the area, if and how they determine it would benefit their communities.

### INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

**Experiences that are inclusive and accessible provides equal opportunity and participation for everyone - regardless of age, ability, gender, or culture.** It's not only about human rights, but it's a business opportunity for destinations and companies to embrace all visitors. Working with partners to enhance Langford's inclusivity is an important part of making it a safe, accessible, and welcoming place for all people.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Destination Canada, Tourism's Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry – November 2021

<sup>2</sup> Source: Destination Canada, Tourism's Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry – November 2021



# TRENDS

## DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

The role of the DMO is shifting from marketing to overall management and an increasing role in destination development. DMOs are well positioned to foster stronger connections with all stakeholders and to help facilitate long range planning for the destination that ensures the ideal visitor experience while thoughtfully managing growth. Destination Management involves working toward balancing the needs of residents, visitors, and natural spaces.

## LAST-MINUTE TRIP PLANNING

Last minute trip planning is on the rise. Expedia search data shows that Canadian travelers are not planning as far ahead these days and are motivated by the idea of the last-minute deal. Langford is well positioned to work with local accommodation providers, and event organizers to create and promote last minute trip offers.

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

There is a desire to connect in meaningful ways with places visited and to support local economies. Recognizing the impact that tourism has on the environment and host populations has led to reflections by residents and visitors alike.<sup>3</sup> By creating responsible tourism strategies and building connections and awareness with residents, destinations such as Langford can participate in lowering any negative impact of tourism and attracting visitors with those shared values.

## DOMESTIC TRAVEL/STAYCATIONS

A significant portion of the population is interested in traveling closer-to-home due to rising costs, limited time, and ease of travel.<sup>4</sup> This creates opportunities for drive destinations and the creation of road trip itineraries for travelers, such as the South Island Spirit Loop. Further, working together with accommodation providers and businesses to create “staycation” packages. These travellers can be converted to repeat visitors and potential ambassadors for communities such as Langford.



## TECH-CENTRIC TRAVEL

Technology has dramatically changed the consumer and marketing landscape. It’s integral to the end-to-end visitor experience, from booking travel, checking-in, ordering food, Uber, to returning home – it can all be done using mobile technology. Individual businesses in Langford will need to keep informed and embrace technology trends to ensure we’re aligning with the methods travelers are utilizing before, during and after a vacation.

## PET TRAVEL

Since the start of the pandemic, approximately three million pets were adopted into Canadian homes.<sup>5</sup> There were similar rates in other countries around the world too. A rise in pet travel is anticipated and data reveals that pet owners are interested in future travel with their pets.<sup>6</sup> Destinations can assist potential travelers by helping to clearly promote where pets are welcome and pet-friendly activities in the community.

## SHARING ECONOMY

The sharing economy has significantly impacted many industries, including tourism and is expected to reach \$335 billion by 2025.<sup>7</sup> The rise of “collaborative consumption” with the popularity of online platforms such as AirBnB, VRBO, and Uber, etc. has transformed the way in which travellers connect with a destination. Travellers want an immersive community-based experience rather than to simply “visit” a destination. As tourism becomes more interconnected with the sharing economy, destinations like Langford need to continue to monitor and address the impacts, both positive and negative, on residents and local businesses.

## LOCAL FOOD AND DRINK

Culinary tourism is on the rise across the globe.<sup>8</sup> With the abundance of food influencers on social media and the desire to consume sustainable and locally sourced food, culinary tourism continues to thrive. Further, food festivals and events are also gaining popularity.<sup>9</sup> Langford is well positioned to capitalize on this opportunity with its growing and dynamic eateries, engaged chefs/entrepreneurs, availability of local seasonal ingredients from Vancouver Island, and events such as Brewery and the Beast.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Destination Canada, Tourism’s Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada’s Tourism Industry – November 2021  
<sup>4</sup> Source: Destination Canada, Tourism’s Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada’s Tourism Industry – November 2021  
<sup>5</sup> Source Pet Valu Canada Inc., National Survey of Canadian Pet Owners, February 2022

<sup>6</sup> Source: Hilton, The 2022 Traveller: Emerging Trends and Redefined Traveller  
<sup>7</sup> Source: PWC, Sharing or paring? Growth of the sharing economy  
<sup>8</sup> Source: Future Market Insights, Food Tourism Sector Market, August 2022.  
<sup>9</sup> Source: Future Market Insights, Food Tourism Sector Market, August 2022.



# Situation Assessment

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The City of Langford takes a progressive, hands-on, collaborative approach to supporting the business community</li><li>• Supportive Mayor and Council</li><li>• Strong sense of community in our people and our places</li><li>• Attractive destination for sports and events</li><li>• State of the art sporting facility and events venue – Starlight Stadium. Home to Canadian professional soccer club Pacific FC, as well as Rugby Canada and Westshore Rebels</li><li>• New events reaching out Langford to relocate their event</li><li>• Diverse outdoor experiences – golf, biking, hiking, birding, fishing and over 2,200 acres of green space and parks</li><li>• A mix of accommodations offering high quality, value and services for visitors</li><li>• Revitalized arts and cultural precinct – The Langford Station</li><li>• Close proximity to Victoria and other large and affluent markets</li><li>• Wide array of transportation options - Clipper, Coho Ferry, BC Ferries and air transportation</li><li>• Strong destination marketing partnership with neighbouring South Island Spirit Loop communities – Sooke, Port Renfrew, the Malahat and Malahat Nation</li><li>• Langford values building partnerships that help us to advance as an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable destination</li><li>• Strong partnerships with 4VI, Destination BC, and Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission</li><li>• MRDT budget to fund initiatives</li><li>• Experienced staff</li><li>• Collaboration with accommodation partners</li><li>• Alignment with provincial and regional marketing initiatives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perceptions that Langford/Vancouver Island has limited access, is not a hub, or is not easy to travel to</li><li>• Staffing resources – currently 1 FTE</li><li>• Awareness of Langford outside of BC/AB is limited</li><li>• Still in awareness phase – destinations are as aggressive as ever</li><li>• Competitive rates from Victoria hotels and the number of rooms competing for the visitor bookings</li><li>• Access to trails at Bear Mountain may be restricted</li><li>• No airport shuttle</li><li>• Limited inventory can = higher rates for hotels, challenging for teams</li><li>• Industry staffing challenges</li><li>• Turn over of front-line staff</li><li>• Lack of indoor attractions</li></ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Growth of sports and events - development of new events during shoulder season</li><li>• Increased activity on social media channels to encourage ambassadors</li><li>• Continuing to build a year-round visitor economy</li><li>• Strengthen Indigenous tourism partnerships</li><li>• Available grants and funding sources through ICET, Canada Summer Jobs, Destination BC, 4VI, Province, etc.</li><li>• New university campus by 2024 – opportunity to market to student, visiting families, sports and events</li><li>• Build stronger partnerships with organizations addressing environmental stewardships, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the tourism industry</li><li>• 4VI Sustainability Program</li><li>• Business networking</li><li>• Workshops: social media, digital marketing, customer service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fuel prices and cost of travel</li><li>• Recruitment and retention of employees in tourism-related businesses (wage competition with other sectors of economy)</li><li>• Border requirements may deter travelers (i.e. passport)</li><li>• Global competition – travellers have many destination options with similar assets to Langford</li><li>• Increased competition for hosting festivals and events</li><li>• Climate change – wildfires/smoke, flooding</li><li>• Weather events affect BC Ferries</li><li>• Airline challenges</li><li>• Potential recession</li></ul>



# Key Achievements & Performance Measures

The following are key achievements made through the 2018-2022 strategic planning cycle:

1. Secured almost \$325,000 in federal, regional and private grant funding.
2. Welcomed over 3,500 total visitors to the mobile visitor van over July and August 2021 and 2022.
3. Launched Langford Instagram channel and increased organic growth of user-generated content due to the 78,591 uses of #IamLangford and #ExploreLangford.
4. Launched The Langford Station, an arts and culture district complete with custom retrofitted shipping containers that host six artist studios, six business incubators and one community arts workshop, the *Creation Station*. In addition, there is an area for up to five food trucks, formalized parking, picnic and chess game tables, 13 murals, three interactive lighting installations, five sculptures, a stage area for performances, a permanent washroom building, and an off-leash dog area.
5. Supported the promotion of 30+ events to enhance the overall visitor experience and increase room nights. This is in addition to the promotional support of the regular season Pacific FC, Rugby Canada and Westshore Rebels games.





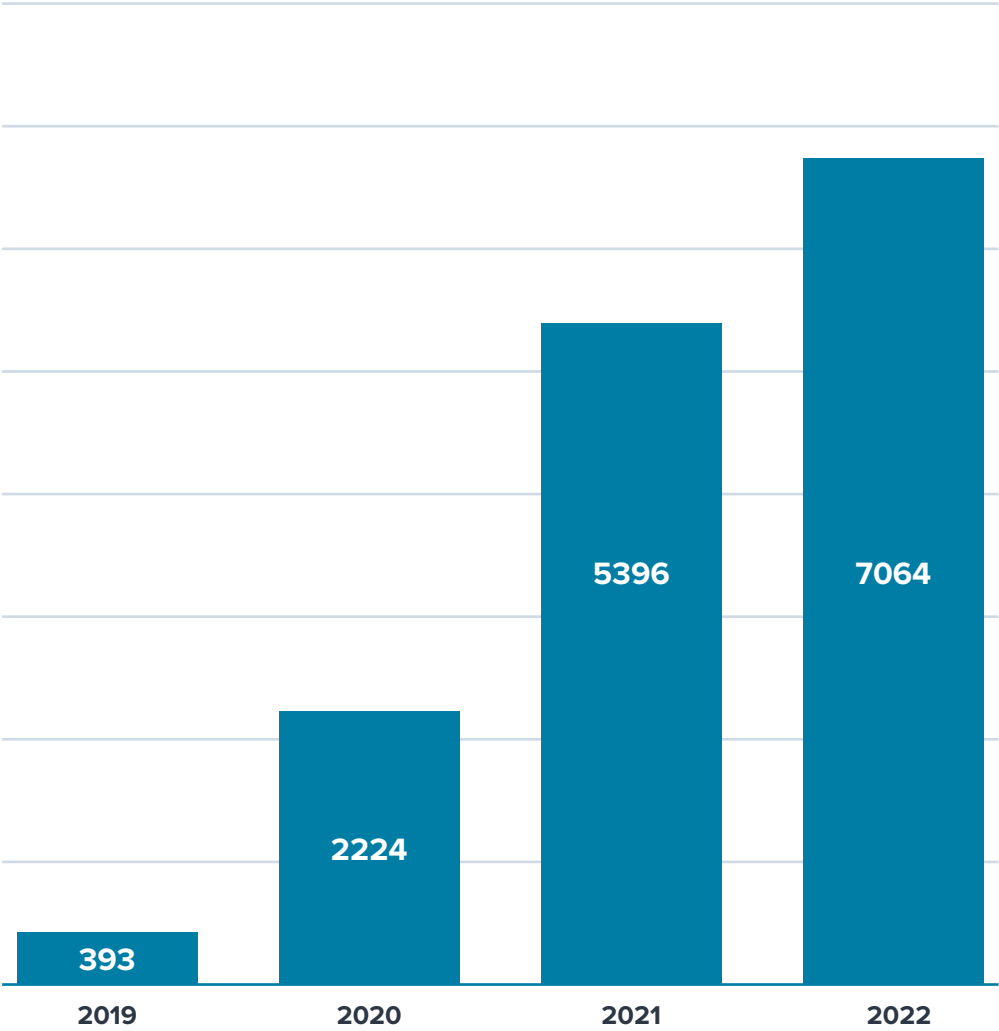


## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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

- Strong growth in room revenue from 2018 to 2019. Revenue expected to surpass pre-pandemic totals by the end of 2022.
- 27% increase in web users between August 2021 and August 2022 with 23,888 tourism page views for Langford.ca.
- Strong Instagram growth – over 7000 followers in three years.

### CITY OF LANGFORD INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS





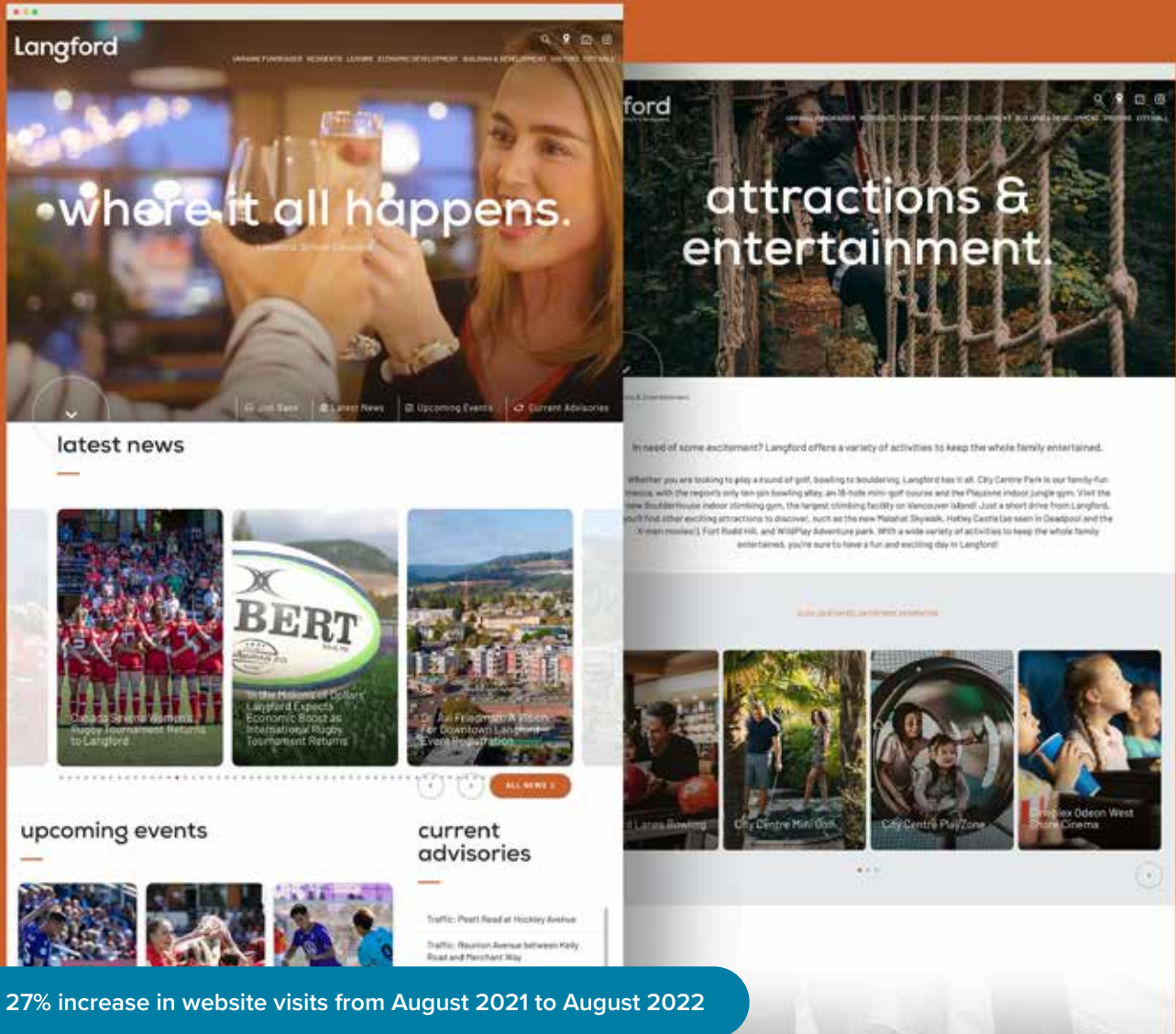
A man and a woman are sitting at a bar, smiling and clinking their beer glasses. The woman has blonde hair and is wearing a white sweater. The man has dark hair and is wearing a grey jacket. They are both holding glasses of beer. In the background, there is a bar counter with various bottles and a television screen showing a sports game. The lighting is warm and ambient.

# Highlights and Achievements

Over the past three-years, the City of Langford has actively implemented its tourism strategy focused on four key pillars:

- Destination Marketing
- Destination Development
- Visitor Services
- Events and Sport Tourism





# Destination Marketing

Since 2019, Langford has executed key marketing activities including the production and distribution of a visitor guide and map, development of new website, growing social media presence and the execution of innovative consumer marketing campaigns.

Further, Langford leverages the power of partnership marketing by working collaboratively with neighbouring communities (South Island Spirit Loop) and specific sector groups (Mountain Bike, Golf Vancouver Island, and the BC Bird Trail) to align with provincial marketing efforts and to create greater impact.



4,000 maps distributed

7000 new Instagram followers in three years

25,000 visitor guides distributed province wide





# Offseason Campaign

The Off Season Campaign was developed by Langford to drive bookings to local hotels in the shoulder season. Within these ads Langford was positioned as an amazing island getaway but at much more affordable budget for potential travellers in metro areas in BC.

Media channels were chosen that could use data segments to target users that were actively browsing destinations and accommodation options. The strong CTAs with competitive rates were presented to these users to drive traffic to a landing page with relevant stakeholders. Overall, the campaign was very efficient in reaching large relevant audience, creating traffic for stakeholders and fostering engagement on social media.

	SUMMARY	
Geo Target	Metro Vancouver & Central Vancouver Island	
Channels	Display & Instagram	
Duration	65 Days	
	CAMPAIGN	
Impressions:	1.2 Million	
Clicks to Landing page:	1,001	
Social Media Engagements:	1,609	





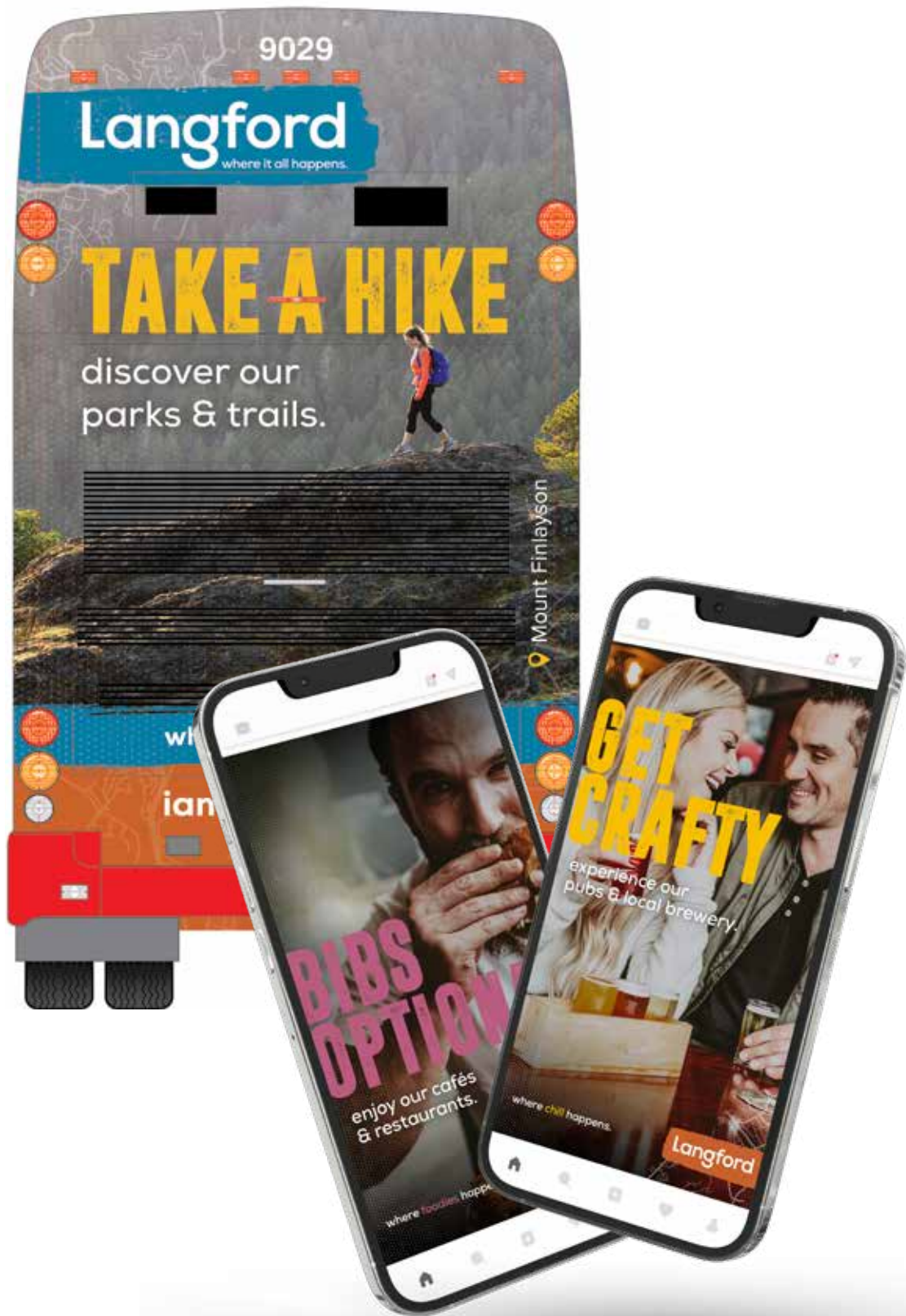
# Places Unknown Campaign

Langford developed a compelling campaign to raise awareness of the region as a travel destination for residents in British Columbia and Washington State.

The Places Unknown campaign utilized a multi-channel strategy with unique creative built to connect with specific target audiences. A video advertisement was also made that showcased the stunning tourist areas in Langford. Overall, the campaign proved to hit high benchmarks, especially across engagement key performance indicators and video ad completion rates.

SUMMARY	
Geo Target	British Columbia, Washington
Channels	Social, Video, Discovery
Duration	61 Days
CAMPAIGN	
Impressions:	2.9 Million
Video Completions:	850,000
Clicks to Landing Page:	8,750
Pages per Session:	2.56
Stakeholder Clicks:	570





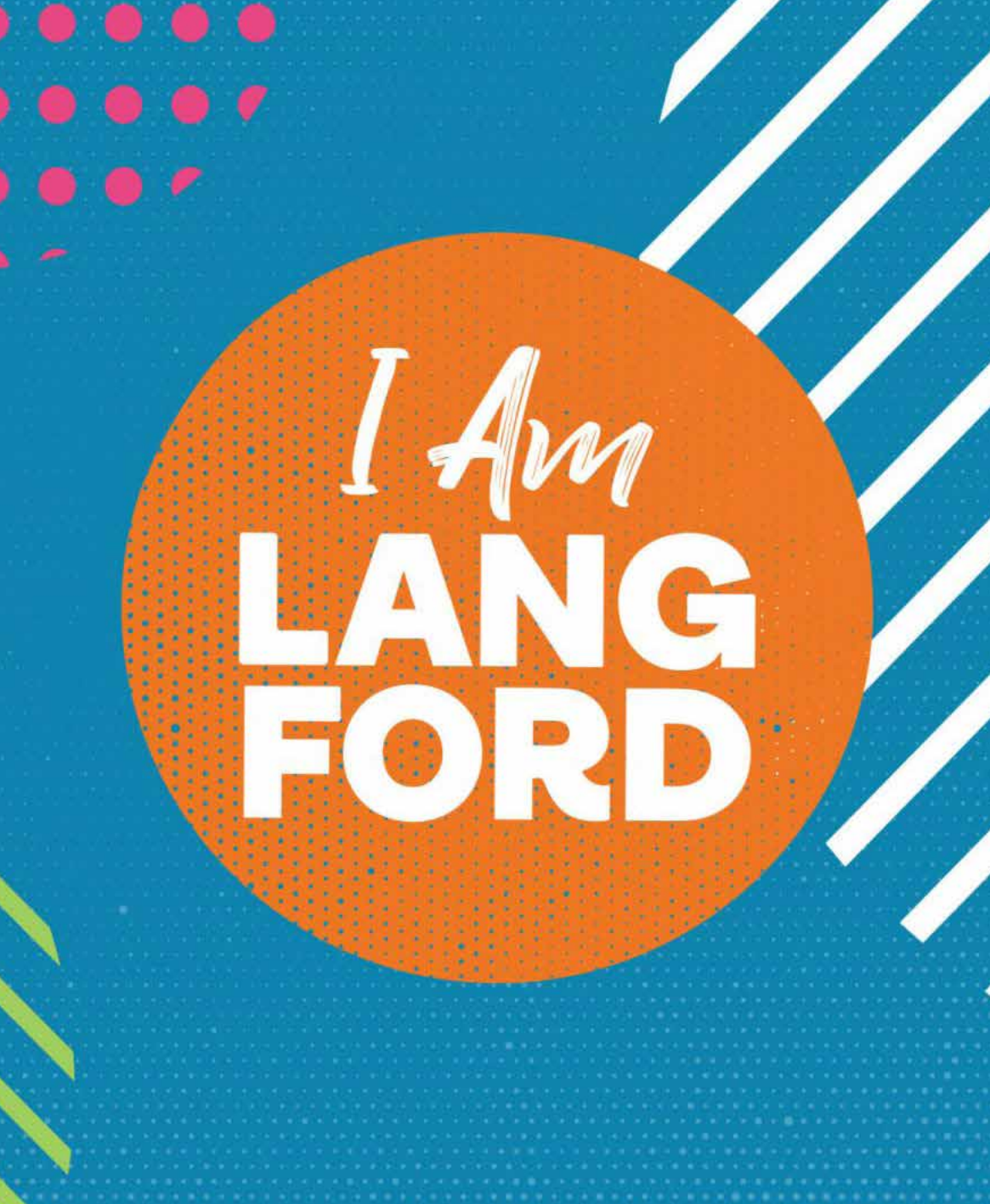
# Staycation Campaign

In 2021, travel restriction altered destination marketing strategies. Langford acted accordingly and developed an innovative campaign to build awareness of local businesses with a younger audience (19-35) in the local South Island market.

The This is Langford campaign utilized impactful images and disruptive tag lines to raise the awareness of activities in Langford that would appeal to the targeted demographic. This campaign was extremely successful as ads garnered 750,000 impression with an impressive sub \$1 cost per link click on Instagram and Snap Chat.

	SUMMARY	
	Geo Target	South Island
	Channels	Instagram & Snapchat
	Duration	19 Days
	CAMPAIGN	
	Impressions:	750,000
	Clicks to Landing Page:	4,998
	Social Media Engagements:	1,398





# I Am Langford Recovery Campaign



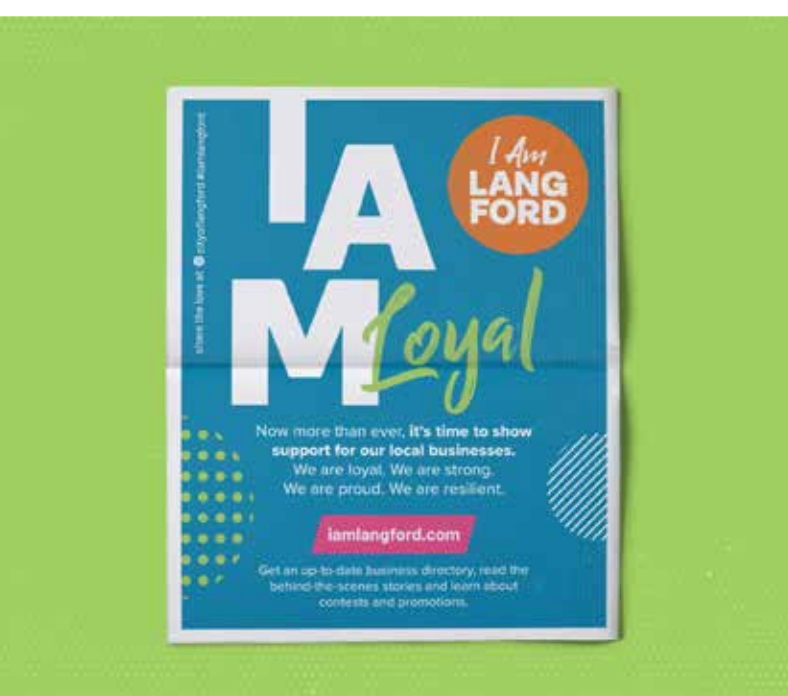
Economic Recovery and Resiliency Award  
for communities with a population  
exceeding 20,000

In 2020, when the Province announced mandatory temporary closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Langford quickly stepped up and supported residents and businesses alike through the captivating “I Am Langford” Economic Recovery Campaign. The campaign went deeper than encouraging residents to shop locally; it was positioned to connect the entire community through storytelling, visual decals for business doors and windows, contesting, traditional advertising and more.

City staff were reassigned from economic development/tourism and other departments to aid in community outreach to ensure engagement with as many individuals and business owners as possible. To connect the community and provide support, outreach was made through phone calls, business visits, supplies deliveries, and a mobile information centre. More than 500 business connections, not including email alerts and online correspondence, were made.

An I AM Langford microsite was created to share stories behind many of Langford’s well-loved local businesses. Through photos and phone interviews, heartwarming biographies were created to remind residents of the story behind their favourite store or restaurant. The I Am Langford microsite received 6,384 page views throughout July and August 2020. The Mobile Visitor Services Van was redeployed as the “I Am Langford” Acts of Kindness Van that travelled throughout the community spreading good vibes and rewarding shoppers for their loyalty to Langford businesses.

The I AM Langford campaign provided the opportunity to remind residents to keep local businesses top of mind and foster a culture of community support and connection.





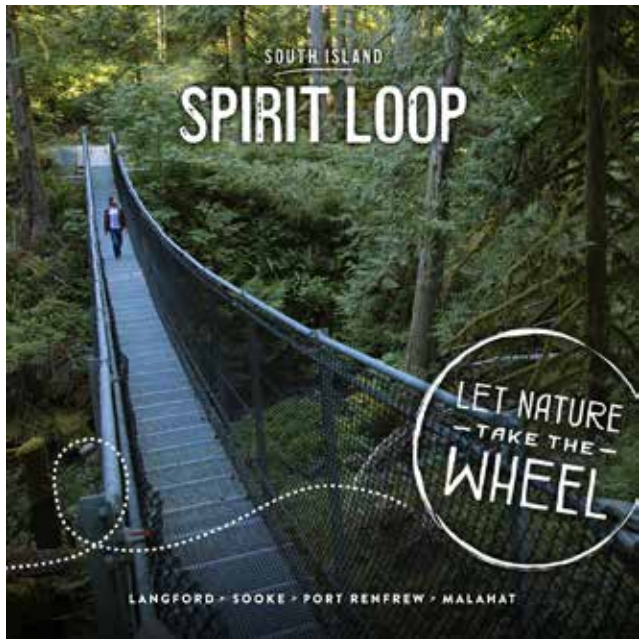
# South Island Spirit Loop

In late 2021, the City of Langford, in partnership with Sooke to Port Renfrew Regional Tourism Association, Malahat Nation, Malahat Skywalk and Destination BC, announced the formation of a new tourism marketing collective. The Spirit Loop is positioned to promote unique tourism experiences in Langford, Sooke, Port Renfrew and Malahat regions.

As part of this initiative, Langford has benefited from a series of engaging marketing activities including:

- A short-documentary style film
- High quality photos and video assets
- Media PR kit
- Hosting travel writers to Langford, resulting in a recent feature in Canadian National Geographic
- Inclusion in the Spirit Loop campaign

The \$91,500 Spirit Loop campaign leveraged media channels that best showcased visuals of the amazing destinations and attractions. Both Connected TV apps (Gem, Roku, etc.) and in-feed social media advertisements were targeted in select geographic regions and audience segments. The campaign was successful in effectively reaching a wide audience, driving engagement on social accounts and growing traffic for local stakeholders.



## SUMMARY

Geo Target	Greater Vancouver, Interior, BC
Channels	Social, Video, Discovery
Duration	160 Days



## CAMPAIGN

Impressions:	1.1 Million
Video Completions:	650,000
Clicks to Landing Page:	16,000
Pages per Session:	1.71
Email Subscribers:	202



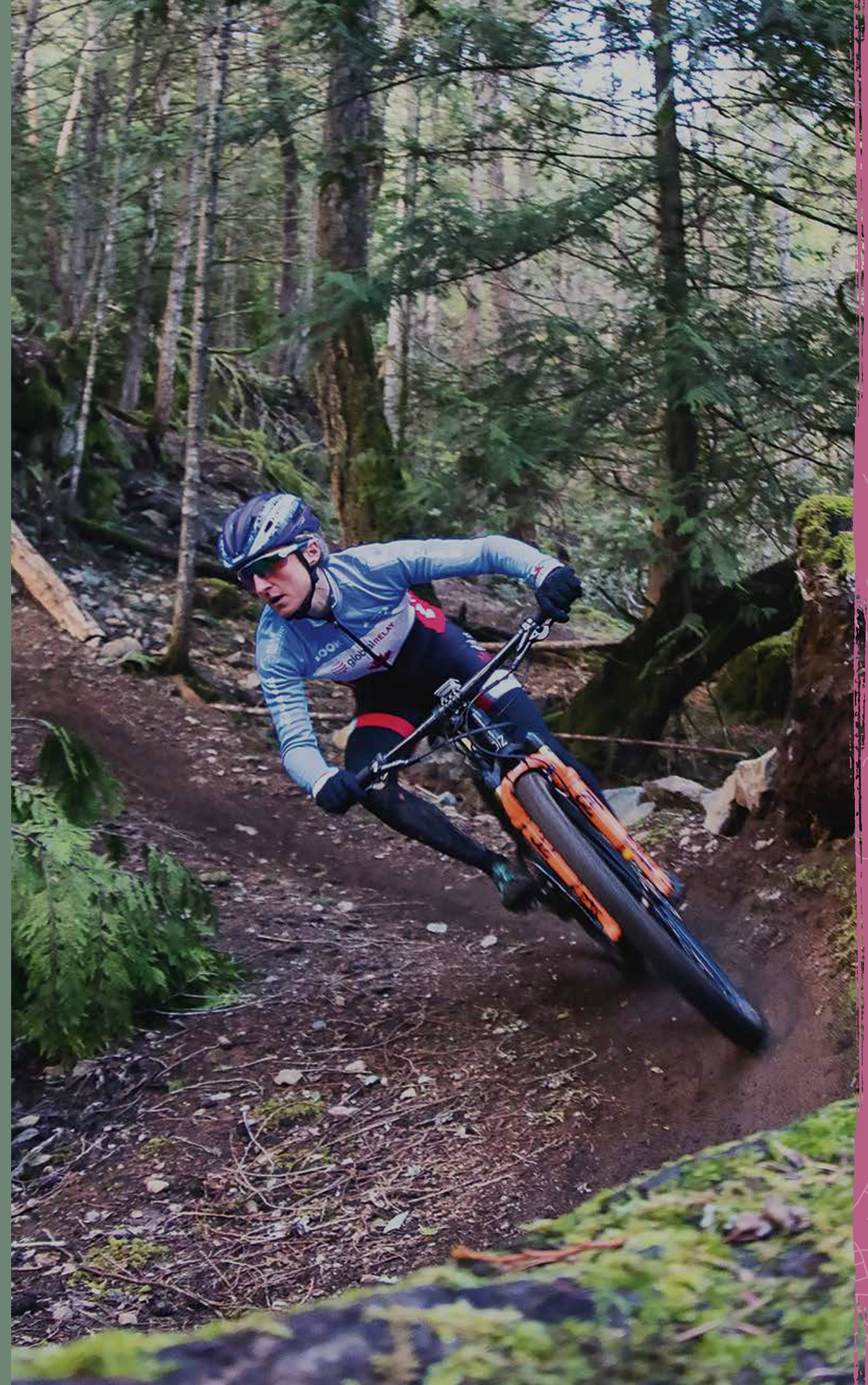


# Mountain Bike BC

Mountain Bike BC is a cooperative marketing initiative that brings together communities, resorts and industry partners to pool resources and showcase the breadth of mountain bike locations and experiences available throughout BC. The City of Langford first joined Mountain Bike BC in 2020 to create greater awareness of our new cycling spaces including the Langford Gravity Zone and nature trails. In 2021/2022, Langford's investment was leveraged with other communities and Destination BC's contribution for a total project spend of over \$420,000. As part of Langford's investment, we were included in overall global marketing tactics, including paid social media, digital advertising, public relations, development of a Langford page on mountainbikebc.com website, and two provincial campaigns.

*"Mountain Bike BC is excited to have the City of Langford on board since 2020 with its one-of-a kind recreational cycling spaces, including the Langford Gravity Zone and Nature trails, featuring the Jordie Lunn Bike Park. Langford's approach to trails in a more urban setting is unique and adds to the range of mountain bike experiences on Vancouver Island and aligns with our overall goal to position BC as the most diverse mountain biking region on the planet. With its easy ferry access from the mainland, year-round riding opportunities, local bike culture and history of producing high-performing athletes, Langford has become an increasingly popular destination for its ability to cater to cyclists of all ages and abilities. By investing in Mountain Bike BC, the City of Langford has access to a range of partnership marketing activities and the opportunity to leverage both private and public funds to achieve greater awareness and impact in the marketplace."*

**Martin Littlejohn**, Executive Director of Mountain Bike BC







# Golf Vancouver Island

Golf Vancouver Island is a regional sector marketing group that falls under the provincial British Columbia Golf Marketing Alliance cooperative marketing program through Destination BC. Golf Vancouver Island is comprised of 13 destination golf courses and tourism partners across Vancouver Island and aims to be the primary resource for information on Vancouver Island golf vacations. The City of Langford, home to renowned golf clubs - the Bear Mountain Golf Resort and Olympic View Golf Club, first became a Golf Vancouver Island community partner in 2020 to showcase the breadth of on and off-course activities for golfers in the Langford area. In 2021/2022, Langford's investment was leveraged with other communities and partners on Vancouver Island and aligned provincially for a total project investment in excess of \$380,000. As part of Langford's investment, we are included in North American marketing tactics, including paid social media, digital advertising, broadcast television commercials, travel media, and inclusion on [golfvancouverisland.ca](http://golfvancouverisland.ca) as a call to action.

*"Golf Vancouver Island's mission is to promote Vancouver Island as a unique golf vacation destination through partnership marketing initiatives that align with provincial strategies. Having an engaged community partner like the City of Langford helps us to attain our mission by showcasing the on and off-course activities for golfers that put southern Vancouver Island, and specifically Langford, on the map for remarkable golf experiences. The City of Langford has been an invested partner since 2020 and is supportive of hosting travel media, particularly when we need to expand our story angles to include golf and other experiences such as mountain biking or the diverse dining options close to Bear Mountain Resort and other partner courses. Golf Vancouver Island is thrilled to have a supportive partner in the City of Langford, helping to showcase our world-class destination of Vancouver Island."*

**Chris Elder**, Marketing Director, Golf Vancouver Island



# The BC Bird Trail

The BC Bird Trail is a cooperative marketing initiative and primary resource for information on attractions, activities, and accommodations related to birdwatching in British Columbia. The City of Langford, home to approximately 200 different species of birds, first joined the BC Bird Trail in September 2022. Our investment is leveraged with other communities and Destination BC's contribution for an estimated total project spend of over \$150,000 in 2022/2023. Langford will benefit from a series of engaging tourism marketing tactics, such as:

- High-quality photo and video assets of Langford birding hotspots;
- Familiarization trip bringing travel media to Langford in February 2023;
- The Langford Bird Trail Outpost itinerary highlighting various locally owned destinations for site visitors to discover through the lens of birdwatching; and
- Inclusion in global BC Bird Trail marketing tactics.

*"The BC Bird Trail is excited to partner with the City of Langford to help showcase the diversity of natural wildlife viewing opportunities throughout the community, including Langford Lake, Glen Lake and Florence Lakes – home to a wide variety of waterfowl throughout the year. Also, nearby Goldstream Provincial Park sees the return of thousands of Chum Salmon to spawn annually and with the spawn come the birds, including hundreds of Bald Eagles. Since launching in September 2020, the BC Bird Trail has established itself as the leading source of information on attractions, activities, and accommodations related to birdwatching in the province. With more than 20 partners, including Indigenous Tourism BC and Destination British Columbia, this highly visible tourism marketing project continues to celebrate the unique stories of birding, community, and conservation found throughout BC."*

**Jordan Stout**, Project Director, The BC Bird Trail





# Destination Development

Langford actively engages with local businesses, residents, and strategic partners to sustainably grow the visitor economy in the City of Langford.

Investing in innovative initiatives, including The Langford Station, Langford Gravity Zone and Nature Trails, the Job Bank, and a future University not only benefit residents, but also support the continuous improvement of the overall visitor experience.

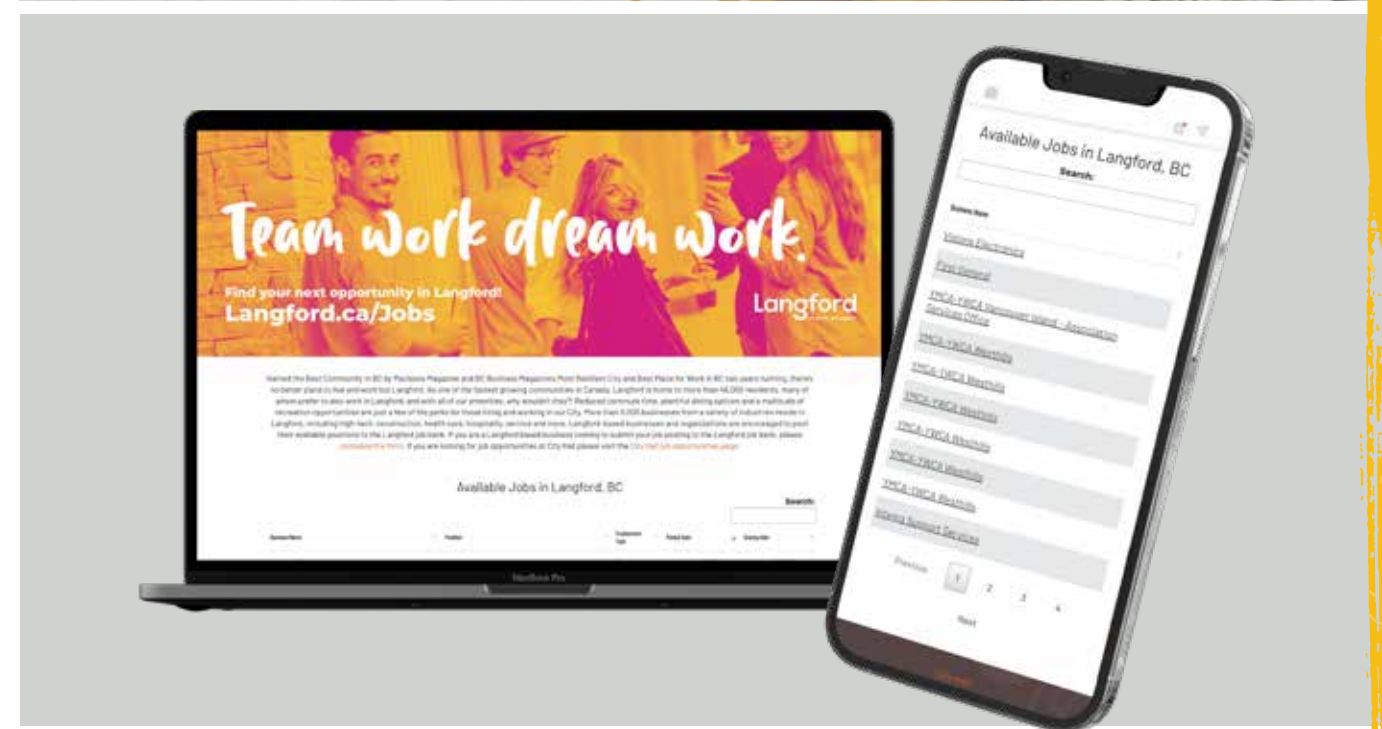
Langford aims to build stronger partnerships with organizations addressing environmental stewardships, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the tourism industry, and to further strengthen Indigenous tourism partnerships.

**MOST  
RESILIENT CITY  
IN BC**

**BC BUSINESS  
MAGAZINE**

**RANKED BEST  
COMMUNITY  
IN BC**

**MACLEAN'S  
MAGAZINE**







# The Langford Station

Launched in May 2022, The Langford Station is a vibrant new ‘cultural district’ in the City of Langford. Stretching two blocks along Station Avenue, the revitalized site features components aimed at encouraging and supporting local business, and providing community amenities.

The area includes thirteen custom retrofitted shipping containers that host six artist studios, six business incubators, a purpose-built area for up to five food trucks, formalized parking, picnic and chess game tables, a stage area for performances, a permanent washroom building, an off-leash dog area, and one community arts workshop, the Creation Station. The City’s Senior Manager of Business and Events secured \$305,000 in federal, and regional grant funding to incorporate interactive lighting elements, an overhead lighting canopy, 13 murals, and five sculptures designed by local artists - elevating Station Avenue to a destination for visitors.

The Langford Station is a partnership between the City of Langford and the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) and supports destination development in line with objectives set out in both the Federal Tourism Growth Strategy and Destination BC’s Greater Victoria Destination Development Strategy. It encourages the creation of new experiences, increases the contribution of tourism to the regional economy, and enhances year-round dispersion of visitors by providing an additional reason for visitors to venture beyond Victoria. A recent example of the opportunity that this year-round venue presents, is the two-day Food Truck Festival in October 2022 that attracted over 10,000 people and contributed directly to the local economy.





# Visitor Services

Langford meets visitors where they are, to offer destination travel advice and inspiration.

Over the past five years, the City of Langford has thought critically about how best to engage the visitor, having not previously provided a visitor servicing program. As communities around the globe are transitioning from traditional brick and mortar visitor centres with limited hours, the City of Langford recognized the value of connecting with visitors where they are whether that is at home in the trip planning stage, or on-site at local events. As a result, in 2019, the City of Langford made a strategic decision to use MRDT funds to purchase a self-contained mobile visitor van that could be deployed to the many events and activities around the community. By attending these events and attractions and intercepting large numbers of visitors during peak times, Langford can share information on how to best enjoy the area and encourage increased length of stays and revenues for local businesses.

The mobile visitor van is wrapped with Langford branding and the interior is retrofitted to include:

- slip-proof stairs and handrails
- high durability flooring
- birch paneling
- brochure rack for local businesses and Langford guide
- custom desk for visitors to sit at and use iPad to book ferry or explore website
- high-powered quick charge station
- TV to play consumer video(s) and Crowdriff feed
- bench seating/storage
- awnings for rain/sun protection
- outdoor seating area

The mobile van was first deployed for visitor services in 2021 and summer staff welcomed almost 1,500 people from July to August. In 2022 that number increased over 40% to 2,097 people from late June to August. Mobile van activation sites included Goldstream Provincial Park, Hatley Castle, Malahat Skywalk, Goldstream Farmers Market, the Langford Station, Fort Rodd Hill and various events in Langford.







# Events & Sport Tourism

Langford actively works to attract, host and promote events in partnership with provincial, national, and international sport organizations and delivers local events aimed at the short-haul market. These events enhance the overall visitor experience and contribute to increased overnight stays in Langford. From 2018 to 2022, Langford has hosted over 30 events. Some highlights of Langford's event work include:

- In 2021, Langford approached the Brewery & the Beast event and encouraged organizers to host their event in Langford. The event attracts 3,000 people and Langford's local hotels were featured on the event site to encourage extended stays. The event was a success and returned in 2022.
- In 2022, Langford approached the Victoria Beer Society to host their Beer Festival in Langford. The Business and Events Manager coordinated a familiarization tour for the organizers and the Starlight Stadium was offered complimentary for the first year, to assist the organizers in hosting their first annual event. The Langford Beer Festival was held in July 2022 and 2500 people attended.
- Langford works closely with Pacific FC and together they approached Soccer Canada to host the women's gold medal Celebration Tour game at the Starlight Stadium on April 11, 2022.
- Langford worked with Rugby Canada, who is based in Langford, to encourage the Toronto Arrows to play select games in the milder Langford winter season; the LA Giltinis team also travelled to Langford to play the Arrows.
- For the third year, Langford coordinated a *Winter Festival* event to draw visitors to the city. The 2-day event offered s'more campfires, vintage carousel, live music, crafts, and food. Langford's hotel partners were listed on the event page of the City's website to encourage overnight visitation.





# Brand Positioning

With a passion to drive the success, sustainability and prosperity of its families and businesses, the City of Langford is committed to creating a strong and vibrant tourism economy that promotes sustainable business practices and responsible travel. Langford has worked strategically to become a successful sport and events tourism destination, and is now working with partners to cultivate a stronger environment for arts and culture in Langford.

Named “BC’s Best Community 2021”, by MacLean’s Magazine, Langford positions itself as a welcoming city surrounded by epic nature and located just a 15-minute drive from Victoria. Outdoor recreation opportunities are plentiful, with a provincial park, three lakes, a variety of hiking trails, golf courses, and an intricate biking and cycling network all located within the city boundaries. While visitors are here, they can catch a game or attend an event at Langford’s Starlight Stadium, the home of Rugby Canada, Pacific Football Club, and the Westshore Rebels Junior Football team. With an award-winning culinary scene, nationally recognized sporting amenities, growing arts and culture scene, local shopping, and more, Langford is a perfect base camp or the first stop on a South Island adventure.



# Target Markets

Langford works in partnership with regional and provincial tourism marketing partners to strategically promote our community as a destination to travellers in the following markets:

## Short Stays (1-2 nights)

- The 2.5 million residents in the lower mainland
- Alberta residents
- Washington State residents
- Small meeting, conference, wedding market in BC, AB and Washington State
- Specific sport event participants and spectators (national and international markets)

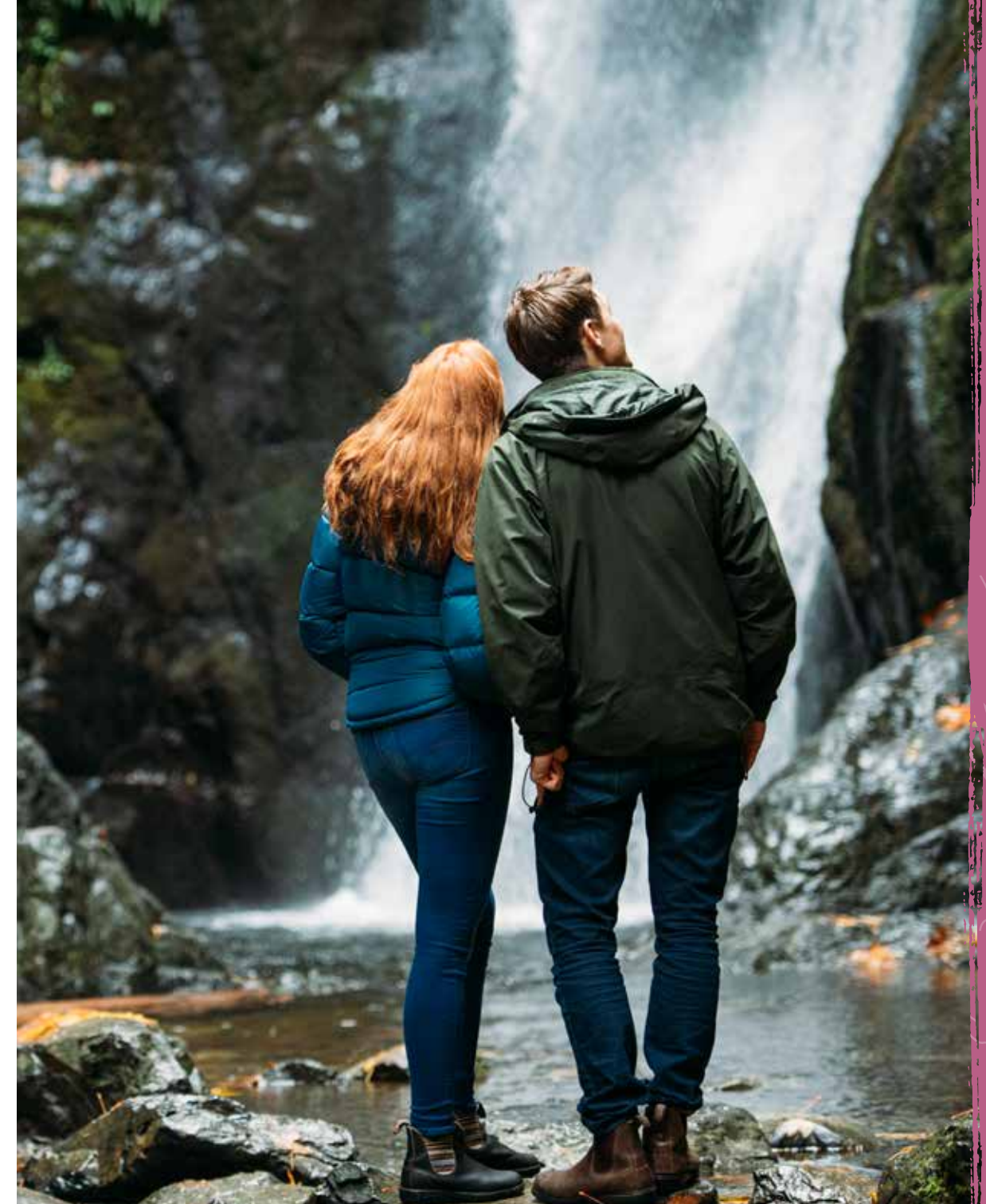
## Multi-Day Excursions (3+ nights)

- British Columbia
- Washington State
- Sport and events

International markets – in partnership with event hosts

## KEY TRAVEL MOTIVATORS:

- Event participation and/or attendance and sport tourism
- Family activities
- Culinary experiences and luxury stays
- Golf and mountain biking
- Outdoor Adventure – Provincial and regional parks, birding, hiking, water sports
- South Island Spirit Loop / Indigenous experiences







# Goals & Strategies

## 2023-2028

The following goals and strategies are designed to continue the momentum and sustainable growth of Langford's tourism industry over the next five-years. The City of Langford will leverage partnerships to increase brand awareness and deliver exceptional visitor experiences by focusing on four key areas:

- Destination Marketing
- Destination Development
- Visitor Services
- Events and Sport Tourism



# Destination Marketing

The City of Langford will promote itself to identified key markets, in partnership with neighbouring destinations, and regional and provincial partners.

The focus will be on sport-specific or active adventurer leisure travelers who visit destinations specifically to partake in their activity of choice. Further, the city will look to grow Langford as a destination for meetings and incentive travel. Businesses are seeking ways to connect their dispersed workforces and may be attracted to locations that offer meeting space and outdoor adventure.

## Key Actions:

- Target and host relevant travel media and influencers in alignment with 4VI (formerly Tourism Vancouver Island) and Destination BC
- Work with 4VI (formerly Tourism Vancouver Island) and Destination BC to engage with the travel trade to increase awareness of the tourism experiences available in Langford and expand international reach
- Maintain existing social media and web presence, sharing engaging on-brand content and targeted campaigns and promotions
- Continue to participate in Destination BC's cooperative marketing program, including the management of the South Island Spirit Loop and participation in sector marketing consortiums
- Create and grow a consumer database to send strategic email e-blasts to increase subscribers and distribute fresh newsworthy content and specials
- Explore consumer shows in primary markets to showcase Langford's outdoor adventure activities, events, and culinary experiences
- Develop and execute a marketing plan to attract the Meetings and Incentive Travel market to contribute to growth of year-round visitation to Langford

## KPIs:

- Accommodation occupancy and hotel tax revenue
- Website visitation
- Social media engagement
- #ExploreLangford hashtag usage
- Leveraged funds

GOAL

1



# Destination Development

## GOAL 2

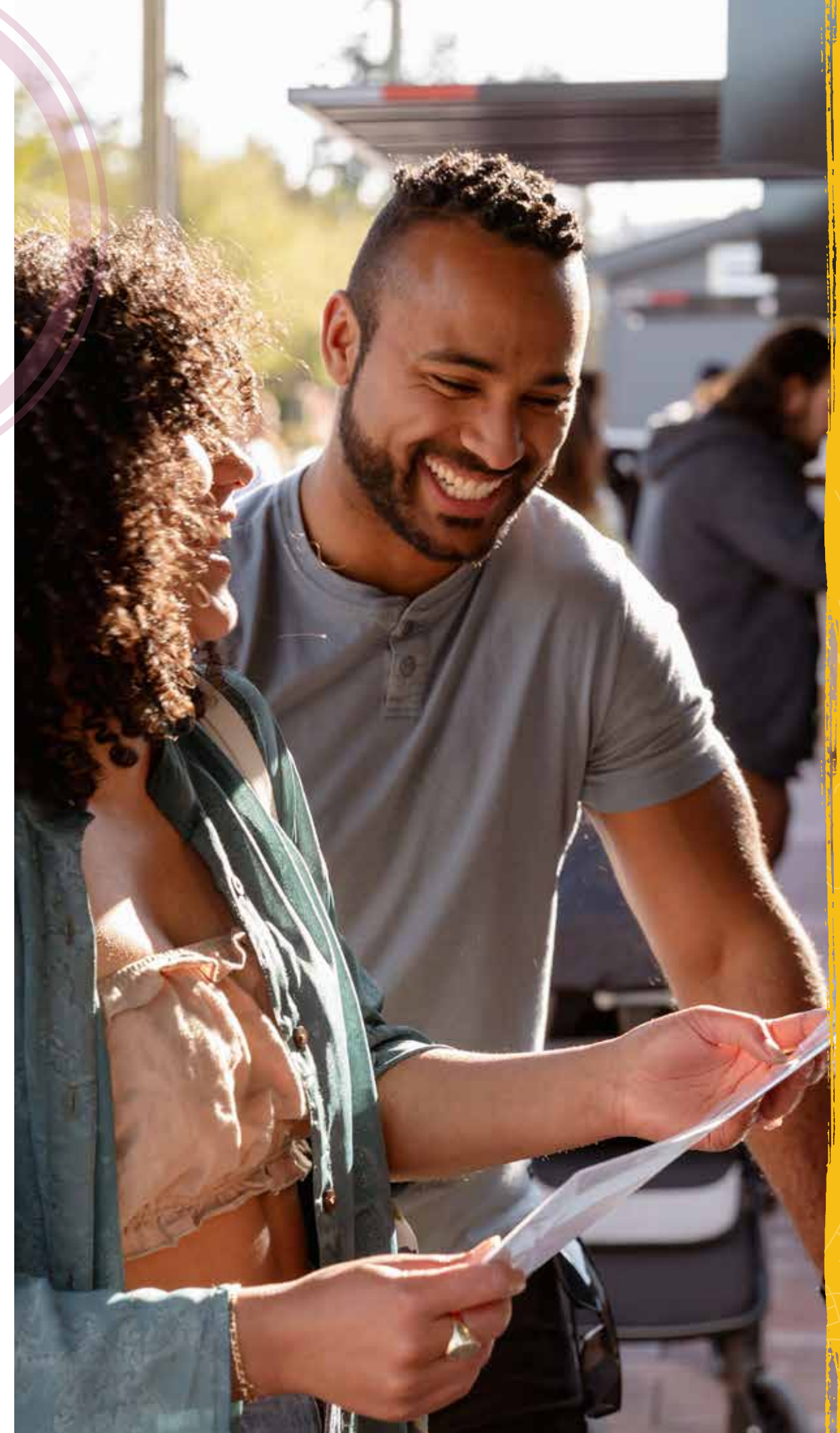
Work together with local, regional, provincial, and Indigenous partners to support the continued enhancement of the overall visitor experience through effective planning, capacity-building, and fostering meaningful relationships.

### Key Actions:

- Support local industry development by working with provincial and regional partners to access programs, resources, and tools to enhance the visitor experience and build capacity at the community level
- Engage local Indigenous partners and Indigenous Tourism BC in discussions regarding tourism activities and partnership opportunities
- Enhance partner communication and engagement to support increased collaboration, marketing alignment and new product/experience development
- Continue to seek available funding/grant sources and programming with relevance to support local destination development initiatives, such as:
  - » Explore working in partnership towards inclusion, and accessibility of Langford's tourism offerings
  - » Support local business and visitor experiences with sustainability initiatives
  - » Work with marketing partners on messaging that encourages responsible and respectful visitation

### KPIs:

- Number of grants pursued
- Number of industry workshops conducted
- Number of new partnerships developed
- Engagement in program offerings







# GOAL 3

## Visitor Services

Strive to provide an exceptional visitor experience that encourages visitors to return and recommend Langford as a great destination to visit.

### Key Actions:

- Maintain mobile visitor centre and summer student program
- Conduct wayfinding and arrival evaluation to identify ways to improve Langford as a place to visit
- Continue to publish and distribute the City of Langford Visitor Guide and Map
- Ensure visitors are aware of businesses that are welcoming and accessible to all
- Be a trusted steward of the destination and offer visitor education to encourage respect of the land, people, experiences, and local culture

### KPIs:

- Number of visitors intercepted with mobile visitor van
- Summer student grant funding
- Visitor guide distribution numbers
- Accommodation occupancy and hotel tax revenue



# GOAL 4

## Events & Sport Tourism

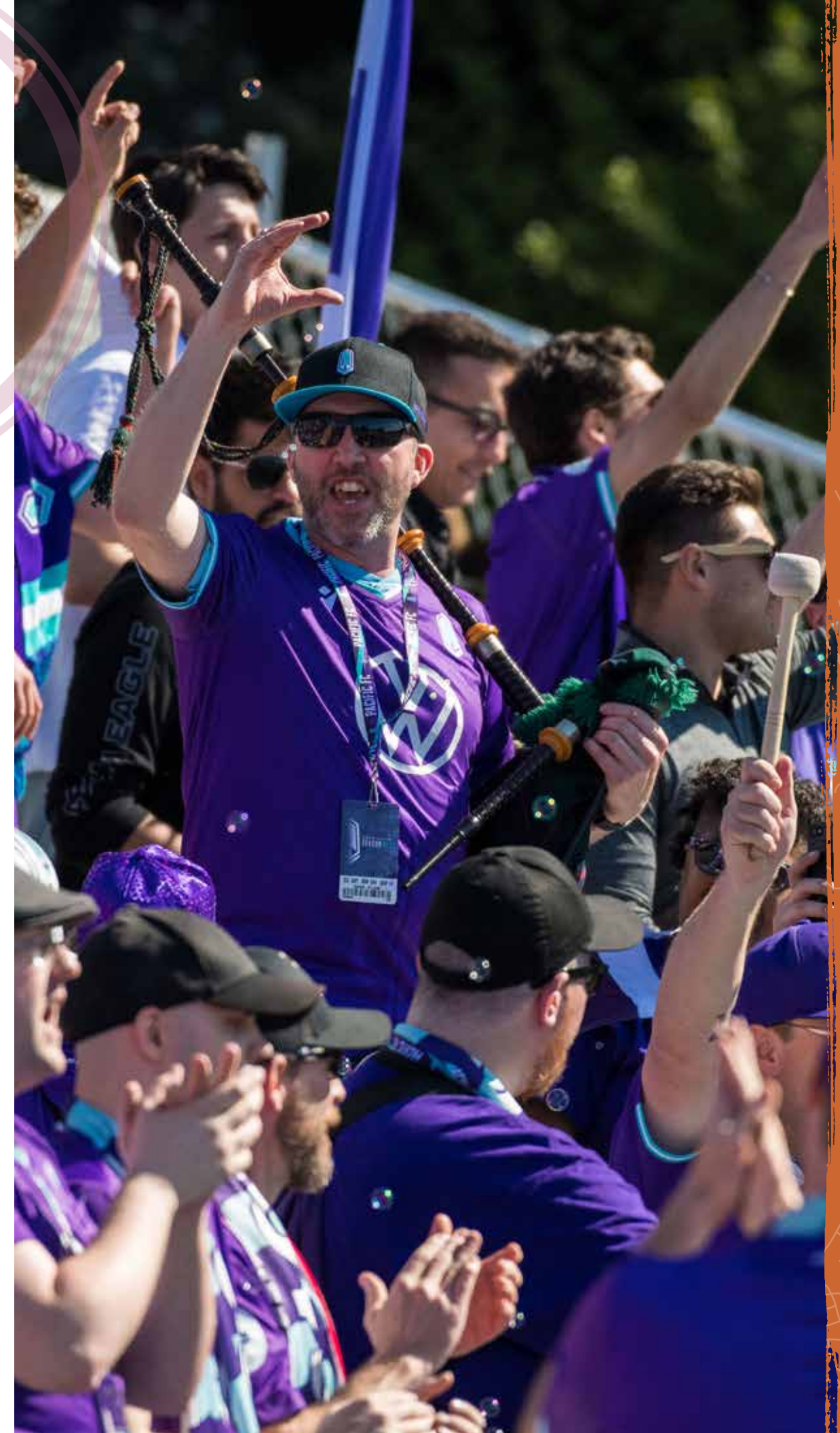
Work with key partners to bid, host and assess the impact of events hosted in Langford.

### Key Actions:

- Continue National Sport Organization (NSO) / Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) / Event right holder relationship-building
- Conduct Economic Impact Assessments of select events in Langford
- Support local sport groups with event hosting resources
- Explore funding opportunities with provincial Tourism Events Program
- Maintain membership with the Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission

### KPIs:

- Number of events hosted in Langford
- Accommodation occupancy and hotel tax revenue
- Number of event bids / event grants pursued
- Economic impact





# Meet the Team

## STAFF TEAM

### **DARREN KIEDYK**

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### **DONNA PETRIE**

Senior Manager of Business Development & Events

City of Langford

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### **CAROLINE SMITH**

Marketing and Communications Coordinator

City of Langford

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### **TOURISM LANGFORD WORKING GROUP**

The Tourism Langford Working Group has been established as an advisory committee to provide strategic input into the City of Langford's Five-Year Tourism Strategy.

**Westin Hotel:** David Clarke

**Fairways Hotel:** Darren Anderson

**Sheraton Four Points Hotel:** Steven Baxter

**Solo Suites:** Xavier Smith





**"Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much."**

*– Helen Keller*

**Langford.ca**