

SUSTAINABLE JOURNEYS FROM PRAIRIES TO PACIFIC STRATEGY

Summary

April 2024



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As storytellers and representatives of Canada's tourism sector, we recognize our position of influence and the importance of our work, workplace, and workforce in reflecting the many voices and places that make up Canada.

At Destination Canada, we acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands that we work and live on. We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and our own understanding of local Indigenous Peoples and their cultures. From coast to coast to coast, we acknowledge the territory of the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people who have called this place home for generations beyond measure.

Specifically, the Highway 3 Corridor is the ancestral home of many Indigenous Peoples and First Nations including the home of the Chawathil, Ktunaxa peoples in BC, Okanagan (Syilx), Shxw'owhanel, Sinixt, Upper Similkameen and the Sto'lo, and the Blood Tribe and Pi'ikanni Nations of the Blackfoot Confederacy in Alberta's Treaty 7 Territory.

Tourism is a collaborative effort – it is highly dependent on the industry that it supports. A wide array of stakeholders directly and indirectly engaged in developing and supporting the conditions for tourism to thrive. The Prairies to Pacific Highway 3 Corridor Strategy was developed with extensive consultation and engagement from a wide variety of stakeholders from across the Corridor.

We are thankful for their support, participation, and invaluable insights to achieve long-term sustainable

growth and prosperity for all the communities within and along the Corridor.

We would additionally like to thank the Project Team for their meaningful insights, dedication, and passion for tourism – not just in their own jurisdictions, but for the corridor communities, residents, and stakeholders as a whole. Their collaboration and vision are the guidepost that reinforces the project ambition to provide a compelling tourism experience that transcends local and provincial borders, more than 50 communities, and more than 1,000 kilometers of an epic journey.

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Twenty 31 a Skift Company

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For a complete list of the individuals that generously contributed to the Corridor strategy, please see [Appendix 1](#).

Travel Alberta / Chris Amat



A CASE FOR DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

In early 2023, Destination Canada's Destination Development Team launched the Tourism Corridor Strategy Program to contribute to a more resilient tourism industry through accelerated destination development of multiple tourism corridors across Canada.

This pilot program places emphasis on collaboration amongst varying stakeholders with corridors and importantly, between provinces and territories, to strengthen tourism capacity and leadership. This ambitious program is an opportunity to connect the work of partners and stakeholders with a more holistic national scope.

Following a comprehensive review process, Destination Canada selected three high-potential tourism corridors to support in 2023. This includes the Sustainable Journeys from Prairies to Pacific, which leverages Highway 3 as a key interprovincial corridor linking the large urban hubs of southern Alberta and British Columbia's lower mainland. It offers a collection of resort towns, national and provincial parks, authentic rural communities, Indigenous nations and experiences, trails and outdoor recreation, agri-tourism, wildlife viewing, western heritage, and much more.

Canada has a vibrant and rich tourism economy and is a destination which has been developed, managed, and marketed for over a century by private and public-sector based operators. However, much of the success of Canada's tourism industry resides in the three large provinces of Ontario, Québec, and British Columbia with the most visitation to maturing destinations in these and other key provinces, and predominantly in the key summer months.

In some instances, during certain periods of the year, demand for top Canadian destinations and attractions far outstrips supply of tourism assets causing overcrowding and significant price escalations in some destinations, discouraging prospective travellers who, in turn, may seek to spend their tourism dollars in other destination around the world. In many cases, these popular, well-known Canadian destinations – whether they are iconic attractions, major cities, resorts, or mountain communities – have decades of destination management capacity, a visitor-base, and well-known brands and marketing programs to attract visitors.

If Canada's tourism industry is to grow and be sustainable into the future, it must help manage the over-capacity

challenges in the more popular destinations by encouraging visitation during less busy times of the year. It must also encourage the development of alternative regions by building capacity, encouraging tourism investment and accelerate destination development. However, before these regions can be branded and marketed as viable corridors and routes, significant capacity development is required to support the investment needed to develop or enhance tourism assets, collaborate across a wide spectrum of stakeholders and enabling environments, and prepare to welcome high-value visitors in the future.



Travel Alberta

The Sustainable Journeys from Prairies to Pacific Strategy leverages existing key strategy and experience themes in both Alberta and BC to uncover a collection of potential investment opportunities to grow demand and sustainably manage visitation in the long-term, help define the challenges and opportunities of both provinces in developing the region for tourism, prepare the regions for tourism investment and entrepreneur attraction, and align against a common corridor theme to support Destination Canada and its partners in helping to develop the country, from coast to coast to coast – for future tourism success.

SUSTAINABLE JOURNEYS FROM PRAIRIES TO PACIFIC

Canada's tourism industry has endured significant change in recent years. And despite Canada's many competitive advantages, Canada's tourism industry recognizes a need to continue to invest in strengthening the quality of their destinations and experiences to ensure long-term competitiveness and resiliency.

In order to achieve this, Destination Canada, along with its Prairies to Pacific Corridor provincial partners, Destination BC and Travel Alberta, is embarking on work to catalyze connections, cultivate new economic development prosperity, attract investment, and bring awareness to tourism development opportunities along the Highway 3 Corridor – to ultimately connect people, communities, cultures, and visitors in this very special part of Canada.

While there is much work to be done, it is important to note that tourism is already thriving in some communities along the Corridor. There are many well established tourism assets, amenities, operators and infrastructure and drivers of destination choice. There are resorts, national and provincial parks, wineries, Indigenous cultural centres, ski resorts, charming communities, towns and villages that for a century have attracted domestic and international visitors. Despite this, the region lacks some of the elements required to take its place along that list journeys well established in the minds of visitors. And to be clear, it is not for a lack of effort.

For Alberta, portions of the Corridor are represented in the newly formed Tourism Development Zones (TDZ) of the Southern Rockies and the Lethbridge to Medicine Hat TDZs, which aim to prioritize destination development and investment into high-potential zones. Having completed the strategies in 2023, the implementation of these strategies is just beginning.

For BC, which is led by 3 regional DMOs with support from community DMOs and strong engagement of the Highway 3 Mayors and Chairs Coalition, there is ongoing attention to execute the [Highway 3 Destination Development Plan](#) which was developed in 2017. While they have made good progress in fostering collaboration and uniting communities, as well as branding and marketing, there remains a need for filling asset and experience gaps and unlocking the economic development potential for the Corridor.



Roam Creative

For both Alberta and BC, there are also many well established DMOs, economic development organizations, and other support services dedicated to supporting the management and marketing of these communities and tourism assets. However, in order to meaningfully galvanize the communities across the Corridor and implement the strategy, additional resources – both human and funding – will be required.

The Sustainable Journeys from Prairies to Pacific Highway 3 Corridor Strategy identifies the challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed and leveraged to achieve the Corridor's full potential. Building on the excellent work already being done by partners, the strategy seeks to provide a clearly defined and actionable roadmap to enable the vision for the entirety of the Corridor over the short, medium, and long-term (10+ years), and to prioritize elements of their action plans to leverage the vast, unique trail system across the entire Corridor, to attract investment to accelerate development of new and enhanced tourism assets.

Finally, it is important to note that this is a pilot project for Destination Canada which is relatively new to national destination development. And as a pilot, the learning from this project may serve as guideposts to new corridors in the future which may in turn affect the scope of work for those projects.

OVERVIEW

CORRIDOR STRATEGY OBJECTIVE

DEVELOP A CORRIDOR STRATEGY THAT WILL SUPPORT THE ACCELERATE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE HIGHWAY 3 CORRIDOR

OPPORTUNITY

With a strong mix of assets and experiences, the Highway 3 corridor holds high-potential to be a sought-after journey-based tourism destination. However, the corridor currently falls well short of its potential, welcoming predominantly regional visitors from BC and Alberta, day trippers, and those who use the Corridor as a transportation route – making few stops along the way. Located in close proximity to some of Western Canada's top destinations such as Vancouver, Calgary, Banff and Lake Louise, and Vancouver Island., which can experience over-tourism and crowding during peak periods. With an acceleration of destination development through investment attraction – supported by branding and marketing, the region holds tremendous potential to grow and thrive while offering an alternative journey destination and supporting visitor dispersion and economic development and diversification through tourism for corridor communities.

CHALLENGES

In order to accelerate destination development and position the corridor as one of the great journey destinations, there are challenges that first must be overcome:

1. Destination Development lacks a coordinated, strategic, and aligned approach across the entire corridor. There is limited capacity to support the objectives of the entire corridor.
2. Tourism is not prioritized in many of the corridor communities resulting in a lack of financial and human resources to support the development of the corridor.
3. Resident support for tourism growth is low in many of the corridor communities.
4. The corridor lacks a range of accommodations, and tourism products and experiences to attract visitors and compel them to slow down and explore the communities, regions, and tourism amenities along the corridor.
5. Corridor communities are at varying degrees of preparedness to accelerate destination development through investment attraction and in some cases, have an opportunity to identify and fill asset gaps through investment attraction.

KEY OPPORTUNITY THEMES

To support investment attraction to the corridor, many of these pre-conditions for tourism investment may need to be addressed giving way to increased opportunities:

1. Prioritize the development of the corridor including galvanizing communities under a common theme of trails.
2. Evaluate the current capacity and the corridor as a whole and each community to attract tourism investment and address deficiencies to build investment attraction competencies.
3. Develop investment business opportunity cases for communities and the corridor as a whole to attract tourism investment (i.e., accommodation and products/experiences).

OUTCOMES

A corridor that is aligned and adequately prepared to increase investment attraction to support an increase of tourism products, experiences, and accommodations – supported by branding and marketing – to position the corridor as one of the world's greatest journey destinations.

INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT



Indigenous Tourism BC/Inclian Grover/Ridley

The Journey as the Destination

The Highway 3 Corridor traverses two provinces winding through fields and foothills; forests and valleys; deserts, lakes, and mountains; cities, resorts, and First Nation communities; vineyards, orchards, and rich agricultural lands – from Hope, British Columbia (BC) to Lethbridge, Alberta – this Corridor offers its visitors a vast arrange of journeys.

With more than 1,000 kilometres, the Highway 3 corridor offers a journey through beautiful geography, cultural, historic and Indigenous experiences, and nearly 50 charming communities. These are reason enough to put this drive on the list of world's most spectacular journeys alongside the Great Ocean Road in Australia, the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland, the Cape Breton Trail and the Oregon coast to name a few. The region is blessed with an abundance of natural and experiential trails including the TransCanada Trail, and many other regional and municipal trails that have the potential to drive visitation.

In spite of its tremendous potential and significant efforts by Destination BC and Travel Alberta and regional and local partners to develop their respective regions of the Corridor, there remain barriers to achieving the full potential of the Corridor. Barriers that other 'journey-style corridor destinations' have overcome with fastidious focus, strategy, time, and investment.

Corridor Tourism

While journey destinations are not necessarily a new concept, there is an opportunity to learn from other 'journey' destinations that have partnered and aligned to welcome visitors looking to slow down and take the path less followed.

Corridor tourism differs from traditional destination management. It is more complex because it requires significant collaboration from the multiple destinations, communities, political and geographic jurisdictions, regional, provincial and national governments, their Destination Management Organizations, and economic development and investment attraction organizations that tend normally to focus their efforts on developing their own unique communities or regions. Many of these entities struggle with adequate investments to support marketing and management of their own destinations, and are often consumed with the challenges within their own communities such as affordable housing, attracting and retaining labour, and developing community amenities. Alignment of these communities against a common theme is frequently on the radar. However; competing priorities that lack the time or financial resources that are required to execute a common strategy prevent real forward

movement. And while tourism is managed through these jurisdictions, it must be recognized that visitors are rarely aware, nor really care, when they have crossed over one geographic boundary into another – especially when on a journey corridor.

As an example, when Ireland's national tourism organization, Failte Ireland, sought ways of diversifying its tourism offerings in order to disperse visitors that were clustering and crowding only a few destinations and compelling them to explore the other spectacular regions of Ireland, they developed a 5-year tourism corridor strategy. The strategy concentrated initial efforts on developing the trail and its communities over a series of years to attract investment and entrepreneurs, and importantly, only then initiated its branding and marketing efforts.



Destination BC/Kari Medig

The result is the "Wild Atlantic Way" – similarly, spanning over 50 significant communities. Now in its third 5-year development plan, Ireland has invested over \$22M CDN and nearly 15 years to realize its success. Through an all-of-government approach and collaboration between communities and partners across boundaries, the strategy has resulted in over 1 million incremental visitors to the corridor, and an incremental spend to the corridor communities of more than €3.3 billion, supporting 83,000 jobs.

The 'Wild Atlantic Way' represents a tourism success that required a monumental effort to galvanize communities along a corridor under a common theme in order to realize tourism sustainable tourism growth – all started by the idea of a journey.

Methodology & Framework

Crucial to the strategy of the Highway 3 Corridor Sustainable Journeys from Prairies to Pacific- (the strategy) builds upon the important destination development work and strategies that are currently being implemented in both Alberta and British Columbia. Further, it is critical that the corridor strategy is rooted in evidence and that this evidence comes from, and is verified by, multiple sources of information. This is necessary to ensure a holistic understanding of the current tourism context across the Corridor, and to gain buy-in and support from stakeholders and partners that will ultimately have a stake in the outcomes of the strategy.

The development of the strategy included three phases. The Discovery Phase included the review of existing strategies, plans, primary and secondary research, as

well as extensive key tourism stakeholder engagement. A Situation Analysis report was compiled using this essential research and review.

The second phase consisted of assessing data and insights collected during Discovery and validating and prioritizing initiatives identified based on their potential to achieve the strategic goals and objectives. During this phase, the project team further assessed and uncovered the investment-attractiveness of communities along the Corridor and identified key gaps for investment attraction opportunities.

Finally, in the Recommend Phase, the Strategy took shape and included input from the project partners and tourism leadership at both the National, and provincial levels.



PHASE 1
DISCOVERY & CURRENT SITUATION ANALYSIS

- Documents and materials review
- Stakeholder mapping & analysis
- Tourism asset mapping and gap analysis
- Stakeholder Interviews, workshops, & online survey
- Alberta and BC in-depth exploration



PHASE 2
ASSESS & PRIORITIZE

- Inputs assessment
- Conduct a findings validation workshop with corridor partners
- Insights Analysis



PHASE 3
RECOMMEND & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Drafting of Strategy
- Strategy feedback & finalization
- Financial Plan
- Implementation Plan

Highway 3 Corridor Description

The Sustainable Journeys from Prairies to Pacific includes several communities, including First Nations along the Corridor, between Hope, British Columbia and Lethbridge, Alberta.

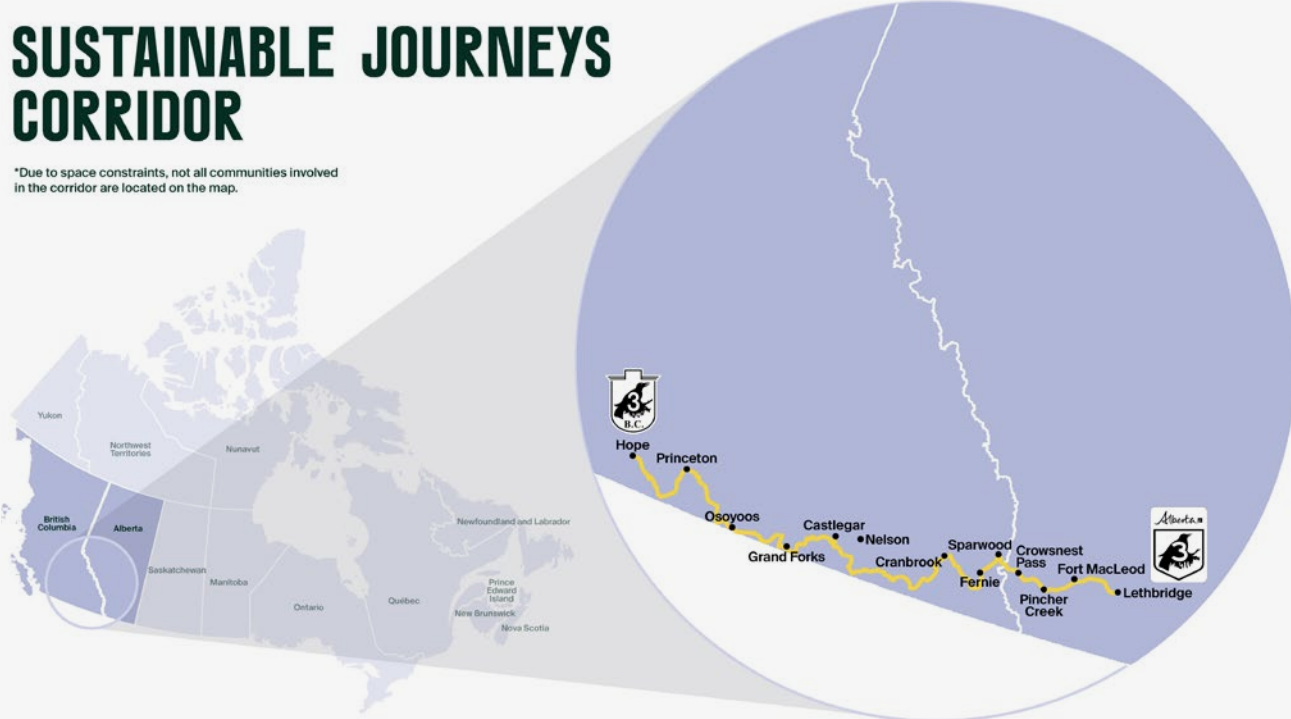
The Corridor is made up largely rural communities, supported by larger urban areas including Lethbridge and Cranbrook.


Regional and provincial partner DMOs will continue to represent and partner with communities and First Nations beyond the Corridor for the purposes of tourism.

Finally, in the Recommend Phase, the Strategy took shape and included input from the project partners and tourism leadership at both the National, and provincial levels.

SUSTAINABLE JOURNEYS CORRIDOR

*Due to space constraints, not all communities involved in the corridor are located on the map.





<p>VANCOUVER COAST & MOUNTAINS REGION Hope Manning park</p> <p>THOMPSON OKANAGAN TOURISM ASSOCIATION Princeton Keremeos Oliver Osoyoos Grand Forks Christina Lake Syilx Nation Upper Similkameen Indian Band Lower Similkameen Indian Band Osoyoos Indian Band</p>	<p>KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM Rossland Trail Castlegar Nelson Creston Balfour Crawford Bay Cranbrook Kimberly Fernie Sparwood Elkford Aq'am Indian Band Yaqan nu?kiy / Lower Kootenay Indian Band Tobacco Plains Indian Band</p>	<p>SOUTHERN ROCKIES Crowsnest Pass MD of Willow Creek Claresholm Fort MacLeod Nanton MD of Pincher Creek Pincher Creek Castle Mountain Resort Lundbreck Cowley Pi'ikanni Nation Cardston Magrath Glenwood Kainai Nation Lethbridge Coaldale Improvement District #4: Waterton</p>
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A Destination Development & Investment Attraction Framework

Effective tourism strategies rely on historical data, research, and insights to identify challenges and opportunities – those that require management, and those that require acceleration.

The framework used to structure the Sustainable Journeys Corridor Strategy allows for the flexibility needed to accommodate several tourism eco-systems and investment-attractiveness across its more than 50 communities. It is rooted in evidence, informed by a detailed understanding of the tourism context, through engagement including a myriad of interviews, workshops, and an online survey with tourism leaders and tourism stakeholders throughout the Corridor, to structure a path forward.

The outlined strategy begins by first laying out tourism values, through guiding principles, that the corridor and

its stakeholders want to ensure remain constant as it executes its strategic plan moving forward.

It is followed by an understanding of key short, medium, and long-term challenges as well as opportunity themes, before setting the vision – along with the strategic goals and objectives necessary to achieve that vision.

With the vision, strategic goals, and objectives set, details of the strategy begin to emerge with a breakdown of initiatives by pillar, along with key tactical actions, timelines, responsible stakeholders, and measures for each to ensure the successful implementation – over the months and years to come.

Finally, in the Recommend Phase, the Strategy took shape and included input from the project partners and tourism leadership at both the National, and provincial levels.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES	Values that guide tourism stakeholders to accomplish its vision.
KEY INSIGHTS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES	Short and long-term bottlenecks and barriers that need to be addressed, as well as potential prospects to consider.
VISION	Direction for tourism along the Corridor that reflect tourism stakeholder needs, potential visitors, and communities that are served.
GOALS & OBJECTIVES	Broad and longer-term outcomes and shorter-term, measurable ones.
PILLARS & INITIATIVES	Initiatives organized in pillars that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be supply-driven to leverage a competitive opportunity. • Can be demand-driven such as an under-targeted group of visitors. • Are prioritized based on impact and ease of implementation.
TACTICAL PLAN	Includes actions and timelines that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of objectives and strategic initiatives. • Includes approach for establishing tourism corridor leadership, creating alignment with the corridor theme, supporting community attractiveness for tourism investment, and attracting investors to the corridor.
RESOURCE GUIDE & APPENDICES	Provides additional resources to support accelerated destination development and investment attraction and supporting information & findings.

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles represent the shared values and beliefs of a destination's tourism industry. For the Highway 3 Corridor, these guide the sometimes difficult decisions that need to be taken, and apply in all circumstances, regardless of changes in goals, strategies, type of work, or leadership.

1

Economic

Tourism businesses prosper, are deeply embedded in and generate wealth for communities.

2

Employment

Tourism jobs are coveted and inclusive of diverse people and geographies.

3

Enablement

Tourism flourishes with the development of quality infrastructure.

4

Environment

Tourism operates in harmony with the ecological abundance and rebalancing of the carbon cycle.

5

Engagement

Engagement is rooted in community, where local cultures thrive and welcome the world.

6

Experiences

Visitors are transformed by rich experiences that distinguish Canada from the rest of the world.

Travel Alberta / Roth & Ramberg



TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



Photo: Michael Matti @michaelmatti

Key Insights

Discovery conducted to inform this strategy delved deeply into understanding the current context of tourism of the more than 50 communities along the Corridor. This information was derived directly from tourism leaders across the Corridor, as well as many other public and private sector tourism stakeholders, and from observation and experiences from the consulting team over multiple visits.

While the list does not represent all tourism insights that were gleaned from the extensive engagement process, it outlines the most critical ones, and those that are most relevant to the future success of the Corridor.

GALVANIZING UNDER A COMMON THEME

Positioning the corridor to support corridor tourism and to develop assets that reflect that will require significantly longer time horizon and significantly more resources.

Galvanizing 50+ communities that span more than 1,000km of corridor against a single common theme will be challenging and take time.

Trails of all kinds represent a significant opportunity to unite corridor (e.g. Cultural, culinary, outdoor recreation, etc.).

INVESTMENT ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Communities along corridor have a varying degree of tourism readiness and tourism investment readiness.

Many communities along the corridor do not welcome the idea of large-scale tourism and fear mass resort development of their communities.

Economic development organizations have limited knowledge and understanding of tourism and tourism investor attraction.

Communities need a more robust understanding of what investors are seeking to support capital investments.

More work is needed to meaningfully engage and support indigenous nations and operators to grow and develop capacity and support for authentic, indigenous lead tourism experiences and assets.

PRODUCTS & EXPERIENCES

The majority of stakeholders define tourism asset gaps as community asset gaps and prioritize investment in assets that benefit the community over tourism.

Critical mass of authentic experiences in alignment with a theme across corridor is needed in order to position the corridor as an epic journey.

There are gaps of accommodations across all ranges and types throughout the corridor and these are needed to slow down travellers.

Challenges

Discovery conducted to inform this strategy delved deeply into understanding short-term and systemic challenges impacting tourism along the Corridor. This information was derived directly from tourism leaders across the Corridor, as well as many other public and private sector tourism stakeholders, and from observation and experiences from the consulting team over multiple visits.

While the list of challenges contained herein does not represent all tourism challenges that the Corridor faces to support destination development and investment attraction, it outlines the most critical ones, and those that align and build upon the existing destination development strategies in place for both Alberta and BC and when addressed will help accelerate the development of the Corridor to support the visions and objectives of the strategy.

In spite of the significant tourism potential of the Highway 3 Corridor, there are challenges that a potential investor may face when considering an investment in support of development which this strategy will need to address.

These challenges can be grouped into the following categories;

- 1.** Tourism performance – current situation
- 2.** Tourism and economic development enabling environment
- 3.** Alignment and support of “corridor” tourism
- 4.** Underutilized tourism assets and seasonality
- 5.** Infrastructure

Destination BC/Hubert Kang



Highway 3 is a region blessed with natural and geographic features and cultural amenities, access, and some strong tourism assets—in short many of the foundational elements for tourism to thrive. Yet, it underperforms against other regions in Western Canada that prioritize tourism, attract investment, and tourism amenities.

1. TOURISM PERFORMANCE – CURRENT SITUATION

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation levels to the corridor falls well below other more developed destinations with similar geographic and cultural features, such as Banff. • The corridor is primarily reliant on the BC and Alberta and local residents markets. • The corridor is perceived to be a highway transportation route with links to Southern BC and Alberta communities as a means to get to a target destination along the highway rather than a “journey” drive. • The Highway is more often a same day, or a trip of one to three nights with little time or money spent in Corridor communities. • Despite some four-season assets, the corridor’s communities are challenged with seasonality (e.g., the ski resorts in the summer and the desert and non-skiing resorts in the winter and shoulder seasons). • Investors require revenues earned and sustained throughout the year in order to support the business case for investment. • Although the Hwy 3 corridor and its communities have received grant money in BC to advance implementation of the Hwy 3 Destination Development Plan, there still remains significant work to be done. • There is a lack of understanding from tourism communities about how corridor journey tourism differs from the traditional tourism in their individual communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corridor continues to fall short of its tourism potential and remains a transportation route with little economic growth and tourism impact and as a result, Corridor communities lack the ability to diversify their economies, increase sustainable tourism growth, and attract investment. • Corridor communities continue to work in silos without greater collaboration and the tourism potential is not realized. • Tourism investors are unwilling to invest and take risks in the Corridor due to a lack of cohesive approach and investment-friendly policies, incentives, etc.

Many of the communities that comprise the Corridor are not prepared for tourism development or investment attraction due a lack capacity and/or tourism prioritization from their communities.

2. TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of prioritization of tourism in many of the communities within the Corridor leading to insufficient resources, both human and financial, to adequately support tourism throughout the corridor. • It is recognized that there are limited resources in many of the Corridor communities with a limited tax base and competing interests for funding. • Limited awareness of prospective sources of tourism investment from economic development or investment attraction. • Limited awareness of focus and attention on tourism investment attraction from government organizations at the national and provincial level. • Lack of tourism-friendly investment policies (e.g., land-use planning, transportation, etc.). • Lack of strategic plan and experience of communities to support tourism investment attraction; no track record for pitching tourism opportunities to potential investors. • Limited community-readiness for overall tourism investment. • Poor current investment climate for tourism investments (e.g., labour, supply chain, inflation, high interest rates, etc.). • Time horizon expectations to develop the region for enhanced tourism to the Corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local governments and decision-makers throughout the Corridor continue not to prioritize tourism. • Corridor communities are perceived as not valuing tourism or fully understanding the contributions that tourism can make to the economy and economic diversification and sustainability. • Inability to meaningfully grow tourism and attract investment. • Corridor communities continue to have a lack of diversified economies. • The Corridor continues to lack resources to achieve its full potential as a corridor.

While there is strong support for the idea of a tourism corridor, there is a lack of alignment throughout the Corridor communities with many key stakeholders focused on their individual communities. Alignment of Corridor communities can support increased investment attraction to support the optimization of underutilized assets, year-round.

3. ALIGNMENT AND SUPPORT OF CORRIDOR TOURISM

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities are not ready for tourism growth; low community sentiment to support tourism – fear of mass resort development. Lack of meaningful investment funding to support Corridor growth. Communities not funded or set up to support Corridor growth vs. their own priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corridor communities remain focused on their own communities and individual tourism efforts. Corridor communities remain unaware of the role that tourism can play in supporting economic growth and diversification and resident sentiment for tourism remains low. The Corridor is not able to attract meaningful tourism investment. Potential competitive advantage of the Corridor not realized with limited coordination across the region.

4. UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS AND SEASONALITY

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underutilized government and private sector tourism assets across the Corridor (e.g., parks, ski resorts, community tourism assets, etc.). Priority for community amenities and assets (as opposed to tourism assets to drive visitation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing tourism assets remain underutilized making financial and operational viability difficult. Reduced capacity of new/enhanced assets leading to an aging or stagnation of the Corridor. Community assets continue to get prioritized over tourism assets that drive visitation and revenues.

Destination BC/Kari Medig



There is currently a gap in accommodation options within the Corridor, making it more difficult for visitors to stop along the way and for the Corridor to optimize demand year-round and increase visitation and revenues. Investment attraction efforts to support gaps in infrastructure will help to attract a wide-range of visitors including high-value.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gap in accommodation options along the Corridor to support extended visitation (one week plus vs. 1-2 days) and expenditures. • Priority for community amenities and assets (as opposed to those that support tourism). • Distance of Corridor from major urban centres. • Access – land and air with a high dependency on personal vehicle. • Winter highway safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors are not able to experience the full Corridor due to gaps in infrastructure both in terms of range and quantity. • Reduces perception of a quality experience or destination across the Corridor potentially impacting its ability to drive visitation. • Exclusion of certain types of visitors due to specific tourism infrastructure needs (e.g., high-reliance on personal vehicle). • Corridor is not able to attract investment to fill accommodation and product and experience gaps due to lack of supporting infrastructure required to support Corridor development.

6. INDIGENOUS-LED PARTICIPATION IN TOURISM AND CAPACITY

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Nations recognize the potential for tourism development and investment attraction however, it is important that capacity-building, destination development, and investment attraction is Indigenous-led to ensure the values and principles that guide the individual Nations are upheld and importantly contribute to truth and reconciliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous-led participation in tourism may take longer for some Nations and are priority dependent. • Indigenous Nations ROI may reflect a more broad spectrum of values than potential investors (e.g., beyond economic and include health and well-being of the Nation, preservation of cultures and languages, provide meaningful employment to Indigenous youth).

Travel Alberta / Jeremy Fokken



Opportunities

Stakeholder engagement, a review of key tourism trends, and extensive primary and secondary research revealed opportunities that the Corridor can leverage to achieve potential outcomes. While the list contained herein does not represent all tourism opportunities that are available to the Corridor, it outlines opportunity themes that may be most crucial to its future, and in alignment with the existing destination development work in place for both Alberta and BC.

These represent opportunities that can support the acceleration of the development of Highway 3 as a corridor journey and support the achievement of the project outcomes. Many of these opportunities are reflected in this strategy and in the action plans that serve to overcome the challenges.

The Highway 3 Corridor holds tremendous potential. There is new tourism momentum in these communities as well as a prioritization from both Destination BC and Travel Alberta to recognize and develop this potential, and to overcome some of the challenges and plans in place for destination development and marketing. These opportunities can be grouped into the following categories;

- 1.** Tourism & economic development enabling environment
- 2.** Tourism Potential
- 3.** Investment Attraction

Destination BC/Kari Medig



The region holds many of the foundational elements required to increase investment attraction and accelerate development of the Corridor. A strengthening enabling environment and support from leadership that is unified and represents both Alberta and BC Corridor communities will be well positioned to leverage major travel routes and air access to increase visitation from US, Canadian, and international markets.

1. TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong destination development strategies supporting both Alberta and BC. Multiple regional/local DMOs across the region with tourism capacity. Highway 3 Mayors and Chairs coalition and tourism sub-committee alignment across BC’s portion of the corridor that could extend to Alberta’s Highway 3 Twinning Development Association. A brand and some marketing targeting short and long-haul and international markets already in development for the BC portion of the Corridor. Multiple agencies dedicated to economic development across the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on the existing tourism leadership in both Alberta and BC that can support alignment and prioritization of tourism throughout the Corridor and will enable accelerated destination development and increased investment attraction. Leadership will be unified and represent all Corridor communities in both Alberta and BC.

2. TOURISM POTENTIAL

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong foundational attraction drivers of destination choice in some communities within the Corridor (e.g., resorts, wineries, agri-tourism, Indigenous cultural sites, parks, and major trails). Corridor proximity to two major international airports (i.e., Vancouver, Calgary), with additional regional airports (Abbotsford, Cranbrook, Lethbridge, etc.) supporting access. Proximity to East – West Highway routes in Canada and South - North routes from the US (e.g., the Alaska Highway). Optimize under-utilized assets to build year-round tourism products and experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong foundational tourism assets and underutilized assets are leveraged to support increased visitation and expenditures. Strong access by land and air for both major Corridor entry points as well as the Corridor as whole. Optimization of investment attraction opportunities to accelerate destination development and long-term growth.

Tourism investors will be more likely to invest in communities and regions that have a plan to develop and grow tourism, address tourism challenges, and support favourable zoning and tax incentives to strengthen ROI. In short, investors are seeking communities who are willing to provide a partnership to share in the opportunities and help mitigate the risks.

3. INVESTOR ATTRACTION

Description	Potential Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many Western Canada-based accommodation investors in BC and Alberta are interested to explore opportunities in the Corridor however, they want to know that there is a cohesive strategy in place that brings together tourism, local government and decision-makers, and other key stakeholders to support their investment and ultimately help them to choose the Corridor over other destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased confidence for investors within the Corridor due to a cohesive and collaborative approach to destination development. Increased ease of investment for investors. Increased investment in Corridor communities supporting overall economic growth and diversification .

VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES



Travel Alberta / John Price

Vision

The defined vision for the Sustainable Journeys Prairies to Pacific is intended to provide an aspirational view of the future of tourism for the Corridor that is meant to inspire and unite tourism stakeholders, partners, and rights holders while providing guidance on how to successfully achieve that vision. It represents a hope for the kind of tourism that the corridor partners wish to achieve.

For the Sustainable Journeys Prairies to Pacific, this vision aims to grow tourism in Canada by providing a year-round alternative option for visitors seeking an epic journey, creating sustainable economic and social value for the communities and peoples along the Corridor. Through the attraction of visitors seeking a journey through spectacular scenery, the Corridor will seek to compel visitors to stay longer because around every corner, there is another chapter of the journey, waiting to be explored.

VISION: To develop a corridor **where the journey is the destination**, and where a series of **connected authentic experiences** attracts visitors not only to the corridor but **compels them to keep exploring around each and every corner**, between Hope, BC to Lethbridge, Alberta – and back, **again and again**.

Destination BC/Dave Heath



Goals & Objectives

To achieve its vision, the Corridor needs to build upon its existing destination development strategies to support increased investment in product and experience gaps that consider the entire tourism ecosystem. In this way, investment attraction needs to satisfy economic development goals and objectives by first and foremost supporting tourism stakeholders to accelerate success.

Corridor tourism partners and stakeholders understand that decisions made on behalf of the tourism industry have impacts on the communities in which tourism occurs, as well as its physical environment. Therefore, the strategic pillars that form this plan are broken into three key pillars: economic, social, and environmental.

Importantly, the Corridor Strategy establishes goals and achievable outcomes that are generally broad and longer-term, that are supported by objectives that are shorter-term, and that define measurable actions to achieve overall goals.

Travel Alberta / C&B Advertising



GOAL: Economic

Increase total annual revenue, profitability, and job creation and growth through tourism to support investment attraction and acceleration of the Corridor's development.

Supporting Objectives

- Align the communities along the Corridor under a common theme.
- Prepare communities and improve capacity along the Corridor for investment attraction.
- Support the business cases for tourism asset gaps, in alignment with corridor theme.

In order to:

- Increase investment in tourism assets, in alignment with corridor theme.
- Position the Prairies to Pacific Corridor as one of the world's epic tourism journeys.
- Attract more visitors who are seeking an epic journey to slowly experience the Corridor and its many towns, resorts and amenities.

GOAL: Social

Improve destination livability and appreciation of tourism among residents and decision makers to support tourism.

Supporting Objectives

- Increase resident sentiment for tourism in support of investment attraction and sustainable tourism development.
- Increase appreciation for the value of tourism among decision makers to support tourism investment attraction.

GOAL: Environmental

Ensure natural assets are protected & sustained for locals and visitors to enjoy for generations to come.

Supporting Objectives

- Increase tourism stakeholder awareness for protection of natural assets for residents and visitors.
- Increase awareness of the regenerative potential of tourism development that is aligned with environmental values.

STRATEGIC PILLARS & INITIATIVES



Koosmay Paddleboards/Michael Wittich

Strategic Pillars & Initiatives

The Highway 3 Corridor Strategy is comprised of three main strategic pillars: alignment to the corridor theme, community attractiveness for tourism investment, and attracting investors to the Corridor. Importantly, each of these strategic pillars are designed and order to help build the tourism and economic development enabling environment and capacity to support the objective of accelerating destination development along the Corridor.

Each pillar contains initiatives that the Corridor should undertake over the next years and months to achieve the goals and objectives. Tactical actions, timelines, responsible stakeholders, and measurable outcomes for each initiative are outlined in the following sections.

<h2>1.</h2> <h3>ALIGNMENT TO CORRIDOR THEME</h3> <p>Ensure alignment of major tourism Corridor communities against the trails theme.</p>	<h2>2.</h2> <h3>COMMUNITY ATTRACTIVENESS FOR TOURISM INVESTMENT</h3> <p>Support and prepare major communities along the Corridor for tourism investment attraction.</p>	<h2>3.</h2> <h3>ATTRACTING INVESTORS TO THE CORRIDOR</h3> <p>Develop specific investment opportunities aligned to corridor theme.</p>
<p>Design and align destination development under the “trails” theme.</p> <p>Communicate the high potential of “corridors tourism” for Highway 3, the opportunity, in alignment with the “trails” theme.</p> <p>Develop a trails asset map and determine gaps in tourism amenities to develop the theme across all participating communities along the Corridor.</p>	<p>Prioritize Corridor communities that are eager to align with and support Corridor Strategy outcomes .</p> <p>Develop action plans for each community to fill tourism gaps for investment attractiveness .</p> <p>Using the Strategy Resource Guide, develop a list of investment opportunities required to support the corridor theme.</p> <p>Develop investment opportunity business cases to support the corridor theme and objectives.</p>	<p>Identify investors to target, primarily focusing on accommodation and product & experience investors.</p> <p>Develop robust, all of community, and Corridor individual asset business cases to attract and pitch to investors—aligned to the corridor theme.</p> <p>Work with DMOs in BC and AB to develop and execute marketing, and communications strategies to drive visitation to the Corridor.</p> <p>Monitor progress of strategy implementation and investments to communicate the achievement of outcomes.</p>

Alignment Against the Corridor Theme

1.

ALIGNMENT TO CORRIDOR THEME

Ensure alignment of major tourism Corridor communities against the trails theme.

Design and align destination development under the “trails” theme.

Communicate the high potential of “corridors tourism” for Highway 3, the opportunity, in alignment with the “trails” theme.

Develop a trails asset map and determine gaps in tourism amenities to develop the theme across all participating communities along the Corridor.

RATIONALE

Throughout our extensive research, asset mapping, and key stakeholder engagement, one common, galvanizing theme stood out – the region holds an abundance of trails.

Some of these trails are long-standing historic trade routes, others form portions of the TransCanada trails system, some utilize former rail trails for hiking, driving and walking, and others yet are clusters of community-based experiences such as local food and wine tours. And yet, there is still much more potential to tell even more of the unique and authentic stories of this special part of the world.

While trails are not unique to this region, they are part of all communities that comprise the Corridor and hold high-potential to attract and slow down visitors to the Corridor and offer a reason to stay on the Corridor and keep exploring what is just around the next corner, in the next community, and indeed on the next trail.

Frank Slide Interpretive Centre



Community Attractiveness for Tourism Investment

2.

COMMUNITY ATTRACTIVENESS FOR TOURISM INVESTMENT

Support and prepare major communities along the Corridor for tourism investment attraction.

Prioritize Corridor communities that are eager to align with and support Corridor Strategy outcomes.

Develop action plans for each community to fill tourism gaps for investment attractiveness.

Using the Strategy Resource Guide, develop a list of investment opportunities required to support the corridor theme.

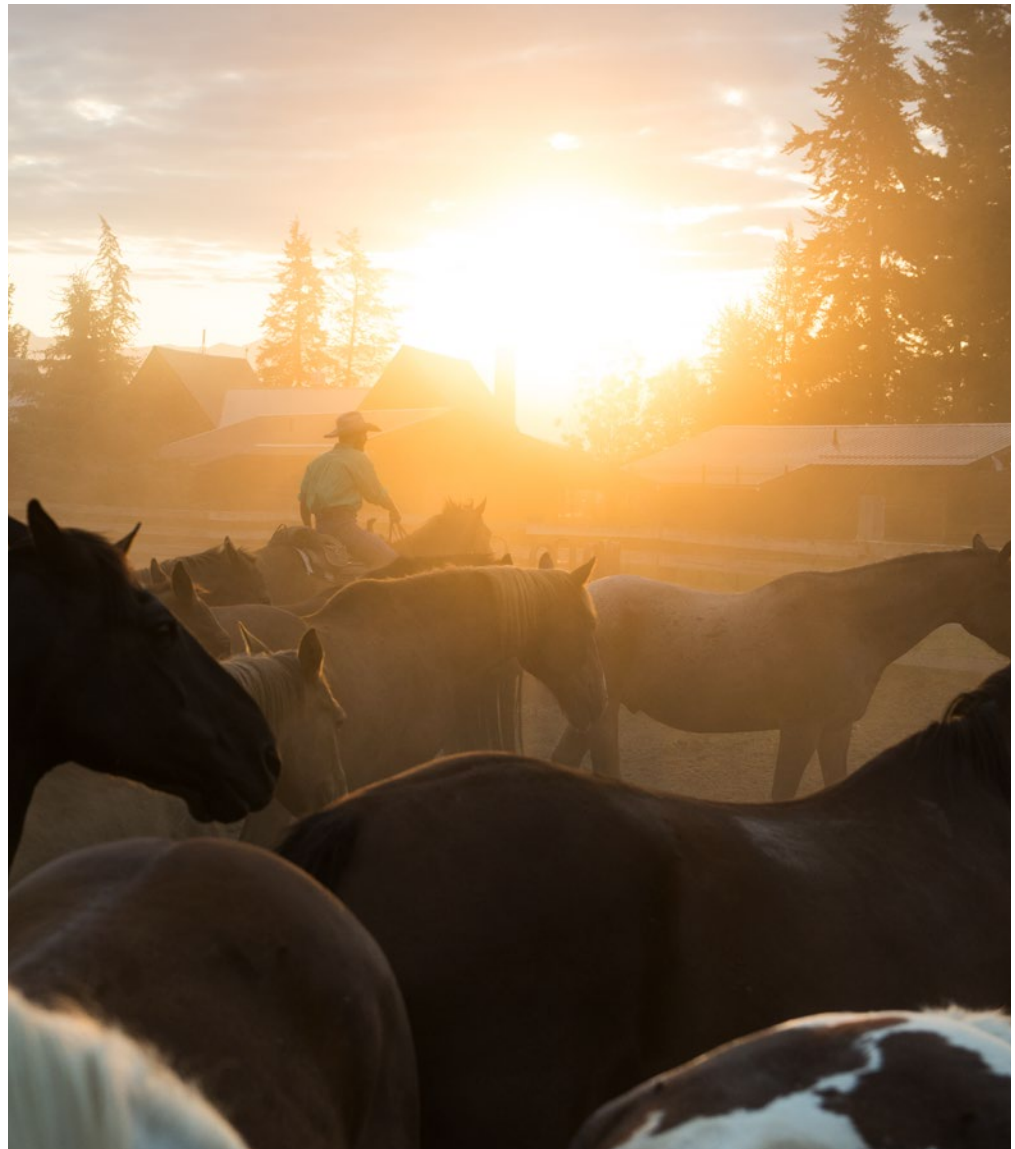
Develop investment opportunity business cases to support the corridor theme and objectives.

RATIONALE

Many of the communities that comprise the Corridor, including First Nations that have expressed that they are keen to develop tourism, seek support to identify or articulate the gaps in their tourism and accommodation assets, products, and services, and are unprepared to attract tourism investment. Additionally, there is a lack of capacity or knowledge to identify, connect, and/or pitch their opportunities to potential investors.

As such, the Skift investment-attractiveness model has been adapted to support the corridor communities evaluate their current readiness to attract tourism investment based on criteria reflecting the community's track record of tourism success, prioritization of tourism by residents and local government, and preparedness of economic development to understand tourism and attract tourism investment. This model will help define each community's needed action plan as they prepare, as an aligned community of tourism, city government and economic development to attract tourism investors

Destination BC/Kari Medig



Attracting Investors to the Corridor

3.

ATTRACTING INVESTORS TO THE CORRIDOR

Develop specific investment opportunities aligned to corridor theme.

Identify investors to target, primarily focusing on accommodation and product & experience investors.

Develop robust, all of community, and Corridor individual asset business cases to attract and pitch to investors—aligned to the corridor theme.

Work with DMOs in BC and AB to develop and execute marketing, and communications strategies in alignment with existing strategies and provincial efforts to drive visitation to the Corridor.

Monitor progress of strategy implementation and investments to communicate the achievement of outcomes.

RATIONALE

While there are many accommodation investors in BC and Alberta, few are targeted with an all of tourism and economic development business case that go beyond occupancy rates to compel and inspire these organizations to consider investing in accommodations and attractions in the communities along the Corridor.

To be effective in attracting tourism investors, corridor communities should align the DMO, local government, investment attraction and economic development organization to support the identification of tourism gaps and develop a business case that can be strategically positioned for targeting western Canadian-based, national, and/or international organizations for investment.

Destination BC/Dave Heath



STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: ALIGNMENT TO CORRIDOR THEME



Destination BC/Karl Medig

PILLAR 1, INITIATIVE A

Design and align destination development under the “trails” theme.

DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE	TIMEFRAME
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Highway 3 Corridor has many communities sprinkled along the route with tourism offerings that may interest visitors. However, it is lacking a unified theme throughout the Corridor, that can attract visitors and incentivize them to stay longer on the route.• A trails theme, which could include outdoor recreation trails, cultural trails, culinary/agri-tourism trails, etc., can unite key assets along the Corridor to strengthen the brand of the route.• Stop and smell the roses – showcase the stops along the route to support the overall tourism experience around trails and communities, cities and resorts in the Corridor.• With an understanding of how the Corridor would like to continue to grow and the assets it offers, destination development actions can be prioritized as it relates to the theme and investment attraction strengthened as investment opportunities can be more easily identified to fit the needs to the theme and overall destination growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short-term (0-12 months).• On-going.
TACTICAL ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine which type of trails will be prioritized along the route which may include outdoor recreation trails, cultural trails, or culinary/agri-tourism trails. Build out specifics on what the trail theme could look like across the Corridor, noting key assets and attractions relating to the theme and creating potential itineraries for a visitor around the theme.• Explore how the trails theme can be integrated into the Highway 3 brand for marketing and awareness as well as a cornerstone for destination development in the region.• Identify potential development opportunities around the trails theme including attraction development, infrastructure development, and accommodations development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine which trail(s) are best aligned for Highway 3 tourism.• Develop products and assets to support a strong trail along Highway 3 that attracts visitors to go to and stay on the route.• Further entice investment and effective entrepreneurs to drive innovation.

Travel Alberta / CakeWalk Media



PILLAR 1, INITIATIVE B

Communicate the high potential of “corridors tourism” for Highway 3, the opportunity, in alignment with the “trails” theme.

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strategy cannot thrive without support from the community who have the power to collectively turn an idea into a reality. The potential for corridors tourism, or creating one unified tourism experience, requires participation from across communities and provinces. This form of tourism must be supported by the local communities, regional and provincial tourism organizations, and other relevant stakeholder groups.• Operating tourism at a local level, neighbouring communities could be seen as competition for visitors. However, Corridor tourism reinforces the idea that attracting visitors to the Corridor must be a collaborative effort and that tourism success in each community supports tourism growth across the entire Corridor. Tourism development and growth can in turn be a regional effort.• Better together – cross-provincial connections can create a more pleasurable experience for visitors if the trip feels like one seamless route. This means across the route, there is information available about the entire Corridor.	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short-term (0-12 months).• On-going.
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate communities about the importance of corridor tourism and the trails theme along with the need for collaboration of the Corridor for successful destination development.• Develop materials to easily explain the high potential of corridors tourism for Highway 3 so that communities and regions can share this with their broader community and stakeholders to support widespread knowledge on this initiative.• Engage members of the BC and Alberta tourism communities to actively meet to discuss how to make this a collaborative Corridor, sharing ideas on asset management, tourism development.• Explore opportunities for materials for the Corridor that follow the same design and information across provinces (i.e. signage, maps, etc.).	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Align communities around the idea of corridors tourism and the trails theme to foster collaboration and understanding throughout the Corridor.• BC and Alberta collaborate to create the best Highway 3 Corridor.

Maurice Li @Maurice

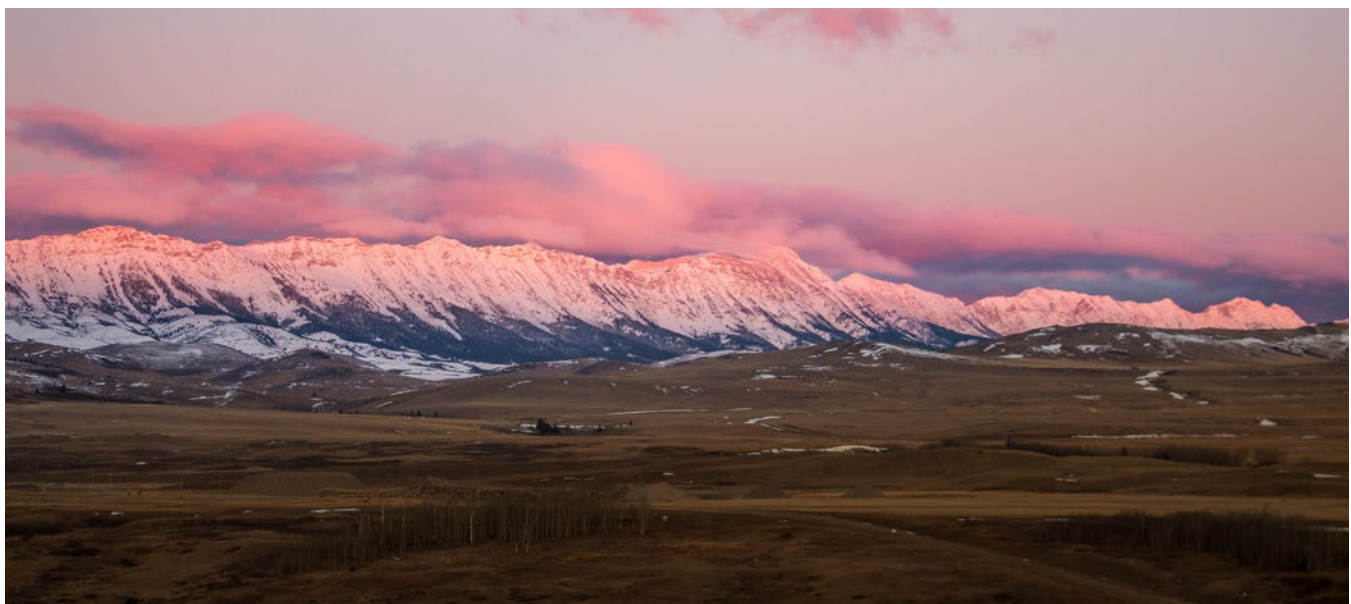


PILLAR 1, INITIATIVE C

Develop a trails asset map and determine gaps in tourism amenities to develop the theme across all participating communities along the Corridor.

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge is power – a better understanding of the collective assets along the Corridor can be used to fuel collaborative development and strengthen the trails theme.• A trails asset map can highlight the existing assets which could be physical trails or supporting infrastructure (like accommodations, restaurants, parking lots, etc.) around these trails. These trail asset maps can aid the creation of visitor materials like a website, map, or trip itineraries to display what a trip to Highway 3 could look like, and how their visit could be supported.• Determining existing trail assets can help determine the gaps in tourism amenities to understand the particular needs and projects for investment.	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium-term (12-24 months).• On-going; Periodically re-evaluate assets and determine changes in amenities gaps.
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a trails asset map to determine gaps in tourism amenities to strengthen the overall trail theme.• Identify how to address the gaps in the trails asset map, including identifying potential projects and investors, noting who will oversee this development, and setting realistic timelines for completion. These gaps should be addressed across the Corridor, in communities that are interested in tourism and ready for tourism investment.• Utilize the trails asset map to develop visitor materials for trip planning and execution including a map, potential itineraries, and supplementary information on a Corridor website.	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed trails asset map with a gaps assessment.• Address gaps with a plan for particular projects in specific communities with identified investors and project oversight.• Create visitor materials using the trails asset map.

Katie Goldie @goldiehawn_



STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: COMMUNITY ATTRACTIVENESS FOR TOURISM INVESTMENT



Alex Strohl @alexstrohl

PILLAR 2, INITIATIVE A

Prioritize Corridor communities that are eager to align with and support Corridor Strategy outcomes.

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not all communities within the Corridor prioritize tourism or economic development through tourism investor attraction.• All communities along the Corridor are at different stages of tourism development and while some may be more ready to support tourism investment, others still may require more support through regional and provincial DMOs to move them along the destination development spectrum.• First Nations are also at different stages of engagement in tourism. Some are early in their exploration of their potential for tourism and capacity building, while others are actively seeking investment or are themselves currently investing in tourism projects.• Those communities (including First Nations) that are well-positioned and prioritize tourism investment attraction, should be prioritized.	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium-term (12-24 months).
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each supporting/participating community along the Highway 3 Corridor can be evaluated on how attractive they are to tourism investors as measured by the four criteria on the Skift Framework for Community Attractiveness for Tourism Investment to identify gaps and then determine areas of prioritization to improve their level of attractiveness for tourism investment.• Building off Resource Guide A, identify those communities and First Nations that are most keen to participate in the Highway 3 Corridor, align with the corridor theme, and participate in community attractiveness for tourism investment.• Communicate the strategy and program on a community-by-community basis to solicit participation and further refine community attractiveness assessments.	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of those communities that hold the highest propensity to support the overall strategy and program for initial support.• Identification of gaps for each community to support increased community attractiveness for tourism investment.



PILLAR 2, INITIATIVE B

Develop action plans for each community to fill tourism gaps for investment attractiveness.

DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE	TIMEFRAME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With a critical mass of communities working to increase their tourism investment readiness, investors will be more apt to invest in communities that have a plan and are supportive of the needs of investors requirements to achieve a reasonable return on their investment while mitigating risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term (2-5 years)
TACTICAL ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With an assessment complete for each community on their current situation, an action plan to address gaps and deficiencies and tactics and strategies that can implemented. The action plan should seek to address educating communities on prioritizing tourism for local government and decision-makers, garnering resident support for tourism in communities, recognizing tourism asset gaps, prioritizing tourism investment from economic development and/or investor attraction, developing or strengthening a DMO, and addressing barriers to investment (e.g., zoning) and local tax incentives opportunities for tourism investors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A crucial mass of communities along the Corridor ready for tourism investment.

Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Mitch Winton



PILLAR 2, INITIATIVE C

Using the Strategy Resource Guide, develop a list of investment opportunities required to support the corridor theme.

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are dozens of organizations supporting economic development and investment attraction throughout the Corridor.• Navigating this multitude of resources can be daunting, especially for communities who are just entering tourism or just beginning to think about diversifying their economies through tourism.• As part of the Highway 3 Corridor Strategy, a Resource Guide has been developed to assist Highway 3 leadership and communities within the corridor to better understand how to recognize prospective investors, what those investors are seeking in support from communities, and economic development and potential funding resources to support investors.• While not an exhaustive list of resources, the Resource Guide will help lead communities and the Highway 3 leadership in the right direction.	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term (2-5 years).
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share the Resource Guide with communities and key partners within the corridor to support increased understanding and prioritization of tourism investment attraction.• Continue to enhance and adapt the Resource Guide to support tourism investment and development of the Corridor.	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An increased understanding and prioritization of tourism investment attraction along the Corridor.• Increased tourism investment attraction.

Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Mitch Winton



PILLAR 2, INITIATIVE D

Develop investment opportunity business cases to support the corridor theme and objectives

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation investors are keen to invest in the Corridor but have been challenged with the readiness of the communities to support them in overcoming investment barriers such as zoning, land access and allocation, tax incentives, support for labour readiness etc. Bringing together tourism partners, local government, economic development, and investment attraction stakeholders in a unified and collaborative way to develop specific investment opportunities is rarely done, but something that is very attractive to potential investors and can increase the likelihood of securing investment. 	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term (2-5 years).
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on Initiative C, and Resource Guide B, work with corridor communities to develop and communicate investment opportunity business cases to target areas of need, in alignment with the corridor theme. 	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business cases for tourism investment that are aligned to support tourism investors' needs with stronger potential to succeed and attract investors and investment. Increased tourism investment attraction.

Destination BC/Kari Medig



STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: ATTRACTING INVESTORS TO THE CORRIDOR



PILLAR 3, INITIATIVE A

Identify investors to target, primarily focusing on accommodation and product & experience investors

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are many different types of accommodation investors.• Some tourism and accommodation investors are more local or regional in nature, while some are national and international. Some seek to purchase older assets and renovate while others prefer to build new.• Each investor will have different support requirements from a community. As such, robust research is necessary to gain an understanding of the investment climate and support the identification of appropriate investors.	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term (2-5 years).
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building on the information contained in Resource Guide D, conduct research on segments of tourism and accommodation investors to identify investor segments that are the most likely to respond to a pitch from the Corridor and/or Corridor communities.• Develop segments, characteristics of prospective accommodation and tourism investors.	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An investor data base specific to the Corridor.• A strategic approach to targeting tourism investors to support carefully crafted business cases to compel and inspire investment in the Corridor (multiple aligned projects) or in select communities.

Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Mitch Winton



PILLAR 3, INITIATIVE B

Develop robust, all of community, and corridor investment opportunity business cases to attract and pitch to investors—aligned to the corridor theme.

DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE

- Navigating the investment environment can be time consuming and challenging for investors, as well as the community.
- An investor will often need to work through several different levels of governments and approvals which often lack coordination or a shared strategy.
- A well-crafted business case created and supported by key community stakeholders including tourism, local government, economic development, and investment attraction organizations, which reflects the specific needs of the prospective investor, will have a greater chance of successfully securing investment.

TACTICAL ACTIONS

- Once the investor segments have been identified, Corridor leadership and community consortia of tourism, economic development, local government and investor attraction, develop an “all of community” business case to support investment attraction.

TIMEFRAME

- Long-term (2-5 years).

OUTCOMES

- A strategic approach to effectively target tourism investors that reflects their specific needs including ROI, risk mitigation, etc.
- Increased investment to the Corridor.

@jasonmengvisuals & @laurenmneves



PILLAR 3, INITIATIVE C

Work with DMOs in BC and AB to develop and execute marketing and communications strategies to drive visitation to the Corridor.

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• While there are current marketing efforts taking place in both BC and Alberta, these do not reflect the Corridor as a whole or its position as a journey corridor.• Positioning the Corridor as a journey and actively marketing the Corridor will help to attract prospective visitors to experience the entire drive.• Marketing efforts will help to increase visitation and provide further incentive for investment at both the corridor level and with respect to investment attraction.	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium-term (12-24 months).
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop marketing campaigns to create awareness of the Corridor and position it as a journey corridor for both potential visitors as well as potential investors.	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A corridor journey in demand supporting increased visitation and expenditures for the long-term sustainable growth of the Corridor and its communities.• Provide support to the corridor model by attracting community interest in expanding tourism assets, prioritizing tourism, and attracting investors to accelerate destination development.

Megan Posein @mposein



PILLAR 3, INITIATIVE D

Monitor progress of strategy implementation and investments to communicate the achievement of outcomes

<p>DESCRIPTION/RATIONALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring proper measurement and tracking of key metrics is vital to ensure strong organizational outputs and strategic direction as well as for communicating key successes to funders, partners, and key stakeholders.• Governance of the Corridor will rely on these scorecard measures to monitor progress and help safeguard their investments.	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short- term (3-6 months).
<p>TACTICAL ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a scorecard for each initiative as well as an overall scorecard for the program to effectively track and measure implementation of the strategy.• Provide regular updates utilizing the score card to communicate to funders, partners, and key stakeholders.	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strategy that is measurable and accountable.

Destination BC/Kari Medig



Conclusion

The Sustainable Journeys Prairies to Pacific Corridor holds significant potential to attract both domestic and international visitors and ultimately support accelerated destination development.

Through dedication and commitment and the implementation of this strategy, the Corridor can achieve its goals of accelerated of destination development and support the economic, social, and environmental objectives of the many communities along the Corridor.



Travel Alberta / ROAM Creative

1. The key differentiator between the Corridor and other better known destinations such as Banff, are their critical mass of tourism assets and decades of marketing and branding.
2. Peer destinations that have successfully developed corridor tourism and increased visitation and expenditures, have done so through dedicated human and financial resources, a commitment to the prioritization of tourism, and time.
3. In order to achieve the project objectives, Corridor communities and partners must align against the galvanizing theme and take the necessary steps and actions to attract tourism investment and accelerate sustainable destination development.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FRAMEWORK



Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Mitch Winton

Investment Framework & Analysis Overview



Miriam Lena @miriam_lena

While trails are not unique to the Highway 3 Corridor, what is unique is the opportunity to take in many different types of trails within one corridor, by taking an investment attraction approach, specific to tourism, and aligning destination and product development under an overarching theme, trails can support increased economic development, sustainable visitor attraction & management, and revenues throughout the Corridor – while embracing and celebrating the differences along the way – whether that be outdoor adventure, wine & food, culture, art & artisans, or dark skies – each trail has its own story to tell – from Prairies to the Pacific.

There is currently a lack of accommodation types and ranges throughout the Corridor

OPPORTUNITY TYPE 1: ACCOMMODATIONS

While the goal of the Corridor is to invite visitors to slow down to touch, feel, smell, and experience the people and places along the Corridor, we know that in order to do so, visitors need a place to rest and rejuvenate and ultimately sleep along the way to keep them engaged and on the Corridor longer. From a whole-of-corridor perspective, more investment in a variety of unique accommodation offerings is needed.

- Tier 1: 4 -Star+ Resorts & Hotels
- Tier 2: Boutique-style unique accommodations
- Tier 3: Hotels, Motels, and Inns
- Tier 4: Glamping & Hut-to-Hut accommodations
- Tier 5: Basic camping (front & back country)

Growing a depth of attractions and experiences throughout the Corridor should focus on both new and existing assets to fuel growth and visitation for the Corridor.

OPPORTUNITY TYPE 2: NEW & ENHANCED EXPERIENCES & SERVICES

We know that accommodations alone won't (often) be a driver of destination choice in and of itself. Visitors need a myriad of authentic and immersive experiences along the way to encourage them to slow down, enjoy the journey AND the destination, and continue to seek what is just around the next corner. While new experiences and attractions are needed, investment can also support existing assets to help diversify revenue streams and drive more tourism to the Corridor.

- Tier 1: Four-season guided tours (front-country)
- Tier 2: Four-season guided tours (back-country)
- Tier 3: Guided water-based tours
- Tier 4: Four-season self-guided
- Tier 5: Support service
- Tier 6: Enhanced Existing Asset or Experience

Investment Opportunities Disclosure

The following investment opportunities presented herein are designed as illustrative examples of potential investment opportunities within various locations and destinations throughout the Corridor. These cases have been formulated based on comparable business opportunities and modelling, supported by additional research. It is important to note that these scenarios serve as models and do not represent specific investment recommendations. Further due diligence is necessary including specific considerations related to the unique characteristics of individual locations and detailed business information.

Project	Overview	Rationale	Suggested Capacity	Potential Locations	Estimated Required Investment
Nordic Spa Resort	The Nordic Spa retreat aims to provide a unique blend of Nordic spa traditions and local wellness experiences, set against the stunning backdrop of the Highway 3 Corridor's natural beauty.	By prioritizing sustainability and local elements (e.g., food, traditional knowledge, natural surroundings, nature, etc.), the retreat seeks to appeal to wellness enthusiasts seeking an authentic and rejuvenating experience.	150 rooms	Osoyoos/ Oliver, Christina Lake, Kimberley, Fernie	\$15.2M
Boutique Hotel	With so many unique and charming communities along the Highway 3 Corridor, additional unique accommodation offerings are required; such as boutique hotels, that combine luxury, personalized services, and a unique local experience.	Support year-round visitation to support the filling of existing tourism gaps to help keep visitors on the corridor for longer.	100 rooms	Lethbridge, Castle Mountain Ski Resort, Cranbrook	\$7.76M
Hotel, Motel or Inn	The establishment of smaller inns, hotels, and motels along the Highway 3 Corridor can support a diverse range of accommodations to suit varying visitor preferences. The emphasis on affordability and community engagement ensures a welcoming and inclusive experience for all visitors along the Highway 3 Corridor.	By integrating with the local community, focusing on personalized service, and embracing sustainability practices, these establishments can contribute significantly to the economic, social, and environmental pillars of destination development. This can further support visitor dispersion and sustainability by supporting an increased accommodation mix.	80 rooms	Princeton, Keremeos, Nelson, Crownsnest Pass	\$3.04M
Glamping & Hut to Hut Accommodation	The introduction of a hut-to-hut experience along the Highway 3 Corridor capitalizes on the growing trend of adventure tourism while providing sustainable and immersive outdoor experiences. The hut-to-hut experiences offers a unique way for visitors to connect with nature and local communities, fostering a sense of adventure and appreciation for the natural environment.	By emphasizing environmental responsibility, community involvement, and cultural integration, this concept can contribute greatly to the economic, social, and environmental pillars of destination development.	40 huts	Manning Park, Sparwood/ Elkford, Rossland, Waterton	\$1.45M

Project	Overview	Rationale	Suggested Capacity	Potential Locations	Estimated Required Investment
Dark Sky Self Guided Tour	Dark sky self-guided tours along the Highway 3 Corridor offer a unique and educational experience for visitors to explore and appreciate the wonders of the night sky.	By combining astronomy education, sustainability initiatives, and responsible tourism practices, this concept contributes to the economic, social, and environmental pillars of destination development. This investment opportunity business case aims to provide a memorable and enlightening dark sky experience while fostering a deeper understanding of the importance of preserving natural darkness in the Corridor.	624 attendees per year	Waterton, Castle Provincial Park, Manning Park	\$24.5K
Bike Rental & Servicing	A comprehensive sustainable bike rental, servicing, and maintenance business along the Highway 3 Corridor aligns with the growing demand for eco-friendly transportation options.	By focusing on electric bikes, bike/vehicle charging stations, and providing servicing and maintenance for a wide customer base, this concept contributes significantly to the economic, social, and environmental pillars of destination development. This investment opportunity business case aims to provide visitors with a sustainable and culturally enriched mode of transportation while supporting the local economy, fostering a sense of environmental responsibility, and ensuring the longevity of the biking infrastructure.	624 attendees per year	Waterton, Rossland, Nelson, Fernie, Kimberley, Castle Provincial Park, /Castle Mountain Ski Resort	\$60K

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CONTACTS



There are opportunities to support the implementation of this strategy. To better understand how to engage with and contribute to this work, please contact:

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APPENDIX 1

Alberta

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Photo: Darryl Palmer

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 Troy Ravndalh, NK'Mip Cellars
 Tyrone Joseph, Indigenous Tourism BC
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 Wendy Van Puymbroeck, Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council

In addition to site visits, workshops, focus groups, and in-person/virtual interviews, more than 200 stakeholders were invited to provide their input via an online stakeholder survey that was offered in both French and English. The survey was provided to stakeholders throughout the Highway 3 Corridor communities and organizations.

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