

The Town of The Blue Mountains

Destination Development Plan and Tourism Marketing Strategy

Council Deputation

9 December 2024

Project Overview and Update



Introductions

Bannikin is a proudly Canadian consultancy working within and beyond travel and tourism. We co-create value with a breadth and diversity of client-partners, ranging from small businesses and municipalities to national associations and organizations.



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Overview: Project Goal

By early 2025, the Town of The Blue Mountains will have co-created an industry and community-informed destination development plan that outlines the Town's role and strategy for destination development and management, and a separate but related tourism marketing strategy that outlines the role and strategy for the confirmed Destination Marketing Organization.

Overview: Project Objectives 1

1. To identify and engage local and regional tourism organizations and businesses, tourism and municipal partners, residents, Council members, and others as identified across the research process and toward understanding the Town's tourism ecosystem.
2. To baseline the current context of tourism products, services, and tourism supportive infrastructure toward identifying a sustainable and strategic direction for destination development, management, and tourism marketing that responds to identified challenges/needs and opportunities.
3. To understand and prioritize the sustainability of the environment, society, and the tourism economy and four-season hosting capacity of the destination when exploring the future of destination development and tourism marketing.

Project Objectives 2

4. To identify tourism development and marketing solutions/initiatives that mobilize resources to enhance the built and natural environment, elevate the experience of the Town of The Blue Mountains as a place to visit, support the well-being of the community, and ultimately aiming to increase the quality of life for residents.
5. To explore and provide considerations for the positioning of the Town's tourism brand with a focus on promoting the entire municipality, while building on well-established brands (e.g., Blue Mountain Resort, Blue Mountain Village, Thornbury, etc.).

Overview: Working Definitions

Destination Development and Management

The strategic development, management, and upkeep of components that create and foster desirable destinations for visitors.

This includes but is not limited to the infrastructure required for and beneficial to tourism activity, support for tourism products and experiences, and quality services.

Tourism/Destination Marketing

The strategic promotion, marketing, and positioning of a place as a destination, including its businesses and assets. This work is usually led by Destination Marketing Organizations that market and promote a place's assets, as well as inform product development and experiences, to inspire and invite potential visitors to come explore, engage with local communities, and contribute to local economies.

Methodology: Project Progress



Methodology: Activities and Engagements

Method/Activity	Key Data Sources
Background document and marketing materials review	Local and regional strategies and plans, Research and study reports, Tourism resources and initiatives, Virtual and physical marketing materials
Tourism ecosystem mapping	Background documents, Key informant interviews, Industry and community roundtable inputs and notes
Infrastructure and key services scan	Background documents, Town and key partners' websites, In-person visit observations and notes
Tourism product and asset review	Background documents; Local and regional business websites; In-person visit observations and notes.
Target audience and market research	Background documents, Trend documents and reports, Environics Mobilescapes visitor data, Local and regional visitation reports
Best practice research	Comparator Municipal and DMO websites, Development and marketing strategies and plans
Destination visit s	2-day destination tour
In-person and virtual community open houses.	Permanent and temporary residents, Community group representatives
In-person and virtual tourism business round tables	Tourism businesses, Industry organizations (incl. BIAs, Village Associations)
Virtual Economic Development Advisory Committee round table	EDAC members and Council representatives
Key informant interviews	Business representatives; Tourism leaders; Council Members; Local, regional, and provincial; Organizational partners

Methodology: Highlights and Results

Method/Activity	Highlights and Results
Background document and marketing materials review	Internal reference document with 30+ background and context documents reviewed
Tourism ecosystem mapping	Draft and evolved ecosystem map visualization and accompanying database of ecosystem actors
Infrastructure and key services scan	Infrastructure and services scan collector, with 191 infrastructure and services reviewed
Tourism product and asset review	Product and asset collector, with 162 products and assets reviewed
Target audience and market research	Target market and audience overview and profiles
Best practice research	Best practice vignettes and key learnings
Destination visit	Team notes and observations, direct engagement with a variety of local industry and community members
In-person and virtual community open houses.	Input and perspective gathered from 27 community members directly engaged in project
In-person and virtual tourism business round tables	Input and perspective gathered from 26 representatives of tourism-related businesses in the town
Virtual economic development advisory committee round table	Input and perspective gathered from 6 community members on the EDAC
Key informant interviews	Input and perspective gathered from 25 key informants

Methodology: Current and Upcoming Phases & Engagements

Active Phases

Destination
Development
Strategy

Late November to
Late January

Marketing Strategy

Late November to
Late January

Upcoming Phases

Sharing and
Pressure Testing

Mid-January to
Early February

Action Planning,
Integration, and
Report Development

Late January to
Late March

Upcoming Engagements

- *Community Partners
Focus Group*
- *Tourism Partners
Focus Group*
- *EDAC Focus Group*

Thank You!

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