



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee

Date: June 10, 2024

From: Katie Ferland
Director, Business Services

File: 08-4150-01/2024-Vol
01

Re: Development of a Richmond Tourism Master Plan

Staff Recommendation

That the approach to developing a Richmond Tourism Master Plan, including the guiding principles, as outlined in the staff report titled, "Development of a Richmond Tourism Master Plan," dated June 10, 2024, from the Director, Business Services, be endorsed.

Katie Ferland
Director, Business Services
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REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO	

Staff Report

Origin

Multiple City strategies and plans have guided past tourism initiatives and related Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) investments, helping to shape the development of Richmond's tourism industry and the evolution of the Community Tourism Partnership Model that exists today. These include the 2008 Community Tourism and Sport Hosting Strategy, 2012 Official Community Plan, and the 2014 Resilient Economy Strategy.

Developing a new long-term strategy has been identified as a priority by the tourism partners to ensure Richmond's approach to tourism considers both the current context and future challenges and opportunities. The City, Tourism Richmond, and the Richmond Hotel Association (RHA) committed to jointly developing a Tourism Master Plan in the City's 5-Year Strategic Tourism Plan (2022-2027), which was endorsed by Council and approved by the Government of British Columbia through the MRDT Program application process.

In advance of the next MRDT application cycle (2027-2032) and in alignment with the development of the City's new Economic Development Strategy, it is timely to commence work on developing this Tourism Master Plan for Richmond. It is anticipated that the Tourism Master Plan will develop a shared vision for tourism in Richmond and a comprehensive framework of key goals that align tourism, economic development, and the community in Richmond. This would be done through a lens of social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability to provide long-term opportunities for the greatest breadth of residents and communities possible.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond's interests.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #2 Strategic and Sustainable Community Growth:

Strategic and sustainable growth that supports long-term community needs and a well-planned and prosperous city.

2.5 Work collaboratively and proactively to attract and retain businesses to support a diversified economic base.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

Analysis

Proposed Guiding Principles

It is proposed that the Tourism Master Plan be developed in alignment with the following Guiding Principles:

- **Create a shared vision.** Through the process of developing the Tourism Master Plan, extensive community and industry consultation will enable a greater understanding of multiple perspectives, with the aim that the final Plan reflects a shared vision to guide activities to enhance Richmond as a tourist destination.
- **Grow sustainably.** The Tourism Master Plan will guide future growth of the tourism sector in Richmond and will identify opportunities to grow the visitor economy sustainably over the long-term, building resilience to address shorter-term impacts. The lens of social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability will seek to provide long-term opportunities for the greatest breadth of residents and communities possible.
- **Positively impact the community.** In considering future growth of the sector, the Tourism Master Plan will be guided by a focus on approaches and actions that positively impact the broader Richmond community.
- **Guide future investments.** The Tourism Master Plan will help provide direction for future public and private investments related to tourism in Richmond over the longer term. This includes guiding future MRDT applications, investments and associated activities undertaken by the City and its partners to support growth and development of the tourism sector in Richmond.

Proposed Approach

It is proposed that Tourism Richmond, as the City's contracted Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), lead this project in partnership with the City and in collaboration with other key tourism partners and stakeholders. Tourism Richmond has the capacity and funding to complete this work and is well positioned and recognized in the community and tourism industry.

A Steering Committee would guide and govern the development of the Master Plan. This Committee could be comprised of City staff, Tourism Richmond Board members, Tourism Richmond's CEO and select team members, and potentially other community members and leaders. The role of the Committee would be to provide feedback on the project scope of work, review and approve key deliverables, and potentially be engaged in follow up implementation of the Master Plan, once approved. Extensive industry and community engagement would inform the work of the Committee and the development of the Plan.

The Tourism Master Plan would be brought forward to both the Tourism Richmond Board and to Council for approval.

Table 1: Work Plan for Richmond Tourism Master Plan

Task	Description	Estimated Timeline
Steering Committee formed	Members of Steering Committee identified and convened; input provided to guide the project's detailed scope of work.	Q3 2024
Phase 1: Research and Analysis	Based on the agreed scope of work, Tourism Richmond will engage experts to conduct research and analysis of the city's tourism sector and broader landscape, including an examination of Richmond's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to better inform the development of the Plan's vision and key goals.	Q3 2024 – Q1 2025
Memo to Council - Research results and plans for public engagement	An Information Memo to Council by staff to provide results of the research and analysis phase and information on plans for upcoming community and industry engagement.	Q1 2025
Phase 2: Consultation and Public Engagement	Engagement with businesses and others in the tourism sector, as well as the broader community, to provide input and help develop the Master Plan vision and key goals. Members of Council will be invited to participate in these engagement opportunities.	Q2 2025
Phase 3A: Draft Master Plan	Creation of the Master Plan based on the research and analytical work undertaken and input from the business and public engagement processes.	Q3 2025
Report to Council – Draft Master Plan	Draft Master Plan presented to Council; additional community and industry engagement as needed.	Q3 2025
Phase 3B: Final Master Plan, including presentation to Tourism Richmond Board and Report to Council	Final Master Plan presented to the Tourism Richmond Board of Directors for endorsement and then to Council for approval.	Q4 2025

Upcoming MRDT Renewal

The City will be required to submit an application to the Government of BC for the next 5-year MRDT cycle (2027-2032) on or before September 30, 2026. The above timelines would ensure that the Tourism Master Plan is completed in advance and that this strategic document can guide the content and goals of the application, and that proposed activities align with the strategic needs of the industry and community as presented to and approved by Council.

It is anticipated that the Tourism Master Plan would form part of the City's MRDT application package, in addition to the required 5-year strategic business plan jointly developed by the three tourism partners and a tactical plan outlining specific actions to be taken in the first year. Subsequent tactical plans are required to be submitted to the Government of BC on an annual basis,

and any future City-led initiatives would be brought forward to Council for consideration as appropriate.

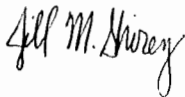
Financial Impact

None. Tourism Richmond will provide funding for the full cost required to develop the Richmond Tourism Master Plan.

Conclusion

Richmond has a key opportunity to consider and strategically plan for the future of its tourism sector, given the past challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and continuing global and local economic challenges and opportunities. A Richmond Tourism Master Plan would help shape how tourism businesses and partner entities such as Tourism Richmond align on key goals and initiatives to drive both growth and sustainability in the sector. Initiating this work in 2024 could align development with the City’s new Economic Development Strategy and also ensure that a Master Plan is in place prior to the 2027-2032 MRDT application cycle.

If endorsed, next steps would involve working with Tourism Richmond to form the Steering Committee and providing input on the more detailed project scope of work that would be aligned with the guiding principles and approach outlined in this report. Extensive community and industry engagement will help to inform the development of the Plan, which would then be brought forward to Council for approval.



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