



COMMUNITY
TOURISM
FOUNDATIONS®

SOOKE TO PORT RENFREW TOURISM PLAN

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SOOKE TO PORT RENFREW TOURISM PLAN
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The communities of Sooke to Port Renfrew have embarked upon a joint tourism planning initiative through Tourism British Columbia's Community Tourism Foundations program, which provides resources to assist communities in developing a comprehensive tourism plan. These resources include providing the services of professional facilitators to assist in the planning process. Strategex Consulting Group was given the assignment to prepare a comprehensive tourism plan for Sooke to Port Renfrew that encompasses destination development and market development. Tourism British Columbia oversaw this project, which included the guidance and assistance of a working group comprising representatives from the communities, including the District of Sooke, Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce, Sooke Community Association, T'sou-ke First Nations, Juan de Fuca Economic Commission, accommodation properties, attractions and other tourism -related businesses and organizations, as well as a representative from Tourism Vancouver Island.

Planning Process

The planning process began with an initial meeting on February 12, 2008, and the subsequent preparation of a detailed situation analysis, which forms the factual foundation for the tourism plan. A planning session was held on May 7, 2008 in which the situation analysis was reviewed by the working group and priorities were set for the tourism plan. Following the setting of priorities, the first draft of the tourism plan was completed with a review on June 24, 2008. The tourism plan was finalized after working group members provided feedback to the plan.

Tourism Plan

The tourism plan serves as the embodiment of the community's overall vision and economic goals with regard to tourism. The plan encompasses five years and, while it serves as a roadmap, it should also be flexible enough to take new information and unexpected opportunities into consideration during implementation.

Objectives

- From 2009 to 2011, the number of tourists to Sooke to Port Renfrew will grow at the same rate as the number of tourists to BC.
- From 2012 to 2013, the number of tourists to Sooke to Port Renfrew will grow by 2% more than the rate of tourist growth to BC. This means that if the number of tourists to BC grows by 4%, the number of tourists to the communities should grow by 6%¹.

Target Markets

Primary markets:

- Residents of Greater Victoria, particularly couples travelling without children (start promoting to this group in the short term, with particular emphasis on the spring and fall shoulder seasons).

¹ Objectives assume that ongoing sources of funding at levels recommended in the plan are secured by 2010.

- Visitors to Greater Victoria after they arrive in Victoria. This group would include couples and families (start promoting to this group in the short to longer term, with day trips in the short term and overnight visits in the medium to long term).
- Residents of Metro Vancouver. This group would also include couples and families, but given the relatively high cost of reaching this market, the focus should be on cooperative marketing efforts targeting those who may be planning a visit to Vancouver Island.
- Outdoor adventure enthusiasts, particularly in the Greater Victoria and Metro Vancouver markets.
- Local residents. While residents of Sooke to Port Renfrew are not strictly a tourism target group, they represent potential ambassadors for the communities who can encourage their friends and family to visit and provide information on what to do in the area. Through local residents, potential visitors from other parts of Canada and the world could be reached efficiently.

Secondary and niche markets:

- Other BC residents (if budget permits).
- Washington State residents (longer term and would include cooperative marketing efforts).
- Meeting and incentive travel planners for Victoria businesses (appropriate for a limited number of accommodation providers and adventure tour operators)
- Greater Victoria families with children, primarily for day trips (included in secondary markets as day trips have lower revenue potential than overnight stays).

Tertiary markets:

- Those with direct air access to Victoria, including Calgary, Edmonton, San Francisco.

Length of Stay

- In the short to medium term (i.e. one to three years), Sooke to Port Renfrew will promote short getaways and day trips to residents of Greater Victoria and to visitors to Victoria.
- Day trips will be emphasized for Victoria families and will be promoted to Victoria visitors who can be encouraged to return for an overnight visit once they have seen what the area has to offer
- Longer stays may be promoted more significantly in the medium to long term (i.e. three years or more) as tourism development and infrastructure grows, and for accommodations that are particularly suited to longer stays such as vacation homes.

Priority Tourism Products

- Outdoor adventure activities, particularly hiking, wildlife viewing/whale watching, bird watching, kayaking, cycling and fishing, all within a 40-minute drive of Victoria.
- Less structured outdoor pursuits, such as visiting parks and beaches.
- Arts, culture, and heritage attractions, including the Sooke Region Museum, Sooke Philharmonic performances, Sooke Fine Arts Show, Stinking Fish Studio Tour, and aboriginal products and experiences.
- Health, wellness and spa experiences.
- Small meetings and corporate retreats (applicable to a limited number of accommodation properties and adventure tour operators).

Budget

To accomplish the objectives, strategies, and the tactics outlined in the plan, an annual budget of \$104K to \$122K minimum is recommended in the first few years, growing to a minimum of \$156K-\$198K by 2013.

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This tourism plan addresses the conclusions and implications brought forward from the situation analysis, and is intended to guide the tourism activities of the communities of Sooke to Port Renfrew. The plan describes the type of tourism organization that needs to be established and proposes various funding options. It also sets out the objectives that the tourism organization will strive to achieve, using the strategies and specific tactics described. Evaluation methods to track the objectives, strategies, and tactics are listed, and estimated budget amounts for each activity are provided.

Background

The communities of Sooke to Port Renfrew have embarked upon a joint tourism planning initiative through Tourism British Columbia's Community Tourism Foundations program that provides resources to assist communities in developing a comprehensive tourism plan. These resources include the services of professional facilitators to assist in the planning process. Strategex Consulting Group was given the assignment to prepare a comprehensive tourism plan for Sooke to Port Renfrew that encompasses destination development and market development.

The planning process began with an initial meeting on February 12, 2008. The participants included:

Community Participants:

Sheila Beech	Exhibit Room III, Feltmaking Studio
Al Carter	President, Sooke B&B Association
Chief Rose Dumont	T'sou-ke First Nations
Janet Evans	Mayor, District of Sooke
Scott Gertsma	Past President, Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce/Sooke Home Hardware
Michelle Glanfield-Bohn	Le Sooke Spa
Mark Grant	President, Sooke Charter Boat Association/Mark Grant's Salmon Charters
Patricia Handy	Manager, Sooke Visitor Centre
Debbie Hay	Sooke Community Association
Jeff Lorton	West Coast Wildlife Adventures
Matthew Mackenzie	Sooke Harbour Resort
David Mallett	Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Chair
Lyll Markham	Sooke B&B Association/Markham House/ Past President of Sooke Regional Tourism Assoc.
Russ Nicks	Sooke Coastal Explorations
Brenda Parkinson	District of Sooke Councillor
Elida Peers	Curator, Sooke Region Museum
Barb Sinclair	Sooke Fine Arts Show
Rod Sluggett	Sooke News Mirror/First VP - Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce
Betty Tully	Juan de Fuca Economic Commission/Island Vacation Homes

Tourism BC

Representatives:

Laura Plant	Tourism BC
Erin O'Brien	Tourism BC Research Services
Dave Petryk	Tourism Association of Vancouver Island

Facilitator:

Denise Hayes	Strategex Consulting Group
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A planning session was then held on May 7, 2008 in which the situation analysis was reviewed and priorities were set for the tourism plan. (see Appendix #1).

Tourism British Columbia oversaw this project, with the guidance and assistance of a working group comprising representatives from the communities, municipalities, and the regional tourism association. The participants included:

Community Working

Group Participants:

Evonne Black	Sooke Fine Arts Representative
Mike Conlin	President, Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce
Chief Rose Dumont	T'sou-ke First Nation
Kathy Drover	The Reading Room
Janet Evans	Mayor, District of Sooke
Neil Flynn	Salty Towers Oceanfront Retreat
Scott Gertsma	Past President, Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce/ Sooke Home Hardware
Mark Grant	President, Sooke Charter Boat Association/Mark Grant's Salmon Charters
Mike Hicks	Arbutus Cove Guest House
Christine Hopkins	From the Garden at French Beach
Patricia Handy	Manager, Sooke Visitor Centre
Debbie Hay	Sooke Community Association
Larry Hutchings	Manager, Seaparc
Rick Kasper	Chair, Sooke Economic Development Commission
Jeff Lorton	West Coast Wildlife Adventures
Matthew Mackenzie	Sooke Harbour Resort
Lyll Markham	Sooke B&B Association/Markham House/Past President of Sooke Regional Tourism Assoc.
Russ Nicks	Sooke Coastal Explorations
Brenda Parkinson	District of Sooke Councillor
Elida Peers	Curator, Sooke Region Museum
Frederique Philip	Sooke Harbour House
Scott Taylor	Rush Adventures
Betty Tully	Juan de Fuca Economic Commission/ Island Vacation Homes
Jeremy Wilson	Seventeen Mile Pub

Randy Welters President, Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce

Tourism BC

Representatives:

Caterina Papadakos Tourism British Columbia
Dave Petryk Tourism Association of Vancouver Island

Facilitator:

Denise Hayes Strategex Consulting Group

Many of the community representatives have other responsibilities and volunteered their time to contribute to the planning process. The tourism plan could not have been completed without their commitment and support.

Tourism Plan

In the preparation of the tourism plan, the following principles are kept in mind:

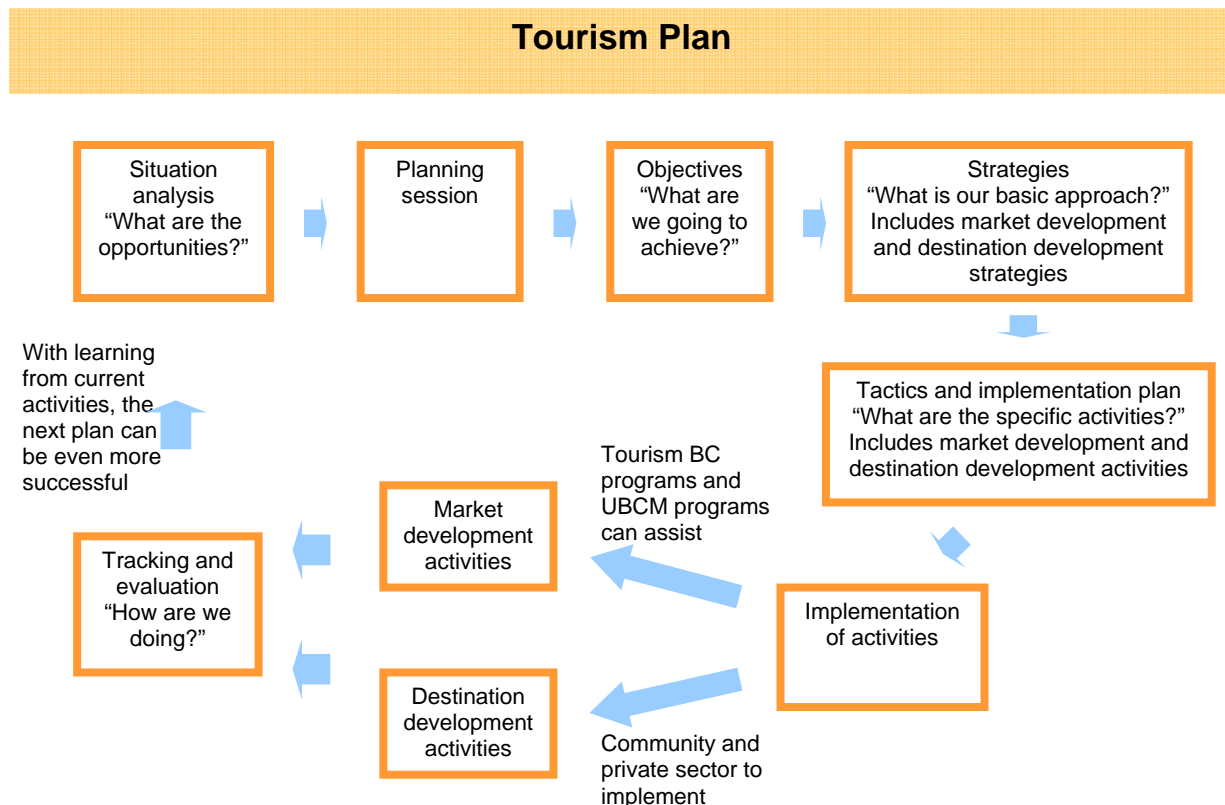
- Visitor Needs. BC communities must be responsive to visitor needs. Communities need to understand visitor needs first, develop tourism experiences to meet those needs, and then market the appropriate tourism experience to the appropriate type of visitor.
- Inclusiveness. To address the issues and opportunities facing the tourism industry, consultation and collaboration need to form the basis of plan development.
- Effective Partnerships. Tourism is a fragmented industry and effective partnerships among tourism operators, communities, destination marketing organizations, and all levels of government are essential to building a cohesive, strong and sustainable tourism industry in British Columbia.
- Sustainability. Tourism in British Columbia will be developed in a sustainable manner, recognizing the need for economic, social, and environmental sustainability.
- Community Support. To be successful, tourism development in communities needs to be supported by all areas of a community, including businesses, local government, and residents.

The tourism plan is the embodiment of the overall vision, economic goals, and serves as a roadmap for the years ahead to achieve the community's vision with regard to tourism. This tourism plan presents objectives to 2013, with greater detail provided in the first three years. While the plan provides a roadmap, it is also flexible enough to take new, unexpected opportunities into consideration during implementation.

The tourism plan accomplishes the following²:

1. Defines the business situation – past, present and future.
2. Defines the tourism-related opportunities and problems facing the community.
3. Establishes specific and realistic business objectives.
4. Defines strategies and tactics required to accomplish the objectives.
5. Establishes a timetable and pinpoints responsibility for execution of programs.
6. Establishes control and review procedures to monitor effectiveness of programs and performance against the defined objectives.

Once the tourism plan is completed and implementation begins, results should be tracked regularly such that an updated plan, with learning from the current year’s activities, can be even more effective in increasing tourism to the community. For many communities, the objectives and strategies should be reviewed, with most of the updates occurring on the detailed tactics. The planning cycle can be illustrated as follows:



² Based on the American Marketing Association definition.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FROM SITUATION ANALYSIS

The conclusions and implications are the culmination of the situation analysis and the planning session. They represent the key insights that distil the learning and identify the key areas that the tourism plan must address.

- a) **The Sooke to Port Renfrew area is well placed to make gains in tourism given its proximity to Greater Victoria's 345,000 residents and its 3.6 million annual visitors, most of them repeat visitors.** Sooke to Port Renfrew has a wealth of outdoor adventures, beaches, parks and hiking trails, and is easily accessible from Victoria by car or by bicycle via the popular Galloping Goose Trail. The area is also home to world-famous Sooke Harbour House, many vacation home rentals and charming B&Bs, a small museum and a few heritage buildings. There are also some art and music events that may have tourism potential. Since three-quarters of Victoria visitors are repeat visitors, many of them may be ready to explore areas beyond the city.
- b) **The close-in markets of BC and, to a lesser extent, Washington State represent the greatest number of potential visitors to the community and are the most affordable to reach.** BC residents made up 41% of visitors to Victoria in 2007. Not only do BC residents make more trips in BC than any other market, they are most likely to travel in BC throughout all seasons and across more regions than any other market. Washington residents made up 14.2% of visitors, almost half of all U.S. visitors to Victoria. Sooke to Port Renfrew should consider focusing its marketing efforts on these geographic segments, especially when they are already visiting or considering a visit to Victoria and/or Vancouver Island. Participation in Tourism Victoria and Tourism Vancouver Island marketing initiatives is a way to reach this market cost-effectively. Tourism BC marketing programs also provide an affordable means to reach these markets, and more distant markets as well.
- c) **The primary strengths of Sooke to Port Renfrew are its natural beauty, a relatively mild climate, its beaches, hiking/cycling trails and the many opportunities for outdoor adventures.** The area also benefits from a number of artists and artisans whose work is accessible in galleries, shops and during art events. There are, however, some destination development issues to address, including the lack of accommodation during the summer months (as the area has mainly small bed & breakfasts, vacation home rentals and a few low to mid range motels and hotels), transportation issues, and the absence of an attractive, strollable town centre and shopping/cultural district.
- d) **A sustainable approach to tourism is called for, where tourism growth is carefully planned, with a gradual increase in the short term.** In the initial meeting, participants expressed the desire to fully develop tourism in Sooke to Port Renfrew while still maintaining a livable community and the area's unique West Coast character. Tourism development and promotion should focus on a few specific areas that have tourism potential while avoiding other areas where crowding may be detrimental to the natural environment or the quality of life for residents, particularly as the area's natural beauty and outdoor adventure activities are its key strengths. However, it is recognized that Sooke to Port Renfrew needs to develop its tourism infrastructure to provide a full tourism experience. Tourism development should be accompanied by enabling infrastructure that will minimize inconvenience to residents (to address issues such as traffic, parking, etc.). However, some

inconvenience will inevitably occur with more people on the streets, especially during the summer months when more visitors travel.

- e) **Over the long term, Sooke to Port Renfrew needs to encourage the development of clusters of visitor experiences that are unique, compelling to visitors, and in harmony with its tourism vision.** A clear focus as to the type of tourism experience offered will help distinguish Sooke to Port Renfrew from the many other options available to Vancouver Island visitors and residents. To be successful in attracting significant numbers of visitors, particularly during the shoulder seasons, the communities should consider developing clusters of artisan studios, unique attractions, retail shops and restaurants, while preserving and enhancing the natural wilderness areas.

- f) **To succeed in growing tourism in a sustainable manner, the communities must determine which body is primarily responsible for destination marketing, ensure that stable and adequate funding is in place, establish realistic priorities, and take advantage of the marketing opportunities provided by larger DMOs.** Without adequate resources, the effectiveness of the Sooke Region Tourism Association has been limited. The communities should review the various funding options for tourism organizations presented in this document and determine which is most suitable and sustainable, and develop a focused plan that is affordable within that funding model. As well, close cooperation with Tourism Victoria, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism BC will allow Sooke to Port Renfrew to reach markets that would otherwise be unaffordable.

OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the communities of Sooke to Port Renfrew is to increase tourism to the area to achieve greater economic prosperity in a sustainable manner. This would be achieved over a period of five to ten years, in a manner that enhances the community.

The objectives are as follows:

- From 2009 to 2011, the number of tourists to the communities will grow at the same rate as the number of tourists to BC.
- From 2012 to 2013, the number of tourists to the communities will grow by 2% more than the rate of tourist growth to BC. This means that if the number of tourists to BC grows by 4%, the number of tourists to Sooke to Port Renfrew should grow by 6%³.

It is anticipated that tourism will grow more significantly to BC after the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, based on learning from other Olympic host destinations and Tourism BC's plan, so the rate of growth to BC is expected to accelerate after 2010.

To achieve this growth rate, the organization responsible for marketing Sooke to Port Renfrew as a destination requires an operating budget of at least \$104K -122K (increasing to \$156-\$196K by 2013) - excluding the operation of the Visitor Centre.

To measure this growth, the Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization will use indicators as it is costly to conduct visitor studies. Indicators could include the following:

- Occupancy data that compares occupancy rate with the total number of rooms. Occupancy data would be of even greater relevance in the longer term once overnight visitation increases.
- Room revenue.
- Number of visitors to key attractions.
- Number of visitors to Visitor Centre.

³ Objectives assume that ongoing sources of funding at levels recommended in the plan are secured by 2010.

STRATEGIES

The strategies that the Sooke to Port Renfrew communities need to employ to achieve their objectives are discussed in this section. The principles that were integral to developing these strategies include:

- The need for a single, unified approach to tourism development.
- The importance of a consumer-driven positioning and consistent tourism identity.
- Minimizing administration requirements and expenses.
- Working with other tourism organizations (city, regional, provincial), wherever possible to maximize the benefits of combined resources.
- Collaboration and cooperation between the Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce, District of Sooke, Sooke Economic Development Commission, Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce, Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission, and the T'sou-ke first Nations.
- Ongoing stakeholder involvement through a tourism advisory group.

Organizational Structure

To carry out the tourism strategies and tactics in this plan, the communities of Sooke to Port Renfrew need to organize and coordinate their tourism activities. This need was recognized in 2001 when the Sooke Region Tourism Association was established as a membership-based non-profit society, but the Association has since become inactive due to lack of resources. Other options that were presented for review and consideration at the May 7 planning session include:

- Informal marketing cooperative
- Department/committee of the Chamber of Commerce
- Subsidiary of economic development body (EDB)
- Fee for service sub-contracted to Regional DMO
- Not-for-profit society.

As infrastructure already exists through the Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce and the Sooke Economic Development Commission partnership, with these two entities sharing staff resources, it is recommended that the tourism organization be housed within this existing framework. Other stakeholders would continue to be involved as part of a tourism advisory group to provide ongoing advice and direction.

Features of the new Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization include:

- As Sooke to Port Renfrew's tourism budget is limited, some marketing initiatives of the tourism organization would likely need to be on a "pay-to-play" basis⁴, with some initiatives benefiting tourism in Sooke to Port Renfrew in general. Even with the pay-to-play principle, the tourism organization needs to make decisions that will benefit tourism as a whole in Sooke to Port Renfrew and put its best foot forward (for example, media relations and familiarization tours would not generally be on a pay-to-play basis).

⁴ "Pay-to-play" means that Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism businesses may buy advertising in cooperative initiatives of Tourism Sooke to Port Renfrew.

- The makeup of the tourism advisory group will likely be an issue of much discussion but a possible structure is shown below:
 - Maintain a manageable size – no more than 15 members in total
 - One representative from District of Sooke
 - One representative from Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission
 - One from T'sou-ke First Nation
 - One from Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce
 - One representative from Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce
 - Three from accommodation sector
 - Two from heritage, arts, and culture
 - One from retail
 - One from restaurant
 - Two to three tour operators representing outdoor adventure products
 - One at-large (could include festivals and events, etc).

A representative of Tourism Association of Vancouver Island could be invited as a guest to ensure coordination between Sooke to Port Renfrew and the regional tourism association.

The makeup of this tourism advisory group reflects the short to medium term emphasis on both day trips and overnight stays. The importance of activities and attractions in motivating potential travel to Sooke to Port Renfrew is represented on the tourism advisory group. Adjustments may need to be made in the medium to long term, however, consistent with other tourism organizations, the number of members from the accommodation sector should not reach 50% of the total.

It will be important that the members of the tourism advisory group have a big picture view and agree that, while each may represent a particular sector of the community, each committee member has the responsibility to achieve the best possible results for Sooke to Port Renfrew as a whole and is not an advocate for any particular business or sector.

The tourism organization needs to have a portion of at least one staff person dedicated to tourism initiatives. Freelance marketing professionals and volunteer resources would be used to assist paid staff.

Sources of Funding

In recent years, many communities in British Columbia have increased their funding for tourism initiatives, creating greater competition. Significant funding increases will be required for the communities of Sooke to Port Renfrew to achieve their tourism objectives. An annual budget of approximately \$104K - \$196K (including staffing but excluding the operation of the Visitor Centre) is required to achieve the objectives set out in this plan and to implement the product development and promotional tactics.

Currently, a total of \$108K in funding support may be available from the following sources:

UBCM Phase II funding for District of Sooke (10K already committed to tourism infrastructure project out of the total 43K available)	\$33K
UBCM Phase II funding for Juan de Fuca	\$25K
Tourism BC Community Tourism Foundations Cooperative Marketing Program (matching funds available over three years, upon completion of the community tourism plan)	\$50K
Total	\$108K

While the above-mentioned sources of funding will allow Sooke to Port Renfrew to undertake tourism related initiatives outlined in this plan in the near term, these sources of funding are finite and time limited in nature. The UBCM Phase II funds must be utilized prior to December 1, 2009 (when the final report is due) and the Tourism BC funds are limited to a maximum of \$50K over three years. To make its tourism program sustainable over the longer term, Sooke to Port Renfrew must seek other ongoing sources of funding.

AHRT

To provide a sustainable source of funding, the communities could implement the 2% additional hotel room tax (AHRT), which would generate approximately \$102K annually⁵. One challenge in Sooke to Port Renfrew is that no more than one third of the area’s accommodation properties (those with four or more rooms) would be taxable, so this minority would be responsible for funding destination marketing activities for the benefit of the majority. There is also some concern on the part of the taxable B&B operators that the additional 2% charge would make their rates less competitive with smaller, non-taxable operators. (see Appendix #4 for Additional Hotel Room Tax Guidelines and forms).

Business Levies

An additional source of revenue, one currently employed in several BC communities, could be a business licence tax, applied to all tourism-oriented businesses in the municipalities. The amount of the tax could vary based on the size of the business.

⁵ This amount is equal to one quarter of the revenues generated by the existing 8% hotel room tax in Sooke to Port Renfrew in the 2007/08 fiscal year. Source: E-mail from Dave Barnett, Tax Policy Branch, Ministry of Finance, June 5, 2008.

Other Sources of Revenue

Although unlikely to generate significant revenue, additional sources of funding that could be considered include the following:

- Featured links on the Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism website.

Other initiatives that generate income or earned revenue should be considered but they would likely come to fruition over the medium to longer term.

Municipal Support

As highlighted in the table below, many tourism organizations receive some level of base funding from the local government to assist in building tourism revenues to the community. The Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism advisory group could pursue discussions with the District of Sooke and the CRD to obtain ongoing base funding to help sustain tourism initiatives over the longer term. The Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism plan will help to support these discussions, as it provides a clear direction for tourism in the communities.

Tourism Funding Models and Accommodation Characteristics by Community

Community	Funding Model	Size ⁶	Number of Accommodation Properties*	Number of Rooms*	2004 Room Revenue* (millions)
Budget less than \$250K					
100 Mile House / Clinton Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	Municipal funding (District of 100 Mile House, Cariboo Regional District, Village of Clinton, Thompson Regional District), earned revenue	1,823	8 (TBC approved accommodation)	169	n/a
Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows Vancouver Coast & Mountains	Municipal funding, earned revenue, VIC funding from Tourism BC, HRSDC funding	86,412	4 (TBC approved accommodation)	123	n/a
Saanich Vancouver Island	Fees from Chamber members, municipal in-kind funding, earned revenue	39,049	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wells Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	Municipal funding, Chamber of Commerce, VIC funding from Tourism BC ⁷	261	5 (TBC approved accommodation)	71	n/a

⁶ Size is measured by population.

⁷ Respondent was not sure about VIC funding from Tourism BC.

Budget \$251K to \$500K					
Chilliwack Vancouver Coast & Mountains	2% hotel tax, Chilliwack Economic Partners Corporation (municipal funding), membership fees, earned revenue, VIC funding from Tourism BC	69,009	20 (TBC approved accommodation)	n/a	n/a
Parksville / Qualicum Vancouver Island	2% hotel tax, memberships, business license levy	18,628	n/a	n/a	n/a
Penticton Thompson Okanagan	2% hotel tax recently added, municipal funding, earned revenue	32,868	59	2,034	\$23.8
Prince George Northern BC	Municipal funding, moving to add 2% hotel tax	76,000	35	2,155	\$21.2

* Unless otherwise stated, information is from BC Tourism Room Revenue report, BC Stats, 2004.

Target Markets

The recommended target markets are as follows:

Primary markets:

- Residents of Greater Victoria, particularly couples travelling without children (start promoting to this group in the short term, with particular emphasis on the spring and fall shoulder seasons).
- Visitors to Greater Victoria after they arrive in Victoria. This group would include couples and families (start promoting to this group in the short to longer term, with day trips in the short term and overnight visits in the medium to long term).
- Residents of Metro Vancouver. This group would also include couples and families, but given the relatively high cost of reaching this market, the focus should be on cooperative marketing efforts targeting those who may be planning a visit to Vancouver Island.
- Outdoor adventure enthusiasts, particularly in the Greater Victoria and Metro Vancouver markets.
- Local residents. While residents of Sooke to Port Renfrew are not strictly a tourism target group, they represent potential ambassadors for the communities who can encourage their friends and family to visit and provide information on what to do in the area. Through local residents, potential visitors from other parts of Canada and the world could be reached efficiently.

These are considered primary target markets because Sooke to Port Renfrew has the greatest product strengths against them, they represent the greatest visitor volumes, and they are relatively cost-efficient to reach.

Secondary and niche markets:

- Other BC residents (when budget permits).
- Washington State residents (longer term and would include cooperative marketing efforts).
- Meeting and incentive travel planners for Victoria businesses (appropriate for a limited number of accommodation providers and adventure tour operators)
- Greater Victoria families with children, primarily for day trips (included in secondary markets as day trips have lower revenue potential than overnight stays).

As many of the primary and secondary markets for Sooke to Port Renfrew are also priority markets for Tourism Victoria and Tourism Vancouver Island, Sooke to Port Renfrew would do well to highlight their proximity to Victoria, and to take advantage of Tourism Victoria's and Tourism Vancouver Island's well-established marketing programs and strong tourism brands.

The distinction between primary and secondary/niche markets is based on potential visitor revenue and best practices from other communities. Leisure markets are the primary source of visitor revenue for all BC communities. The primary markets of residents of Greater Victoria (population 330,000) and Metro Vancouver (population 2.2 million) have enormous potential. As well, there are 3.6 million overnight visitors to Victoria, most of them repeat visitors who may be ready to explore areas beyond the city centre. The secondary markets of residents of other BC communities, Alberta and Washington also have potential for growth but they are not likely to come close to the visitation levels of the primary markets.

Tertiary markets:

- Leisure travellers, particularly outdoor adventure enthusiasts, with direct air access to Victoria, including Calgary, Edmonton, San Francisco.

The primary and secondary/niche markets will be pursued and promoted to proactively, and destination development will keep these target markets in mind. This does not mean that tertiary markets and visitors from other markets will not be welcome or will not receive any attention. The tourism organization would be expected to take advantage of opportunities in the tertiary meeting and incentive travel market, as well as in other geographic markets, on a reactive basis with opportunistic funds, but the limited resources of the organization will be focused on the key target markets.

Length of Stay

Getaway vacations of one to three nights will be promoted to couples in Greater Victoria and Metro Vancouver, and to those Victoria visitors who have more flexible itineraries or may visit Victoria frequently (40% of Victoria's visitors say they visit three or more times annually⁸). Particular emphasis will be placed on the spring and fall shoulder seasons where significant excess capacity exists.

Day trips will be emphasized for Victoria families and will be promoted to Victoria visitors who can be encouraged to return for an overnight visit once they have seen what the area has to offer.

⁸ 2007 Tourism Victoria Exit Survey Annual Report

Longer stays may be promoted more significantly in the medium to long term (i.e. three years or more) as tourism development and infrastructure grows, and for accommodations that are particularly suited to longer stays such as vacation homes.

Priority Product and Destination Development Strategies

The product categories to be developed and promoted are recommended as follows:

Primary tourism products:

- Outdoor adventure and accessible wilderness. The area's varied beaches, trails and regional and provincial parks offer a wide range of outdoor recreation experiences for both outdoor adventure enthusiasts and less active travellers. Hiking, cycling, whale watching, bird watching, eco-tours, fishing and lama trekking are activities that visitors of a wide range of ages and abilities can enjoy, while zip-line tours, kayaking and scuba diving appeal to a smaller sub-group of outdoor adventurers. While other communities in BC may offer similar outdoor activities, very few are as quickly and easily accessible from a major population centre and tourism destination like Victoria. The relatively mild climate of the South Island region is an added advantage, since outdoor activities can be enjoyed almost year-round.

Outdoor adventure activities, along with visiting parks and beaches, were identified in the Situation Analysis and by the working group as being competitive advantages for Sooke to Port Renfrew compared to other destinations, and they are known to be growth sectors or have high demand.

Secondary or niche tourism products:

- Arts, culture and heritage attractions and related events (including aboriginal products and experiences). The Sooke Region Museum and cultural events (such as Sooke Philharmonic performances, other music festivals and outdoor concerts, artist studio tours, the Sooke Fine Arts Show, and new aboriginal tourism experiences) can appeal to a range of day trip and overnight visitors. Given the calibre and variety of arts, cultural and heritage attractions and events available elsewhere on Vancouver Island, however, Sooke to Port Renfrew's products in this category are not likely to motivate significant increases in visitation – but they do add a different dimension to the visitor experience, and can provide reasons for visitors to stay longer and/or return.
- Heath, wellness and spa experiences.

The distinction between primary and secondary/niche products does not mean that the secondary/niche products are not important. Both of the identified priority products (primary and secondary/niche) should receive resources from the tourism organization, along with its business and government partners, to achieve the tourism growth objectives outlined in this plan.

These product priorities should not suggest that other tourism experiences in the Sooke to Port Renfrew area are not important, but the above have been identified as priorities due to their size, uniqueness, and potential to draw significant numbers of visitors. Other tourism experiences and products that provide more for a visitor to do and make a stay more enjoyable also play an important role in visitor satisfaction and an increased length of stay. These would include galleries, interesting local shops, the Sooke Farmer's Market, T'sou-ke First Nations cultural experiences, unique restaurants, pubs and cafes.

Tertiary tourism products:

- Small meetings and corporate retreats. Sooke Harbour House offers a meeting/conference room for up to 60 participants and dining facilities for up to 150 (for a stand-up reception), but with just 28 rooms it can only accommodate small groups overnight. There are only a few other resorts and tour/operators that can accommodate small groups. For this reason, meetings and retreats are considered a tertiary product category. The tourism organization can support the marketing initiatives of the various operators by providing tourism information and existing promotional materials, but should not be expected to devote significant resources to this market. Tourism operators should also investigate environmentally friendly transportation options to attract Victoria business meetings and incentive planners to make the trip out to Sooke to Port Renfrew, as corporations are increasingly factoring environmental impacts into their decision making.

Clustering of tourism products:

One of the major challenges facing Sooke to Port Renfrew is the dispersed nature of its attractions and the absence of a focal point, such as a visitor-oriented town centre or a waterfront area with a variety of shops and restaurants. Planning initiatives should be encouraged that will result in more attractive, pedestrian-friendly clusters of tourism products, including accommodation properties, local shops, museums and galleries, and restaurants that serve high quality local food in pleasant surroundings.

Marketing and promotional strategies

A focused, consumer-driven positioning and an appropriate, distinctive and consistently applied brand identity are the foundation of successful marketing campaigns. The Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization will need to articulate its positioning and establish its brand identity accordingly. Going forward, advertising and promotional programs should be evaluated to ensure they are in line with the desired positioning, reflect the brand identity, and that they are reaching the designated target markets in a cost-effective way.

Research and evaluation

Evaluation mechanisms are essential to understanding the current value of tourism in the community, to tracking growth and gauging the effectiveness of various initiatives. Some mechanisms are already in place in the form of surveys conducted at the Visitor Centre, but additional measures are needed to

evaluate the impact of marketing programs and the drawing power of the attractions and events in the area.

To measure tourism growth, the Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization will use indicators as it is costly to conduct visitor studies. Indicators could include the following:

- Occupancy data that compares occupancy rate with the total number of rooms. Occupancy data would be of even greater relevance in the longer term once overnight visitation increases.
- Room revenue.
- Number of visitors to key attractions.
- Number of visitors to Visitor Centre.

Tourism BC's "Value of Tourism" model provides a structured, consistent approach to estimating the volume and value of tourism to a community and valuable information to participants. The core data collection component of the model is an accommodation survey to gather the most recent annual performance data from commercial accommodation operators (including campgrounds). This information is then applied to local, regional, provincial and national tourism indicators to provide an informed estimate of the total number of visitors (overnight, day and visiting friends and relatives) and their expenditures in the community. (see Appendix #3).

While Sooke to Port Renfrew does not have the budget to conduct consumer research in primary target markets about attitudes and behaviour regarding visiting Sooke to Port Renfrew, a survey of visitors in the communities would provide useful information on visitors' experiences and satisfaction to guide future initiatives.

Tracking of tourism activities should occur to determine whether each activity should be continued, expanded, changed, or abandoned and will help to enhance the effectiveness of Sooke to Port Renfrew's tourism initiatives.

TACTICS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following tactics flesh out the strategies for Sooke to Port Renfrew and describe the steps to implement each tactic. While the tactics may change from year to year, the overall strategies may not. The tactics are organized in the following categories:

- Tourism organization
- Development tactics
- Promotional tactics
- Research and evaluation tactics
- Summary timetable
- Budget.

Tourism Organization

Tactic #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a new, adequately funded tourism organization within an existing structure, with dedicated staff resources and a representative tourism advisory group.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a new structure for tourism in Sooke to Port Renfrew as subsidiary of the Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce and the Sooke Economic Development Commission (as both currently share staff), with ongoing stakeholder involvement through a tourism advisory group. • Ensure core funding through municipal grants, AHRT, business levies or licence fees, etc. • Hire a freelance marketing professional (to keep fixed overhead to a minimum) to assist Sooke Chamber/EDC staff in implementing the tourism plan and bring in specialists (designers, writers, etc.) as needed. As tourism grows, and if the AHRT can be implemented, consideration should be given to hiring a full-time or at least a part-time tourism marketing staff member over the longer term.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization to be set up by end of 2008. • Freelance marketing professional in place by end of 2008.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By housing the tourism organization within an existing body, administration and operating costs will be kept to a minimum. • A freelance project manager, ideally with previous destination marketing experience, will provide dedicated attention to tourism initiatives together with the Sooke Chamber/EDC manager, while the tourism advisory group will provide strategic guidance.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain support from Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce and Sooke Economic Development Commission. • Set up core funding mechanisms (fee for service, AHRT, etc.). • Apply for UBCM funds available to District of Sooke and Juan de Fuca

	<p>Economic Development Commission (UBCM funds).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for co-shared marketing funding from the Tourism Community Foundations Co-operative Marketing Program and Tourism BC. • Establish preliminary annual budget for tourism organization. • Decide on the size and make-up of the initial tourism advisory group. • Decide on responsibilities of the tourism advisory group compared to responsibilities of paid staff and prepare terms of reference for the tourism advisory group. • Develop terms of reference and determine time requirements for freelance for marketing professional/project manager. • Hire freelance marketing professional/project manager
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce, Sooke Economic Development Commission, Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission, Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce, Capital Regional District.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce/Sooke Economic Commission staff could take the lead on setting up the tourism organization, with input from the tourism planning group members.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization to be set up with staff and freelance marketing professional in place by end of 2008.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$30K to 40K for marketing/project management services in 2008/2009, \$40K-\$50K in 2010. The budget increases to \$60K-\$90K in 2011 to allow for the hiring of a staff member over the longer term if required. • In-kind (staffing, office space, equipment, office expenses) through Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce/Sooke Economic Development Commission.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date organization is set up and marketing professional in place.

Shorter Term Development Tactics

Tactic #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with tourism-related businesses to inform them of the new tourism structure and plan, and initiate e-newsletters to provide useful information to them on tourism in general and tourism in Sooke to Port Renfrew.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These activities are meant to achieve a number of purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educate tourism-related businesses about the exciting opportunities in tourism. - Educate tourism-related businesses and potential entrepreneurs about the types of opportunities in demand in BC, Vancouver Island and in Sooke to Port Renfrew, focusing on the priority outdoor adventure products and arts, culture and heritage. - Encourage tourism-related businesses to upgrade their tourism experiences, customer service and hours of operation to meet the needs of visitors. • Initially, face-to-face communication will be needed to establish the new tourism organization. E-mail addresses should also be gathered to create a mailing list for the e-newsletter, which will provide news and marketing opportunities to tourism businesses in the communities.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of tourism-related businesses in Sooke to Port Renfrew receiving e-newsletter.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating tourism-related businesses about opportunities in tourism and the needs of visitors should increase visitor satisfaction and length of stay.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with tourism-related businesses in Sooke to Port Renfrew communities. • Obtain e-mail addresses through the meetings and through databases, ensuring opt-out options are incorporated into the e-newsletter. • Create e-newsletter. • Distribute 4 to 6 times per year, depending on the amount of communication needed.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First e-newsletter to be sent out in spring 2009, introducing the new tourism staff.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2K for set up.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of tourism-related businesses in the communities receiving e-newsletter.

Tactic #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and enhance the Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism product inventory that includes information about current accommodations, attractions and events in the Sooke to Port Renfrew communities.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial tourism product inventory has been compiled as part of the Community Tourism Foundations planning process. It is intended to be kept current and used as the information source to Sooke to Port Renfrew’s activities as well as promotional efforts by Tourism BC, Tourism Victoria and Tourism Vancouver Island. The tourism product inventory is divided into categories consistent with Tourism BC’s tourism product database. The initial Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism product inventory is included as an appendix to this plan.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The up to date tourism product inventory would be used as the basis for listings, marketing communications, media relations, etc.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine who is responsible for maintenance and enhancement of the tourism product inventory database. • Contact local businesses and event organizers regularly to augment information. • Once the information updates have been collected, Tourism BC’s system can be used to update information. Contact Tourism BC (Kathleen Harvey) to confirm appropriate steps.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism Victoria.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial tourism product inventory has been completed. Maintenance ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Tactic #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and deliver tourism education programs and provide training tools to tourism-related businesses in Sooke to Port Renfrew.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC has a series of education and training tools available, using workshops and guides. They include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism Packaging and Product Distribution - Environmentally Responsible Tourism - Travel Media Relations - Ads & Brochures that Sell - Internet Marketing - Hospitality Law Guide - Starting a Tourism Business Guide - Sport Tourism. • These workshops are available for a modest fee per participant (most are \$35 to \$45 per participant), through Tourism BC. • The SuperHost program is a valuable tool for training front line employees as well as their supervisors. Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SuperHost Fundamentals - Service Across Cultures - Japanese Service Expectations - Customers with Disabilities - Frontline Management Solutions - Solving Problems through Service - Sales Powered by Service. • The SuperHost workshops are conducted by a number of delivery organizations throughout the province, including Tourism Victoria. Workshop fees vary by delivery organization. The Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization can promote the appropriate workshops with the individual businesses paying the participation fee.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants in workshops. • At least two workshops in Year 1. • Based on the actual results from Year 1, establish objectives for Year 2 and beyond.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide educational and training tools to assist tourism-related businesses. A starting point would be the Tourism BC Business Essentials series of guides and workshops and the SuperHost workshops.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide on the appropriate workshops that will be most relevant to tourism-related businesses in the area. • Contact the appropriate delivery organization about dates and location. • Promote workshops to tourism-related businesses in Sooke to Port Renfrew. • Attend workshops to ensure the desired messages about Sooke to Port Renfrew are incorporated into the workshop.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 and ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.

Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants. • Number of workshops.
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Tactic #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate residents and non-tourism businesses about the tourism plan, its underlying principles, and the economic importance of tourism to Sooke to Port Renfrew
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A potential constraint to growth in tourism in Sooke to Port Renfrew is a lack of understanding on the part of taxpayers and opinion leaders about the economic benefits of tourism to the community overall, and the principles underlying the tourism plan (particularly economic, social and environmental sustainability). For example, residents may not see the need to help fund visitor amenities and services that they seldom use personally, and businesses may not support development initiatives designed to improve the visitor experience. • Data gathered through Tourism BC’s Value of Tourism model will provide a factual basis for the economic benefit analysis. • This education process could take the form of public meetings, speeches at the Rotary Club and other associations, a series of editorials with the local newspaper, e-newsletters, etc.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to overall objectives.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be successful, tourism development needs to be supported by all areas of a community, including businesses, local government, and residents.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the type of education that is most needed and how to best provide this education. • Develop the appropriate tool(s) (handouts, press releases, speaker support). • Pilot the tool(s) and determine changes required. • Roll out implementation.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce, Sooke Economic Development Commission, District of Sooke, Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce, Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission, regional tourism organizations, local newspaper, etc.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires time to coordinate and develop education tools(s). • \$1K allowance for tools (handouts, e-newsletter design, etc.).
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Tactic #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support tourism development initiatives that are consistent with the overall tourism strategy for Sooke to Port Renfrew.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage tourism initiatives that are consistent with the overall tourism strategy by providing support as appropriate and available. This support could be in the form of in-kind, promotional, or organizational activities. • These could include encouraging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – entrepreneurs to create new tours related to the priority product categories – expansion of festivals/events with the potential to become signature events – local businesses to increase packaging of accommodation with activity-based tourism products – development of clusters of shops, restaurants and heritage/cultural areas.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new initiatives that the tourism organization assists and/or supports on an annual basis.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tourism plan contains broad objectives and strategies that represent the community’s vision for tourism. Initiatives that are consistent with that vision should be encouraged and supported to the best of the tourism organization’s ability without compromising the competitiveness of other tourism-related businesses.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential initiatives through a variety of means (announcements, e-newsletter, and word-of-mouth). • Determine whether the initiative is appropriate to the communities, and ascertain the type of support needed. • Support will be non-financial and in the form of in-kind assistance, advice, referrals, promotion, etc.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners for this tactic would be numerous and may include the District of Sooke, Juan de Fuca Economic Commission, the Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce, Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce, community organizations, etc.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 and ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new initiatives that the tourism organization assists and/or supports on an annual basis.

Tactic #7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage tourism businesses to increase packaging of complementary tourism products, to provide potential visitors with reasons to come, and current visitors with reasons to stay longer, explore the area and return.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide more for visitors to do (particularly adults visiting outside the peak season) and to simplify the planning of their activities, encourage packaging of tourism experiences with accommodation, as well as the “bundling” of experiences to create longer (one or two-day) itineraries – both guided and self-guided - for specific demographics or interest groups. Examples might be a day of hiking, kayaking and whale watching for active outdoor adventurers; or a nature walk/llama trek combined with a visit to an organic farm or honey farm for less energetic visitors. • These packages can be promoted via the tourism website, by Visitor Centre staff, and in the Official Visitors Guide and by local tourism businesses.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of packages developed. • Number of packages booked.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As many visitors to Sooke to Port Renfrew are currently day visitors, activity packages can encourage people already visiting to spend more time and money in the area. • Packaging and promotion of activities with accommodation will help increase awareness of the many tourism experiences available in Sooke to Port Renfrew.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a Tourism BC <i>Tourism Packaging & Product Distribution</i> workshop for operators to give them further information about how to package tourism product. • Support local accommodation operators, tour operators and attractions in developing packages and itineraries. • Packages to be promoted by businesses themselves, as well as by the tourism organization, Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism BC, and Tourism Victoria as appropriate.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation sector. • Tour operators. • Other local tourism-related businesses and organizations.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 and thereafter.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/marketing professional.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participating businesses. • Number of packages booked.

Tactic #8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage initiatives that contribute to maintaining or improving the aesthetic appeal of Sooke to Port Renfrew’s tourist areas and entrances.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote initiatives to make tourist areas more visually attractive and give them a distinctive, small-town charm, such as revitalization and beautification plans, community and shoreline cleanups, beautification of facades, addition of public art, public seating, landscaping, hanging flower baskets and planters, Communities in Bloom, etc.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing improvements to Sooke to Port Renfrew’s streetscapes, main approaches, waterfronts, etc. will enhance the area’s appeal to potential visitors.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to municipal departments that contribute to Sooke to Port Renfrew’s aesthetic appeal by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Providing input to beautification plans, neighbourhood revitalization plans, design guidelines, official community plans, etc. – Identify problem areas and potential solutions that could be forwarded to the respective districts for consideration. – Identify and promote community programs such as neighbourhood clean up weekend, Communities in Bloom, etc.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke Harbour and Port Renfrew Chambers of Commerce, individual businesses, volunteer groups, etc.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate ratings of Sooke to Port Renfrew’s visual appeal in visitor surveys (see Tactic #29).

Tactic #9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the development of clusters of attractive shops, artisan studios, unique attractions and restaurants in town centres and nearby waterfront areas.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote initiatives to develop visually attractive, pedestrian-friendly focal points that offer visitors a combination of shopping (particularly independent boutiques), regional arts and crafts, and fresh, local food. • Encourage measures that will ensure these areas are clean and well-maintained, with adequate public seating, restrooms, and off-street parking nearby.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to overall objectives.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing improvements to streetscapes, waterfront, etc. will enhance the area’s appeal to potential visitors. • More market-ready shops and restaurants (from casual to fine dining) will provide more reasons for people to visit and stay longer.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to municipal departments that deal with town planning and retail development by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Providing input to development reviews, design guidelines, official community plans, etc. – Identify problem areas and potential solutions that could be forwarded to the respective districts for consideration.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke Economic Development Commission, Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission, District of Sooke, Sooke Harbour and Port Renfrew Chambers of Commerce, prospective developers, etc.
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate ratings of Sooke to Port Renfrew’s shops, galleries and restaurants in visitor surveys.

Tactic #10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current highway signage and way finding, with a view to increasing visibility and encouraging a stop in Sooke to Port Renfrew.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current signage needs to be reviewed in the context of generating greater awareness of local attractions, amenities and experiences that are of interest to visitors.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractively designed, highly visible tourism-oriented signage will help create a welcoming atmosphere and begin to address the separation between the town centre and waterfront, and the dispersed locations of the area’s natural and man-made attractions.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing signage and identify gaps. • Identify how these gaps can be addressed and any other improvements needed. • Work with the appropriate jurisdictions to address signage needs.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage: Tourism BC (as it has been working with the Ministry of Transportation on circle tours); Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Tourism, Sport, and the Arts; Capital Regional District; District of Sooke.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Organization together with District of Sooke, Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission, Port Renfrew.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and discussions in 2008/09. • Implementation of signage would be dependent on levels of government and would likely be no earlier than fall 2009.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Tactic #11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and enhance the current image bank.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A greater variety of appealing, high impact, tourism-related photos will enhance marketing communications and be valuable for cooperative initiatives such as Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism BC programs. • Particular emphasis should be placed on the priority tourism products (outdoor adventure - hiking/cycling trails, fishing, wildlife/whale watching, etc.), supplemented by images that depict the arts, cultural and heritage aspects of the area. • Where possible, images should include people enjoying the priority activities in optimal weather conditions.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality, visually appealing images are needed for any community tourism organization.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the images that are currently available (checking subject matter, aesthetic and technical quality, weather issues, usage limitations, etc.). • Identify the gaps in images. • Prepare the terms of reference for photographers (e.g. format requirements, copyrights, payment, model releases, preferred subjects, artistic quality, size, resolution). • Retain photographer and shoot images. • Create a repository of images, organized by subject, with supporting data such as photographer details, talent details and releases, and copyright requirements. Ideally images should be available royalty-free for use in all media (traditional and on-line) and by partner tourism organizations.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing, with first set of new images in fall 2009.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3K in 2009, \$3K in 2010 and \$2K allowance annually thereafter.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Shorter Term Promotional Tactics

Tactic #12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a concise positioning statement that articulates the key strengths of Sooke to Port Renfrew as a tourism destination for its primary target markets.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A positioning statement (to be used as an internal guide rather than as a slogan or tagline) will help provide focus to marketing communications. • It should define how Sooke to Port Renfrew wants to be perceived by its target markets compared to competing tourism destinations, and articulate the character or personality of the brand. • The statement should be based on reality, but should also be aspirational and forward-looking. • Potential aspects of the positioning statement could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - West Coast wilderness and wildlife, just minutes from Victoria - Outdoor adventures for every taste (from relaxed to extreme).
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A positioning statement is a first step in bringing focus and consistency to marketing efforts.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strike a small task force to develop a positioning statement for endorsement by the wider tourism advisory group.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2008.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Tactic #13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism brand identity to reflect the new positioning.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new logo or brand mark and tagline will be the cornerstone of a distinctive, appropriate and consistent look for Sooke to Port Renfrew that should be reflected in all tourism marketing materials and partner communications. • Given the long-term implications of a new brand identity, the tourism organization is advised to use the services of a professional/firm with strong credentials in developing brand identities.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more consistent approach to marketing communications will help Sooke to Port Renfrew establish its new positioning in a cluttered environment. • The tagline “Where the Rainforest Meets the Sea” and the less-frequently used “The Undiscovered West Coast” address physical aspects of the area, but do not clearly convey the outdoor experiences that visitors can enjoy nor the proximity to Victoria.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strike a small task force of staff and tourism advisory group members. • Using the positioning statement as a foundation, prepare project brief. • Issue Request for Proposals to branding/design firms. • Assign the project. • Branding firm/design team to present brand mark and tagline options for review by taskforce. • Finalize brand mark and tagline, present to wider tourism advisory group for endorsement. • Design firm to develop essential identity items (business cards, letterhead), a basic graphics standards manual specifying logo variations and fonts, colours, and formats for ads, brochures, etc.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early 2009. Begin process as soon as funding is available and marketing professional is in place; aim for finalized brand mark, tagline and brand within three months of issuing RFP.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10K to \$18K depending on credentials of design firm, number of iterations required.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Tactic #14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism brochure and print ads that reflect the new positioning and brand identity.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These essential items should be professionally designed and written to ensure that the new positioning and brand identity are reflected. • Content should highlight the priority products, with attractive images and concise, readable text; call to action will be to official tourism website and toll-free Visitor Centre line. • Brochures to be distributed through all Vancouver Island and selected Metro Vancouver Visitor Centres, BC and Washington ferries, etc. May also be distributed through local tourism businesses and Victoria hotel concierges (see Tactic #23). • Size and content of print ads to be determined based on annual advertising plan and media opportunities (see Tactic #17). • Standard 8-panel brochure format will be sufficient in Year 1 and 2. However, if the AHRT can be implemented and as tourism revenues grow, consideration should be given to producing a larger magazine-style visitor guide/lure piece in Year 3 or 4 (at least partially funded by advertising).
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion by a specific date. • Annual increases of at least 10 to 20% in number of website visits, calls to Visitor Centre and brochures distributed.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising and promotional programs should be in line with the desired positioning, reflect the brand identity, and designed to reach the designated target markets in a cost-effective way. • Brochures and print advertising are important sources of information for potential visitors.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a project brief that defines the target audience, desired positioning, brand elements and overall communication objectives. • Work with branding firm/design team chosen for branding/logo project, or issue an RFP to other firms or freelancers that offer expertise in copywriting, design and print production. • Work closely with selected team to ensure end products are consistent in style and tone and focused on the information that potential visitors need. • Determine most effective distribution methods for the brochure.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization, working with design/advertising firm or freelance designer/writer, printer.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete by summer 2009, or soon as possible after new positioning and branding have been developed.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$15K in 2009 and \$10K annually thereafter (assuming advertising revenues offset much of the cost of the brochure/visitor guide).
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of website visits. • Number of calls to toll free information number (Visitor Centre). • Number of brochures/guides distributed.

Tactic #15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Sooke News Mirror to ensure the 2009 <i>Sooke to Port Renfrew Visitors Guide</i> reflects the new positioning and brand identity.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial content of the <i>Visitors Guide</i> produced by the Sooke News Mirror should emphasize the priority tourism products for Sooke to Port Renfrew, and the new positioning and branding elements should be incorporated into its design. • The publication should include numerous attractive images of the area, its activities and accommodations, accompanied by informative captions and brief descriptions.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to overall tourism goals.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the only visitors guide that currently exists for Sooke to Port Renfrew, it is important that this publication (which reaches both potential and current visitors) is in line with the desired tourism positioning and reflects the new brand identity.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with the publishers to discuss “Official Visitors Guide” designation, provided design and content are consistent with Sooke to Port Renfrew’s tourism product priorities and brand identity.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke News Mirror.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009, once new positioning and branding have been developed.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to work with Sooke News Mirror.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Tactic #16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh the design and content of the Sooke Region Tourism Association website to reflect the new positioning and brand identity and optimize for search engine rankings.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing SRTA website can serve as the basis for the official tourism site for Sooke to Port Renfrew if redesigned to be consistent with the new positioning, brand identity and graphic standards. • The site should include as many attractive images as possible, accompanied by informative captions and brief descriptions (website users tend to scan for information rather than read lengthy passages). • Calendar of Events pages should be located on the tourism site if possible, rather than being an external link to the Sooke Region Museum website. • Implement optimization techniques to improve search engine rankings. • Work with Tourism BC's HelloBC.com team to ensure that they also have current and appropriate content for Sooke to Port Renfrew (see Tactic #24)
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion by a specific date. • Annual increases of at least 10 to 20% in number of unique visits and time spent on site.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having an Internet presence is important as the majority of American and Canadian travellers use the Internet for vacation planning and about half book online. • Search engine optimization will help ensure that those seeking information on visiting the area are directed to the most appropriate site. • Advertising and promotional programs should be in line with the desired positioning, reflect the brand identity, and designed to reach the designated target markets in a cost-effective way.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a project brief that defines the target audience, desired positioning, brand elements and overall communication objectives. • Prepare and distribute RFP to firm(s) that offer expertise in website design and development and search engine optimization. • Work closely with selected firm to ensure end products are consistent with the new graphic standards and provide the information that potential visitors need.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009, once new positioning and branding have been developed. • In the meantime, ensure that content on www.sooketourism.bc.ca, HelloBC.com, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism Victoria websites is current and focused on the priority tourism products.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10K in 2009 for website development and search engine optimization, and \$5K annually thereafter for updates and maintenance. • Time to ensure content is kept accurate and up to date.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of unique website visits and time spent on website.

Tactic #17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach potential visitors via targeted advertising, particularly through publications and cooperative programs developed by Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism Victoria.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising in the high quality travel guides/planners produced by the larger destination marketing organizations is a cost-effective way to reach consumers who may be considering a visit to BC and/or Southern Vancouver Island or are already visiting. • There are also frequent opportunities to participate in Tourism Vancouver Island coordinated cooperative advertising/editorial programs with targeted consumer publications (such as <i>Westworld</i>, <i>BC Getaways</i> in the <i>Vancouver Sun</i> and <i>Province</i> newspapers, etc.). • The Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization should participate actively in these initiatives, taking advantage of the discounted rates to maximize a limited advertising budget. • Local tourism businesses should also be encouraged to participate on a “pay to play” basis. • Set aside a smaller portion of the budget to take advantage of other appropriate advertising opportunities that may occur, especially those targeting visitors to Victoria and couples living in Greater Victoria.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined based on publication/program.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with Tourism Victoria, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism BC is a cost-effective approach to tourism marketing.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review advertising rates and circulation for the various guides/planners. • Review additional cooperative marketing opportunities through Tourism Vancouver Island. • Decide on which opportunities to pursue, size of ad (minimum 1/6 page, maximum ½ page). • Produce ad material, consistent with formats developed as part of the brand identity process (Tactic #13). • Present cooperative opportunities to tourism businesses in the communities and encourage participation on a pay to play basis.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Victoria: <i>Official Vacation Guide</i>, www.tourismvictoria.com. • Tourism Vancouver Island: <i>Vancouver Island, Victoria, Gulf Islands Vacation Guide</i>, • Tourism BC: <i>Outdoor Adventure Guide</i>, <i>BC Escapes</i> (accommodation/activity packages) • <i>Where (Victoria)</i>
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 and ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$20K in 2009, \$30-40K in 2010, \$40-50K in 2011 and 2012, \$45-55K in 2013.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.

Tactic #18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities to reach Greater Victoria residents and visitors through Victoria Attractions Association (VAA) marketing programs.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual “Be a Tourist in Your Own Hometown” coupon book, which features free or two-for-one admission and other special offers, encourages Victoria residents to experience Victoria and South Island attractions, restaurants and accommodations in early spring, before the peak tourism season begins. Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism businesses may be able to participate in the program, with the approval of the VAA and payment of a fee (approximately \$200.00 per business). • The VAA also publishes a map of Victoria’s Inner Harbour and the West Shore, 700,000 copies of which are distributed through Vancouver Island Visitor Centres, ferries, Greater Victoria hotels and other visitor venues. A limited amount of paid advertising space is available on the map, and it may be possible to accompany this with a reference to Sooke to Port Renfrew on the map itself. As an advertising vehicle, this could be appropriate for a general Sooke to Port Renfrew destination message and/or for specific tourism businesses.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of coupons redeemed at local tourism businesses for “Be a Tourist” promotion. • Number of potential visitors exposed to Sooke to Port Renfrew message on map.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If available, these VAA programs can be cost-effective ways to reach residents of Greater Victoria or visitors to Victoria, both of whom are primary target markets for overnight stays and day visits.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact VAA coordinator Krista Larsen (tel. 250-382-6432 or e-mail krista.larsen@shaw.ca). • Determine advertising and promotional opportunities available, timing and costs. • Make tourism businesses aware of the opportunities and encourage participation. • Evaluate results of participation to determine if worth continuing.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke to Port Renfrew attractions, restaurants, accommodation properties.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization. • Sooke to Port Renfrew attractions, restaurants, accommodation properties.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial enquiries should take place in summer 2008 as 2009 programs will be finalized in September/October.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4K allowance for map advertising.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of “Be a Tourist” coupons redeemed. • Number of visitors citing VAA coupon or map as a factor in their decision to come to Sooke to Port Renfrew, as determined by visitor surveys (see Tactic #29).

Tactic #19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media relations with general and special interest publications reaching Greater Victoria and Metro Vancouver residents.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use unpaid media to generate editorial coverage of events and attractions in the priority product categories, particularly outdoor adventures and arts/cultural events and festivals. • Focus on media that target Greater Victoria residents and visitors and Metro Vancouver residents. This could include the travel and leisure sections of the Times Colonist (“Go!”) and Vancouver Sun and Province, Monday Magazine, Boulevard and community papers, as well as family magazines and e-newsletters, and specialty publications and websites dealing with outdoor recreation. • Work with Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, and Tourism Victoria to ensure Sooke to Port Renfrew receives its fair share of editorial coverage in their publications and websites. • Assist Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism BC, and Tourism Victoria with media fam tours (see Tactic #20).
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To achieve a minimum of five stories on events or attractions in the communities in Year 1. Based on the actual results from Year 1, establish objectives for Year 2 and beyond.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial coverage is cost effective and has high credibility among readers. Greater Victoria and Metro Vancouver residents are the primary target groups.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a list of targeted publications, editors and journalists. • Determine whether prepared stories, press releases, familiarization tours, or other methods of achieving editorial coverage are appropriate for each. • When newsworthy events occur, prepare press releases and distribute to appropriate media.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism Victoria.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 and ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5K annually for hosting, materials, photography.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings. When budget permits, add media monitoring service.

Tactic #20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with larger city, regional and provincial destination marketing organizations on media relations and other marketing initiatives.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to their publications, websites and cooperative advertising programs, Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism Victoria are engaged in numerous activities such as media/trade familiarization tours, media marketplaces, and consumer travel and trade shows. • The Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization should participate actively in these initiatives, taking advantage of the opportunities to reach markets it cannot afford to reach on its own.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism Victoria is a cost-effective approach to tourism marketing and media relations.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review marketing and media relations opportunities as they become available • Decide on opportunities to pursue. • Where appropriate, present opportunities to tourism businesses in the communities and encourage participation.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism Victoria.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 and ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.

Tactic #21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a “Be a Tourist in Your Own Town” promotion to familiarize local residents with Sooke to Port Renfrew’s tourism products and encourage them to be tourism ambassadors.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coinciding with the beginning of the tourism season in spring, residents will be invited to purchase and use a special “Sooke to Port Renfrew passport”, which entitles them to free or deeply discounted admission (or other high value offers) at area attractions, cultural events, restaurants, shops, etc. for a limited time. • The passports can be available through the Sooke Visitor Centre and other outlets, at a nominal cost (under \$5) in relation to the value represented (at least \$200). • When residents use their passports at participating business or events, the passport is validated with an official stamp. Once a certain number of stamps are obtained, the passport may be used as an entry form, to be deposited at the Sooke Visitor Centre and other designated locations by a predetermined date. A winning entry is then chosen, with the winner receiving a grand prize (minimum \$1,000 value) consisting of items/offers donated by the participating businesses. • Attractions or performing arts groups that do not charge admission fees can encourage residents to visit/attend by offering to stamp passports.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of local residents who visit participating businesses/events.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local residents are potential tourism ambassadors who may invite their friends and relatives to visit Sooke to Port Renfrew and provide information on its many activities and attractions.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize the mechanisms to implement the promotion. • Obtain agreement from business operators and non-profit groups to participate in the campaign. • Obtain discounts, special offers and grand prize elements through tourism-related businesses in the communities. • Promote the event through local advertising, posters and media releases.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke News Mirror. • Tourism-oriented businesses and arts and cultural groups in the area. • Other partnerships to be determined.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2010 and annually thereafter.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3K annually (may be offset by passport purchase price).
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participating business or groups. • Number of passports purchased. • Number of visits to participating businesses/events.

Tactic #22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an “invite family and friends” e-mail campaign, encouraging local residents to invite their friends and family for a visit.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents are naturally proud of their community and this initiative motivates them to tell their friends and family what a great destination Sooke to Port Renfrew is. • A series of electronic postcards would be posted on the tourism website, each highlighting a particular aspect of Sooke to Port Renfrew, and incorporating a link back to the official tourism website. • A contest could be included to encourage postcard recipients to visit the tourism website (e.g. “Win a weekend of outdoor adventures”) • Announce initiative through local media (paid advertising and unpaid editorial coverage)
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of postcards sent and contest entries received.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success of local tourism relies partially on strong community support. This initiative motivates the community to become involved in tourism. • By encouraging residents to send promotional e-postcards to non-resident family and friends, wide exposure is possible at very little cost.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize the mechanisms to implement the campaign. • Obtain sponsors to participate in the campaign. • Obtain prizes through tourism-related businesses in the communities.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media, hotels and attractions in the area. • Other partnerships to be determined.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2010 and annually thereafter.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5K annually (may be partially offset by sponsorship revenue).
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants.

Tactic #23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism experiences to visitors to Greater Victoria through Visitor Centres and hotels.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Greater Victoria already receives 3.6 million overnight visitors annually, there is an opportunity to encourage some of these visitors to make at least a day trip to Sooke to Port Renfrew. Greater Victoria Visitor Centres and major hotels (through their concierges) should be contacted to ensure they are aware of the visitor experiences in Sooke to Port Renfrew that would be of interest to their guests. • Outdoor adventures (including the activity packages described in Tactic#7), would be the primary product, but events such as the Sooke Fine Arts Show and the various music festivals are also noteworthy.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to overall objectives based on tourism indicators.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors to Greater Victoria are one of the primary target markets.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with management of Greater Victoria Visitor Centres how best to convey information about tourism experiences in Sooke to Port Renfrew to their visitors. • Put together a test concierge program, including information kit and suggested itineraries for specific types of groups, with selected Victoria hotels.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 and thereafter.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3K, increasing to \$5K in 2011 and thereafter, depending on results.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall objectives of visitor volume through tourism indicators.

Tactic #24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize Tourism BC’s marketing opportunities to expose Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism products to millions of potential visitors.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC’s www.hellobc.com website receives 7 million web visits annually, its HelloBC call centre receives 119,000 calls, and the Tourism BC visitor centres throughout BC receive 3.4 million visitors (all 2007/08 figures). • The Sooke to Port Renfrew tourism organization and the tourism businesses in the area can benefit from the power that these tools provide and the \$9 million annually in advertising that drive visitors to these sources of information. • The marketing opportunities that are recommended for Sooke to Port Renfrew include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content for the community pages of www.hellobc.com. Currently, there is a listing for Sooke but no mention of Port Renfrew or the smaller communities in the area. Since the Sooke to Port Renfrew communities are being marketed together they should either as a combined listing (and might appear as separate listings as well). The tourism organization should contact mikala.talyer@tourismbc.com to take advantage of this free service. - Listings program for tourism businesses, including festivals and events. Tourism businesses in Sooke to Port Renfrew can choose to be accessible to visitors on the above mentioned distribution channels. Prices for non-accommodation businesses are \$95 per year depending on the size of the listing. Prices for accommodation businesses are tiered based on size of property. Tourism BC staff also uses the listings as a resource for requests it receives about media relations, from meeting planners, to advise potential visitors. More information is available on www.tourismbc.net. - The BC Escapes program is a multi-million dollar marketing campaign conducted by Tourism BC in selected high potential cities in Canada and the U.S., including a BC resident campaign. The fulfillment mechanisms are through www.hellobc.com and 1-800-hellobc. There is a fee to participate in the reservations program and commission is charged. Currently 43 Sooke area accommodation properties are listed on www.hellobc.com but only four are bookable through the website or call centre. Hellobc.com is presently limited to listing accommodation and activity packages through accommodation properties, but other activities are anticipated to be bookable in the future. More information is available on www.tourisnbc.net.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of web visits to the community pages, individual business results.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These opportunities provide exposure for Sooke to Port Renfrew to its primary target markets as well as markets further afield.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide content for the community pages of www.hellobc.com. • Work with tourism businesses to encourage them to participate in the Tourism BC programs.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, tourism businesses in the communities.

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Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning in 2009 and ongoing thereafter.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of web visits to the community pages, individual business results.

Longer Term Promotional Tactics

Tactic #25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media relations with general and special interest publications reaching residents of Alberta, the rest of BC (beyond Metro Vancouver) and Washington, including couples and families.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to limited resources, media relations initiatives targeting Alberta and the wider BC and Washington markets should start in Year 2 after marketing initiatives in Greater Victoria and Metro Vancouver market have been established. • Initially, cooperative media relations with Tourism Victoria, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism BC would be an efficient way to reach these markets, in conjunction with messages relating to Greater Victoria and Vancouver Island.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To achieve a minimum of five stories on events or attractions in Sooke to Port Renfrew by Year 2. Based on the actual results from Year 2, establish objectives for Year 3 and beyond.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial coverage is cost effective and has high credibility among readers. • Alberta and the rest of BC are secondary markets with long-term potential.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with media relations departments of Tourism Victoria, Tourism Vancouver Island and Tourism BC to ensure Sooke to Port Renfrew is covered in appropriate media relations opportunities. • Participate in media fam tours. • After some experience has been gained through cooperative efforts, establish a list of targeted publications. • Based on each publication, determine whether prepared stories, press releases, familiarization tours, or other methods of achieving editorial coverage are appropriate. • When newsworthy events occur, prepare press releases and distribute to appropriate media.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism Victoria.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 and ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2K annually.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings. • Number of media fam tours.

Tactic #26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advantage of new cooperative marketing opportunities.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each year, opportunities arise through other tourism organizations based on projects that may take years to come to fruition. Examples could include advertising or the filming of an international travel show in BC. These opportunities are usually unanticipated but funds should be set aside each year to take advantage of them when they occur.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The priority target groups and priority products should be the focus of these opportunities.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the new cooperative marketing opportunities against the priority target groups and priority products. • Determine whether pay-to-play fees are appropriate for tourism-related businesses in Sooke to Port Renfrew.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism Victoria.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008/2009 and ongoing.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5K annually, with pay-to-play fees as appropriate.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.

Research and Evaluation Tactics

Tactic #27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage local accommodation providers to participate in Tourism BC’s Value of Tourism analysis by completing and returning the accommodation surveys and forecasts (see Appendix #3).
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC “Value of Tourism Model” uses accommodation data to estimate visitor volume and direct tourism expenditures within a community. The data is collected from accommodation operators (both fixed roof and campgrounds) and is then applied to regional, provincial and national tourism indicators to provide an informed estimate of the number of visitors and their expenditures in each community. • Ideally, the accommodation properties will fill out 12 months worth of monthly data such that the economic impact of tourism to Sooke to Port Renfrew can be calculated. Thereafter, the monthly Commercial Accommodation Survey can be used to track occupancy.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the value to tourism to Sooke to Port Renfrew.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking is important to measure tourism growth and track success of tourism initiatives. • There is a need to educate local residents and businesses about the economic importance of tourism in the community.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine interest of accommodation properties to be involved in tracking. At least 50% of accommodation rooms would need to participate to provide meaningful data. • Distribute surveys to participants.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC Research Department. • Accommodation properties.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization. • Accommodation properties.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on accommodation properties. Ideally, a baseline should be established using 2008 data.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of Tourism model implemented in Sooke to Port Renfrew.

Tactic #28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up and maintain tracking for key attractions, festivals and events.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although attendance at the Sooke Region Museum is currently tracked, attendance statistics for other key attractions and festivals/events in the communities can also be useful as indicators of tourism growth. • Attendance would be tracked by attractions operators and by organizers of ticketed events, such as the Sooke Fine Arts Show and Sooke River Music Festival. • Attendance at non-ticketed events such as the Sooke Philharmonic Fling or Sooke Country Market would be estimated by methods that allow for reliable year-over-year comparisons, such as crowd counts at specific intervals and locations during the events. • Attendance numbers would be reported only to the tourism organization. If confidentiality is an issue, the tourism organization can agree to publish only aggregate attendance numbers.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking of various attraction and events is important to measure overall tourism growth and track success of tourism initiatives
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Tourism BC about assistance with tools and formats for tracking. • Determine key attractions and events to be involved in tracking. • Obtain agreement from key attractions and event organizers to take on this responsibility. • Confirm formats and work with key attractions and event organizers to put systems in place to track.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC. • Key attractions operators and even organizers.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a baseline using 2009 data.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Tactic #29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct survey of visitors in Sooke to Port Renfrew about their experience and satisfaction.
Short description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine the aspects of Sooke to Port Renfrew that satisfy visitor expectations, to identify areas for improvement, and to determine trip characteristics, and how visitors decided to come to the area.
Quantifiable objectives (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.
Rationale / relation to strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To better understand visitor attitudes and behaviour.
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Tourism BC to obtain advice on questionnaire design and sampling methodology. Determine whether Tourism BC can assist in consolidating collected information. • Decide on intercept points for visitor research such as Visitor Centre/Sooke Region Museum. • Field research in the late spring/summer/early fall 2009.
Potential partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism BC.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organization.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late spring/summer/early fall 2009, with updates every other year.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined.
Evaluation mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/a.

Summary Timetable

Strategy or Tactic	2008 - 2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Establish and staff new tourism organization	X				
2. Meet with tourism businesses, create e-newsletter	X	X	X	X	X
3. Maintain and enhance tourism product inventory	X	X	X	X	X
4. Promote and deliver tourism education programs and tools	X	X	X	X	X
5. Educate residents and other businesses about tourism	X	X	X	X	X
6. Support development consistent with tourism strategy	X	X	X	X	X
7. Encourage packaging of complementary tourism products	X	X	X	X	X
8. Encourage aesthetic improvements to tourism areas	X	X	X	X	X
9. Encourage clusters of shops, galleries, restaurants	X	X	X	X	X
10. Review highway signage and way finding	X	X	X	X	X
11. Expand and enhance image bank	X	X	X	X	X
12. Develop positioning statement	X				
13. Update tourism brand identity	X				
14. Develop/distribute tourism brochure and print ads	X	X	X	X	X
15. Work with Sooke News Mirror on 2009 <i>Visitor Guide</i>	X				
16. Refresh and optimize tourism website	X	X	X	X	X
17. Advertising in travel guides, planners and other publications	X	X	X	X	X
18. Investigate marketing opportunities with Victoria Attractions Association	X				
19. Media relations reaching Greater Victoria and Vancouver	X	X	X	X	X
20. Work with larger DMOs on media relations, marketing	X	X	X	X	X
21. “Be A Tourist in Your Own Town” promotion		X	X	X	X
22. “Invite family and friends” e-mail campaign		X	X	X	X
23. Promote through Victoria Visitor Centres, hotels.		X	X	X	X
24. Maximize Tourism BC marketing opportunities	X	X	X	X	X
25. Media relations reaching Alberta, BC, Washington		X	X	X	X
26. Take advantage of new cooperative marketing opportunities		X	X	X	X
27. Encourage participation in Value of Tourism analysis	X	X	X	X	X
28. Tracking of key attractions, festivals and events	X	X	X	X	X
29. Survey of visitors	X		X		X

BUDGET

Strategy or Tactic	The amounts shown are broad estimates for budgeting purposes only. No quotes have been obtained.				
	\$000s				
	2008 – 2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Establish and staff new tourism organization ⁹	30-40	40-50	60-90 ¹⁰	60-90	65-95
2. Meet with tourism businesses, create e-newsletter	2	-	-	-	-
3. Maintain and enhance tourism product inventory	-	-	-	-	-
4. Promote and deliver tourism education programs and tools	-	-	-	-	-
5. Educate residents and other businesses about tourism	-	-	-	-	-
6. Support development consistent with tourism strategy	-	-	-	-	-
7. Encourage packaging of complementary tourism products	-	-	-	-	-
8. Encourage aesthetic improvements to tourism areas	-	-	-	-	-
9. Encourage clusters of shops, galleries, restaurants	-	-	-	-	-
10. Review highway signage and way finding	-	-	-	-	-
11. Expand and enhance image bank	3	3	2	2	2
12. Develop positioning statement	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
13. Update tourism brand identity	10-18	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
14. Develop/distribute tourism brochure and print ads	15	10	10	10	10
15. Work with Sooke News Mirror on 2009 <i>Visitor Guide</i>	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
16. Refresh and optimize tourism website	10	5	5	5	5
17. Advertising in travel guides, planners and targeted publications	20	30-40	40-50	40-50	45-55
18. Investigate marketing opportunities with Victoria Attractions Association	4	4	4	4	4
19. Media relations reaching Greater Victoria, Vancouver	5	5	5	5	5
20. Work with larger DMOs on media relations, marketing	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
21. “Be A Tourist in Your Own Town” promotion	n/a	3	3	3	3
22. “Invite family and friends” e-mail campaign	n/a	5	5	5	5
23. Promote through Victoria Visitor Centres, hotels	n/a	3	5	5	5
24. Maximize Tourism BC marketing opportunities	-	-	-	-	-
25. Media relations reaching Alberta, BC, Washington	n/a	2	2	2	2
26. Take advantage of new cooperative marketing opportunities	5	5	5	5	5
27. Encourage participation in Value of Tourism analysis	-	-	-	-	-
28. Tracking of key attractions, festivals and events	-	-	-	-	-
29. Survey of visitors	TBD	n/a	TBD	n/a	TBD
Total (\$000)	104-122	115-135	146-189	146-189	156-198

⁹ As the recommended organization structure is a subsidiary of the Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce/Sooke Economic Planning Office, the support from the Chamber/EDC is identified as in-kind with an allowance for retaining a marketing professional on contract in the first few years. In general, budgets for staffing, office space, equipment and general office costs for a community tourism function can range from \$100K to \$200K.

¹⁰ Budget increase provides an allowance for increasing marketing professional’s time or hiring a staff resource.

Community Tourism Foundations Marketing Program

As part of the Community Tourism Foundations program, those communities that have gone through the development side of the program (i.e. developing this tourism plan) will have access to cost-shared funding through the marketing side of the program. The marketing program provides a small amount of funding to provide initial support in an effort to increase the success of communities as they embrace tourism. This Tourism BC program, administered through the regional tourism associations (in the case of Sooke to Port Renfrew, through Tourism Vancouver Island) provides a maximum of \$50K over a period of three years. Eligible activities in Sooke to Port Renfrew’s case may include the following:

1. Marketing professional/project manager (contract)
10. Expand and enhance image bank
12. Update tourism brand identity
13. Develop/distribute tourism brochure, print ads
15. Refresh/optimize tourism website
16. Advertising in travel guides, planners, targeted publications
20. Invite friends and family promotion
22. Promote through Victoria area Visitor Centres, hotels
25. New cooperative marketing opportunities.

This list is not meant to be definitive as discussions between the tourism organization and Tourism Vancouver Island will need to take place to determine eligible activities.