

THE VANCOUVER, COAST & MOUNTAINS (VCM) REGION IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

City of Surrey Case Study

August 2024



INTRODUCTION



The Vancouver, Coast & Mountains (VCM) region [Destination Management and Development Implementation Guide](#)—an accompanying piece to [VCM's Regional Destination Development Strategy](#)—highlights the ways in which tourism destination management and development intersect with local government roles and responsibilities. The guide and the case studies presented within demonstrate how government decisions can shape tourism and the ways in which collaborative work with government and the community achieves benefits for visitors, locals, industry partners, and the environment.

ADAPTING THIS GUIDE FOR YOUR DESTINATION



The three presented case studies showcase the [VCM Implementation Guide](#) at work, which can serve other destinations. The City of Surrey case study, specifically, highlights the early stages of destination management and development, where many other destinations across the country likely find themselves.

A couple highlighted examples of the work Discover Surrey has already conducted in their journey include:

- Leading the development of research and plans that help inform tourism development and growth in the city. In 2023, for example, the organization collaborated with Destination BC to conduct a Value of Tourism Study.
- Linking existing community assets to develop new, market-ready travel experiences. In the summer of 2021, for example, the Surrey Spice Trail was launched, with Tourism Sentiment Index results showing a 25% increase in positive sentiment over the provincial average afterwards.

Elements of all three phases of the [Tourism Continuum](#) (pg. 22) are at play for the City of Surrey—few market-ready products and experiences; community planning focused on economic and cultural development but with limited reference to tourism; recognition of tourism challenges and potential; an active Destination Management and Marketing Organization (DMO) collecting and appropriately using Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT); early stages of proactive tourism partner collaboration; event hosting seen as an important economic and social sector.



Implementation of the [VCM Strategy](#) is broken down into a three-staged approach (pg. 26–28), which in the case of the City of Surrey aligns more heavily with Stage 1 and 2.

1

In Stage 1, the focus is analyzing where there is overlap between destination management and development with local governments' roles, responsibilities, and functions. Using the destination development themes outlined in the [VCM Implementation Guide](#) helps guide this analysis. In the City of Surrey case study, for example, two of the destination development themes—Transportation and Infrastructure, and Product and Experience Development—are explored, highlighting opportunities for tourism partners to align their work for the benefit of the industry and the community.

2

Stage 2 is about exploring alignment with local governments' areas of interest. In the case study, we note proactive collaboration starting to happen and growing awareness of the value of tourism among tourism partners, with room to continue expanding destination development and management opportunities in the city planning process.

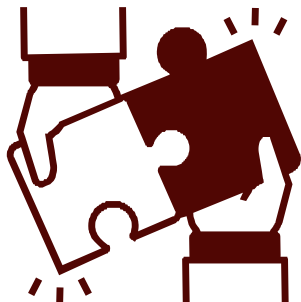
Through the documented Action Plan, we gain insight into next steps for the destination, which include expanding engagement within the community through existing forums, furthering awareness among city staff and council, and continuing to share information about the value tourism brings to the local economy and the quality of life for residents. The continued collaborative work highlighted in the Action Plan will further Stage 2 and eventually lead into Stage 3 for the City of Surrey.

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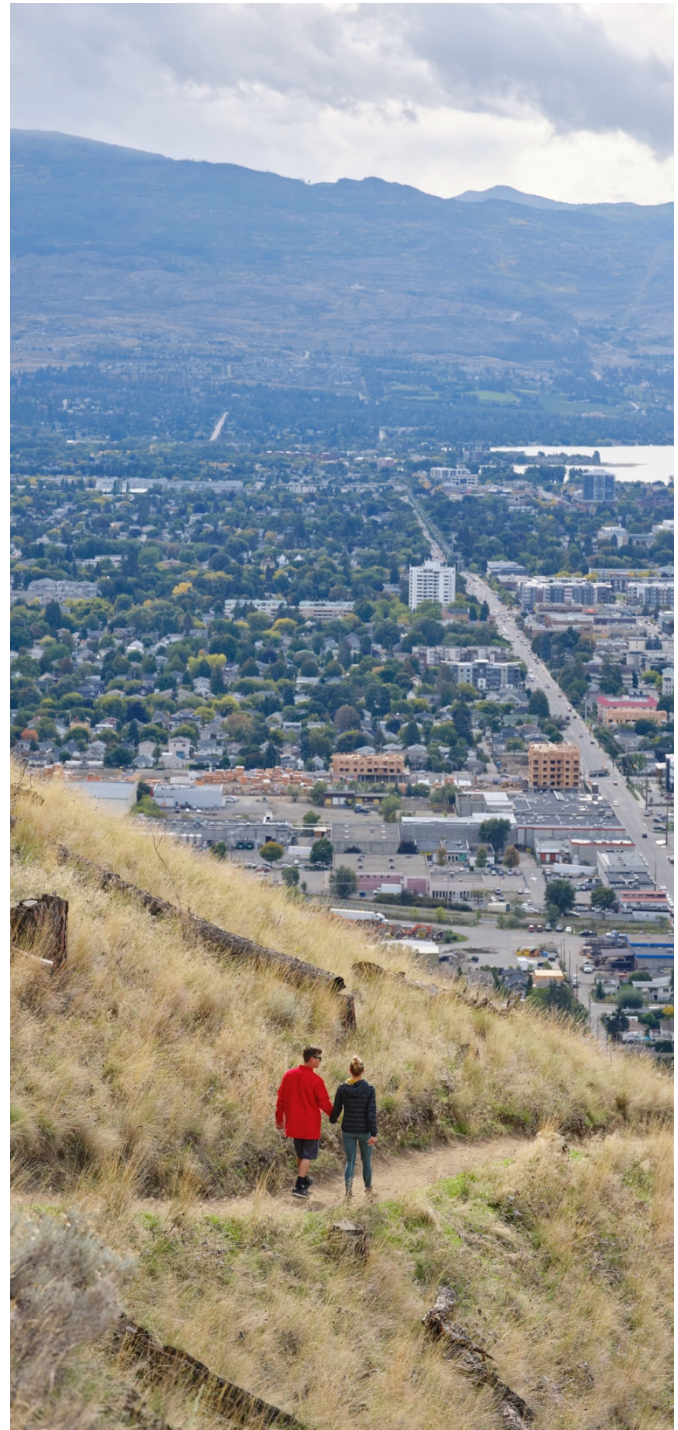
As noted in the [VCM Implementation Guide](#), tourism is shaped by local government decisions — successful community-based tourism occurs through collaborative relationships with local government and community organizations, taking into account and respecting local interests.



Discover Surrey has already started to put the puzzle pieces together on its destination management and development journey, with work that includes collaborating with Destination BC to conduct a Value of Tourism Study and developing new, market-ready travel experiences, like the Surrey Spice Trail.

1 Tourism Continuum

The Tourism Continuum outlined in the [VCM Implementation Guide](#) provides a way to review and evaluate a community's position in its destination development journey. For the City of Surrey, elements of all three phases are at play, as noted with a few examples below.



2 Implementation Approach

	Focus	City of Surrey
STAGE 1	Analysis of destination management and development overlap with local governments' roles, responsibilities, and functions	Explores two destination development themes to highlight the opportunities for tourism partners to align their work for the benefit of the industry and the community.
STAGE 2	Exploring alignment with local governments' areas of interest.	Proactive collaboration is starting to happen and there is a growing awareness of the value of tourism, with room to continue expanding opportunities in the city planning process.
STAGE 3	Reporting on findings and recommended actions.	Completion of this stage will happen later in the journey.



3 Action Plan

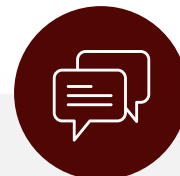
The documented Action Plan in the City of Surrey case study provides insight into the next steps for the destination, which include:



Expanding engagement with the community through existing forums.



Furthering awareness among city staff and council.



Continuing to share information about the value tourism brings to the local economy and the quality of life for residents.