



JASPER DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that Jasper National Park is on Treaty 6 and 8 Territories as well as Métis Region 4. This land is the traditional territory, meeting ground, gathering place, travelling route and home for the Dane-zaa (Beaver), Nêhiyawak (Cree), Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Secwépemc (Shuswap), Stoney Nakoda and Métis Nations. In a continuous dedication to land stewardship, listening to, learning from, and nurturing relationships with Indigenous Peoples, who are the original stewards of this land, will be a top priority. Their guidance will serve as the north star in safeguarding the natural and cultural heritage of Jasper for generations to come, as well as enhancing action towards reconciliation.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan is to optimize the visitor economy to best steward the collective future of Jasper and Jasper National Park. That requires the public, private, and civic sectors to work together as effectively as possible to achieve a shared long-term vision of a unified community.

At its heart, this plan is a 10-year roadmap that outlines initiatives that both protect the authenticity of Jasper and future-proof the region's visitor economy, which fuels most economic activity and employment opportunities in the community. This plan is not just a document, it's a living process, evolving with local priorities and the involvement of everyone, from local businesses to community groups and individual residents.

The intended outcome of this plan is the community's shared success. For Jasper to be vibrant, resilient, regenerative, and authentic in the coming decades, the community must be aligned. United, Jasperites can define and create the future they want.

This plan lights the way forward.



CONTEXT

The idea for this plan was conceptualized in the heart of COVID-19 when Jasper residents and businesses were trying to stay afloat as the community's economic lifeblood was put on pause. This period offered a moment of reflection and a window of opportunity for transforming how we do things here in Jasper. **With a renewed focus on nurturing the supply side of the visitor economy, the notion of a Destination Stewardship Plan was formed.**

To create this plan, the community identified local opportunities, challenges, and ways forward to make Jasper and Jasper National Park, as a tourism destination and mountain community, more vibrant, resilient, regenerative, and authentic. Through collaboration with Parks Canada and the Municipality of Jasper, led by MMGY NextFactor and Tourism Jasper, this plan was developed to chart a roadmap for the future based on that collective community vision. **This plan should be used as a guiding document to catalyze action and inform the future visitor economy. The implementation of this plan will not be static, as the approach is intended to evolve and remain fluid as local priorities and circumstances change over the next decade.**

This plan's implementation is unique in that it is not owned by one group and is instead facilitated by Tourism Jasper in partnership with Parks Canada and the Municipality of Jasper. Recognizing that each organization has their own autonomy and priorities related to the day-to-day functioning of the park and community, we will collaborate to implement the recommended initiatives, while respecting each partner's strategic objectives and circumstances. **As partners, we will strive to work together and realize a mutually beneficial future for the destination.**



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY...

Community:

"Community" refers to an interconnected group of people that share values, cultures, passions, and/or living areas. It's vital to acknowledge that communities are dynamic and as new members join the community of Jasper, the shared values, cultures, and passions will naturally transform over time.

Jasper:

The term "Jasper" refers primarily to the people, businesses, and infrastructure located within the town borders of the municipality. However, this term can also apply more broadly when framing the wider and surrounding region as an international tourism destination.

Jasper National Park:

The terms "Jasper National Park" or "the park" refer to the natural and cultural systems that characterize the 11,228 km² protected area and are central to the community of Jasper, visited by millions of people every year, and managed by Parks Canada.

Regenerative:

"Regenerative" refers to a form of tourism that positively impacts the local community, economy, and environment, giving back more than it takes.

Sustainable:

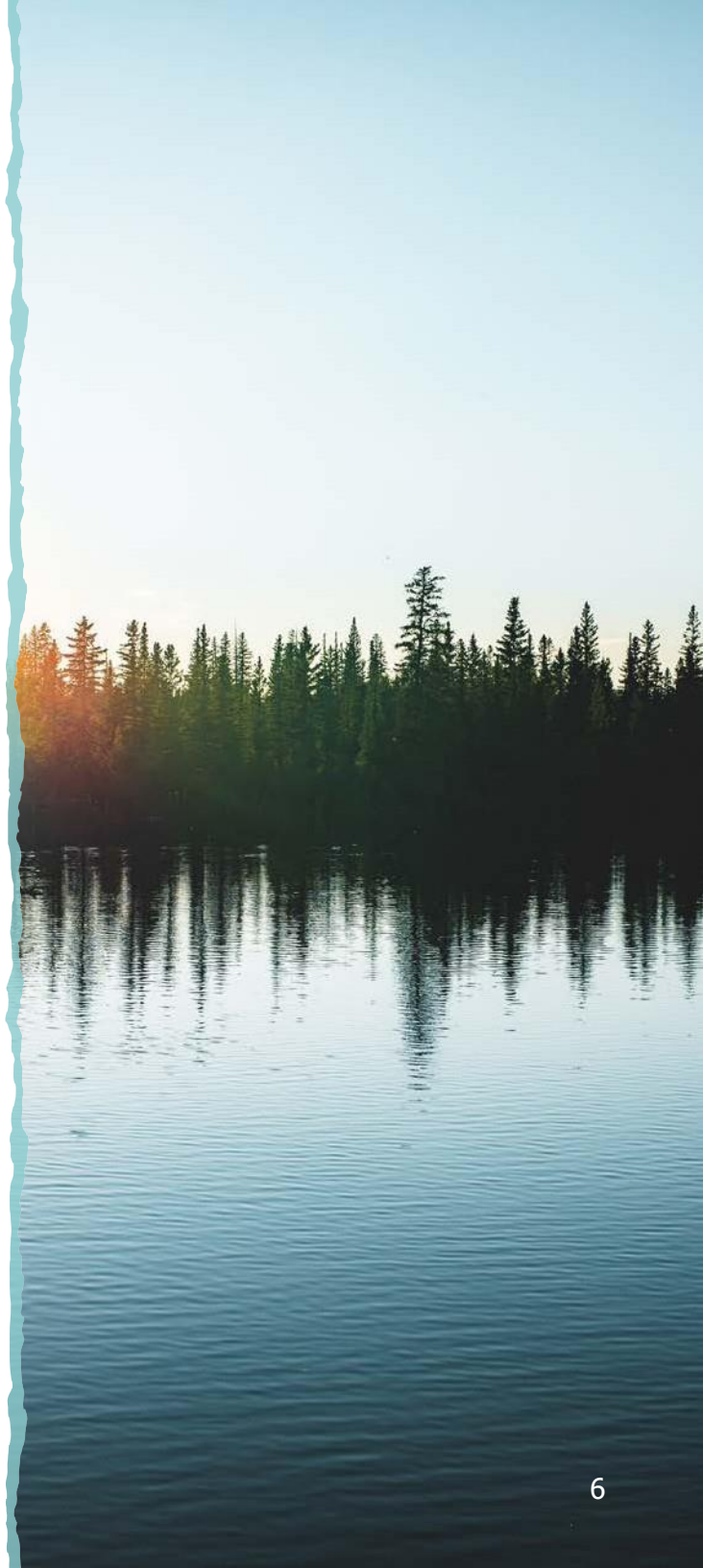
"Sustainability" itself does not have an unanimously accepted definition, but in the context of this plan, we refer to the term "sustainable" as a form of tourism that appropriately balances the environmental, economic, and sociocultural aspects of tourism development for current and future generations.

Stewardship:

"Stewardship" refers to a shared responsibility and obligation to protect something. In the context of this plan, it relates to holistically taking care of the environmental, sociocultural, economic, and governance systems that define the unique character of Jasper.

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WELCOME

National parks in Canada were developed to protect and preserve natural and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. Their original purpose was to foster public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the environment and inspire all visitors to be better stewards of the natural world.

Visitors' connection to the natural and cultural heritage of Jasper National Park is central to the community, as tourism comprises more than 80% of all economic activity and is why many people live in the park. However, in recent decades there has not always been alignment between visitors, residents, and the park itself. Today that relationship is more complex than ever.

The Destination Stewardship Plan is designed to find balance and alignment. It is a 10-year roadmap with unified strategies to develop a more predictable, prosperous, and regenerative year-round visitor economy that provides equitable benefits for everyone in the community. This plan recognizes the importance of measuring success through stewardship values and metrics instead of infinitely increasing visitor volumes. Ultimately, the future of the visitor economy must align with community values and Parks Canada's mandate.

The overarching purpose of this plan is to optimize the visitor economy to best steward the collective future of Jasper as a mountain community and tourism destination. That requires the public, private, and civic sectors to work together to achieve a shared long-term vision of a unified community. The Municipality of Jasper, Parks Canada, Tourism Jasper, the local visitor industry, non-profit community organizations, and residents from all walks of life must collaborate more intentionally and effectively to implement the strategic initiatives of this plan successfully.

Tourism Jasper led the development of this project in collaboration with the Municipality of Jasper and Parks Canada. Yet, as partners, we collectively recognize that a plan like this is only as good as the execution that follows it. That's why everything in it is based on input from the community. People from all segments of Jasper's community said the plan's strategies and intended outcomes are important to them. Therefore, the anticipation is that a broad cross-section of residents and local organizations will be motivated to own a piece of this plan and collaboratively act on what they prioritize.

We also recognize that instilling stewardship values throughout the destination cannot happen without the leadership, involvement, and support of Indigenous Peoples, who were the primary inhabitants and caretakers of the lands found in Jasper National Park since time immemorial, predating the park's establishment. Thus, their profound understanding of the land's intricacies and lasting traditions must guide us. Together, we aim to learn from their knowledge, while consistently recognizing and upholding their crucial stewardship role, culture, and traditions as we move forward together towards reconciliation.



STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee for the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan provided critical guidance and support throughout the project. The MMGY NextFactor project team is grateful for the Committee members' thoughtful leadership, inclusive perspective, collaborative spirit, and invaluable contributions to develop the final framework of strategic goals and actionable initiatives.

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Bill Given

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Owner & Operator
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Every strategy and initiative in the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan was developed based on input from community members. In 2022, more than 800 locals participated in a diverse range of community engagement formats to help co-create the future of how people live and work in the park, and how they welcome visitors.

Throughout the process, community members were asked: 1) where they see the greatest opportunities for enhancing the visitor economy and local quality of life in the next 10 years; 2) where they see the biggest long-term challenges for the community; and 3) how they can collaborate more effectively to achieve the goals of the community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS INCLUDED:

- The Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan Steering Committee
- Focus groups with industry and community stakeholders
- Individual interviews with industry and community stakeholders
- Public visioning workshop for residents and stakeholders
- Resident sentiment survey
- Tourism Jasper staff



RESIDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY

The process to develop the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan included fielding a resident sentiment survey in 2022 to identify general attitudes about living in Jasper and the visitor economy's impact on local quality of life.

The survey was open to all Jasper residents to ensure everyone could contribute to the development of this plan. A sample of the survey questions included:

- What do residents think of Jasper as a place to live and work?
- What are the most important attributes of a resident's quality of life?
- How do residents view the tourism industry and its impact on their community?

A total of 723 Jasper residents participated in the survey. The following is a sample of the results:

- Residents ranked local quality of life in Jasper an average of 7.9 out of 10
- In terms of how eager residents are willing to recommend Jasper as a place to visit, the average of responses was 8.8 out of 10
- 67% of respondents were 49 years of age or younger
- 61% of respondents were female
- 29% of respondents have children under 18 years of age
- 53% of respondents have annual household incomes less than \$100,000
- 23% of respondents have annual household incomes between \$100,000-\$150,000



RESIDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY

In terms of the positive benefits of tourism in Jasper, most of the respondents agreed that a strong tourism industry is good for the community and promotes economic diversity. The respondents were inclined toward agreeing that the economic benefits of tourism extend beyond traditional tourism businesses, and the positive benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts.

SURVEY QUESTION:

“Rank the following benefits of tourism in Jasper on a 5-point scale, with ‘5’ being the highest possible benefit.”



RESIDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY

Residents were also asked about the challenges they believe exist in their community due to the impacts of the visitor economy. The top challenges indicated were the availability of affordable housing and a rise in living costs. They also identified traffic congestion and threats to the natural environment as other concerns.

SURVEY QUESTION:

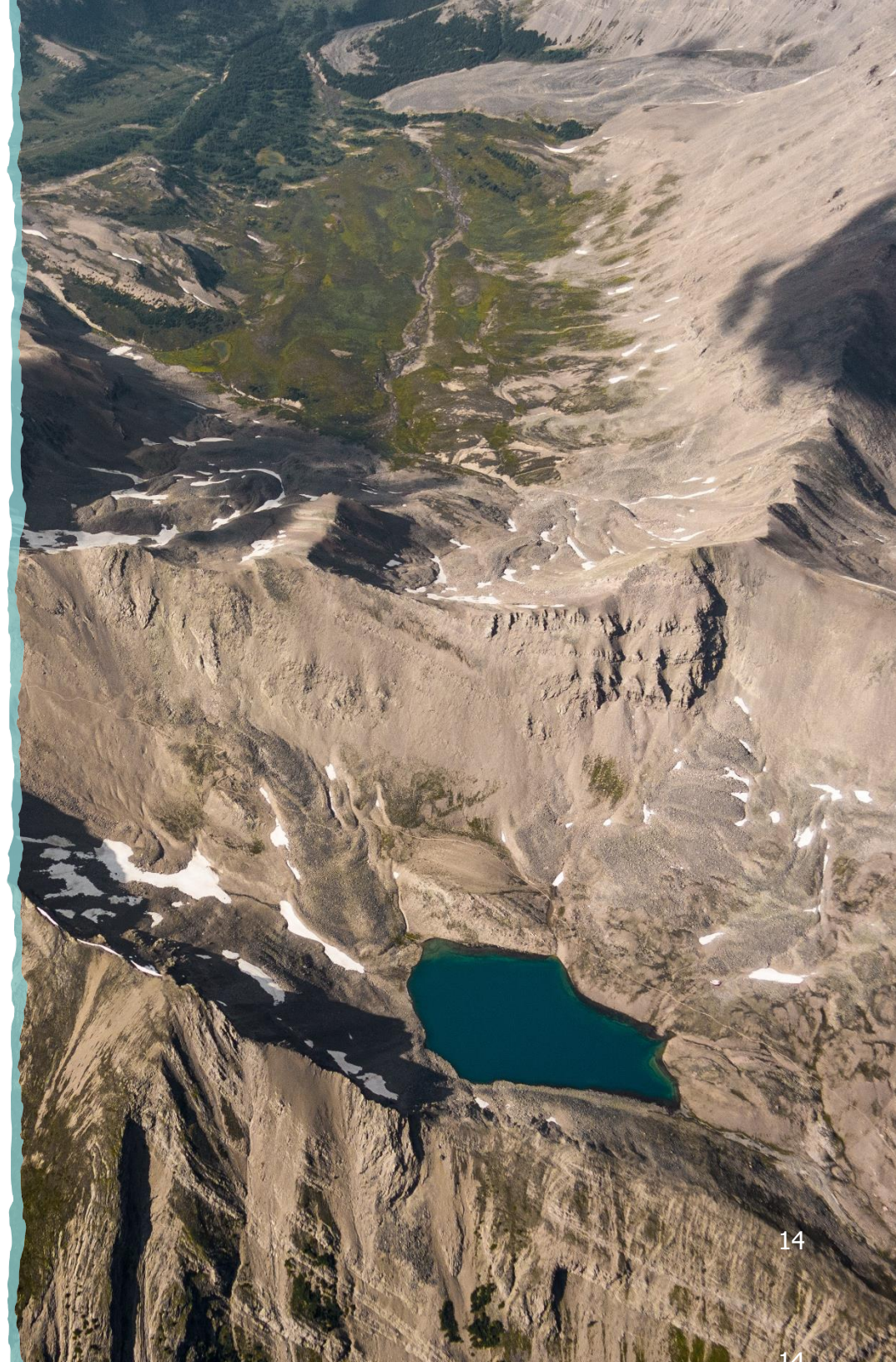
“Indicate what you see as being the downsides of tourism in your community on a 5-point scale, with ‘5’ being the most significant possible downside.”



WHAT WE HEARD - 11 KEY TAKEAWAYS

From the community engagement process, key themes emerged that represent the voices of visitor economy stakeholders, local community organizations, and a wide range of residents. These themes were distilled into the 11 key takeaways presented on the following pages that were used to inform the development of the objectives rooted in this plan.

While these takeaways represent the perception of groups identified above, they may not align in some cases with the strategic direction and priorities of Parks Canada, the Municipality of Jasper, and Tourism Jasper. **However, as transparency is vital in a long-term process like a Destination Stewardship Plan, it is important to showcase what we heard and how the plan is formed from diverse community voices.**



WHAT WE HEARD - 11 KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 | KEEP IT REAL

- Jasper residents are quick to point out that their home is unlike many other Rocky Mountain communities that have a significant visitor economy. Locals define that special quality in various ways, but many said it's about how: "Jasper is a place where you can breathe."
- Jasper has not developed as quickly as other mountain resort destinations in North America due to its relative isolation. Therefore, as a tourism destination, Jasper can benefit from modern best practices globally in the last decade related to sustainable development, improving quality of life for residents, while retaining the community's character and values.

2 | YEAR-ROUND ECONOMY

- A more robust and consistent year-round economy greatly benefits Jasper residents and local businesses. This is one of the most consistent goals emphasized by the community.
- Greater year-round vibrancy in the Jasper townsite is a high priority for residents, and it is key for attracting high-value visitors and increasing repeat visitation. Stakeholders expressed that the high-value visitor is the repeat visitor who builds a lifelong relationship with the community and likes to visit during various times of the year, especially outside of the peak summer season.

- Locally, industry stakeholders said their strategy for developing a more even year-round visitor industry is defined as: more revenue yield in summer (not visitation); more visitation in winter; and more of a mix of both in spring and fall.

3 | AIR ACCESS

- There was significant consensus among industry stakeholders that establishing commercial airport access near Jasper increases more consistent year-round revenue opportunities for local businesses.
- Additional feedback emphasized that nearby air access expands the pool of high-value repeat visitors from more source markets. It also improves the quality of life and opportunities for residents to connect with the world outside Jasper.
- Consideration should be given to aligning with industry and government to develop airport infrastructure that is within an hour of Jasper.

WHAT WE HEARD - 11 KEY TAKEAWAYS

4 | IN-PARK MOBILITY

- Unanimously, residents agree that a higher volume, quality, and diversity of mobility/transportation options within Jasper National Park (including e-mobility) will improve local quality of life and increase small business development opportunities.
- It was stated that the town and trail network could be expanded and enhanced to better connect the townsite with the rest of Jasper National Park, get more people out of cars, and contribute to a healthier community.
- Improved bike infrastructure within the park and town, as well as between Jasper, Hinton, and Lake Louise was indicated as a tactic to help develop new visitor segments, as well as enhance Jasper as a destination for high-value biking, active travel, and health/wellbeing visitor segments.

“The perceived isolation of Jasper is both endearing and incredibly challenging. We need to make it easier to live and work here while keeping what makes Jasper special.”

– Jasper Resident



WHAT WE HEARD - 11 KEY TAKEAWAYS

5 | JASPER TOWNSITE

- Jasper residents stated that they value how the townsite has not been over-commercialized with corporate chain brands, but greater investment is required to address the town's underappreciated appearance. They suggested that the aging infrastructure and lack of updates to the building stock make the town look somewhat economically depressed to first time visitors. One resident said, "The town's appearance makes it look like we don't respect it."
- Many residents stated that they have seen how other mountain communities have beautified and reinvested in their town centers with various placemaking strategies. The public sentiment is that Jasper can learn from other communities in this regard.
- Public and private sector stakeholders said that numerous streets in the townsite are well designed for more human activity and socializing. They suggested that expanding patios and closing specific streets for regularly scheduled events could potentially increase pedestrian traffic, small business revenues, and overall community vibrancy.
- Residents suggested that Hinton and the surrounding area can be developed to increase workforce housing, address labour shortages, and add another layer to enhance Jasper's broader regional visitor experience and cultural setting.

6 | HOUSING

- There is consensus among stakeholders and residents that a more diversified and denser inventory of housing that benefits the vast majority of residents and business owners is essential. More housing also improves hospitality service culture, local mental and emotional health, and Jasper's competitiveness in the North American travel and tourism marketplace.
- The Municipality of Jasper has stated that it wishes to increase housing inventory, providing public support for innovative solutions. Also, increasing affordable housing inventory supports greater equity, diversity, and inclusion in Jasper.
- Many stakeholders argue that better data is required to make informed decisions and build consensus around long-term strategies for determining and implementing smart housing solutions.
- Residents stated that regulations should be refined to manage and steward short-term rentals more effectively and transparently. More diligence is required to ensure regulations and control measures are still adequate.

WHAT WE HEARD - 11 KEY TAKEAWAYS

7 | WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- There is widespread agreement that improving workforce development to address labour shortages requires alignment of numerous strategies that address systemic issues, which is critical for Jasper's future. Local business owners state that this challenge is only going to get worse without the required attention.
- Parents in Jasper emphasized that the most important thing for Jasper's future is ensuring their kids and other young people can afford to live and work in the park. They said that not having that youthful energy and family spirit diminishes the community identity that residents and visitors cherish.

"Prosperity needs to happen for everyone. Workers need to make a living wage and be able to afford to live here. That affects our quality of life. Tourism can contribute to providing a living wage and year-round opportunities to make workers feel like they're part of the community."

– Jasper Resident



WHAT WE HEARD - 11 KEY TAKEAWAYS

8 | PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Diversifying the types of indoor and outdoor experiences available in Jasper year-round makes the park a more interesting destination for both residents and visitors. Residents are asking for more culinary, cultural, and wellness offerings that are weather resilient and more affordable for everyone. Jasper is also uniquely positioned to continue to offer and expand winter nature-based activities.
- Special events, such as the Jasper Dark Sky Festival, have been proven to drive visitor volumes during shoulder and winter seasons, and local business owners suggested that those types of events should be expanded. Residents stated there is an opportunity to develop many different types of themed local events, which also capitalize on visitor segments looking to escape the high-season crowds.
- One resident interviewed for this plan stated that, "Jasper feels somewhat like a time capsule." However, many residents explained that the visitor industry is slowly reinvesting in dated products to drive higher revenues long-term.
- There is community support for new hotel properties and alternative types of visitor accommodations (e.g., glamping), as long as they are developed responsibly within commercial limits, and if there is available workforce to service them.

9 | GOVERNANCE & POLICY

- Parks Canada and the Municipality of Jasper are committed to reviewing and updating Jasper's land use planning and development authorities
- People familiar with strategies for modernizing land use policy in Jasper said that it is a critical conversation to help support the future needs of Jasper and its residents, especially related to housing and small business development.
- To support the visitor economy more effectively, the Municipality of Jasper, in unison with the Towns of Canmore and Banff, state they will continue to lobby the provincial government to achieve tourism-based community status.

10 | SUSTAINABILITY

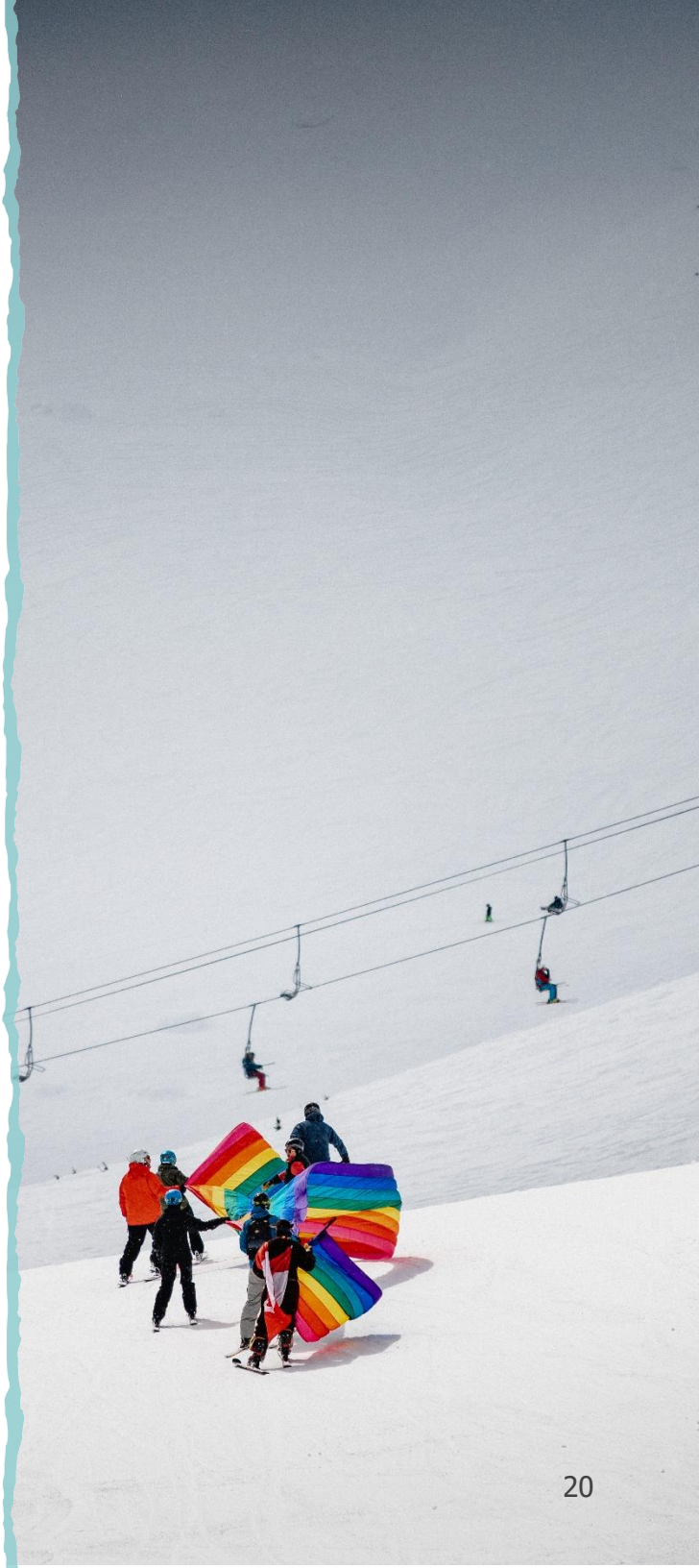
- A more sophisticated data-driven approach to environmentally sustainable tourism products and services that protects the natural ecosystem, fosters greater collaboration between local and regional agencies, and builds stronger community stewardship, is needed in Jasper.
- Jasper residents explained that there are many different agencies across Alberta that can collaborate and share resources more intentionally to develop a sustainable tourism strategic framework for Jasper and Jasper National Park.

WHAT WE HEARD - 11 KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Industry leaders stated it is critical to engage a 3rd party organization to establish measurable benchmarks for improving the sustainability of tourism products and services.
- Jasper's ski product has a higher elevation than many other ski resorts, which makes it more resilient to climate change. Ski industry leaders suggested that could be an important differentiator for Jasper in the long-term.

11 | EQUITY & INCLUSIVITY

- Residents emphasized they can learn much from Indigenous people. They said the visitor industry should prioritize learning about Jasper's Indigenous history and strive to develop relationships directly with Indigenous communities, especially those represented in the Jasper Indigenous Forum.
- A greater focus on accessibility for people of diverse abilities is needed to ensure that everyone can enjoy visiting and living in Jasper more productively.
- Repeatedly, residents brought up that local mental and emotional health is increasingly becoming a more widespread challenge in Jasper, like in many mountain resort destinations, which needs to be addressed accordingly.
- Social equity is a key priority for the public sector, as well as many industry stakeholders. Representatives from the Municipality of Jasper and Parks Canada stressed that the needs of all residents, regardless of their income, ethnicity, gender, abilities and/or lifestyle, must be a priority for developing a visitor economy that respects and supports everyone.



VALUES-ALIGNED VISITOR LOYALTY

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VALUES-ALIGNED VISITOR LOYALTY

The 11 key takeaways show that the community of Jasper cares about their values, the destination, and who is coming to visit. **A large component of the realization of this plan will be to attract the right type of visitors to Jasper that align with those values and the community's collective vision.**

Currently, destinations worldwide are trying to update how they define the "high-value visitor," who has traditionally been characterized as a high-income traveller. That definition has since evolved to include people who embrace local culture and customs, visit outside peak travel season, stay in destination longer, explore beyond the main attractions, and travel more sustainably. All these behaviours benefit the community, but they are only parts of a bigger strategic direction.

The high-value visitor should be defined by what every other industry values most in their customers — loyalty. As such, the high-value visitor is one that shares values, gives back to the community, repeats their visitation, and is loyal to place. People who return to a specific destination consistently do not do so because they want to feel like a tourist; they do so because they want to feel like they are part of a community. They identify with the local values of people who live there, are conscious of their impact and influence in the community, and want to support local, independently owned businesses. For them, it is not just about visiting a destination, it is also about feeling part of the community's unique vibe that aligns with their own identity. **As such, we are redefining the high-value visitor as the "values-aligned visitor".**



VALUES-ALIGNED VISITOR LOYALTY

Four things need to happen in Jasper to effectively connect with the values-aligned visitor.

1 | IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE PARK

It is a challenge to return to Jasper on a regular basis when it takes 4+ hours to drive from Edmonton and 5+ hours from Calgary. Approaching access issues from a multi-modal perspective will be key to providing visitors with options. Opening regional air access for commercial aviation, increasing inbound transit services, and enhancing cycling networks expands the pool of repeat visitors from national and international source markets, as well as increases the likelihood of visitors to recommend Jasper. The Alberta Government is supportive of the strategy to commercialize Jasper-Hinton Airport, and there's broad support amongst the community.

2 | INVIGORATE THE TOWN

Presently, Jasper residents state the town feels old, tired, ignored, and disrespected. Instead, it should be a celebration of local culture and values. Because repeat visitors feel like they are part of the community, the town plays a key role in connecting them with the local community spirit. Placemaking strategies include expanding patios/sidewalks, year-round events, public art, streetscape beautification, wayfinding, temporary street closures, pop-up activations, and alternative mobility options (i.e., trolleys, e-bikes, bike sharing). The latter is key as research shows that getting people out of vehicles drives incremental sales in local businesses.

3 | LOOK BEYOND EXPERIENTIAL TRAVELLERS

One of the macro trends in travel for decades has been the rise of experiential tourism, where people are more active. However, while there is a large cohort of high-value visitors of all ages who travel to Jasper for the great outdoors, that does not mean they want to fully immerse themselves in it physically. For them, the mountains are a wonder to behold and an escape from city life, but the scenery is just that — a backdrop. These passive visitors often spend well and prefer to visit during slower months when crowds are fewer and local businesses need the revenue most, making them a key target visitor segment.

4 | IT HAS TO BE ABOUT ALIGNING VALUES

Visitors come to Jasper for a variety of reasons. They might visit Jasper once to explore a new mountain destination and tick a box but inspiring them to return must be about aligning their values with those of the community. Storytelling about Jasper should communicate how local people are transforming the ways they live, work and play, and how visitors can plug into that. This strategy is commonly called "values-based marketing". The goal is not just to promote the destination and experiences, which are often viewed as somewhat commoditized. Rather, the goal is to promote the people behind the experiences and communicate their values about how and why they do what they do.



JASPER 5P STRATEGY MATRIX

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JASPER 5P STRATEGY MATRIX

The year of broad community engagement in 2022 to develop the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan included Jasperites from all walks of life.

The series of group and individual engagement sessions, along with the comprehensive resident sentiment survey, established the 11 key takeaways outlined earlier in this document.

From there, the initial list was culled down to five high-level community priorities that those engaged in the plan's development support.

The purpose of narrowing the 11 key takeaways into five key community priorities is to inform the development of the plan's foundational strategic framework.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

1. Jasperites want to help make Jasper and Jasper National Park a more dynamic place to live, work, learn, and visit
2. Jasperites believe that all residents should have tangible opportunities to create a better life for themselves
3. Jasperites are eager to help protect the natural environment and local wildlife
4. Jasperites want a more evenly distributed year-round economy to support their businesses and livelihoods better in slower months
5. Jasperites want government and businesses to share their values



JASPER 5P STRATEGY MATRIX

To develop the plan’s strategic framework, the five community priorities were plotted into a strategy matrix around five key pillars: **Place, People, Planet, Prosperity, and Policy.**

From a tourism lens, **“Place”** encompasses the entire destination and is defined as everything visitors and residents connect with, including natural and built environments. That visitor journey is the foundation for over 80% of Jasper’s economy and is central to residents’ livelihoods. Therefore, the stewardship of place is one of the top strategies because such a high percentage of residents’ livelihoods depend on its quality.

The other four themes — **People, Planet, Prosperity, and Policy** — act as a foundation of the destination (aka **Place**). This matrix is not hierarchical, and each pillar is equally as important to Jasper’s future as a tourism destination. That is to ensure that all strategic decisions related to the development of place are evaluated through a prism of equitable opportunities for residents, environmental protection, sustainable and long-term economic development, and collaborative governance.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES	STRATEGIC GOALS
Jasperites want to help make Jasper and Jasper National Park a more dynamic place to live, work, learn, and visit	PLACE: Enhance the Destination to Improve the Overall Experience for Visitors and Residents Year-Round
Jasperites believe that all residents should have tangible opportunities to create a better life for themselves	PEOPLE: Strengthen Community Cohesion and Social Equity to Create a Better Future for Every Resident
Jasperites are eager to help protect the natural environment and local wildlife	PLANET: Improve Environmental Sustainability of the Tourism Industry to Protect Jasper National Park for Future Generations
Jasperites want a more evenly distributed year-round economy to support their businesses and livelihoods better in slower months	PROSPERITY: Improve Visitor Engagement to Increase Revenue Opportunities for Local Businesses and Residents Year-Round
Jasperites want government and businesses to share their values	POLICY: Align Public and Private Sector Efforts to Better Serve the Long-Term Needs of the Community

JASPER 5P STRATEGY MATRIX

PLACE

Enhance the Destination to Improve the Overall Experience for Visitors and Residents Year-Round

PEOPLE

Strengthen Community Cohesion and Social Equity to Create a Better Future for Every Resident

PLANET

Improve Environmental Sustainability of the Tourism Industry to Protect Jasper National Park for Future Generations

PROSPERITY

Improve Visitor Engagement to Increase Revenue Opportunities for Local Businesses and Residents Year-Round

POLICY

Align Public and Private Sector Efforts to Better Serve the Long-Term Needs of the Community

JASPER 5P STRATEGY MATRIX

PLACE

“Place” refers to the physical location of Jasper and Jasper National Park that possesses unique attributes and features, making it a distinct destination to visit and is fundamental in shaping the visitor experience. While the connotation of place “development” is often perceived as antithetical to the purpose of national parks, if a place is not growing, evolving, and adapting to socioeconomic shifts, then it will atrophy or gentrify. Thus, investing in sustainable place development, including infrastructure, transportation, products, experiences, and small business development, is critical to support economic vitality, enhance community culture, and provide a welcoming sense of place for visitors and residents alike. This is critical for increasing visitor revenues year-round and ensuring investments in destination and product development benefit the broadest range of residents.

PEOPLE

“People” refers to the individuals who reside in Jasper and have a strong connection to this place. Taking care of the people who call Jasper home not only fosters sustainable development but also enhances the overall quality and authenticity of the visitor experience, while nurturing positive relationships between tourists and the local community. Equitable opportunities for all people regardless of socioeconomic backgrounds and diverse abilities is a fundamental definition of “community”. Thus, it is incumbent on government, industry, and community leaders to be intentional about ensuring all residents have opportunities to participate in creating and benefiting from Jasper’s visitor economy, and therefore, the future of Jasper as a destination.



PLANET

“Planet” refers to the integrity of the vast natural ecosystems located in Jasper National Park. We are fortunate that in Jasper National Park, Parks Canada runs a successful and comprehensive program that continually monitors and manages the integrity of major park ecosystems and the subsequent impacts of tourism activities.

However, recognizing the growing pressure on ecosystems due to increased tourism activity and environmental change, collective work is needed to ensure that tourism does not add further stress to the landscape and instead supports the current and future integrity of the park’s ecosystems.

PROSPERITY

“Prosperity” refers to the economic well-being of the local community and broader destination. Current challenges exist regarding prosperity in Jasper, including the fact that the community relies on a high local tax base to fund expensive infrastructure and service upgrades, while local businesses and the workforce must manage large swings in revenue and job/housing security across the year.

Thus, increasing the amount of visitor spending across the year and ensuring that tourism dollars are circulating locally is paramount for developing a more predictable and equitable year-round economy.

POLICY

“Policy” refers to a set of guidelines, regulations, and/or processes established by relevant agencies to guide and govern the development, management, and promotion of tourism activities. The Municipality of Jasper and Jasper National Park are somewhat unique in regard to their shared multi-jurisdictional governance structure that is not always perfectly aligned.

This is a complex arrangement designed to protect the region’s greatest resource: the land. However, there is agreement among all parties that opportunities exist for the governance structure to evolve incrementally to better support the long-term needs of residents and the community at large.





STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

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PLACE PEOPLE PLANET PROSPERITY POLICY

Strategic Goal #1

Enhance the Destination to Improve the Overall Experience for Visitors and Residents Year-Round

The Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan is, at its heart, a 10-year roadmap that outlines initiatives that both protect the authenticity of Jasper and future-proof the region’s primary industry (tourism), which fuels the majority of all economic activity and employment opportunities.

The significance of place cannot be overstated when it comes to future of a destination. The unique characteristics and attractions of a place, including its natural environment, historical sites, and local culture form the foundation of its appeal to travellers. A captivating place is the catalyst that ignites wanderlust and creates memorable experiences for tourists, making them want to return again and again.

The focus of this strategic goal and its actionable initiatives is place stewardship. That potentially includes long-term, capital-intensive infrastructure improvements, as well as short to medium-term initiatives to improve access, mobility, experiences, services, amenities, and vibrancy across the destination. All the subsequent strategic goals in this plan roll up under this one to inform destination improvement decisions, so they are sustainable and equitable, drive revenue year-round, support local workforce development, benefit residents at scale, support conservation efforts, and create a meaningful sense of place.



INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Better visitor experience
- Improved quality of life for residents
- Improved tourism products, services, and infrastructure
- Enhanced destination and community vibrancy
- Improved sense of place, community spirit, and civic pride
- Expanded visitor source markets
- More values-aligned repeat visitors
- More consistent year-round revenue and income
- Higher tax assessment base and reinvestment opportunities

PLACE PEOPLE PLANET PROSPERITY POLICY

Strategic Goal #1 | Actionable Initiatives

Enhance the Destination to Improve the Overall Experience for Visitors and Residents Year-Round

1 | Improve access to Jasper

- a. Increase accessible inbound transit options
- b. Facilitate improvements to Icefields Parkway accessibility
- c. Develop regional airport infrastructure

2 | Facilitate enhanced mobility within Jasper and Jasper National Park

- a. Develop and continually enhance a destination-wide, multi-mobility, and accessible transit ecosystem
- b. Develop and enhance alternative transportation options (e-mobility, vehicle/bike sharing, etc.)
- c. Enhance trails systems and cycling routes to better connect the townsite, park, Hinton, and Lake Louise

3 | Create greater vibrancy in the townsite

- a. Develop and enhance pedestrian zones within the townsite
- b. Improve streetscapes, paths, and physical/digital wayfinding
- c. Invest in transformational placemaking strategies to create a greater sense of place

4 | Develop and enhance shoulder and winter season experiences

- a. Develop more outdoor and weather-resilient indoor experiences for visitors and residents
- b. Develop and enhance indoor arts, culture, and heritage attractions/experiences
- c. Develop locally owned and operated events during need periods
- d. Enhance corporate meeting and incentive capacity and services to drive mid-week revenue during need periods

PLACE **PEOPLE** PLANET PROSPERITY POLICY

Strategic Goal #2

Strengthen Community Cohesion and Social Equity to Create a Better Future for All Residents

All Jasperites should have an opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, the local visitor economy. That is the very definition of an equitable, vibrant, and just community. Clearly, the rapidly increasing cost of living in Jasper makes it challenging for people to live here. However, continually enhancing the quality of the visitor experience demands taking care of the many diverse individuals living in Jasper to create a rich and robust social fabric, while promoting authentic visitor and resident relationships. Ultimately, if we take care of Jasper residents, they will take care of visitors.

There is a strong correlative relationship between housing diversity and availability, equitable workforce development, community mental health, and local quality of life. The very development of this plan is an example of how the Jasper community can come together to discuss challenges and define its future through constructive debate and collaborative communication. This must continue to ensure the visitor economy supports the needs and aspirations of current and future Jasperites.



INTENDED OUTCOMES

- More, and more diverse housing
- Stronger, more equitable community
- Improved livability and affordability
- Higher resident sentiment; improved resident mental health
- Greater sense of community; more welcoming community spirit
- Enhanced action on truth and reconciliation efforts
- Better workforce attraction; better hospitality service culture

PLACE **PEOPLE** PLANET PROSPERITY POLICY

Strategic Goal #2 | Actionable Initiatives

Strengthen Community Cohesion and Social Equity to Create a Better Future for All Residents

1 | Increase support for the local community

- a. Create a communication platform to inform and engage residents and local businesses about ongoing developments to help optimize the positive social and economic impacts of the visitor economy
- b. Increase support for the local maker community and creative economy
- c. Create more capacity within the local non-profit sector to serve the community

2 | Develop more housing options for residents

- a. Increase private sector funding and participation with the Jasper Municipal Housing Corporation to build more housing
- b. Facilitate and support more infill and alternative resident lodging (garden/secondary suites, height/density limits, etc.)

3 | Develop the local workforce

- a. Improve compensation, benefit, and retention programs that incentivize and contribute to workforce sustainability
- b. Increase year-round opportunities for domestic and international workforce recruitment
- c. Create education and developmental programs for the local workforce
- d. Expedite increases in international workforce

4 | Enhance relationships with Indigenous communities

- a. Expand listening sessions and build on existing relationships with Indigenous leaders and the local industry
- b. Create space for traditional Indigenous knowledge to be weaved into destination strategy
- c. Collaborate with Indigenous Tourism Alberta and the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada on relationship building, experience development, and promotion
- d. Develop a specific support structure for Indigenous entrepreneurs and workforce

PLACE PEOPLE **PLANET** PROSPERITY POLICY

Strategic Goal #3

Improve Environmental Sustainability of the Tourism Industry to Protect Jasper National Park for Future Generations

Protecting ecological integrity of Jasper National Park is a shared goal across the community and is the primary focus of Parks Canada. However, the imperative themes of sustainability, resilience, and regeneration in relation to the tourism industry are highly complex and often divisive, requiring inter-agency and cross-community collaboration. Thus, the focus of this plan's planet goal will be to ensure that tourism products and services support the current and future integrity of Jasper National Park ecosystems.

Yet, with increasing demand from the global growth in tourism coupled with rapid environmental change, ecosystems are under pressure. As such, the long-term goal is for Jasper, as a tourism destination, to be a leader in sustainable, resilient, and regenerative tourism and provide experiences that are low-carbon, climate-resilient, and planet-positive, while supporting Parks Canada's conservation priorities as indicated in the 2022 Jasper National Park Management Plan.



INTENDED OUTCOMES

- More planet-positive tourism offerings that have reduced impact on the ecological integrity of Jasper National Park
- Reduced tourism-related energy consumption, water usage, and transportation emissions
- Increased participation of visitors in the stewardship of park ecosystems
- Greater civic pride, unity, and purpose on the protection of ecological integrity through sustainable tourism development
- Increased resilience of tourism products and offerings to the impacts of climate change.

PLACE PEOPLE **PLANET** PROSPERITY POLICY

Strategic Goal #3 | Actionable Initiatives

Improve Environmental Sustainability of the Tourism Industry to Protect Jasper National Park for Future Generations

1 | Initiate a transition towards a regenerative visitor economy

- a. Develop a destination-wide regenerative tourism plan
- b. Develop experiences and opportunities to educate and unite residents and visitors around regenerative tourism
- c. Partner with 3rd party sustainability organizations (GDS, Biosphere, etc.) to establish data-driven targets/benchmarks to monitor tourism impacts and outline strategies to develop a regenerative visitor economy
- d. Partner on initiatives that position Jasper as a leader in regenerative tourism practices

2 | Enhance destination-wide action on climate change

- a. Create programs and initiatives to reduce tourism industry emissions, in alignment with Parks Canada's and the Municipality of Jasper's greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies
- b. Enhance current adaptation strategies to increase the resilience of tourism infrastructure, products, and services to the impacts of climate change
- c. Align partners to develop and distribute communications that educate the public on the impacts of climate change in Jasper National Park

3 | Strengthen environmental protection and awareness initiatives

- a. Enhance opportunities for visitors and residents to learn about the ecology of the park
- b. Develop partnerships with research institutions to integrate research programming into tourism products
- c. Attain destination-wide certifications focused on enhancing commitment to ecological protection

PLACE PEOPLE PLANET **PROSPERITY** POLICY

Strategic Goal #4

Improve Visitor Engagement to Increase Revenue Opportunities for Local Businesses and Residents Year-Round

In today’s competitive global tourism marketplace, just because you build something does not mean visitors will travel there to experience it. Further, even if visitors do come, a portion of tourism dollars spent in destinations often do not contribute to the prosperity of the local community.

There are many new digital communication tools, data management platforms, and in-destination strategies to customize how destinations target and engage values-aligned visitor segments and international source markets more effectively, while ensuring visitor spending gets reinvested into the local community.

These can be somewhat costly, though. One of the recommendations in this strategic goal is to increase and diversify funding levels for more sophisticated marketing/communication, community engagement, and data collection tools. There is also an emphasis here on increasing marketing and messaging initiatives to drive shoulder and winter season visitation to provide more consistent year-round visitor revenue for local businesses.



INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Increased quantity of tourism revenues that stay in the community
- More equitable benefits from Jasper’s visitor economy
- Higher, more diversified destination marketing funding
- More consistent year-round revenue for local businesses
- More consistent year-round income for local workforce
- Enhanced community spirit

PLACE PEOPLE PLANET **PROSPERITY** POLICY

Strategic Goal #4 | Actionable Initiatives

Improve Visitor Engagement to Increase Revenue Opportunities for Local Businesses and Residents Year-Round

1 | Increase industry impact and effectiveness

- a. Increase and diversify destination marketing funding
- b. Increase the amount of tourism dollars being reinvested into the community
- c. Invest in new visitor information and experience infrastructure
- d. Enhance and align data collection and management tools/processes, including visitor sentiment and booking data

2 | Drive winter and shoulder season visitation

- a. Develop winter and shoulder season experience strategic plans
- b. Enhance content and programming to target values-aligned visitors interested in local, regenerative, culinary, and weather resilient experiences
- c. Increase sales and marketing investments to target values-aligned visitors in the corporate business events and incentive market
- d. Enhance content and programming that leverages local influencers and changemakers to promote the community's values and vibe more authentically and effectively

3 | Capitalize on new technology innovations

- a. Leverage generative artificial intelligence platforms to increase capabilities for research and content development
- b. Leverage Web3 blockchain technology to build global/local communities and increase revenue generation for area businesses in tourism and other sectors
- c. Explore destination-wide e-commerce solutions for accommodation and experience purchases

PLACE PEOPLE PLANET PROSPERITY **POLICY**

Strategic Goal #5

Align Public and Private Sector Efforts to Better Serve the Long-Term Needs of the Community

Effective and collaborative governance structures are crucial for the visitor economy as they enable inclusive decision-making, community alignment, and sustainable development, which is foundational to the long-term success of the destination.

Jasper is somewhat unique in North America based on the multi-jurisdictional governance structure between the Municipality of Jasper and Parks Canada. Currently, there is an evolving conversation among leaders in the municipal government, Jasper National Park field unit, and the federal government to explore opportunities for reshaping that governance structure. The goal is to provide the community with more autonomy to invest in itself and determine its future, while still embracing and supporting Parks Canada’s mandate.

This strategic goal also highlights the need to improve support for the local business community. There is an opportunity to reduce red tape for local business owners and provide a more enabling environment for investors. Municipal authority over local land use will help address the situation more productively.



INTENDED OUTCOMES

- More effective governance, planning, and policy making
- Better alignment of public, private, and civic sectors
- Enhanced livability and affordability for residents
- Greater spirit of self-determination and community pride
- Improved services and support for local business owners and entrepreneurs

PLACE PEOPLE PLANET PROSPERITY **POLICY**

Strategic Goal #5 | Actionable Initiatives

Align Public and Private Sector Efforts to Better Serve the Long-Term Needs of the Community

1 | Streamline destination-wide governance systems

- a. Modernize land use and planning
- b. Explore attaining and leveraging tourism-based community status
- c. Establish governmental policy that supports greater vibrancy and activation of the destination
- d. Establish governmental policy that supports event development

2 | Enhance economic development and small business support

- a. Improve business intelligence and data collection to provide a more enabling environment for investors
- b. Improve small business development policy and programs (“reduce red tape”)
- c. Improve the Municipality of Jasper’s capacity to help local entrepreneurs and organizations secure new grants and investment opportunities

LOOKING AHEAD

No single organization will be able to implement the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan alone. Everything in here is about the community's future, based on what the majority of the community said they want and prioritize. Therefore, the community at large is responsible for the long-term success of this plan.

Implementing the plan's strategies throughout the next 10 years will be a major undertaking because the strategic framework is both ambitious and broad. It builds on past successes and the current strengths of the community to forge a new direction that benefits the widest breadth of local businesses and residents possible. The plan also prioritizes the responsibilities that visitors and Jasperites have for ensuring the long-term health of the staggeringly beautiful environment surrounding them.

While Tourism Jasper led the development of this plan in collaboration with the Municipality of Jasper and Parks Canada, it will require many diverse partners in the public, private, and civic sectors to execute the strategic initiatives in alignment with the provincial and federal government. It is essential that this plan does not just sit on a shelf in an office somewhere.

Every organization and business in Jasper can contribute to their long-range success and that of their neighbours if they unite

around these strategies and work together to achieve shared goals. That includes individual residents who are encouraged to champion this plan. Anyone with the commitment and will to help co-create the best future for the collective community has an opportunity to build coalitions of like-minded people and take ownership of any of the plan's initiatives.

There is reason to be optimistic in that regard. Many people who participated in the community engagement process to develop this plan expressed their support to dig in, work with their neighbours, build coalitions of supporters, and roll up their sleeves to accomplish the plan's goals.

The five overarching strategic goals in the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan are designed to remain consistent. Meanwhile, the individual initiatives should be reviewed on an annual basis in a fluid flow chart to prioritize specific action items and ensure this plan remains a living document year after year.

The success of this plan is not just up to Jasperites and how they collaborate among themselves. Success at scale also depends on how local residents, businesses, and organizations work together with the millions of annual visitors who have the privilege of experiencing Jasper National Park.

JASPER DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN

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The development of the Jasper Destination Stewardship Plan was led by Tourism Jasper in collaboration with the Municipality of Jasper and Parks Canada.

