



2018-2021

Tourism and Economic Development Committee Strategic Plan

*Produced
in consultation with*
**the Tourism and Economic
Development Committee
and Alberta Culture and Tourism,
Community Development Unit,
Karen Doyle**

August 2018

Tourism and Economic Development Committee
 Tourism Strategic Plan
 August 28th, 29th and 30th, 2018

Tourism Vision - Athabasca Region: Rich in history, diversity; where your adventure is easily accessible.

Tourism Mission - Growing Tourism for our residents and visitors through regional promotion and support.

SWOT Analysis – TOURISM

Strength	Evidence	Impact	Act to Keep/Build
Diversity	Man-made Natural ½ of land-base is crown-owned; Culturally diverse Variety of events	Sites and events utilized (lots of locals take part); Spending Promotion (word-of-mouth) Longevity – with use Current regular use of sites and attendance to events; Variety of experiences available.	
Opportunity	Evidence	Impact	Act to Leverage
A.U. Economic Development Symposium	It's being planned; 400 attendees;	Showcase the region; Increase awareness to government, industry and education communities	Complete our strategic plan and share with AU so they may respond to our focus in the plan;
Social Media	Dated tourism information; TED not well-represented on the web-page;	Visitors to the site encounter out of date content; frustration with use;	Explore the 'Edmonton App'
Influence GoA decisions	Provincially initiated a	Province determines	Connect with MLA's, Ministers,

<p>to spend \$ on strategic (TED and AR) recreational development</p>	<p>decade ago – just being implemented now; what chance is there to impact a plan that has been in place.</p>	<p>development without regional input;</p>	<p>Department Heads/Representatives – to consistently and effectively deliver the AR message; Develop our ‘message’; Keep close tabs on recreation and tourism plans – developed and in development, to see where TED can present the united front (tri-council). Know our long-term plans and be able to take advantage of opportunities to speak to powers that be</p>
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PEST Assessment – A discussion about trends that may impact what TED is charged with accomplishing. Actions should be captured in either Plan (Tourism/Economic Development)

Political	Evidence	Impact	Action to Prepare
Reconciliation	Acknowledgement and apologies are happening now (not just in Canada)	The Athabasca County FNMI will pursue reconciliation issues;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-active connections and relationship/partnership building with FNMI; • Identify short and long-term benefits of relationship between TED and the Aboriginal community • Create a Belief Statement focused on reconciliation • Explore Aboriginal tourism opportunities from a historical and contemporary perspective
More favourable attitude toward pipelines	Parties are moving in this direction Getting 'tough' with one another A change in government won't necessarily reverse the trend	Value-added benefit; Athabasca region is well-placed to capitalized on increased or expanding oil and gas needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure an up-to-date inventory of land availability; • Data-base of critical/pertinent information; • Create a 'plan' to support industry needs i.e. crews/staff, etc.; • Anticipate and respond; • Proactive around potential challenges to successful support of oil and gas needs.
Economic	Evidence	Impact	Action to Prepare
Cannabis Legalization	It's coming in October 2018	Rules and Regulations; laws and legislation; Smells; Noise; Conflict – old-school thinking clashes with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to date Land Use by-law – to accommodate, not prohibit; • Tri-council agreement on set of rules; • Lobby provincial government to support common rules – provincially; • Plan for retail interest i.e. shops; • Strategic 'placement' plan

		more socially open and accepting groups and individuals	
Social	Evidence	Impact	Action to Prepare
Boomer's Exit	Baby Boomers: Born 1946-1964 (54-72 years old)	Fewer people to support organizations (boards); events; fewer volunteers; Loss of → knowledge (-) → expertise (-) → connections (-) → work ethic (-) → status quo (+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit Gen-X and younger • A video to encourage volunteerism • Find out what motivates today's younger volunteers • Be open-minded and adaptable as new ideas and ways of doing things are brought to the table • More Millennials on TED • Create an 'advisory' panel from exiting boomers to access their knowledge, expertise and connections
Technological	Evidence	Impact	Action to Prepare
Fast-paced Present in all arenas → Social media → Farm → Industry, etc.; Challenge is to keep up with changing technology	Region outpaced by technology; Region responds late if it can respond at all; Unable to take advantage of technological changes in a timely manner;	Missed opportunities; Missed potential; Frustration; Inaction;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Research drives innovation' • Connect key partners with AU to capitalize on AU ability to support research in various arenas; • Use strategic awareness to keep up with (or stay in front of) <i>emerging technology</i>.
Emerging technologies are those technical innovations which represent progressive developments within a field for competitive advantage . ^[1]		https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_emerging_technologies - to quickly review a list of emerging technologies (<i>use caution with Wikipedia sites</i>)	

TED Values and Belief Statements

Value	Definition	Belief Statement
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For land/ water, gates, roads, property and people • Environmental * Personal * Etiquette 	TED believes we need respect for people, property and amenities as we utilize, explore and enjoy our region.
Mutual Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering * Understanding • Consultations * Communication • Both sides gain 	TED believes in pursuing a win-win approach.
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From harm • Facilities development and use • Rules, regulations, protections • Rescue services * Medical services 	TED is committed to providing a safe experience through preparedness, prevention and education.
Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity * Transparency • Fairness * Disclosure 	TED believes that honesty is integral to fostering transparent economic growth in the Athabasca Region.
Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward performance – current businesses • Acknowledgement • Registry, web-site * Promotion 	TED believes in the need to recognize and promote current and future business performance.
Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment, personal • Our message * Our position 	TED believes that effective stewardship requires a balanced approach by all parties.
Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging gaps * Care • Remove barriers * Set parameters • Changing perceptions * Accessibility 	TED believes that partnerships are critical to the ongoing prosperity of the region.

TOURISM - FOCUS AREA – MARKETING

Goal – DEVELOP MARKETING AND IMPLEMENT ADVERTISING STRATEGY THAT WILL PROMOTE TOURISM IN THE ATHABASCA REGION

Data | Current web and social media sites with tourism information/promotions and event calendar; we need to develop our own website; better signage for places of interest/recreational opportunities; enlarge social media presence; Google-recognized destinations;

Strategy #1	Create website/app visitors guide (IT Technologies)		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Enhance existing website, Facebook page “keep fresh”/Google	End Date: June 2020	RFP - \$30,000.00 (\$10,000 per year)
Step 2	Create Slogan	End Date: May 1, 2019	\$5,000.00
Step 3	Liaison with Athabasca Advocate for Visitors Guide	End Date: February 2019	
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	RFP - \$30,000.00 Marketing - \$5,000.00	Renee Tamara	Contract Webpage-TED Only Job Description (RFP) Trip Advisor
Strategy #2	Prioritize areas to target		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Create list of campgrounds and the amenities they offer (ex. Servicing, attractions, etc.)	End Date: March 2019	
Step 2	Create a list of potential day-trip opportunities	End Date: May 2019	

Step 3	Promote day-trip opportunities	End Date: January 2020	\$1,000.00
Step 4	Increase inventory of graphics/pictures	End Date: January 2020	\$1,000.00
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$2,000.00	Tamara	

TOURISM - FOCUS AREA – BUSINESS			
Goal ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM BASES BUSINESSES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR VISITORS			
<i>Data</i>	Create a day-trip industry in Athabasca Region; businesses with exceptional customer service; fostering of tourism-based entrepreneurial endeavors; a multitude of functioning tourism-based businesses;		
Strategy #1	Inventory tourism businesses in the Athabasca Region	Lead → Rachael	
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	List of businesses and organizations (Ads)	End Date: June 1, 2019	\$1,500.00
Step 2	Set up consultations/introductions (mileage)	End Date: Oct. 1, 2019	\$1,500.00
Step 3	Develop consultation/showcase presentation	End Date: April 2020	\$2,000.00
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$5,000.00	Travail	
Strategy #2	Inventory tourism related amenities and infrastructure and identify gaps (a full asset report)	Lead → Rachael	
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Create a list of existing tourism amenities in a shareable document and map (trails, museums, points of interest, etc.)	End Date: March 2020	\$2,000.00
Step 2	Get input from all entities (3 muni, rec board, etc. town, village)	End Date: March 2020	\$1,000.00
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$3,000.00	Garry TED	Town and Boyle Inventory
Timeline	Start Date: October 2019		End Date: March 2020

Strategy #3	Work with local business to augment current tourism assets	Lead → Rachael		
Step 1	Travel AB, Community Futures to set the stage for contact with Athabasca Region businesses – and to gather knowledge/ideas about how to approach businesses with this idea, host courses, workshops and events			
Resources	Financial	People	Material	
	\$5,000.00/year	Travail		
Timeline	Start Date:		End Date: Ongoing/Yearly (2019, 2020, 2021)	

Tourism and Economic Development Committee
 Economic Development Strategic Plan
 August 28th, 29th and 30th, 2018

Economic Development Vision

Municipal collaboration has catalyzed and transformed the Athabasca Region into a place where diverse businesses, industry, institutions, people, and communities have prospered and succeeded.

Economic Development Mission

TED Committee – providing leadership to support business retention, expansion and growth in the Athabasca Region by addressing barriers and promoting opportunities.

SWOT Analysis – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities	Evidence of the Opportunity	Impact of the Opportunity	Act to Leverage
Value-Add	We have the resources to value-add to industry (strength)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep tabs on opportunities; • Determine exactly what AR can do to value-add • Inventory our accessible land; • Understand and address identified barriers; • Become a point of contact for value-add opportunities; • Use AU symposium to present value-add opportunities; • Compile a list/inventory of value-

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> add capabilities; • Address common barriers with Councils • Web-site page dedicated to Economic Development; • Explore and choose optimal advertising vehicles; • Advertise AR open to development.
Threats	Evidence of the Threat	Impact of the Threat	Act to Mitigate
'NIMBY'	<p>People are demonstrating this position</p> <p>Negative reactions</p> <p>Appeals to development are occurring</p>	<p>Stifling</p> <p>Bullying</p> <p>Challenges our (TED) purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparedness; • Clearly explain long-term regional benefit; • Ensure transparency; • Increase education; • Education partners; • Acknowledge 'both sides' • Use social media to promote; • Hold town halls to provide opportunities for people to speak and share their concerns publicly; • Ensure consultation occurs; • Undertake surveys – where appropriate; • Ensure understanding of benefits; • Proactive reduction of rule-breakers (enforce current legislation/by-laws, etc.)
Regulations – regulatory control;	<p>Castle Area Reg</p> <p>Closing trails</p> <p>Limiting machine size</p>	When applied in one area it impacts is provincial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Councils are advised so appropriate stewardship can be undertaken to forestall regulatory

			<p>changes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby • Convince the locals – put rules and regulations in place to forestall need for provincial action; • Be aware of provincial positions re: regulatory developments
Old Ideas - complacency	<p>Unwillingness to compete; People shopping elsewhere; People fight change; Change seen as intrusion to established norms;</p>	<p>Status quo prevails; Progress hampered or stopped; Population will decrease;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure 'Best for All' development; • Include residents in the process – give them a voice and ability to choose; • Demonstrate the positive impact (benefits) of change
Poor Internet (and mobile phone) Service	<p>Mobile phone/internet service linked to population #'s;</p>	<p>Reduced ability to take advantage of social media, internet activity – sharing, promoting, researching, advertising tourism opportunities, etc. People are generally apathetic about the absence of good service i.e. 'What can we do?'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore 'Olds' example – what they did and how much it cost; • Lobby; • Gain a greater understanding of the impact of poor service by internet and mobile providers;

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - FOCUS AREA – Assets

Goal PROMOTE OUR REGIONAL ASSETS AND ADVOCATE FOR CONTINUED GROWTH AND INCREASED CAPACITY

Data We have good education facilities in place (colleges and universities); we have a good transportation system in place; we have good health facilities and emergency services; strong partnerships with educational providers/institutions; we need to facilitate and promote conferencing/gatherings (AU MP New School); promote regional recreation opportunities i.e river, trails, lakes, pool, multi-plex; promote industry diversity i.e. Agriculture, Forestry, Energy, Education; Promote strong communities; showcase our successes; we have a wide cross-section of a skilled workforce; promote industrial development corridor i.e. Highway, Water, Rail, Gas, Pipelines, Land; We need to improve our local airport; Promote and market Athabasca Region; We have regional water; We have the necessary infrastructure and feedstock for PC industry; promote regional amenities i.e. schools, hospitals, senior facilities.

Strategy #1	Take inventory of regional assets		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Create list/map of existing industrial subdivisions and amenities that could support industrial development	End Date: June 1, 2019	\$5,000.00
Step 2	Active role in Athabasca District Chamber of Commerce & Boyle Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing/Yearly	\$1,000.00/year
Step 3	Create a business/industry list	End Date: December 2019	\$2,000.00
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$10,000.00	Colin * Rob * Travais	
Strategy #2	Identify opportunities for growth and asset improvements		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Economic roundtable/symposium partner with AU	Ongoing/Yearly	\$2,000.00/year

Step 2	Identify gaps in infrastructure that prohibit development	End Date: December 2019	\$2,000.00
Step 3	Consult with existing businesses to determine needs for their growth	End Date: December 2020	\$3,000.00
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$11,000.00	Warren	
Strategy #3	Develop economic development Web-site		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Enhance economic development webpage on Athabasca County website and provide link for partners	End Date: April 1, 2019	\$10,000.00/year for contractor split with Tourism (\$20,000 total)
Step 2	Create a dedicated Athabasca Region economic development website	Start Date: 2021 End Date: December 2021	\$60,000.00
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$90,000.00	TED	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - FOCUS AREA – Development			
Goal WE ARE PREPARED TO CONNECT AND INVEST WITH BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY TO FOSTER GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIPS TO GROW DEVELOPMENT IN OUR REGION			
<i>Data</i>	Meet with potential external business owners and identify what they need; Processes that encourage business development or expansion; Connect developers with vendors and resources; TED Officer facilitate networking with businesses, industry and organizations; encourage two way communication; make contact with local businesses in variety of ways; Partnership with industry to enhance to prosper and succeed; we need to become a service hub to the oil industry; be prepared to invest resources so we can prosper and succeed;		
Strategy #1	Create an economic development brand to share (tag line)		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Have a contest for a tag line for the purpose of branding	Start Date: May 2019 End Date: July 2019	\$2,000.00
Step 2	Comprehensive and engaging and informative brand	End Date: December 2019	
Step 3	Utilize tag line for all future communication for the Region	Ongoing 2019-2021	
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$2,000.00	TED	
Strategy #2	Develop a showcase video to promote the Region		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Identify groups that could develop promotional videos for our region	January 2019	
Step 2	Create videos that showcase areas *	Start Date: January 2020	\$20,000.00

	lifestyle – live * industry – work * tourism - play	End Date: June 2021	
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$20,000.00	Penny TED	
Strategy #3	Identify three effective engagement processes to connect with business		Lead → Rachael
		Timeline	Budget
Step 1	Network with business and industry at conferences or targeted venues	Ongoing/Yearly	\$7,000.00/year
Step 2	Identify three provincial events/conferences that we should attend	Ongoing/Yearly	\$7,000.00/year
Step 3	Host events to engage business and industry	Ongoing/Yearly	\$6,000.00/year
Resources	Financial	People	Material
	\$20,000.00/year	Penny * Colin Garry * Warren	
Timeline	Start Date: 2019	End Date: Ongoing (TED and AR Council)	

Yearly Budget Allocation Requirements

Year	Tourism	Economic Development	Total
2019	\$25,000.00	\$44,000.00	\$69,000.00
2020	\$20,000.00	\$56,000.00	\$76,000.00
2021	\$15,000.00	\$93,000.00	\$108,000.00