

Five-Year Strategic Business Plan Template
Designated Recipient: Arrow Slokan Tourism Association (ASTA)

Community Name:

ASTA is a marketing partnership of all communities located within Areas H and K of the Regional District of Central Kootenay including the Village of Nakusp, Village of New Denver, Village of Silverton, Village of Slokan and the communities within Areas H and K including: Area H: South Slokan, Crescent Valley, Slokan Park, Passmore, Winlaw, Red Mountain, Vallican, Perry Siding, Appledale, Hills, Summit Lake, Playmour Junction, Krestova, Brandon, Lemon Creek, Sandon, Rosebery, New Settlement; Area K: Applegrove, Edgewood, Fauquier, Burton, Arrow Park, Crescent Bay, Whatshan Lake, Brouse/Glenbank, Box Lake, Needles, Halcyon, Inonoaklin Valley.

Date Prepared: January 2018

MRDT Term Expiry Date: First application

Five Year Period: 2018-2023

A description/instructions pertaining to each section is provided in grey text as a guide only. **The format of your Five-Year Strategic Business Plan may be developed specific to your community needs and resources, but must include all required sections of the Five-Year Strategic Business Plan listed below.** If using this template, please delete the grey text and provide your response accordingly.

Section 1: Five-Year Strategic Overview
Vision and Mission

Vision: The Arrow Slokan tourism region is known in our target markets for our incredible nature and our year-round recreation opportunities as well as our rich history and culture. Having visited, a discerning number of visitors choose to make this region their home. Tourism growth respects community values and, in turn, the tourism sector is respected as an important contributor to economic vitality and community vibrancy.

Mission: The mission of the Arrow Slokan Tourism Association (ASTA) is to support and market the tourism destination in a sustainable manner that strengthens the local economy and enriches quality of life. ASTA strategically invests resources in destination marketing programs that will:

- Increase awareness of, and intention to travel to, the Slokan Valley/Nakusp/Arrow Lakes area as a year-round, overnight destination of choice in identified target markets
- Grow overnight visitation in need periods (winter/autumn/spring)
- Increase average visitor yield and length of stay at all times of year
- Connect local businesses that service travelers with training and education opportunities to support their delivery of remarkable experiences
- Establish relationships and partnerships within and beyond the area

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	that are mutually beneficial and respectful
Strategic Context	<p>Visitation occurs primarily in the summer season from May to September with reports of infrastructure and tourism businesses being at their maximum capacity. Visitors are primarily from British Columbia and Alberta with longer-hauls visitors from the rest of Canada, the US and Europe. Primary trip motivators include outdoor recreation, access to lakes, rivers and hot springs and a growing base of second homeowners.</p> <p>The New Denver Visitor Centre is open seasonally from May to September and in 2017 they reported almost 2,000 total parties representing approximately 4,000 visitors. The majority of these parties were same day to 2 nights stay indicating opportunity to lengthen stay in peak season. Information requested frequently related to maps/directions as well as attractions/tours indicating an opportunity to both better share the experiences that are available/where they are located and an opportunity to add more guided tours/experiences to the product mix. The heritage experiences (Nikkei, Museum, Sandon etc.) were noted as having particular interest for Visitor Centre drop-ins.</p>
Overall Goals, Objectives and Targets	<p>ASTA has identified the following measurable objectives for the five-year period from 2018 – 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in shoulder season visitation (winter, autumn, spring) • Increase in number of businesses lengthening their season and hours of operation • Increase the average length of stay of visitors • Increase in average yield per visitor • Increase in Net Promoter Score (NPS) • Growth in annual MRDT collected <p>Initially, the value of MRDT collected by month will be used as a baseline from which to gauge shoulder season growth. In year two, an investment in primary market research (visitor intercept) will be made in order to establish baseline measures for average length of stay, average yield and Net Promoter Score. The Nakusp & District Chamber and Slocan District Chamber of Commerce will anecdotally report on number of businesses lengthening their season and hours of operation. Once all baseline measures are in place, specific quantifiable targets will then be established for each subsequent year.</p>
Strategies - Key Actions	<p>ASTA has identified the following priority strategies/actions to achieve the agreed objectives and make progress toward the vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build awareness of the Arrow Slocan area as a preferred overnight destination in target markets using media relations, social media networks, select and limited collateral/maps, web presence, digital advertising, development of cooperative marketing programs for tourism stakeholders and participation in marketing partnerships as

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	<p>appropriate with other community DMOs or provincial sector organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in development and delivery of signature shoulder season events that motivate travel to the Arrow Slokan area • Invest in the experiential quality offered to visitors by identifying relevant training and facilitating access to programs such as DBC’s Remarkable Experiences • Work with local sport hosting facilities and volunteer clubs to secure additional sport tournaments and events • Offer meeting/retreat organizers a one-stop comprehensive source of information and contact point for planning their event in the Arrow Slokan region • Periodically invest in primary market research to truly understand who is coming today, what motivates them, what influences them, and how they could be motivated to return, stay longer, come in the shoulder season, etc • Hire Tourism coordinator position to lead implementation activities • Fund minimal administrative costs <p>See attached Excel spreadsheet for more detailed five-year resource allocation.</p>
Brand Positioning	<p>The Arrow Slokan region is a place for visitors to find their ‘zen’ whether that is in the adrenaline rush of powder snow, soaking in a full-service hot springs resort or paddling a quiet lake. All of this easily accessed from authentic towns, filled with unique artists and artisans, rich heritage and that ever present vibe found only in the Kootenays.</p> <p>Execution of this brand positioning will focus on travel outside of July and August and will encourage longer stays (7-10 nights) that embrace tours of the entire area from north to south (from Revelstoke) or south to north (from Castlegar/Nelson) and include a range of experiences such as a backcountry lodge, Halcyon Hot Springs, Nakusp Hot Springs, stays in Nakusp, New Denver, Silverton, Lemon Creek, Winlaw).</p> <p>The Arrow Slokan area is naturally aligned with the British Columbia brand as it is on the edge of raw wilderness and urban refinement offered by small communities.</p>
Target Markets	<p>Priority target markets have been identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Traveler Profiles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cultural Explorers ○ Authentic Experiencers ○ Cultural History Buffs ○ Gentle Explorers • Primary Geographic Markets

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lower Mainland ○ Okanagan ○ Alberta ○ Europe (Germany, Netherlands, UK) ○ Australia / New Zealand ○ Pacific Northwest • Primary Activity / Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Getaways (empty nesters outside of summer school vacation) ○ Winter sports enthusiasts (snowmobiling, heli-skiing, backcountry lodge experiences) ○ Touring in private vehicles/RVs (April/May/June/Sept/Oct) ○ Motorcycle touring ○ Passionate paddle sports enthusiasts ○ Passionate hikers ○ Road cyclists ○ Festival/event goers ○ Sports tourism / tournaments ○ Meetings/retreats
Management, Governance, and Administration	<p>A new not-for-profit Society has been established under the BC Societies Act – Arrow Slokan Tourism Association. ASTA will be the eligible entity for the 2% MRDT through the duration of this five-year strategy and future renewals.</p> <p>Governance would be provided by an 11 voting member Board of Directors + 1 ex-officio seat for local government (total of 12 seats). Four (4) seats are appointed and eight (8) seats are elected. The composition of the Board represents a geographic mix of tourism business operators in the Arrow Slokan area and representation of the range of motivating visitor experiences. The Board is made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce (appointed) • Slokan District Chamber of Commerce (appointed) • Halcyon Hotsprings (appointed) • Local government (appointed/ex officio) • MRDT Collector – Nakusp/Area K (elected) • MRDT Collector – Slokan Valley/Area H (elected) • MRDT Collector – Backcountry Lodges (elected) • Arts/Culture/Heritage – Area H (elected) • Arts/Culture/Heritage – Area K (elected) • Activity Operator/Outdoor Recreation – Area H (elected) • Activity Operator/Outdoor Recreation – Area K (elected) • Food/Beverage/Retail – Area H or K (elected) <p>Elections will occur at the Annual General Meeting by Voting Stakeholders.</p>

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	<p>The nominee’s experience and qualification should align with the seat they will hold. Voting stakeholders are defined in the bylaws as either being collectors of the MRDT or stakeholders that have participated financially in a marketing program in the last twelve months. Initial staggering of the terms of the first Board ensure continuity of experience. After this initial staggering, terms of two years will be held with opportunity for up to three term renewals.</p> <p>An annual forum to engage all tourism businesses would be hosted by ASTA to ensure that every stakeholder is aware of the progress that has been made and can have an opportunity to contribute thoughts, ideas, and market intelligence on plan updates. Regular communication will occur over the course of the year.</p>
Sources of Funding	<p>Current funding: \$nil</p> <p>To date destination marketing has occurred as grant funding has been secured. In addition to Destination BC support, local governments contribute to operation of two Visitor Centres run by the local Chambers of Commerce. This arrangement would continue and ASTA would not be responsible for operation of the Visitor Centres. Local government will be asked to provide office space and access to phone lines/printers by the Tourism Manager when he/she is in town.</p> <p>Estimate of MRDT: \$100,000 with 5% growth annually</p> <p>Leveraged funds from partners: \$35,000 – this is a combination of cooperative ‘pay to play’ programs for tourism businesses in the area; Destination BC Open Pool application of \$20,000 and additional grants periodically available through Columbia Basin Trust and other granting authorities.</p>

Section 2: One-Year Tactical Plan with Performance Measures

Major Category: Marketing

Activity Title: Build awareness of Arrow Slokan area as a preferred overnight destination in winter/autumn/fall in target markets

Tactics:

- Online Marketing
- Social Media
- Travel Media Relations
- Print collateral/maps
- Cooperative Marketing

Implementation Plan:

Objectives:

- Increase destination awareness
- Produce tangible marketing outcomes for benefit of consumer and local tourism stakeholders

Rationale: There has been limited resources available to dedicate to destination awareness without the MRDT in place. The opportunity now exists to leverage MRDT funds with stakeholders, regional and provincial partners for marketing initiatives.

Action Steps:

- Launch interactive website showcasing a range of experiences – allowing visitors to ‘click’ their passion to see the range of options and suggested multi-night itineraries in the area - \$20,000
- Execute social media campaigns using key words / geotargeting with a focus on winter, autumn and spring experiences - \$30,000
- Secure editorial coverage in key target markets (print and digital) featuring suggested itineraries (either passion-based or time-based) for shoulder seasons - \$2,500
- Invest in high quality images, videography, and curate content in a steady feed to social channels and influencers - \$10,000
- Design and print select collateral/maps - \$2,500
- Implement other cooperative marketing initiatives designed with participating stakeholders – pay to play programs

Partnerships: Local tourism stakeholders, Kootenay Rockies Tourism, Destination BC

Sources of Funding: MRDT, partner funding (local, regional and provincial leveraged dollars)

Responsibilities: ASTA Board, Tourism Manager

Timeframe: Year 1

Budget: \$65,000

Evaluation Mechanism: monitor and tracking marketing avenues (website, social media, etc.), stakeholder feedback

Performance Measures:

Output Measures:

- Types of marketing activities
- Website analytics
- Description of social media activities/impressions and outcomes
- Advertising equivalency
- Webpage visits
- Visitor inquiries/calls

Outcome Measures:

- Visitor volume estimates
- Visitor nights & visitor spending
- Visitor revenues
- Average length of stay
- Accommodation revenues
- Investment of marketing dollars by local partners in cooperative initiatives

Major Category: Experiential Quality
Activity Title: Invest and facilitate training to support enhancements to the experiential quality offered to visitors
Tactics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industry education and training• Local resident education and support
Implementation Plan: <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local tourism stakeholder participation in training opportunities• Develop ambassador program• Increased resident support for tourism• Understand visitor motivation <p>Rationale: There is a need to ensure delivery of brand promise (authentic Kootenay vibe) and to assist small operators to deliver the most remarkable experiences possible.</p> <p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer on-line reputation management training to all businesses and assist all tourism businesses with their on-line presence (Google My Business, Trip Advisor etc.)• Identify and facilitate access/local delivery of front-line service education and training (general training through go2HR and specific local knowledge program)• Educate all residents on the value of local tourism economy and develop their appreciation of their contribution to the visitor experience• Create a resident ‘ambassador’ program (“ask a local”) – Educate ambassadors on available experiences• Encourage all businesses to participate in Destination BC’s <i>Remarkable Experiences Program</i> <p>Partnerships: Local tourism stakeholders, Kootenay Rockies Tourism, Destination BC, go2HR</p> <p>Sources of Funding: MRDT</p> <p>Responsibilities: ASTA Board, Tourism Manager, local tourism stakeholders, workshop facilitators</p> <p>Timeframe: Year 1</p> <p>Budget: \$2,500</p> <p>Evaluation Mechanism: workshop attendance and feedback; availability of accurate and on-brand destination and experience information online</p>

Performance Measures:Output Measures:

- Workshop delivery
- Program creation and delivery

Outcome Measures:

- Number of training participants in various programs offered
- Workshop feedback
- Number of tourism businesses with accurate information/images online
- Number of locals participating in ambassador program

Major Category: Shoulder Season Event Support	
Activity Title: Invest in shoulder season events to motivate travel	
Tactics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event promotion and delivery • Event calendar 	
Implementation Plan:	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow overnight visitation levels motivated by shoulder-season events • Develop, maintain and promote event calendar 	
Rationale: Existing events draw overnight visitors and there are opportunities for additional events in shoulder season.	
Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support existing events that currently motivate travel with marketing/promotion and packaging of overnight stays (Garlic Festival; Fibre Festival; Sufferfest) • Engage with tourism stakeholders to review current calendar of events and conceive 1-2 new shoulder season events or add to programming of existing events to convert them into travel motivators 	
Partnerships: Local tourism stakeholders, event organizers, local volunteers	
Sources of Funding: MRDT	
Responsibilities: ASTA Board, Tourism Manager, local tourism stakeholders, local event stakeholders	
Timeframe: Year 1	
Budget: \$7,500	
Evaluation Mechanism: event attendance; number of events in calendar; accommodation reports (anecdotal) of occupancy levels during various events	
Performance Measures:	
<u>Output Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event delivery • Event calendar 	<u>Outcome Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in occupancy levels in overnight accommodation during event days

Major Category: Sport Tourism Promotion	
Activity Title: Work with local sport hosting facilities and volunteer clubs to secure additional sport tournaments and events	
Tactics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for event bids • Event promotion and delivery • Event calendar 	
Implementation Plan:	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow shoulder season overnight visitation through successful hosting of incremental sports events/tournaments • Develop, maintain and promote event calendar 	
Rationale: Sport events in the shoulder season increase overnight visitation by participants, while also encouraging additional visitation by family, friends and spectators.	
Action Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support volunteer groups in bid identification/preparation and provide financial support to local event host • Once tournament(s) are secured, promote ‘come early/stay longer’ offers – partner with accommodation, activities, retail, restaurants to maximize yield 	
Partnerships: Local event organizers, sport groups, volunteers, event sponsors, tourism stakeholders	
Sources of Funding: MRDT	
Responsibilities: ASTA Board, Tourism Manager, local tourism stakeholders, local sport event stakeholders/clubs/volunteers	
Timeframe: Year 1	
Budget: \$5,000	
Evaluation Mechanism: bid submissions, financial support, event delivery	
Performance Measures:	
<u>Output Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted events • Promotional offers 	<u>Outcome Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sport teams hosted • Incremental occupancy levels achieved during events

Major Category: Meetings and Retreats	
Activity Title: Offer meeting/retreat organizers a one-stop comprehensive source of information and contact point for planning their event	
Tactics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting/retreat inventory 	
Implementation Plan:	
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased meetings/retreats hosted in destination in shoulder seasons 	
Rationale: Meeting/retreat capacity information needs to be sourced and shared in a manner that serves event organizers seeking unique event destinations.	
Action Steps:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create on-line inventory of meeting and retreat facilities in Arrow Slokan region including capacities, floor plans, walking distances to accommodations, restaurants etc. • Respond to inquiries from event planners and support venues in their efforts to promote 	
Partnerships: Local meeting and retreat venue providers and associated partners (accommodation, F&B providers, etc.)	
Sources of Funding: MRDT	
Responsibilities: ASTA Board, Tourism Manager, local tourism stakeholders	
Timeframe: Year 1	
Budget: \$5,000	
Evaluation Mechanism: event inquiries; meeting/retreat bookings	
Performance Measures:	
<u>Output Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line inventory • Hosted meeting/retreats 	<u>Outcome Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meeting/retreat inquiries • Number of meeting/retreat bookings • Incremental occupancy levels achieved from meetings/retreats

Section 3: MRDT Budget for Year One

Designated recipients **must** complete the budget table as provided below.

Revenues		Budget \$
MRDT		\$100,000
Local government contribution (in kind office/admin support)		\$20,000
Stakeholder contributions		
Co-op funds received (e.g. DBC Open Pool)		\$20,000
Grants		\$15,000
	Total Revenues	\$155,000
Expenses		Budget \$
Marketing		
Marketing staff – wage and benefits (incl. travel allowance)		\$50,000
Image/video content acquisition		\$15,000
Website - hosting, development, maintenance		\$15,000
Social media		\$12,500
Collateral production and distribution		\$7,500
Travel media relations		\$7,500
Other cooperative marketing initiatives designed together with participating stakeholders		\$7,500
	Subtotal	\$115,000
Destination & Product Experience Management		
Product experience enhancement and training		\$1,500
Local resident education		\$1,000
	Subtotal	\$2,500
Event & Sport Tourism		
Event & sport attraction, delivery and promotion		\$12,500
	Subtotal	\$12,500
Meetings and Conventions		
Meetings/retreats attraction, delivery and promotion		\$5,000
	Subtotal	\$5,000
Administration		
Management and staff unrelated to program implementation – wages and benefits		\$0
Board of Directors costs		\$0
Expenses		Budget \$
General office expenses - <i>overheads are anticipated to be minimal with a series of remote offices identified at Village offices/Chamber offices provided as an in-kind contribution</i>		\$20,000
	Subtotal	\$0
	Total Expenses:	\$155,000
Balance or Carry Forward		