



**TOURISM DAWSON CREEK
EVENT TOURISM STRATEGY**

**PUNCHING
ABOVE
OUR WEIGHT**



May 22, 2018

Acknowledgements

The following event tourism strategy was developed with extensive input from the many tourism stakeholders of the City of Dawson Creek. The community's willingness to come together to share ideas for enhancing event tourism is acknowledged and appreciated.

Ryan MacIvor, General Manager, Spectra Venue Management at the Encana Event Centre provided valuable guidance throughout the planning process.

The leadership of Mayor Dale Bumstead and key leadership and sport staff from the City of Dawson Creek was foundational to plan development and will remain so as implementation proceeds.

It has been a privilege to work together with everyone in Dawson Creek. Thank you.

Laura Plant



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Executive Summary

The City of Dawson Creek has recently contracted tourism delivery services to Spectra Venue Management and has outlined the need for the development of an event strategy. Dawson Creek has successfully been hosting events for many years, but stakeholders understand the opportunity to strategically coordinate efforts to increase the impact of hosted events – festivals, cultural and sporting events, meeting, weddings, etc.

Laura Plant Consulting was contracted to develop the strategy – reviewing previous plans, interviewing stakeholders, researching other destinations and formulating an implementation plan.

What is Event Tourism?



| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Tourism marketing is all about promoting a destination as a place to visit.</p> | <p>When these two things intersect, it becomes event tourism - the developing, planning, marketing and hosting of events as visitor attractions in a specific destination.</p> |
| <p>Event hosting is all about putting together the best event (tournament, concert, festival...)</p> | |

In many ways, event tourists are the best tourists: they come to a destination in great numbers, they turn up rain or shine at a pre-arranged time, and they can fill hotels. Visitors engaged specifically in sport tourism are also high yield, stay longer than other tourist categories and often stimulate other tourism.¹ This is why Destination Canada, our national marketing organization is partnering with the

¹ www.sporttourismexpo.com/sport-tourism

Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance on a three-year agreement to promote Canada as a preferred sport tourism destination to the international sport community.²

Dawson Creek has been successfully hosting events for a long time – including sport and cultural events, corporate meetings, and weddings. For a community of its size, it could be argued that it is punching above its weight in terms of success with event tourism. And all this activity is having a positive impact: events bring visitors to the community - helping to both diversify the economy and bring competitive opportunities for local sport clubs and teams. Sport events give Dawson Creek families the opportunity to stay home and not to have to travel to every competition. Cultural events provide entertainment and build community and help retain a quality of life that assists in keeping people in the community and attracting business investment that is considering northeastern BC communities as a home base. Therefore the development of an Event Strategy, rather than just a sport tourism strategy makes the most sense for Dawson Creek.

“What gives us an advantage over communities such as Grande Prairie, Fort St John, and even Prince George is our multi-plex and events centre.”

~ Mayor Dale Bumstead

In 2018, BC Business Magazine produced their fourth annual ranking, measuring a city’s attractiveness as place to work. New to this year’s process was a gauge for quality of life. Dawson Creek was ranked #2, after Fort St John.³ Event tourism can contribute to quality of life and help ensure that Dawson Creek remains a vibrant community for current and future residents.

Partnerships are a vital component of event tourism and need to be part of the strategy. Organizations such as the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance* provide partnership opportunities for members, which could benefit Dawson Creek. Locally, the on-going partnership of the City of Dawson Creek and Spectra Venue Management, operators of Tourism Dawson Creek and the Encana Events Centre, can provide sustainable, collaborative and cooperative opportunities to actively target events. Whether it is conference facilities, accommodations, sport venues or other event requirements, working together toward a common goal is key. Tourism Victoria and WestJet Airlines who signed a partnership agreement to align their marketing strategies to boost conference business demonstrated an example of this type of partnering recently.⁴

But how much will it cost?

Event tourism provides a new focus of effort for Dawson Creek, although it is not a new idea, as is outlined in the Existing Tourism Planning section (see page 23). Tourism Dawson Creek has a successful history marketing the community as a destination, strategically located at the beginning of the historically-significant Alaska Highway. This event tourism strategy is meant to compliment Tourism Dawson Creek’s leisure market activities by reallocating some internal resources to strategically add

² canadiansporttourism.com/news/destination-canada-and-canadian-sport-tourism-alliance-sign-three-year-partnership-agreement.html

³ Where to Work in 2018. BC Business Magazine. December/January 2018

⁴ www.timescolonist.com/business/tourism-victoria-westjet-partner-to-boost-conference-business-1.23257665

event tourism to the marketing mix. ***Event Tourism can be added to the marketing and product development activities conducted by Tourism Dawson Creek within the existing TDC budget - the current City of Dawson Creek financial contribution remains unchanged.***

Tourism Dawson Creek – Focus of Effort

| Marketing & Product Development | | Visitor Services |
|--|--|---|
| Leisure Traveller: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alaska Highway explorer ○ Short-haul Peace region explorer ○ VFR (visiting friends and relatives) ○ Sector-specific explorer (birding, etc.) | Event Tourism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Event participants ○ Event spectators ○ Conference/meeting attendees ○ Weddings and reunions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visitor Centre ○ Mobile VC at events ○ Alaska Highway House |

Many communities begin their tourism strategies with a need for a unique brand. What is it that sets their community apart from everyone else? Dawson Creek already has that. Being Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway is something Dawson Creek owns that no one else can; this is invaluable and should not be lost when building an event tourism strategy. The leisure traveler looking to explore the Alaska highway, interested in historical and cultural experiences and those looking to explore the Peace region and other parts of northern BC should all continue to be encouraged to visit Dawson Creek.

In addition to being a historic mile marker, the Mile 0 name is in use by some event clubs in the community, such as the Mile Zero Cruisers, the Mile Zero Figure Skating Club and the Mile 0 Meltdown at the Encana Events Centre (EEC). There is an opportunity to grow and capitalize on the brand by incorporating the name into tournaments and events to further leverage the brand and raise awareness of the name.

However, brands are much more than logos or a slogan. To be successful brands need to be based on quality product. Marketing brings visitors once, but a quality product keeps them coming back. Dawson Creek has the draw of the Alaska Highway and should continue to promote this product and provide a centre to service these visitors. Adding the tactic of promoting Dawson Creek events presents an additional tourism opportunity. Delivering quality events that keeps people coming back is key and dedicating resources to an event tourism office can help, and is recommended as part of this strategy.

Visitor Centre staff resources can be utilized in the off-season to support event tourism activities while the busy summer season could have the Visitor Centre staff more engaged in servicing visitors at events. Visitor service trends are moving toward online channels and incorporating mobile centres, such as Dawson Creek’s visitor centre trailer. However, in Dawson Creek, being located at the start of a major travel route requires a unique need for a physical location, with RV parking.

Why invest in events? Because they are worth it.

Dawson Creek undertook four economic impact assessments in 2017 – two festivals and two sporting events. The events ranged in both size and scope, attracting a diverse audience to Dawson Creek and each producing beneficial economic activity to both the city and the province.



Collectively, in hosting these four events in 2017, the event organizers spent approximately \$3.5 million on various goods and services to ensure successful operations. The only event with any capital expenditures was the World U-17 Hockey Challenge who invested \$41,000 in facility upgrades to host the event. The combined spending of out-town participants, delegates, family members, spectators and other people who visited Dawson Creek for these events, in combination with the expenditures made by the organizers of each event, totaled \$6.5 million, supporting \$10.2 million in economic activity in BC , including \$8.4 million of economic activity in Dawson Creek.

These expenditures supported \$3.4 million in wages and salaries in the province through the support of 60 jobs, of which 46 jobs and \$2.5 million in wages and salaries were supported in Dawson Creek. The total net economic activity (GDP) generated by these four 2017 events and festivals were:

\$6.0 million for Canada as a whole
 \$5.5 million for the province of BC
 \$3.7 million for Dawson Creek⁵

For this event tourism strategy, the consultant also researched 7 sport tourism communities and determined the transferable lessons:

- A sustainably funded event tourism strategy is an important part of successful event hosting
- A one-stop shop can assist event organizers and assist with bidding, hosting and measuring impact of events
- A well-managed event calendar ensures coordination of marketing and event attraction to fill need periods and maximize impact of events
- Event hosting grants provide funding for targeted events based on strategic timelines
- Volunteer recruitment and recognition benefits all events
- Leveraging the destination brand for event marketing is important
- Collaboration amongst all partners is key to clarifying roles and delivering the best events
- Local event organizers can benefit from the development and sharing of resources and tools
- Measuring and communicating the benefits of event hosting is critical for on-going support

⁵ Economic Impact Assessment Aggregate Report – 2017 Dawson Creek Events, CSTA February 2018

- Accommodation stakeholders can be engaged in sponsoring events and/or coordinating streamlined booking process for event participants/organizers

An analysis of Dawson Creek's current situation shows that the destination has invested in, and developed, strong brand equity with Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway. The Visitor Centre greets visitors traveling the Alaska Highway and visiting other regional attractions, and the mobile visitor-servicing trailer attends events in destination. The Tourism Dawson Creek staff have shown a dedication to the tourism industry and developed partnerships with regional and provincial marketing effort that need to be maintained. Incorporating an event tourism focus - to the existing leisure traveler market - provides opportunities to attract additional visitors to the community.

Dawson Creek has successfully hosted many events from agricultural fairs to car shows to concerts, conferences and sport events. Each of these events relies upon the relationships that have been built over time and the countless years of volunteer dedication. Not every community has a fall fair approaching its 100th anniversary. Dawson Creek has invested in facilities, such as the Lakota Agriplex and the Harry Morrow ball fields, to name a few and the community is home to a very high standard venue – the Encana Events Centre. Hockey Canada, hosts of the U17 World Hockey Challenge event, acknowledges the local know-how and ability to get things done right in Dawson Creek - the collaboration with the City Council was unique in Dawson Creek for this hockey event, whereas in other communities it has been more self-serving. And the volunteers and community pride were overwhelming. This groundwork is fundamental for success with future event hosting.

In order for event tourism to truly succeed in Dawson Creek, there has to be a concentrated sales effort, on-going relationship-building and collaboration to maintain and enhance existing events. Becoming more connected with sports organizations and other communities through the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance* is recommended to ensure Dawson Creek remains top of mind for sport event rights holders. The development of event planner materials to help potential hosts understand what Dawson Creek offers as well as being a main point of contact for local event managers are key next steps. All of this will be most effectively managed by creating a dedicated role for event tourism management.

What Event Tourism Is – and Is Not.

Although they are important to Dawson Creek, event tourism does not involve coordinating community events such as parades, Canada Day celebrations and other events designed for residents. The strategies outlined in this Event Tourism Strategy pertain to attracting visitors from out-of-town to Dawson Creek for an overnight stay. The proposed Tourism Event Office staff will not be event organizers or planners, but rather act as a resource for event hosts – either aspiring or current hosts. By developing an event checklist, program guidelines, and various resources, the Event Tourism Office can assist event organizers connect all the necessary pieces required for a great event, and collect metrics that will enable Tourism Dawson Creek to better understand the local event tourism economy.

The Event Tourism Office could support organizations that are taking the lead to apply to host events and who have a club, organization or committee taking on responsibility for hosting. For example, in addition to creating the Northern Lights Disc Golf series to increase tourism into BC peace region from

other communities like Whitehorse and Grande Prairie, the Dawson Creek Disc Golf Club is working on a bid to host the 2019 BC Disc Golf championships. In this instance, roles for the Event Tourism Office staff may include assisting - or participating on - organizing committees, assisting with event bid packages, or being part of bid presentations for the community. The Event Office could also support efforts in local procurements, local transportation logistics, hotel bookings, etc.

Events need to have an organizer that takes the lead on tasks such as developing conference agenda, organizing event logistics and being an on-site staff during the event. The Event Tourism Office can source hosting opportunities and share these with community stakeholders for hosting consideration – for example, local businesses/stakeholders may wish to financially contribute to contracting an event organizer who would be responsible for coordinating and delivering a conference such as the Minerals North Conference in 2010. www.mineralsnorth.ca/association/applying-to-host-minerals-north

For existing events that already attract visitors and contribute to the local economy, the event tourism strategy relates to increasing event participation and length of stay through collaborative marketing and development activities.

The accompanying implementation plan outlines six strategies:

1. Event Tourism Office
2. Event Recruitment and Marketing
3. Event Hosting Grant
4. Event Hosting Calendar and Capacity
5. Event Enhancement
6. Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment

Each strategy has the rationale outlined along with the action steps, responsibility, partnerships, timing, budget and measurements.

The following event strategy for Dawson Creek is founded on stakeholder input and feedback. In order to ensure a diversity of viewpoints and a variety of times/formats for participation, the following engagement strategies were employed:

- 27 stakeholder consultations (February – March 2018) – consisting of Tourism Dawson Creek Staff, City of Dawson Creek Mayor and Council, city staff, sport venue owners, operators as well as local sport stakeholders (see Appendix A for complete list)

In addition to the wealth of ideas and knowledge offered by participants in these sessions, the consultant spent several days in Dawson Creek experiencing the community from a visitor's perspective and meeting with sport facility management. The recommendations are additionally informed by a review of best practices from other communities.

Stakeholder interviews and input identified the opportunity for Dawson Creek to take the next step in event tourism development. It was widely recognized that Dawson Creek has a strong hosting resume, and that there is more success to come. However, in order to ensure the best returns from event hosting efforts, a stronger collaboration between stakeholders is required.

The resulting event tourism strategy for Dawson Creek is structured as follows:

- Introduction
- Competitive Analysis
- Situation Analysis
- Recommendations
- Implementation Plan

Introduction

The City of Dawson Creek has recently contracted tourism delivery services to Spectra Venue Management and has outlined the need for the development of an event strategy. Dawson Creek has successfully been hosting events for many years, but stakeholders understand the opportunity to strategically coordinate efforts to increase the impact of hosted events – both festivals and sporting events.

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Competitive Analysis

Sport / Event Hosting

A series of seven case studies were studied to showcase the range of options that are available to Dawson Creek. While each is structured differently, every one of the following are considered

successful in their destination. A few of these destinations are similar in population size to Dawson Creek and some of the destinations are located long distances from major urban centers. Others provide event hosting efforts that Dawson Creek can use as a guide/template.

- Vancouver, BC
- Kamloops, BC
- Prince George, BC
- Regina, SK
- Lethbridge, AB
- Fort McMurray, AB
- Grande Prairie, AB

| Community Name | Population | Hotel/Motel rooms | Sport/Event Committee | Event Hosting Grant(s) |
|--------------------|------------|--|-----------------------|---|
| Vancouver, BC | 603,502 | 24,000 in Metro Vancouver; 10,400 in downtown core | Yes | Yes vancouver.ca/people-programs/sporting-event-grants.aspx |
| Kamloops, BC | 98,754 | 3,000 Note: 80 more rooms joining in 2017 | Yes | Yes www.tournamentcapital.com/grants_and_funding.htm |
| Prince George, BC | 74,003 | 2,150 (400 rooms joining in 2019) | Yes | Yes www.princegeorge.ca/CityServices/Pages/GrantsandFinancialAssistance.aspx |
| Regina, SK | 241,422 | 3,800 | Yes | Yes www.regina.ca/residents/social-grants-programs/community-investments-funding/sport-recreation/hosting-grant/ |
| Lethbridge, AB | 96,828 | 1,000 | Yes | Yes www.lethbridge.ca/Things-To-Do/Special-Events/pages/grants.aspx |
| Fort McMurray, AB | 66,500 | 1,785 (listed in conference planner) | Yes | Yes www.rmwb.ca/living/Community-Investment-Program/Joint-Initiatives-Grant.htm |
| Grande Prairie, AB | 68,556 | 3,000 | Yes | No |
| Dawson Creek, BC | 12,500 | 939 | No | No formal grant program Note: there is, however, a \$25,000 discretionary fund |

Various event hosting services provided by communities:

- one-stop shop services for event organizers – with accompanying strategy to guide initiatives
- event hosting grants
- local event host coordination
- promoting events; maximizing the number of participants and spectators
- volunteer management
- bid preparation and support
- site-visit coordination and/or assistance
- accommodation and equipment logistics
- transportation logistics
- assisting with identifying available funding sources at the federal, provincial and local levels
- welcome strategy for event participants
- visitor services before and during the event
- destination marketing materials (maps, promotions, etc.)
- calculating and communicating the economic impact of an event

Vancouver

Transferable Lessons from Vancouver

A one-stop shop, funded through partnership dollars, can be created to assist Dawson Creek event organizers and assist with bid prioritization.

Events grants can be set up to support different size events.

In December 2015, Vancouver created [Sport Hosting Vancouver](#) - a one-stop shop designed to assist event organizers. It is a partnership between the City, Tourism Vancouver, PavCo, the Vancouver Hostel Destination Association and UBC. The creation of *Sport Hosting Vancouver* has provided solutions to issues, such as a lack of coordination that existed in Vancouver when it came to executing and pursuing sporting events. The partnership is meant to provide one point of contact for event organizers as well as put together bids for major sports events that are a good fit for the city in terms of facilities, timing, interest and branding.

The *Sport Hosting Vancouver* Action Plan has received city council funding for the Sport Tourism Development Fund. \$1M over two years is the City of Vancouver contribution, which will be matched by \$2.15M in partner funding (\$1.5M to the Fund and \$650K to marketing and related sport hosting initiatives), which will be used to attract, grow or create Vancouver sport events that advance Sport Hosting Vancouver Action Plan goals.

The \$138,000 Vancouver Sport Hosting grant provides financial support for sporting events that have the potential to bring direct or indirect economic, social, health, and community development benefits to Vancouver.

Vancouver's Major Sport Event Operating Grant is intended for large-scale events with influence on national or international sport. Major Sport Event City Service Offset Grant is intended for large-scale events that require numerous city services, such as police, engineering, and parks. The Community Sport Event Operating Grant supports community-based events.



Kamloops

Transferable Lessons from Kamloops

Even communities that market themselves as the Tournament Capital still have a need for more coordination. The group that seeks events to fill sport facilities (Tournament Capital Program) and the DMO who markets the destination have created *Host Kamloops* to increase communications, and to work together to secure events (sport, arts, and culture events) that fill need periods while also filling sport facilities. This same opportunity exists for Dawson Creek – the efforts of the DMO can be combined with supporting local event organizers who are offered grants for bidding and hosting.

Successful events that generate revenue in Dawson Creek can provide seed funding for Legacy Funds - set up to support local athletes, coaches, officials and sport organizations.

The City of Kamloops has long recognized Sport Tourism as an economic generator for the City and to that end has made [Canada's Tournament Capital](#) one of its top goals in City Council's Strategic Plan. With close to \$50 million invested in new and renovated facilities Kamloops brands itself as the premier host centre for tournaments, cultural events, high performance training camps, and national and international competitions.



Sport hosting efforts involve the local destination marketing organization, [Tourism Kamloops](#) and the not for profit society [Kamloops Sports Council](#), an advocate for local sports groups.

Kamloops offers a Tournament Capital Grant that provides funds for amateur sports organizations/individuals hosting events:

Provincial Tournament (participants from BC) - \$500

Western Canadian Tournament (participants from BC, AB, SK & MB) - \$1,000

National Tournament (participants from Canada) - \$1,500

Invitational Tournament (participants from out of town) - \$1500

In 2014, Kamloops' tournament capital economic impact was \$12M and consisted of 110 events and 26,000 out of town participants. This same year the sport event funding was \$56,251.

| Event Category | Grant Funding |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Provincial | \$5,593 |
| Western Canada | \$1,900 |
| National | \$6,000 |
| Invitational | \$42,758 |
| TOTAL | \$56,251 |

Source: City of Kamloops, Annual Report 2014

BC Summer Games Sport Development Grant – a legacy of \$100,000 remains in the community as a result of a budget surplus from staging the BC Summer Games in July 2006. The BC Summer Games Sport Development Grant is available to local coaches, officials and sport organizations interested in furthering their knowledge in their respective areas. Winter Games Legacy Fund Grants are to cover circumstances where a person or group advances beyond local competition, or is recruited to a provincial or nationally ranked team.

Prince George

Transferable Lessons from Prince George

Tourism Prince George and the City of Prince George worked closely together to develop a 10-year sport tourism strategy. This collaboration of stakeholders incorporates the public and private venues and the vast array of events hosted in the community. Tourism Prince George has a dedicated Sport Tourism Manager to manage the relationship-building with event rights holders and the local community. Attracting conferences and hosting sporting events are key strategies for Prince George.

Although Tourism Dawson Creek is different from Tourism Prince George (a DMO society that collects hotel tax), the close working relationship with the city is a key aspect to learn from. The development of a strategy - that clearly delineates roles, helps to prevent duplication of effort, inconsistent event support and unclear roles and responsibilities – will lead to implementation of a Dawson Creek-created plan.

The *SportPG Hosting Grant* program provides funds to event hosts, but also requires that they report back metrics from the event, which is a crucial step in measuring the impact of event hosting .

One of Tourism Prince George’s key strategies is attracting conferences and hosting sporting events. Investment is responding in the community with two new hotels being invested in, one right next door to the Conference and Civic Centre.¹⁰

The City of Prince George recognises that local organisations work hard and have many ideas on how to boost the community. To that end, the City provides grants and financial assistance programs to help groups meet their goals of enhancing PG for all who live in the community.



The *SportPG Hosting Grant* financially supports local non-profit organisations that host sporting events, which attract participants and visitors to Prince George.

Approved grants are in line with, *This is SportPG* missions and goals, a [strategy](#) developed in partnership between the Tourism Prince George and the City of Prince George. “To host new events while continuing to support and strengthen existing events, which add to the sustainability of tourism and the enhancement of the city’s image.”

Part of the criteria for receiving grant funding is to complete a final report that outlines the following:

- Number of volunteers, athletes, coaches and officials
- Number of local spectators (estimates if the event is not ticketed) and out-of-town spectators
- Financial statement

¹⁰ www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/prince-george-hotels

Regina

Transferable Lessons from Regina

Hosting grants at both the provincial and municipal levels can compliment one another. Dawson Creek sport hosting grants could be tailored to assist with events, which are outlined in a strategic plan. Timing of grant deadlines could consider [Hosting BC](#) grant timelines and requirements to ease workload of local event organizers.

Accommodation stakeholders in Dawson Creek could be encouraged to become involved in financially supporting events as a collaborative. Sponsor funds can be tailored to encourage events of particular sizes, times of year, etc. This would not have to preclude individual accommodation properties from sponsoring events.

Tourism Saskatchewan is responsible for the marketing of Saskatchewan as a tourism destination and has a particular focus on supporting major sporting and cultural events. Their strategy to host national and international involves assisting stakeholders to attract and host events through promotion, collaboration, advice and financial support.

[Events Regina](#) is a collaborative venture of founding partners including Tourism Regina, Regina Hotel Association, City of Regina, Tourism Saskatchewan, Wascana Centre Authority and the University. This collaborative venture of industry partners assists local organizations with bidding, site inspections, economic impact assessment and promotions.



Saskatchewan has a community events grant program. In addition, they also support Marquee Annual Events and National and International Events. Marquee Annual Events attract national and or international participants and spectators and typically have an operating budget of over \$100,000. The National and International Events are one-time events of a size and scope sufficient to draw significant visitation to the province, and to showcase Saskatchewan's communities nationally and globally.

The City of Regina offers a [hosting grant](#) of up to \$10,000 for sanctioned amateur championship events at the provincial, Western Canadian, national or international level.

In addition, the [Regina Hotel Association](#) (RHA) sponsors over 50 events and conventions. To be eligible, the events must generate a minimum of 200 hotel room nights in RHA member properties.

Lethbridge

Transferable Lessons from Lethbridge

The City of Lethbridge has recognized the importance of events to their community and has formalized the sport tourism roles and responsibilities for themselves and the local sport council. As more communities recognize the benefits of sport tourism and work toward stronger collaborations, the competition for sport hosting will get even stronger. The time for Dawson Creek to further their sport hosting efforts is now.

A Dawson Creek Event Tourism Office could develop toolkits for event organizations – organizational development, volunteer management, etc. Hosting grants could be provided to encourage Dawson Creek organizations with bidding and/or hosting events.

Coordinating all the various partners required to host the best events will ideally provide best practice examples that could be shared with those hosting any event in the community.

[Visit Lethbridge](#) is an association of Lethbridge accommodation properties working to increase overnight stays for member properties. [Lethbridge Sport Council \(LSC\)](#) was incorporated as a non-profit sport organization and exists as an independent body to support the enhancement and development of sport within Lethbridge. The LSC provides leadership and a collective voice for sport, offering quality sport experiences to all and attracting, creating and retaining sport tourism opportunities for Lethbridge.

Roles and Responsibilities:

| City of Lethbridge | Lethbridge Sport Council |
|--|---|
| Facilitate implementation of the Sport and Recreation Policy mandate | Provide leadership for the enhancements and development of sports in Lethbridge |
| Coordinate long term sport/ ecreation planning | Advocate for sport and promote in Lethbridge |
| Develop, negotiate and manage contractual agreements and partnerships | Attract and promote sport events that have economic benefits to Lethbridge and region |
| Coordinate space allocation and facility booking processes to provide optimal use of sport and recreation facilities | Assist sport organizations and individuals by linking them to, or providing them with, sport-related education and support services (e.g. bidding process, resources, etc.) |
| Manage the operation and maintenance, including life cycle requirements, of sport and recreation facilities | Provide benefits to members including: Training, Volunteer Organization Assistance, Research & Information Sharing and Media Awareness |
| Provide business development support to sport and recreation organizations | Provide input to development of sport and recreation needs addressed in Municipal Capital Improvement Program and the Operating Budget |
| Coordinate sport/recreation marketing and information | To communicate to City Council any issues, challenges or initiatives related to sport |
| Coordinate municipal sport and recreation funding/grant initiatives | |

The City of Lethbridge provides a [Civic Hosting Grant](#) to provide funds to help organizations bid and/or host conferences, conventions, meetings, cultural events or sport events. Support for bidding and event sponsorship may come in the form of one or more of the following: direct grants, gifts in kind (city services), minor capital investment in facilities, and/or equipment that provides a legacy that can be utilized for other events.



Fort McMurray

Transferable Lessons from Fort McMurray

Fort McMurray recognizes the importance of volunteers to their success – their sport tourism website acknowledges that nearly half of the region’s population actively volunteers, which is more than twice the national average. A strategy in Dawson Creek related to volunteer recruitment and acknowledgement will lend itself to event success.

Fort McMurray recognizes the importance of incorporating Wood Buffalo National Park and its associated branding into their messaging. Dawson Creek owns the Mile 0 brand and can ensure this is woven into more events and promotions.

Fort McMurray applies to both regional and provincial grant programs to seek partner funding for events.

Tourism Fort McMurray is a non-profit destination marketing organization (DMO) whose mandate is to promote and develop tourism within Fort McMurray and the Wood Buffalo Region. The strategic focus on sport tourism is supported by being home to Canada’s largest recreational centre (MacDonald Island Park), being in close proximity to Wood Buffalo National Park and having many indoor and outdoor recreational and sport opportunities.

The DMO’s Fort McMurray Tourism and Sports Tourism Steering Committee strives to:

- Enhance our region’s image and identity of being a sport destination
- An opportunity to generate new tourism business
- To achieve widespread national and international recognition for our region, our people, and our success stories Increase community and corporate collaboration and partnerships
- To capitalize on the many benefits of Sport Tourism in our country
- An opportunity to make a difference in Wood Buffalo

www.fortmcmurraytourism.com/explore-wood-buffalo/sports-tourism

Fort McMurray hosted the Alberta Winter Games February 2018.

The [Joint Initiatives Grant](#), provided by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is designed to support new community programs, projects or events that will become self-sustaining. Although it is not specific to major sport or cultural events and encourages events and projects where the majority of participants reside in Wood Buffalo, it has provided some funding to sport events in the community. The provincial Community Initiatives Program (CIP), [Major Cultural and Sport Events](#) (MSCE) program provides funding to sanctioned national and international cultural and sport events.



www.fortmcmurraytourism.com/sprt-tourism

Grande Prairie

Transferable Lessons from Grande Prairie

A sustainably-funded event tourism strategy is an important part of a successful event hosting program for Dawson Creek. Grande Prairie's strategy addresses important priorities that Dawson Creek is also wishing to address, such as marketing the community as a hosting destination, creating a stable base of event funding, and improving event hosting coordination.

Successful event hosting involves partners from many areas – local government, DMO, local business, sport and volunteer groups, event management and marketing. A formalized event hosting group in Dawson Creek, similar to the one in Grande Prairie could assist in ensuring local expertise is engaged in event hosting and that municipal funding is supported, managed and monitored.

The Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association is involved with promoting the Grande Prairie region as a visitor destination. The City of Grande Prairie works closely with the [Grande Prairie Sport Council](#) to implement the *Sport Tourism Strategy* and maintain the *Sport Facilities* guide. The [Setting the Stage manual](#) is a tool created by the Alberta government for community-based festivals and events planning.

In 2012 the City of Grande Prairie published the Grande Prairie Sport Tourism Strategy. The Priorities/Goals include:

1. Improve communication and coordination
2. Increase the number of sporting participants in Grande Prairie
3. Develop a stable, on-going base of funding for sport
4. Develop, manage and use facilities efficiently to increase sporting events
5. Promote sport and tourism in Grande Prairie

The strategy outlines a \$105,000 budget that includes \$30K for a resource person, \$30K for office space/supplies, \$10K sport promotion, \$20K for sport funding and \$15K for increasing sport participation.

Part of the strategy includes a City of Grande Prairie Sport Bid Committee - a committee of council created to support community groups undertaking major sporting events. The 9-member committee has one council-appointed representative, two city staff (recreation & sport supervisor and EDO), and 6 public participants from the following areas: sport, business, marketing/communications, large event planning/games background, and volunteer management. The committee meets a minimum of three times per year.



Meetings & Conferences

Dawson Creek's unique positioning as Mile 0 provides an opportunity to promote itself to the meetings and conferences market. Utilizing the existing various meeting facilities for the wedding and corporate markets and for banquets of multiple sizes can be begin right away. This can be enhanced by developing online resources for meeting planners and by developing a target list of conferences. Many destinations have focused on the meetings market by providing the essential information that meeting planners require, and these can be used as templates for Dawson Creek to develop resources. Many of these resources are similar to the needs of other types of events and marketing materials can be adapted for various audiences.



Tourism Squamish has a Meeting In Squamish website, accessible from their main consumer website that provides information and videos on the meeting opportunities in the community. Venue details, transportation information, dining, attraction and shopping ideas, FAQs, and suppliers lists (caterers, florists, rentals, marriage commissioners, etc.) are all found online.

meetinsquamish.com



Tourism Kelowna's website has a Meetings section that covers all the details for planners looking to host a meeting in the destination.

www.tourismkelowna.com/meeting-planners

Nelson



Nelson and Kootenay Lake Tourism's consumer website has a list of wedding resources for event planners, listing photographers, venues, flowers, etc.

www.nelsonkootenaylake.com/events/weddings



Tourism Fort McMurray has produced a Conference Planner publication that can be found on their website. It lists their conference facilities, accommodations, attractions, recreation facilities, medical and emergency services, and media services.

www.fortmcmurraytourism.com

Volunteers

Every event needs volunteers, whether that is the group organizing the event or the dedicated volunteers needed to host the event. Some events in Dawson Creek expressed difficulty in sourcing volunteers while others did not. There is an opportunity to share volunteer ideas and resources amongst event organizers.

Dawson Creek can learn from other communities about how to best promote a volunteer culture in their community. A volunteer centre could be housed in an existing location, such as the Visitor Centre or could be a virtual centre online. Volunteer Week in April of each year is an ideal time to celebrate the volunteers in Dawson Creek, raise awareness of volunteer opportunities and encourage community members to sign up for a volunteer database, is that is the direction the volunteer centre wishes to go.

Volunteer Canada - the national voice for volunteerism in Canada. Since 1977, they have been committed to increasing and supporting volunteerism and civic participation. The organization collaborates closely with volunteer centres, local organizations and national corporations to promote and broaden volunteering. Their programs, research, training, tools, resources and national initiatives provide leadership on issues and trends in Canada's volunteer landscape.

volunteer.ca

Volunteer BC



Volunteer BC has resources available for starting a volunteer centre, and could visit the community to assist in this process.

volunteerbc.bc.ca/volunteercentres

Volunteer Campbell River - a non profit organization that helps people and projects come together. Established in 1988, the Campbell River Volunteer Society has grown and flourished from a person answering a phone in their home to a vibrant, community not-for-profit agency that supports over 100 organizations. Also known as Volunteer Campbell River, VCR runs two main programs. Volunteer and Community Engagement and Non-Profit Leadership and Support. VCR is run with two regular part-time staff, along with office volunteers and is overseen by a volunteer board of directors.

www.volunteercr.ca

Volunteer Terrace

volunteerterrace.com

Volunteer Fraser Valley

www.volunteerfv.com

Dawson Creek Situation Analysis

Existing Tourism Planning

In 2003, the City of Dawson Creek surveyed residents regarding their vision for Dawson Creek over the next 3-5 years. In this vision work:

- 16.7% of the data is related to Beautiful, Clean Magnet Community
- 24.1% of the data is related to having a Diverse Strong Economic Base
- 20.8% of the data is related to having Healthy Progressive Infrastructure
- 17.1% is related to Active Sports and Cultural Community

Tourism was seen as the biggest opportunity for improving the economy. This is clearly tied in people's minds to the cleanliness and beautification of the community and to having a wide range of activities for people to enjoy. Many of the recreational activities were seen as both for local people as well as attractors for tourism. ¹¹

In 2005, in conjunction with Tourism British Columbia (now Destination BC), Tourism Dawson Creek hosted a Sport Tourism workshop. The workshop resulted in enhanced and continued communication between Tourism Dawson Creek and the sporting community. Several issues were brought forward and were included in the 2006 broader tourism consultation.

In 2006, Tourism Dawson Creek held Tourism BC's *Community Tourism Foundations* program where stakeholders, operators and the public at large were invited to help shape the future of tourism within Dawson Creek. The results identified a number of different areas including Sport and Event tourism.

The two workshops highlighted the need for a new staff position: Sport and Events Coordinator. The position would work within Tourism Dawson Creek, but would be responsible for the development, promotion and marketing for sports and events with the City of Dawson Creek and work in partnership with the management of the events centre.

In 2006, based on the workshop as stated above, a budget request and rationale for a sports and events coordinator position was presented to city staff. The objectives of the new staff position were to improve coordination of opportunities, market Dawson Creek as a sport and event centre, to extend visitor length of stay, to host pre-Olympic training events and to marketing and promote key events in the community. The request was not approved at the time.

In 2009, Tourism British Columbia worked with stakeholders in Dawson Creek and Pouce Coupe to produce the *Community Tourism Foundations* (CTF) plan. The planning process involved reviewing the existing Tourism Dawson Creek 2006-2012 Tourism Development Plan, which outlined six strategic areas: Destination Development; Sports and Events; Communication; Visitor Services; Marketing and Promotion; and Education. Using this 2006-2012 plan, the CTF process outlined strategies for 2010-

¹¹ Dawson Creek Visioning Process 2003

2015. The Management, Planning and Implementation section recommended an action plan that coordinates the three key tourism management stakeholders: Tourism Dawson Creek, the City of Dawson Creek and Global Spectrum Facility Management. Developing a formal Sport, Event and Conference Plan was also recommended.

In 2007, the City of Dawson Creek hired Spectra Venue Management (then Global Spectrum) to operate the Encana Events Centre (EEC). Their strategic plan focuses on community building and commits to working with Tourism Dawson Creek to review and update the Sports/Event Tourism plan that directly impacts the EEC for all major event opportunities.

Six strategies are outlined:

1. Increased Community Access
2. Events Capital of the Peace
3. Foster and Develop Relationships
4. Continued Investment
5. Be Entrepreneurial
6. Local First¹²

In December 2015 and February 2016, two follow up CTF stakeholder workshops were held to update the tourism plan.

In the opportunities section of the CTF report referenced above, it is noted that sport tourism, an integrated sport and event plan and event development are all opportunities for the destination to explore. The then recently opened South Peace Community Multiplex provided the chance to expand the event meeting and small conventions markets and the sport facilities provided increased sport tourism opportunities. Since this time, the events in Dawson Creek have grown in number and in economic impact with new opportunities in progress.

In June 2017, the City of Dawson Creek conducted a Request for Proposal for Tourism Services and in November 2017 signed a 5-year contract with Spectra Venue Management to manage, develop and implement Tourism Dawson Creek's business and strategic plans.

Event Hosting History

Dawson Creek has successfully hosted many events from agricultural fairs to car shows to concerts, conferences and sport events. Each of these events relies on the relationships that have been built over time and the countless years of volunteer dedication. Not every community has a fall fair approaching its 100th anniversary.

The Encana Events Centre provides a distinct advantage for Dawson Creek, compared to communities lacking a large event venue, and it has a strong event hosting history.

¹² EEC Strategic Plan

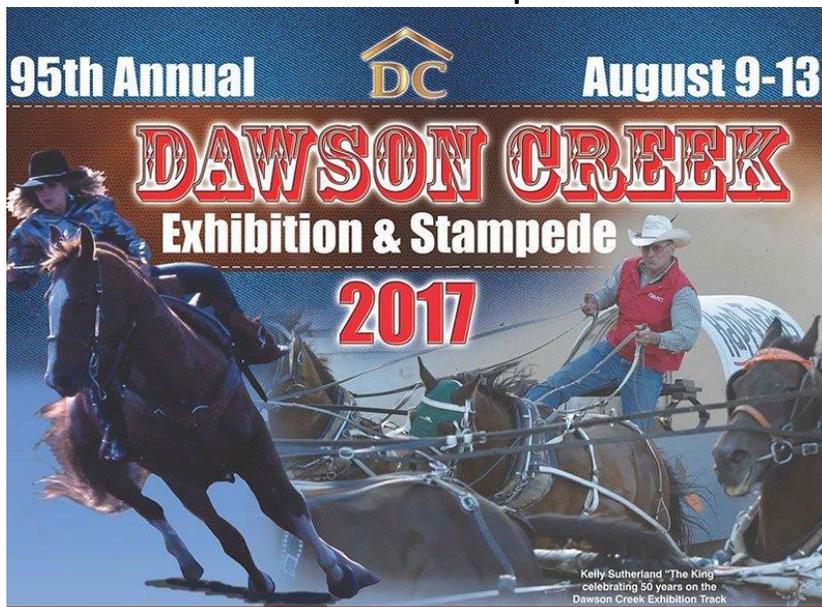
Economic Impact of Events

Dawson Creek has been hosting events and measuring the economic impact, for many years. The 1998 Northern BC Winter Games had a total direct economic impact on Dawson Creek of \$604,200 based on the total spending of \$418,680 by Game's participants, and \$185,520 by Game's organizers. By comparison, the 2005 Northern Winter Games hosted a similar (although not identical) list of sports. The 1988 games hosted more competitors (1,660 in 1988 compared to 1,255 in 2005), but the spectator counts were similar (1,250 in 1988 and 1,150 in 2005). The direct economic impact in Dawson Creek was similar in 2005 at \$690,000 – 60% created by spending of Games participants and 40% contributed by Games Society organizers.¹³

A 2009 Economic Impact Study found the direct expenditures for the three elements of the South Peace Community Multiplex (EnCana Events Centre, Lakota Agri-Plex and Kenn Borek Aquatic Centre) resulted in a direct gross economic impact of \$6,504,400.¹⁴

The City of Dawson Creek has invested in, and secured grant funding for facility maintenance. In 2015, Dawson Creek received a \$250,000 grant from Northern Development Initiative Trust to support the replacement of ice plants at the Memorial and Kin arenas, which support the city's efforts to host more events, including hockey tournaments, curling bonspiels, figure skating competitions, among others. This funding was paired with \$2.1 million from the City of Dawson Creek to complete the upgrades.¹⁵

2017 Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede



The 95th Annual Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede was hosted over 5 days from August 9-13, 2017. The festival, featuring a Midway, Rodeo, Chuckwagon races and an Agricultural Fair, attracts thousands of people from around the region. The influx of visitors, along with spending made by organizers in hosting the event generated a significant economic impact for the City of Dawson Creek.

During the 2017 event, 536 visitor intercept surveys were completed, asking respondents about the number

¹³ Dawson Creek 2005 Northern Winter Games Economic Impact Report, Economic Planning Group March 2005

¹⁴ 2009 South Peace Community Multi-Plex Economic Impact Study. Economic Planning Group May 2010

¹⁵ www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/newsletter_item/august-2015/trust-funding-boosts-dawson-creeks-ability-to-host-tournaments-events

of days they attended the event, which events they too part in and where they were from. Out of town respondents were asked about their visit to the host region and spending whiled in Dawson Creek.

Attendance was developed through the use of gate entries and the survey results. The 2017 Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stamped had a total attendance of approximately 30,000 over the five days of the event. Total entries were allocated between six respondent origin categories, and then divided by the average number of days attended for each category to calculate the number of unique individuals who attended. The study found that 14,788 people attended the 2017 Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede for an average of 2.03 days, and that more than half of those attending (55%) were from out of town.

The event attracted attendees who visited as Families (with children under 18) 57%, Family (with no children under 18) 18%, friends 24% and colleagues/co-workers 3%. When asked about their experience, 87% rated the event excellent or good (and 7% rated it “too soon to tell”).

60% of respondents were on a daytrip and 4% were overnight. Camping and RV was the most common type of accommodation at 45%, followed by hotel/motel at 26% and then friends/family at 26%.

| How many nights will you be in Dawson Creek on this trip? | |
|---|-----|
| 1-2 | 35% |
| 3-4 | 43% |
| 5-7 | 21% |
| 8 or more | 2% |

Visitor spending directly attributable to the 2017 Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede, along with spending made by the event organizers in hosting the event reached \$2.6 million, supporting \$4.1 million of economic activity throughout the province of British Columbia including \$3.4 million in Dawson Creek. These expenditures supported \$1.6 million in wages and salaries and 24.5 jobs throughout the province, including 19.3 jobs and \$1.2 million in wages and salaries in Dawson Creek. The total net economic activity (GDP) generated by the 2017 Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede was \$2.3 million, of which \$1.6 million in new economic activity took place in Dawson Creek.

The 2017 Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede supported a total of \$689,000 in tax revenues across the 3 levels of government, including \$357,000 for the federal government, \$253,000 of provincial revenues in BC and \$51,200 in municipal tax revenues, including \$36,400 in Dawson Creek.¹⁶

By comparison, a report showed that the 2005 Exhibition event attendance was just under 7,000 spectators and the total economic impact estimated at over \$1.3 million.¹⁷

| Dawson Creek Exhibition 2005 vs. 2017 | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| | 2005 | 2017 | % of change |
| Tickets | 17,771 | 30,000 | 68% |
| Spectators | 6,835 | 14,788 | 116% |
| Total Economic Impact | \$1.3M | \$2.3M | 76% |

¹⁶ DC Exhibition & Stampede 2017 Economic Impact Assessment – CSTA, November 2017

¹⁷ Dawson Creek Exhibition Economic Impact and Visitor Satisfaction Analysis – Economic Planning Group, 2005

2017 Summer Cruise

The 23rd Annual Dawson Creek Summer Cruise hosted by the Mile Zero Cruisers Car Club, took place over three days from July 7 to 9, 2017. The summer cruise attracts car aficionados from BC, Alberta and beyond, with the 2017 edition featuring 487 cars on display. The influx of more than 1,400 visitors, along with the spending made by the organizers, generated significant economic impact for the City of Dawson Creek and the province of British Columbia as a whole.

With 487 cars participating in the 2017 Summer Cruise, there were a total of 1, 233 people who were accompanying the cars on display. The survey found that for every 10 people who were connected to a car, there were 8.4 people who were 'spectators' and came out to see the event, but did not have a car on display. In total, the Summer Cruise has 2,266 individuals who took part in the event, of which 1,423 were out-of-town visitors. The average respondent was at the summer cruise for 1.9 days: local residents attended an average of 2.4 days; sameday visitors came for an average of 1.5 days; regional overnight visitors for an average of 2.8 days and long distance visitors for an average of 2.9 days.

66% of respondents used hotel/motel accommodations, 21% were in an RV or camping and 14% stayed with friends/relatives. 74% of respondents rated their event experience as Excellent and 24% as good.

Visitor spending directly attributable to the 2017 Summer Cruise, along with spending made by the Mile Zero Cruisers Car Club in hosting the event, totaled \$336,000, supporting \$507,000 of economic activity throughout the province of BC including \$425,000 in Dawson Creek. These expenditures supported \$145,000 in wages and salaries and 2.7 jobs throughout the province, including 2.1 jobs and \$104,000 in wages and salaries in Dawson Creek. The total net economic activity (GDP) generated was \$257,000, of which \$181,000 in new economic activity took place in Dawson Creek.

The Summer Cruise supported a total of \$86,600 in tax revenues across the three levels of government, including \$39,800 for the federal government, \$36,200 of provincial revenues in BC, and \$6,500 in municipal tax revenues throughout the province, including \$5,900 in Dawson Creek.¹⁸

2017 BC Pee Wee Hockey Championships - Dawson Creek

| 2017 BC Pee Wee Hockey Championships - Key Facts & Figures | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| 8 participating teams | \$382,712 of visitor spending attributable to event | 3.2 Dawson Creek jobs supported by event | \$650,910 in economic activity in British Columbia |
| 720 out of town visitors in Dawson Creek | \$161, 858 of wages and salaries supported locally | \$330,230 boost to BC GDP | \$124,990 in taxes supported across Canada |

¹⁸ Economic Impact Assessment Final Report – 2017 Dawson Creek Summer Cruise, CSTA, December 2017

The 2017 BC Pee Wee Hockey Championships were held in Dawson Creek from March 19-23, 2017. The five-day tournament had eight teams competing for the provincial title. Over 1,000 people were in attendance.

The combined spending of out-of-town family members and spectators, in combination with the \$32,000 in expenditures made by the organizers of the event, totaled \$414,868, supporting \$650,910 in economic activity in BC, including \$525,184 of economic activity in Dawson Creek.

These expenditures supported \$205,130 in wages and salaries in the province through the support of 3.8 jobs, of which 3.2 jobs and \$161,858 in wages and salaries were supported in Dawson Creek.

The total net economic activity (GDP) generated by the 2017 BC Pee Wee Hockey Championships was:

- \$386,326 for Canada as a whole
- \$330,230 for British Columbia
- \$246,307 for Dawson Creek

The Championships supported tax revenues totaling over \$124,990 across Canada. Broken out by level of government, the event supported federal tax revenues of \$56,637 with an additional \$54,022 in taxes accruing to the province of BC.¹⁹

64% of attendees stayed overnight during their visit to Dawson Creek and of those, 81.7% stayed in a hotel. 92% of attendees indicated that this event was the sole reason for their visit to Dawson Creek.

2015 World U17 Hockey Challenge

The spending of spectators at the event, in combination with the expenditures made by the event organizers in producing the 2015 U-17 Hockey Challenge reached \$2.7 million, generating an estimated net economic activity (GDP) of \$2.9 million in the Province of British Columbia, of which \$1.2 million occurred in Dawson Creek and \$517,000 in Fort St. John. These expenditures supported \$1.8 million in wages and salaries in the Province as a whole and an estimated 38 jobs, of which 19 jobs and \$762,000 in wages and salaries were in Dawson Creek along with 7 jobs and \$307,000 in wages and salaries in Fort St. John. The combined economic activity (industry output) generated by the event was \$5.9 million in the province, with \$2.7 million occurring in Dawson Creek and \$1.2 million in Fort St. John.

Considerable tax revenues were also produced by the World U-17 Hockey Challenge, totaling \$1.1 million. The event supported federal government tax revenues of \$516,000 with an additional \$413,000 in taxes accruing to the Province of British Columbia. Moreover, \$713,000 in municipal taxes was supported in British Columbia municipalities with \$77,000 of the municipal tax base in Dawson Creek and \$38,000 in Fort St. John being supported by the 2015 U-17 Hockey Challenge.²⁰

¹⁹ DC Provincial Pee Wee Hockey 2017 Economic Impact Assessment – CSTA, 2017

²⁰ 2015 World U-17 Hockey Challenge – Economic Impact Assessment, CSTA February 2016



www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/2017-hockey-northeast-bc

2017 World U17 Hockey Challenge

The 2017 World U17 Hockey Challenge was held in Dawson Creek and Fort St John November 5-11, 2017.

| 2017 World Under -17 Hockey Challenge - Key Facts & Figures | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| \$2.1 Million of initial expenditures | \$724,000 of visitor spending attributable to event | 13 local jobs supported by event | \$3.3 Million overall economic activity in the province |
| 1,167 out of town visitors in the region | \$744,000 of wages and salaries supported locally | \$1.8 Million total boost to provincial GDP | \$474,000 in taxes supported across Canada |

Hockey Canada, hosts of the U17 World Hockey Challenge event acknowledges the local know-how and ability to get things done right in Dawson Creek. The collaboration with the City Council was unique in Dawson Creek for this hockey event, whereas in other communities it has been more self-serving. And the volunteers and community pride were overwhelming. This groundwork is fundamental for success with future event hosting. In terms of ways to improve, it was noted that the hotel infrastructure near the EEC was exceptional, but the room rates are very high and make it difficult for event organizers to break even. Catering opportunities outside the EEC are limited, and air travel is an issue depending on where participants are arriving from internationally. It was suggested that Dawson Creek engage more with the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance* community to ensure that Dawson Creek remains top of minds with event National Sport Organizations (NSOs).

Facility Overview

Dawson Creek is home to a variety of quality facilities and some are listed below. This is not a comprehensive list, but does show the variety and quality of event hosting sites. A comprehensive facility inventory is recommended as an action item in the strategies section.

- Lakota Agri-plex
- Kenn Borek Aquatic Centre
- Encana Events Centre (EEC)
- Dawson Creek Kin Arena / Curling Rick
- Dawson Creek & District Memorial Arena
- Calvin Kruk Centre for the Arts
- Bear Mountain Nordic Ski Trails
- Bear Mountain Ski Hill
- Fall Fairground
- Municipal parks/trails
- Harry Morrow Ball Park
- Golf courses
- School District gym venues

In the lead-up to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, communities throughout BC prepared lists of sport facilities as part of a pre-games training venue guide. This legacy remains and is currently hosted on the ViaSport website (www.viasport.ca). As the BC government's lead delivery agency for sport programs, ViaSport distributes Ministry funding to provincial and multi-sport organizations. Dawson Creek's facility inventory can be found at the link below, and provides a good starting point for building a strong facility inventory for marketing and event tourism planning, but needs updating:

www.viasport.ca/events/facilities?field_term_city_tid=681&field_term_sport_tid=All

Event Flooring Opportunity

The City of Dawson Creek has a budget reserved for a new flooring surface for the Encana Events Centre. An opportunity exists to fully consult with sport groups regarding flooring specifications that could enhance event hosting capabilities. During the research phase of this report, the consultant received floor option suggestions from the Richmond Oval that are high quality, durable, synthetic and useable as a sub-floor allowing sports to overlay mats (e.g. martial arts, etc.). During stakeholder consultations, the following comments were made when asked about flooring at the EEC:

- concern about the ability to pay for use of the space, when they have less expensive options elsewhere
- potential overuse of lines, creating confusion – there is a need to consider temporary line solutions
- wood floors (or synthetic) is better than concrete
- dry floor option could provide cross-training opportunities for sports such as hockey
- some sport groups mentioned the desire for a field house – e.g. indoor soccer surface for winter

During these initial conversations with local stakeholders and potential event hosts, it was not determined exactly which event hosting opportunities could be pursued based on various flooring options (hardwood, rubber, etc.). Stakeholders were interested in new EEC flooring that could offer both event hosting as well as cross-training, recreational and off-season sport activities. Once an event calendar is developed and local event host capacity is determined, a prospective list of events can be created. With this new information in place, specific flooring options will very likely present hosting possibilities, which the current cement floor does not.

Dawson Creek Current Event Inventory

Many events are hosted in Dawson Creek and the list below is a sample (not an comprehensive list). Events are hosted throughout the year, in various locations and all have event hosts that manage the coordination and delivery of the event. With the support of the event tourism office staff, this calendar can be expanded upon and events sought that compliment availability of facilities.

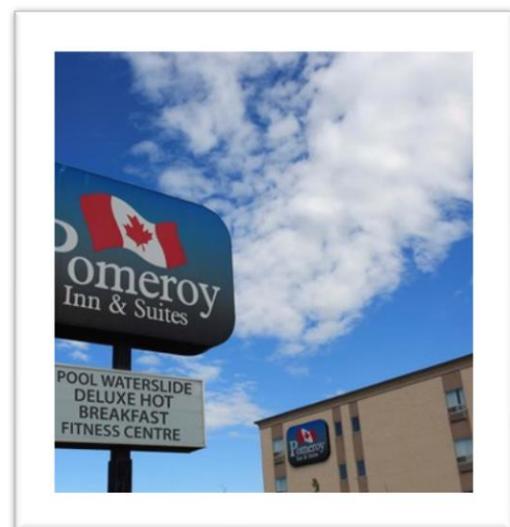
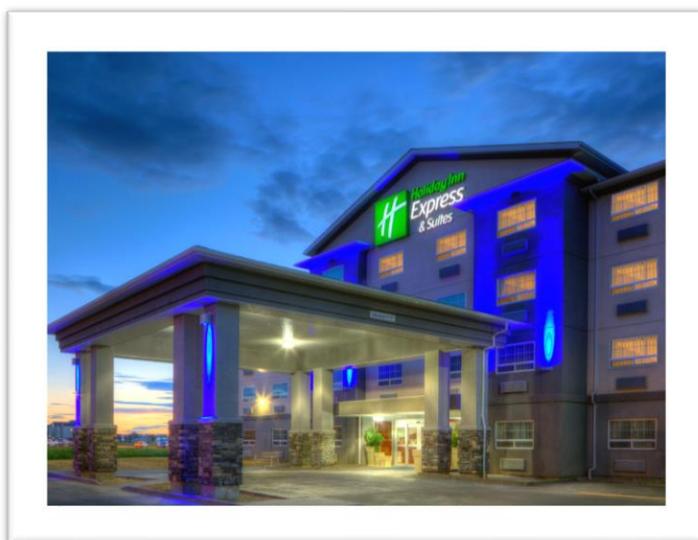
| Event | Organization | Facility | 2018 Dates |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 4 th Annual Health & Wellness Expo www.dawsoncreekeventscentre.com/events/detail/hwexpo | EEC | EEC | February 17 |
| 41 st Annual Gun & Sportsmen Show www.evensi.ca/41st-annual-gun-show-sportsman-encana-events-centre/237843580 | Dawson Creek Sportsmen Club | EEC | April 7-8 |
| Home Garden & Leisure Show: www.facebook.com/events/1582453735130862 | Kiwanis Club | EEC | April 20-22 |
| Mile 0 Cruisers Summer Cruise & Shine www.milezerocruisers.com | Mile 0 Cruisers | Downtown Dawson Creek | July 13-15 |
| 96 th Annual Dawson Creek Exhibition, Rodeo & Parade dawsoncreekfair.com | Exhibition Association | Fairground | August 8-12 |
| Oktoberfest www.dawsoncreekeventscentre.com/events/detail/of17 | Kiwanis Band | EEC | Fall |

Accommodations

Overnight stays for visitors attending events are critical. Dawson Creek has a large number of accommodations and rooms for a community of 12,000+ people. However, occupancy and room rates in Dawson Creek are high due to room demand from the oil and gas sector.

| Name | Number of Rooms |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Aurora Inn | 42 |
| Airport Inn | 40 |
| Travellers Inn | 36 |
| The Lodge | 40 |
| Stonebridge Hotel | 100 |
| Days Inn | 84 |
| Ramada | 41 |
| Inn on the Creek | 49 |
| Central Motel | 12 |
| Holiday Inn Express | 97 |
| Voyageur Inn | 20 |
| Comfort Inn | 60 |
| Peace Villa Motel | 48 |
| George Dawson Inn | 80 |
| Pomeroy Inn & Suites | 125 |
| Super 8 | 65 |
| TOTAL | 939 |

The stakeholder consultation portion of this event strategy development included interviews with hoteliers. There was agreement that Dawson Creek should focus on event tourism and there are opportunities for more visitors at particular times of year. More coordination of events would be helpful to avoid last-minute room block requests and ensure rooms are available before booking events. Both hoteliers were open to discussing cooperative marketing initiatives.



Stakeholders

| Community Partner | How can they contribute to success of events? |
|--|--|
| <p>Tourism Dawson Creek As the local Destination Marketing Organization, Tourism Dawson Creek plays an important role in the event tourism strategy. As a marketing entity Tourism Dawson Creek is tasked with increasing visitation to Dawson Creek and maintaining positive working relationships with the accommodation sector and other tourism products, which help to provide event hosts with additional incentive to bring their events to the community.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event marketing • Online event calendar listing and maintenance • Coordinate capacity-building workshops for event hosts • Assistance with event bidding and coordination • Volunteer appreciation |
| <p>City of Dawson Creek The City of Dawson Creek plays a role of in facility management and is the primary decision maker on committing to bid and host large external events.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Facility rentals • Coordinate resource-sharing • Partner on large event opportunities • Volunteer appreciation |
| <p>Local sport and event groups The local event hosting groups play the role of event lead generators and local hosts for events.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain contact with provincial and national counterparts (PSOs, NSOs) and share event opportunities with Dawson Creek • Event promotion and support |
| <p>Private venues/Businesses The private venues and businesses, including accommodations and event facilities, play a strong supporting role when it comes to event hosting.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive rates for room nights, restaurants, facility rentals, etc. • Event promotion and support • Volunteer appreciation |
| <p>First Responders</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident and visitor safety |

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities

The following Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats were gathered from pre-existing strategies, stakeholder interviews and the February 15, 2018 meeting with local event and sport groups in Dawson Creek. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather a summary of findings to date that guide the next steps and outline the strategies.

| Strengths |
|---|
| Mile 0 – attracts visitors; strong brand equity |
| Proximity to Alberta; location at crossroads of several major highways |
| Proven track record for successfully hosting events, supported by economic impact assessments |
| Strong accommodation sector (supported by oil and gas industries) |
| Regional airport nearby in Fort St John, Grande Prairie, and local Dawson Creek opportunities |
| Event facilities: Multiplex (EEC, aquatic centre, agri-plex) Calvin Kruk Centre, ski hill, curling rink |
| Existing strategies and strong DMO, with city support |
| Strong Annual Event calendar: exhibition, summer cruise, sport tournaments, concerts, etc. |
| Economic impact assessment reports validate event successes |
| Volunteers, friendly community, good customer service |
| Strong service clubs |
| Healthy lifestyle, active sport participation by youth |
| Sport groups want to host events and not have to travel all the time |
| Great corporate sponsors |
| Lots of accommodation options |

| Weaknesses |
|---|
| Access – expense of getting to destination |
| Need for reinvestment in hotels |
| Uncoordinated approach – everyone doing their own thing – hosting teams but not booking hotel rooms |
| Need for a formal policy relating to funding, grants, etc. from City Council |
| Airport not serviced by WestJet or Air Canada |
| Lack of an organizing body – who is recruiting / retaining events? |

| |
|--|
| Lack of comprehensive facility inventory |
| Long winter |
| Could use an indoor field house and track |
| No track = no summer games |
| Lack of practice space and time |
| Some people move due to lack of sport facilities |
| Volunteer burnout |
| Could better market what we have |
| Hotel rates are high; occupancy is high |

Opportunities

| |
|---|
| Shuttle programs with hotel/casino shuttles to use during events (e.g. in Penticton, during Scottie's Tournament of Hearts curling – Cascades Casino continues to offer shuttle to events centre) – are their unused (or under-utilized shuttles from hotels, casinos or work camps?) |
| Development funds for signature events |
| Metrics tracking from event investment by city |
| Potential bids such as the 2019 BC Disc Golf championships |
| Coordinated approach to event hosting – calendar of events that spreads out events and has support of partners (accom/F&B/facilities); welcome guests with pre-event communication, welcome signage, etc. |
| Event rates from accommodation partners |
| Off-season support from Visitor Centre staff with event hosting program |
| Connecting with event participants/spectators/attendees before arriving in DC (e.g. spousal programs) |
| Event resources kit – first aid kit, safety cones, etc. |
| Legacy opportunities – not just event hosting but also developing sport |
| Tracking event participation – working with accommodation partners |
| Event funding program |
| Promote local offerings during events; host concert during event; combine events, etc. |
| Event toolkit template-event hosts use this to prepare promotional outreach to front-line staff; suggested social media posts, etc. |
| Event marketing/packaging with experiences – cross marketing of events |
| Event development program – capacity building, resource sharing, etc. |
| Municipal and regional district tax (hotel tax) could provide additional funding for marketing |

| |
|--|
| Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) grant (Community Halls and Recreation Facilities / Marketing Initiatives) |
| EEC: sprint track, soccer events, 4 turfs |
| Add turf to empty arenas to extend soccer season |
| Outdoor ice rinks / pond hockey |

In summary, the analysis of Dawson Creek's current situation highlights that Dawson Creek is currently hosting strong events – both sport and cultural – that generate out of town guests. These events generate economic impact, but could be further enhanced and new events added. The facility inventory is strong and provides for a range of event types and sizes and there are lots of hotels in the community to host guests, although high occupancy and room rates can be challenging for event hosts. Previous tourism plans developed for Dawson Creek have highlighted the need for more collaboration and dedicated marketing of events. The opportunity exists to further the event relationships that exist now with organizations such as Hockey Canada, as well as actively engage with the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance*.

Dedicating resources to event tourism can address many of the opportunities and challenges outlined above. An event tourism office can support the volunteer culture in Dawson Creek needed for successful events, work with existing events on enhancements, better understand the community's event hosting capacity and assist in the development of new event hosting opportunities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings outlined above, 6 recommendations are proposed:

1. Create an Event Tourism Office

The creation of an Events Tourism Office provides an effective way for the City of Dawson Creek, Tourism Dawson Creek and their event stakeholders to efficiently handle all aspects of effective event hosting. This office would ideally consists of 1 to 2 staff who oversee the key factors in bidding for an event as well as connecting with all pertinent event hosting stakeholders in the community. The diagram below describes what each sector brings to event hosting and how all four are needed to create an effective model. This event tourism office essentially becomes a one-stop shop for everything event hosting. This office supports the goal of becoming an event hosting capital of the Peace region and Tourism Dawson Creek's goals of increasing the economic impact of visitation. This is the team that local event hosts would contact when they are interested in hosting an event, seeking financial partnership, and/or need the insight and support to present the very best events for Dawson Creek and their organization.

| Group/Organization | Role | Activities |
|--|--|--|
| Sport Clubs | Bid on and host events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with PSO/NSO or events-right holder • Organizing event/competition • Promoting event |
| Clubs and Associations | Bid on and host events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with, or as, events-right holder • Organizing event/competition • Promoting event |
| Event Tourism Office /Tourism Dawson Creek | Support event bidders and event hosts / market destination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing resources to event hosts • Assisting City with event grant program • Participating on select bid or organizing committees • Cooperatively marketing events • Marketing Dawson Creek as an event host |
| Local Businesses | Event support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsoring events • Donating prizes |



2. Enhance Collaboration on Existing Events and Recruitment New Events

Dawson Creek has the opportunity to position itself as the Event Capital of the Peace and to market itself as a proven event hosting destination in BC's northeast. Dawson Creek can benefit from this momentum but also needs to continue with the practices that have been successful in the past as well as new recommendations.

This includes:

- Relationship building with all event hosts in Dawson Creek
- Maintaining an accurate event facility inventory and upkeep schedule
- Remaining an member of the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance*, but getting engaged in Congress
- Relationship building with local sport groups, PSOs and NSOs
- Working in partnership with local sport groups, PSOs and NSOs for sport event bids

Promoting the destination as a place to visit remains the mission of Tourism Dawson Creek, however incorporating events as a key visitation driver needs to be added to the mix. Cooperative marketing opportunities that exist with event hosts and local, regional and provincial organizations, need to be actively explored in order to fully leverage the financial resources dedicated to marketing.

Dawson Creek has been a member of the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance (CSTA)*, but active engagement with the annual Sport Events Congress, which provides meeting appointments with National Sport Organizations (NSOs) should be initiated. In the same manner, a proactive approach to the meeting and conference market should be undertaken to encourage planners to consider Dawson Creek for corporate events, weddings, reunions, etc.

3. Establish Event Grant Funding

The City of Dawson Creek also provided funds over the past several years to community groups requesting financial support and/or waiving of municipal facility rental fees. Currently there are few guidelines related to the approval of these grants, nor is there any established funding amounts designated for event bidding, marketing, enhancement or hosting.

Below is the breakdown of a sample of approved event funding, including sport events and conferences since 2015:

2015

- \$10,000 Platinum sponsorship for Rotary Conference
- \$1,500 Northeast BC Coal & Energy Forum
- \$10,200 Exhibition Association
- \$10,200 Mile 0 Cruisers

2016

- \$5,000 Peace Country Beef Congress
- \$25,200 Exhibition Association
- \$10,200 Mile 0 Cruisers

2017

- \$1,200 Curling sponsorship
- \$1,200 Longtrack championships (Dawson Creek?)
- \$500 Metis Nation AGM
- \$2,500 Peace Country Beef Congress

A dedicated amount of municipal funding for sport tournament/event/conference hosting (i.e. events that attract overnight guests) could be allocated to the Tourism Event Office to enhance an *Event Hosting Grant Program*. This would ensure any funding for sport tournaments/events/conferences would be handled by the Tourism Event Office. Funding requests would be subject to eligibility criteria, such as number of out-of-town guests, room nights, partnerships, etc. and applicants would be asked to supply metrics post-event. This provides for a strategic ability to support events, encourages events to stay in contact with Tourism Event Office regarding hosting opportunities and ensures measureable results of event hosting. The ability to carry-forward unused funds would ensure the Event Tourism Office could save for larger anticipated events in the hosting calendar.

4. Maintain Event Calendar and Determine Hosting Capacity

In order to ensure that resources are not stretched, the first step is to identify what the City of Dawson Creek's annual capacity is for event hosting. This can include the following metrics:

- Funding spent on bids, grants
- Volunteer usage
- Hotel Room Blocks
- Facility usage
- Local corporate sponsorship

Once these numbers are identified, the next step is to use the same metrics above to classify four levels of events:

- Level A – International and National events, such as the U17 World Hockey Challenge
- Level B – Western Canadian or large Provincial events, such as the Exhibition
- Level C – Regional events, such as the Summer Cruise
- Level D – Local club group events, such as sport tournaments with neighbouring communities

Once events are secured they are classified as to what level they fall under, based on their needs of Dawson Creek's resources. Once all booked events are recorded, the event tourism office staff will have a clear picture of what their gaps are each year as well as how close they are to reaching the city's event hosting capacity. This also provides clear direction for the event tourism office staff in regards to any future bidding as they can better forecast when to pursue a large Level A event and when they might not have the capacity to do so. This creates a smarter bidding environment where events are targeted to fill the gaps in the community and prevents negative event hosting factors such as burnout of the community's volunteers as well as its corporate sponsorship base.

5. Event Enhancement

The City of Dawson Creek's local event hosts play a very crucial role in event lead generation and initiating support for hosting events. It was made clear that this group could be better supported through consistent communication. Developing a platform where the local event hosts can network, exchange best practises and support each other's events can help to increase their event hosting capabilities. Hosting an annual reception would provide the local event hosts with an opportunity to meet face to face with each other as well as the event tourism office staff. It is through this interaction, as well as regular communication, that the local event hosts can be educated on how the event tourism office provides hosting support. This includes everything from applying for funding, securing hotel room blocks and event rates, accessing volunteers, completing any licences that may be required and assisting in connecting with the local corporate community to secure sponsorship. Providing an opportunity for the local event hosts to connect with each other and the event tourism office staff at least once in person and regularly through a communication platform should be a priority.

6. Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment

Event hosting destinations need to ensure that visitors are warmly welcomed when attending events. This role falls not only to the event organizers, but also to the many volunteers who play a vital role in event hosting.

Events in Dawson Creek rely heavily on volunteers from the organization to the implementation. Recognizing the contribution that volunteer organizers bring to Dawson Creek's quality of life and economy is important. It is also important to assist local events with securing the on-going support of volunteers in order to avoid volunteer burnout and ensure event hosting success.

Dawson Creek has an opportunity to more fully engage in celebrating their community's generous and enthusiastic volunteering culture by celebrating Volunteer Week, sharing volunteer resources such as online databases and encouraging local residents to participate.

What Event Tourism Is – and Is Not.

Although they are important to Dawson Creek, event tourism does not involve coordinating community events such as parades, Canada Day celebrations and other events designed for residents. The strategies outlined in this Event Tourism Strategy pertain to attracting visitors from out-of-town to Dawson Creek for an overnight stay. The proposed Tourism Event Office staff will not be event organizers or planners, but rather act as a resource for event hosts – either aspiring or current hosts. By developing an event checklist, program guidelines, and various resources, the Event Tourism Office can assist event organizers to connect all the necessary pieces required for a great event, and collect metrics that will enable Tourism Dawson Creek to better understand the local event tourism economy.

The Event Tourism Office could support organizations that are taking the lead to apply to host events and who have a club, organization or committee taking on responsibility for hosting. For example, in addition to creating the Northern Lights Disc Golf series to increase tourism into the BC peace region from other communities like Whitehorse and Grande Prairie, the Dawson Creek Disc Golf Club is working on a bid to host the 2019 BC Disc Golf championships. In this instance, roles for the Event Tourism Office staff may include assisting or participating on the organizing committees, assisting with event bid packages, or being part of bid presentations for the community. The Event Office could also support efforts in local procurements, local transportation logistics, hotel bookings, etc.

Events need to have an organizer that takes the lead on tasks such as developing conference agenda, leading event logistics and being an on-site staff during the event. The Event Tourism Office can source hosting opportunities and share these with community stakeholders for hosting consideration – for example, local businesses/stakeholders may wish to financially contribute to contracting an event organizer who would be responsible for coordinating and delivering a conference such as the Minerals North Conference in 2010. www.mineralsnorth.ca/association/applying-to-host-minerals-north

For existing events that already attract visitors and contribute to the local economy, the event tourism strategy relates to increasing event participation and length of stay through collaborative marketing and development activities.

The accompanying implementation plan outlines six strategies:

1. Event Tourism Office
2. Event Recruitment and Marketing
3. Event Hosting Grant
4. Event Hosting Calendar and Capacity
5. Event Enhancement
6. Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment

Each strategy has the rationale outlined along with the action steps, responsibility, partnerships, timing, budget and measurements

Implementation Plan

A Vision for Event Tourism In Dawson Creek

Vision statements are forward-thinking and create a goal for future achievement. They are not the tagline that is used in marketing to potential guests, but rather a goal to strive for.

Tourism Dawson Creek Vision Statement

Tourism Dawson Creek is recognized as a provincial leader and innovator in destination development and marketing while leading the city of Dawson Creek towards sustainable growth and development utilizing the tourism industry.

Event Tourism Vision:

Dawson Creek will be the Events Capital of the Peace

During the extensive stakeholder interview process and the workshop held on February 15, 2018, the following themes were raised by participants when asked, “What does being the Event Capital of the Peace mean to you?”

- Events provide an economic foundation for Dawson Creek, contributing to a diverse and strong economy
- Events contribute to increased quality of life for local residents, while also providing enticement for businesses looking to invest in a community that will provides a great place to live for their employees
- Event hosts are supported by their community (financial support, volunteer support, sponsorship, etc.) and their economic impact is measured and appreciated by municipal government, local businesses and residents
- Utilization of the venues that have been invested in by the City of Dawson Creek
- Year-round calendar of events ensuring consistent visitation
- Events provide the opportunity for local residents and their families to participate in their home community and not always have to travel for competitions, shows, etc.
- Event hosting and marketing is coordinated amongst stakeholders

If successfully implemented, this vision will require:

- On-going measurement to ensure local understanding of the social and economic impacts of event tourism. Understanding of the value of hosting events will help to ensure support for municipal facility infrastructure maintenance and upgrade as well as hosting grant support
- Coordinated approach to event hosting that ensures consistent financial support, effective bidding and hosting, and innovative marketing.
- On-going support of volunteers and a customer-service culture in Dawson Creek to ensure a warm welcome for all visitors.
- An understanding, and appreciation for, the capacities of Dawson Creek’s sport clubs and event volunteers; although the current facility inventory and sport club programming justifies seeking out

regional to international level events, it is imperative to ensure they are hosted when the community at large can most successfully welcome them

- Partnership at many levels for bidding and hosting and a strategic focus that results in more effective use of resources
- An appreciation of event tourism's economic value therefore securing it within the economic development portfolio of the city, safe from changes in local government leadership

Mission Statement for the Event Tourism Office

A proposed mission statement for the Event Tourism Office is *"To enhance existing events while supporting hosts/organizing committees to explore new opportunities, which add to the sustainability of tourism and the enhancement of the city's quality of life."* The proposed Event Tourism Office can lead this initiative based on the following goals, objectives and strategies.

Goal Statement #1 – Strategy

Tourism Dawson Creek will formalize and adopt an event tourism strategy in order to:

- clarify roles and responsibilities for marketing, bidding, hosting, and measuring impact of events
- provide guidance on event bidding based on identified gaps and availability in the event hosting calendar

The recommended tourism objectives (the outcomes to be achieved) associated with this goal statement are as follows:

- assist stakeholders to better understand the value and impact of event tourism
- develop and steward and event hosting calendar
- measure the annual event hosting revenues, room nights, economic spend when possible

Goal Statement #2 – Marketing

Dawson Creek will market local events in order to:

- decrease "dark days" at hosting facilities
- increase visitation
- lengthen visitor stays
- encourage greater visitor spending in all local businesses

The recommended tourism objectives (the outcomes to be achieved) associated with this goal statement are as follows:

- enhancement of existing event hosting
- increase in number of events hosted
- increase in average length of stay
- improvement in shoulder season occupancy rates
- growth in the overall value of the visitor economy in Dawson Creek

Goal Statement #3 – Product Development

An Event Tourism Office will be formed in order to:

- ensure local event groups are supported during the process of exploring, bidding, marketing, hosting and measuring impact of events
- coordinate all event tourism stakeholders to ensure optimal success of event hosting
- ensure transfer of knowledge post-event
- development / enhancement of events

The recommended tourism objectives (the outcomes to be achieved) associated with this goal statement are as follows:

- *Event Hosting Grant Program* to assist with the hosting of events in Dawson Creek
- *Event Hosting Grant Program* guidelines that ensure events are pursued that align with Dawson Creek's hosting capacity and event calendar
- Annual Event Hosts meeting

Strategies

- 1. Event Tourism Office**
- 2. Event Recruitment and Marketing**
- 3. Event Hosting Grant**
- 4. Event Hosting Calendar and Capacity**
- 5. Event Enhancement**
- 6. Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment**

| Description | 1. Event Tourism Office |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Rationale/Objectives | Several other successful event hosting destinations have implemented a one-stop shop to address coordination issues that arise when pursuing and hosting events. These programs are meant to provide one point of contact for event organizers. Event bidding is coordinated to ensure that the required capacities are in place to best host the event. Event hosting can benefit when the office ensures marketing and volunteer coordination are addressed early in the planning process. |
| Action Steps | Year 1: remainder of 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the role/responsibilities of the Event Tourism Office • Finalize job description for Event Tourism Office staff • Hire staff |
| Responsibility | Tourism Dawson Creek's Manager to lead this initiative |
| Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities | Local sport and events groups, accommodations, local businesses, private venue operators, City of Dawson Creek |
| Budget | Existing Tourism Dawson Creek budget |
| Measuring Success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Tourism Strategy outcomes achieved as per timeline and budget |

| Description | 2. Event Marketing and Recruitment |
|------------------------------|--|
| Rationale/Objectives | <p>Tourism Dawson Creek's mandate is to promote the destination and this event tourism strategy provides a new area of focus. Leveraging the existing marketing efforts of local events hosts can increase awareness of the destination and participation at events. The recruitment of new events and bid opportunities requires on-going relationship building with event rights holders.</p> |
| Specific Initiatives/Actions | <p>Year 1: 2018</p> <p><i>Marketing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Northern BC Tourism/Destination BC on potential cooperative marketing opportunities • Explore NDIT grant programs • Work with Rural Discovery Destination Marketing Fund on potential marketing funding projects for local events • Explore Hosting BC Grant program; assist event hosts with applications (www.viasport.ca/grant/hosting-bc) • Design direct marketing materials for event hosts to share with event registrants (Dawson Creek branding, link to consumer website, list of amenities, etc. to encourage participants to plan to extend stay and/or bring additional visitors to the event) <p><i>Recruitment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete facility inventory for both sport and meeting/convention venues and accommodations (# of rooms; field of play dimensions, etc.) • Develop Events/Sports/Wedding/Meeting Planner for event rights holders - planning tool that outlines all that Dawson Creek has to offer event organizers <p>Year 2: 2019</p> <p><i>Marketing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate events into Tourism Dawson Creek marketing – collateral and web presence that showcases Dawson Creek's competitive advantage for sport and meetings/conventions markets • Research provincial Tourism Events Program to investigate whether any future large events could be eligible <p><i>Recruitment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Dawson Creek's membership with <i>Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance</i> (CSTA) • Attend CSTA Annual Sport Events Congress, which provides scheduled appointments with National Sport Organizations |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| | <p>(NSOs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with provincial community sport tourism group • Develop target list of meetings and conventions market –areas of focus should reflect Dawson Creek: natural resource conferences; sport conferences (clinics, etc.), small regional conferences, government/UBCM events, cultural/historical conferences that would appreciate Mile 0/Alaska Highway, etc. |
| Responsibility | Tourism Dawson Creek / Event Tourism Office |
| Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities | Event Tourism Office, Rural Discovery Destination Marketing Fund, Northern BC Tourism/Destination BC, local event hosts, local businesses |
| Budget | Existing Tourism Dawson Creek budget |
| Measuring Success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of events/meetings/conferences hosted in community • Number of event attendees • Hotel occupancy rates/Number of rooms booked for events (with cooperation from accommodation partners) • Social media engagement pertaining to events/meetings, etc. • Amount of marketing budget leveraged with event hosts and other marketing partners • Amount of grant funds received by local hosts • Amount of corporate sponsorship received by event hosts |

| Description | 3. Event Hosting Grant |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Rationale/Objectives | <p>The feedback from stakeholders during the development of this strategy highlighted the inconsistency of event hosting financial support. Some event hosts expressed a desire for support criteria.</p> <p>The case studies examined as part of this strategy showed that many sport tourism communities are providing a sport event grant opportunity. Grants can be tailored to assist with events, that align with Dawson Creek’s hosting capacity and event calendar. Grant eligibility could include some type of event impact assessment to enable on-going measurement of the value of event tourism.</p> <p>The existing \$25,000 municipal budget for event support could remain in place with the addition of objectives, criteria and requirements for recipients. Ideally, any unallocated event hosting grant funds should be carried-forward each year to ensure grants are distributed based on annual need. There may be fewer or small events in the year(s) leading up to a larger event.</p> <p>An additional opportunity is a change to the Fees & Charges Bylaw that could discount facility rental fees for event organizers, subject to the meeting of specific eligibility requirements.</p> |
| Specific Initiatives/Actions | <p>Year 1: 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectra Venue Management, operators of the EEC and Tourism Dawson Creek work in partnership with the City of Dawson Creek design an event hosting grant program for the city to administer. • Develop eligibility requirements of the grant – e.g. event must bring in X amount of overnight guests; must bring events to the community during specific times of year; etc. <p>Year 2: 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote program to all event hosts • City to continue to administer event hosting grant program • Tourism Dawson Creek to report on hosting outcomes |
| Responsibility | City of Dawson Creek |
| Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities | Tourism Dawson Creek, Event Tourism Office, City of Dawson Creek |
| Budget | \$25,000 / TBD |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <p>Measuring Success</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After year 2, Tourism Dawson Creek can gauge if event hosting has increased due to this grant program. Post-event metrics could be a requirement for event organizers. For example, grant recipients could receive 25% of grant funding dispersed upon approval, followed by 75% upon receipt of post-event metrics (e.g. # of participants, #of hotel rooms booked, # of tickets sold, etc.) |
|--------------------------|---|

| Description | 4. Event Hosting Calendar and Capacity |
|------------------------------|---|
| Rationale/Objectives | <p>An event hosting calendar is the platform upon which Dawson Creek can monitor all of its scheduled tourism events and then use that information to identify gaps in its booking schedule as well as identify when any of its event hosting sectors are approaching capacity and therefore react accordingly.</p> <p>Event hosts currently need to update several online calendars, which result in inaccurate calendars.</p> <p>By proactively identifying the capacity for the key factors that are critical for successful event hosting, this exercise sets the foundation to begin the process of smart bidding and reducing event hosting fatigue in any of those key sectors.</p> |
| Specific Initiatives/Actions | <p>Year 1: 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop events calendar ▪ Develop a calendar that can be populated to show all events that are booked and confirmed ▪ Explore existing calendars to choose most effective model (e.g. local newspaper has online event calendar that may be able to be “one stop shop” for event listing) ▪ Ensure access to this calendar is shareable and reports are able to be distributed to hotel partners and other businesses ▪ Meet with local sport groups to understand their parameters for resources to host an event; primarily staff/volunteers and any equipment requiring purchasing ▪ Meet with event facilities to identify their usage capacity ▪ Connect with Dawson Creek local businesses to discover the corporate sponsorship capacity ▪ Meet with Dawson Creek accommodation providers to discover their capacity for discounted room blocks for sport groups <p>Year 2: 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Populate calendar of event ▪ Develop Host / Facility Matrix that outlines venue capacity and availability with hosting opportunities – i.e. which sports can host which level of sport events; how many events/year, etc. |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Responsibility | Event Tourism Office |
| Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities | N/A |
| Budget | Existing Tourism Dawson Creek budget |
| Measuring Success | Once all events are added to calendar, success is measured through the ability to identify key gaps in the event tourism calendar and target those events efficiently. Success is also measured by the reduction in labour required to update multiple calendars and justify targeting certain events. |

| Description | 5. Event Enhancement |
|------------------------------|---|
| Rationale/Objectives | <p>Throughout the year, the Event Tourism Office can seek updates from the local sport and event groups on potential event bidding/hosting opportunities. However, in order to foster networking, collaboration and relationship building, there is a need to bring together local potential event hosts on an annual basis. This forum provides the Event Tourism Office with the opportunity to update local stakeholders on the strategy implementation. It also provides the event groups with the opportunity to update on bidding and/or hosting opportunities and goals. In addition, it can provide an opportunity for local event tourism related businesses to learn more about hosting requirements particularly related to accommodation, meals and transportation.</p> |
| Specific Initiatives/Actions | <p>Year 1: 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an <i>Event Hosting Toolkit</i> for Dawson Creek event hosts – bid assistance, list of resources, photo library, maps, economic impact assessments, athlete/delegate arrival packages, hosting checklists (timelines, permits, hotel room blocks, etc.), etc. • Work with events to offer pre-event trip planning packages to registrants, mobile visitor servicing by Tourism Dawson Creek at events, etc. <p>Year 2: 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host annual event hosts meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connect with all of the local event groups and identify a date range that provides the highest participation potential ▪ Draft meeting agenda – outline Event Tourism Office roles and resources, fill in event calendar, discuss hosting opportunities, etc. ▪ Send out invitations in advance and ensure that there is an opportunity for some networking to occur among the groups as well as the scheduled programming ▪ Ensure event groups start to add this to their calendars annually so that participation remains high ▪ Prepare a summary of the Event Tourism Office’s annual progress <p>Year 3: 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Business Directory/Database concept - designed to reduce the amount of asks that a business has to repeatedly turn down once its reached its donation capacity. In this model, |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| | it is the steward of the database that does the asking |
| Responsibility | Event Tourism Office |
| Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities | Local sport and event groups, local event tourism related businesses |
| Budget | Existing Tourism Dawson Creek budget |
| Measuring Success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of visitor interactions by mobile visitor service team at events • Number of pre-event visitor packages sent to registrants/participants • Annual meeting hosted and number of attendees |

| Description | 6. Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Rationale/Objectives | Events in Dawson Creek rely heavily on volunteers from the organization to the implementation. Recognizing the contribution that volunteer organizers bring to Dawson Creek's quality of life and economy is important. Assisting local events with securing the on-going support of volunteers in order to avoid volunteer burnout and ensure event hosting success. |
| Specific Initiatives/Actions | <p>Year 1: 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Volunteer Canada and Volunteer BC to list Dawson Creek events on their websites, for those seeking volunteer experiences • Research other community volunteer initiatives such as www.lacombe.ca/living/recreation-culture/online-volunteer-handbook • Encourage local residents to register on volunteer databases <p>Year 2: 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate Volunteer Week April 15-21 • Host volunteer appreciation event for event hosts and their volunteers |
| Responsibility | Tourism Events Office/City of Dawson Creek partnership |
| Partnerships/Leveraging Opportunities | City of Dawson Creek, Tourism Dawson Creek, Event Tourism Office, and event hosts |
| Budget | Existing Tourism Dawson Creek budget |
| Measuring Success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawson Creek listed on volunteer websites • Events reporting more variety in volunteers • Successful volunteer appreciation events |

Monitoring Success and Measuring Impact



The implementation of this strategy should include an annual review of the initiatives in order to measuring the impact. The measured results will guide any adjustments to the annual tactical plan and refine delivery of Dawson Creek's *Event Hosting Strategy*.

The impacts of the six proposed strategies could be measured in the following ways:

- Number of events/meetings/conferences hosted in community
- Number of event attendees
- Hotel occupancy rates/Number of rooms booked for events (with cooperation from accommodation partners)
- Number of visitor interactions by mobile visitor service team at events
- Social media engagement pertaining to events/meetings
- Number of "Explore Dawson Creek" pre-event visitor packages sent to registrants/participants
- Amount of grants received by local event hosts (i.e. *HostingBC* dollars, Rural Discovery Destination Marketing Fund, etc.)
- Amount of corporate sponsorship received by event hosts
- Number of successful municipal grant applications / annual grant allocation
- Amount of cooperative dollars leveraged (i.e. how much money was TDC able to leverage with partners)
- Online web metrics related to event planning pages on Tourism Dawson Creek website
- Number of requests for event/meeting planning materials (i.e. event planners contacting Dawson Creek)
- Number of meetings with PSOs, NSOs, event rights holders, meeting planners, etc.
- Number of event facility rental requests
- Number of volunteers that supported events

Budget

The existing Tourism Dawson Creek budget has the ability to fund the Marketing & Product Development and Visitor Services components outlined earlier in this plan.

Tourism Dawson Creek – Focus of Effort

| Marketing & Product Development | | Visitor Services |
|--|--|---|
| Leisure Traveller: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alaska Highway explorer ○ Short-haul Peace region explorer ○ VFR (visiting friends and relatives) ○ Sector-specific explorer (birding, etc.) | Event Tourism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Event participants ○ Event spectators ○ Conference/meeting attendees ○ Weddings and reunions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visitor Centre ○ Mobile VC at events ○ Alaska Highway House |

There is no need for additional funds for Dawson Creek as existing budget can be reallocated to new initiatives such as more focus on event tourism.

Existing office space in the Alaska Highway House can house additional employees required for strategy implementation and visitor centre staff during the off-seasons can provide administrative assistance for event tourism projects, if necessary.

Appendix A – Interview List

Mayor and Council / City Staff

Mayor Dale Bumstea
Councillor Terry McFadyen
Barry Reynard
Director of Community Services

Councillor Charlie Parslow
Councillor Cheryl Shuman
Chante Patterson-Elden
Recreation Manager

Sport and Event Groups

Nicole Palfy and Dean Good
Summer Cruise

Connie Patterson
Exhibition Association

Ryan Robins
Director, Events and Properties
Hockey Canada

Jeff Ginter
Curling Club

Richard Payne
Junior Soccer / basketball

Sheldon Wilkinson
Minor Hockey Association

Carolyn Huttema
Seals Swim Club

Anndra Graff
Minor Ball

Aaron Powell
Volleyball Club

Marilyn Kreuzinger
Mile Zero Skating Club

Pat O'Reily
Ski Club

Mark Rogers
Peace Rugby

Mark Fonda
Karate Club

Accommodation, Restaurant, Facilities Providers

Pat Johnston
Super 8

Kevin Lee
Holiday Inn Express

Kim Gravengard, Jackie Clayton, Ali Engelberts
Rural Discovery Destination Marketing Fund / Pomeroy Hotels

Chris MacLean
Boston Pizza

Richard Powell
School District 59

Other

Pam Eales, Chamber of Commerce Director

Appendix B – Event Tourism Office Overview

Dawson Creek Event Tourism Office

Vision

The Dawson Creek Event Tourism Office's vision is for event hosting to be recognized as an important contributor to the city's economy. By implementing the event tourism strategy, the people of Dawson Creek will value the social and economic impacts of event hosting and warmly welcome visitors participating in regional, provincial, national and international events. Event bidding and hosting are strategically focused and strongly supported by local government, clubs, sport groups and businesses. Event tourism is recognized as a key component of the Dawson Creek economy.

Mission

The Event Tourism Office will enhance existing events while supporting hosts/organizing committees to explore new opportunities, which add to the sustainability of tourism and the enhancement of the city's quality of life.

The specific outcomes are intended to:

- develop, manage, and allocate an event hosting program
- develop effective working relationships with local, provincial and national event right holders and stakeholders
- identify and pursue events based on alignment with Dawson Creek's hosting capacity and event calendar
- assist event right holders with delivery of exceptional events
- coordinate event hosting activities in Dawson Creek, acting as a one-stop shop
- annually review and adjust the event tourism strategy

Guiding Principles:

When examining event hosting event opportunities, decisions will consider the following principles:

- measurable economic benefits to Dawson Creek
- increased overnight stays
- targeted events make effective use of Dawson Creek's event facilities
- targeted events incorporate a culture component and strengthen local sport development and athlete development, where applicable
- Dawson Creek tourism brand enhancement (Mile 0)

Event Tourism Office Partners

- Tourism Dawson Creek
- City of Dawson Creek
- Local Sport Organizations and clubs
- Private and Public Venues
- Local Tourism Businesses

- Event Hosts

Strategic Focus

The focus for the Event Tourism Office will be to consistently make all decisions based on research, City of Dawson Creek capacity, local volunteer availability and event calendar availability. The key is to always make informed decisions based on the guiding principles to ensure that the strategic outcomes are met.

Appendix C – Event Tourism DRAFT Job Description

Tourism Dawson Creek

Event Tourism Manager Job Description

About Tourism Dawson Creek

Tourism Dawson Creek is the recognized Destination Management Organization for the City of Dawson Creek, responsible for marketing to leisure visitors, while developing and promoting event tourism.

Position Summary

The Event Tourism Manager for Tourism Dawson Creek will be a dynamic, results oriented, hands on individual that works well in a team environment and on their own, is able to manage multiple priorities and personalities concurrently while achieving results measured as successful events attracting tourists and benefitting a wide range of community businesses and organizations. This person will be a take charge professional with the ability to update and deliver upon the *Event Tourism Strategy*. The Event Tourism Manager will be the principal contact through which Dawson Creek tourism event initiatives will be coordinated. The ideal candidate for this position will have experience in event management, provide outstanding customer service, have a strong understanding of, and appreciation for, the economic impact of event hosting, have excellent promotion skills and the ability to engage our local businesses, develop promotional materials, packages and raise awareness of local business and attractions in our local communities. The individual will work with internal staff, municipal council, businesses, sport groups, event organizers, volunteers and community members.

The Event Tourism Manager is responsible for the growth, increased participation and continuous development of event tourism in Dawson Creek. Use your experience as a networker and strategic planner to prospect, generate interest, market and close deals to position the region as a community of choice for events. You will update, evaluate and execute a strategic plan for event host engagement. You will identify events to attract and then plan and deliver persuasive approaches that will convince organizations to hold events in the region. You will support strategic bid opportunities for events, strengthen event tourism related partnerships, identify services required to support and enhance existing events along with optimizing the use of facilities and volunteers to grow the capacity of local event and sport organizations.

Relationships

- Immediate Supervisor – Ryan MacIvor
- Direct Reports – part-time position (Event Tourism Coordinator)
- Contacts – event organizers, sport groups, business community, residents, volunteers, municipal staff members, municipal Council members, Tourism Dawson Creek staff, donors and others that may be involved in events or promotional activities

Responsibilities

- Initiate, develop and maintain cooperative relationships with key stakeholders
- Update and deliver Tourism Dawson Creek's *Event Tourism Strategy*
- Manage part-time Tourism Events Coordinator staff position and work cooperatively with Tourism Dawson Creek and Encana Events Centre staff

Event Hosting

- Help to develop and maintain an inventory of assets related to events – sport and meeting facilities, accommodations, signage, equipment, etc.
- Develop a target list of meetings and conventions market in partnership with EEC and other meeting facility operators
- Work with local sport groups to develop and maintain a list of event hosting opportunities – maintain a sport/facility matrix
- Assist in maintaining an inventory of Dawson Creek businesses, as it relates to event tourism opportunities
- Provide assistance to event organizers with coordination and recognition of volunteer groups involved with events
- Work with community partners to ensure that booking facilities and equipment has been completed for successful event hosting
- Identify opportunities for increased economic benefits to be derived from new and existing events
- Compile and assemble information to produce, or assist in the production of, bid proposals
- Ensure that post event/promotion evaluations and recommendations for improvements for subsequent similar occurrences are documented
- Provide assistance to event organizers to coordinate the evaluation of events, recommendations for improvement and related documentation for subsequent events
- Host annual meeting of event organizers to review hosted events and discuss future opportunities
- Research community volunteer initiatives for consideration for implementation in Dawson Creek
- Coordinate celebrations for Volunteer Week to recognize event hosting organizations and volunteers in Dawson Creek

Event Tourism Marketing

- Maintain positive working relationships with all event tourism stakeholders
- Work with event hosting partners to develop tourism packages promoting local businesses and concurrently attracting tourists to businesses, events and other offerings
- Develop event tourism section of Tourism Dawson Creek website that provides relevant information for event rights holders, event participants and visitors
- Conduct social media promotion of tourism/events in Dawson Creek, in partnership with event hosts and Tourism Dawson Creek staff
- Ensure effective communications and other marketing materials for event promotions are developed and implemented; assist in creation of direct marketing materials for events hosts to share with event registrants/participants to extend stay
- Establish effective working relationships with event hosts, businesses, etc.
- Work with local business contacts to assist businesses in deriving increased economic benefits from new and existing events as well as raising awareness about the economic and social benefits of event tourism

- Maintain active membership with the *Canadian Sports Tourism Alliance (CSTA)* and attend annual Congress

Financial Administration

- Ensure the development and management of organizational budget
- Explore funding opportunities with potential partner programs such as Destination BC, Northern BC Tourism, Northern Development Initiative Trust, Rural Discovery Destination Marketing Fund, Hosting BC, Tourism Events Program, etc.
- Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of funds from all sources
- Ensure proper completion of grant applications as may be required
- Assist, as required, with event hosts/organizations providing or receiving grants, including all reporting requirements

General Administration

- Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of funds from all sources
- Coordination of staff requirements and related briefings, annual reporting, etc.
- Represent Tourism Dawson Creek and the City of Dawson Creek in a professional manner at meetings related to events and tourism initiatives as may be required

Education and Experience

- Degree in Sports Management, Tourism, Business or related discipline
- Hands-on experience at a mid to senior level in networking, project management, event management, stakeholder relations, budgeting and fiscal accountability.
- Involvement, experience with an event, knowledge and awareness of sport and event tourism landscape, key players, business models, etc.

Apply For This Position

Please submit a covering letter, resume, salary expectations, availability to start and source of position posting to:

Submission Deadline:

Appendix D – Event Tourism in British Columbia



What is Event Tourism?

Event hosting is all about putting together the best tournament, concert, festival, etc. Tourism marketing is all about promoting a destination as a place to visit. When these two things intersect, we get event tourism - the developing, planning, marketing and hosting of events as visitor attractions in a specific destination.

In many ways, event tourists are the best tourists: they come to a destination in the hundreds or even thousands, they turn up rain or shine at a pre-arranged time, and they can fill hotels. Visitors engaged specifically in sport tourism are also high yield, stay longer than other tourist categories and often stimulate other tourism.²¹ This is why Destination Canada, our national marketing organization is partnering with the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance* on a three-year agreement to promote Canada as a preferred sport tourism destination to the international sport community.²²

There are various types and costs associated with each tourism event. At the highest level, events like the Olympic Games and the World Cup have become the most effective ways for a country to place itself front and centre on the world stage. For every very large event, there are hundreds of smaller events with the potential to attract visitors to a community and to our province. Given the range in the size and scope of events, there are many communities in BC that have reasons around which to craft an tourism strategy.

Types of Events

Successful community hosting strategies almost always include a mix of events. A small local event can usually be created and handled by a community group with little assistance. A larger, higher profile event will require better infrastructure, money, resources and time from a broader set of stakeholders. Annual sport events often grow from small beginnings and, if successful, can become a major event over time.

Attempts to secure uncertain rights to host sport events can be extremely expensive and the opinion that mega events are worth this cost is controversial. However, there is no doubt that these kinds of events are effective in increasing awareness of a destination. There is a wide range of events available, not all are as risky as hosting mega events.

²¹ www.sporttourismexpo.com/sport-tourism

²² canadiansporttourism.com/news/destination-canada-and-canadian-sport-tourism-alliance-sign-three-year-partnership-agreement.html

Sport Championships and Games

The rights for various Championships and Games are held by their respective sport organizations, where a championship tournament is often the culmination of a season's sport activity. These are often referred to as 'the provincials', 'the nationals' or the 'worlds'. The locations of these events are decided by the provincial, national or international sport governing bodies (the event rights-holder) and often involve a competitive bidding-process. An example of this type of event was the 2017 World Under-17 Hockey Challenge.

www.dawsoncreekeventscentre.com/events/detail/2017worldu17

Sport Tournaments

Where a championship is owned by a sport organization, tournaments can be the initiative of any group choosing to initiate them. They are generally held in the same place at the same time every year and can become a familiar part of the sport's and a community's annual calendar. Tournaments may be competitive, but are often as much participation and recreation-focused as results-oriented.

Participation-focused events can be very attractive tourism generators, as high participation equals high visitation. 2017 marked the 33rd year of Vernon, BC's [Funtastic](http://funtasticsports.ca), a slo-pitch tournament started by the local ball teams now draws 300 teams and 4,500 ball players – 75% of whom come from outside the region. As a result of hosting the annual fundraiser- Funtastic, the society has been able to contribute more than \$1.7 million back to the community.

funtasticsports.ca

Manufactured Events

An event can also be created by a community, facility or corporation primarily for commercial or tourism purposes. A large venue or facility may, during its shoulder season(s), create an invitational sports tournament to fill that capacity, or arrange with a promoter to stage an event or training camp. Created, or manufactured events offer communities a means to manage the risk involved in bidding on and staging one-off events as they do not require a bid. Successfully created events can be staged on an annual basis, growing and improving each year.

The annual [Half Corked Marathon](#) weaves racers through the beautiful vineyards of the Oliver Osoyoos Wine Country, sampling wines and fine food along the route. Created by the Oliver Osoyoos Winery Association, and inspired by the legendary Medoc Marathon in Bordeaux, the Half Corked Marathon pays homage to one of Canada's most decorated wine regions; a celebration of the Golden Mile and Black Sage Road benches connecting the communities of Oliver and Osoyoos. The event, with 1,000 runners, sells out every year—tickets are distributed by lottery, which is open in November.

Dawson Creek's annual [Exhibition](#) and [Summer Cruise](#) are great example of manufactured events that draw visitors to the community while providing opportunities for residents to attend events.

Dawson Creek's location does pose limitations on the success of invitational and manufactured events, as opposed to competitive events. However, marketing of the event, possibly with accommodation, restaurant, massage, etc. packages can be promoted to regional visitor markets.

Training camps, clinics, conferences and development courses offer additional opportunities for communities to attract visitors through sport.

Created events can be used to showcase a community's tourism assets, attract visitors in the off-season or throughout other shoulder seasons in the calendar year, and offer significant potential for growth.

The Value of Event Tourism

Festivals and Major Events (FAME) commissioned a report in 2009, which estimated 12.6 million visits at Canada's 15 largest events .3.3 million visits by tourists, of which 1 million were from outside Canada. The report also found that more than \$1 billion in new spending was generated by the largest events: \$780 million spent by tourists visiting largest festivals and events; additional \$300 million in local event-related operational expenditures.²³

In the last twenty years, interest in sport – particularly elite sport events – has grown at a phenomenal rate and the World Tourism Organization (WTO) recognizes that sport tourism is now an emerging market.²⁴

Sport tourism continues to be the fastest growing sector in the global travel and tourism industry. In 2008, the sector was estimated to account for US\$600 billion or 10% of the international tourism market, with 12 million trips a year taken for the specific purpose of sport tourism.²⁵ By 2010, it was estimated that sport tourism contributed an astonishing 14% of overall travel and tourism receipts²⁶ and that the sector was growing at a rate of approximately 6% a year.²⁷ At a time when some traditional tourism trends are in decline, sport tourism continues to thrive and is expected to grow exponentially in the next decade (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Growth in Sport Tourism Forecasts (World Tourism Organization)

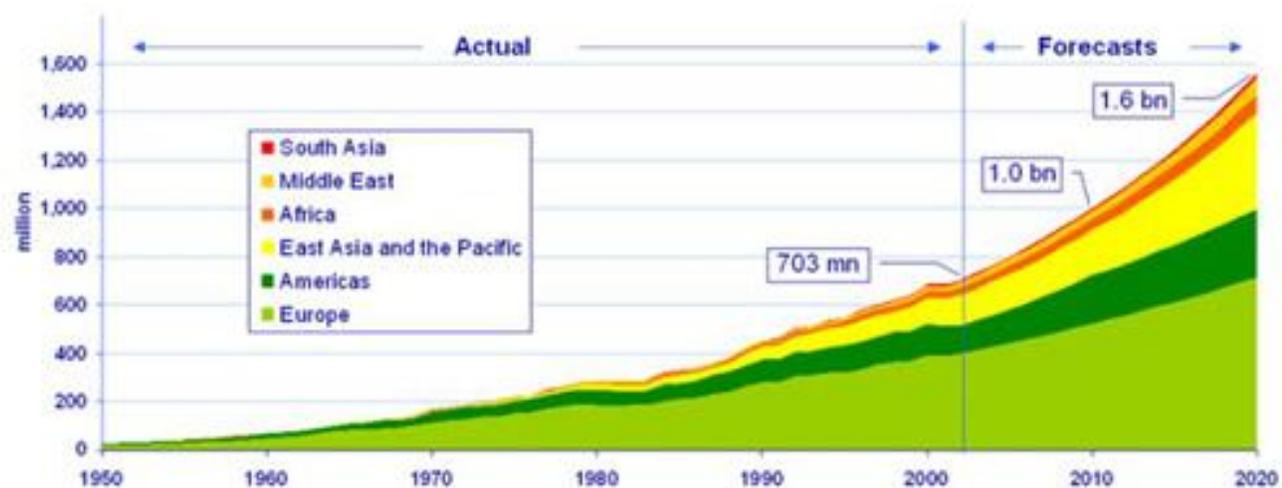
23 2009 Economic Impact of Canada's Largest Festivals and Events, Enigma Research Corporation

24 www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-sports-tourism-worldwide-phenomenon-article1330

25 www.sporttourismexpo.com/sport-tourism

26 www.breakingtravelnews.com/news/article/vero-to-open-rio-office/

27 www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=149285



Source: www.sporttourismexpo.com/sport-tourism

Canadian figures related to sport tourism are dated, but reinforce the growing value of sport tourism. According to Statistics Canada, many travel agendas include participation in recreation and competitive sports and, in some cases, sport may be the overriding purpose for travel. Note that the following account only for domestic travel.

2004: Sport travel generated \$2.4 billion in domestic spending, according to the 2004 Canada Travel Survey. The 2004 figures represent an increase of 85% from the 1998 Canada Travel Survey.²⁸

2007: Statistics Canada reports that within the context of total tourism receipts, sport tourism receipts (\$2.1 billion) account for almost 4% of this total. Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia account for \$1.7 billion or 82% of sports tourism receipts.²⁹

Sport Tourism – Nationally and Provincially

Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance (CSTA)

The CSTA was created in 2000 through a partnership with the Canadian Tourism Commission and now has over 200 members including 95 municipalities, 55 national sport organizations and a variety of product and service suppliers to the industry. Approximately 25 BC communities are members of the CSTA.

One of the CSTA's objectives is to market Canada internationally as a preferred sport tourism destination. The CSTA partners with the Canadian Tourism Commission to lead a *TEAM Canada* delegation to the annual [SportAccord International Convention](#) – a gathering of more than 1500 leading representatives from international sport. The CSTA also promotes the development of partnerships

²⁸ www.burnettthorneculturaltourism.com/sports_tourism.html

²⁹ www.pch.gc.ca/pc-ch/org/sectr/inter/econ_impct2007/104-eng.cfm#a2

between national event rights-holders and Canadian communities at its annual [Sport Events Congress](#), being hosted in Richmond, BC in April 2012 – the first time the event has been hosted west of Toronto in its ten-year history.

Other activities of the CSTA include sharing best practices, measuring the economic impact of sport events and enhancing the profile of sport tourism. The organization has developed a number of [industry tools and resources](#), including a web-based economic impact model specifically designed for sport events – the [Sport Tourism Economic Assessment Model \(STEAM\)](#). Access to tools and resources is restricted to members of the CSTA. Membership costs vary based on population and are generally minimal, but deter other communities from becoming members and they are unable to take advantage of the tools and resources offered by the CSTA as a result.

Many of the organization's efforts are focused in Ontario – likely a result of stronger partnerships made possible by the CSTA's geographic headquarters, in Ottawa:

- Through a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the CSTA offers Ontario communities a one-day workshop designed to help communities become more actively involved in the sport tourism industry.
- The CSTA jointly commissioned (with Tourism Toronto) a [White Paper](#), *The Case for the Province of Ontario to Engage Strategically in Sport Tourism*, to bring attention to the opportunity Ontario has to strategically engage sport tourism as a legacy of hosting the [2015 Pan American and Parapan American Games](#).
- The CSTA's annual Sport Events Congress is also typically held in Ottawa, which makes attending cost-prohibitive for some BC communities meaning they miss out on opportunities to meet one-on-one with Canada's National Sport Organizations (NSOs) to explore opportunities to host their events. The CSTA awarded the 2012 Sport Events Congress to Richmond, BC.

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development supports the provincial sport system, including organizations, coaches, officials and volunteers, to expand opportunities for sport participation and excellence, and for community development through sport event hosting.

The Province of BC through the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development invests in event hosting in the following ways³⁰:

1. Major Sport Event Hosting
2. Marquee events
3. Tourism Events program
4. Hosting BC

ViaSport and Provincial Sport Organizations

ViaSport British Columbia was created in 2011 as a legacy of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. As an independent not-for-profit organization, viaSport is tasked by the provincial government to lead the promotion and development of amateur sport in British Columbia.

Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO) are autonomous, not-for-profit societies responsible for the regulation of all areas and levels of their sport's participation within the province and for the governance of the province-wide development of the sport. A PSO is the provincial voice on behalf of its members: clubs, affiliated recreation and education members, athletes in some cases, provincial team athletes.

The BC Games Society

The BC Games Society provides event management services to host committees in the areas of administrative support, Games marketing, volunteer management, contract management, and financial administration. The scope of the BC Games Society management was broadened in 1994 with the addition of the BC Seniors Games, the Northern BC Winter Games, and the BC Disability Games.

The BC Games are funded by the provincial government, as well as through corporate partnerships and self-generated revenue. The current contribution ratio is approximately 20% self-generated and 80% provincial government. Public funding is provided by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development.

Like Sport BC, the BC Games Society is focused on sport and, in particular, athlete development in BC, but the organization also acknowledges the community development and community legacy benefits of the BC Summer and Winter Games offered to host communities.

Event Tourism Trends

There are numerous cities that have taken an "If you build it, they will come approach" which is not always the safest strategy in a competitive industry. Sport Organizations are recognizing this fact and some use this competitive model to increase their ask for choosing a winning bid city and as the stakes go up, the success rate and economic return for the city can go down. A city with a sport/event tourism strategy or bidding plan can choose events based on economic indicators and time of season to ensure that they will be given the best opportunity to be successful and enjoyed by the participants, spectators and local residents. A trend in event hosting has been to include a festival atmosphere to increase the gathering of people to celebrate the event and this social strategy has been seen as a positive to increase the exposure of the event to a greater collection of residents.

Increasing Economic Value of Youth Events

Social trends also influence event tourism development. In today's world, many parents are deeply entrenched in their children's lives, and are known as helicopter or hover parents. The economic value of Under-18 events will likely increase because parents and families are travelling more often to support children participating in out-of-town sport events. "The economic value of Under-18 events will increase

because you'll see the entire family. Now (there's) a change in the focus where people are having kids later and they're focused on their child's life being the centre of theirs," says Pegoraro.³¹

Globally, the competition for the largest events is still very high and although normally reserved for very large cities, recent trends have seen cities and regions partnering up to co-host some of these large events. This creates an opportunity to share the initial hosting costs, risks and planning as well as bring an event that normally couldn't be hosted by one of those cities to the region.

National events, such as the Canada Winter Games, bring a lot of positive exposure to a host city as they are a National celebration sometimes and also provide opportunities to secure future repeat business as various sport organizations descend upon the city and get to see everything it offers first hand.

The Provincial level events play an important role in creating sustainable sport tourism programs. Most of them occur annually and can provide for steady economical returns when the event becomes a regular occurrence to that city.

Local regional events are also important as they allow for the local residents and sport groups to use any sport facilities as well as create that base for generating even hosting leads that come through local sport groups looking to host an event.

Maximising the Tourism Benefits/Growing Event Tourism

Events generate economic activity for hotels, restaurants, attractions, retail and service businesses in the host community.

Events also help to market an area and increase destination awareness amongst potential visitors from elsewhere in Canada and/or BC. There is a marketing effect through the word-of-mouth recommendation of attendees at the event, but this effect is amplified if the event attracts widespread media interest – especially television coverage. Broader TV coverage and the ability to stream video online have increased the number events that receive this type of attention.

A positive experience at an event can also encourage participants and their families to return to the community for a future vacation or future event, leading to repeat visitation over the long-term. Many participants in Vernon's Funtastic slo-pitch tournament are repeat visitors who have been coming Vernon on an annual basis for ten years or more.

There are a number of ways to grow event tourism and maximize the returns from investment. These include:

- Hosting more events
- Improving the yield from existing events, by better coordinating events with tourism to maximize visitor volume and length of stay

³¹ www.northernontariobusiness.com/Regional-News/sudbury/Sudbury-reloads-its-sports-tourism-strategy.aspx

- Targeting and supporting events that offer the biggest potential returns in terms of tourism
- Spreading the benefits of new and existing events to more regions, rather than just the major metropolitan centers

The tourism value of an event can vary enormously depending on a range of variables:

1. **Number of Participants** – Some events easily attract thousands of participants, while others may attract just a couple hundred. Team sport events, especially those with larger teams and sports with high participation levels such as cycling tend to involve higher numbers of participants.
2. **Length of Event** – The longer event participants stay in a community, the more room nights the event generates and the more valuable the event becomes. While longer events typically mean more room-nights, this is not always the case with sport events as sometimes the tournaments are designed so that different teams participate on different days of the event.
3. **Time of Year** – Events that take place in the tourism industry's off-season offer significantly greater value than do events which take place in the high-season when tourism operators would likely be at least moderately busy even without the event taking place.
4. **Out-of Province Participation** – While provincial and regional events serve to promote travel throughout the province and provide a tourism benefit to individual communities, these events are guaranteed to take place within BC and do not generate additional tourism impact to the province. The economic impact of events is greatest when these events attract participants and visitors from outside BC.
5. **Spectator Events Versus Participant Events** – While events, which draw spectators, are great for increasing community profile and as attractions for tourists who are already visiting a community, they largely serve a local market and thus bring little new money to the community. In contrast, even small, one day participant events require the participants to stay overnight and to eat and, therefore, have a greater economic impact.
6. **Demographics** – Some events attract higher-income tourists who will spend more than regular visitors. Amateur/youth sport participants are usually budget travelers, but while these events may involve lower yield 'four to a room' accommodation or even billeting, they can also bring the families of participants and stimulate pre-post event vacations.
7. **Level of Tourism Integration** – The value of an event can vary depending whether the tourism aspects are considered as an integral part of the event and are built-in to the development process. For example, the GranFondo Whistler was deliberately designed to showcase the spectacular scenery of the Sea to Sky highway and also include a celebration plaza, music concert and after party in Whistler all of which serve to enhance the event as a tourism product and increase the likelihood of overnight stays in the community. Any time a visitor travels to participate in a sport event, there is an opportunity for the destination to provide them with information and resources that will not only enhance their overall experience, but also encourage them to plan to arrive early, extend their stay in the community or plan a return trip in the future.
8. **Media Coverage** – Some sport events may have very little direct tourism value, but provide significant indirect value in the form of marketing opportunities. Participants of [Raid the North](#)

[Extreme](#) didn't stay in hotels throughout the six-day adventure race because they were traveling through BC's wilderness, but the race was televised nationally and throughout the USA. Outdoor events, particularly races better showcase a destination than do events that take place inside a building or stadium and therefore have a greater media value from a tourism perspective.

9. **Location** – While it is generally considered a disadvantage for a community to be difficult to access, visitors are more likely to stay an extra night or two at an event that is a greater distance from their homes. This offers significant opportunities for communities for which other forms of tourism are problematic.

Target Audiences

Destinations working to develop event tourism are able to contribute to attracting and staging successful events by assisting with marketing activities geared at two key audiences.

Event Rights-Holder

Event rights-holders are the most common audiences for destinations looking to develop event tourism. An event rights-holder is an organization or company who owns the rights to a sport event(s). Rights holders often move their events around and, therefore, seek destinations to host their event. They are responsible for overseeing the bid process, awarding the event to a Host Community, and managing the overall event.

For sport events specifically, event rights-holders are governing bodies of individual sports:

- [Provincial Sport Organizations](#) (PSOs) – such as Tennis BC, BC Ringette or Horse Council BC – responsible for the regulation of all areas and levels of their sport's participation in BC. A PSO is usually the link between local clubs (or other local sport organizations) and the sport's National Sport Organization (NSO). PSOs sanction and operate provincial competitions and/tournaments (usually in partnership with the NSO).
- [National Sport Organizations](#) (NSOs) – such as Cross-Country Canada, Water Ski and Wakeboard Canada, and Wheelchair Basketball Canada – are similarly responsible for their respective sports, but at a National level.
- [International Sport Federations](#) (ISFs or IFs) – such as Badminton World Federation, Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique and Tug-of-War International Federation – administer their respective sports at a world level, most often crafting rules, promoting the sport to prospective spectators and fans, developing prospective players, and organizing world or continental championships. Canada's NSOs are affiliated with these ISFs.

Sometimes sport tourism events may be owned by a for-profit organization that has developed the event to generate profits. For example, both the GranFondo Whistler and the GranFondo Kelowna are run by Toit Events. While Toit Events is the rights-holder of these events, there was no competitive bidding process in this case. Toit events approached these destinations because the organization believed a GranFondo race would be successful in these communities and the Whistler

and Kelowna GranFondos have evolved into annual events because they continue to be successful and return a profit. Other communities across Canada are now proactively working to persuade Toit Events to organize similar events in their areas.

Destinations work to promote the benefits of their area to event rights-holders at various national and international trade show-type events and influence decisions regarding where they host their events, such as the [Sport Event Congress](#) hosted by the *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance* (CSTA), [Sport Accord](#) and [TEAMS](#).

Event Participants

Many sport events are restricted to participants who have previously qualified for the event. In these cases, the number of participants who will be participating in an event is known ahead of time and no amount of marketing will increase participation in the event. Often with these types of events, elite athletes who are qualifying for an event are focused on resting, training and winning rather than vacationing, although their families may be more open to travel ideas. There are however, opportunities for destinations to increase the tourism benefits these events bring to their communities. Working with event organizers to promote the destination to participants ahead of time serves to encourage pre and post event travel and can sometimes attract higher numbers of family and friends to the community than would otherwise have accompanied participants to the event. For example, promoting a destination as a family-friendly vacation may influence participants to plan a family vacation around a sport event.

Events like GranFondo Whistler and the GranFondo Kelowna are open to as many participants as register for the event. In these cases, destinations can work with event organizers to grow the event and attract higher participation from out-of-province participants. Other events, such as the [Half-Corked Marathon](#) in Osoyoos, have a maximum number of participants and registration often sells out very quickly.

Although many destinations focus promotional and marketing efforts on event-rights holders, there are opportunities to contribute to the growth, success and tourism impact of certain types of events by promoting the destination to known participants or potential participants. For example, ensuring each registrant for the event receives a welcome from the host and a link to vacation ideas on the local tourism website or a mailout of an experiences guide to assist in trip planning.

The Bidding Process

Many sport events require some form of bidding process. At higher levels of competition, this is a very sophisticated process and can be both competitive and expensive to secure. BC has been fortunate enough to participate and win a bid for the Olympic & Paralympic Winter games. In other cases, a rights-holder may have difficulty finding a host community each year. The complexity, cost and competitiveness of the bid process depends on the worldwide profile and marketability of the sport event.

Rights-holders often use a bidding process to be transparent when awarding events and to be fair to all interested communities. In most cases a rights-holder will have a set of bid guidelines that outlines the necessary requirements of hosting its event including facility infrastructure, the financial and human resource requirements, and the length, competition format and number of participants to be expected. A community bid committee will be required to respond to the request for proposals, and to meet these bid guidelines.

Local sport organizations will be familiar with the championships for their sport and will also have an understanding of the priorities of the organization responsible for awarding hosting rights. Most often, it is a local and/or provincial sport organization leading the charge, but communities are increasingly offering their support and, in some cases, financial resources to this process.

Communities bidding on a National event need the support of the Provincial Sport Organization. The Federal Government's Hosting Policy stipulates that communities bidding for an International event must have the support of the National Sport Organization. For this reason it is important for communities engaged in sport tourism development to develop relationships and communication with Provincial and National Sport Organizations. In some cases, bidding is a two-stage process, with cities bidding at the national level before proceeding as the National representative against overseas competitors.

Sport Organizations typically hold their events in different regions from year to year, to stimulate interest in different regions and access new host community volunteers and resources.

Further, some privately held events may require financial incentives to consider a bid and/or to award the rights to host an event to a particular community.

A rights-holder determines a host community based on its assessment of the community's capability of staging a successful sport event. For this reason, understanding and fulfilling rights-holders' requirements for hosting events is critical to winning bids.

Factors influencing the selection of a host community depend on the objectives of individual rights-holders, but there are some key factors that are central to all hosting decisions:

- Infrastructure and Logistics (facilities/venues, transportation, accommodation, investment required)
- Funding/Sponsorship – community's ability to pay rights fees
- Organizational Capacity – capacity of local (for Provincial events), provincial (for National events) or national (for international events) sport organization, volunteer base.
- Business plan – community has a detailed, sound business plan for how they plan to stage the event
- Media Broadcast/Television capacity
- Previous hosting experience
- Marketing and communications

Additional considerations commonly include:

- Legacy Provision
- Environmental requirements
- Community support
- Reputation of the sport, its popularity and fan base, particularly in the host community

The *Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance* identifies three overarching site selection criteria that are central to all hosting decisions for major sport events³²:

1. Relationships – Given the nationally diverse decision making structures associated with international sport federations and major games organizations, the cultivation of relationships within the sport community as well as in other national and domestic contexts (political, economic and trade) influence site selection decisions.
2. Funding – Significant investment is required to ensure success in bidding and hosting for all major sport events. Rights holders, government and corporate sponsors all want to maximize the return on their investment, therefore, whether the rights holders are a non-profit or a for-profit organization, the business case demonstrating financial return is critical to the selection process, as is limiting financial risk and maximization of financial return.
3. Infrastructure – The successful host must demonstrate the availability, quality and appropriate standard of infrastructure. This includes athletes, officials and spectator accommodation, venues, sport facilities, transportation, access to sport medicine and the capacity to develop the necessary infrastructure to meet all the requirements of event rights-holders.

Top tier events require coordination at a National level and are bidding for these events is in coordination with Canada's hosting policy – Canada will bid for a limited and defined number of these events each year.

³² www.canadiansporttourism.com/app/DocRepository/1/reports_en/CSTA_White_Paper_Jan2011.pdf

Appendix E – Resources

BC Government Hosting Toolkit

The province has compiled resources to guide stakeholders through various stages of event management from preparing bid packages to tracking economic impact.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/sports-culture/events-hosting/hosting-toolkit>

Tourism Events Program

Understanding that tourism is one of the world's most competitive industries, the Province launched the *Tourism Events Program* (TEP) to support the delivery of events that can increase the volume of visitors to British Columbia, and/or increase global recognition for the province.

TEP provides incremental funding to eligible events to support their marketing or promotional activities in order to increase and broaden the impact of the event.

www.destinationbc.ca/BC-Tourism-Industry/Municipal-and-Regional-District-Tax-Program/Tourism-Events-Program

Destination BC Research Guides

Destination BC's research division has resources for event organizers related to measuring economic impact of gated and non-gated events. Their Research Guide explains why tourism research is important for tourism operators. The guide provides direction on what type of information should and can be collected, how to conduct tourism research, how to process, analyze and evaluate research results, and where to get help.

In 2005 and 2006 a consortium of national, provincial and territorial organizations produced a set of Guidelines for conducting visitor surveys at festivals, events and permanent attractions. These guidelines can be adapted for any visitor study but were originally developed to generate credible and consistent inputs for estimating the tourism economic impact of festivals, events and attractions.

www.destinationbc.ca/Research/Resources-for-Researchers/How-To-Guides

Dawson Creek Temporary Road Closure and Event Manual

The City recognizes that special events enhance tourism, culture, recreation, education and provide opportunities for businesses in and around the City. For ease of reference, this manual refers to parades, processions, marches and other activities that require a temporary road closure collectively as events.

www.dawsoncreek.ca/departments/infrastructure/temporary-road-closures

Setting the Stage: a community-based festival and event planning manual

This manual has been developed to be a fill-in-the-blank tool for organizers to help them plan, implement and then evaluate their event. The manual is divided into standalone sections that can be given to each major team member, outlining their specific duties. Each section includes general guidelines, checklists and worksheet templates which can easily be customized for a specific event:

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/9342a3f1-fa7b-4e92-a7ac-f4ab2136b5d2>

Hosting an Event- how to

The regional municipality of Wood Buffalo has created a list of items for event hosts to consider when planning events.

www.rmwb.ca/living/Events-and-Festivals/Hosting-an-Event.htm

Tyler Cole - Sport Tourism Coordinator, Fort McMurray Tourism

tyler@visitfmt.com

Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) Grants

Marketing Initiatives

Northern Development provides grant funding to support development of marketing assets that will attract new investment and increase revenues to the region from outside of central and northern B.C.

Community Halls and Recreation Facilities

Northern Development provides grant and loan funding to improve the sustainability and event hosting capacity of facilities that generate revenues for non-profits and the tourism sector.

www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/apply-for-funding