

2022-2023

# TOURISM ROSSLAND ANNUAL REPORT





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## **STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS**

During the fiscal year 2022/2023, we effectively harnessed our financial resources, leading to a substantial boost in our marketing budget to support the recovery and expansion of the local and regional tourism economy. Our organization remained committed to collaborative efforts with our stakeholders, successfully implementing our strategic plan to accelerate recovery and achieve the objectives set by our stakeholders in 2020.

Some notable highlights from this year encompass:

- Celebrating the 16th anniversary of our organization while maintaining a robust financial footing.
- Cultivating and nurturing strong relationships with our local, regional, and provincial stakeholders.
- Witnessing a remarkable surge in Rossland's accommodation revenue, reaching \$10.4 million, the highest in our community's history, signifying a remarkable 50% increase from our previous record in 2021/2022.
- Observing a significant rise in our Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) income during the fiscal year, which reached \$279,000, marking a remarkable 53% increase compared to our previous revenue record in 2021/2022.
- Allocating \$365,000 to our marketing expenditure, signifying a substantial 38% increase from our 2021/2022 investment.
- Collaborating closely with local and regional stakeholders, enabling us to leverage over \$42,000 through co-op marketing programs.
- Sustaining our media relations partnership with Tartanbond to bolster PR support, with the aim of enticing both Canadian and international travellers to explore our community and relish the ultimate outdoor experience in any season.



- Continuing our involvement in the South Kootenay marketing project, collaborating with Destination Castlegar and Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism on the Kootenay Roadtrip/WestKoot Route project to promote our entire region as a premier travel destination.
- Exploiting our extensive photo and video assets on social media, with a heightened focus on digital marketing, resulting in a substantial expansion of our digital reach. Noteworthy is the engagement of our passionate and growing followers, contributing significantly to our overall growth.
- Sustaining our excellent rapport with the City of Rossland and crafting a new Resort Municipality Initiative Resort Development Strategy.

## **TOURISM INDICATORS**

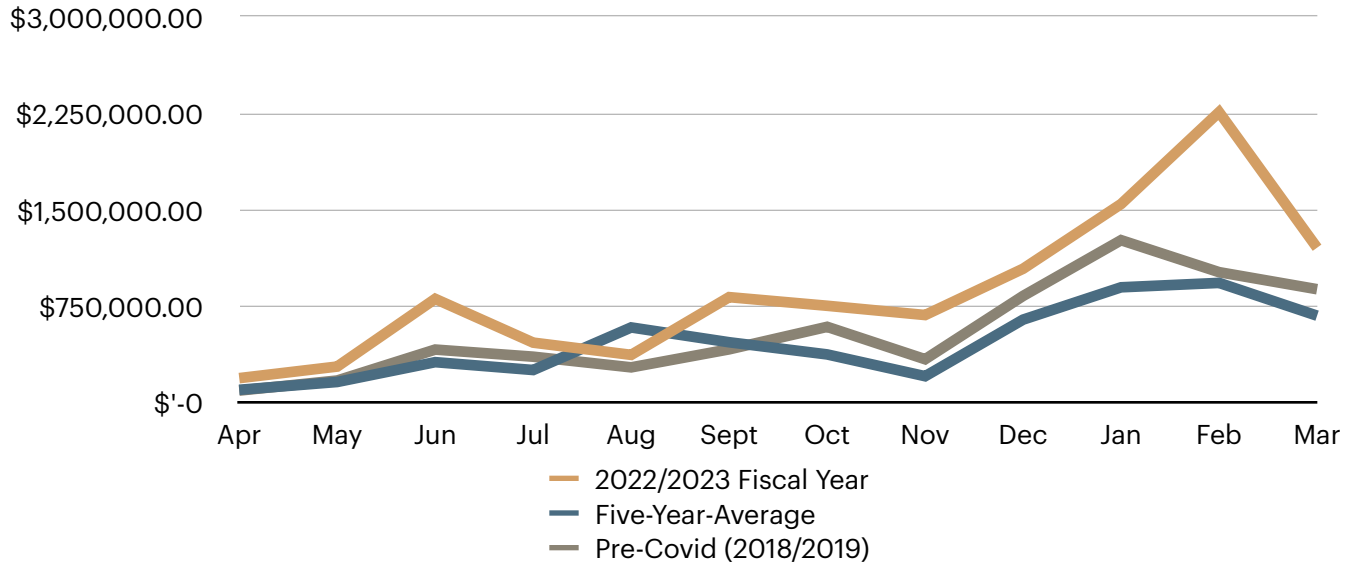
Rossland's accommodation revenue for the 2022/2023 fiscal year reached \$10.4 million, marking a significant 50% increase compared to the previous fiscal year. This figure is nearly \$3.5 million higher than our previous record year in 2021/2022.

Revenue generated through Online Accommodation Platforms (OAP) accounted for approximately 16% of the total reported revenue, totalling \$1.7 million (46% increase). This proportion remains consistent with previous years. Notably, this represents the highest OAP revenue since the province implemented the Municipal and Regional District Tax on short-term rental accommodations.

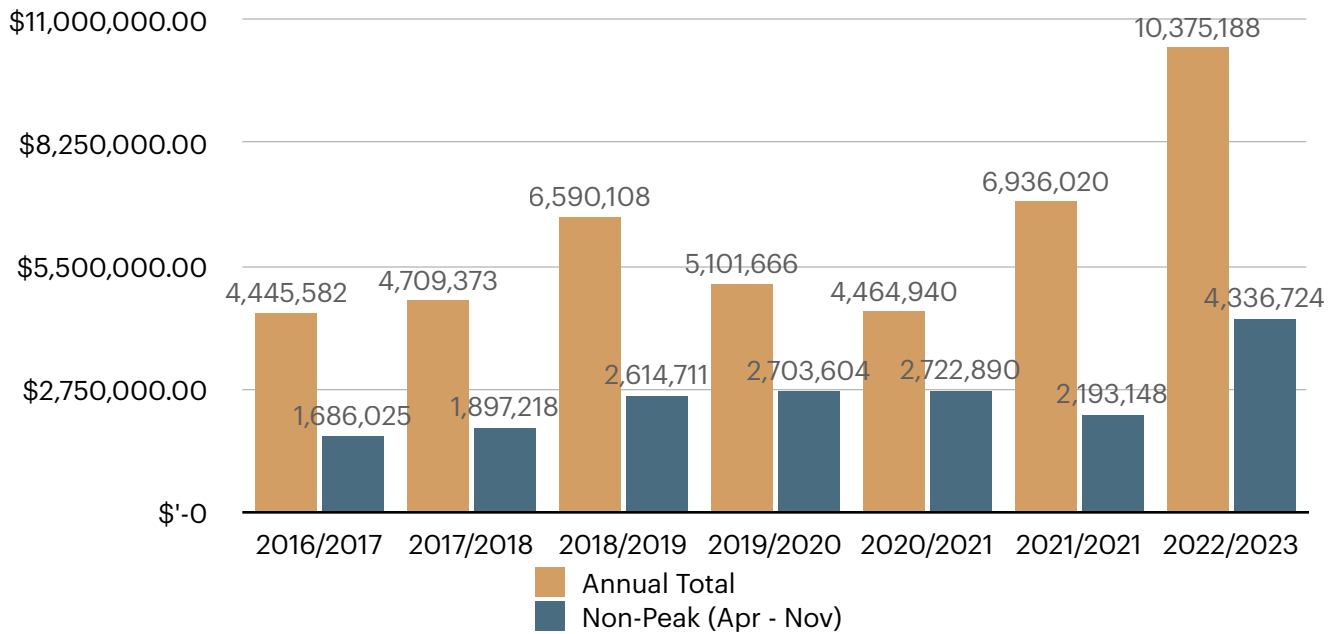
Our reported non-peak accommodation revenue, spanning from April to November, amounted to \$4.3 million, nearly doubling the revenue from the previous fiscal year and exceeding our previous record by \$1.6 million. Approximately \$800,000 of this revenue is attributed to OAP platforms.



Monthly Rossland Accommodation Revenue



Accommodation Revenue





## **FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

As travel restrictions eased, consumer confidence returned, and demand increased, the hotel sector had a record-breaking year during 2022/2023. This was reflected in the incomes of our organization. The annual MRDT revenue for Tourism Rossland was \$279,000, which represents a 50% increase over our previous best year in 2021/2022.

Our grants income increased significantly from the previous fiscal year. We were successful in securing a second Destination BC grant to promote regional travel through our Kootenay Roadtrip/WestKoot Route project. Additionally, we were able to finalize the finances of a previously completed regional grant. The increase is partially attributable to our accounting (cash basis), as some of our grants for the 2023/2024 fiscal year were deposited right before the end of the previous fiscal year.

The financial stability of our organization is greatly enhanced by the continued support of the Red Resort Association. This income was approximately \$43,000. This stable and predictable income is essential for Tourism Rossland. It gives us the opportunity to plan marketing campaigns and continue providing essential services while also presenting us with funds to leverage with other grants and stakeholder resources.

Our cooperative marketing programs (pay-to-play) decreased slightly, yet it remained an integral part of our collaborative marketing approach.

Given the strong financial position of our organization, we were able to significantly increase our marketing spending during the past fiscal year. Our total marketing spend was \$365,000, which is \$100,000 more than our previous fiscal year. Based on our projections, we should be able to increase this investment in the future to further support the well-being and diversification of the local and regional tourism industry.

Our organization was able to employ two full-time staff members during the fiscal year. We promoted Kylie Lakevold to become the Marketing Manager with added

responsibilities and a pay increase. Keeping our strong team together was a strategic priority for the Board of Directors. We also employed a full-time seasonal staff member, Ashley Voykin, during the summer of 2022 thanks to the Canada Summer Jobs program. Our combined payroll increased to \$162,000 from \$142,000, but at the same time, it became a smaller percentage of our overall expenses (26% vs. 31%).

We continued to administer the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) program in cooperation with the City of Rossland and submitted a new Resort Development Strategy to the province. Some RMI funding is directly used by the City of Rossland, while other programs go through Tourism Rossland. We use RMI funding to support our transportation programming. However, we need to complement this funding with other sources to ensure that we adequately address the transportation challenges of our destination. The transportation line item in our reports reflects the RMI contribution (\$20,000) and the use of unrestricted organizational assets (\$23,000). This investment represents our contribution to various transportation projects (Rossland Ski Shuttle, Spokane Airport Shuttle, and Kelowna Airport Shuttle).

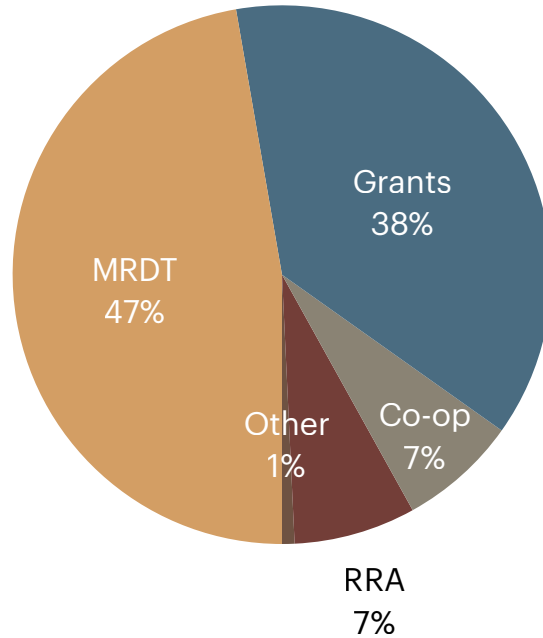
Finally, our core operational and general administrative costs increased due to the increased cost of doing business, the return of the Jingle & Mingle tourism gala, and some administrative costs associated with grants administration.

**Income Breakdown Comparison: 2021/2022 - 2022/2023**

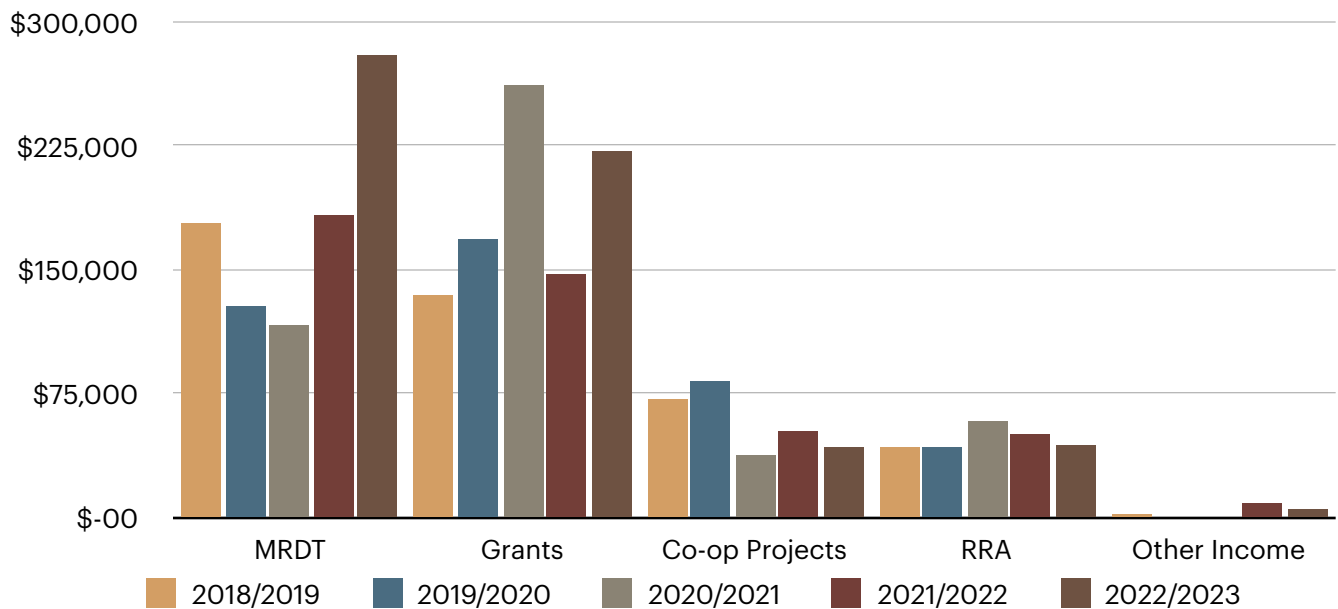
	2021/2022	2022/2023	% Change
MRDT	\$183,104	\$279,335.42	53%
Grants	\$147,311	\$221,920.54	51%
Co-op	\$51,340	\$42,069.55	-18%
RRA	\$50,000	\$43,230.00	-14%
Other	\$8,225	\$4,421	-46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$439,980</b>	<b>\$590,976</b>	<b>34%</b>



**Income Breakdown by Category 2022/2023**



**Income Breakdown by Category 2018/2019 - 2022/2023**

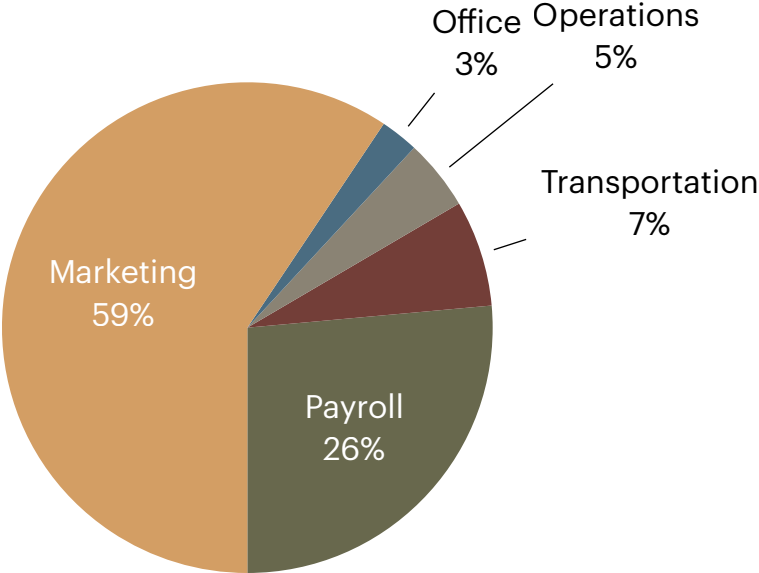


**Expense Breakdown by Comparison 2021/2022 and 2022/2023**

Expense breakdown	2021/2022	2022/2023
Marketing	\$265,327 58%	\$364,880 59%
Office	\$12,312 3%	\$15,445 3%
Operations	\$10,631 2%	\$28,628 5%
Transportation	\$29,492 6%	\$43,030 7%
Other RMI	\$0 0%	\$0 0%
Payroll	\$142,636 31%	\$162,444 26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$460,398</b>	<b>\$615,090</b>

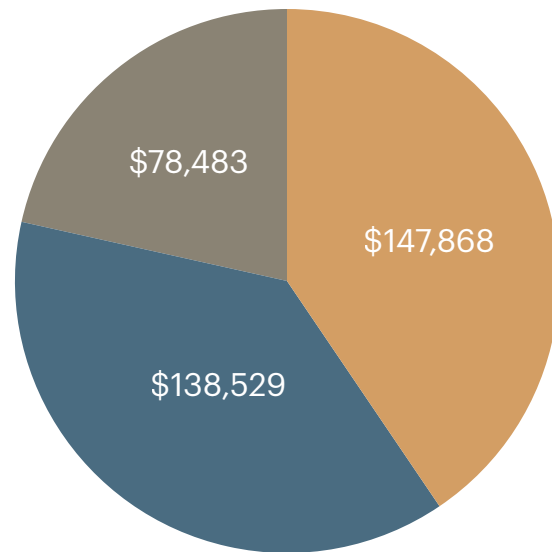
\*amortization expenses not included

**Expense Breakdown by Category 2022/2023**





### Marketing Spending by Season - 2022/2023



● Winter ● Summer ● Year-Round



## **MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS**

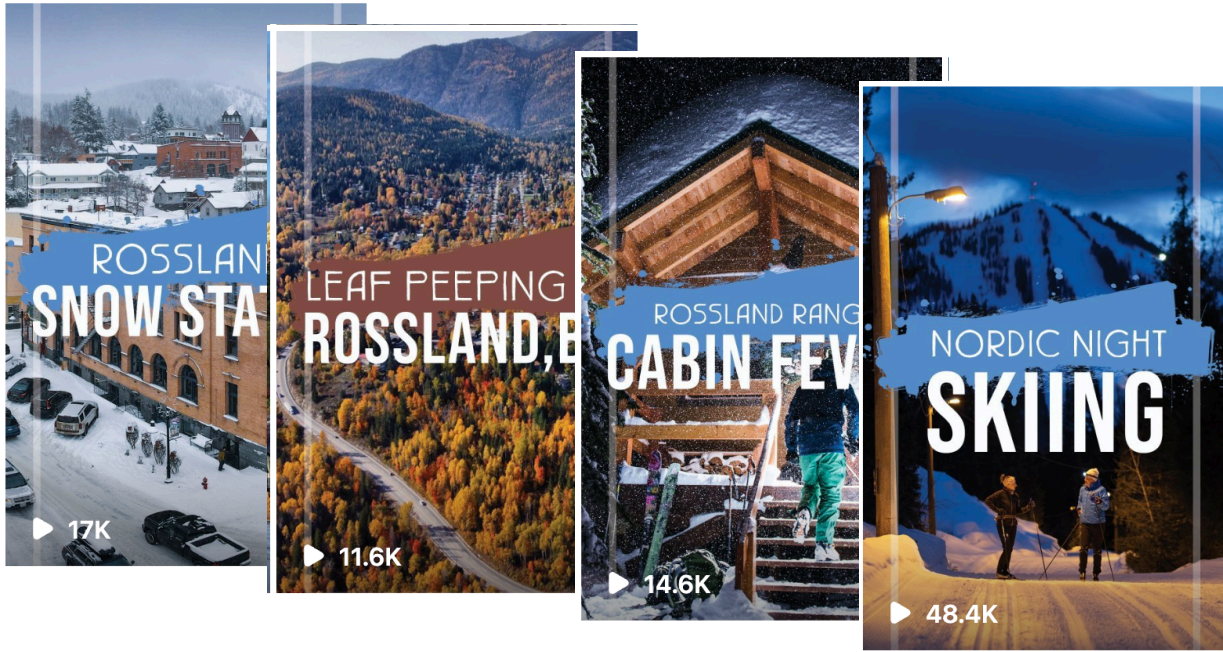
Our organization significantly increased our marketing spending during the 2022/2023 fiscal year. Based on the directions of our Strategic Plan, we strive to keep our marketing spending balanced between summer and winter visitation while exploring options for shoulder season opportunities. To kickstart the non-winter recovery, we invested approximately 38% of our marketing budget in summer and shoulder-season product marketing (\$139,000). Winter marketing was 41% of our total expenses (\$148,000) while 22% of our budget was devoted to year-round activities and general destination awareness.

Our investment in advertising on various Google platforms resulted in increased visitation to our main marketing website ([www.tourismrossland.com](http://www.tourismrossland.com)). Our efforts generated 110,000 page views with 57,345 unique users. Traffic from the United States increased after the opening of the international border and represented 36.3% of the traffic. We were able to continue website development in-house, however our website is getting old and we made the decision to start redesigning the website during the 2023/2024 fiscal year in order to better serve our prospective visitors.

Our Instagram and Facebook channels are one of the most important consumer-facing marketing platforms that we currently use. We continued to focus on Instagram growth during the fiscal year and grew the size of our audience by more than 7%. We strived to provide a mixture of inspirational and informational content while leveraging our continuously expanding photo and video assets.







<b>Instagram Statistics</b>	
Total Followers	11,752 (+7%)
Total Post Likes	30,529
Total Post Comments	871
Reel Video Views	325,947
Impressions	682,631
Accounts Reached	328,646
<b>Facebook Statistics</b>	
Facebook Page Likes	14,649
Total Post Reach	404,178
Total Engagements	21,417
Content Clicks	43,792
Post Likes	18,190
Post Shares	1,593
Video Views	228,000

Marketing Expense Breakdown

Brochure Distribution	\$34,380	9.4%
Co-op programs	\$33,728	9.2%
Digital Marketing	\$69,752	19.1%
Events	\$23,666	6.5%
Hospitality	\$28,440	7.8%
Photo Development	\$12,861	3.5%
Print Advertising	\$14,699	4.0%
Public Relations	\$62,511	17.1%
Research	\$670	0.2%
Sculpture program	\$1,506	0.4%
Social Media/Digital Marketing	\$26,409	7.2%
Trade Show	\$14,747	4.0%
Video Asset Development	\$28,219	7.7%
Website	\$13,294	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$364,881</b>	

**Brochure Program (\$34,380):** We produced a brand-new Rossland Escape Guide for 2023. We kept the advertising prices unchanged, providing exceptional value for our partners. Additionally, we redesigned the Trails of the Rossland Range map and committed to annually update this product. Our organization supported the Winter Trail Map project as well. Our print collateral was available locally, across visitor centers in British Columbia and digitally as well.

**Co-op programs (\$33,728):** This program area includes all of our cooperative marketing program buy-ins: Canada West Ski Areas Association Nordic Program (including Kootenay XC), Mountain Biking BC Program (including Kootenay Dirt), BC Ale Trail and our regional project (Kootenay Roadtrip/WestKoot Route). Additionally, our ongoing regional marketing partnership with the Trail and District Arts Council is part of this category.

**Digital Marketing (\$69,752):** This is the first fiscal year where we separated digital marketing and social media marketing in our budget. In 2023 we focused a lot of our efforts in digital marketing through Google and the Bell Mobile network. Additionally, we invested in a hybrid digital tv/radio campaign in Washington during the winter.



**Events (\$23,666):** We continued to invest in supporting events and funded the following events: Shred Kelly Concert, Rossland Winter Carnival, Rekindle, RattleCat 2023, U16 Western Ski Championship, SingleTrack 6 and Canada Day.

**Hospitality (\$28,440):** As we continued to focus on earned media through our public relations partner (Tartanbond) our media visitation and hospitality budget increased significantly. During the fiscal year we hosted 14 media trips with 31 members of the media. Our hospitality program is a collaborative endeavour including local stakeholders (attractions, accommodation, food and beverage sector, etc.) and regional and provincial partners (Kootenay Rockies Tourism and Destination BC).

**Photo Development (\$12,861):** While our investment in photo development decreased from the previous year, our photo library renewal continued. We worked with Ashely Voykin inclusively during the fiscal year as a contractor. Ashley was also working for Tourism Rossland full-time during the summer on photo development and that cost is included in our payroll. Our photos are the foundation of our social media, digital and print marketing and they are available for our stakeholders for marketing purposes as well.



**Print Advertising (\$14,699):** This program includes the design and advertising cost associated with our select stand-alone print advertising in Kootenay Mountain Culture, Ski Canada, Inside Golf and Out There Monthly magazines.

**Public Relations (\$62,511):** We continued our partnership with Tartanbond for PR support with the goal to encourage Canadians and international travellers to visit our community for the ultimate outdoor experience in any seasons. This partnership resulted in media coverage in Canadian Geographic, Freeskier Magazine, Forecast Ski, Calgary Herald, Score Golf, Lonely Planet among others. We also hosted 5 social media influencers. Future media cover will also result from this investment.

**Social Media (\$26,409):** Our paid social media cost includes all paid advertising and promotions on our main consumer facing channels (Facebook and Instagram) and CrowdRiff, our visual content marketing software subscription. We worked with Alison Worsfold to create short video reels and those performed extremely well.

**Video Asset Development (\$28,219):** Video development remained an important component of our marketing mix. We worked with Bohdan Doval, Dane Tudor and Juicy Studios to produce captivating videos and b-roll footage to promote our destination. Some of the work produced are not-yet release as they are an integral part of our 2023 winter marketing activities.

**Website (\$13,294):** We continued to upgrade and maintain our main website and other micro-sites ([www.kootenayroadtrip.com](http://www.kootenayroadtrip.com) and [www.southkootenay.com](http://www.southkootenay.com) and [southkootenayevents.com](http://southkootenayevents.com)). We continued to support the integrated accommodation search/booking referral engine to our website to increase its usability.



## REGIONAL PROGRAMS



We continued to partner with regional organizations and businesses that share the vision of our organization to promote our region collectively.

The Kootenay Roadtrip initiative with Destination Castlegar and Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism initiative continued to grow. Towards the end of the fiscal year Arrow Slokan Tourism joined the program and we completed a re-branding exercise to leverage the existing WestKoot Route brand ([westkootroute.com](http://westkootroute.com)).

We used the Bell Media mobile network to leverage our previously developed assets and market the region. During the summer of 2022, we focused on general touring and golf, including a golf sweepstakes.

During January and February, we ran a Kootenay Tasting Passport contest with BC Ale Trail promoting our regional breweries.

We continued our excellent relationship with the Trail and District Arts Council and cost-shared some marketing and promotional initiatives to help their programming.

We continued to build strong collaborative relationships with accountable regional tourism businesses, non-profits and economic development organizations.





## TOURISM ROSSLAND STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS

Tourism Rossland adopted a new Strategic Plan 2020-2025 in September, 2020. The plan incorporates dialogue and input from industry partners, government agencies, local and regional organizations and individuals who are passionate about Rossland.

While the COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally changed the short-term plans of the organization, the three long-term strategic objectives remain unchanged:

- 1. Increase visitation and spending in need periods through effective investments in destination sales and marketing**
- 2. Continuously Improve Rossland's Visitor Servicing and Experiential Quality**
- 3. Build a Compelling and Authentic Destination**

In order to achieve these objectives, Tourism Rossland will focus on the key growth markets of ski/snowboard enthusiast and mountain bikers. Additionally, the organization will continue to invest in emerging markets with an emphasis on non-peak season visitation (April – November). Events will be of critical importance and we are dedicating resources to help the development of the wedding sector as well.

The Strategic Plan identified 18 strategies that will help our organization achieve these objectives:

- 1. Invest in primary market research to understand current and potential visitors to Rossland.**
  - Progress: significant progress
  - We continued to leverage data available from our tourism partners, Kootenay Rockies Tourism and Destination British Columbia to increase ROI

on our marketing investment. The new RMI RDS also includes some visitor satisfaction measurement tools that we will implement during the 2023/2024 reporting year.

**2. Define and regularly monitor a consistent set of key performance indicators to gauge short and long-term progress towards destination and organization vision.**

- Progress: some progress
- We continued to invest-in and maintain the Check-in Canada accommodator search on our website to highlight accommodator availability and to track accommodation referrals and conversions.

**3. Continue to invest in additional on-brand marketing assets/content (imagery, videography).**

- Progress: significant progress
- We continued to invest in photo and video asset development (\$41,000 total investment, 11% of total marketing spend this fiscal year).

**4. Review range of print collateral and create a branded and integrated family of print/downloadable collateral.**

- Progress: significant progress
- We reviewed our full suite of print collateral and re-designed and/or reprinted our flagship print marketing materials (Rossland Escape Guide and Trail of the Rossland Range). We continued to support print collateral produced in-association with our stakeholders (Rossland Winter Trails Map). Some print materials will be phased out in future (Disc Golf, Rossland Road Biking, etc.)

**5. Support existing and/or create new events in non-peak season that have the potential to grow to a scope/scale that warrants visitation and multi-night stays.**

- Progress significant progress
- We supported existing and new events and worked diligently to ensure that event producers feel welcomed in Rossland. Total investment in the events sector was \$24,000 (7%).

**6. Continue to actively engage in social media channels.**

- Progress: significant progress
- Continued our focus on paid and unpaid social media to engage with our core audience and leverage our assets. Social media stats are included earlier in this report. Social media spending was approximately \$26,500 (7%).

**7. Invest in select print and digital advertising.**

- Progress: significant progress
- We identified key print and digital advertising channels and invested approximately \$85,000 during the fiscal year (23%).

**8. Identify, target and host key influencers in various target markets and proactively secure media coverage.**

- Progress: significant progress
- We continued to work with Tartanbond to help our organization achieve this goal and significantly increased our media hosting budget. Total investment: \$28,000 (8%).

**9. Invest in direct sales to proactively target and secure additional sport hosting opportunities and maximize associated length of stay/spending/repeat visitation.**

- Progress: some progress
- We invested in trade shows (ski and weddings), but not in direct sales to target sports hosting. At the same time our organization supported sport hosting through our event grant (Black Jack and Red Mountain Racers).

**10. Review transportation experience through the lens of the visitor and advocate for/invest in improvements.**

- Progress: significant Progress
- We were able to continue our core transportation project (Rossland Ski Bus, Spokane Airport Shuttle and Kelowna Airport Shuttle).

**11. Create 'one-stop' for easily accessed, easily consumed Rossland visitor information that showcases various possible itineraries.**

- Progress: some progress
- We continued to maintain inspirational custom itineraries on our social media channels and our blog.

**12. Manage destination content on key sites such as Trip Advisor/Expedia/ Google/ Facebook.**

- Progress: some progress
- We continued to monitor destination content on social media channels through Crowdriff.



**13. Assess experiential quality of businesses and act as a conduit for business service and training programs.**

- Progress: no progress
- We provided ad-hoc advice to local businesses and organizations, but did not develop formal programs.

**14. Create opportunities for local tourism businesses to collaborate and network and to improve industry and market knowledge.**

- Progress: significant progress
- We restarted our accommodator meetings, hosted our Jingle & Mingle winter gala and continued industry collaboration through the Tourism Rossland Board Meetings.

**15. Create opportunities to educate and engage residents on visitor experiences, the needs of the visitors and the value of the tourism economy.**

- Progress: some progress
- We continued to advocate on behalf of the tourism industry and educate residents through press releases, City of Rossland Council presentations and increased the visibility and recognition of the tourism industry.

**16. Advocate for amenity development– campground, RV sites/services, all season camping, conference facility.**

- Progress: some progress
- Our organization continued to advocate for amenity development within and outside the RMI framework.

**17. Continue to successfully implement the Resort Development Strategy and invest RMI funds on behalf of the City of Rossland.**

- Progress: significant progress
- We continued our partnership with the City of Rossland, developed a new Resort Development Strategy and executed our transportation projects.

**18. Participate in various tables and discussions related to municipal, regional, provincial infrastructure.**

- Progress: significant process
- We continued to work with our regional partners (CDMOs, Kootenay Rockies, Destination BC and other economic development organizations to discuss infrastructure projects and development (Highway 3, product developments and other amenities).





## **LOOKING AHEAD**

Tourism Rossland will persist in implementing the strategies outlined in our strategic plan. We are optimistic that our ongoing investments in non-winter visitation and events will continue to bolster year-round visitor economy growth, stimulate further investments in product development, and enhance the visitor experience.

Considering the current rise in interest rates and economic uncertainty, we do not foresee significant visitation growth during the summer of 2023. Nonetheless, the 2023/24 winter season could potentially surpass the previous one if favourable snow conditions prevail.

Our proximity to the US border and the nearby metropolitan areas of Spokane and Seattle offer the most substantial growth opportunities, and we will continue to allocate resources and cultivate relationships with key partners in that region.

We will also maintain and strengthen our relationships with regional partners who recognize the economic and social value of tourism and share our organizational goals.

Tourism Rossland remains committed to collaborative regional marketing initiatives, such as the South Kootenay/WestKoot Route programs, and will sustain our excellent working relationships with other city DMOs in the region.

Our primary focus will be on digital marketing, content creation and media relations while revamping our website to better serve our visitors and stakeholders. Additionally, we will advocate for new infrastructure projects that diversify our experiential offerings and provide additional amenities for our visitors.



## **ABOUT US**

Tourism Rossland is Rossland’s Destination Marketing Organization and works collaboratively with input from all Rossland tourism stakeholders. The organization is a registered non-profit society which was formed in 2007.

The mission of the organization is to work collaboratively and leverage its resources effectively to execute destination management, marketing and sales strategies that responsibly and respectfully grow Rossland’s year-round visitor economy within the context of community values.

Managed by 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, Tourism Rossland leads, directs and manages tourism development on behalf of Rossland by building on the existing strengths of local businesses and organizations, by being inclusive in nature, and developing strategic alliances.

The DMO supports local business and industry to improve products that meet changing market demands. By two-way communication, stakeholders will provide input into the process to achieve our stated objectives.

### **Directors of Tourism Rossland As of September 1, 2023**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email</b>
Jeff Bruce	Redstone Golf		jeff@redstoneresort.com
Jane Paterson	MRDT Collectors	President	jane.paterson@redresort.com
Jesse Steele	MRDT Collectors		jsteele@prestigehotels.ca
Vacant	MRDT Collectors		
Erik Kerr	Red Mountain Resort		erik.kerr@redresort.com



Christine Andison	Red Resort Association	Treasurer	christine@redresort.com
Robert Murray	Red Resort Association		rmurray@thejosie.com
Vacant	Red Resort Association		
Daniel D'Amour	Restaurants/Cafe/Bars	Vice-President	manager@theflyingsteamshovel.com
Vacant	Retail		
Fiona Lane	Rossland Museum		admin@rosslandmuseum.ca
Kate Garlinge	Rossland Arts Council		rosslandbikeretreat@gmail.com
Adele Pratt	Black Jack Ski Club		adelepratt@hotmail.com
Dave Diplock	Kootenay Columbia Trails Society		davediplock@bearenviro.ca

## **OUR TEAM**

### **ANDRAS LUKACS, Executive Director**



Andras started working for Tourism Rossland in 2017. Previously, he lived in Yellowknife, NT, where he worked in tourism management and planning for the Government of Northwest Territories. He has an extensive background in tourism development, programming and market research. Andras earned a Ph. D. and MA. from Loyola University Chicago studying leisure networks and digital media and a BA. in communication from the University of Detroit Mercy. Originally from Hungary, Andras enjoys living an active outdoor lifestyle with his wife, two young sons and two dogs.

**KYLIE LAKEVOLD Marketing Manager**



In 2007, Kylie packed up her Kootenay family and moved to Calgary, AB in search of new adventures in the digital media world. During her time in Calgary, she worked as a brand manager for one of the top technology companies in Calgary, the chief marketing officer for a digital communications software company and eventually built her own successful marketing consultancy and several software startups. She prides herself on her ability to get people talking about any project she is working on and is excited to be able to bring these skills, back home, to Tourism Rossland.

**ASHLEY VOYKIN Marketing Intern**



Ashley was our marketing intern during the summer of 20212. An amazingly talented photographer and creative artist, Ashley was in charge of our visual content development that capture the capture the spirit of our community and region. Additionally, she worked on our business directory visual update.