

# Tourism Master Plan

The Saint John Region

2024 - 2034

resonance

ENVISION  
Saint John THE  
REGIONAL  
GROWTH  
AGENCY



## Dear Reader,

We are truly fortunate to call the Saint John Region home.

A major port city with a historic and vibrant uptown core surrounded by abundant nature, the region is a desired destination for visitors looking for exceptional and authentic experiences. In 2024, CNN named Saint John as the only Canadian destination on its list of Top 24 Places to Visit in 2024 – something to be celebrated and built upon.

Tourism is a key element in the economic and social fabric of the Saint John Region, offering valuable opportunities to enrich the community, enhance our cultural and built heritage and support sustainable development. It is an economic driver that requires a thoughtful and deliberate roadmap for growth that benefits both our residents and our visitors – this was a guiding principle as we embarked on developing the first-ever Tourism Master Plan for the Saint John Region.

The plan, built by the community, embraces our natural assets like the world-famous Bay of Fundy, our rivers, trails and spectacular nature-hoods along with our dynamic cultural and culinary scenes all steeped in maritime history. Collectively, there have been eight strategic priorities identified to revitalize the local economy and enrich the lives of our residents and visitors. These priorities will help guide efforts in planning, managing and marketing the Saint John Region as a tourist destination.

Envision Saint John will help drive the Tourism Master Plan forward, but success will come through collaborating with our local tourism industry, community stakeholders and municipal partners. Everyone has a role to play.

Sincerely,

Andrew Beckett  
CEO, Envision Saint John

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# 01 Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

# The Saint John Region stands at a pivotal moment in its tourism journey.

As global travel patterns evolve and consumer preferences shift towards more personalized and sustainable experiences, the region is uniquely positioned to capitalize on these trends.

The tourism sector has emerged as a crucial economic driver, prompting a comprehensive approach to its development and management.

In response to these changing dynamics, Envision Saint John is evolving to expand its mandate beyond traditional destination marketing to be a more comprehensive

destination management organization. This shift allows for a broader impact, addressing not only tourism promotion but also the development of infrastructure, services, and attractions that benefit both visitors and residents alike.

Recognizing the interconnected nature of tourism and economic growth, Envision Saint John has collaborated with key stakeholders to create two integrated reports for the region: an Economic Development Strategy and Tourism Master Plan. This collaborative effort ensures that tourism development aligns seamlessly with broader economic goals, helping foster a resilient and diversified regional economy.

At its core, the Tourism Master Plan is built on three fundamental principles: loveability, liveability, and prosperity.

By focusing on these elements, the plan aims to create a destination that resonates deeply with visitors, offers an exceptional quality of life for residents, and generates sustainable economic benefits for the entire region. This balanced approach ensures that as the region enhances its appeal to tourists, it simultaneously improves the everyday experiences of those who call the Saint John Region home. From vibrant urban centres to charming rural areas, every part of the region stands to benefit from this comprehensive strategy.

As the Saint John Region embarks on this journey, collaboration will be key. The successful implementation of this plan relies on active partnerships between Envision Saint John, community stakeholders, and industry partners.

Together, they will work to address challenges, seize opportunities, and position the Saint John Region as a premier destination where historic tides and urban vibrancy converge to offer a rich tapestry of experiences.

Through this Tourism Master Plan, the Saint John Region is not just adapting to change – it's embracing it, ensuring that tourism becomes a powerful force for positive transformation. As the region moves forward, it invites all members of the community to join in realizing its full potential, ensuring that each season brings new opportunities and unforgettable experiences for all.

# 02 Project Background

## METHODOLOGY

# In 2024, Envision Saint John initiated the development of the Saint John Region Tourism Master Plan to identify priorities for the next decade.

The goal is to enable the region to deliver a positive visitor experience while enhancing the quality of life for local residents.

To achieve this, Envision Saint John engaged Resonance Consultancy to conduct industry and trends research, destination benchmarking, and stakeholder engagement. This comprehensive approach was designed to help Envision Saint John, its partners, and stakeholders, articulate and share a clear vision for the future of tourism in the region.

Through extensive research and community engagement, the project team aimed to develop a cohesive and strategic plan that aligns with the region's broader economic development strategy. Integrating the Tourism Master Plan with the economic development strategy offers numerous benefits from both perspectives.

From the tourism perspective, aligning with the broader economic development strategy ensures that the tourism sector is not developed in isolation but rather as an integral part of the region's overall growth. This holistic approach can enhance destination competitiveness

by leveraging shared resources and infrastructure, fostering innovation, and attracting investment. It can also ensure that tourism development is sustainable and beneficial to the local community by addressing issues such as housing, transportation, and workforce development in a coordinated manner.

From the economic development perspective, integrating tourism into the broader strategy helps diversify the economy, creating new job opportunities and stimulating local businesses. A thriving tourism sector can also increase demand for local products and services, thereby boosting

other sectors such as retail, food and beverage, arts and culture, and transportation. The more appealing a destination is to visit, the more competitive it is when it comes to attracting talent and investment in other sectors.

Ultimately, this integrated approach promotes sustainable tourism growth and strengthens the overall economic fabric of the Saint John Region. By working together, stakeholders can create a prosperous community that benefits both residents and visitors alike.

# Approach

## PHASE 1 REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The development of the Saint John Region Tourism Master Plan began with the formation of a Steering Committee, comprising key stakeholders from the region.

Initial kick-off meetings introduced the project's key milestones, deliverables, and objectives to the committee members. The Steering Committee met periodically throughout the project to provide essential guidance and validation at critical junctures. An in-depth review of existing regional studies, tourism strategies, and development projects was conducted, which served as a foundational step in understanding the current landscape and informing the subsequent phases of research and engagement.

## PHASE 2 REGIONAL ASSESSMENT

The second phase involved a comprehensive assessment of the Saint John Region's tourism landscape.

This phase included extensive stakeholder engagement and data collection efforts to capture a detailed picture of the region's tourism industry. A Competitive Benchmarking Analysis was performed, comparing the Saint John Region with 10 peer regions, the province of New Brunswick, and Canada as a whole, across various metrics related to lovability, livability and prosperity. This analysis provided a holistic view of the region's competitive positioning. Additionally, a detailed inventory of tourism assets was compiled, evaluating the quality and quantity of accommodations, infrastructure, and experiences. To further inform the assessment, a visitor and resident survey was conducted, gathering critical feedback on the region's tourism offerings. Stakeholder interviews enriched the understanding of the region's current challenges and opportunities, providing valuable insights that guided the development of strategic recommendations.

## PHASE 3 REGIONAL ASPIRATION

To shift the focus from the current state to future possibilities for the Saint John Region's tourism sector, a visioning workshop with tourism stakeholders was conducted.

During this workshop, participants collaboratively prioritized visitor profiles, identified key industry trends for the next 10 years, and developed a clear vision and guiding principles for the Tourism Master Plan. The team then crafted strategies and recommendations aligned with this vision, incorporating best practices and actionable steps to enhance the region's tourism offerings. A strategic framework for the Tourism Master Plan was drafted and socialized with stakeholders to ensure practicality, alignment, and broad support.

## PHASE 4 REGIONAL PLANNING

In the final phase, a comprehensive Action Plan was developed, outlining responsibilities, key performance indicators, timelines, and necessary resources by the Envision Saint John team.

The finalized Tourism Master Plan was then presented to stakeholders, marking a significant milestone in the region's tourism development and setting the stage for future growth.



# 03 Market Opportunities

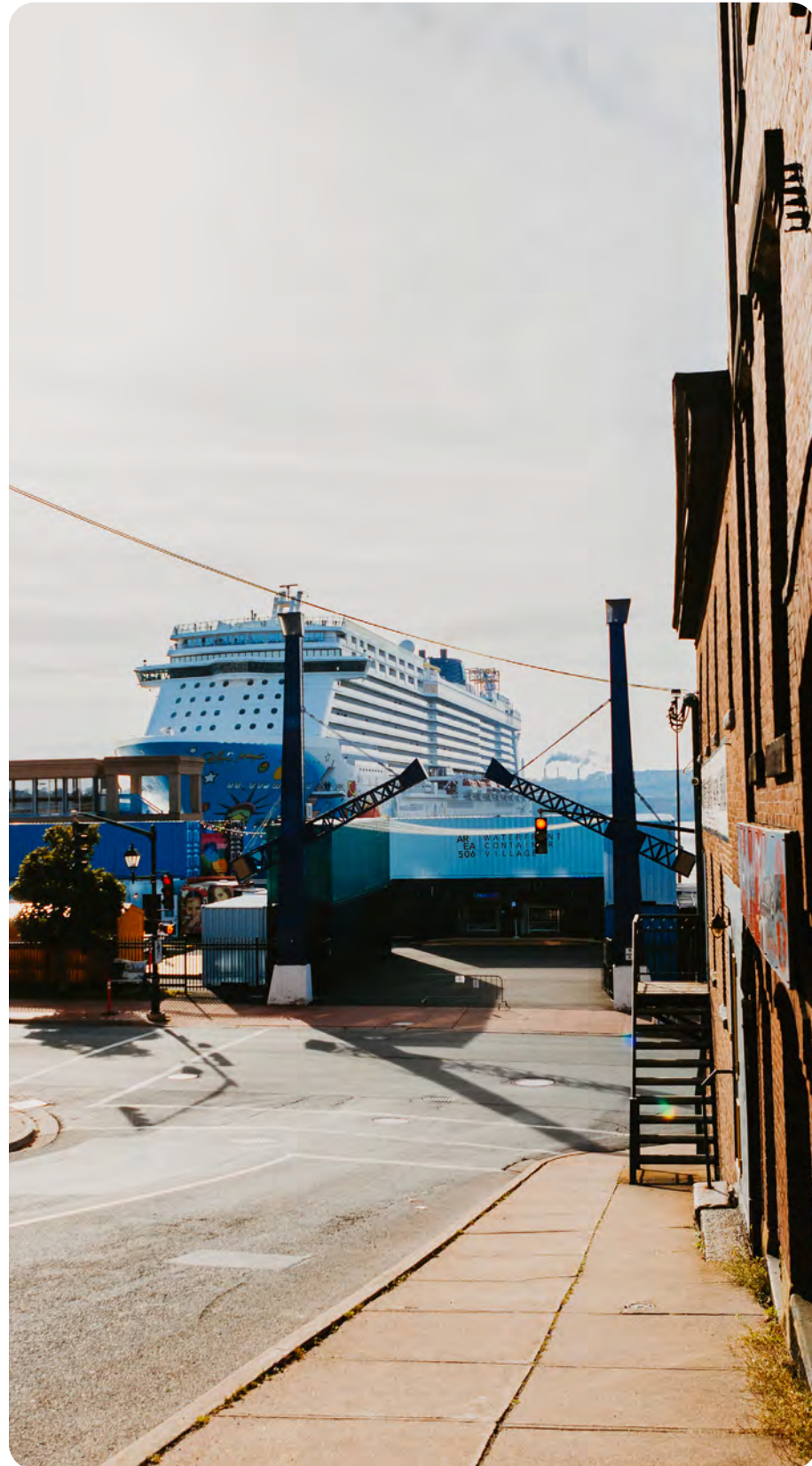
# State of Tourism

As the Saint John Region prepares for future growth, building a shared understanding of its key strengths and challenges is crucial to foster collaboration and ensure sustainable development.

Recent qualitative and quantitative data underscore the importance of addressing infrastructure needs, diversifying attractions, and improving air connectivity to maintain and enhance the region's appeal. These findings provide a comprehensive overview of the current state and future potential of tourism in the region.

The tourism sector in the Saint John Region is poised for continued growth, with projections indicating an increase

in cruise ship arrivals and a steady recovery in the hotel industry. However, this anticipated expansion necessitates strategic planning and investment to compete effectively with other destinations and attract the necessary resources and visitors. To differentiate itself and sustain its competitive edge, the Saint John Region must focus on ensuring a seamless visitor experience while capitalizing on its unique regional assets.



**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 1**

**The Saint John Region's cruise tourism is an important pillar for the region**

Cruise tourism, primarily featuring visitors from the US, remains a vital component of the region's economic landscape, especially as they flock to experience the renowned Bay of Fundy, the spectacular fall foliage, and the region's overall natural beauty. The city enhances its appeal with cruise docks that provide convenient access to local dining, shopping, and architectural attractions—all within comfortable walking distance. This strategic advantage distinctly positions Saint John among other cruise destinations in the Maritimes.

In 2023, the region witnessed significant growth in cruise tourism, welcoming 174,229 visitors, an increase of 26,000 from the previous year, and demonstrating a robust recovery post-pandemic. This resurgence is notable as the city works toward regaining the all-time high of 196,032 cruise passengers recorded in 2019. Although the 2023 figures still reflect an 11% decrease from that peak, the quick recovery indicates a positive trajectory for the cruise sector in the local economy. The strong rebound underscores the essential role of cruise tourism in Saint John's port economic portfolio, serving as a key driver of revenue and a pivotal element in sustaining local businesses and employment.

Looking to the future, there is a projected increase in cruise ship arrivals from 68 in 2023 to 75 in 2024. This positive trend signals continued growth, reinforcing the importance and potential expansion of this sector in the region's tourism economy.

METRICS	RAW DATA
Saint John Cruise Passengers 2019	196,032
Saint John Cruise Passengers 2023	174,229
Cruise Ship Arrivals 2023	68
Scheduled Cruise Ship Arrivals 2024	75

Source: (2024) Envision Saint John Regional Growth Dashboard



**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 2**

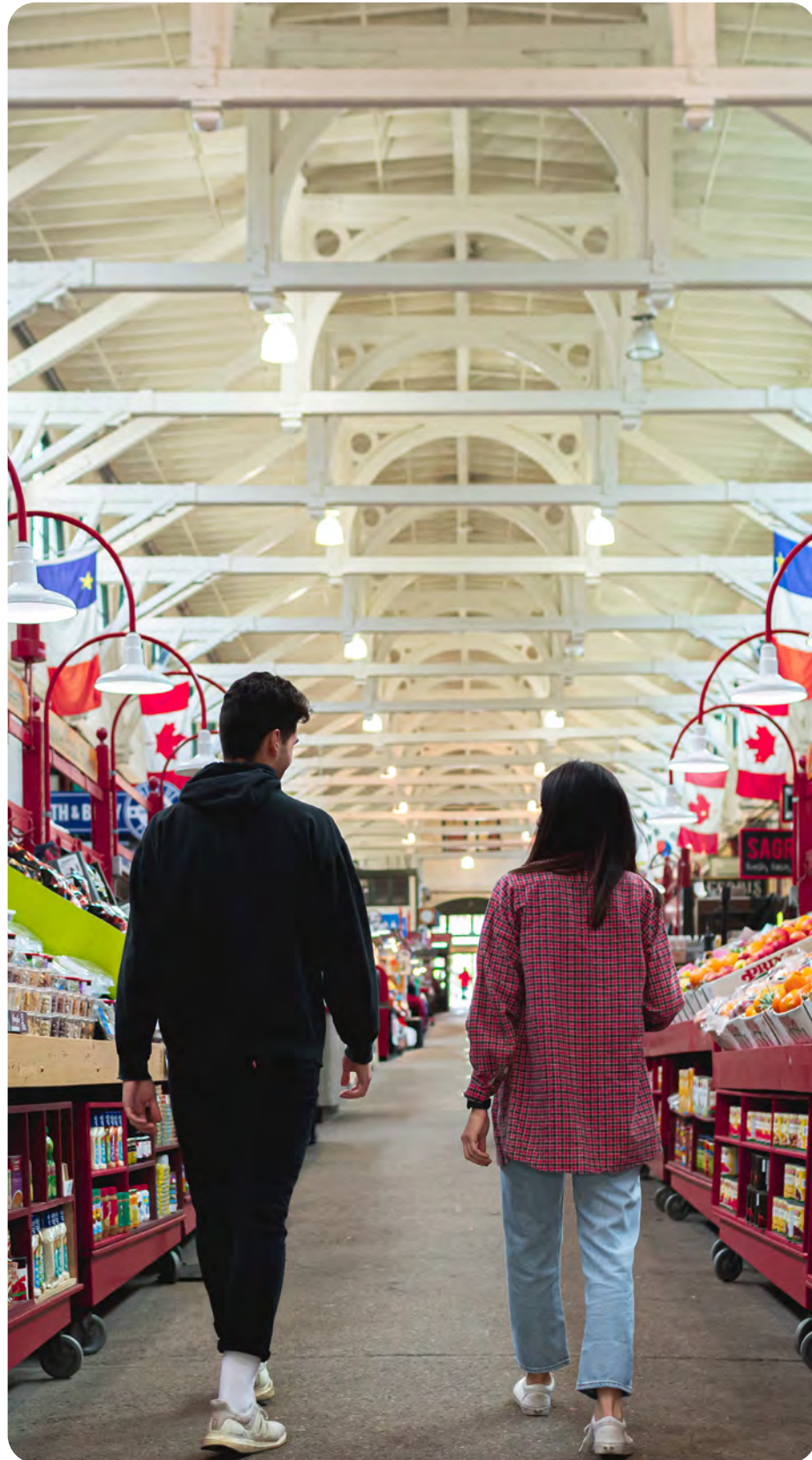
**New Brunswick airports face slow post-pandemic recovery amid varied flight connectivity**

In a post-pandemic evaluation of air passenger traffic across New Brunswick, data indicates a significant slow recovery in the region. Saint John Airport experienced a decline from 281,100 passengers in 2019 to 175,000 in 2023, reflecting a substantial decrease in traveller volume by approximately 37.7%. In the first quarter of 2024, the region offers two daily direct flights from Toronto and one from Montreal. Comparatively, Moncton Airport, which previously held the highest traffic, reported a reduction from 657,900 in 2019 to 600,121 in 2023, amounting to a 8.78% drop, with three daily direct flights from Toronto, two from Montreal, and one from Ottawa.\* Fredericton Airport also saw a decline, with numbers dropping from 408,300 passengers in 2019 to 333,813 in 2023, translating to a decrease of roughly 18.24%.\* Fredericton similarly maintains three direct flights from Toronto, two from Montreal, and one from Ottawa daily. This comparison highlights varying levels of connectivity and the potential impact on recovery rates for these airports.

METRICS	RAW DATA
Saint John Airport Passengers 2019	281,100
Saint John Airport Passengers 2023	175,000
Saint John Airport Direct Daily Flights	3
Moncton Airport Passengers 2019	657,900
Moncton Airport Passengers 2023	600,121
Moncton Airport Direct Daily Flights	6
Fredericton Airport Passengers 2019	408,300
Fredericton Airport Passengers 2023	333,813
Fredericton Airport Direct Daily Flights	6

\*Figures apply to year round flights (April 2024)





**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 3**

**The Saint John Region’s cruise arrivals and hotel visits are recovering, despite ongoing limited air access**

In the Saint John Region, the tourism landscape is showing promising signs of recovery, particularly in the cruise and hotel sectors. As of 2023, room nights have reached 286,570, closely approaching the pre-pandemic levels of 2019. The cruise industry is steadily recovering, with current rates reaching 174,229, approaching the pre-pandemic figures of 196,032.

Additionally, we are observing a general trend of increased visitor growth from key regional markets, including Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. This regional influx is contributing significantly to the overall rise in tourism activity.

However, the air travel sector is still facing challenges. The number of air passengers in 2023 stands at 175,000, which is significantly lower than the 281,100 passengers recorded in 2019. This suggests that while the cruise and hotel industries are nearing full recovery, air travel has yet to rebound to its former strength.

METRICS	RAW DATA
2019 Room Nights	297,260
2023 Room Nights	286,570
2019 Air Passengers	281,100
2023 Air Passengers	175,000
2019 Cruise Rates	196,0321
2023 Cruise Rates	174,229

**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 4**

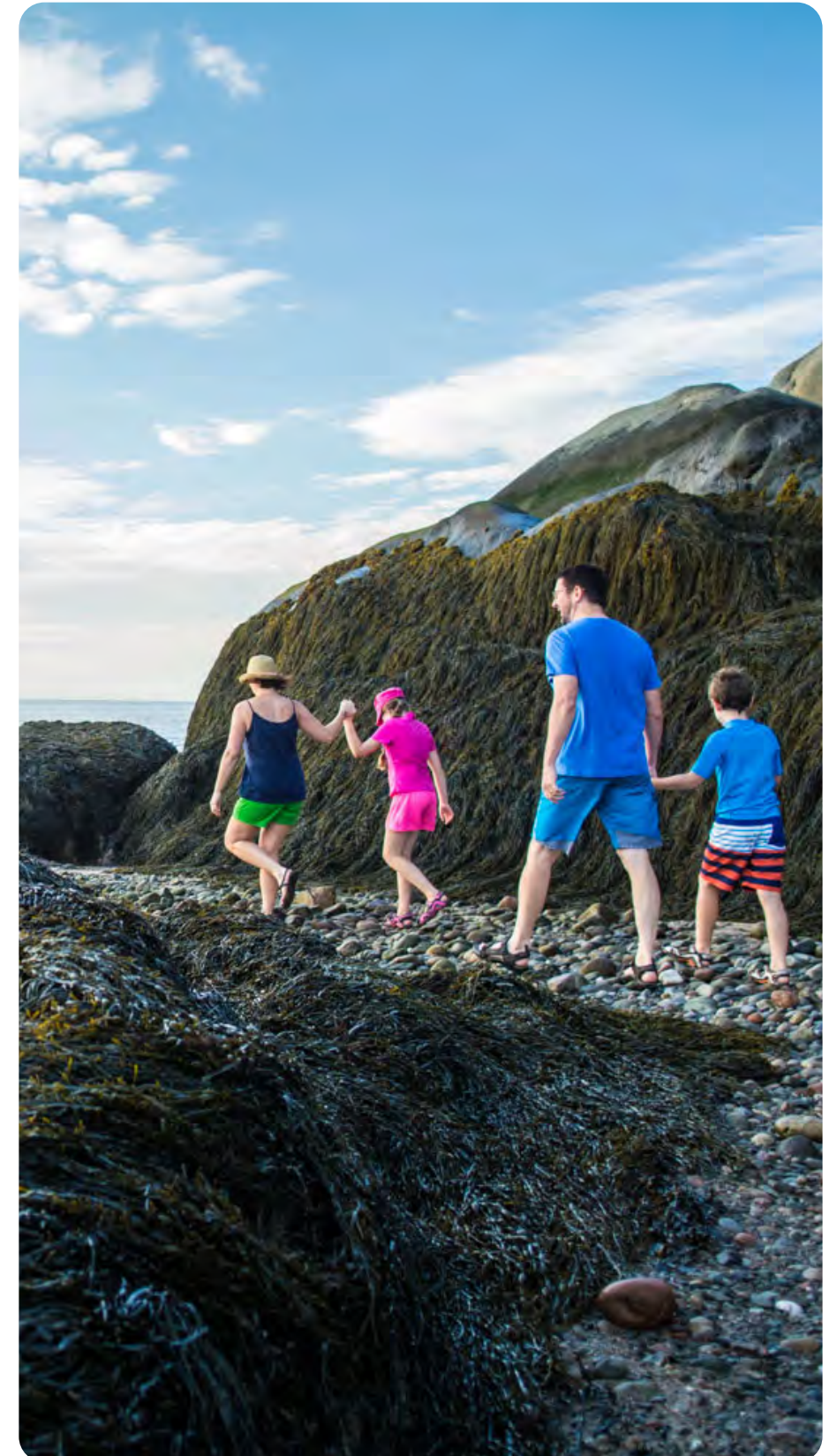
**The Saint John Region draws diverse age groups for short leisure stays, highlighting its appeal as a quick escape destination**

According to survey respondents, the visitor profile for the Saint John Region reveals a balanced age distribution among tourists. Specifically, the age breakdown is as follows: 11% are aged 18-24, 24% are between 25-34, 21% fall within the 35-44 bracket, another 21% are aged 45-54, 10% are between 55-64, and 11% are 65 or older. This wide age range represents a varied demographic that finds appeal in the region's offerings.

Six in 10 tourists come for the region's leisure offerings. Most opt for short stays, typically ranging from one to three days, suggesting that the region is perceived more as a destination for brief escapes rather than for prolonged holidays. The diverse visitor dynamic is evident, with about 28% travelling with families, and similar proportions travelling alone or as couples, highlighting the region's broad appeal.

METRICS	RAW DATA
Visitors Age 25-34	24%
Visitors Age 35-44	21%
Visitors Age 45-54	21%
Leisure Visits	61%
Business Visits	23%
Travelling with Family	28%
Travelling as a Couple	27%
Travelling Alone	27%

Source: (2024) Envision Saint John Regional Growth Dashboard, (2024) Envision Saint John Visitor Survey





**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 5**

**Visitors to the region benefit from the affordability of mid-range accommodations and number of vacation rentals**

78% of survey respondents indicate that accommodation is the most important factor when choosing a travel destination. In the region, the accommodation sector is notably affordable, with an average daily rate (ADR) of \$144.34 and a revenue per available room (RevPAR) of \$82.44 in 2023. These prices position the Saint John Region as an economical choice within the competitive landscape, particularly suitable for the average household income among survey respondents, which ranges from \$50,000 to \$79,000.

In addition to traditional hotel offerings, the region excels in providing alternative lodging options. The region boasts a higher density of vacation rentals and bed-and-breakfasts per 100,000 residents than its peer cities. Notably, 32% of visitors opt for vacation rentals, which may reflect a trend towards staying in locations that offer a more intimate connection with the region's rural landscapes. This trend, coupled with the economic suitability for the visitor demographic, underscores potential areas for further growth and investment in the local tourism and accommodation sectors.

METRICS	VISITOR DATA
2023 Average Occupancy Rate	57.1%
2023 Average Daily Rate	\$144.34
2023 RevPar Average	\$82.44
Number of Vacation Rentals per 100k	181
Bed & Breakfast per 100k	15
Respondents Rating Accommodation as Excellent	42.68%

Source: (2024) Costar, (2024) TripAdvisor, (2024) Envision Saint John Visitor Survey



**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 6**

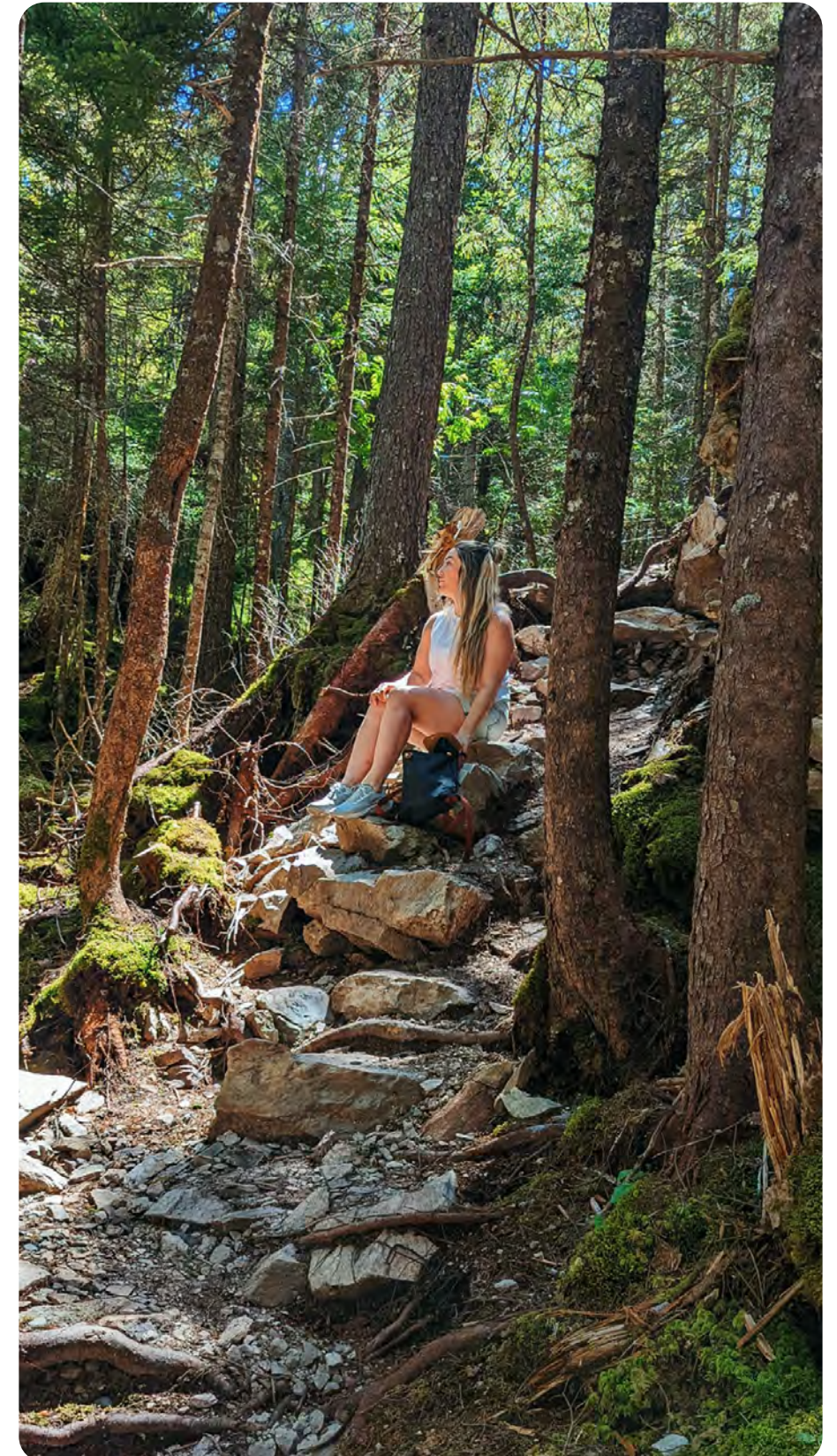
**Visitors see the Saint John Region as a beautiful and authentic region, and they are coming back for more**

Tourists overwhelmingly appreciate the Saint John Region as a destination that combines natural beauty with genuine local culture, reinforcing its appeal as a place worth revisiting. Satisfaction levels among visitors are notably high, with 46% reporting a very positive impression of their stay and an additional 31% rating it as somewhat positive. This high level of satisfaction is complemented by the strong intent of visitors to return; 93% of respondents expressed a likelihood to revisit the region, including 43% who are extremely likely to make another visit. This enthusiastic response is bolstered by the fact that 70% of respondents had visited the region in the past two years, indicating a consistent pattern of repeat visits.

The allure of the Saint John Region is further underscored by visitor perceptions; 72% of those surveyed described the city as beautiful, and 40% valued its authenticity.

METRICS	RAW DATA
Nature & Parks	4.18 / 5
Sites & Landmarks	4.04 / 5
Outdoor Activities	3.97 / 5
Described as Beautiful	72%
Described as Authentic	40%
Described as Clean	35%
Described as Historical	27%
Extremely Positive Impression	46%
Extremely Likely to Return	31%

Source: (2024) Envision Saint John Visitor Survey  
 \*Tourism attractions scored on a 5 point scale





**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 7**

**Residents see the region as beautiful, historical, and industrial and want more festivals, waterfront activities, and culinary experiences**

Tourism assets are often shared with residents, and having direct access to a cruise port, as well as eco and adventure tourism activities, significantly shapes the quality of life for those living in the Saint John Region. Residents appreciate that the region offers a unique combination of history and natural beauty, with 76% describing it as historical and 40% as beautiful. According to a community survey, 56% of respondents would recommend the Saint John Region as a place to live, rating it seven out of 10 or higher. Despite the region’s rich assets, residents see substantial room for improvement in certain areas.

For instance, a mere 4% of respondents gave high marks to the culinary tourism sector, highlighting a significant gap between current offerings and expectations. Reflecting this, 55% of residents expressed a strong interest in having more culinary tours and food experiences. Additionally, only 7% rated the cultural tourism offerings as excellent, indicating a desire for enhanced cultural experiences. Residents also expressed interest in more activities, with 73% wanting additional festivals and cultural events and 58% seeking more beach and waterfront activities. This alignment underscores the need for the region to expand and enrich its cultural and culinary offerings to better meet both visitor and resident expectations and to enhance the overall appeal of the Saint John Region. It is important to recognize that visitors and residents often have different perspectives on a place, which highlights the necessity for a balanced approach in tourism development.



**METRICS RESIDENT SURVEY DATA**

Described as Beautiful	40%
Described as Industrial	49%
Described as Historical	76%
Recommend as a Place to Live (7 out of 10, or higher)	56%

Source: (2024) Envision Saint John Regional Growth Dashboard

**DESIRED EXPERIENCES RESIDENT SURVEY DATA**

Culinary tours and food experiences	55%
Beach and waterfront activities	58%
Festivals, events, and cultural celebrations	73%

Source: (2024) Envision Saint John Regional Growth Dashboard



**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 8**

The Saint John Region shines as an emerging culinary haven, enriched by cultural attractions and vibrant outdoor life, attracting visitors and new talent

The Saint John Region has strong potential as a premier destination for culinary enthusiasts, showcasing more food and drink experiences per capita than both Moncton and Fredericton. The quality and variety of its dining and nightlife options resonate with the preferences of survey respondents, with 97% placing dining at the top of their criteria when selecting a vacation destination.

Complementing its culinary appeal, the Saint John Region boasts a strong visitor sentiment for arts and culture, underscored by an impressive number of museums and landmarks per capita.

Additionally, the Saint John Region provides an extensive range of outdoor activities and abundant green spaces, exceeding the averages per capita of similar peer cities. These offerings cater to the desires of visitors (91%) seeking engaging outdoor experiences and are especially attractive due to the region's often mild climate and favourable weather conditions.

These assets not only offer visitors things to do but also provide a higher quality of life for residents in the Saint John Region and attract new talent.

“

What was once a smokey industrial town has shifted to a centre of homegrown excellence, with an interesting mix of artists, musicians, chefs, and restaurateurs.

- LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR



**STATE OF TOURISM INSIGHT 9**

**The region’s rural areas offer a diverse array of outdoor recreation and UNESCO heritage sites**

The rural regions of Saint John are also increasingly recognized as a vibrant hub for outdoor recreation and green space, offering a diverse array of activities that attract nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers alike. With over 30 outdoor activities available, ranging from immersive nature tours to golfing, the area caters to a wide spectrum of interests and provides ample opportunities for visitors and residents to engage with the natural environment. Stakeholders in the region have expressed a desire for greater connectivity, envisioning the rural areas as ideal bases for day trips that allow tourists to explore the breadth of activities and scenic beauty on offer.

Adding to the rural appeal are two significant UNESCO sites: a Geopark and a Biosphere Reserve. These sites are integral parts of a broader initiative by Destination Canada to create a UNESCO corridor linking 12 UNESCO sites across Atlantic Canada. This corridor aims to enhance the visibility and accessibility of these unique natural and cultural heritage sites, positioning the Saint John Region not only as a destination for outdoor recreation but also as a key player in a larger network of protected areas that highlight sustainable tourism and conservation efforts. This corridor can also be a point of pride for the region’s residents, improving their perception and experience of place.



These heritage sites represent a fantastic opportunity to attract new travellers, including families, who are eager to explore unique cultural and natural landscapes. These sites not only educate and inspire but also offer memorable experiences.

- LOCAL TOURISM OPERATOR



# Market Trends

Market trends in the tourism industry are continually evolving, shaped by factors such as technological advancements, demographic changes, and economic conditions. The following analysis delves into the key trends that are currently

impacting the tourism landscape, offering a comprehensive overview of the forces driving demand and shaping the future of travel. By staying abreast of these trends, the Saint John Region can position itself to attract and retain visitors effectively.

**MARKET TREND 1****Leveraging Canadian demographic changes and increased discretionary spending to boost the local tourism economy**

Canada's population is expected to grow significantly, from 38.2 million in 2024 to a projected 56.5 million by 2068, with notable increases anticipated in nearby Maritime provinces such as Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. This population surge, driven largely by new Canadians and migration from other regions, represents a substantial opportunity for the Saint John Region. According to the Royal Bank of Canada, this demographic shift will be accompanied by an increase in discretionary spending, particularly in the travel sector, as Canadians allocate more of their income to leisure activities. This trend underscores the potential for the Saint John Region to capitalize on a burgeoning domestic market, attracting new visitors and boosting the local economy.

Specifically, by 2043, Nova Scotia's population is projected to reach 1.2 million, reflecting a growth rate of 24.61%, while Prince Edward Island is expected to see a 38.96% increase, bringing its population to 228,300. New Brunswick, including the Saint John Region, is also forecasted to experience a 16.29% rise, reaching 917,800 residents. These trends indicate a growing pool of potential visitors within the Maritime provinces alone. As Canadians increasingly spend on travel and leisure, the Saint John Region is well-positioned to enhance its tourism offerings and infrastructure, tapping into the expanding domestic market and leveraging the economic benefits of increased population and spending in the region.

**MARKET TREND 2****The United States market expansion could unlock new growth opportunities for the Saint John Region's tourism sector**

The increasing expenditure by U.S. travellers and the projected growth in the U.S. population present a significant market opportunity for Canadian tourism, particularly for regions like Saint John, New Brunswick. In 2022, the U.S. travel and tourism sector generated an impressive \$120 billion in revenue, reflecting a robust compound annual growth rate of 2.9% from 2017 to 2022. This trend underscores a steady increase in U.S. travellers seeking international destinations. In 2023, Canada welcomed 21.2 million visitors from the United States, showing significant progress toward recovery from the impact of COVID-19. This surge in U.S. tourism is attributed to a growing population and a heightened interest in exploring diverse and culturally rich locations like those offered in Atlantic Canada. Additionally, U.S. travellers spent approximately \$1.9 billion in tourism during the fourth quarter of 2019 alone, highlighting the substantial economic impact of this market segment.

The U.S. population is projected to grow from 341 million in 2024 to approximately 404 million by 2060, further expanding the pool of potential tourists. This demographic expansion suggests a substantial increase in the number of U.S. travellers who may be attracted to Canada's scenic landscapes, vibrant cultural offerings, welcoming communities, and cooler summer weather. By strategically positioning itself to attract U.S. tourists, the Saint John Region can tap into this lucrative market, boosting local tourism, and fostering economic growth in the region.



**MARKET TREND 3****Strategic opportunities to achieve year-round growth**

Recognizing the untapped potential of the shoulder seasons, Destination Canada has strategically focused its efforts on boosting tourism during these periods, particularly in autumn, which attracts high-value and international travellers. According to their latest visitor sentiment data, these travellers are drawn to the unique experiences and quieter ambiance of the off-peak months. This strategic shift complements Tourism New Brunswick's ongoing efforts to disperse tourism throughout the year, reducing the dependency on the traditional summer peak and extending the economic benefits of tourism across all seasons.

In the Saint John Region, these efforts align well with the existing tourism infrastructure, which has already supported a significant boost in autumnal tourism, primarily driven by cruise ship arrivals that capitalize on the vibrant fall foliage and cultural experiences. The quieter, scenic beauty of autumn and the blossoming renewal of spring present unique opportunities to attract visitors seeking a more relaxed and intimate travel experience.

**MARKET TREND 4****Leveraging the growing interest in outdoor and active leisure activities**

The Saint John Region is uniquely positioned to enhance its outdoor recreation and active leisure offerings, capitalizing on the increasing global and national interest in these activities. Recent data underscores significant growth in outdoor recreation, with a record 168.1 million participants, or 55 percent of the U.S. population ages six and older, engaging in such activities in 2022. Similarly, outdoor recreation is becoming increasingly popular in Canada, where nearly eight in 10 Canadian households reported participating in activities like walking, bicycling, and hiking in 2021. This surge highlights a robust demand for nature-based and active leisure experiences, demonstrating strong engagement with nature and active lifestyles across North America.



**MARKET TREND 5****A culinary tourism boom could drive economic growth by leveraging the region's unique food culture**

The global culinary tourism market is projected to experience substantial growth, with forecasts indicating an increase from approximately \$946.4 billion in 2023 to an estimated \$3,515.1 billion by 2032. This remarkable growth highlights the increasing demand for authentic and culturally immersive dining experiences, underscoring the significant economic potential of culinary tourism. As more travellers seek to explore and engage with local cuisines, food has become a central aspect of their travel experiences and a key factor in choosing destinations.

The Saint John Region presents a significant opportunity to tap into this growing market, given its dynamic culinary culture and the global trend towards food-focused travel. The region's capacity to showcase home-grown and locally produced specialties positions it well to attract visitors interested in authentic, region-specific culinary experiences. Insights from the Culinary Tourism Alliance highlight the strong social and economic benefits associated with culinary tourism, such as promoting sustainability and celebrating local heritage through food. With 26.2% of travellers expressing a desire to discover new foods and select destinations based on culinary appeal, the Saint John Region stands to benefit from the increased interest in culinary tourism, potentially drawing more visitors and fostering economic growth through a focus on its unique culinary offerings.

**MARKET TREND 6****Potential for cruise tourism to further catalyze urban and regional development**

The cruise tourism industry is experiencing significant growth, with its value projected to surge from USD 5.3 billion in 2022 to USD 17.8 billion by 2033, representing a robust compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.1%. A post-pandemic study by Oxford Economics reveals an emerging trend: a growing number of travellers, particularly young people and families from the United States, are increasingly drawn to cruise vacations. This shift in travel preferences presents new opportunities for the Saint John Region to capitalize on the expanding cruise market.

Top activities among cruise travellers include dining, shopping, and exploring landmarks and tourist attractions. These travellers are on the lookout for unique experiences that allow them to immerse themselves in new cultures. While fall foliage attracts many cruise passengers to the region, Port Saint John presents an opportunity to serve as an anchor institution. In this role, the Port can significantly boost regional tourism by engaging in urban development projects akin to AREA 506 and enhancing transportation connections throughout the region.

Enhancing the vibrancy and connectivity around the Port can significantly impact the summer and fall seasons. By encouraging more passengers to disembark and explore various parts of the Saint John Region, the Port can help to create a dynamic and inviting atmosphere that attracts and retains visitors. This strategic approach not only benefits the local economy but also enriches the cultural fabric of the region.





# Target Audiences

A critical component of the Saint John Region's Tourism Master Plan is a comprehensive analysis of the perceptions, needs, and interests of local residents and visitors. This in-depth examination explores the motivations driving visits to the Saint John Region, encompassing both current and potential visitor

demographics and psychographics. By viewing the region through the lens of these diverse audiences, the plan develops targeted strategies to address their unique needs and preferences, ultimately enhancing the region's appeal and competitiveness in the tourism market.



**TARGET AUDIENCE 1**

**Active Adventurers**

Active Adventurers are an essential demographic for the Saint John Region’s tourism strategy, characterized by their deep engagement with outdoor sports, nature, and health and fitness activities. This audience typically opts for fewer, but more distant, vacation destinations where they can immerse themselves in the environment and participate in outdoor experiences. In the Saint John Region, they find a playground ripe with opportunities, from hiking rugged trails to sea kayaking in the Bay of Fundy.

Unlike the typical family or multi-generational tourist, Active Adventurers in the Saint John Region seek solitude or the camaraderie of like-minded individuals rather than family-oriented activities. Marketing efforts aimed at Active Adventurers should highlight the Saint John Region’s unique blend of urban and natural environments. Promotional materials might showcase visuals of mountain biking, coastal trekking, and water sports.



**TARGET AUDIENCE 2**

**Sophisticated Explorers**

Sophisticated Explorers are a target audience distinguished by their preference for fewer but longer vacations and their tendency to spend more on their travels than other Canadian visitor segments. This group is attracted to the Saint John Region for its rich blend of cultural attractions and historical depth. They are especially drawn to the city’s vibrant arts scene, the New Brunswick Museum, and the renowned Saint John City Market. Sophisticated Explorers seek immersive experiences that allow them to absorb the local culture, learn new things, and broaden their perspectives. They also select their destinations based on their culinary offerings.

Marketing initiatives for Sophisticated Explorers should emphasize Saint John’s rich cultural tapestry, highlighting immersive experiences that blend history, art, and culinary excellence. Highlighting events like the annual AREA 506 Festival, art gallery exhibitions, and live theatre performances can attract these travellers who appreciate sophisticated cultural enrichment.



**TARGET AUDIENCE 3**

**Families and Multigenerational**

Family travellers are a core audience for the Saint John Region’s tourism initiatives, with the region offering a wealth of attractions that cater to both children and adults. Families are drawn to the Saint John Region for its friendly atmosphere and diverse range of activities that can be enjoyed together. The region boasts numerous family-friendly sites, such as the New Brunswick Museum and Stonehammer UNESCO Global Geopark where interactive exhibits entertain and educate, and TimberTop Adventures for some aerial fun. The Reversing Falls Rapids also offers a unique natural spectacle that can be enjoyed from safe viewing areas, making it a perfect spot for families to experience nature together.

To effectively market to this demographic, the Saint John Region’s promotional strategies should highlight the region’s accessibility, safety, and the variety of experiences that can enrich a family vacation. Emphasizing family-oriented accommodations, dining options that cater to various tastes and dietary needs, and special family packages or discounts can make the destination more attractive.



# 04 Vision



VISION

# Embracing the dynamic spirit of the Saint John Region

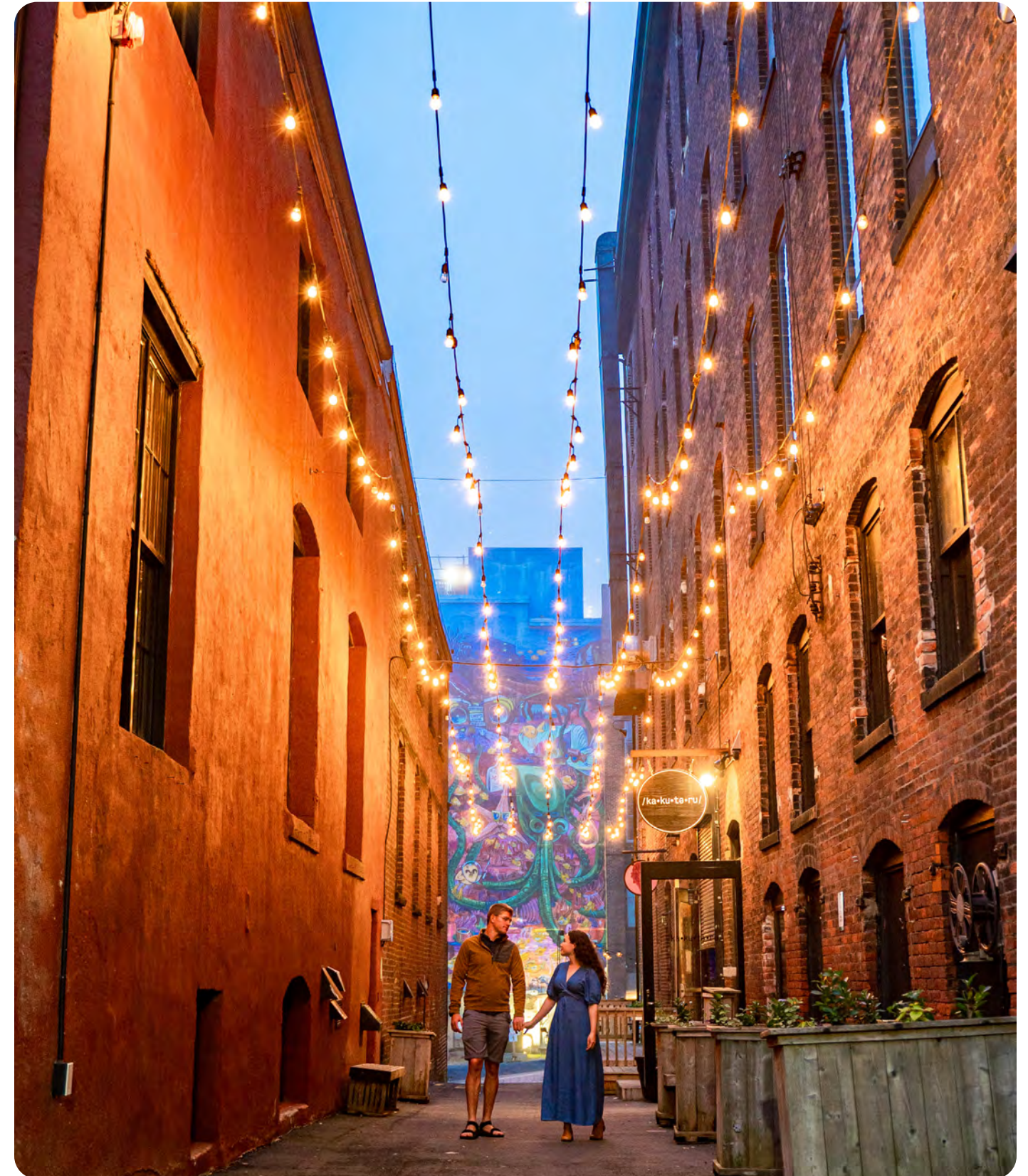
At the confluence of historic tides and vibrant city life, the Saint John Region stands as a beacon for explorers of all kinds.

Here, where the mighty Bay of Fundy's waters caress the age-old shores, the region unfolds as a panorama of rugged coastal landscapes and expansive seas, framed by the lively hum of the market and the charming whisper of storied streets. The Saint John Region offers a rich tapestry of experiences that seamlessly weave together the raw beauty of nature, the refined art of gastronomy, and the deep threads of heritage.

## VISION

In the early misty mornings, adventurers can paddle through the Bay of Fundy's fog-draped waters, where the earth's highest tides sculpt the landscape in a perpetual dance of creation and erosion. Nearby, a myriad of trails beckon thrill-seekers, each path unfolds stunning vistas and vibrant colours. As the day progresses, culinary adventurers delight in exploring the diverse gastronomic landscape, where independently owned restaurants showcase a rich tapestry of flavours. Meanwhile, history buffs and culture seekers find joy meandering through the city's heart, where each turn unveils stories deeply etched into the stone and spirit of the place.

Beyond the immediate allure of the region's historic and natural sites, Saint John fosters a vibrant cultural scene. Art galleries, live music venues, and theatres animate the evenings, offering windows into the creative soul of the community. Seasonal festivals and local traditions invite visitors and residents alike to celebrate the heritage that makes the Saint John Region unique, from seafaring past to contemporary culture. As dusk falls, the region transforms into a vibrant tableau of light and shadow, where the echoes of the day's adventures mingle with the promise of tomorrow's discoveries. Here, every season unfolds a new chapter of experiences, ensuring that the spirit of the Saint John Region is not just observed, but lived.



# 05 Strategic Priorities

# Strategic Priorities

With its rich history, vibrant culture, and stunning natural beauty, the Saint John Region offers something unique for every visitor.

As the future of this destination is envisioned, key strategic priorities have been identified to guide efforts in planning, managing, and marketing the Saint John Region. Based on the vision being pursued and the audiences targeted for engagement, these strategic priorities include:

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

### Advance the Saint John Region's infrastructure

To support sustainable growth and enhance visitor experiences, the Saint John Region will modernize and expand its infrastructure. This involves upgrading transportation systems, enhancing public amenities, and ensuring that all infrastructure developments are resilient.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

### Enhance tourist attractions

Efforts will be made to enrich and diversify the Saint John Region's tourism attractions, aiming to captivate and engage visitors from around the world. By investing in new attractions and revitalizing existing ones, unforgettable experiences that showcase the region's unique charm will be created.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3****Expand outdoor recreation**

To highlight the region's natural beauty, the Saint John Region will develop and promote outdoor recreational opportunities. This includes expanding trail networks, enhancing UNESCO offerings, and developing mountain biking trails to encourage active lifestyles and connect visitors with nature. Additionally, coastal recreation activities will be developed to leverage the region's stunning waterfront and provide diverse outdoor experiences.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5****Grow events and festivals**

An engaging calendar of events and festivals will be created to celebrate the Saint John Region's unique heritage and attract new audiences. By supporting local talent and partnering with diverse stakeholders, memorable experiences that resonate with visitors and residents alike will be created.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4****Cultivate urban culture**

Urban spaces will be further cultivated to foster cultural vibrancy and community engagement in the Saint John Region. Through art, music, culinary, and public events, the cityscape will transform into a dynamic and inclusive hub of activity.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6****Diversify accommodation**

To increase overnight stays, the Saint John Region will diversify accommodation options, meeting the varied preferences of travellers. This includes monitoring the vacation rental market and enhancing camping facilities to broaden the region's appeal to key target audiences.





**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7**

**Elevate the visitor experience**

Elevating the visitor experience is crucial for establishing the Saint John Region as a more attractive and memorable destination. This involves creating an ambassador program with trained local volunteers, transforming the Welcome Centre into a vibrant hub, and leveraging a digital lens for promotion and visitor services in order to streamline access to local attractions and encourage deeper exploration of the area.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 8**

**Commit to stewardship**

The commitment to environmental stewardship, reconciliation, and sustainable practices will be upheld throughout the tourism sector. By adopting eco-friendly initiatives, respecting cultural heritage, and championing responsible growth that will benefit both the community and the environment.



# 05 Strategies

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

# Advance the Saint John Region's Infrastructure

The Saint John Region's infrastructure, highlighted by state-of-the-art cruise terminals and the unique AREA 506 Waterfront Container Village, positions the region as a standout in Canada's cruise industry.

These facilities adeptly support a growing number of cruise visitors, thereby bolstering the local economy. To further elevate the Saint John Region as a premier travel destination, enhancing flight connectivity is crucial, meeting the critical demand for better accessibility and attracting

more leisure and business travellers. Additionally, improvements in transit and cycling infrastructure, coupled with better signage, will ensure that visitors can effortlessly explore and enjoy the region's attractions.





The Saint John Region – Tourism Master Plan

### STRATEGY 1.1

#### Position the region as a premier cruise destination for visitors

With a strong post-pandemic recovery in 2023, the port welcomed a significant increase in visitors, evidencing its capacity to attract and handle large volumes of cruise traffic effectively. This influx of cruise passengers is vital for the local economy, driving revenue and supporting a myriad of businesses and jobs in the area. As cruise ship arrivals are expected to continue rising, the port's strategic importance and potential for further development are clear, underscoring its pivotal role in sustaining and expanding the Saint John Region's tourism economy.

#### ACTIONS

- Strengthen partnerships with cruise lines to grow cruise visitation during the summer season.

### STRATEGY 1.2

#### Increase air connectivity to the Saint John Airport

Currently, the Saint John Airport offers limited direct flights—two daily from Toronto and one from Montreal—placing it at a competitive disadvantage in attracting business investments and new industries. This connectivity shortfall has led to a significant 37.7% decline in passenger volumes since 2019, underscoring the urgent need for expanded air services. Stakeholders highlighted the necessity of improving connections to key markets in Canada and the North-Eastern United States to bolster economic recovery and growth. Moreover, as technological advancements have raised expectations for speed and convenience, enhancing flight connectivity is increasingly critical for the Saint John Region to remain an attractive destination for both leisure and business travellers.

#### ACTIONS

- Advocate for the introduction of new direct flights connecting strategic domestic and international markets.
- Develop marketing collaborations with airport and airlines to promote the Saint John Region as a destination.
- Explore public-private partnerships to fund airport infrastructure improvements and increase direct investment.

**STRATEGY 1.3****Expand transportation and mobility options for visitors**

Transportation options in the Saint John Region present significant challenges for visitors, particularly those arriving by cruise and air. The availability of taxis is limited, and their high costs, along with sparse rideshare services, complicate travel plans. During peak tourist months, the situation is exacerbated by a shortage of car rentals, making it difficult for tourists to explore the region's attractions seamlessly. This lack of efficient and affordable mobility solutions is particularly problematic given the largely rural nature of the Saint John Region, where many key destinations are widely dispersed. Enhancing transportation infrastructure and services is therefore critical to ensuring that tourists can fully experience what the area has to offer, contributing to the overall success of the tourism sector.

**ACTIONS**

- Explore the viability of an on-demand electric shuttle service through a feasibility study.
- Establish a dedicated airport shuttle service that offers direct routes between the airport and key locations in the Saint John Region, including hotels and the convention centre.



## CASE STUDY

### The Bellhop in Bellevue

The Bellhop offers a novel transportation solution in downtown Bellevue, enhancing mobility and reducing traffic congestion. This ride service utilizes electric vehicles to provide a free, convenient and eco-friendly shuttle service within the downtown area. Funded through a public-private partnership with Visit Bellevue and Circuit, the Bellhop aims to improve accessibility to local businesses and attractions while promoting sustainability. By integrating with existing transit options, it creates a seamless travel experience for residents and visitors alike. The program has experienced early success with a 40,000-person ridership in its first six months of operations. This initiative exemplifies innovative urban transport solutions that prioritize both environmental impact and community convenience.



## STRATEGY 1.4

### Optimize visitor navigation through enhanced wayfinding and signage systems

In the Saint John Region, the challenge of mobility is compounded by inadequate signage and wayfinding for walking, cycling, and driving. Visitors often find it difficult to navigate between major attractions such as the Reversing Falls Rapids, the Saint John City Market, and Fundy Trail Provincial Park. This lack of clear directional guidance can confuse travellers and detract from the overall visitor experience. To facilitate easier access and enhance the enjoyment of the region's cultural and natural landmarks, there is a critical need for improved and strategically placed signage. Addressing these wayfinding deficiencies will not only support tourism but also promote a more seamless integration between the rural regions.

## ACTIONS

- Investigate an integrated digital and physical wayfinding system throughout the region to improve navigability.
- Collaborate with local chambers of commerce, municipalities, and attractions to create unified thematic signage that enhances the regional brand.
- Collaborate with the Provincial Government to enhance highway signage for improved wayfinding.

**STRATEGY 1.5**

**Advance regional connectivity through strategic cycling infrastructure development**

The cycling infrastructure in the Saint John Region holds significant potential to enhance connectivity and align seamlessly with the area’s robust outdoor recreation offerings. As cycling continues to gain popularity both as a leisure activity and a sustainable mode of transport, the development of comprehensive bike paths, including the Harbour Passage bike trail, is crucial.

These enhancements not only provide residents and visitors with a healthier, eco-friendly way to explore the scenic landscapes and cultural sites but also strengthen the region’s appeal as a top destination for outdoor enthusiasts. By investing in well-maintained and clearly marked cycling routes, the Saint John Region can better connect key attractions such as Rockwood Park, Irving Nature Park, and the Bay of Fundy, facilitating easier access and a more immersive experience.

**ACTIONS**

- Advocate for a connected network of safe and scenic bike paths and circuits linking key tourist attractions in the Saint John Region.
- Promote cycling, scooter, and e-bike tours as a sustainable way to explore the Saint John Region, incorporating local history and culture.



**CASE STUDY**

**The Greenway Project in Minneapolis**

In 2000, Minneapolis launched the Greenway Project to transition old railway lines to paved cycling trails that enhance connectivity throughout the city and its suburbs. The initiative created a comprehensive network of bike paths, connecting key neighborhoods, parks, and business districts. By integrating these trails with public transit systems, the project promoted sustainable transportation, reduced traffic congestion, and improved air quality. Each day, over 5,000 people use the Greenway to help navigate the city. The Greenway has also boosted tourism, attracting cyclists from around the country and contributing to the local economy through increased spending on accommodation, dining, and retail.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

# Enhance Tourist Attractions

Enhancing tourism attractions in the Saint John Region is essential for sustainable growth and elevating the region’s travel appeal.

Improvements at key sites like the Reversing Falls Rapids and the New Brunswick Museum—ranging from infrastructure upgrades to new visitor amenities—will enhance experiences and increase visitor sentiment. These enhancements make attractions more accessible and help in attracting a broader audience, boosting

local tourism and economic activity. Investing in the modernization of heritage sites and development of new attractions enriches the cultural tapestry and historical narrative, making the Saint John Region a compelling destination for cultural and historical tourism.



### STRATEGY 2.1

#### Forge a unified future for the Reversing Falls Rapids

Located within the UNESCO-designated Stonehammer Global Geopark, the Reversing Falls Rapids in the Saint John Region holds significant untapped potential. Currently, the strategic vision for the site is still undefined, emphasizing the need for collaborative stakeholder engagement to chart its future course. Enhancing the site’s wayfinding is also essential for boosting visitor satisfaction and engagement.

#### ACTIONS

- Develop a strategic vision for the Reversing Falls Rapids through comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- Implement comprehensive signage and digital guides that explain the geological and historical significance of the rapids.

### STRATEGY 2.2

#### Promote the New Brunswick Museum as a culture beacon for education tourism

As the oldest operating museum in Canada, the New Brunswick Museum holds a pivotal role in the educational and cultural landscape of the Saint John Region. The ongoing upgrades funded by the provincial and federal governments, as well as private funds, are set to expand exhibition spaces, improve accessibility, and incorporate state-of-the-art technologies that will enrich the visitor experience. This project is not only a testament to the value placed on cultural preservation but also positions the museum as a key opportunity for attracting tourism and fostering economic growth in the Saint John Region once it reopens. The revitalized museum is expected to draw visitors, eager to explore its extensive collections and interactive displays.

#### ACTIONS

- Launch targeted marketing campaigns that highlight the museum’s upgraded facilities and new exhibitions to attract new visitors.
- Collaborate with academic institutions and cultural organizations to host workshops, lectures, and temporary exhibits off-site that will draw tourists from the New Brunswick Museum around the region.
- Advocate for increased funding to support the enhancement and preservation of the New Brunswick Museum and related programming.





## CASE STUDY

### National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh

The National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh significantly impacts the Scottish economy, contributing over £103 million annually and supporting more than 4,500 jobs. Attracting nearly two million visitors each year, the museum enhances local tourism and stimulates substantial spending in the area. Its reach extends through innovative programs such as the “Museum on the Move” initiative, which brings traveling exhibits to various neighborhoods, and the “Learning and Outreach” program that offers educational workshops in local schools. Additionally, the museum collaborates with cultural organizations to host the “Festival of Museums,” a city-wide celebration of Scotland’s heritage. It also organizes cultural and historical tours of Edinburgh, providing guided experiences of significant sites. These initiatives engage diverse audiences, drive tourism, and promote economic growth, illustrating the museum’s essential role in the cultural and economic vitality of Edinburgh.



## STRATEGY 2.3

### Highlight the Saint John Region’s heritage sites as pivotal cultural landmarks in Canadian history

Heritage plays a pivotal role in defining the cultural and touristic appeal of the Saint John Region. The region boasts a rich array of landmarks and museums, ranking second-highest in landmarks per capita and fourth in museums per capita among its benchmarked peers. Iconic architecture such as the Loyalist Burial Ground, Carleton Martello Tower, and the historic Saint John City Market line its streets, each structure narrating a chapter of the city’s storied past. From Victorian-era buildings to robust maritime structures, these sites attract visitors from around the globe and also serve as foundational pillars of the community’s identity.

## ACTIONS

- Create a unified heritage trail linking key sites throughout the region like the Loyalist House, Carleton Martello Tower, and the City Market utilizing digital channels.
- Advocate for the preservation and restoration of historic sites to maintain their integrity and appeal for future generations.

**CASE STUDY**

**Montréal en Histoires- Cite Mémoire**

Montréal en Histoires - Cité Mémoire is an innovative project that brings the city’s rich heritage to life through immersive heritage trails. Utilizing cutting-edge technology, it features augmented reality and multimedia projections to narrate Montreal’s history in a captivating manner. As the world’s largest projection circuit, it covers 27 scenes projected on walls, alleys, the ground, and trees across Old Montreal. This expansive installation includes 100 points of interest and 32 augmented reality experiences, engaging visitors with the city’s history. Annually, the installation attracts over 600,000 people, who engage with its multimedia content and use the accompanying mobile application.



**STRATEGY 2.4**

**Assess Partridge Island’s potential as a historical and cultural destination**

Partridge Island, with its rich historical significance and unique location at the mouth of Saint John Harbour, presents an exceptional opportunity for development into a premier cultural and historical destination akin to Pier 21 in Halifax. As a former quarantine station, immigration entry point, and military installation, the island offers a layered narrative that is ripe for exploration and interpretation.

**ACTIONS**

- Advocate for the development of Partridge Island as a destination with Parks Canada.



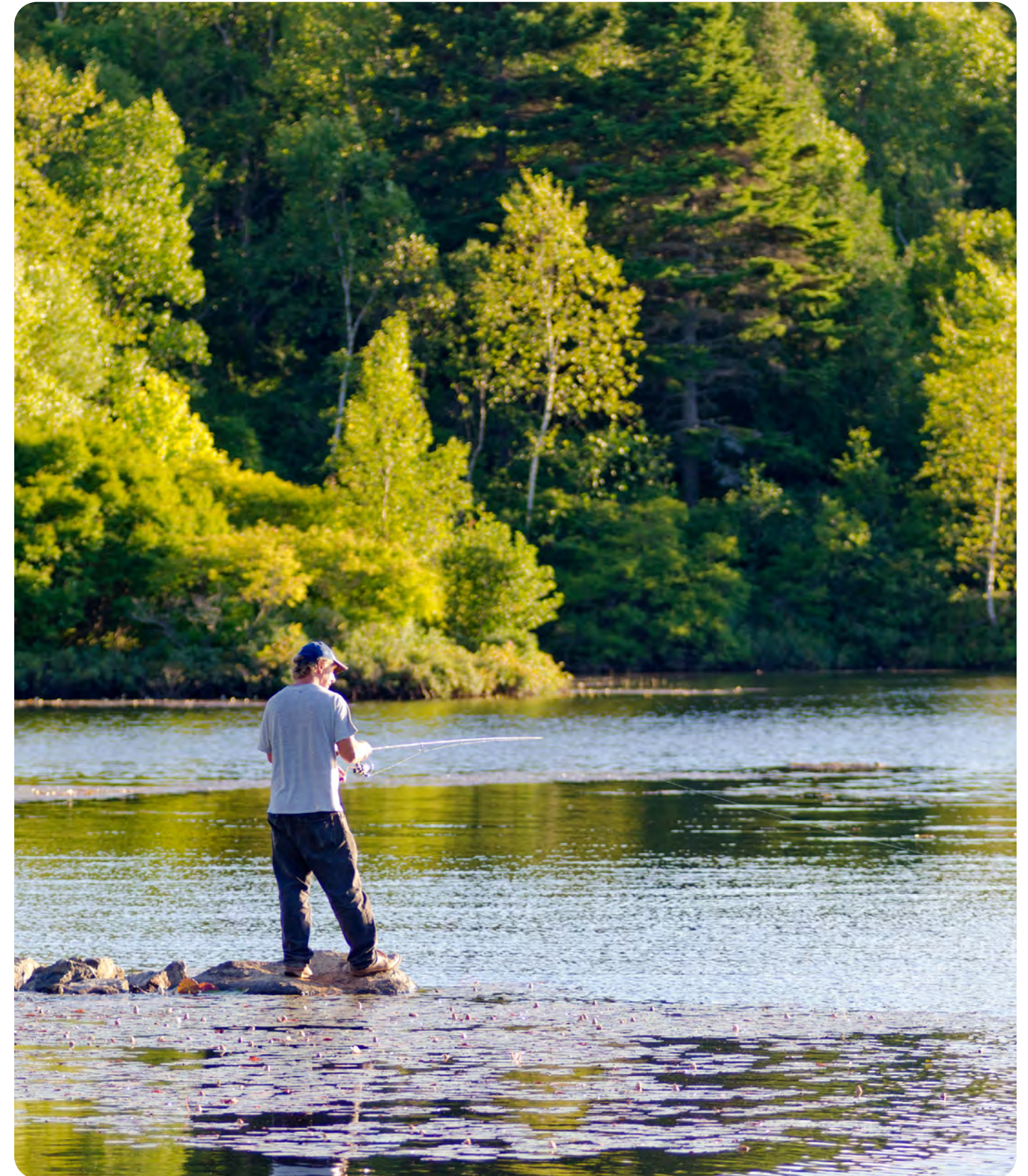
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

# Expand Outdoor Recreation

Expanding outdoor recreation in the Saint John Region is key to enhancing its appeal as a top destination by utilizing its natural assets, including the Saint John and Kennebecasis Rivers and the Reversing Falls Rapids.

Introducing activities like kayaking, fishing, jet boat rides, and mountain biking not only showcases the area's stunning landscapes but also distinguishes it as a unique maritime location. Further leveraging

its UNESCO-designated sites can attract eco-conscious visitors, reinforcing the Saint John Region's status as a leading choice for sustainable coastal, riverine, and trail-based adventures.





The Saint John Region – Tourism Master Plan

### STRATEGY 3.1

#### Leverage the Saint John Region’s coast and river systems for premier outdoor adventures

To bolster its outdoor recreation offerings, the Saint John Region should leverage its extensive river system, including the Saint John River and the Kennebecasis River, along with the unique natural phenomenon of the Reversing Falls Rapids. Enhancing attractions such as kayaking, fishing, and scenic river tours can significantly elevate the region’s appeal, showcasing its natural beauty and biodiversity. By integrating these river-based activities into its tourism strategy, the Saint John Region could attract a wide range of outdoor enthusiasts, from thrill-seekers to nature lovers, thereby reinforcing its position as a leading destination for coastal and riverine adventures.

#### ACTIONS

- Develop guided eco-tours that educate visitors about the biodiversity of the Saint John River and Kennebecasis River.
- Expand on existing activities like kayaking by introducing new water sports.
- Improve infrastructure at key points along the rivers, such as better docks, enhanced viewing platforms, comfortable resting areas, and improved food and beverage options.

### STRATEGY 3.2

#### Enhance the region’s appeal by capitalizing on UNESCO-designated sites

As Destination Canada drives the development of a UNESCO corridor in Atlantic Canada, the Saint John Region is urged to capitalize on its UNESCO-designated sites, including the Stonehammer UNESCO Global Geopark and the UNESCO Fundy Biosphere Reserve. Statistics from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) highlight the growing significance of UNESCO sites in tourism, with a reported 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals at cultural and natural heritage sites in 2018 alone. Additionally, research conducted by Tourism Economics underscores the economic impact of UNESCO sites, indicating that visitors to such attractions spend an average of 45% more than other tourists. Leveraging these insights, stakeholders emphasize the necessity of fostering the creation of innovative tourism products in the Saint John Region.

#### ACTIONS

- Partner with local businesses and artisans to develop unique tourism products and experiences that are inspired by the region’s UNESCO designations.

## CASE STUDY

### Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland

Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland has effectively leveraged its UNESCO World Heritage status to boost tourism and economic growth in the small town of Bushmills, attracting nearly one million visitors annually. The town offers a variety of guided tours, including walking tours of the Causeway's geological and mythological sites, and bus tours of nearby attractions like Dunluce Castle. Local businesses provide cultural experiences such as traditional music sessions, storytelling events, and craft workshops. Seasonal festivals showcase local cuisine and art, enriching the visitor experience. Managed by the National Trust, sustainable tourism practices ensure the preservation of the site while accommodating growing visitor numbers, making Bushmills a vibrant tourism hub. A University of Ulster economic and social impact report commissioned by the National Trust into the Giant's Causeway, has revealed that the UNESCO World Heritage site helped generate £484.26 million last year for Northern Ireland and the Causeway Coast and Glens region.



**STRATEGY 3.3****Elevate the Saint John Region as a premier mountain biking destination in Atlantic Canada**

To bolster its outdoor recreation offerings, the Saint John Region should prioritize the development of mountain biking infrastructure, leveraging its diverse terrain and natural landscapes. While the region currently offers some mountain biking opportunities, there is considerable potential for expansion, enhancement, and connection to pre-existing sites, such as Rockwood Park. With its rolling hills, forested trails, and scenic vistas, the Saint John Region provides an ideal setting for both novice riders and seasoned enthusiasts. Investing in the construction of purpose-built mountain biking trails and trail networks can significantly elevate the region's appeal to outdoor enthusiasts. By collaborating with local biking clubs and organizations and promoting the sport as a premier outdoor activity, the Saint John Region can solidify its position as a leading destination for mountain biking adventures amidst its stunning natural backdrop.

**ACTIONS**

- Work closely with mountain biking clubs to ensure trails meet community needs and standards, and leverage their expertise in promoting mountain biking within and beyond the Saint John Region.

**CASE STUDY****Rotorua mountain biking trails, New Zealand**

Rotorua, New Zealand, has effectively leveraged its unique geothermal terrain to become a premier mountain biking destination by developing an extensive network of trails within the Whakarewarewa Forest. This trail system, spanning over 180 kilometres, offers a rich diversity of routes tailored to all levels of proficiency—from scenic, family-friendly circuits to challenging technical descents—each designed with sustainability in mind to protect the local ecosystem. Winding through stunning landscapes adorned with native bush and distinctive geothermal features, the trails not only provide recreational and practical commuting routes but also integrate Maori cultural elements, showcasing carvings and artworks that enrich the riding experience. Since its expansion in 2017, the thoughtful combination of natural beauty, cultural depth, and varied technicality has elevated Rotorua's global reputation as a top cycling hub attracting 500,000 riders a year.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

# Cultivate Urban Culture

Cultivating urban culture is crucial for enhancing tourism in the Saint John Region, transforming the area into a vibrant and engaging destination that attracts visitors and enriches their experience.

By integrating culinary tourism with innovative placemaking initiatives, the Saint John Region can offer unique, dynamic experiences that highlight its rich cultural and historical heritage.

Additionally, establishing a craft beer hall would fill a critical gap in the local entertainment infrastructure, boosting the culinary scene and attracting a broader audience.



**STRATEGY 4.1**

**Position the Saint John Region as a leader in culinary tourism**

The Saint John Region’s culinary landscape is as diverse as it is extensive, with over 200 restaurants offering a wide range of cuisines to cater to every palate. From classic seafood joints like Steamers Lobster Company to globally inspired eateries like Thandi Restaurant, the region offers a culinary adventure for every taste. Notably, the Saint John Region is home to the headquarters of Moosehead Breweries Limited, a historic Canadian brewery known for its premium beers, adding to the region’s reputation as a hub for food and beverage enthusiasts. The Saint John Region embraces its local culinary heritage with pride, showcasing sustainably-sourced seafood from Acadian Sturgeon & Caviar among its many local delicacies.

**ACTIONS**

- Partner with local farms and seafood producers to offer authentic farm-to-table dining experiences.
- Create culinary trails that guide visitors through diverse dining experiences across the region.
- Create annual food festivals that showcase traditional and contemporary elements of maritime culture.



**CASE STUDY**

**Cornucopia Festival, Whistler**

The Cornucopia Festival in Whistler has become a hallmark event for the region, successfully extending the tourist season into November, a typically slow period. Drawing over 10,000 attendees annually, Cornucopia offers a rich array of culinary experiences, including wine tastings, chef demonstrations, gourmet dinners, and educational seminars. These events attract food and wine enthusiasts, significantly boosting local businesses during the shoulder season. The festival generates an estimated \$4 million in economic impact for British Columbia, with \$2.3 million directly benefiting Whistler. This strategic approach to enhancing off-peak tourism through a vibrant food and drink festival provides a model for other destinations looking to capitalize on their culinary assets.







### STRATEGY 4.2

#### Activate placemaking initiatives to amplify uptown Saint John's urban and cultural spaces

Tourism stakeholders are keenly aware of the potential that placemaking holds in harnessing uptown Saint John's gritty and authentic character to create vibrant and engaging spaces. This approach involves transforming the city's unique urban elements, such as its industrial heritage, into dynamic areas that attract both locals and tourists. Key initiatives like the development of the AREA 506 Waterfront Container Village exemplify how blending historical preservation with modern urban renewal can offer distinctive experiences. By amplifying contemporary cultural expressions with the rich tapestry of the city's past, Saint John can craft an authentic and immersive urban environment that resonates with the essence of the community.

#### ACTIONS

- Integrate art installations and cultural exhibits into public spaces to celebrate local artists and add vibrancy to urban areas.
- Establish a dynamic public art program in Saint John to create diverse art. The art pieces will highlight the region's historical, cultural, and maritime identity, enriching public spaces and fostering community engagement.

#### CASE STUDY

##### Mural Arts Program, Philadelphia

Since its inception in 1984 as an anti-graffiti initiative by then-Mayor Wilson Goode, Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program has transformed the city into a vibrant open-air gallery, creating over 4,000 murals in collaboration with local residents. Funded and organized by the City of Philadelphia, along with support from donors, foundations, and corporations, the program has evolved from the Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network to a comprehensive public art project that beautifies neighborhoods and fosters community engagement. Offering mural tours, workshops, and educational projects, it immerses participants in the city's rich history and cultural diversity, with each mural narrating a unique story that deepens the connection to Philadelphia's heritage.



### STRATEGY 4.3

#### Energize the region's culinary scene by establishing a craft beer hall

Expanding on the success of Uncorked—the world's only New Brunswick-exclusive tasting bar—the Saint John Region can further enhance its reputation as a culinary destination with the introduction of a craft beer hall. This new venue would serve as an all-weather, year-round attraction, offering a diverse array of locally brewed beers and creating a vibrant gathering space for culinary enthusiasts. The venue would provide a space that could be enjoyed by visitors and residents, with unique drink offerings, curated events, and food pairings.

#### ACTIONS

- Establish a craft beer hall that leverages local brewing expertise to create a year-round, all-weather culinary attraction.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

# Events and Festivals

Festivals, events, and sport tourism play a pivotal role in enhancing the cultural vibrancy and economic vitality of the Saint John Region.

By increasing the variety and frequency of events, particularly with a focus on vibrant winter festivals and hosting year-round sporting events, the region can attract more visitors during off-peak seasons, boosting the local economy. As the City of Saint John's waterfront undergoes significant renovations to include new

gathering spaces and stages, there is a golden opportunity to elevate the area as a hub for diverse cultural and recreational activities. Additionally, providing festival and event organizer training at no cost empowers local residents, fostering community involvement and ensuring the sustainability of these celebrations.





**STRATEGY 5.1**

**Increase seasonal tourism with vibrant winter events and festivals**

To invigorate the Saint John Region during the winter months and attract more visitors, the development of seasonal events and festivals is essential. Expanding on traditional celebrations, the region can introduce a range of winter events such as holiday markets, ice sculpture contests, and cultural festivals that showcase local artisans and performers. These events will enhance the region’s festive atmosphere and provide substantial economic benefits by increasing visitor spending and engagement. Collaborative planning with local businesses and community groups will ensure these winter festivities are both vibrant and uniquely reflective of the Saint John Region’s community spirit.

**ACTIONS**

- Plan and launch an annual winter festival that becomes a hallmark event for the Saint John Region.
- Collaborate with local artists and cultural organizations to host winter-themed exhibitions, performances, and interactive arts activities that celebrate the season and local heritage.

**STRATEGY 5.2**

**Enhance event coordination to amplify key waterfront events and assets**

As Saint John’s waterfront experiences significant revitalization, with the creation of new gathering spaces and stages, it is crucial to enhance coordination among event organizers in alignment with the collective assets at the waterfront. By fostering collaboration between event organizers, local businesses, and waterfront management, Saint John can effectively utilize its waterfront to host a vibrant array of cultural, recreational, and entertainment activities. This coordinated approach will not only invigorate the waterfront area but also amplify the Saint John Region’s appeal as a dynamic destination for diverse events and festivals.

**ACTIONS**

- Initiate regular meetings with event organizers, local businesses, and community leaders to discuss upcoming events, share best practices, and collaborate on promotional strategies.

## CASE STUDY

### Waterfront District, Portland, Maine

Portland, Maine's waterfront district has been successfully transformed into a dynamic and vibrant area that serves as a focal point for events and community gatherings. Beginning in the early 2000s with the acceptance of the Eastern Waterfront Master Plan in 2002, the redevelopment included renovating historic buildings and constructing new public spaces, creating a unique blend of old and new. Notable developments include the Ocean Gateway terminal, which facilitates cruise ship tourism, and the expansion of public parks and walking paths that offer scenic views of the harbour. The district now hosts a variety of events, such as seasonal festivals, farmers markets, and concerts, attracting both locals and tourists. In 2023, Greater Portland and Casco Bay saw over 12.1 million visitors, contributing significantly to the local economy with \$2.7 billion in visitor spending.



**STRATEGY 5.3**

**Foster community-driven event planning through training and support**

To revitalize event offerings and boost community involvement across the Saint John Region, it’s proposed that Envision Saint John provide festival organizer training at no cost to local residents. This initiative will equip aspiring event planners with essential skills and knowledge, enabling them to create and manage successful events. With access to training resources and advice, this program aims to inspire a new generation of event organizers, fostering diverse and enduring events that celebrate the region’s cultural heritage.

**ACTIONS**

- Offer a comprehensive training curriculum for festival organizer training to local residents free of charge.
- Create a festival organizer mentorship program that pairs aspiring organizers with seasoned professionals.



**CASE STUDY**

**ATX Festival Organizer Training Program, Austin**

The ATX Festival Organizers Training Program in Austin, Texas, serves as a pivotal initiative designed to cultivate a new generation of event professionals by providing comprehensive training and hands-on experience in festival organization. Launched in response to the growing demand for skilled event managers in the region’s vibrant festival scene, the program offers participants a detailed curriculum that covers essential aspects of festival planning, including logistics, marketing, vendor management, and audience engagement. Trainees benefit from mentorship by industry experts and gain practical skills by working directly on the renowned ATX Television Festival, an annual event that draws thousands of attendees and media professionals. This immersive training equips participants with the expertise to organize successful festivals and fosters a network of professionals dedicated to enhancing Austin’s reputation as a leading hub for cultural and entertainment events.

### STRATEGY 5.4

#### Grow the number of sports events in the Saint John Region

Sporting events play a crucial role in driving sales and attracting provincial and national tourists to the Saint John Region. The strategic collaboration with Moncton for events like the Canada Games showcases the area's ability to host significant national sports events, drawing both spectators and participants from across the province and beyond. With the province of New Brunswick set to release a provincial sport tourism strategy, the Saint John Region is well-positioned to capitalize on this momentum, increasing its appeal as a prime destination for sports tourism.

#### ACTIONS

- Strengthen collaboration with nearby cities to co-host large events.
- Actively participate in provincial initiatives to secure financial and promotional support for hosting sports events in the region.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

# Diversify Accommodation

Diversifying accommodation options is a strategic way to increase overnight stays in the Saint John Region, meeting the varied preferences and needs of travellers.

By expanding the range of accommodations, the region boosts its capacity to welcome different kinds of visitors during both peak and off-peak seasons. This strategy involves carefully monitoring the growing vacation rental market to ensure it enriches the local economy without reducing housing availability.

Additionally, it includes developing enhanced camping facilities that capitalize on the area's natural beauty. Each initiative aims to broaden the appeal of the Saint John Region, making it a versatile destination suitable for Active Adventurers, Sophisticated Explorers, and Families alike.





**STRATEGY 6.1**

**Strategically monitor the Saint John Region’s vacation rental market**

In the Saint John Region, the burgeoning market of vacation rentals presents both opportunities and challenges for local tourism and housing. As these rentals become increasingly popular, there is a pressing need to implement regulations and taxation policies to ensure they contribute fairly to the local economy without destabilizing the residential housing market. Striking this balance will be crucial in harnessing the economic benefits of vacation rentals while preserving affordable housing options for long-term residents.

**ACTIONS**

- Conduct a comprehensive vacation rental impact study to analyze the current landscape and impact of vacation rentals in the Saint John Region.
- Advocate for a taxation system for vacation rentals to ensure they contribute their fair share to the local economy.

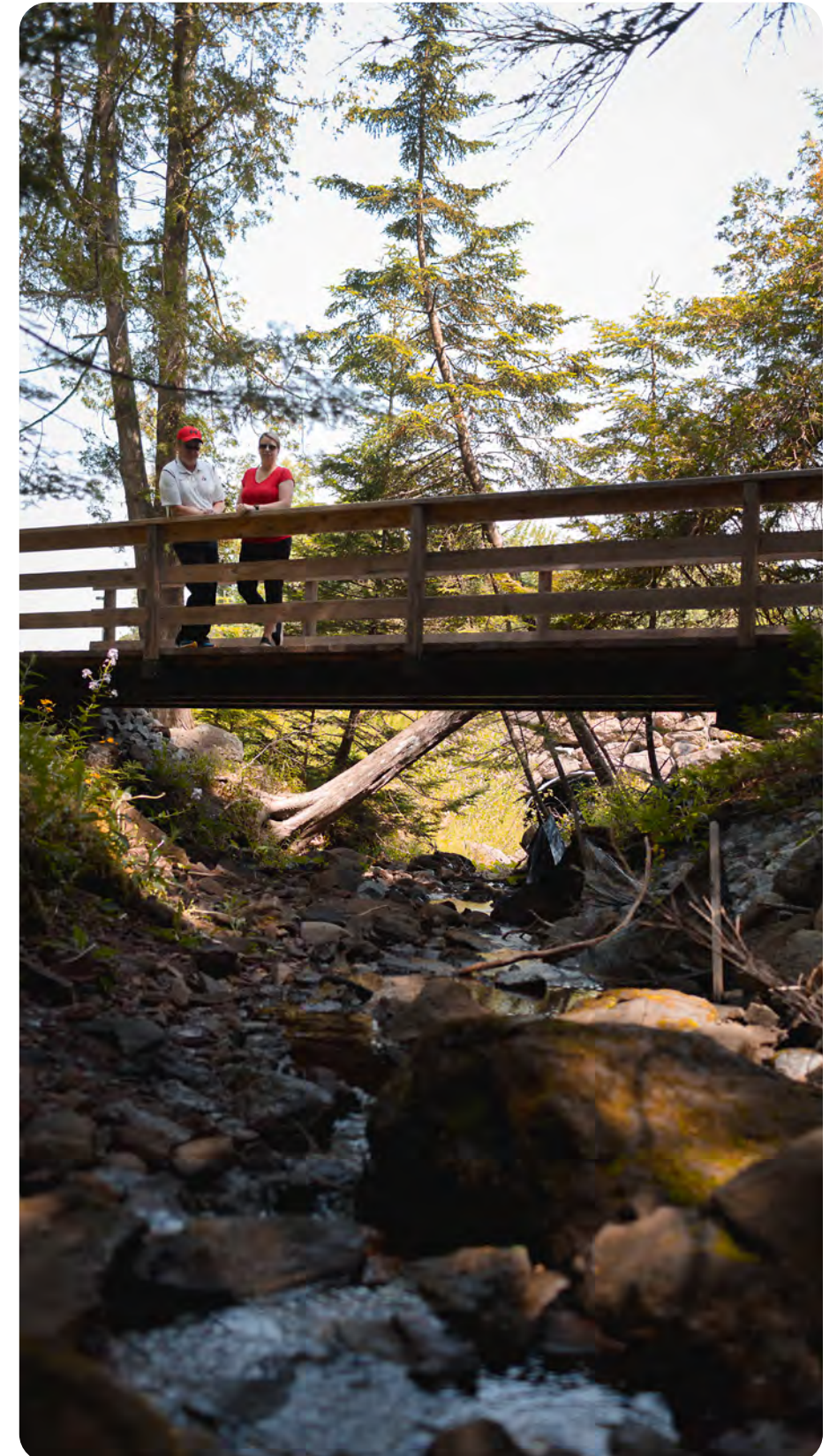
**STRATEGY 6.2**

**Broaden overnight camping opportunities for visitors**

In the Saint John Region, enhancing the overnight camping experience is identified as a key strategy to attract more nature enthusiasts and extend visitor stays. By developing and promoting well-maintained campgrounds equipped with modern amenities and sustainable practices, the region can capitalize on its natural landscapes to offer unique outdoor experiences.

**ACTIONS**

- Advocate for the modernization and maintenance of current camping facilities to improve comfort and accessibility.
- Identify potential new camping areas that take advantage of the region’s unique natural landscapes.



## CASE STUDY

### Under Canvas, Bryce Canyon

Under Canvas, founded in 2009, has redefined camping through a successful public-private partnership that enhances tourism and infrastructure at iconic U.S. destinations, including Bryce Canyon, Yellowstone, and Glacier National Parks. This company collaborates with public land agencies to set up glamping accommodations featuring safari-style tents with plush beds, private bathrooms, and eco-friendly amenities, offering a unique blend of comfort and nature. At their Bryce Canyon site, this partnership has significantly increased overnight visitor numbers of diverse travellers interested in outdoor recreation. The influx of visitors has driven the development of new infrastructure in surrounding campgrounds, including improved road access and expanded facilities, which benefit both the local economy and the national parks. Through this collaboration, Under Canvas showcases how public and private sectors can work together to enhance visitor experiences and support regional growth.



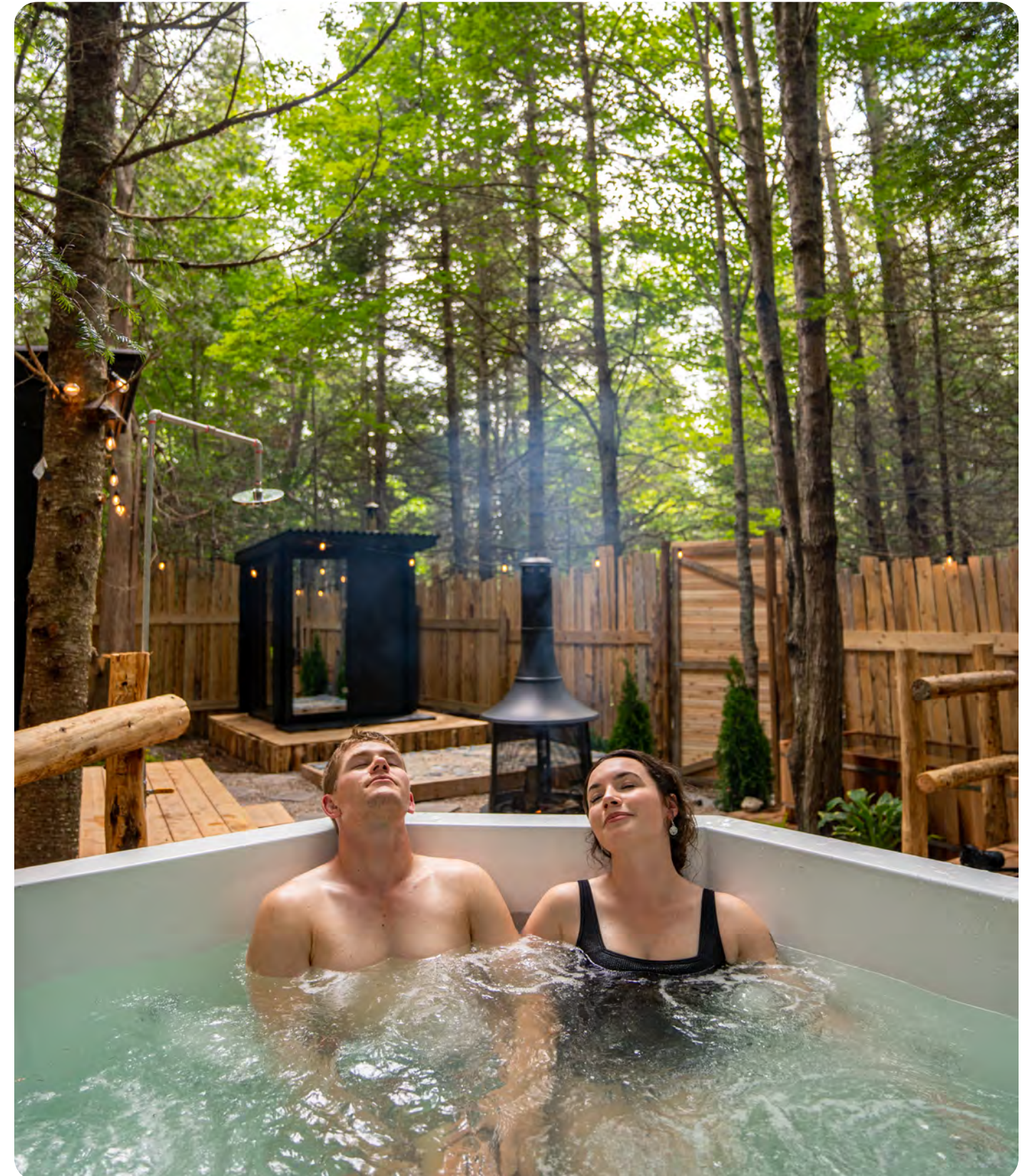
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7

# Elevate the Visitor Experience

Elevating the visitor experience is crucial for establishing the Saint John Region as a more attractive and memorable destination

Key strategies include creating an ambassador program with trained local volunteers and transforming the Welcome Centre into a vibrant hub to support local activities. Applying a digital lens to promotion and visitor servicing will further

enhance these efforts by streamlining access to information and attractions through digital platforms and tools. These initiatives boost community engagement and pride while making it easier for visitors to discover and enjoy local attractions.

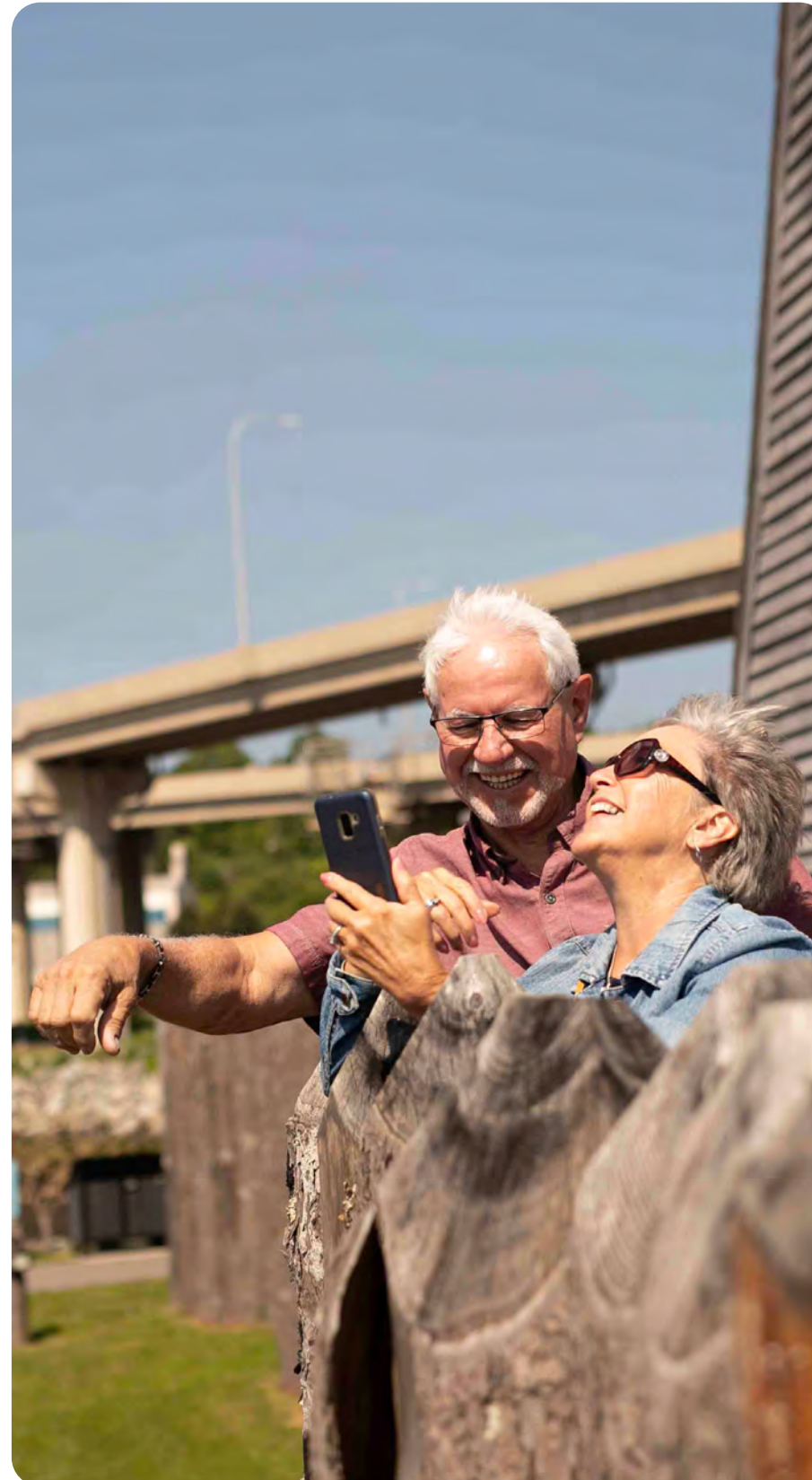


**STRATEGY 7.1****Launch a resident ambassador program**

Creating an ambassador program for resident volunteers in the Saint John Region could significantly enhance community pride and deepen local tourism knowledge. This initiative can educate volunteers in the nuances of local history, attractions, and events and equip them with the skills to effectively share this knowledge with visitors. As ambassadors, residents can offer personalized, insightful interactions that enrich the tourist experience, making visits more memorable and fostering a positive image of the region.

**ACTIONS**

- Identify opportunities to educate local residents in storytelling, enabling them to share authentic stories about Saint John Region's history and culture with visitors.
- Utilize ambassadors at key tourist spots, events, and in promotional materials to enhance the region's brand as a welcoming and informative destination.
- Implement a recognition system to showcase outstanding ambassadors including public acknowledgment.

**CASE STUDY****The White Hat Ambassador Program, Calgary**

The White Hat Ambassador Program in Calgary, Alberta, is a volunteer initiative run by the Calgary Airport Authority, designed to provide exceptional customer service and hospitality to travellers passing through Calgary International Airport (YYC), as well as major tourist attractions and events. Since its inception in 1991, the program has grown significantly, with over 400 volunteers contributing up to 1,000,000 total volunteer hours in the history of the program. Volunteers, easily recognizable by their white cowboy hats, offer assistance with navigation, information, and a warm welcome to visitors, embodying Calgary's renowned Western hospitality. The program enhances the travel experience for visitors while also promoting Calgary as a friendly, welcoming destination. The White Hat Academy comprises four core courses; Calgary's Brand, Calgary Knowledge, Ultimate Host Service, and Tools and Resources.



### STRATEGY 7.2

#### Enhance visitor services and support through the Welcome Centre

The Welcome Centre in the City of Saint John is being enhanced to better support the city’s tourism infrastructure as a vibrant activities centre. While primarily serving as an informational hub, the centre could also assist in ticket sales for surrounding attractions and experiences. By offering ticketing services, the activities centre will enhance the visitor experience, making it more convenient for tourists to access information and purchase tickets for various local attractions, tours, and events in one location. Additionally, the centre could provide updates on real-time availability and exclusive packages that combine multiple attractions at a discounted rate, further enticing visitors to explore more of what the Saint John Region has to offer.

#### ACTIONS

- Develop a central hub for information and ticket sales covering all major tourist attractions in the Saint John Region, offering package deals and special promotions.
- Implement a state-of-the-art ticketing system that allows for online bookings, real-time updates, and mobile ticketing options.

#### CASE STUDY

#### Le Centre D’activités, Mont Tremblant, Québec

Mont Tremblant, Quebec, repurposed its former visitor centre into Le Centre de Activités in 1997, establishing it as a central hub for outdoor adventure and recreation that capitalizes on the region’s breathtaking natural beauty. Initially a simple informational point for tourists, the centre now orchestrates a vast array of purchasable activities, including skiing, snowshoeing, dog sledding, high-adrenaline zip-lining, and guided hiking tours that explore the scenic landscapes. This strategic transformation, undertaken to harness Mont Tremblant’s year-round appeal, simplifies the path to purchase experience by serving as a one-stop-shop for adventure planning and booking for nearly 3.5 million visitors a year. Le Centre d’Activités Mont-Tremblant offers more than 75 indoor and outdoor activities throughout the year, further cementing its role as a vital component of the region’s tourism infrastructure.

**STRATEGY 7.3****Apply a digital lens to promotion and visitor servicing**

By prioritizing multimedia storytelling, the Saint John Region can share its stories in a compelling and engaging manner. Utilizing digital technologies like virtual reality and augmented reality will further elevate promotional efforts and visitor services. Augmented reality can enhance on-site experiences by offering real-time information and interactive elements, making trips more convenient and enjoyable. Through these advanced technologies, personalized and memorable experiences can be created, promoting a more even distribution of tourist traffic and uncovering hidden gems within the Saint John Region.

**ACTIONS**

- Prioritize multimedia storytelling to share the stories of the region and to promote attractions and events.
- Consider digital technologies like virtual reality and augmented reality to help promote the region and service visitors.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 8

# Commit to Stewardship

Stewardship is essential for ensuring the long-term viability and appeal of the tourism industry in the Saint John Region.

By emphasizing environmental care, the area can safeguard its beautiful natural settings and resources, which are crucial for attracting visitors interested in nature and outdoor pursuits. Enhancing accessibility makes the region's varied attractions available to all visitors, fostering inclusivity and improving overall visitor experiences. Furthermore, a commitment to reconciliation

acknowledges and respects the vital contributions of Indigenous communities, adding rich cultural layers to the tourism experience. As champions of responsible growth, the region's efforts will balance tourism development with sustainability, ensuring that growth benefits both the community and the environment.



**STRATEGY 8.1**

**Promote recycling and waste reduction for tourism businesses**

By enhancing recycling programs, encouraging the use of eco-friendly materials, and promoting waste reduction initiatives among local businesses the Saint John Region can significantly lessen its environmental impact. Collaborating with businesses to adopt sustainable practices will foster a region-wide commitment to preserving natural resources and ensuring a healthier environment for future generations.

**ACTIONS**

- Promote and support the organization of zero-waste events in the community, providing resources and guidelines to event organizers.
- Promote recycling and food waste training programs to industry.



**CASE STUDY**

**Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association Biosphere Program, British Columbia**

The Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) in British Columbia has successfully implemented the Biosphere Certification program to promote sustainable business practices across the region. Launched in 2017, this program provides a comprehensive framework for local businesses to achieve sustainability certification, guided by the principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It includes offering free energy audits and sustainability planning services to help businesses identify areas for improvement and implement eco-friendly practices. Through the Biosphere program, over 50 businesses in the Thompson Okanagan region have adopted eco-friendly practices, such as reducing carbon footprints, conserving water, and supporting local communities. This program strengthens the region’s appeal as a leading destination for responsible tourism and positions TOTA as a model for sustainable tourism development.





**STRATEGY 8.2**

**Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the local visitor economy**

The region can achieve a balanced approach to economic and environmental priorities by fostering initiatives that promote energy efficiency and lower emissions. Expanding alternative transportation options and incentivizing green certifications for businesses will enable significant strides in reducing the region’s carbon footprint.

**ACTIONS**

- Promote alternate forms of transportation for visitors to the region.
- Provide marketing support to certified businesses, encouraging more establishments to participate.

**STRATEGY 8.3**

**Be champions of responsible growth**

To champion responsible growth in the Saint John Region, the focus will be on sustainability, education, and stakeholder collaboration. By sharing key messaging and providing educational resources, the plan aims to raise awareness about responsible tourism practices and the economic impact of sustainable growth. Facilitating open discussions among stakeholders will help address tourism capacity and ensure that growth aligns with community values. Additionally, targeted campaigns aimed at tourists will educate them about the local environment and offer practical tips on how they can contribute to its preservation during their visit.

**ACTIONS**

- Share key messaging and provide educational resources related to sustainability, responsible tourism practices and economic impact.
- Facilitate discussions on tourism growth and capacity among stakeholders.
- Conduct campaigns aimed at tourists to educate them about the local environment and how they can help preserve it during their visit.

**STRATEGY 8.4**

**Improve accessibility and inclusivity for all visitors**

Enhancing accessibility in the Saint John Region is crucial to accommodating the unique needs of its diverse visitors. By upgrading facilities and infrastructure to be more inclusive of various mobile needs, the region can significantly enhance its attractiveness as a tourist destination.

**ACTIONS**

- Partner with chambers of commerce and business improvement associations to raise awareness about the benefits of accessible tourism and encourage businesses to invest in accessibility improvements.

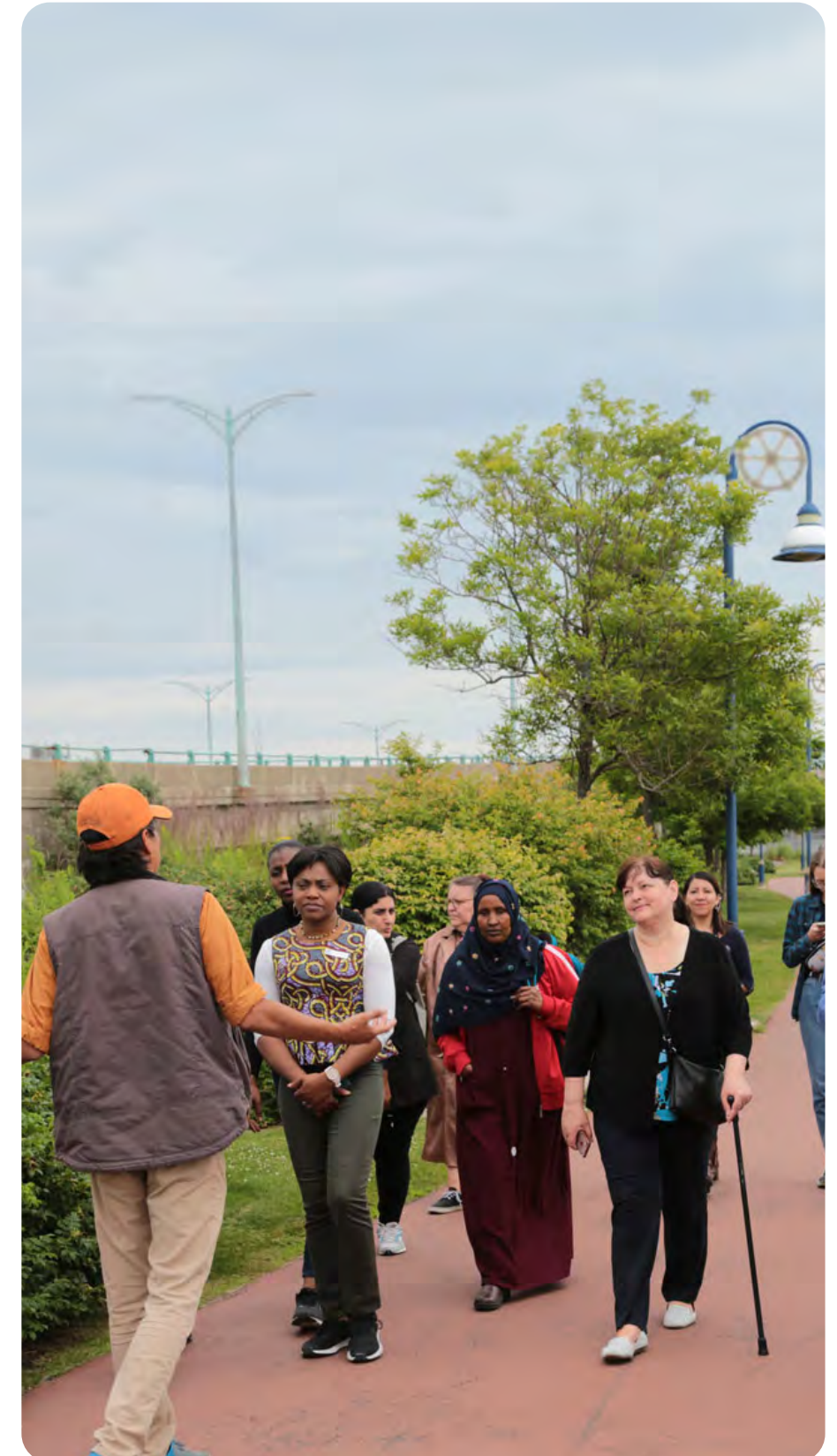
**STRATEGY 8.5**

**Support reconciliation and Indigenous cultures**

The Saint John Region’s commitment to reconciliation involves acknowledging historical injustices, celebrating Indigenous culture through events, exhibits, and partnerships, and ensuring that the benefits of tourism development are shared equitably. Prioritizing these efforts helps to foster a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of the region’s history and cultural landscape, enhancing the region’s appeal as a destination that respects and honours its diverse heritage.

**ACTIONS**

- Implement campaigns that educate tourists and the local community about the Indigenous history of the area, the significance of the land, and current Indigenous cultures and contributions.
- Include Indigenous cultural events in the region’s official tourism calendar and provide logistical and promotional support to increase attendance and awareness.
- Allocate funds to support projects that preserve and enhance Indigenous cultural heritage.



# 07 Strategies & Actions: Summary

**SECTION**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

**ACTION**

**1. Advance infrastructure**

1.1 Position the region as a premier cruise destination for visitors

1. Strengthen partnerships with cruise lines to grow cruise visitation during the summer season.

1.2 Increase air connectivity to the Saint John Airport

1. Advocate for the introduction of new direct flights connecting strategic domestic and international markets.
2. Develop marketing collaborations with the airport and airlines to promote the Saint John Region as a destination.
3. Explore public-private partnerships to fund airport infrastructure improvements and increase direct investment.

1.3 Expand transportation and mobility options for visitors

1. Explore the viability of an on-demand electric shuttle service through feasibility study.
2. Establish a dedicated airport shuttle service that offers direct routes between the airport and key locations in the Saint John Region, including hotels and the convention centre.

1.4 Optimize visitor navigation through enhanced wayfinding and signage systems

1. Investigate an integrated digital and physical wayfinding system throughout the region to improve navigability.
2. Collaborate with local chambers of business, municipalities, and attractions to create unified thematic signage that enhances the regional brand.
3. Collaborate with the Provincial Government to enhance highway signage for improved wayfinding.

1.5 Advance regional connectivity through strategic cycling infrastructure development

1. Advocate for a connected network of safe and scenic bike paths and circuits linking key tourist attractions in the Saint John Region.
2. Promote cycling, scooter, and e-bike tours as a sustainable way to explore the Saint John Region, incorporating local history and culture.

**2. Enhance tourist attractions**

2.1 Forge a unified future for the Reversing Falls Rapids

1. Develop a strategic vision for the Reversing Falls Rapids through comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
2. Implement comprehensive signage and digital guides that explain the geological and historical significance of the rapids.

2.2 Promote the New Brunswick Museum as a cultural beacon for educational tourism

1. Launch targeted marketing campaigns that highlight the museum's upgraded facilities and new exhibitions to attract new visitors.
2. Collaborate with academic institutions and cultural organizations to host workshops, lectures, and temporary exhibits off site that will draw tourists from the New Brunswick Museum around the region.
3. Advocate for increased funding to support the enhancement and preservation of the New Brunswick Museum and related programming.

2.3 Highlight the Saint John Region's heritage sites as pivotal cultural landmarks in Canadian history

1. Create a unified heritage trail linking key sites throughout the region like the Loyalist House, Carleton Martello Tower, and the City Market utilizing digital channels.
2. Advocate for the preservation and restoration of historic sites to maintain their integrity and appeal for future generations.

2.4 Assess Partridge Island's potential as a historical and cultural destination

1. Advocate for the development of Partridge Island as a destination with Parks Canada.

SECTION	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION
<b>3. Expand outdoor recreation</b>	3.1 Leverage the Saint John Region's coast and river systems for premier outdoor adventures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop guided eco-tours that educate visitors about the biodiversity of the Saint John River and Kennebecasis River.</li> <li>2. Expand on existing activities like kayaking by introducing new water sports.</li> <li>3. Improve infrastructure at key points along the rivers, such as better docks, enhanced viewing platforms, comfortable resting areas, and improved food and beverage options.</li> </ol>
	3.2 Enhance the region's appeal by capitalizing on UNESCO designated sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partner with local businesses and artisans to develop unique tourism products and experiences that are inspired by the region's UNESCO designations.</li> </ol>
	3.3 Elevate the Saint John Region as a premier mountain biking destination in Atlantic Canada	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work closely with biking clubs to ensure trails meet community needs and standards, and leverage their expertise in promoting mountain biking within and beyond the Saint John Region.</li> </ol>
<b>4. Cultivate urban culture</b>	4.1 Position the Saint John Region as a leader in culinary tourism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partner with local farms and seafood producers to offer authentic farm-to-table dining experiences.</li> <li>2. Create culinary trails that guide visitors through diverse dining experiences across the region.</li> <li>3. Create annual food festivals that showcase traditional and contemporary elements of maritime culture.</li> </ol>
	4.2 Activate placemaking initiatives to amplify uptown Saint John's urban and cultural spaces	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrate art installations and cultural exhibits into public spaces to celebrate local artists and add vibrancy to urban areas.</li> <li>2. Establish a dynamic public art program in Saint John to create diverse art installations. The art pieces will highlight the region's historical, cultural, and maritime identity, enriching public spaces and fostering community engagement.</li> </ol>
	4.3 Energize the region's culinary scene by establishing a craft beer hall	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a craft beer hall that leverages local brewing expertise to create a year-round, all-weather culinary attraction.</li> </ol>
<b>5. Events and festivals</b>	5.1 Increase seasonal tourism with vibrant winter events and festivals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plan and launch an annual winter festival that becomes a hallmark event for the Saint John Region.</li> <li>2. Collaborate with local artists and cultural organizations to host winter-themed exhibitions, performances, and interactive arts activities that celebrate the season and local heritage.</li> </ol>
	5.2 Enhance event coordination to amplify key waterfront events and assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Initiate regular meetings with event organizers, local businesses, and community leaders to discuss upcoming events, share best practices, and collaborate on promotional strategies.</li> </ol>
	5.3 Foster community-driven event planning through training and support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Offer a comprehensive training curriculum for festival organizer training to local residents free of charge.</li> <li>2. Create a festival organizer mentorship program that pairs aspiring organizers with seasoned professionals.</li> </ol>
	5.4 Grow the number of sports events in the Saint John Region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen collaboration with nearby cities to co-host large events.</li> <li>2. Actively participate in provincial initiatives to secure financial and promotional support for hosting sports events in the region.</li> </ol>

SECTION	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION
6. Diversify accommodation	6.1 Strategically monitor the Saint John Region's vacation rental market	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a comprehensive vacation rental impact study to analyze the current landscape and impact of vacation rentals in the Saint John Region.</li> <li>2. Advocate for a taxation system for vacation rentals to ensure they contribute their fair share to the local economy.</li> </ol>
	6.2 Broaden overnight camping opportunities for visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advocate for the modernization and maintenance of current camping facilities to improve comfort and accessibility.</li> <li>2. Identify potential new camping areas that take advantage of the region's unique natural landscapes.</li> </ol>
7. Elevate the visitor experience	7.1 Launch a resident ambassador program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify opportunities to educate local residents in storytelling, enabling them to share authentic stories about Saint John Region's history and culture with visitors.</li> <li>2. Utilize ambassadors at key visitor spots, events, and in promotional materials to enhance the region's brand as a welcoming and informative destination.</li> <li>3. Implement a recognition system to showcase outstanding ambassadors including public acknowledgment.</li> </ol>
	7.2 Enhancing visitor services and support through the Welcome Centre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a central hub for information and ticket sales covering all major tourist attractions in the Saint John Region, offering package deals and special promotions.</li> <li>2. Implement a state-of-the-art ticketing system that allows for online bookings, real-time updates, and mobile ticketing options.</li> </ol>
	7.3 Apply a digital lens to promotion and visitor servicing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prioritize multimedia storytelling to share the stories of the region and to promote attractions and events.</li> <li>2. Consider digital technologies like VR and augmented reality to help promote the region and service visitors.</li> </ol>
8. Commitment to stewardship	8.1 Promote recycling and waste reduction for tourism businesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote and support the organization of zero-waste events in the community, providing resources and guidelines to event organizers.</li> <li>2. Promote recycling and food waster training programs to industry.</li> </ol>
	8.2 Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the local visitor economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote alternate forms of transportation for visitors to the region.</li> <li>2. Provide marketing support to certified businesses, encouraging more establishments to participate.</li> </ol>
	8.3 Be champions of responsible growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share key messaging and provide educational resources related to sustainability, responsible practices and economic impact.</li> <li>2. Facilitate discussions on tourism growth and capacity among stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Conduct campaigns aimed at visitors to educate them about the local environment and how they can help preserve it during their visit.</li> </ol>
	8.4 Improve accessibility and inclusivity for all visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partner with chambers of commerce and business improvement associations to raise awareness about the benefits of accessible tourism and encourage businesses to invest in accessibility improvements.</li> </ol>
	8.5 Support reconciliation and Indigenous cultures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement campaigns that educate visitors and the local community about the Indigenous history of the area, the significance of the land, and current Indigenous cultures and contributions.</li> <li>2. Include Indigenous cultural events in the region's official tourism calendar and provide logistical and promotional support to increase attendance and awareness.</li> <li>3. Allocate funds to support projects that preserve and enhance Indigenous cultural heritage.</li> </ol>

# 08 Appendix

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Enhance Tourist Attractions	41	<a href="#">Montréal en Histoires - Cité Mémoire, Montreal</a>
Expand Outdoor Recreation	44	<a href="#">The Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland</a>
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Commitment to Stewardship	63	<a href="#">Thompson- Okanagan Tourism Association Biosphere Commitment Program</a>



# Tourism Master Plan Steering Committee

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**Dan Myers** Delta Hotels by Marriott Saint John

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**Danielle Timmons** Aquila Tours/Cruise

---

**Dave Smith** First Nations Storytellers

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**David Alston** TimberTop Adventures

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**Heather Kamerman** Place Fort La Tour

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