

Golden

Resort Municipality Initiative



Annual Report 2020

Submitted by:



Prepared by:

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with supporting data
from Tourism Golden*

1. Regional and Local Tourism Context

COVID-19 put a halt to international travel and significantly reduced domestic travel in British Columbia for 2020 which has been devastating for the provincial tourism economy. Providing context on the impacts of COVID-19 and other significant local and regional influences on and of tourism leads to better understanding of both the local tourism economy and the overall progress of the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) Resort Development Strategy.

The following table is designed to provide a summary of both positive and negative impacts of COVID-19 on tourism in *Golden* and any significant local and regional tourism influences for the report year that are outside of municipal control.

Factors Supporting Tourism	Factors Hindering Tourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuation of the Resort Municipality Initiative and the advent of other higher level government grants to enable highly valuable tourism infrastructure improvements.• Proximity to the Alberta border allowing for smaller scale, 'weekender effect' market activity.• Rural nature of community allowing for effective physical dispersal of visitors.• Major highway construction projects, creating a temporary but robust long term rental market.• Strong leadership and tools from industry organisations such as Destination BC, TIABC, BCHA, ITBC and ABLEBC and lobbying of government for recognition of the critical impact of COVID on the tourism industry that resulted in tourism-specific grants and other support programs.• KHC project diversions providing an opportunity to showcase our downtown to pass-thru traffic that would otherwise never venture off the TCH.• Outbound international travel restrictions resulted in increased interest and opportunity for raising awareness and visitation from existing and new domestic markets.• DMO focus on consistent quality research provides insight into new and emerging trends pre and post COVID and an ability to respond quickly plus identification of visitor markets and marketing campaign performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public health orders including limiting visitation and part closure of some economic sectors, particularly accommodation and food and beverage.• Grant eligibility excluded many businesses from accessing critical support and led to business closures.• Lack of information on the TEP program during and post-pandemic is restricting event organisers from planning 2022 events.• Pre-existing lack of intermodal transport services.• Increased demand at key front-country locations where existing infrastructure does not support an exceptional visitor experience and responsible recreational use (washrooms, waste management, parking, safety and responsible recreation messaging). This became more obvious in 2020 as the visitor demographic and community travel habits changed dramatically but nevertheless provided insight into the potential for future over-tourism issues.• Increased travel restrictions April 23 - May 25 caused delayed opening of a new tourism experience as well as removing the hope for a strong start to the summer season for all businesses which rely on summer revenues.• Misinformation that highway closures for the multi-year KHC project will impact accessibility and visitor experience in the peak season.

2. Project Progress

2.1. Resort Municipality Initiative Context and Vision

Golden has participated in the RMI program since 2007. The Resort Development Strategy (RDS) Vision is: *Golden's spectacular natural setting, history and tradition inspire visitors from Canada and internationally to discover, explore, and stay in Kicking Horse Country.*



2.2. Resort Development Strategy Goals

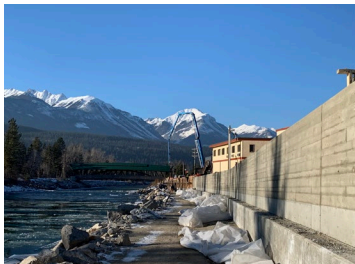
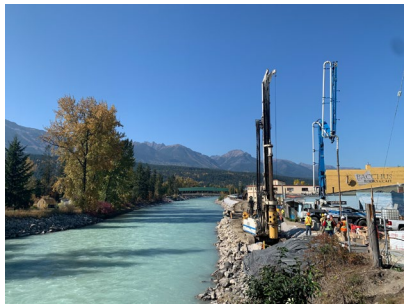
The table below lists *Golden's* RDS Goals and provides an overview of progress made on each.

Resort Development Strategy Goals	Summary of Progress on Resort Development Strategy Goals
1. Improve and Enhance the Built Environment	The Kicking Horse River Dike Improvement Project continued.
2. Enhanced Cultural Vibrancy and Identity	Freeride World Tour, Golden 24 events immensely successful, pre pandemic.
3. Enhance Key Existing Tourism Product Infrastructure	Significant progress in ensuring world class quality and maintenance of summer and winter trail networks for cycling and snowmobiling.
4. Establish and annually Report on Performance Measuring	Tourism Golden now implements a consistent reporting of key metrics that are germane to the RMI program and community tourism performance.
5. Increase Summer Visitor Traffic by 10%	Total activity attendance up 8% during RDS term.
6. Increase Winter Visitor Traffic by 10%	Total activity attendance up 5% during RDS term
7. Diversify municipal tax revenue by 5%	MRDT increased over 18% during RDS term
8. Increase overnight stays by 10%	Summer stays at 2.8 nights (no change over RDS term). Winter stays at 3.2 nights (up 7% over RDS term).
9. Increase snowmobile visitation by 10%	Over 90% increase over 4 years.
10. Increase performance and event attendance by 10%	Average attendance sporting events up 10% over RDS term; cultural events up 5%

2.3. Project Details

The following section provides project status and details on the individual projects outlined in the RDS. The financial breakdown for the projects can be found in Appendix 1.


Project Title	<i>Trail Systems</i>		
Project description	<i>The full description can be found in the 2019-2022 RDS. The project includes capital projects as identified in the <u>Regional Trail Strategy for Golden and Electoral Area A</u> and operational projects in the form of maintenance of current infrastructure.</i>		
Project Category	<i>Infrastructure/Amenities AND Programs and Services</i>		
Other themes	Accessibility related / Sustainability		
Project rationale/goal/objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the designation of the Golden area as a <i>Resort Region</i>, efforts must be made to ensure a meaningful portion of RMI funds are dedicated to the rural area to address priorities of both the municipality and the regional district as established through broad community processes. This project specifically supports Tourism Infrastructure and Sustainability. <i>The project is broadly supportive of developing/enhancing infrastructure or amenities, delivering remarkable visitor experiences, and supporting sustainable tourism.</i> 		
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$70,000		
Project status		In Progress/Ongoing	Completed
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year	<div>  <p><i>On the capital side, (\$70,000) we saw the completion of a high priority item within the Trail Strategy, being Golden's only Adaptive Trail – a system which accommodates a broad range of events and riders who typically cannot ride a standard mountain bike and require adapted equipment and or trails to suit their physical, intellectual, neurological and sensory abilities. Nearly 3.5km of machine built trails were completed in July; overall the project took 5 months and employed 4 full time workers and 1 part time worker. The results are tremendous and prideful.</i></p>  </div>		
Stakeholder Involvement:	The Golden Cycling Club is a key partner in all planning and implementation of trail system work in the area. The club and the town hold a Memorandum of Agreement for development with permissions and expectations included. Development in accordance with the Regional Trails Strategy inherently includes the sanction and support of many user groups and vested interest stakeholders in the area.		

Project Title	<i>Dikes and Waterfronts</i>		
Project description	<i>The full description can be found in the 2019-2022 RDS. This project includes beautification of a section of the Kicking Horse River dike and lane adjacent to Golden's downtown. The outcome will be a radically changed 300 m with spanning concrete, paving stones, benches, lighting, design aesthetics, and public art if possible.</i>		
Project Category	<i>Infrastructure/Amenities</i>		
Other themes	Accessibility related / Emergency Preparedness / Sustainability		
Project rationale/goal/objectives	This project is a small part of a much larger initiative that will see this section of dike have its utilities buried and a system of piles and concrete wall raised along its entire length for the purposes of flood protection. In doing so, the former dirty alley will become a pedestrian waterside walkway that serves its functional purpose above, but just as importantly will transform our downtown, introducing a vibrant attraction to our riverfront, and spurring economic diversification and growth in the commercial area along its length.		
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$11,439		
Project status		In Progress/Ongoing	
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year	<p><i>This project is a combination of a sizeable infrastructure grant for flood control and the RMI portion for beautification and economic appeal. The year saw the vast majority of spending and activity in construction of the flood wall. RMI funding was limited to remaining light standards in an adjacent area, minor purchases and design finalizations.</i></p> <div>   </div> <p><i>In 2021 RMI will play a dominant funding role in this project with the introduction of concrete hardscaping, soft landscapes, furniture, architectural structures, lighting, and other structural renewals, and be fully accessible.</i></p>		
Stakeholder Involvement:	<i>As RMI Advisory Committee members, Tourism Golden, the Chamber of Commerce, and Kicking Horse Culture have all played meaningful promotional and advisory roles in the project. The entire community was consulted prior to project implementation for approval and suggestion, and the 6 property owners along its length have been integrally involved. Local companies and vendors are supplying both materials, labour and structural components.</i>		

Project Title	<i>Public Spaces and Facilities</i>		
Project description	<i>The full description can be found in the 2019-2022 RDS. This project originally included the creation of an amphitheatre in spirit square and shade sails.</i>		
Project Category	<i>Infrastructure/Amenities</i>		
Other themes	Accessibility related/Sustainability		
Project rationale/goal/objectives	<p><i>While there has been significant revitalization and enhancement of the downtown core, including the creation of Spirit Square, continued revitalization is required to further animate the area, which will help to attract and keep visitors in the downtown core. The amphitheatre is required to accommodate the steadily increasing number of spectators to various concerts and events while the sails will provide the requisite shading desperately needed by both performers and spectators from the hot summer sun.</i></p> <p><i>The parameters for this project have necessarily changed. Because of its immediate adjacency to the dike project, its deliverables have been shifted to that project given the symbiosis of both location and general contractors involved and as a result has been essentially amalgamated into that larger project. Deliverables have also been amended to eliminate the amphitheatre as it would require an untenable engineering and permitting regime given its placement into the dike, based entirely on the pre-construction experience of the dike project. The result will be eventual shade sails and in place of an amphitheatre, a more usable and attractive set of bench seating atop the dike facing the square.</i></p>		
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$0		
Project status		In Progress/Ongoing	
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year	<i>Nil</i>		
Stakeholder Involvement:	<i>RMI Advisory Committee members have discussed and approved of this change.</i>		

Project Title	<i>Vehicle Corridors</i>		
Project description	<i>The full description can be found in the 2019-2022 RDS. This project builds in part upon previous RDS projects: the Highway One corridor enhancement and the visitor sign program. This continued project will now focus on the third phase of Highway One landscaping and see the installation of a smaller version of the iconic community entrance sign at the junction of Highways 1 and 95 at the south entrance to the municipality adjacent to Highway 95 as well as upgrading sign boards on existing signs through town.</i>		
Project Category	<i>Infrastructure/Amenities</i>		
Other themes	Sustainability		
Project rationale/goal/objectives	This project has undergone an amendment in budget and deliverables following consultation and agreement amongst members of the RMI Advisory Committee. The third phase of landscaping on the Trans-Canada Highway corridor has been placed in abeyance to a future RDS with the funding by unanimous agreement shifted to the Dike Project. Otherwise, the south entrance sign project will continue in this envelope.		
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$13,068		
Project status		In Progress/Ongoing	
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year	<i>For 2020 expenditures and activities included finalizing tree replacements on the Trans-Canada Highway corridor for those having not survived or requiring an alternate species and structural design costs and site preparation/investigation preceding tendering for the south entrance sign which will be completed in 2021.</i>		
Stakeholder Involvement:	<i>The RMI Advisory Committee was the determining collective for activity in this envelope.</i>		

Project Title	<i>Pedestrian</i>		
Project description	The Pedestrian project is focused on encouraging more walking and exploring of the community on foot by improving safety through installation of pathway lighting bollards and improving wayfinding.		
Project Category	<i>Infrastructure/Amenities</i>		
Other themes	Indigenous Tourism / Accessibility related / Sustainability		
Project rationale/goal/objectives	As we increase our initiatives in enhancing the downtown, Spirit Square and the walking trails along the river, more visitors will wish to get around the community by walking. Improving safety and wayfinding for pedestrians is crucial to encourage and support increased walking, improve the visitor experience, and provide additional opportunities for activity that could extend visitation – length of stay as well as time of year.		
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$0		
Project status	Not Started	In Progress/Ongoing	Completed
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year			
Stakeholder Involvement:	Nil		

Project Title	Tourism Activity Services																																																				
Project description	Annual contribution of funds toward the costs of grooming popular snowmobile routes in the area, totaling over 50kms and priority maintenance within a 300km network of single track mountain bike trails.																																																				
Project Category	Infrastructure/Amenities				Programs and Services																																																
Other themes	Indigenous Tourism / Accessibility related / Sustainability																																																				
Project rationale/goal/objectives	Mountain biking has been identified as one of the top five summer activities and reasons for visiting Golden, and is seen as growth market. Good trail maintenance is essential to the mountain bike experience and for drawing visitors back, as well as for continuing to host popular events such as the Golden24. Similarly, snowmobiling has been identified as a growth market for the winter visitor.																																																				
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$65,000																																																				
Project status	Not Started		In Progress/Ongoing			Completed																																															
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year	<div>Another successful snowmobiling grooming year, with tangible increases in visitation over the prior season. Ridership continues to grow over time. In the midst of a pandemic, ridership jumped substantially. Local membership rose to new levels.</div> <table><thead><tr><th>Area</th><th>2020-21</th><th>2019-20</th><th>2018-19</th><th>2017-18</th><th>2016-17</th><th>2015-16</th><th>2014-15</th><th>2013-14</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Quartz Creek</td><td>8592</td><td>6082</td><td>6896</td><td>7105</td><td>7243</td><td>7719</td><td>6445</td><td>5184</td></tr><tr><td>Gorman Lake</td><td>2445</td><td>2031</td><td>2678</td><td>2497</td><td>3427</td><td>3610</td><td>3317</td><td>1930</td></tr><tr><td>Silent Pass</td><td>3037</td><td>1794</td><td>1668</td><td>1846</td><td>2410</td><td>2298</td><td>1766</td><td>1442</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>14074</td><td>9907</td><td>11242</td><td>11448</td><td>13080</td><td>13627</td><td>11528</td><td>8556</td></tr></tbody></table> <div><div>The cycling trails saw the continuation of maintenance activity on existing networks, carried out by the Golden Cycling Club. This important work ensures professional upkeep of one of the area’s greatest tourism draws. The project typically employs 2 full time workers for over 4 months.</div></div>								Area	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	Quartz Creek	8592	6082	6896	7105	7243	7719	6445	5184	Gorman Lake	2445	2031	2678	2497	3427	3610	3317	1930	Silent Pass	3037	1794	1668	1846	2410	2298	1766	1442	Total	14074	9907	11242	11448	13080	13627	11528	8556
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Stakeholder Involvement:	The Golden Snowmobile Club and Golden Cycling Club are DMO stakeholders directly responsible for the RMI funds use.																																																				

Project Title	Events		
Project description	The Events project is about increasing our events programming. It includes increasing shoulder season festivals and activities as well as providing event support for existing events.		
Project Category	Infrastructure/Amenities	Programs and Services	
Other themes	Indigenous Tourism / Sustainability		
Project rationale/goal/objectives	Destination BC has identified “Arts/Culture/Heritage including First Nations cultural experiences, and Culinary” as a primary motivating experience for visitors to the Golden area. The “Cultural Explorer” is also one of the main explorer quotient segments visiting the area. Evidence has shown that arts/culture/competitive events in Golden are very successful; experiential sport competitions such as the Freeride World Tour and Golden 24 and Ultra have been immensely popular, providing economic benefit and sport tourism exposure to Golden.		
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$0		
Project status	Not Started	In Progress/Ongoing	Completed
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year	The pandemic effectively shuttered this project in 2020. It is hoped that a limited opening up of opportunities may present itself in Q3 of 2021.		
Stakeholder Involvement:	Tourism Golden is the key stakeholder and implementer for these funds. Through the lens of a contribution agreement with TG and the Town of Golden, it was mutually agreed to place the terms of the agreement in abeyance until provincial pandemic regulations and the marketplace allowed activity to resume.		

Project Title	Program Administration		
Project description	Travel allowance to the annual RCC forum to a maximum amount, supplemented by municipal funds as necessary. Measuring performance against stated project outcomes to accurately report on the level of success of projects		
Project Category	Infrastructure/Amenities	Programs and Services	
Other themes	Sustainability		
Project rationale/goal/objectives	Measuring performance is a key necessity in establishing the utility of projects and the value of the RMI program in general. The Province has recognized this and provided for an allocation of program funds to ensure it is undertaken adequately.		
Project Spending in Reporting Year	\$9,000		
Project status	Not Started	In Progress/Ongoing	Completed
Project activities and/or outcomes for the reporting year	The annual RCC event was not held due to the pandemic. No travel expenditures were accrued. Tourism Golden continued its performance measurement activities, as an integral component of its DMO mandate.		
Stakeholder Involvement:	N/A		

3. Economic Outcomes

The data in this section is collected by both the resort communities and/or the WCS Engagement and Planning (WCS). While specific projects can impact these results, the results in this area only show trends over time and should be considered as a long-term impacts of investments in infrastructure, projects and programs.

Accommodation Sector Performance

Accommodation sector performance provides an indication of the size and health of the overall tourism economy by tracking changes in MRDT, room revenue or room nights sold. Overnight visitors to the communities tend to participate in more experiences than day visitors, and the additional hours spent in the resort result in increased spending patterns and greater contributions per visitor to the local economy. Considering the variation in this indicator throughout the year provides a window into the community's success at growing tourism throughout the four seasons.

The annual MRDT revenues to the community rose 180% between 2008 and 2019 from \$271,790 to \$761,746. The YOY increase from 2018 to 2019 alone was 19%.

In 2020 the MRDT revenue shrank to \$466,778, down 40.21% against 2019, the lowest it has been since 2015.

These results are both sobering and unsurprising, yet to have fallen only to a point of 5 years previous is an indication of sustainability and resiliency in a challenging year.

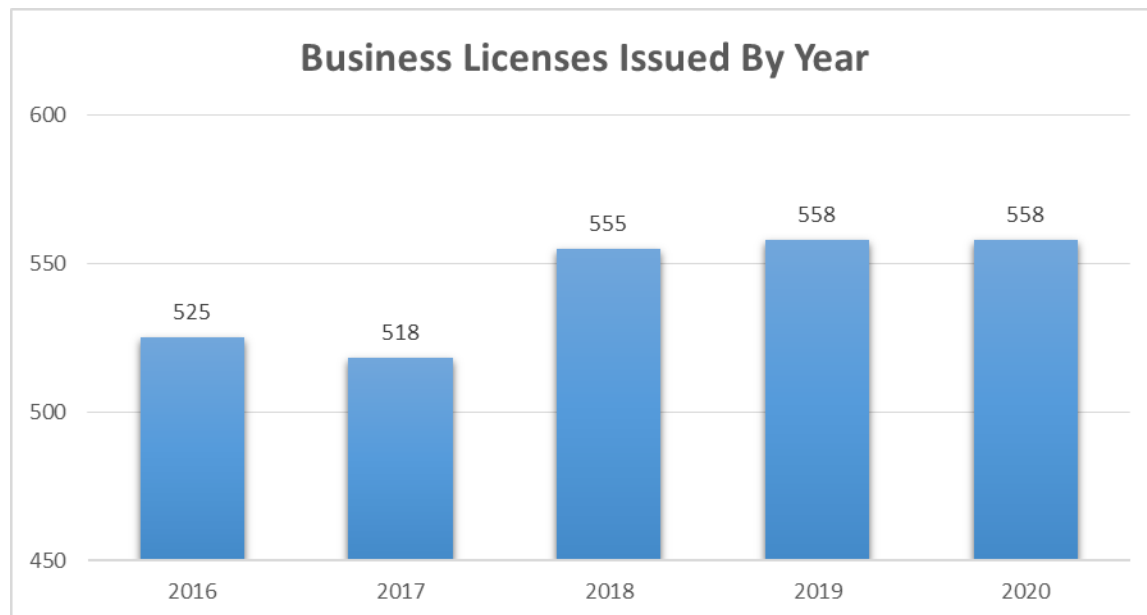
Visitor Numbers

A resort communities' tourism economy is dependent on visitation. Visitor numbers provide an understanding of the health of the tourism economy, as well as the popularity the community as a tourism destination, quality of the service levels, and the perceived value of tourism offerings. Depending on the employed methodology, visitor numbers includes day visitors and overnight visitors differing from accommodation sector performance. Considering the variation in this indicator throughout the year provides a window into the community's success at growing tourism throughout four seasons.

The area saw 443,250 day trip visitors and 491,000 overnight visitors for grand total of 934,520 total visits in 2020. Previous visitor numbers were unavailable due to a lack of data sources. Funding permitting, new data sources will begin to reveal annual visitation numbers for analysis. Notwithstanding, it is logically positioned that visitation was significantly down in 2020 due to the pandemic. Being a resort community in close proximity to the provincial border, these numbers were not felt as critically as originally thought, despite visitation largely being in contravention of public health orders.

Number of Business Licenses

The number of businesses in a community reflects economic success and potentially diversity of tourism offerings. Breaking the results out by tourism business can provide a more direct measure of tourism growth.



Total Tourism based business licenses increased to 196 in 2020 from 176 in 2019 from the total license count. Given the pandemic played a key role in ensuring no growth overall in 2020 this is somewhat surprising.

4. Conclusion and Outlook

The effects of the pandemic were of course devastating to the local tourism sector in 2020. Visits and therefore room nights and expenditures plummeted and employment was gutted; however, there were indications that the industry was able to maintain its functionality at times. Anecdotally, reports of limited occupancies kept the accommodation sector from faltering completely. The food and beverage contingent may have been the most impacted from public health order closures.

The effect upon the Resort Development Strategy was immediate and substantial, largely based on a collapse of capacity by community partners to deliver, supply chain interruptions and general economic slowing across the economy and the inability to host a tourism population. In response, the municipality maintained a zero increase budget to stay any rise in municipal property taxes, relaxed regulations around sidewalk patios and focused on RMI funded infrastructure development that would benefit the local economy post pandemic, taking opportunity to begin work during a time when disruptions to the economy were far less than in any other year. The municipality also took steps to expedite other infrastructure works in order that a post-pandemic tourism recovery could be faster.

The RMI Advisory Committee met to re-analyze and agree upon changes to timelines and certain deliverables in the RDS to adapt to the current situation.

Little more than operational funding was spent, which may have been the most valuable as it ensured employment, maintained world class trails, and encouraged use conducive to physical distancing (mountain biking and snowmobiling). The completion of the Adaptive Trail was a local landmark in accessible outdoor recreation and is expected to be a key component of the trail network adjacent to the community.

Though no RMI funds were spent at this juncture, the Kicking Horse Dike Project would see the majority completion of work funded otherwise and 2021 will see the beautification of this section of downtown through the RMI program to a new standard not otherwise seen here.

The year brought to the fore the concept of resiliency in this community. The capacity of citizens to reach out to each other, protect the local economy, and provide a moral benchmark that defines us through the pandemic lens was truly amazing.

As 2021 unfolds, hope springs as vaccinations continue and the possibility of a summer visitation season is envisioned. The year will be one of the largest yet on the RMI project docket. The Kicking Horse River Dike Project will be complete, transforming a pivotal part of the downtown from a dusty garbage strewn alley to a gentrified pedestrian thoroughfare that will transform the look and feel of the community core. Moreover, the private sector is responding with its own beautification and business transformation efforts that will set a new tone in the accommodation and food and beverage local industry.

We will also see the completion of a new community entrance sign to the south, timed to welcome the thousands of new people travelling through Golden for the first time, detoured as a part of the Kicking Horse Canyon Phase 4 twinning project. Golden is experiencing a development boom larger than ever seen. Housing starts including single family homes and highly desirable condominiums are under construction, downtown business revitalizations are occurring, and opening this year will be one of the most spectacular destination attractions in western Canada – directly adjacent to our town – that will entirely change the tourism landscape in Golden.

Check it out: <https://www.banffjaspercollection.com/attractions/golden-skybridge/>

Town of Golden: RMI 2020

Activity	Budgeted Amount (from RDS, 2018 carry over or Amendments)	Jan. 1 - March 31 Expenditures	Apr. 1 - Jun. 30 Expenditures	July 1 - Sept. 30 Expenditures	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31 Expenditures	Total Expenditures 2020	Current Status - please update with every quarterly report submission (ex: start date, groundbreaking, bid phase, nearing completion)	Accessibility, Sustainability and Indigenous Projects Update	Upcoming Opportunities & Milestones
2015-18 Carry Over projects:									
Trail Systems	78,000			-	70,000	70,000	CSRD Trails		
Dikes and Waterfronts	412,599	-	7,047	4,392		11,439			
2019-21 Projects									
Infrastructure:									
	61,208			-			- Increased \$30K to cover cost of CSRD multi user trail the \$30K has now been moved toVehicle Corridors to use towards the Entran		
Trail Systems									
Dikes & Waterfronts	-								
Public Spaces and Facilities	-			-			\$60K as approved project (Spirit Square) amalgamated with Dike and Waterfront project		
Vehicle Corridors	34,000			1,998	11,070	13,068	-Sign project move to 2021 \$123K - South Entrance Sign 10 Ave. - Highway Corridor \$4K added		
Pedestrian	-						- Carry forward reduced \$28K to fund CSRD Trail - Wayfinding \$30K CF to 2021		
Entrance South 10 Ave. Sign									
Events/Services:									
Tourism Services	50,000	30,000		15,000	20,000	65,000	Snowmobile Trails/Mountain Bike Trails		
Events	-						Events \$50K moved to 2022 due to COVID		
Arts, Heritage & Culture	-						Project Interpretations \$50K moved to 2022 - COVID		
Administration									
Travel to Spring RCC	-						- Travel \$1K moved to 2020		
Performance Measurement	9,000			9,000		9,000			
TOTAL	644,807	30,000	7,047	30,390	101,070	168,507			

168,507

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Financial Snapshot	2020 Budget	Actuals
Reserve as of Jan. 1, 2020	1,042,678	1,042,678
Interest earned on reserve amount 2020	12,000	19,308
Funding provided in 2020		702,656
Total available for 2020	1,054,678	1,764,642
Less: Expenses	644,807	168,507
Total currently available (total less expenditures)	409,871	1,596,135

Please add any other notes below