

Resort Municipality: Golden

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Resort Development Strategy Progress

1. Summary

This reporting year saw the 2022-2024 Resort Development Strategy conclude with great success and the completion of all project goals.

The [2023 Value of Tourism study](#), completed in 2024, confirmed the full recovery of the local tourism industry with 36% increase in direct visitor spend (18% when adjusted for inflation). The trend carried into 2024, with accommodation revenues increasing by an estimated 13% compared to 2023. Significantly, accommodation revenues in the spring and fall shoulder seasons increased by 14% and 43% respectively. Whilst overnight visitor numbers remained largely static, these revenues reflect the DMO's strategic objectives to increase the overall value of the tourism economy by increasing shoulder season occupancy and average length of stay whilst balancing resident values with visitor demand and business needs.

These industry indicators are even more impressive when set against the potential disrupters of a snow drought and extremely cold temperatures in early winter, which impacted visitation, and the Dogtooth Wildfire, close to the south boundary of the Town, which resulted in large-scale cancellations. Fortunately, these cancellations were almost immediately mitigated by the devastating fire in Jasper, which diverted visitors to Golden and caused a large uplift in accommodation occupancy and revenue in August, September and into October.

Ongoing labour shortages and housing availability and affordability remained a barrier for tourism industry employers in high season, particularly as the Value of Tourism 2023 showed a growth of 28% in tourism-related jobs when compared to 2019.

RDS projects and programming have contributed positively to the tourism industry and visitor experience as well as detailed in the Performance Measurement section below.

2. RDS Goals

1. Enhance cultural vibrancy and identity.

The RMI projects continue to support Golden's cultural identity as an outdoor destination and mountain community. The [2024-2025 Annual Golden Visitor Study](#) confirms decision-making factors for choosing Golden as a destination include:

- Close proximity to nature (87%) and National Parks (84%);
- Variety of outdoor activities (82%);
- Friendly, hospitable people (73%) and Small town charm (73%);
- Excellent Skiing (52%), Excellent Mountain Biking (34%) and Snowmobiling (13%); and
- Attending concerts or public events (21%).

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) for the year was 50.8.

MRDT revenues increased by 13% in 2024.

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588 participants in the Golden Guide Online Learning program

2. Enhance key existing tourism product infrastructure.
The Visitor Study also confirms a Top Box rating of 90% in overall satisfaction with their visit, and the same for Recreation and Adventure Opportunities.
 - 89% of visitors rated their experience very good or excellent.
 - 80% were likely to return for an overnight visit.
 - 588 participants in the Golden Guide Online Learning program

3. Diversify municipal tax revenue.
MRDT revenues increased by 13% in 2024. Specifically, spring revenues increased by 69%, summer revenues increased 51%, fall revenues increased by 112%, and winter by 23%
The [2023 Value of Tourism study](#) indicates \$9.9 million in Municipal taxes was generated by tourism (compared to \$3.8 million in the 2019 study).
Construction was well underway on another mixed-use residential and commercial building in Golden that will be permitted to allow short-term rentals. Developments of this nature are linked to the tourism industry while also providing needed housing. Their size and scope will increase the municipal tax base as well as MRDT revenues.

4. Increase visitation.
Telus Insights data confirmed a negligible increase in visitor numbers, however the increase in accommodation revenues demonstrates the DMO's goal to attract higher-value visitors. Importantly, the increase in MRDT revenues in shoulder, fall and winter seasons demonstrates success in attracting these visitors across all seasons.
80% were likely to return for an overnight visit indicates the likelihood of these visitors returning.

5. Increase length of stay.
The visitor study indicates an average length of stay of 3.1 nights (compared to 2.88 in 2023), and this is supported by AirDNA data which confirms an average 3.3 nights in short term rental accommodations.

6. Enhance environmental sustainability and climate adaptation.
The community shuttle program continues to have positive impacts on reducing GHG emissions by providing transit alternatives within the community and from Calgary. 9,538 riders used the community shuttle in winter 2024-2025. Although this was 14% less than the 2023/24 season, which benefitted from an additional vehicle supported by a Ministry of Transportation and Transit grant, it reflects a 52% increase against the 2022/23 season.

The final components of the Trans-Canada boulevard project were completed in 2024, this included planting regional, hardy drought resistant plants, installation of garbage receptacles and dog waste dispensers and a remotely controlled irrigation system intended to ensure long term sustainability of the plantings while conserving water.

7. Increase Indigenous tourism opportunities in collaboration with the Ktunaxa, Secwepemc, and Metis Nations.

588 participants in the Golden Guide Online Learning Program which includes an Indigenous module featuring representatives of the Ktunaxa, Shuswap Band of the Secwepemc Nation and the Metis Nation Columbia River Society.

Multimedia Interpretive Indigenous displays installed at the Golden Visitor Centre includes written and video content, Indigenous art, cultural displays, and a map.

3. Performance Measurement

The online visitor study was implemented and is managed by Tourism Golden. The study continuously collects visitor data and is supported by a paid social media campaign and printed postcards with a QR code distributed in-destination and included in the print annual Golden Travel Planner. Participating visitors are encouraged to take a follow survey. 2,197 in-destination surveys and 684 follow up surveys were completed Annual, Winter and Summer reports were received in spring 2025.

Tourism Golden has purchased Telus Insights data since 2018, which provides visitor numbers and demographic data to December 2024. Unfortunately, Telus has closed this program. Until a reliable alternative is found, visitor numbers will no longer be a measure for the RDS. Demographic data will continue to be collected in the online Visitor Study and at the seasonal Golden Visitor Centre during the summer.

1. Visitor Centre Washroom Expansion

Program Outcome #1: Enhance Visitor Experience
Performance Measurement – Visitor Surveys
Progress: <i>Completed in May 2024. With the operational and capacity issues improved, the VC Google Business rating rose from 4.1* in 2023 to 4.3* at the end of summer 2024 and stands at 4.4* in August 2025.</i>

Program Outcome #2: Improve Accessibility, Sustainability, and/or Indigenous Tourism
Performance Measurement – Ensure Accessibility Standards
Progress: <i>Expansion works were completed to the current BC Building Code and provided for one fully accessible universal family washroom with room for mobility device maneuvering and five universal individual washrooms. Low-flow fixtures were used throughout. Energy-efficient LED lighting was used throughout.</i>

2. Phase 4 Trans-Canada Highway Beautification

Program Outcome #1: Enhance Visitor Experience
Performance Measurement – Visitor Surveys
Progress: <i>This project was completed in 2023. Visitor Study Top Box rating for ‘Attractiveness on Highway 1 east & west entrances’ is 72% rated 4 or 5.</i>

Program Outcome #2: Improve Accessibility, Sustainability, and/or Indigenous Tourism
Performance Measurement – Visitor Survey Data on Accessibility
Progress: <i>The last planned phase of this project was completed in 2023, incorporating regionally attractive and hardy plantings, turf, rock feature seat walls, garbage receptacles and dog waste dispensers, intended to attract and serve the travelling public, involved the design and installation of a</i>

remotely controlled irrigation system intended to ensure the long-term sustainability of plantings while conserving our community's water resource.

3. Community Mural

Program Outcome #1: Enhance Visitor Experience
Performance Measurement – Community & Visitor Feedback – <i>Collected anecdotally and through Kicking Horse Culture's digital feedback</i>
Progress: <i>The mural was completed in 2023. Over 50 explicitly positive posts were received on Kicking Horse Culture's feed about the mural. The new mural was the top post on the Town of Golden's Facebook and Instagram feeds in 2023, reaching over 55,000 people with over 2,500 positive engagements.</i>
Program Outcome #2: Improve Accessibility, Sustainability, and/or Indigenous Tourism
Performance Measurement – Inclusion of Indigenous Mural Component
Progress: <i>The mural includes indigenous representation on the Columbia River.</i>
Program Outcome #3: Increase New and/or Return Visitation
Performance Measurement – Reports by Adjacent Businesses and Locals
Progress: <i>Social media posts by local businesses have been positive and report on the visitor impacts of the mural. Photos of the mural have also been featured in visitor social media posts and blogs.</i>

4. Events

Program Outcome #1: Enhance Visitor Experience
Performance Measurement – Community & Visitor Feedback – <i>Collected anecdotally and through Tourism Golden's digital feedback</i>
Progress: <i>Supported the annual return of the Freeride World Tour ski event (Feb), the Golden Rush Endurance Mountain Bike race (June) and Golden Ultra Trail running race (Sept) as well as a highly successful return of the Psychosis Downhill bike race for the 25th anniversary. All events drove immediate and future visitation from highly qualified audiences through strong targeted marketing. Visitor Survey confirms 24% of visitors cited attending an event as the deciding factor in deciding to visit Golden.</i>

5. Online Tourism Services Learning

Program Outcome #1: Increase New Visitation and/or Return Visitation
Performance Measurement – Assess Visitor Sentiments – <i>Collected through interactions with trained individuals to gauge program success and positive experiences.</i>
Progress: <i>588 participants in total. Visitor Study confirms 20% of visitors obtained information from Golden locals and 27% from frontline staff. 47% confirmed it increased the likelihood of returning.</i>
Program Outcome #2: Enhance Visitor Experience
Performance Measurement – Visitor Surveys – <i>Surveys to be completed by Ambassadors</i>
Progress: <i>Visitor Study confirms 20% of visitors obtained information from Golden locals and 27% from Front line staff. 2% confirmed that visitor information obtained in Golden (through multiple sources) resulted in spending more money than anticipated, and 6% extended their stay as a result. 52% said it improved the overall quality of experience and 47%.</i>

6. Regional Trail Renewal & Restoration

Program Outcome #1: Increase New Visitation and/or Return Visitation
Performance Measurement – Visitor Surveys
<p>Progress:</p> <p><i>Based on a 2023 economic impact study, mountain biker volume estimates indicate that approximately 77% of mountain bikers are day (16%) or overnight (61%) visitors.</i></p> <p><i>The snowmobile club estimates a total of 6,172 riders for the 2024-25 season, down from 7,523 in 2023-24, due to a late start to the operational year, a lack of snow, and high avalanche danger in key riding areas.</i></p>
Program Outcome #2: Enhance Visitor Experience
Performance Measurement – Visitor Surveys & Anecdotal Evidence – Surveys to be completed by Ambassadors
<p>Progress:</p> <p><i>According to the 2023 economic study, the trail networks in Golden are very highly rated by visitors with regard to trail quality, maintenance and variety. The snowmobile club’s cabin was back in place this season for the first time since the pandemic. Visitors to the Gorman Lake riding area have shared comments that they love this infrastructure piece as it serves not only as a warming hut but a sanctuary in case of emergency.</i></p>
Program Outcome #3: Improve Sustainability
Performance Measurement – Time Between Trail Repairs
<p>Progress:</p> <p><i>The Golden Cycling Club was able to rebuild jumps, berms and trails in key areas (trails included Canyon Creek, Rollercoaster, Premature, Hymenoptera, and Devil’s slide) as well as rebuild and enhance the iconic Psychosis racecourse on Mt. 7 for the race’s 25th anniversary event. Some of these trails had not been worked on for several years, a testament to building standards. Additionally, work included new connector trails, new features, safety improvements, bridge realignments, alternate routes and the installation of new kiosks in all three networks, working towards enhanced signage for visitors.</i></p>

7. Community Shuttle

Program Outcome #1: Extend and/or Diversify Community Tourism Season
Performance Measurement – Shuttle ridership
<p>Progress: <i>9,538 riders used the community shuttle during the 120 operational days in winter 2024-2025. Although this was 14% less than the 2023/24 season which benefitted from an additional vehicle supported by a Min. Transportation grant, it reflects a 52% increase against the 2022/23 season.</i></p>
Program Outcome #2: Improve Accessibility & Sustainability
Performance Measurement – Estimated emissions reduction
<p>Progress: <i>Using NRCan data, removing 20 light vehicles per day for 120 days avoids 20 tonnes of CO2 emissions.</i></p>
Program Outcome #3: Enhance Visitor Experience
Performance Measurement – Overall Winter Experience in Golden
<p>Progress: <i>Winter 2024/2025 Visitor Study confirms 87% of visitors confirmed a Top Box rating of 4 or 5.</i></p>

Project Progress

4. Previous RDS Carryover Funding

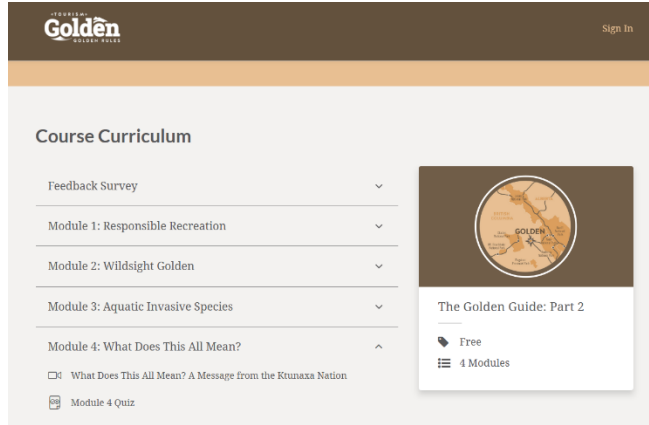
All previous carryover projects were completed.

Project Name:			
Current Status: Click or tap to select an option.	Project Start Date Click or tap to enter a date.	Project End Date Click or tap to enter a date.	Funding Spent in 2024 \$
Project Works Please outline what project works are in progress or have been completed with RMI funds in the reporting year. If a carryover project has been delayed, please include the reasoning here.			
Photos Please include photos of the project and project signage here.			

5. Current RDS Projects

Project Name: Online Tourism Services Learning			
Current Status: In Progress	Project Start Date January 2024	Project End Date December 2024	Funding Spent in 2024 \$10,000
Project Works Please outline what project works are in progress or have been completed with RMI funds in the reporting year. If a carryover project has been delayed, please include the reasoning here.			
<p>The Golden Guide www.Goldenguide.ca is an online tourism-focused learning program for residents and frontline workers. Its objective is to create knowledgeable and passionate ambassadors at all visitor interactions. 4 new videos were created for modules added to the curriculum in April 2024. Module topics were: Responsible Recreation, Wildsight Golden, Aquatic Invasive Species and What Does This All Mean? (Features Ktunaxa Nation speaking about the stewardship of the land and its importance. In 2024, 346 people participated in 2024.</p>			
RMI Initiatives Please refer to the Project Overview within the RDS for the initiative(s) attributed to the project and provide a summary on how the project has supported the RMI Initiatives in the report year. Please use specific examples.			
<p>The project supports the initiative to deliver remarkable visitor experiences by creating 346 knowledgeable ambassadors in 2024 providing consistent and valuable information to visitors. The project supports Sustainability and Indigenous culture by promoting responsible recreation practices and Indigenous culture and stewardship of the land.</p>			

Photos Please include photos of the project and project signage here.



Project Name: Community Shuttle

Current Status:	Project Start	Project End Date	Funding Spent in 2024
In Progress	December 2024	April 2025	\$50,000

Project Works Please outline what project works are in progress or have been completed with RMI funds in the reporting year. If a carryover project has been delayed, please include the reasoning here.

The Golden-Kicking Horse Connector winter shuttle service operated daily between December 13, 2024, and April 13, 2025, and carried 9,538 riders. The scheduled service included a dinner service at the weekends to move visitors between dining options at the resort and downtown. Ridership was impacted by the closure of the KHMR Gondola in mid-March 2025. 9,538 riders used the community shuttle during the 120 operational days in winter 2024-2025. Although this was 14% less than the 2023/24 season which benefitted from an additional vehicle supported by a Min. Transportation grant, it reflects a 52% increase against the 2022/23 season

RMI Initiatives Please refer to the **Project Overview within the RDS for the initiative(s)** attributed to the project and provide a summary on how the project has supported the RMI Initiatives in the report year. Please use specific examples.

The project supports Developing Tourism Infrastructure or Amenities and Delivering Remarkable Visitor Experiences by providing a reliable shuttle service where none existed. It supports Sustainability by contributing to the reduction in GHG by removing an estimated 20 tonnes of CO2 during its operational period.

Photos Please include photos of the project and project signage here.



Project Name: Events

Current Status: In Progress	Project Start June 2024	Project End Date February 2025	Funding Spent in 2024 \$50,000
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Project Works Please outline what project works are in progress or have been completed with RMI funds in the reporting year. If a carryover project has been delayed, please include the reasoning here.

Supported the annual return of the Freeride World Tour ski event (Feb), the Golden Rush Endurance Mountain Bike race (June) and Golden Ultra Trail running race (Sept) as well as a highly successful return of the Psychosis Downhill bike race for the 25th anniversary in July 2024.

RMI Initiatives Please refer to the **Project Overview within the RDS for the initiative(s)** attributed to the project and provide a summary on how the project has supported the RMI Initiatives in the report year. Please use specific examples.

The project supports Delivering Remarkable Visitor Experiences by helping to attract and retain annual or special events that promote the destination, encouraging visitation from target audiences more likely to be satisfied with their experience.

Live broadcast of the **FWT event** generated 191,000 live and replay views and 36.7 million social media impressions with 1.27 million interactions. Output by 15 media from USA, Canada and Germany reached 5.8 million people.

Golden Rush brought 215 athletes, of which 208 were not local, plus an estimated 124 supporters and event crew from AB (81%), BC (13%), and the USA (2%) for 1-2 nights. 96% of event survey respondents stated they would return to Golden.

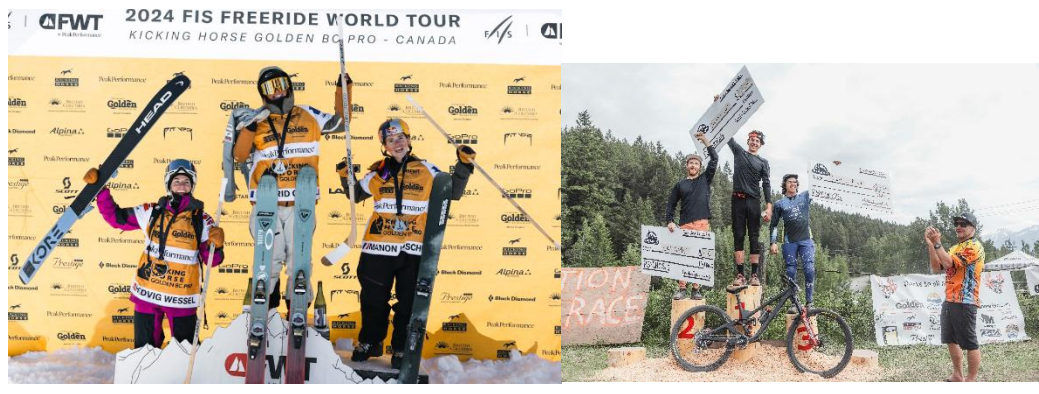
Golden Ultra brought 511 athletes, of which 485 were not local, plus an estimated 267 supporters and event crew from AB (42%), BC (26%), other Canadian provinces (11%), the USA (14%) and other international (1%) for 2 – 3 nights. 80% of survey respondents stated they would return to Golden.

Psychosis drew 193 athletes and an estimated 500 local and non-local spectators. This was a grass roots event organised by the Golden Cycling Club which gained social media recognition by mountain bike brand and athlete influencers resulting in engagement with the Club’s social media channels.

It provides activation and entertainment for visitors who may not be specifically aware of the event but contributes to their overall enjoyment. Visitor study data demonstrates a high satisfaction level with their visitor experience.

The use of existing municipal or resort infrastructure, and the requirement of the program to dedicate a portion of the athlete fee to the volunteer club or private owner to remediate or maintain trail and environment, supports Sustainability.

Photos Please include photos of the project and project signage here.



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Project Name: Program Administration			
Current Status: In Progress	Project Start March 2024	Project End Date December 2024	Funding Spent in 2024 \$11,000
<p>Project Works Please outline what project works are in progress or have been completed with RMI funds in the reporting year. If a carryover project has been delayed, please include the reasoning here.</p> <p>Performance Measurement managed by Tourism Golden: Online Visitor Study 2024/2025 complete and reports received. Telus Insights program Jan – Dec 2024 complete and final visitor numbers and demographics received. CoStar (STR) Destination Reports complete, and reports received. AirDNA Destination data complete and reports received. 2023 Value of Tourism analysis and final report received. VISA Destination Insights on international visitor spend complete and reports received. Tourism Stakeholder Survey. Complete and report received.</p>			
<p>RMI Initiatives Please refer to the Project Overview within the RDS for the initiative(s) attributed to the project and provide a summary on how the project has supported the RMI Initiatives in the report year. Please use specific examples.</p> <p>The Performance Management activity supports all RMI Program Objectives by providing quantitative and qualitative data on visitor experience, satisfaction, origin, spend as well as industry stakeholder feedback. These inform the DMO strategic and annual plans and measure their outcomes, as well as the RDS projects to ensure maximum impact on tourism infrastructure, amenities and projects that result in a destination-wide delivery of a remarkable visitor experience.</p>			
<p>Photos Please include photos of the project and project signage here.</p>			

Project Name: Regional Trail Renewal & Restoration			
Current Status: Complete	Project Start January 2024	Project End Date December 2024	Funding Spent in 2024 \$70,000
<p>Project Works Please outline what project works are in progress or have been completed with RMI funds in the reporting year. If a carryover project has been delayed, please include the reasoning here.</p> <p>The Golden Cycling Club was able to rebuild jumps, berms and trails in key areas (trails included Canyon Creek, Rollercoaster, Premature, Hymenoptera, and Devil’s slide) as well as rebuild and enhance the iconic Psychosis racecourse on Mt. 7 for the race's 25th anniversary event. Additionally, work included new connector trails, new features, safety improvements, bridge realignments, alternate routes and the installation of new kiosks in all three networks, working towards enhanced signage for visitors.</p> <p>The Golden Snowmobile Club underwent staffing changes; however, the Club continued its work, renewing backcountry routes by restoring waterways and improving trail safety through danger tree removal, slope stabilization, and enhanced grooming efforts. The Club has been working on enhancing their grooming program, bringing the program inhouse allows them to groom as necessary, based</p>			

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on conditions and quality of product being offered. Despite challenging winter conditions, the Club was able to maintain grooming efforts and provide safe and accessible trails for sledders.

RMI Initiatives Please refer to the **Project Overview within the RDS for the initiative(s)** attributed to the project and provide a summary on how the project has supported the RMI Initiatives in the report year. Please use specific examples.

In the reporting year, RMI funds supported significant trail renewal and restoration projects that align with the initiative’s sustainability objectives. The Golden Cycling Club completed extensive upgrades contribute to long-term trail sustainability and improved visitor experience.

The Golden Snowmobile Club also advanced its trail renewal efforts through an improved grooming program. Now managed in-house, the program allows for condition-based grooming that improves trail quality while minimizing environmental impact. These efforts support sustainable motorized recreation by reducing wear on natural terrain and ensuring safe, accessible trails for users.

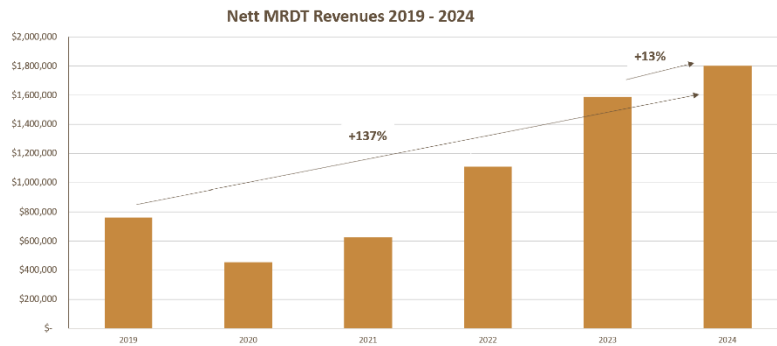
Overall, these projects demonstrate a commitment to sustainable tourism by renewing high-use recreational assets, reducing environmental impacts, and enhancing long-term viability of outdoor experiences in Golden.

PHOTOS Please include photos of the project and project signage here.



Conclusion & Outlook

The value of the RDS projects to the growth visitor economy in Golden continues to be demonstrated in the growth in direct-to-business tourism revenues, and specifically accommodation revenues as demonstrated by the [2023 Value of Tourism Study](#), and the 13% increase in MRDT revenues in 2024, particularly the growth in shoulder seasons. Directly comparing MRDT on a year-to-year seasonal or monthly basis can be less accurate as the disbursements received may be affected by the timing of remittance, particularly for the OAP stream, however the 5-year comparison between 2019 and 2024 clearly indicates significant growth in spring and fall and reflects the targeted marketing efforts of the DMO.



There have been steady increases in MRDT revenues. Accounting for the move from 2% to 3% MRDT in 2022, accommodation revenues have increased from 2019 (best year ever pre-covid) to 2024 by:

Spring Revenue Increase 2019 vs 2024	Summer Revenue Increase 2019 vs 2024	Fall Revenue Increase 2019 vs 2024	Winter Revenue Increase 2019 vs 2024
2019 vs 2024 Adj Revenue 68.80%	2019 vs 2024 Adj Revenue 50.95%	2019 vs 2024 Adj Revenue 112.29%	2019 vs 2024 Adj Revenue 23.35%

MRDT received from January to June 2025 reflects continued growth in accommodation revenues (18%), despite an early curtailment of the gondola operation at KHMR due to an incident in mid-March which caused cancellations and significant drop-off in visitors for the remainder of the ski season. The Golden Visitor Centre also confirms an increase of 11% in visitor party interactions since opening on May 15th.

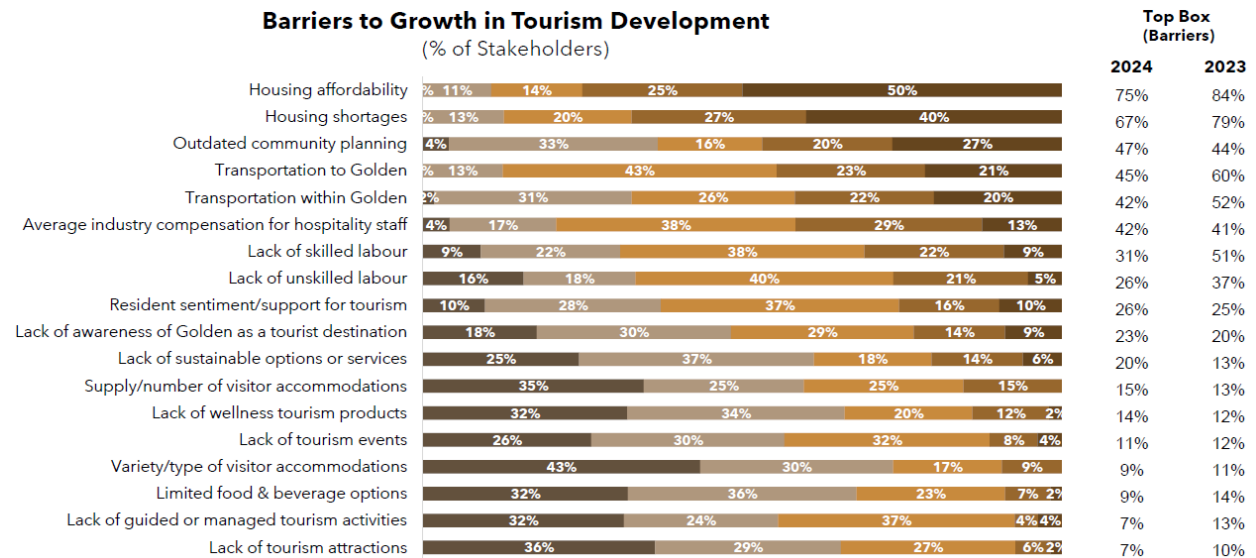
The 2025 Tourism Golden Stakeholder Survey cites housing availability and affordability of housing as the largest barrier to growth, although the percentages have dropped slightly from 2023, likely due to the completion of the large multi-year Kicking Horse Canyon Phase IV project, and the cessation of non-resident employees and contractors booking short term accommodations. Lack of skilled and unskilled labour, exacerbated by the housing issues, will only deepen because of the changes to the federal TFWP implemented in September 2024 which will effectively halve the number of LMIA's available to employers into 2026, and will particularly impact RMI communities. Advocacy efforts by tourism and hotel industry bodies to encourage federal and provincial immigration programs to recognise the value of immigration programs in supporting the tourism industry, however successful, are unlikely to mitigate the short-term impact on businesses in 2026.

The survey also highlights outdated community planning and lack of consistent transportation as the second and third largest barriers to growth. An affordable housing project in downtown Golden, alongside the planned revision to the OCP and direction from the 2024 Housing Needs report, will aim to

focus efforts on addressing the housing issues, and, in turn, the labour issues, as much as they can be without significant improvements to industry-supporting immigration programs. The continued RMI support for the winter shuttle will also help to encourage visitors despite the lack of transportation links and infrastructure.

The 2024 Tourism Golden Stakeholder Survey also recognises a lack of guided or managed tourism activities, tourism attractions and events, along with destination awareness, as barriers. The 5-year Strategic Plan, and annual marketing and destination management plans of the DMO continue to focus on attracting targeted, high value visitors, and encourage the development of new visitor experiences, and events. Their success to date, and the continued provision of RMI funding supporting the development of visitor-facing infrastructure, will address these industry concerns in the coming years.

Subject to continued RMI funding of the seasonal transportation program, the winter shuttle program will continue to address transportation needs of the visitor in winter.





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Updated Financial Report

There are no changes to the 2024 Financial Report.