

Improving Winter and Shoulder Season Tourism in Charlevoix — Three-Year Strategy

March 2021



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The information and data contained herein is accurate as of the date of submission and subject to change in line with market trends and external variables.

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Acknowledgements

This winter and shoulder season tourism strategy for the Charlevoix region was developed following exchanges with the region's primary tourism stakeholders. Said stakeholders participated in the identification and ranking of the main opportunities the region could offer to visitors during the winter and shoulder seasons.

This winter and shoulder season tourism strategy was made possible with the involvement and cooperation of the following people.

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Tourisme Charlevoix, Louis Laliberté

Overview of the winter/ shoulder season tourism strategy

CHARLEVOIX CAN DIVERSIFY ITS TOURISM PRODUCTS
AND EXPERIENCES THROUGH WINTER/SHOULDER SEASON TOURISM

Context & aim

In May 2019, the Government of Canada released a new national tourism development strategy (Creating Middle Class Jobs: A Federal Tourism Growth Strategy). The overarching objective of the strategy is to equip Canadian communities with the means to drive tourism growth in their region.

Within the strategy, the Government of Canada committed to stimulating and diversifying Canada's tourism products and experiences in order to take on one of five long-standing challenges faced by the tourism sector: the seasonal nature of tourism across the country. As most tourism activities take place in the summer, the Government determined that there was a great opportunity to develop and strengthen Canada's tourism products and experiences to create demand outside of the peak season.

The Government of Canada also launched the Canadian Experiences Fund (CEF) in 2019 to support communities across the country in the creation, improvement or enhancement of tourism products, facilities and experiences. The Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) was selected to oversee the CEF through its Elevating Canadian Experiences program.

In collaboration with Twenty31 Consulting, the program includes the development of a series of workshops across the country in which tourism stakeholders learn the importance of building winter and shoulder season tourism, the creation of a national market readiness toolkit, and the creation of winter and shoulder season tourism development strategies for specific destinations, including Charlevoix in Quebec.

This document describes the winter and shoulder season tourism development strategy for Charlevoix, including, in particular:

- A definition of the key elements underpinning the winter/shoulder season strategy, such as the guiding principles, the vision and the strategic objectives;
- The identification and ranking of lead opportunities and supporting initiatives; and
- The creation of a road map for implementing the strategy

Overall, the document provides Charlevoix and its tourism partners with a 24–36-month plan aiming to develop and elevate its potential as a winter and shoulder season destination.

WE APPROACHED THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK IN THREE STAGES

Approach

01

COLLECTION

- 1/ Analyzing the situation
- 2/ Winter/shoulder season tourism workshops
- 3/ Involving stakeholders 1

02

APPROACH

- 4/ Initial evaluation
- 5/ Involving stakeholders 2
- 6/ Prioritizing initiatives
- 7/ First draft of the Charlevoix strategy

03

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8/ Revising the Charlevoix strategy
- 9/ Finalizing the Charlevoix strategy





A PROVEN STRUCTURE WAS USED TO SUPPORT CREATION
OF THE WINTER/SHOULDER SEASON TOURISM STRATEGY

Strategic framework for winter/ shoulder season tourism

Guiding Principles

The values that guide those involved in the Charlevoix tourism industry when developing winter and shoulder seasons tourism products and experiences

Challenges & Opportunities

Addressing the challenges identified during the winter/shoulder season tourism workshops and the opportunities to overcome said challenges

Vision

Ensuring that the management and orientation of winter/shoulder season tourism in Charlevoix reflects industry demands, potential visitors, tourism stakeholders and communities

Objectives

The things Charlevoix wants to gradually implement as it develops its winter/shoulder season tourism product: the final result

Pillars

The themes which become key points when describing the strategy's orientation

Lead Opportunities

Guiding principles with a competitive advantage

May reflect a competitive opportunity that is currently under-utilized

May be focused on the demand of a specific customer segment which is not yet adequately targeted

Prioritized in order of ease of implementation and impact on tourism objectives

Supporting Initiatives

Supporting initiatives support the lead opportunities

Ensure that the conditions for success are in place and that there are sufficient resources to develop the identified opportunity

May include the confirmation of a sufficient tourist infrastructure to support the product

May include market profile, size and characteristics of those likely to visit the region

Details of the winter/ shoulder season tourism strategy



THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF WINTER/SHOULDER SEASON TOURISM
ARE THE VALUES WHICH GUIDE TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS

Guiding principles for winter/ shoulder season tourism



Must be tolerant of a
change of mindset from a
summer to a year-round
destination



Must be created conjointly and
collaboratively by the community,
the industry and the government



Must prioritize
environmental, social, and
corporate governance



Must concentrate on promoting
and supporting long-term local/
regional economic and job
growth



Must be valued and
supported by the
community, the industry
and the government

Guiding principles for winter/shoulder season tourism identified by Charlevoix's key tourism stakeholders.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WINTER/SHOULDER SEASON
TOURISM EMPHASIZES A CHANGE OF MINDSET

Vision

Our vision is to make Charlevoix a year-round premier outdoor recreation destination.

With our breathtaking vistas and impressive outdoor recreation products, our aim is to wow the active customer market segment 365 days a year, and ensure that visitors to Charlevoix can recharge and leave feeling reinvigorated — that's our wellness promise.

Having been identified as a priority region for tourism development by the provincial government, we will work in close collaboration with the local community, government agencies, the tourism industry and key stakeholders who impact the development of sustainable winter/shoulder season tourism in order to achieve this vision.

Winter/shoulder season tourism vision developed by the key stakeholders of Charlevoix's tourism industry.



FOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES SUPPORT
THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF OUR VISION

Objectives

- 1/** Focus on developing 1–2 distinct possibilities for winter/shoulder season tourism per year, for the next 3 years
- 2/** Increase revenue received through accommodation tax by 5% (from October to May)*
* Based on tourist revenue for the 2019 winter/shoulder season
- 3/** Increase tourism employment growth by 5% year-round*
*Based on long-term tourism employment growth in 2019
- 4/** Increase the number of winter and shoulder season tourism enterprises by 5%
- 5/** Constantly communicate the value of tourism and the involvement of key tourism stakeholders in the development of winter/shoulder season tourism

Winter/shoulder season tourism strategic objectives developed by the key stakeholders of Charlevoix's tourism industry.

Lead opportunities & initiatives



THE PILLARS OF WINTER/SHOULDER SEASON TOURISM CREATE A YEAR-ROUND MINDSET, IMPROVE THE TOURISM PRODUCT AND ATTRACT VISITORS

Pillars

01

ESTABLISH A YEAR-ROUND TOURISM-CENTRIC MINDSET

INITIATIVES:

- 1/ Release the winter/shoulder season tourism strategy
- 2/ Provide ongoing, clear communications with stakeholders
- 3/ Explore potential markets for the winter/shoulder season (active customer market segment)
- 4/ Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships

RESULT

Establish year-round tourism by prioritizing and communicating with all concerned stakeholders.

02

IMPROVE THE TOURISM PRODUCT

INITIATIVES:

- 1/ Create an inventory of existing winter/shoulder season tourism products and experiences that are related to the identified lead opportunities:
 - Winter outdoor recreation activities
 - Wellness tourism
 - Active customer market segment
- 2/ Develop products and experiences related to the lead opportunities
- 3/ Create packages and itineraries based on the lead opportunities

Lead opportunities

RESULT

Improve the offer through a deeper understanding of the existing possibility and by linking them to potential market needs.

03

ATTRACT VISITORS

INITIATIVES:

- 1/ Plan and execute 1-2 promotional campaigns focused on a multi-product winter tourism and wellness tourism for the active customer market segment
- 2/ Work with tourism channels to promote the products and experiences related to the lead opportunities

RESULT

Promote Charlevoix's winter and shoulder season tourism products and experiences to the right people, at the right time.



PILIER 1: ESTABLISH A YEAR-ROUND TOURISM-CENTRIC MINDSET**Initiative 01: Release The Winter/Shoulder Season Tourism Strategy****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

Creating a winter/shoulder season tourism strategy is the first thing any destination must do to develop and improve growth in its tourism sector and other related industries. To ensure the tourism strategy is a success, the next key step is for the proprietary authority (in this case Tourisme Charlevoix) to share the strategy with key stakeholders and strengthen the sense of responsibility for its implementation and its position as leader of the initiative.

Actions

Approve the winter/shoulder season tourism strategy for Charlevoix

Get all key stakeholders involved

Share precise elements of the strategy with key stakeholders, in this instance winter outdoor recreation activities, wellness tourism and the active customer market segment (see pillar 2) in order to develop the region's winter and shoulder season tourism product, so that Charlevoix can become a year-round outdoor recreation destination.

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

3 months following approval of the strategy

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

RCM/municipalities (supporter)

RESULTS

Key stakeholders of the Charlevoix tourism sector are aware of the winter/shoulder season tourism strategy

PILIER 1: ESTABLISH A YEAR-ROUND TOURISM-CENTRIC MINDSET**Initiative 02: Provide ongoing, clear communications with stakeholders****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

Destinations with the greatest success rates are those which maintain ongoing communications with key stakeholders (and in some cases with all stakeholders).

The mindset of constant communication strengthens the project leads' obligation to execute the strategy and gives key stakeholders the opportunity to understand the context and align their own initiatives to the common cause.

Actions

Release the approved winter/shoulder season tourism strategy, share the lead opportunities to focus on, the reasonings behind said orientations, and Tourisme Charlevoix's initiatives to implement the strategy

Create networking opportunities for the region's tourism stakeholders

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

Immediately following approval of the strategy

Ongoing

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

RCM/municipalities (supporter)

RESULTS

Majority of tourism stakeholders satisfied with communications

Ongoing communication regarding tourism in the region

PILIER 1: ESTABLISH A YEAR-ROUND TOURISM-CENTRIC MINDSET**Initiative 03: Research potential markets for winter/shoulder season tourism****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

Consumer behaviour in the winter/shoulder season differs from consumer behaviour in the peak summer season. And, of course, there have been many changes to the industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which apply to local, national, regional and international travellers.

Actions

Carry out detailed research to understand the potential needs of the target market, including the types of places and activities they are looking for, how they intend to learn more about the products and experiences, their booking behaviours and their new interests stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, etc.

Carry out research using existing tools to better understand the potential target visitors to ensure that the region provides the experiences they are looking for and attracts them through effective marketing campaigns

In-depth social listening could be a profitable way of quickly obtaining usable data

Try to understand how locals perceive tourism in general, but also specifically in the winter/shoulder season, in order to address any negative perception they may have of potential visitors

Provide all partners (tourism and non-tourism) access to ideas in order to evaluate possibilities and make the best business decisions

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

6–12 months following approval of the strategy

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

RESULTS

Acquire data on the target market and market needs for winter/should season tourism

Tourism stakeholders can access research

PILIER 1: ESTABLISH A YEAR-ROUND TOURISM-CENTRIC MINDSET**Initiative 04: Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

When branching out into new territories—as may well be the case for many tourism stakeholders in Charlevoix who are working on developing/elevating a potential winter or shoulder season tourism product—working collaboratively with other stakeholders and partners can provide a level of support in which partners and stakeholders can refer to each other for vital advice. By doing so, they reduce the risk they would face if they (destination or stakeholder) attempted to develop new products and experiences alone.

Actions

Increase opportunities for networking, in particular for stakeholders with direct links to the lead opportunities identified in the Charlevoix winter/shoulder season tourism strategy, which will enable them to reduce potential financial/operational risks

Foster possibilities for partnerships to support market research, marketing and promotion, the development of packages and itineraries, and the efforts to improve the destination's overall winter and shoulder season tourism product

Leverage tools such as video conferencing platforms and social media to connect stakeholders, and where possible, organize in-person meetings to introduce stakeholders to one another with the objective of creating business opportunities

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

3 months following approval of the strategy

Ongoing

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

RCM/municipalities (supporter)

RESULTS

Increased collaboration between the various stakeholders involved in developing and improving the destination's winter/shoulder season tourism product





PILIER 2: IMPROVE THE TOURISM PRODUCT**Initiative 01: Winter/shoulder season tourism product and experience inventory****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

Through the creation of this winter/shoulder season tourism strategy, the region's tourism stakeholders have identified and prioritized several opportunities to drive the improvement of Charlevoix' winter and shoulder season tourism product.

Actions

For the best chances of success, concentrate on the 1–2 best opportunities for the first 12–24 months

Analyze the other identified and ranked opportunities to determine if Charlevoix should focus on those also

Gain an understand of the winter and shoulder season tourism product and experience inventory based on the lead opportunities (especially as some stakeholders will have been affected by COVID-19)

Identify the potential gaps for developing new products and experiences or packages

Share this information with key stakeholders so that they are aware of the products and experiences they could be involved in

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

3–6 months following approval of the strategy

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

RCM/municipalities (supporter)

RESULTS

The creation of an inventory of winter and shoulder season products and experiences

PILIER 2: IMPROVE THE TOURISM PRODUCT**Initiative 02: Develop products and experiences based on the lead opportunities****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

Charlevoix's inventory of existing winter and shoulder season tourism products and experiences (Pillar 2 – Initiative 1: Winter/Shoulder Season Tourism Product and Experience Inventory) will enable the destination to identify the gaps that need to be bridged in order to provide visitors with a comprehensive tourism experience.

Actions

Work with key stakeholders (at round table-type activities divided by product type) on the identified opportunities to bridge gaps, drawing on the market research to ensure that the products and experiences developed are aligned with the potential needs of the target market (Pillar 1: Initiative 3 – Explore Potential Markets for Winter/Shoulder Season Tourism)

Analyze what other destinations in Quebec, Canada and abroad are doing for the identified lead opportunities

Present a cost-benefit analysis to the stakeholders who may support the implementation of new products and experiences, such as municipalities, RCMs and other stakeholders who may be open to expanding their services

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

3–6 months following approval of the strategy

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

Round tables by product type (leader)

RCM/municipalities (supporter)

Tourism stakeholders (supporter)

RESULTS

Develop new products and experiences related to the main opportunities

PILIER 2: IMPROVE THE TOURISM PRODUCT**Initiative 03: Create packages and itineraries based on the lead opportunities****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

In many cases, solely developing products and experiences (Pillar 2: Initiative 3 – Develop Products and Experiences Based on the Lead Opportunities) can be sufficient for inciting travellers to visit the destination and for guaranteeing the quality of their experience in the hopes of promoting a second visit or word-of-mouth promotional opportunities.

However, market research (Pillar 1: Initiative 3 – Explore Potential Winter/ Shoulder Season Tourism Markets) may reveal that some visitors prefer to have decisions made for them regarding accommodation, meals and drinks, activities, attractions, etc.

Actions

Work with the main identified stakeholders and those involved in developing products and experiences based on the lead opportunities to identify and create an inventory of potential itineraries based on themes, specific products and travellers' needs for the active customer market segment

Work with regional stakeholders to roll out and promote new packages/ itineraries and with the advertising agency to promote said itineraries

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

3–6 months following approval of the strategy

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

Tourism stakeholders (leader)

RESULTS

Create new packages and itineraries based on the lead opportunities



PILIER 3: ATTRACT VISITORS

Initiative 01: Plan and execute 1–2 promotional campaigns based on multi-product winter tourism and wellness tourism for the active customer market segment

DESCRIPTION**Justification**

The stakeholders who helped develop Charlevoix's winter/shoulder season tourism strategy identified the active customer market segment as a lead opportunity, in particular those looking for a destination where they can recharge through wellness tourism.

Actions

Inform target markets (incl. active customer market segment) of Charlevoix's tourism product, concentrating on multi-product winter tourism and wellness tourism

Use targeted marketing campaigns to incite the active customer market segment to experience a new winter/shoulder season product, to stay longer, with more members of their family or friends, and to spend more by emphasizing the possibilities identified as ready to market, such as multi-product winter tourism and wellness tourism.

Drawing on the research in Pillar 1: Initiative 3 (Explore Potential Markets for Winter/Shoulder Season Tourism), develop integrated campaigns targeting specific areas of Quebec, supported by messages, channels and influencers, if required.

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

6–12 months following approval of the strategy

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

RESULTS

1–2 targeted campaigns for the active customer market segment

PILIER 3: ATTRACT VISITORS**Initiative 02: Work with tourism channels****DESCRIPTION****Justification**

Tourism channels, such as travel agencies, have massively evolved. We are now living in an era of online travel agencies and direct supplier/third-party booking sites.

Actions

Identify the tour operators targeting the active customer market segment who could be a useful channel for promoting multi-product winter tourism and wellness tourism in the region

Contact the tour operators to promote products, experiences and packages

Explore how to better promote winter and shoulder season products, experiences and packages targeting various psychographics with online travel agencies that target regional/promotional trips.

TIMEFRAME/CATALYST

Underway

LEADS

Tourisme Charlevoix (leader)

RESULTS

Promote winter/shoulder season packages through tourism channels



EACH INITIATIVE IS DEFINED AROUND A SCHEDULE BASED ON NEEDS,
IMPACT AND FACILITY OF IMPLEMENTATION

Tactical road map

	SHORT-TERM: 0–6 MONTHS	MEDIUM-TERM: 6–18 MONTHS	LONG-TERM 18 MONTHS TO 3 YEARS
01 STRENGTHEN TOURISM BASES	<p>Release the winter/shoulder season tourism strategy</p> <p>Provide ongoing, clear communications with stakeholders</p>	<p>Research potential markets for the winter/shoulder season (regionally as a priority)</p> <p>Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships</p> <p>Provide ongoing, clear communications with stakeholders</p> <p>Develop products and experiences based on the lead opportunities</p>	<p>Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships</p> <p>Provide ongoing, clear communications with stakeholders</p>
02 OPTIMIZE PERFORMANCE IN 2021	<p>Create an inventory of existing winter/shoulder season tourism products and experiences that are related to the lead opportunities</p>		
03 PREPARE FOR A RETURN TO "NORMAL LIFE"		<p>Plan and execute 1–2 promotional campaigns focused on multi-product winter tourism and wellness tourism for the active customer market segment</p> <p>Work with tourism channels to promote the products and experiences related to the lead opportunities</p>	<p>Plan and execute one promotional campaign focused on multi-product winter tourism for the family market segment</p> <p>Work with tourism channels to promote the products and experiences related to the lead opportunities</p>





Appendix

THERE ARE OBSTACLES WHICH WILL IMPACT THE DEVELOPMENT OF WINTER/
SHOULDER SEASON TOURISM IN CHARLEVOIX...

Challenges



Transport and accessibility

One of the greatest challenges for the Charlevoix region is reassuring visitors that the road to the destination isn't long or arduous. Access to the region can be difficult if tourists do not have their own vehicle as public transport is limited. Furthermore, once at the destination it can be expensive to travel by taxi.



Business closures

The region's tourism enterprises often decide to close their business at the beginning of the week (or simply altogether for the winter) because it is not busy enough or because they are over-tired. Also, many of the region's businesses close in the early evening.



Tourism product management

Several winter activities, products and events are managed by a committee of volunteers. Unfortunately, as this is not based on a business model, this can actually be an obstacle to development and does not guarantee the sustainability of the activities. The cross-country skiing, snowmobile and snowshoe trails in Charlevoix are excellent examples of this.



Product development

The region is an immense winter/shoulder season playground for any outdoor recreation enthusiast, but there are limited indoor activities in the event of bad weather. There is also a lack of activities for families with young children and things to do on an evening.



Notoriety and destination marketing

To increase the destination's notoriety, it must be promoted more in markets outside the province. Destination marketing could also emphasize how safe it is to travel to the region.



Entrepreneurial collaboration

Strengthened ties between tourism stakeholders would lead to greater awareness of the winter and shoulder season tourism product and foster the creation of turnkey packages to boost tourism numbers.

Challenges of winter/shoulder season tourism identified by Charlevoix's key tourism stakeholders.



... AND MANY OPPORTUNITIES WHICH COULD
IMPROVE WINTER/SHOULDER SEASON TOURISM

Opportunities



Winter outdoor recreation activities

Cross-country skiing, dog sledding
Snowmobiling, ice fishing,
snowshoeing
Alpine skiing, fatbiking
Dark skies
Trail running



The beauty of the St. Lawrence/Wellbeing tourism

Breathtaking vistas
Recharging and wellness tourism



Local products/culinary tourism

Route des saveurs de Charlevoix
Table agro-touristique de Charlevoix



Tourism promotion/elevation

Relaunch the winter version of the
Grandes Voix de Charlevoix campaign
Raise awareness locally of the winter
tourism product so that locals become
ambassadors
Multi-activity passports



Entrepreneurial mindset

Support for businesses
Resources for events
Resources for trails
maintained
by volunteers



Snow

World-class winter
destination
Trademark



Uniqueness

Geopark: Charlevoix's
Impact Crater – the
destination's DNA



Technology

Turnkey packages
available online
Application for
backcountry safety
Application for self-
guided trails/tours



New markets

Families
Small-scale business
owners
and remote workers



Infrastructure

Charlevoix train
Charlevoix airport



Personal challenges

Défi 5 sommets
La Virée Nordique



Culture and events

Support new and
existing events
Extend the duration of
some existing events





CHARLEVOIX HAS IDENTIFIED SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES
FOR IMPROVING WINTER/SHOULDER SEASON TOURISM

Lead opportunities

HOW TO USE THE MODEL

Prioritize opportunities based on the qualitative evaluation of the impact of objectives (typically defined in a workshop) and the facility of implementation

Identify the opportunities that require further analysis or research

Opportunities may fall in more than one quadrant. This is a dynamic model. We hope that eventually all opportunities will fall in quadrant I.

STRONG POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT OF OBJECTIVES

3. Medium-term returns (2–4 years)



QUEBEC'S ENGLISH-SPEAKING MARKET SEGMENT



PRIORITY REGION



LOCAL PRODUCTS, CULINARY TOURISM



RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL POPULATION



ARTS & CULTURE



COTTAGE RENTALS

1. Almost ready for market



ACTIVE CUSTOMER MARKET SEGMENT



WINTER OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES



WELLNESS TOURISM

4. Re-evaluation or future consideration



SNOW



ICE ACTIVITIES



INDOOR ACTIVITIES



INFRASTRUCTURE: ROADS, TRAIN, AIRPORT

2. Rapid returns (1–2 years)



FESTIVALS & EVENTS



NATIONAL PARKS AND MARINE PARK



PERSONAL CHALLENGES



FAMILY MARKET SEGMENT



GEO PARK — CRATER

WHILE SOME OPPORTUNITIES ARE ACHIEVABLE IN THE LONG-TERM,
OTHERS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED MORE QUICKLY

Focus: Opportunities that are almost ready for market



Winter outdoor recreation

The mountains, the views and the snow make Charlevoix an immense winter playground for any backcountry ski and snowshoe fans and enthusiasts of all other winter outdoor recreation activities. A great winter tourism product could help differentiate Charlevoix from other regions of Quebec. Winter outdoor recreationists are almost guaranteed significant quantities of snow year after year whether they prefer groomed or backcountry trails.



Wellness tourism

Wellness tourism is a growing segment in Charlevoix. With the region's new tourism positioning, A Magnetic Attraction, visitors are invited to energize, rest, indulge and awaken. Wellness tourism and outdoor recreation are a perfect combination for the active customer market segment.



Active customer market segment

For several years now, an active customer market segment has been attracted by Charlevoix's tourism product. The region's breathtaking vistas make it even more attractive. A significant portion of the active customer market segment visits the region for its national parks and marine park in the summer season, evidently, it would be worth attracting them to come back for the winter/shoulder season tourism product also. A substantial number of the active customer market segment lives in the large urban centres close to Charlevoix, namely Quebec City and Montreal.



OTHER OPPORTUNITIES MAY BE IMPLEMENTED
IN THE NEXT 2–4 YEARS

Profitable opportunities for the coming 12–24 months

Profitable opportunities for coming 12–24 months



Family market segment

For some time now, we've been witnessing an enhanced tourism product for families in Charlevoix.

With a significant family customer base in Quebec, attracting a greater number of this market segment could substantially impact the region's tourism industry and the perception that Charlevoix is an adult-only destination.

While some tourism enterprises do offer tourism products or experiences for families, there is still work to do to develop this market segment, especially with regards to indoor activities in the event of bad weather.



Festivals & events

The creation of festivals and events in the winter or shoulder season may support an increase in festival goers from the region and beyond, and also improve the quality of experiences available for local residents.

Tourisme Charlevoix's support would enable the region to set itself apart through its enhanced product, even more so if the festivals and events are related to the lead opportunities, such as outdoor recreation activities and wellness tourism.





Geopark — Charlevoix's Impact Crater

The region's magical landscape was sculpted by a 4.5 km-wide meteorite which landed 400 million years ago.

The Géoparc de Charlevoix's strives to showcase the region through the international geological importance of its meteoritic origins in accordance with the global model of protection, education and sustainable development. It could be interesting to introduce visitors to the origins of the region's breathtaking scenery year-round.



Personal challenges

Over the years, the Charlevoix region has spearheaded many sporting competitions, such as the Défi 5 sommets, the Virée Nordique and the Ultra-Trail Harricana (winter edition). For quite some time now, people have been actively looking for personal challenges to push themselves to the limit. They choose a sporting event to participate in, for example a marathon, and train in the run up to their personal challenge.

These sporting tourists plan their trips (accommodation, transport, etc.) and even extend their stays to visit the area..



National parks and marine park

Charlevoix is privileged to be home to two national parks and one marine park: the Parc National des Grands-Jardins, which is one of the central zones of the Charlevoix Biosphere Reserve, the Parc National des Hautes-Gorges-de-la-Rivière-Malbaie, home to some of the highest rock faces east of the Rockies, and the Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park, one of the best whale watching locations in the world.

This opportunity is directly linked to the identified opportunities: winter outdoor recreation activities, wellness tourism and the active customer market segment.



OTHER OPPORTUNITIES MAY BE DEVELOPED
IN THE NEXT 3–5 YEARS

Other opportunities: medium-term opportunities

Medium-term opportunities — next 2–4 years



Local products, culinary tourism

Charlevoix is renowned for the variety of local products, its chefs and dining, and for the tourist culinary trail, La Route des saveurs.

While many producers, processors and restaurants are open year-round, many other close in the fall and re-open in the spring.



Arts & culture

Charlevoix has an interesting arts and culture scene: Domaine Forget and its music, the Symposium international d'art contemporain de Baie-Saint-Paul for its artists, and the region's numerous art galleries.

An unrivalled destination for art aficionados, more could be done to attract them to the region where they could discover the other attractions.



Priority region

The region of Charlevoix has recently been named a priority region for tourism development by the Premier of Quebec.

The amounts available for the three ports of entry for international travellers to Quebec, including the greater Quebec City region, could be used to promote winter and shoulder season tourism in Charlevoix.

Medium-term opportunities — next 2–4 years



Cottage rentals

The cottage rental market segment continues to grow in the Charlevoix region.

Now that people have begun to rent cottages in the region, work must be done to promote the available activities and attractions and thus encourage them to venture beyond the cottage.



Relationship with local population

In order to work on developing and elevating the Charlevoix winter and shoulder season tourism product, we must first work on improving relations with the local population.

Once locals understand the impact of tourism on the region, they will be more likely to want to participate in developing the tourism industry. Once involved, they will also want to discover the activities and attractions, and thus become excellent ambassadors for the region.



Quebec's English-speaking market segment

A particularly interesting target market is Quebec's English-speaking community. Many English-speakers living in big urban centres are wanting to spend time in large open spaces where they can take part in or discover new outdoor recreation activities.

This initiative would take longer in order to understand the segment and adequately target promotional activities in English.

FINALLY, SOME OPPORTUNITIES MAY BE DEVELOPED
IN THE FUTURE OR FOLLOWING A RE-EVALUATION

Other opportunities: opportunities for future consideration/re-evaluation

Opportunities for future consideration/re-evaluation



Indoor activities

While the winter and shoulder season brings ideal conditions, no activities are safe from Mother Nature's fancies. It would therefore be pertinent to increase the number of indoor activities.

Indoor activities would also provide a playground for young families or those wanting to practice their favourite sport while waiting for winter to settle in and the snow to arrive, such as indoor rock climbing or training for a personal challenge.



Ice activities

Ice activities, such as skating, ice fishing and ice climbing are becoming increasingly popular.

Ice activities resonate with many different customer segments, including the active customer market segment and those looking to experience new winter activities.

Ice activities should be included in winter activity packages or packages tied to arts and culture.





Infrastructure: roads, train, airport

Access to the region seems to be one of the main obstacles to developing winter and shoulder season tourism. The Charlevoix airport is only currently in operation from May to November. The Charlevoix train from June to October.

Motor vehicles remain one of the only methods of transport out of the peak summer season. For those less accustomed to Quebec roads, winter driving conditions can pose a serious challenge to anyone wanting to visit the region between November and March.



Snow

The breathtaking winter scenery, and in particular the St. Lawrence River in the winter, remain top attractions.

The photo viewpoints along the roadside need to be improved.

Climate change may also pose a challenge.



Supporting initiatives



SUPPORTING INITIATIVES THAT WILL FACILITATE
THE IDENTIFIED LEAD OPPORTUNITIES

Supporting initiatives: winter outdoor recreation activities

PRODUCTS & EXPERIENCES	FAVOURABLE CONTEXT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS
<p>Create an inventory of companies providing winter outdoor recreation activities and identify the possibilities</p> <p>Support the creation of products and experiences</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	<p>Share the prioritization of Charlevoix's winter brand image based on outdoor winter activities with the main stakeholders and the community</p>	<p>Create an inventory of the existing supporting infrastructure, identify the gaps and create a plan to improve it</p>	<p>Carry out market research to identify and define the target markets for winter outdoor recreation</p>	<p>Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including online travel agencies) to promote winter outdoor recreation products and experiences in Charlevoix</p>	<p>Create 1-2 promotional campaigns for the identified target markets</p>

CATEGORY OF OPPORTUNITY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVES	DESCRIPTION
Products & experiences	Create an inventory of companies providing winter outdoor recreation activities and identify the possible gaps	Create an inventory of the existing winter outdoor recreation products and experiences that may influence Charlevoix's brand image Identify complementary products such as accommodation, dining and attractions
	Support the creation of products and experiences to bridge the gaps	Leverage the inventory of existing products and experiences to promote winter outdoor recreation activities and identify the possibilities for developing the brand image Work with various economic development and SME development organizations to support the development of new products and experiences related to this lead opportunity.
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once the region has gained a better understanding of its winter outdoor recreation activities and products, work to develop packages and itineraries that meet the identified needs of the target market (see the "target markets" initiative)
Favourable context	Share the prioritization of Charlevoix's winter brand image based on outdoor winter activities with the main stakeholders and the community	Share the winter/shoulder season tourism strategy for Charlevoix with key stakeholders Share the winter outdoor recreation product with all concerned stakeholders to ensure consistency with their own products and experiences
Infrastructure	Create an inventory of the existing supporting infrastructure, identify the gaps and create a plan to improve it	Create an inventory of the existing infrastructure for winter outdoor recreation activities Identify the gaps: maintenance, distance, signage, etc. Create an infrastructure improvement plan and submit it to government agencies to fund and carry out

CATEGORY OF OPPORTUNITY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVES	DESCRIPTION
Target markets	Carry out market research to identify and define the target markets for winter outdoor recreation	Carry out research to identify potential target markets (in the region to begin with) to determine the level of interest and consumer needs for winter outdoor recreation experiences and products
Channels	Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including online travel agencies) to promote winter outdoor recreation products and experiences	<p>Identify the tour operators that could be a great channel for promoting winter outdoor recreation activities, experiences and packages to the target markets, particularly in the Charlevoix region and neighbouring regions.</p> <p>Contact the tour operators to promote winter outdoor recreation products and experiences</p>
Marketing & public relations	Create 1–2 promotional campaigns for the identified target markets	Building on the ideas in the “target markets” initiative, create 1–2 promotional campaigns focused on winter outdoor recreation products and experiences

SUPPORTING INITIATIVES THAT WILL FACILITATE
THE IDENTIFIED LEAD OPPORTUNITIES (CONT.)

Supporting initiatives: wellness tourism

PRODUCTS & EXPERIENCES	FAVOURABLE CONTEXT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS
<p>Create an inventory of companies operating in the wellness tourism segment and identify the possibilities</p> <p>Support the creation of products and experiences</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	<p>Share wellness tourism's prioritization as a tourism experience with the key stakeholders and local community</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Carry out market research to identify and define the target markets for wellness tourism</p>	<p>Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including online travel agencies) to sell products and experiences</p>	<p>Create 1–2 promotional campaigns for the identified target markets</p>

CATEGORY OF OPPORTUNITY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVES	DESCRIPTION
Products & experiences	Create an inventory of wellness tourism experiences and identify the possible gaps	Create an inventory of existing wellness tourism experiences that may influence Charlevoix's winter and shoulder season brand image Identify complementary products such as accommodation, dining and attractions
	Support the creation of products and experiences to bridge the gaps	Leverage the inventory of existing products and experiences to promote wellness tourism and identify the possibilities for developing the brand image Work with various economic development and SME development organizations to support the development of wellness tourism experiences
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once the region has gained a better understanding of its wellness tourism product, work to develop packages and itineraries that meet the identified needs of the target market (see the "target markets" initiative)
Favourable context	Share the prioritization of Charlevoix's winter and shoulder season brand image based on wellness tourism with the main stakeholders and the community.	Share the winter/shoulder season tourism strategy for Charlevoix with key stakeholders Share the wellness tourism product with all concerned stakeholders to ensure consistency with their own products and experiences
Target markets	Carry out market research to identify and define the target markets for wellness tourism	Carry out research to identify potential target markets (in the region to begin with) to determine the level of interest and consumer needs for wellness tourism
Channels	Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including online travel agencies) to promote wellness tourism experiences	Identify the tour operators that could be a great channel for promoting wellness tourism experiences and packages to the target markets, particularly in the Charlevoix region and neighbouring regions Contact tour operators to promote wellness tourism experiences
Marketing & public relations	Create 1–2 promotional campaigns for the identified target markets	Building on the ideas in the "target markets" initiative, create 1–2 promotional campaigns focused on wellness tourism activities as an integral part of Charlevoix's new brand strategy, "magnetic attraction".





SUPPORTING INITIATIVES THAT WILL FACILITATE
THE IDENTIFIED LEAD OPPORTUNITIES (CONT.)

Supporting initiatives: active customer market segment

PRODUCTS & EXPERIENCES	FAVOURABLE CONTEXT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS
<p>Create an inventory of products and experiences popular with the active customer market segment</p> <p>Encourage the creation of products and experiences to bridge the gaps</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	Share the prioritization of the active customer segment as a target market with the key stakeholders and local community	None	Carry out market research to define the target market	Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including online travel agencies) to sell products and experiences to this customer segment	Create 1–2 promotional campaigns for this target market



CATEGORY OF OPPORTUNITY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVES	DESCRIPTION
Products & experiences	Inventory of products and experiences popular with the active customer segment	Create an inventory of existing products and experiences that may be popular with the active customer segment based on the needs of this target market (see initiative “target markets”), in particular for the winter/shoulder season Identify complementary products such as accommodation, dining and attractions
	Support the creation of additional attractions and experiences to bridge the gaps	Building on the inventory of existing products and experiences that may incite the active customer segment to visit the region in the winter/shoulder season, identify the possible gaps to a comprehensive experience Work with various economic development and SME development organizations to support the development of new products and experiences for the active customer market segment
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once the region has gained a better understanding of this market segment, work to develop packages and itineraries that meet the identified needs of the target market (see the “target markets” initiative)
Favourable context	Share the prioritization of Charlevoix’s winter and shoulder season brand image targeting the active customer market segment with the main stakeholders and the community.	Share the winter/shoulder season tourism strategy for Charlevoix with key stakeholders Ensure all concerned stakeholders are aware that the active customer market segment is a target market to ensure consistency with their own products and experiences
Target markets	Carry out market research to define the active customer target market	Carry out research to define the active customer market segment to determine its interests for winter/shoulder season tourism
Channels	Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including online travel agencies) to promote products and experiences likely to be popular with the active customer market segment	Identify the tour operators that could be a great channel for promoting products, experiences and packages likely to be popular with the active customer market segment, particularly in the Charlevoix region and neighbouring regions Contact tour operators who target the active customer market segment
Marketing & public relations	Create 1–2 promotional campaigns for this target market	Building on the ideas in the “target markets” initiative, create 1–2 promotional campaigns focused the active customer market segment



Thank you!

