

Enhancing Winter/Shoulder Season Tourism in Winnipeg: 3-year Strategy

March 2021

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Disclaimer

The recommendations reported herein are provided on a confidential basis. Recommendations can be used in whatever necessity, including releasing them to travel and tourism industry stakeholders and partners and/or media.

The information and data found in this report are current as of the date of submission and subject to change given market forces and external variables.

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For more information please contact:

Greg Klassen, Partner
+1 604 376 6341
gregk@twenty31.org

Joe Naaman, Partner
+1 609 575 2823
joen@twenty31.org

Oliver Martin, Partner
+1 416 721 3544
oliverm@twenty31.org

Twenty31 Consulting Inc.
Tourism.Defined.
www.Twenty31.org

Acknowledgements

Development of the Winnipeg 3-Year Shoulder/Winter Tourism Strategy is informed by significant engagement with key Winnipeg tourism stakeholders to identify and prioritize the unique opportunities that Winnipeg has to offer visitors in the shoulder/winter seasons.

The Winnipeg 3-Year Shoulder/Winter Tourism Strategy is made possible through the commitment and dedication of these stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER	ORGANIZATION	ROLE
Anders Swanson	Winnipeg Trails Association	Outdoor Sports/Trail Development
Barret Miller	FortWhyte Alive	Outdoor Attraction/Trails
Bill Elliott	Winnipeg Art Gallery	Arts and Culture
Bobby Mottola	Hargrave Street Market	Culinary
Brigitte Sandron	Travel Manitoba	PMO
Bruce Garvey	Delta Hotels by Marriott Winnipeg	Accommodations
Clare MacKay	The Forks North Portage Partnership	Outdoor Attraction/Retail
Cody Chomiak	Tourism Winnipeg	DMO
Colin Ferguson	Travel Manitoba	PMO
Darell Nadeau	Festival du Voyageur	Festivals and Events
Elise Wood	Travel Manitoba	PMO
Jackie Tenuta	Travel Manitoba	PMO
Jacques Lavergne	Canadian Museum for Human Rights	Attractions/Museum
Jeff Mayo	Thermea by Nordik Spa-Nature	Outdoor Attraction/Spa
Joel Waterman	Inn at the Forks	Accommodations
Karen Goossen	Tourism Winnipeg	DMO

STAKEHOLDER	ORGANIZATION	ROLE
Kate Fenske	Downtown Winnipeg Biz	Downtown/Retail
Kevin Donnelly	True North Sports & Entertainment	Winter Sports/ Concerts
Linda Whitfield	Travel Manitoba	PMO
Margaret Redmond	Assiniboine Park Conservancy	Attractions
Matthew Sabourin	Nonsuch La Brasserie & Brewery	Culinary
Natalie Thiesen	Tourism Winnipeg	DMO
Neil Fishman	Outlet Collection Winnipeg	Retail
Paul Jordan	The Forks North Portage Partnership	Outdoor Attraction/ Retail



Festival du Voyageur by Dan Harper



Winter/Shoulder season strategic framework overview

WINNIPEG CAN DIVERSIFY ITS TOURISM PRODUCTS AND EXPERIENCES THROUGH WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM.

Context & Purpose

On May 21, 2019, the Government of Canada launched a new national tourism development strategy ('Creating Middle Class Jobs: A Federal Tourism Growth Strategy') aimed at empowering communities across Canada to grow their tourism economies.

As part of that strategy, the Government of Canada committed to stimulate and diversify Canada's tourism products and experiences to overcome one of five of Canada's perennial tourism challenges: seasonality. With most tourism taking place during the summer months, it identified an opportunity to develop and enhance products and experiences, to create demand for travel beyond the peak summer season.

Additionally, it launched the Canadian Experiences Fund (CEF) to support expansion of distinctive products and experiences in rural communities. And, it selected the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) to manage the CEF via a new program called "Elevating Canadian Experiences".

The program, co-led by tourism management consultancy, Twenty31 Consulting, included a series of workshops across Canada to highlight the importance of building winter and shoulder season tourism capacity, the launch of a market-readiness toolkit and the creation of a series of regional winter and shoulder season tourism development strategies for selected regions – with one being Winnipeg, Manitoba.

This document provides the strategic framework for Winnipeg to develop winter and shoulder season tourism. Specifically, it includes:

- Definition of key elements underpinning a destination's Winter/Shoulder strategy like guiding principles, a vision and strategic objectives
- Identification and prioritization of competitive opportunities and their supporting initiatives
- Development of a roadmap for implementation

Taken together, this document provides Winnipeg, along with its travel and tourism industry partners, a 24 to 36 month plan to develop and enhance its winter and shoulder season tourism potential.

THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT APPROACH
CONSISTED OF THREE PHASES.

Approach

01

GATHER

- 1/ Situational analysis
- 2/ Winter/Shoulder workshop
- 3/ Stakeholder engagement 1

02

ACCESS

- 4/ Initial assessment
- 5/ Stakeholder engagement 2
- 6/ Initiative prioritization
- 7/ Draft Winnipeg strategic framework

03

RECOMMEND

- 8/ Winnipeg strategic framework review
- 9/ Final Winnipeg strategic framework



Hockey rink at the Forks Kristhine Guerrero

THE STRATEGY

Situational Analysis

We heard a lot from our interviews with the industry regarding the current situation for Winnipeg. Clearly Winnipeg is not starting from scratch but has a strong foundation from which to grow Winter/Shoulder season tourism.



Weather

Embrace the weather and winter
No bad weather just bad gear
Own winter. There is an opportunity to seize it
So much sunlight
Embrace all 5 seasons, including the polar vortex



Mindset

Opportunity to change the narrative of Winnipeg away from crime
“The perfect small BIG city”
Bilingual, multi-cultural, inclusive and welcoming
Talk more positively about winter in the city
Don't try to compete with Vegas, Mexico or Banff. Be confident with what we have
Exotic can also be cold
Develop winter for the locals and the visitors will follow



Product

We have all the product we need—outdoor, urban, cultural, food, adventure
We just need to package it better with Inbound/receptive operators



Opportunities Post-COVID-19

New focus on winter and outdoor activities due to pandemic
New momentum on soft adventure, especially from those who travel south or to mountains



A PROVEN STRUCTURE GUIDED DEVELOPMENT OF WINNIPEG
WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK.

Winnipeg Winter/Shoulder destination development structure

Guiding Principles

The values that guide Winnipeg tourism stakeholders in the development of Winnipeg Winter/Shoulder tourism products and experiences.

Challenges & Opportunities

Considers barriers identified in the Winter/Shoulder workshops and engagement sessions as well as opportunities to address those barriers.

Vision

Ensures alignment of the direction for Winter/Shoulder tourism in Winnipeg that reflects industry demands, potential visitors, operators, and the communities that tourism serves.

Strategic Objectives

The accomplishments that Winnipeg wishes to achieve its vision as it develops Winter/Shoulder tourism – the ultimate outcome.

Lead Opportunities

The “big idea” or the “big opportunity” where there is a competitive advantage

Can be supply driven reflecting a currently under-leveraged competitive opportunity.

Can be demand driven like an under-targeted group of prospective customers.

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

Supporting Initiatives

Complements the lead opportunity.

Ensures conditions for success are met and there are sufficient resources to develop the lead opportunity.

Can include ensuring there is sufficient tourism infrastructure to support the product.

Can include developing a profile, size of market and characteristics of those who might be willing to travel to the region.

Winter/Shoulder strategic framework details



Warming huts skating trail by Mike Peters

WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM GUIDING PRINCIPLES ARE VALUES THAT GUIDE WINNIPEG TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS.

Winter/Shoulder tourism guiding principles



Tolerance of a shift in mindset for tourism to embrace winter. We own winter.



Empowered tourism leadership to support and prioritize the growth of winter in Winnipeg



Develop and enhance our current product and focus on improving how we package our assets



Leverage the momentum of the post-COVID mindset for outdoor and winter experiences by locals and visitors



A tourism industry that is valued and supported by our community, government, industry and locals all year round

Winter/Shoulder tourism guiding principles identified and defined by key Winnipeg tourism stakeholders.

AND SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED THAT CAN ENHANCE WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM.

Challenges



Weather

While it can be a strength for reliable winter weather, the perception can be that it is too cold or even unreliably warm at times.



Mindset Shift

The tourism industry and travel media often have negative perceptions of winter in Winnipeg.



Festivals and Events

Maintaining support to continue with winter festivals and events are a challenge



Education and Training

Lack of education and training on what the city has to offer visitors and locals during the winter



Accessibility and Competition with Europe

European competitors have better air and transportation access and have a stronger, more competitive winter offering

Winter/Shoulder tourism challenges identified by key Winnipeg tourism stakeholders.

AND SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED THAT CAN ENHANCE WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM.

Opportunities



Create An Entertainment Season

Packaging True North Sports and Entertainment with Hotels for tourism

Purchase tickets available for out-of-town visitors



Arts & Culture

Support growth of culture and arts. Each cultural venue stays open late on a specific weeknight. Art Gallery—Monday, CMHR—Tuesday, etc. so that business travellers have options



FOMO Packages

Develop FOMO (fear-of-missing-out) packages including winter experiences as gift packages—spa/ wellness tourism, experiences, etc.



Develop Packages

Develop winter experiences and packages for locals and the visitors will follow



Festivals & Events

Enhance season long Winnipeg winter festival every week with mix of culture, outdoor, hockey, food and music scene



Leverage Winter Activities

Leverage outdoor winter activities/experiences from the River to the Forks such as ice-skating, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing



Partner with brands like Canada Goose

Provide appropriate winter clothing to domestic and international visitors for the duration of their stay. Package with hotels and experiences; then a donation program to homeless shelter



Mindset Shift

Change the narrative about Winnipeg and winter

Focus the marketing message around: We own winter



Partner with Red Bull

Partner with well-known Red Bull brand or others to attract major winter event in the city

Winter/Shoulder tourism challenges identified by key Winnipeg tourism stakeholders.

WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN WINNIPEG
INITIALLY FOCUSES ON A CHANGING MINDSET.

Vision

Manitoba is a must-visit four season destination generating significant and sustainable economic growth by delivering inspiring and authentic experiences in its unique urban, rural and wild settings

Visitors, especially the regional market, will be encouraged to participate in more of our Winter/Shoulder products and experiences including outdoor activities and our rich arts and culture scene; which will step up their overall satisfaction and increase their likelihood of returning to Winnipeg and inviting those from around the world to share in these rich winter activities.

Winnipeg and Manitoba will harness the richness of those experiences already available to enhance and package them to appeal to prospective visitors to choose Winnipeg in the winter and embrace winter as a competitive advantage.

Winter/Shoulder tourism vision detailed by key Winnipeg tourism stakeholders.



THREE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES SUPPORT ACTUALIZATION OF THE VISION.

Strategic Objectives

01

Engage tourism leadership to support Winter/Shoulder tourism and strengthen relationships with industry stakeholders

Prioritizing Winter/Shoulder Season tourism with Travel Manitoba, Tourism Winnipeg and Winnipeg's tourism industry

02

Develop or enhance 2-3 distinct Winter/Shoulder tourism opportunities per year for next 3 years

Identifying, prioritizing and growing potential experiences, product in Winnipeg over the next few years to support growing the Winter/Shoulder season.

03

Increase Winter/Shoulder (October through May) accommodations occupancy by 1% compared to 2019 within 3 years*

Quantifying evidence that the priority of Winter/Shoulder season tourism development is working. Giving the program at least two years to develop products and the destination.

*Based on 2019 Winter/Shoulder tourism occupancy

Winter/Shoulder tourism vision detailed by key Winnipeg tourism stakeholders.

Lead Opportunities



Photo credit: Mike Peters

WINNIPEG PRIORITIZED SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM.

Winter/Shoulder tourism lead opportunities

HIGH POTENTIAL TO IMPACT OBJECTIVES

3. Medium-term opportunities for next 2-4 years



PARTNER WITH CANADA GOOSE EQUIVALENT



WELLNESS EXPERIENCES



PARTNER WITH RED BULL EQUIVALENT



WINTER GEAR RENTAL



CULINARY

4. For later consideration/re-evaluation



INDIGENOUS TOURISM



WINNIPEG'S DISTINCT NEIGHBOURHOODS



DEVELOP PACKAGES WITH RECEPTIVE TOUR OPERATORS

1. Near market-ready



WE OWN WINTER



LEVERAGE WINTER ACTIVITIES INCLUDING RIVER TRAIL AND SKATING RINK



REGIONAL MARKET



ARTS & CULTURE

2. Quick wins for next 1-2 year



CREATE ENTERTAINMENT SEASON



CONVENTIONS & GATHERINGS



MUSIC SCENE



FESTIVALS & EVENTS

LOW POTENTIAL TO IMPACT OBJECTIVES

CHALLENGING TO IMPLEMENT

EASY TO IMPLEMENT

Winter/Shoulder tourism lead opportunities identified by key Winnipeg key tourism stakeholders and prioritized based on ease of implementation and impact on objectives.

WHILE SOME OPPORTUNITIES ARE LONGER-TERM, OTHERS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED SOONER.

Near market-ready opportunities



Leverage Winter Activities Including River Trail And Skating Rink

Winnipeg already has a number of winter activities centered around the Forks and winter. Many of these activities are free and support a great deal of local engagement. When there is good winter weather, thousands congregate. Poor weather, fewer. We have an opportunity to further leverage, develop, package and enhance outdoor activities/experiences from the River to the Forks for potential export and packaging. The River Trail is one of the world's longest naturally frozen skating trails and attracts all types of outdoor enthusiasts. There is some preliminary evidence, especially post-Covid, to support a growing interest in outdoor winter activities such as ice-skating, snowshoeing and cross-country.



Arts & Culture

Winnipeg has a thriving arts and culture scene. From the Canadian Museum of Human Rights to the WAG and its newest exhibit of the largest collection of Inuit art, to the Symphony and Ballet, Winnipeg over indexes in strong culture. However, Winnipeg can improve how to showcase its vibrant and rich arts and culture scene. Leverage the museums and other key cultural tourism experiences. Some of those opportunities include developing cultural calendar for locals and visitors, a strong brand position for Winnipeg culture and encourage one cultural institution to stay open later each evening for an “always on” cultural experience opportunity.

WHILE SOME OPPORTUNITIES ARE LONGER-TERM, OTHERS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED SOONER.

Near market-ready opportunities



We Own Winter

Winnipeg embraces winter. It is THE city of winter. It's a reality and Winnipeg has an opportunity to wear that label with pride rather than consider it as a negative. And if Winnipeggers embrace winter, their enthusiasm will be infectious to their friends and family and national and international visitors to the city. In fact, the brand of *Winterpeg* can be developed for national and international communications.



Regional Market

Winnipeg has an opportunity to develop winter tourism for locals first. An opportunity to invite Manitobans to explore their capital city during the winter months, develop experiences, festivals and events and then invite the rest of the world. "Target the locals, and the tourists will follow" The industry should develop programs and packages for locals first and within a few years, expand those packaged opportunities for Canadian and international audiences.



OTHER OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE DEVELOPED IN THE NEXT 1-2 YEARS.

Other opportunities: quick wins for next 1-2 years

Quick wins for next 1-2 years



Music Scene

Winnipeg has a vibrant and exciting live music scene with some of the best venues for catching sets from stellar local acts and international touring artists. No matter the genre, you'll find it on stage here.

Post-COVID-19, the interest in live entertainment could potentially be bigger than before.



Festivals & Events

Winnipeg is host to a variety of festivals and events taking place year-round.

Every winter since 1970, St. Boniface, Winnipeg's French quarter, is transformed into a winter paradise and becomes host to the largest winter festival in Western Canada: Festival du Voyageur. Voyageur, Métis and First Nations histories are brought back to life, not only through the historical interpretation offered inside reconstructed Fort Gibraltar, but also through the many attractions inside Voyageur Park and at the festival's various official sites. Festival is a strong asset for Winnipeg's winter tourism season. Other festivals could be developed or enhanced to support tourism growth in the winter.

Quick wins for next 1-2 years



Conventions & Gatherings

This initiative scored relatively low, not because it is not an essential opportunity to grow winter and shoulder season tourism to Winnipeg but because Tourism Winnipeg is already engaging in strategies to target these audiences.

This market is an extremely competitive one and a challenge to get meetings in Winnipeg during the winter months. However, that could be eased if Winnipeg were to embrace the Winter brand, position and expand some of its winter outdoor and cultural experiences, making the meetings sector in Winnipeg more compelling.



Create Entertainment Season

Winnipeg hosts dozens of NHL games, concerts and major events. Currently many of the tickets for these events are fully subscribed by locals. It can be a challenge for a prospective visitor to attain a ticket for popular games and events. However, there may be an opportunity to work more closely with True North Sports & Entertainment who are eager to support a program to withhold a number of tickets for packaging with hotels and other attractions for overnight out of town visitors.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE DEVELOPED IN THE NEXT 2-4 YEARS OR RE-EVALUATED (CONTINUED).

Other opportunities: medium-term opportunities for next 2-4 years

Medium-term opportunities for next 2-4 years



Wellness Experiences

Even though visitors are seeking wellness experiences, spa and wellness products are seen more as a value-added to the Winter/Shoulder tourism season in Winnipeg.



Culinary

Winnipeg is home to a multi-cultural and top-notch food and drink scene, this is also seen as a value-add to other expenses/products in the Winter/Shoulder season and not a lead driver.

Restaurants, microbreweries and culinary institutes are actively present in Winter/Shoulder tourism season programming in the city but Winnipeg sees these as strong compliments to other initiatives which are stronger drivers of destination choice to visit Winnipeg in the winter.



Partner With Canada Goose Or Other Winter Clothing Manufacturers

Since Winnipeg is home to winter clothing and equipment manufacturers such as Canada Goose, Manitobah Mukluks and Mondetta; the idea would be to partner with them to provide appropriate winter clothing to domestic and international visitors for the duration of their stay in order to enjoy the Winterpeg.



Partner with Red Bull

Red Bull and in particular its "crashed ice" televised extreme sports program may be a major draw to support a strong winter brand position and attract visitors to the region's many outdoor and indoor winter experiences. A partnership with Red Bull or equivalent may help accelerate Winnipeg's and Winterpeg's brand position.

Although it may be a great opportunity, more work research needs to be done as this is a complex venture.



Winter Gear Rental

In order to discover and enjoy winter activities in Winnipeg, many visitors will require easy access to winter gear rentals. It is common for ski hills to rent skis, snowboards; ice rinks to rent skates. Why not clothing and other winter gear rentals? Although this is an interesting opportunity, scoring very high on the impact it could have on growing winter tourism to Winnipeg, it will need more work to identify a lead organization or business who will be interested in taking the risk of investing in gear and then renting them out.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE DEVELOPED IN THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS OR RE-EVALUATED (CONTINUED).

Other opportunities: opportunities for later consideration/re-evaluation

Opportunities for Later Consideration/Re-evaluation



Winnipeg's Distinct Neighbourhoods

Winnipeg has diverse neighborhoods like the historic French Quarter and Exchange District or the boho chic Osborne Village. Although they are all worth exploring, this is not a lead driver as more work needs to be done from a tourism perspective.



Indigenous Tourism

From murals and big art pieces to restaurants and tours, Winnipeg offers a variety of indigenous tourism experiences. New opportunities include the new Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

The connection of product is strong around our culture and history of the fur trade and exploration of winter but this initiative may require much greater effort in developing this opportunity.



Develop Packages With Receptive Tour Operators

Develop winter experiences and packages for locals and the visitors will follow, but it is challenging to find a receptive operator to consider packaging local experiences. Other ways of packaging and selling winter experiences were considered more important.



Warming Huts at The Forks by Mike Peters

Supporting Initiatives



Zoo Lights Assiniboine Park Tyler Walsh

WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN WINNIPEG
INITIALLY FOCUSES ON A CHANGING MINDSET.

A deeper dive into Winnipeg's 4 highest potential (lead) activities



Leverage Winter Activities Including River Trail



We Own Winter



Arts & Culture



Regional Market

FOCUS IS ON SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE IDENTIFIED
PRIORITY LEAD OPPORTUNITIES

Leverage Winter Activities Including River Trail

PRODUCT & EXPERIENCES	ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PR
<p>Inventory related products and experiences and identify possible gaps</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	<p>Communicate prioritization of outdoor winter activities to key stakeholders and community</p>	<p>Continue to enhance and develop the river and the Forks assets</p>	<p>Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Manitoba)</p>	<p>Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences</p>	<p>Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets</p>

OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Products & Experiences	Inventory related products and experiences and identify possible gaps	<p>Conduct an inventory of existing outdoor winter products and experiences</p> <p>Includes identification of complementary assets like lodging, culinary and other attractions</p>
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once a comprehensive understanding of winter outdoor products and experiences that can be leveraged for the Winter/Shoulder season is completed, develop packages and itineraries that cater to identified target market needs (see “Target Markets” initiative)
Enabling Environment	Communicate prioritization of outdoor winter activities to key stakeholders and community	<p>Communicate the Winnipeg Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy with all key stakeholders</p> <p>Communicate the Winter/Shoulder outdoor winter offering with relevant stakeholders</p>
Target Markets	Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Manitoba)	Conduct market research to identify potential target markets (especially in Manitoba to begin), to determine their interest and needs in outdoor winter experiences
Channels	Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences	<p>Identify tour operators who may be a good conduit to promote developed outdoor winter packages to target markets, especially in Manitoba</p> <p>Connect with tour operators to promote outdoor winter experiences</p>
Marketing & PR	Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets	Develop 1-2 campaigns, leveraging insight from the “Target Markets” initiatives to develop 1-2 campaigns specific to outdoor winter activities



FOCUS IS ON SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE IDENTIFIED PRIORITY LEAD OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED).

Arts & Culture

PRODUCT & EXPERIENCES	ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PR
Inventory related arts and culture products and experiences and identify possible gaps Develop packages and itineraries	Communicate prioritization of arts & culture to key stakeholders and community	None	Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Manitoba)	Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences	Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets

OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Products & Experiences	Inventory related arts and culture experiences	<p>Conduct an inventory of existing arts and culture, especially for the Winter/Shoulder season</p> <p>Includes identification of complementary assets like lodging, culinary and other attractions</p>
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once a comprehensive understanding of arts and culture that can be leveraged for the Winter/Shoulder season is completed, develop packages and itineraries that cater to identified target market needs (see “Target Markets” initiative)
Enabling Environment	Communicate prioritization of arts and culture to key stakeholders and community	<p>Communicate the Winnipeg’ Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy with all key stakeholders</p> <p>Communicate the Winter/Shoulder arts and culture opportunity with relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment</p>
Target Markets	Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Manitoba)	Conduct market research to identify potential target markets (especially in Manitoba to begin), to determine their interest and needs in experiencing arts and culture in the Winter/Shoulder season
Channels	Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences	<p>Identify tour operators who may be a good conduit to promote arts and culture packages in Winter/Shoulder to target markets, especially in Manitoba</p> <p>Connect with tour operators to plan promotion of Winter/Shoulder arts and culture</p>
Marketing & PR	Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets	Develop 1-2 campaigns, leveraging insight from the “Target Markets” initiatives to develop 1-2 campaigns specific to arts and culture in the Winter/Shoulder season

FOCUS IS ON SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE IDENTIFIED PRIORITY LEAD OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED).

We Own Winter

PRODUCT & EXPERIENCES	ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PR
<p>Inventory products and experiences that can leverage “We own winter” and identify possible opportunities</p> <p>Support creation of products and experiences</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	<p>Communicate prioritization of “We own winter” branding to key stakeholders and community</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Conduct market research to identify and define target markets that “We own winter” would appeal to the most</p>	<p>Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to promote Winnipeg’s “We own winter” products and experiences</p>	<p>Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets</p>

OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Products & Experiences	Inventory products and experiences that can leverage “We own winter” and identify possible opportunities	Conduct an inventory of existing products and experiences that can leverage the “We own winter” brand, especially for the Winter/Shoulder season
	Support creation of products and experiences	Based on inventory of existing products and experiences that can leverage “We own winter”, identify possible opportunities to expand the brand Work with economic development and small business development authorities to support focus on development of new products and experiences that leverage “We own winter”
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once a comprehensive understanding of products and experience that can leverage “We own winter” is complete, develop packages and itineraries that cater to identified target market needs (see “Target Markets” initiative)
Enabling Environment	Communicate prioritization of “We own winter” branding to key stakeholders and community	Communicate Winnipeg’s Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy with all key stakeholders Communicate the Winter/Shoulder “We own winter” offering with relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment with their products and experiences
Target Markets	Conduct market research to identify and define target markets that “We own winter” would appeal to the most	Conduct market research to identify potential target markets (especially within the region at first), to determine interest and needs in “We own winter” product and experiences
Channels	Work with tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to promote Winnipeg’s “We own winter” products and experiences	Identify tour operators who may be a good conduit to promote “We own winter” products, experiences, packages to target markets, especially within the region Connect with tour operators to promote “We own winter” products and experiences
Marketing & PR	Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets	Leveraging insight from the “Target Markets” initiatives, develop 1-2 campaigns focusing on “We own winter” products and experiences



thermëa

FOCUS IS ON SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE IDENTIFIED PRIORITY LEAD OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED).

Regional Market

PRODUCT & EXPERIENCES	ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PR
<p>Inventory products and experiences that appeal to the regional market</p> <p>Support creation of additional attractions to address gaps</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	<p>Communicate prioritization of “We own winter” branding to key stakeholders and community</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Conduct market research to identify and define target markets</p>	<p>Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences</p>	<p>Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets</p>

OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Products & Experiences	Inventory products and experiences that appeal to the regional market	<p>Conduct an inventory of existing products and experiences that may appeal to regional markets based on target market needs (see “Target Markets” initiative), especially for the Winter/Shoulder season</p> <p>Includes identification of assets like lodging, culinary and other attractions</p>
	Support creation of additional attractions to address gaps	<p>Based on the inventory of existing products and experiences that would incite regional travel for the Winter/Shoulder season, identify possible gaps for a holistic experience</p> <p>Work with economic development and small business development authorities to support development of new products and experiences focused on the regional market</p>
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once a comprehensive understanding of products and experiences that can incite regional markets for the Winter/Shoulder season is completed, develop packages and itineraries that cater to identified target market needs (see “Target Markets” initiative)
Enabling Environment	Communicate prioritization of the regional market to key stakeholders and community	<p>Communicate the Winnipeg’s Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy with all key stakeholders</p> <p>Communicate the focus on the regional market for the Winter/Shoulder with relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment with their products and experiences</p>
Target Markets	Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially within the region)	Conduct market research to identify potential target markets (especially within the region at first), to determine regional market interest and needs in the Winter/Shoulder season
Channels	Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences	<p>Identify tour operators who may be a good conduit to promote developed Winter/Shoulder packages to regional target markets</p> <p>Connect with tour operators to promote Winter/Shoulder products and experiences to target regional markets</p>
Marketing & PR	Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets	Leveraging insight from the “Target Markets” initiatives, develop 1-2 campaigns focusing on products and experiences to incite target regional markets to visiting the Winter/Shoulder season

WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN WINNIPEG
INITIALLY FOCUSES ON A CHANGING MINDSET.

Next Steps

Recognize that opportunities are defined through the lens of over 30 key tourism industry stakeholders and experts but that each opportunity will require additional filters to consider their potential. These are as follows:

- Market research: Each opportunity will require further research to determine the characteristics and size of the prospective target markets to support.
- Resources: Each opportunity should be evaluated against the human and financial resources of key stakeholders against the priorities of the organization supporting these initiatives.
- Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement: Each initiative will require leadership and support from the industry to both prioritize the initiative and develop the destination, products, experiences and marketing to fully realize these potentials.





Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Photo credit: Daniel Crump.

Finally

Recognize that while considering these filters, other opportunities may arise which may take priority. Some of those opportunities may not have been considered by stakeholders and others may have been considered but scored poorly.

Because of this, the framework developed allows for a dynamic and ongoing evaluation of opportunities for Winnipeg's winter and shoulder season.



Appendix

Opportunity scores from prioritization exercise during workshop II

Winter/Shoulder tourism vision detailed by key Winnipeg key tourism stakeholders.

SUNSHINE COAST PRIORITIZED SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM.

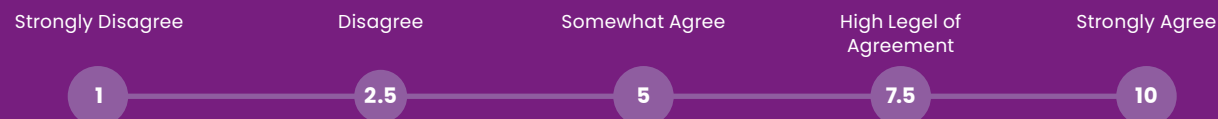
Lead Opportunity Prioritization

→ Engage tourism leadership to support Winter/Shoulder tourism and strengthen relationships with industry stakeholders

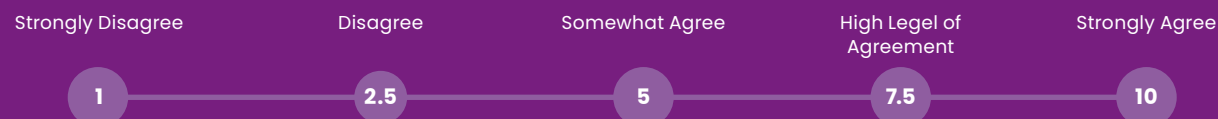
→ Develop or enhance 2-3 distinct Winter/Shoulder tourism opportunities per year for next 3 years




→ Increase Winter/Shoulder (october through may) accommodations occupancy by 1% compared to 2019 within 3 years

OPPORTUNITY HAS HIGH POTENTIAL TO GROW VISITOR ECONOMY TO WINNIPEG



OPPORTUNITY IS EASY TO IMPLEMENT



LEAD OPPORTUNITY	IMPACT	EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING INITIATIVES
 Create Entertainment Season	7.5	7.5	We need money/ a fund to purchase the tickets. There is lots of interest especially Jets' games as it always sold out (locals buying).
 Leverage Winter Activities	9.2	8.2	Covid impact – lots of people enjoying winter outdoor activities. We saw more people this winter. Access to equipment.
 Conventions & Gatherings	7.5	6.2	Tourism Winnipeg is already doing this. Staff responsible for Sports & Religious groups. Prioritized as a strategy.
 Culinary	6.5	6.3	Value-added to other expenses/ products. Great restaurants, chefs and micro-breweries but not the lead driver.
 Arts & Culture	8.6	8.2	Lots of products. Christmas theme? Christmas market.

LEAD OPPORTUNITY	IMPACT	EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING INITIATIVES
 Indigenous tourism	7.5	5.3	Connection of product strong around our culture and history of the fur trade Treaty and exploration of winter.
 Festivals & events	7.2	7.3	Festival doing a great job. The Forks as well. Often volunteer-based and volunteers get burnt out. Lots of resources needed – HR, \$
 Winter gear rentals	8.1	5.9	Great idea but no one will take the risk of investing in gear and then renting them out. Big investment.
 Music scene	7.4	7.2	How do we package this? We need to promote our local scene. Festival du Voyageur has a huge music programming. Idea : WSO doing something to honour French culture during Festival. Post-Covid will be interesting – indoor venues ex. Folk venues in winter.
 Ambassador program	6.5	5.5	60% of our tourism spent by Manitobans. A lot of VFR in Winnipeg.
 Winnipeg's Distinct Neighbourhoods	7.5	6.2	Not a lead driver. More work needs to be done.
 US Market	6.5	6.3	Take lots of marketings
 Snowbirds	3.7	3.4	Definitely in quadrant 4. Saw more this winter along the river trail but as soon as they can, they will return south.

LEAD OPPORTUNITY	IMPACT	EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING INITIATIVES
 Regional market	8.3	7.7	Challenges with packaging. Most of our visitors are Manitobans.
 We own winter	8.4	7.7	Communicate in a very positive tone. We embrace winter even if it's cold. Need marketing work but great idea.
 Wellness Experiences	7.5	6.8	Value-added
 Partner with Red Bull	7.3	5.5	Red Bull or any other major events. Festival mentions that it's not ready dealing with Red Bull (based on experience). Not an easy one.
 Partner with Canada Goose	7.5	5.7	Good idea but needs more work. Could also be with Manitobah Mukluks or Mondetta.
 Develop packages with Receptive Tour Operators	6.9	6.0	Great idea but need more work.
 River and Longest Skating Rink	8.5	8.6	Could go with We our winter & leverage winter activities opportunities. Note: we are not the longest – Lake Windermere in BC has the Guinness Record



Thank You

