



City of Barrie Tourism Master Plan

Developing tourism for Barrie's economic future

November 2020



Introduction

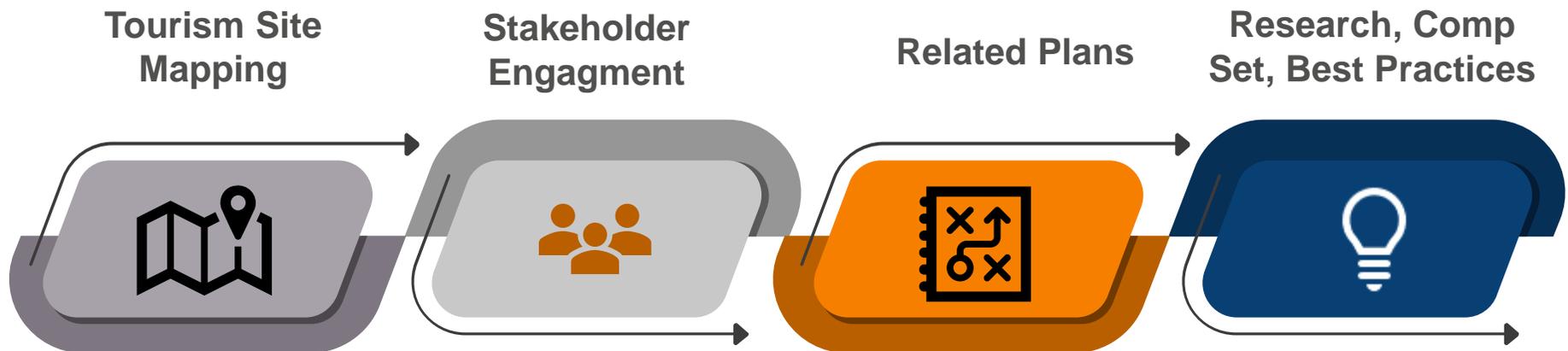
- Seeking approval in principle of the City of Barrie Tourism Master Plan
- Staff to report back to General Committee Spring 2021 with prioritized recommendations on implementation and execution

The Tourism Master Plan supports a long-term vision for tourism development, as well as shorter-term initiatives and actions

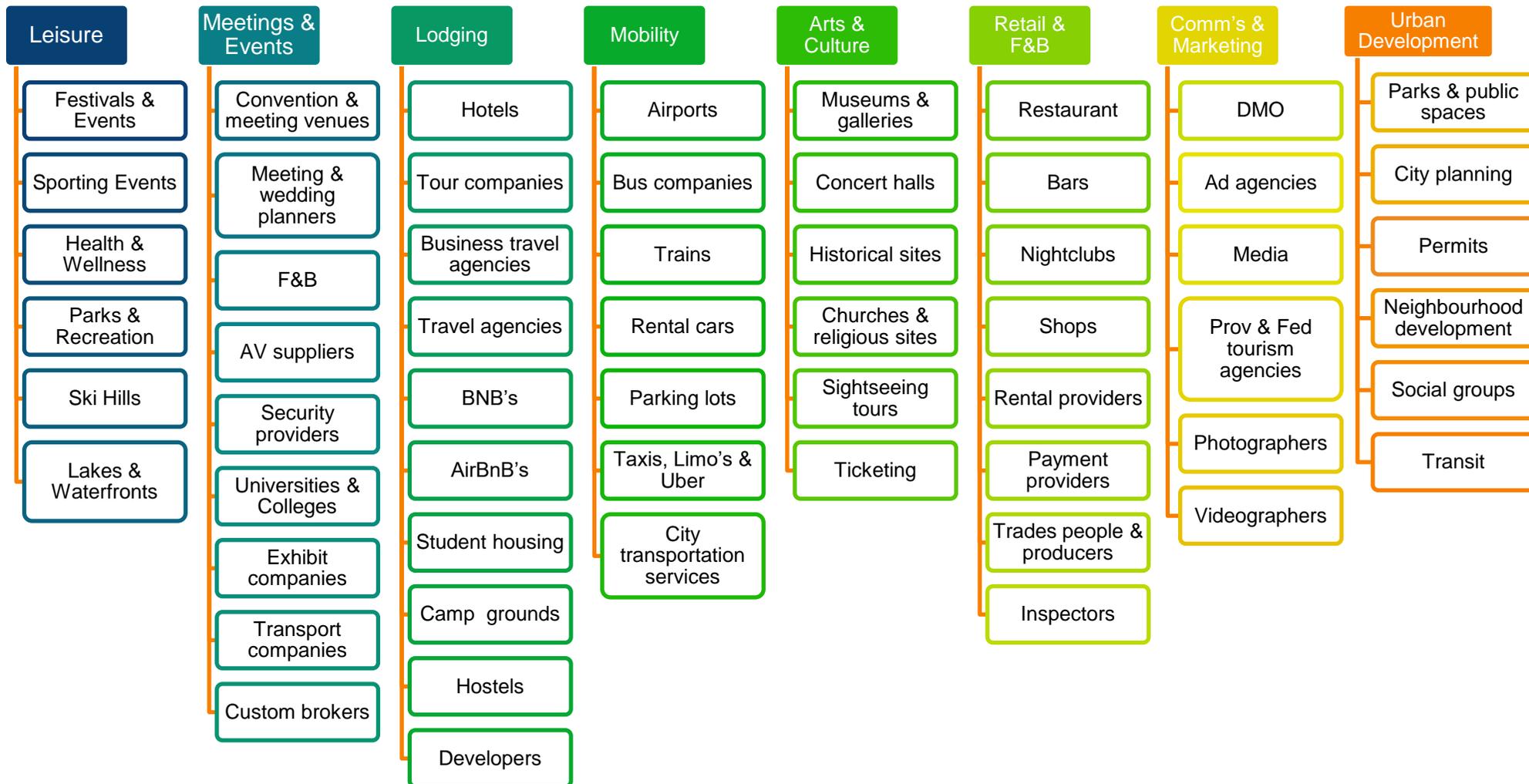


Tourism Master Plan

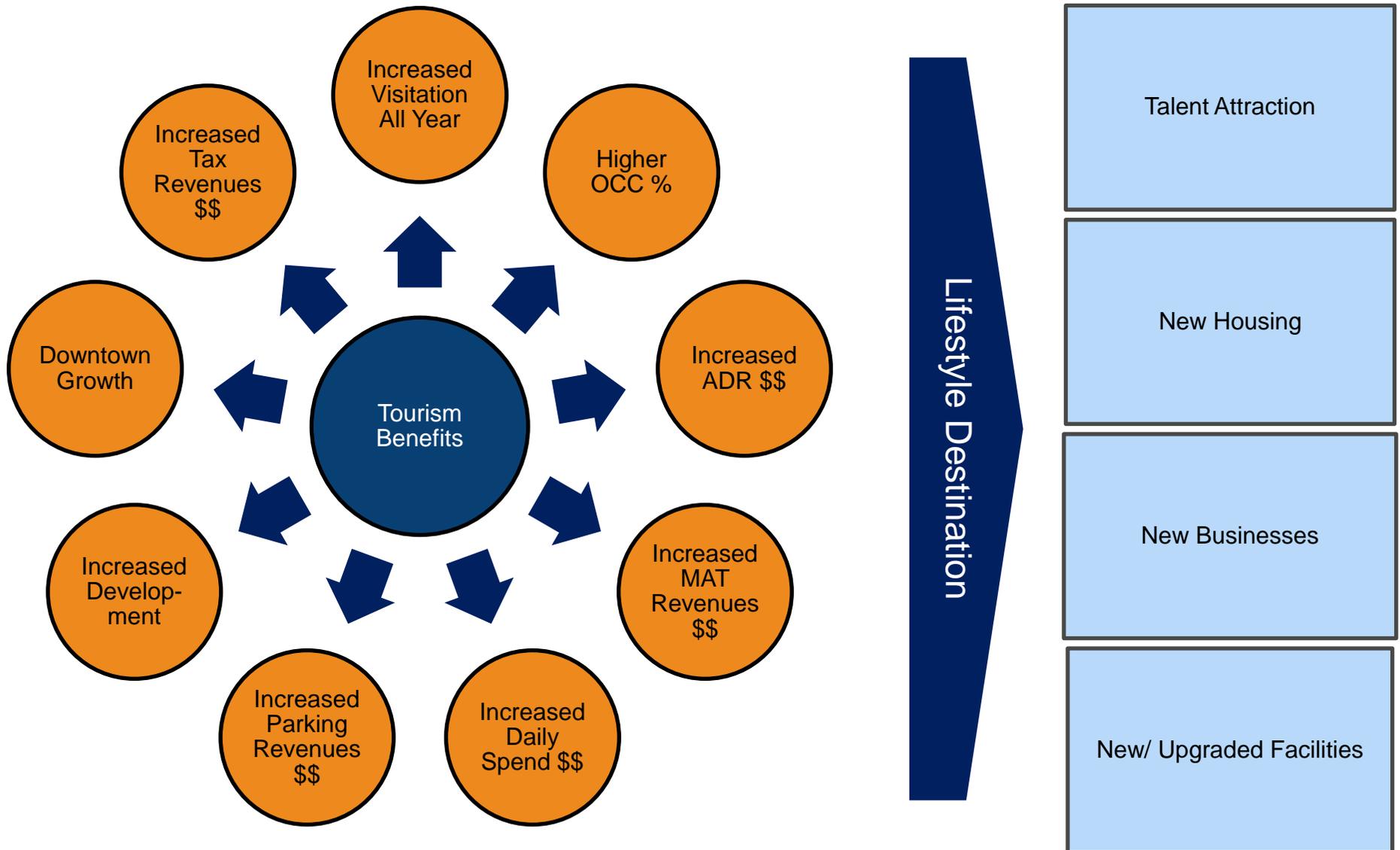
- Integrates the tourism sector, focusing on its economic development function (talent attraction/retention, investment attraction, economic sector diversification, and growth of creative and knowledge-based sectors)
- Invest in Barrie as a tourism product, as well as in the people who support that product
- Develop and align the Barrie brand



Visitor Economy Ecosystem



Direct Benefits of Growing the Visitor Economy



Role of the City and Tourism Barrie

City

Drive overall tourism strategy – linking partners, setting overall direction for Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)

Bring tourism lens to City policies/practices/programs that support tourism

Invest in infrastructure assets that support tourism (i.e., recreation facilities, conference centre, theatre, etc.)

Leadership for brand positioning and overall brand alignment across organizations that deal in tourism (i.e., BIA, Tourism Barrie)

Establish and measure success metrics with our DMO - Tourism Barrie

Investment attraction and business retention work in alignment with DMO – Tourism Barrie

Tourism Barrie

Official tourism marketing agency - leading marketing and supporting product development with tourism members

Frontline and online visitor services

Targeted marketing campaigns and asset promotion, leading total destination management and associated digital platforms

Package development and promotion

Engagement and collaboration with regional DMOs for promotion alignment and leveraging funding opportunities

Tourism market intelligence gathering – visitor profiling, counts, engagement with province, impact calculations

Attraction of large sport tourism events and conference events and supporting logistics

Strategy & Destination Growth Opportunities

Building the Destination

Delivering the Experience

Telling the Tourism Story

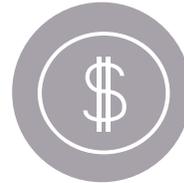
Opportunity areas identified as having potential to dramatically increase visitations and improve tourism's economic contribution:



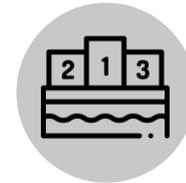
Downtown Hotel & Conference Facility



Year-Round Waterfront Utilization & Tourism Management



Leverage MAT



Sports Facility Renewal & Market Expansion



Grow Visitation from GTA Target segments



Establish Tourism as a Priority Economic Sector



Collaboration between Stakeholders



USP that Appeals to Visitors & Residents

Recommendations

Top 10 Priority Recommendations (30 Total)

Building the Destination

1. Adopt tourism as a priority economic sector for Barrie
 - Tourism is an economic driver with Barrie possessing majority of accommodations supporting the tourism area
2. Establish a tourism position within the City to work jointly with Tourism Barrie
 - Integrate the strategic tourism lens across internal functions including arts & culture development, special events, active transportation, etc.
3. Incorporate a tourism point of view when considering new development, wayfinding, parking and downtown revitalization
 - Unique downtown offerings (shopping & dining) to draw people to the downtown, clear directional signage and parking



Recommendations

Top 10 Priority Recommendations (30 Total)

Building the Destination

4. Ensure 100% of MAT revenue towards tourism (50% to Tourism Barrie and 50% to Barrie Tourism Development Fund)
 - Funds remain tourism centric, long-term sustainable funding, tourism community involved in decision-making process
5. A specific sport tourism strategy to attract more beneficial events through the completion of the Sport Tourism Assessment Template
 - Good access from GTA and Northern Ontario
 - Current mix of sport facilities in Barrie provides a good base for community use and some provincial competitions
6. Invest in and/or facilitate further development of year-round outdoor assets
 - Profiling outdoor 4 season experiences (more than waterfront – nature/hiking trails, parks, cycling, snow-related events)
 - Opportunity to support third-party businesses/instructors

Recommendations

Top 10 Priority Recommendations (30 Total)

Building the Destination

7. Support and invest in visitor-focused arts, cultural and live events (theatre, music, festivals, etc.)
 - Large inventory of high-profile concerts, live music bars and festivals for a city its size
 - Opportunity to strategically position within the north GTA through to Muskoka and Georgian Bay as hub of concert and live theatre activity

Theatre and Conference Opportunity

- Given the close proximity of GTA based organizations, there is potential for hosting meetings and conferences as well as significantly larger theatre and concert productions that would drive visitations, MAT revenues, economic impact and destination brand awareness
- Increased demand for meeting destinations outside of the GTA within a reasonable driving distance
- Future business events potential for Barrie will only be realized if a facility is built with connected or adjacent accommodation
- Separate report being brought forward focused specifically on the Fisher Centre opportunity

Recommendations

Top 10 Priority Recommendations (30 Total)

Delivering the Experiences

8. Build a coalition of willing partners
 - City, Tourism Barrie, BIA, and regional partners to build strategic alliances and holistic visitor experience

Telling the Story

9. Develop the brand promise & USP (unique selling proposition) for Barrie
 - USP must be well considered and resonate with targeted audience
 - Take advantage of the 'city brand' elements
10. Engage the citizens of Barrie to help tell the tourism story
 - Embrace all elements and benefits of the City's tourism assets beyond the waterfront



COVID Recovery Short-Term Wins



Sports Tourism. People will travel for sports before they travel for a vacation or even on business travel.



GTA Leisure Market. Families and couples will come for weekend getaways.



Outdoor Activities. Promoting our trails, ski options and cycling routes.



Cultural Events. Advertising our theatre, concert and festival activities.

Thank you

invest**barrie**