Final Tourism Strategy and Implementation Plan

Report Purpose
To present the final Strathcona County Tourism Strategy and Implementation Plan to Council.

Recommendations
1. THAT the 10-year Vision and the Focus Areas and Goals of the Strathcona County Tourism Strategy and Implementation Plan, as set out on pages 97 and 109, respectively, of Enclosure 2 to the September 8, 2020 Economic Development and Tourism report, be approved.

2. THAT administration provide a report, for Council’s consideration by end of the third quarter of 2021, with a proposal for development of a Product Development Strategy.

3. THAT administration prioritize and provide recommendations to Council for implementation of the Action Plan, as set out in Enclosure 2 to the September 8, 2020 Economic Development and Tourism report, annually through the multi-year budget and business planning process.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals
Goal 1 - Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents
Goal 3 - Cultivate economic diversification, within the petro-chemical industry and beyond, through a business-friendly environment
Goal 6 - Provide facilities and services that are available and accessible to residents

Report
This report recommends approval and implementation of the Strathcona County Final Tourism Strategy and Implementation Plan – a 10-year community-owned vision, based on what was heard from community residents, organizations, stakeholders and Council. The external consultant, Expedition Management Consulting Ltd., provided research documentation, which demonstrates that:

- There is strong support for tourism development among many stakeholder groups
- There is a lack of awareness of tourism among some segments of the population
- There is a need for a unifying vision
- There is need to organize for tourism development
- There is a willingness to collaborate and partner
- There are a lack of tourism products and operators
- There are opportunities for product development
- There is a desire for enhanced tourism marketing
- Tourism is a major economic driver in Alberta and the Edmonton region (including Strathcona County) and the community could see annual tourism expenditures rise from $136 million to $220 million – a $83 million increase in annual visitor spending

Within the report, Expedition Management Consulting Ltd. also outlines a comprehensive action plan and performance measures.
The final tourism strategy has four focus areas and goals:

1. **Organizational development** – build organizational capacity to ensure sustainable tourism development in Strathcona County.
2. **Destination development** – enhance the capacity of the community to develop a compelling destination.
3. **Product development** – develop highly-engaging tourism experiences to attract visitors to Strathcona County. Six product streams have been identified that show the greatest potential (order does not determine importance):
   - nature-based and outdoor experiences
   - agritourism and culinary experiences
   - sport tourism
   - festivals and events
   - cultural tourism
   - visiting friends and relatives tourism
4. **Marketing and promotional development** – expand the destination’s understanding of its visitors and entice travellers to visit by promoting the region’s experiences to key target markets.

**Council and Committee History**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jul. 14, 2020</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism Draft Review</td>
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<td>Apr. 28, 2020</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism What We Heard Report</td>
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<td>Mar. 10, 2020</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism Business Plan Update</td>
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<td>Feb. 11, 2020</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) Annual Report</td>
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<td>Jan. 21, 2019</td>
<td>Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>Dec. 4, 2018</td>
<td>Council Budget Meeting, 2019 Multi-Year Budget</td>
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<td>Nov. 13, 2018</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) Annual Report</td>
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<td>Nov. 21, 2017</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) Annual Report</td>
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<td>Jan. 24, 2017</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) Update</td>
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<td>Nov. 22, 2016</td>
<td>Priorities Committee Meeting, Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) 2016 Council Update</td>
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Other Impacts
Policy: n/a
Legislative/Legal: n/a
Interdepartmental: Economic Development and Tourism; Recreation, Parks and Culture; Planning and Development Services; Transportation and Agricultural Services; Communications.
Master Plan/Framework: n/a

Communication Plan
Communication objectives are to create resident, organization and stakeholder awareness of the Tourism Strategy purpose and objectives; to create resident, organization and stakeholder understanding of the implementation process and timelines; and to generate general awareness and interest.

Enclosures
1 Final Strathcona County Tourism Strategy presentation
2 Final Strathcona County Tourism Strategy and Implementation Plan