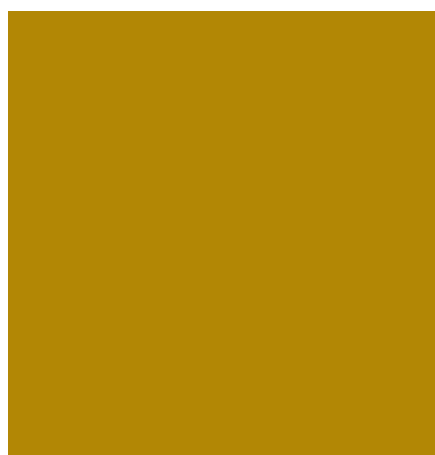


TOURISM PLAN FOR UCLUELET

SUMMARY





This image is intended for the Tourism Plan only and was created by Barbara Schramm of Schramm Design.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Land Acknowledgement

Ucluelet resides on the Ucluth Peninsula, traditional territory of the Yuuluʔiʔath. The Ucluth Peninsula has a significant First Nations history, inhabited by the Yuuluʔiʔath people for thousands of years. The Yuuluʔiʔath have stories and legends about living in the Ucluelet area dating back as far as 4,300+ years ago. One of Nuu-chah-nulth's primary teachings is 'Hishuk ish is' awalk' or 'Everything is one.' The land and the sea gave them food and supported their livelihood and culture and we continue to honour that spirit here today.

Lands and beaches along the peninsula, in conjunction with those listed above; Big Beach (ʔiihatis), Little Beach (λawačaqtu), Hitingis Park (Hitingis Tašii), Terrace Beach (čiisanapuwis), Amphitrite Point (ʔičaačišt), and the now Pacific Rim National Park; Island off Florencia Bay Beach (qaanimča) and South Beach (tučuwis), are rich in Yuuluʔiʔath history and remain sensitive environments.

Today, Yuuluʔiʔath (Government) is a modern treaty government, located in hitacu. There are approximately 700 Yuuluʔiʔath citizens, 200 located in hitacu and residing urban citizens throughout Vancouver Island, across Canada and the United States. The Yuuluʔiʔath Government jurisdiction extends over nearly 5,500 hectares of Treaty Settlement Land surrounding the community of hitacu, as well as territory north of Ucluelet, in the Effingham Inlet, and along the Nahmint River.

Tourism Ucluelet the District of Ucluelet acknowledge the Yuuluʔiʔath, on whose traditional territories the District of Ucluelet, Tourism Ucluelet and the Tourism Industry operates. We would like to further acknowledge the Toquaht Nation, Tseshaht First Nation, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations, Ahousaht and Hesquiaht First Nation on whose traditional territories (the Broken Group Islands to Hesquiaht [Hot Springs Cove]) the visitors to Ucluelet explore and play while on holidays to the west coast.

GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Tourism Plan Working Group Members

- Mike Irg, Alberni Clayoquot Regional District Planning
- Mark Fortune, Airport Representative
- Adele Larkin + Laura Kemps, Black Rock Resort
- Nicole Gerbrandt, CBT - West Coast Nest
- Laurie Geherke, Co-op
- Bruce Greig, District of Ucluelet
- Abby Fortune, District of Ucluelet
- Ian Riddick, Heartwood Kitchen Etc.
- Susan Payne, Pacific Rim Arts
- Dave Tovell, Parks Canada
- Noah Plonka, Toquaht Nation
- Denise Stys-Norman, Tourism Ucluelet
- Laurie Filgiano, Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce
- Melissa Boucha, Ucluelet First Nation
- Corey Rich, Ucluelet First Nation
- Julian Ling, Wild Pacific Trail

Lead Consultants

- Dan Wilson, Planning & Engagement Specialist, WCS Engagement and Planning
- Cheeying Ho, Executive Director, WCS Engagement and Planning

Project Funders

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Photography

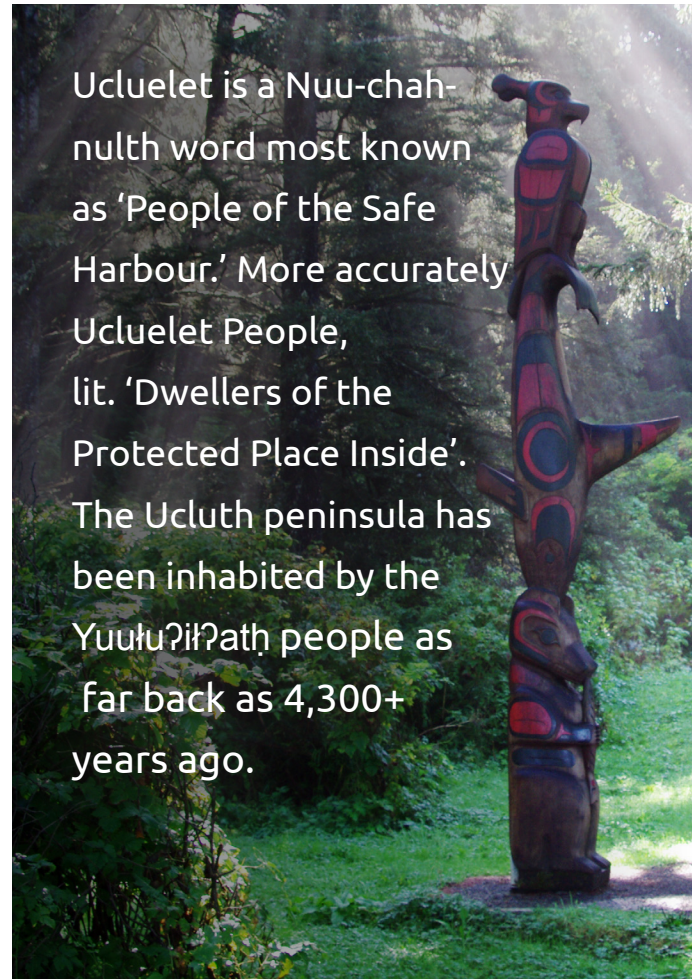
Brian Congdon, Mike Dandurand, George Fifield, Douglas Ludwig, Jen McLeod, Mark Penney, Barbara Schramm, and Landon Sveinson.

UCLUELET

Ucluelet is a welcoming, active, and diverse community. It has been shaped over time by the energy of the place and the people drawn to the natural setting of the rugged outer west coast of Vancouver Island. Ucluelet is situated in the traditional territory of the Yuuluʔiʔaṭh (Ucluelet First Nation), whose community is based immediately across the harbour at Hitacu. The Yuuluʔiʔaṭh are one of the five Maa-Nuulth Treaty First Nations along with the nearby ʔukwaaʔaṭh (Toquaht Nation).

Located on the narrow Ucluth Peninsula between Barkley Sound and the exposed Pacific Ocean, Ucluelet's name ("safe Harbour" in the Nuuchahnulth language) points to the key position of the town in this spectacular landscape. Poised on the edge of the Pacific, the community draws its energy from the interplay of the contrasting and complementary qualities of the landscape and the people. A short stroll takes you from Big Beach and the surge of the wild Pacific to the Whiskey Dock in the centre of the village and the calm waters of the harbour. Layered through the community are pairs of influences, which add to its richness: land / sea; Indigenous / settler; resident / visitor; small town / world class; energizing / restoring – the interplay of these forces makes for a community that is complex, balanced and dynamic.

Ucluelet residents are known for being friendly, hardworking, and resourceful. They are a welcoming group who are fiercely protective of the land and sea, as well as the resources that have sustained the community for generations. Ucluelet has been recognized as a town committed to carefully managing its growth to ensure that, as it changes over time, the natural environment is protected, the social fabric of the community is strengthened, and the local economy becomes more diverse and vibrant.



Ucluelet is a Nuuchahnulth word most known as 'People of the Safe Harbour.' More accurately Ucluelet People, lit. 'Dwellers of the Protected Place Inside'. The Ucluth peninsula has been inhabited by the Yuuluʔiʔaṭh people as far back as 4,300+ years ago.

THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The tourism sector is a strong and growing part of the economy yet Ucluelet remains a working town first, and a resort second.

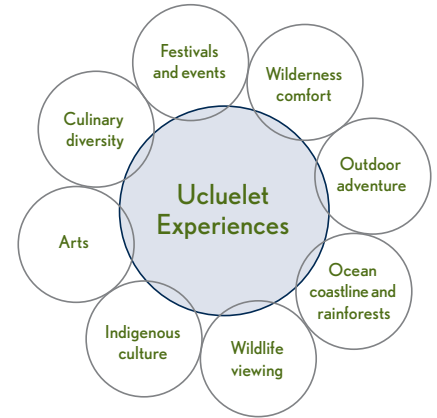
Ironically, this is one of the town's strengths as a visitor destination. Ucluelet is the kind of town where there's a good chance that your yoga instructor not only lives next door to a forklift operator, but that she is a forklift operator.

Interactions with the creative and colourful locals are an essential part of how our community leaves an impression on the visitor. By continuing to strengthen and grow as a diverse working town, by fostering small businesses and local innovators, and by improving the town facilities, programs and infrastructure to benefit all community members, we will also expand and improve the visitor experience.

Remaining genuinely Ukee in the face of growth and change will be key to maximising the quality of life for both residents and visitors.

THE UCLUELET EXPERIENCE

Ucluelet is a year-round, travel destination that offers picturesque beauty, ancient cedars, and spectacular tree-lined horizons along the Wild Pacific Trail. This community is considered one of Vancouver Island's hidden 'off the beaten path' gems. Ucluelet has been named one of BC's top ten, small towns, and offers an endless range of outdoor activities. Affectionately known as "Ukee," the town is friendly, and welcoming. The streets are lined with appealing hotels, restaurants, B&Bs, and artisan shops, while the surrounding area offers wonderful opportunities for wildlife-viewing, hiking, biking, kayaking, surfing and more. Ucluelet is a flourishing community that thrives on outdoor recreation and eco-tourism. It is surrounded by the 150,000 acres Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, with the Broken Group Islands to the South and Long Beach to the North. Ucluelet is a great base for taking on all that the West Coast has to offer.



TOURISM PLAN PURPOSE

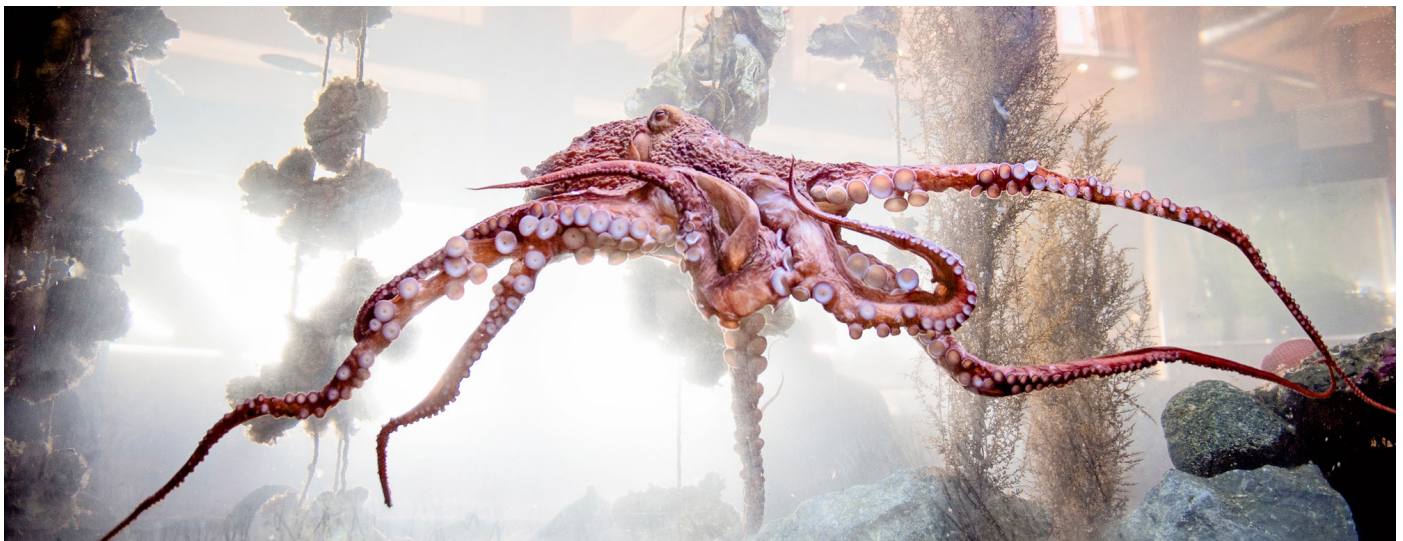
Tourism is one of Ucluelet's main economic drivers, employing 400-500 people regionally and generating \$50-60 million in regional spending each year. Done right, tourism can bring many benefits to our area; doing it right requires proactive planning and ongoing governance for community success. More than any other industry, tourism requires collaboration and partnering amongst local, regional, and provincial organizations, as well as with residents and local business groups and tourism operators.

In the spirit of collaboration, we embarked on this Tourism Plan to identify a shared community vision for tourism, and strategies to achieve it. The plan builds on the assets that have made tourism and our collaboration successful to date, leverages what Ucluelet is good at, proactively aligns with community priorities, and identifies new opportunities and strategies for meeting the changing needs and demands of visitors.

TOURISM PLAN DEVELOPMENT

With a genuine desire to understand and address concerns and seek pathways to reap the benefits of tourism, the District of Ucluelet, in close partnership and support from the Tourism Ucluelet, embarked on this Tourism Plan process.

The purpose of a Tourism Plan is to ensure the long-term success of tourism in Ucluelet. To achieve this, the plan includes a long-term development framework for tourism that guides tourism development in a coordinated and forward-looking way. This plan takes stock of the current situation, and provides a vision, goals, and strategies to guide more specific actions. The plan is a living document that needs to remain flexible and up to date in order to adapt to changes (including trends) that may arise within the environment (social, cultural, environmental, and economic).

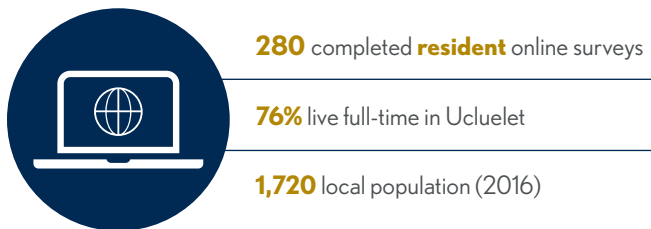


The Process:



Who We Heard From

The planning process was undertaken in collaboration with stakeholders and engagement with community members, tourism organizations, governments, and others. In addition to a Working Group, other activities included surveys, an open house, project web pages, focus groups, interviews, meetings, and presentations.



KEY THEMES: A few ideas and perspectives shared from what we heard.

- **Most respondents are supportive of tourism, but they also expressed some important concerns.**
- **Tourism vision includes:** Sustainable tourism, preservation of Ucluelet's relaxed, small-town feel, and tourism expanded through educational and culture-based offerings throughout the year.
- **Key benefits of tourism:** Tourism is essential for the local economy and contributes to vibrancy and community spirit.
- **Key challenges of tourism:** Affordability and availability of housing for all, staffing shortages, peak period overcrowding, overuse of amenities and variability in visitation.
- **Greatest strength:** a healthy, functioning, natural ecosystem is tourism's greatest asset, which would be complemented by eco-tourism and educational tourism experiences.
- **Greatest weakness:** Lack of housing, essential services and infrastructure to keep up with demand.
- **Shared responsibility:** Tourism Ucluelet and the District of Ucluelet were both seen as key organizations to ensure that tourism develops in a way that supports community goals; tourism businesses were also seen as important.
- **Pandemic impacts:** Prior to the pandemic, 58% of business indicated that they were in a growth phase. A similar number indicated business levels were shrinking through 2020/21.

PRINCIPLES AND VISION

The Tourism Plan vision is guided by aspirations articulated by the community, governments, businesses, and tourism stakeholders as well as visions and principles from within the 2022 District of Ucluelet Official Community Plan and the protocol agreement with the Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government. This agreement is an important foundation for all planning and is considered throughout the tourism plan directions and actions.

Our Vision. The big outcome we hope to achieve with tourism in Ucluelet. Having this common vision allows us to be inspired and clarifies what we are collectively trying to achieve, creating a place of agreement and then a platform for our dialogue and decision making.

OCP Guiding Principles. Reflect what is critical to our success and the lens that we need to look through for planning, decision making and implementation.

District of Ucluelet and the Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government Protocol Agreement. Is a framework within which to advance our working relationship with a shared vision guiding OCP policy that should be considered in this plan.

Ucluelet's Community Vision (2022 O.C.P.)

Ucluelet's built and natural environment reflects, above all, the value we place on the outstanding beauty and diverse, natural habitat of this place, which supports the well-being of all members of the community. Ucluelet's residents and visitors enjoy a high quality of life built upon a sustainable, diverse, and vibrant local economy.

The District of Ucluelet and the Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government have adopted a protocol agreement, with a vision put forward in the protocol agreement is as follows:

Our community vision is:

- A healthy community where the citizens of our population are united and share a sense of civic pride.
- A year-round, diversified, and healthy economy that yields growth that doesn't compromise the environment or what makes our communities unique.

OCP Guiding Principles include:

1. Protect natural areas and ecological function Maintain and enhance Ucluelet's unique character and preserve its heritage
2. Foster a welcoming and complete community
3. Build a diverse and dynamic local economy
4. Create a compact and vibrant Village Square Develop and maintain top quality parks, trails, and recreational and community services for residents and visitors
5. Broaden the spectrum of housing options to improve the availability of appropriate, affordable housing for all
6. Increase transportation choice and reduce automobile trips
7. Manage growth in balance with jobs, infrastructure investments, and the provision of services
8. Embrace the challenge of addressing the causes and impacts of climate change

It is with this engagement and policy background that the following **vision for tourism** is presented as:

Tourism in Ucluelet welcomes visitors year-round for genuine, immersive, and restorative West Coast experiences that are respectful of our environment, cultures and people.

FOCUS AREAS AND GOALS

Five Focus Areas will help us achieve our vision and guide our actions in the plan.

FOCUS AREA 1

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Goal: Visitors embrace our natural areas and are educated on how to be stewards of the environment and minimize their impact.

FOCUS AREA 2

VIBRANT BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES

Goal: Visitors embrace our strong sense of community and history, our local and Indigenous businesses thrive, and our employees are healthy and secure.

FOCUS AREA 3

DIVERSE, QUALITY AND GENUINE OFFERINGS YEAR-ROUND

Goal: We provide unique West Coast experiences that attract those wanting to visit us in any season.

FOCUS AREA 4

MANAGED GROWTH

Goal: Tourism visitation and new growth is spread more evenly year-round, and tourism is managed within our natural and human capacities.

FOCUS AREA 5

ROBUST TOURISM FOUNDATIONS + RELATIONSHIPS

Goal: We have strong partnerships and ensure the vital infrastructure and resources to support a thriving and resilient tourism economy.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The following strategic directions consider the trends, opportunities, and challenges of today and offer direction on how to achieve our goals in each focus area. The directions seek to continue the benefits of tourism such as economic diversification, employment, increased vibrancy, and community spirit; and address current challenges of peak period overcrowding, housing, and staffing shortages, overuse of amenities/infrastructure and variability in visitation.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP	VIBRANT BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	

1. Protect and enhance areas important to tourism.
2. Educate visitors to cultivate stewardship of the natural environment.
3. Ensure mechanisms for visitors/tourism to financially contribute to environmental stewardship.
4. Encourage greater use of active transportation and transit to, from and around the community.

1. Increase support/enhance benefits to ensure attraction and retention of employees working in the tourism industry.
2. Create opportunities for visitors to connect with and understand the local community.
3. Develop better data and monitoring systems to support economic growth and improve visitor experience.
4. Support more sustainable/resilient operations in local businesses.
5. Attract residents/businesses that can provide essential (e.g., food) tourism services and new experiences.

QUALITY, GENUINE AND DIVERSE OFFERINGS YEAR-ROUND	MANAGED GROWTH
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	

1. Grow our arts, culture, heritage, events, and education offerings.
2. Continue to build a robust pathway/trail network with improved access and connectivity, while respecting neighbourhoods.
3. Develop a deeper understanding of value-aligned visitors and shape local experiences to attract them.
4. Grow our marine and land-based eco-tourism and regenerative tourism-based experiences.

1. Strategically invite visitation in the fall, winter and spring seasons.
2. Preserve our small-town character and feel through policies, design, etc.
3. Consider future tourism land use needs and scenarios in light of this plan.
4. Better understand area visitor and development capacities and how to manage them.
5. Maintain summer visitation, and develop programs, projects, and infrastructure to manage it.
6. Create experiences, offerings and itineraries to entice visitors to stay longer.

ROBUST TOURISM FOUNDATIONS + RELATIONSHIPS
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. Continue to develop inclusive partnerships with neighbouring Indigenous communities.
2. Address affordable housing needs for community members and employees.
3. Regularly consult community members regarding tourism decisions and respond to their perspectives.
4. Improve infrastructure and services where needed and strengthen climate adaptation, resilience, and emergency responses.
5. Strengthen partnerships and collaboration among tourism partners and others at all government levels (e.g., local, regional, provincial, and national).

Action Plan

Prioritizing the Strategic Directions led to a review of community, business, and tourism stakeholder input on specific projects and ideas. New ideas were brainstormed with the Working Group and finally prioritized and organized into a general timeline for implementation. Action implementation is organized in a table and actions are categorized into the following types/timelines.

CATALYST ACTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have high value* • Achieve multiple goals • Start within the first year 	SHORT TERM PRIORITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High value tactics with simple tactics and can be achieved within year one 	MEDIUM TERM PRIORITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High value, somewhat complex or requiring lead-time or other actions to accomplish 	LONG TERM PRIORITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High value, somewhat complex and requiring lead-time and other actions to accomplish
Actions: # 43	Actions: # 55	Actions: #28	

*Very important for reaching desired goals.
Supporting Actions can be found in the full plan.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Ucluelet's current tourism benefits are a result of people, working together. To facilitate continued success in tourism and the effective roll out of this plan, roles need to be clearly defined, implementation actions need to be prioritized, and funding needs to be in place.

Tourism Plan Implementation Committee

The Tourism Plan Working Group will be formalized into an ongoing Tourism Plan Implementation Committee that maintains similar representation to the working group and expands where needed. The Tourism Plan Implementation Committee will oversee the implementation of this plan and prevent it from stalling, the consequences of which could include a loss of momentum, apathy, lack of coordination, and limited resources.

Partnership Agreements

In addition to the Committee, a formal partnership agreement among important and interested organizations will help with the sustainability of the working structure, commitment to tourism, and plan implementation. The agreement is structured with varying levels of commitment, with lead Tier 1 convening and implementation roles for organizations such as Tourism Ucluelet and the District of Ucluelet.



Funding

Implementing the Tourism Plan, and achieving the vision and goals it lays out, will require time, funding, and the commitment of many organizations. While some actions will be part of the normal course of business for implementing organizations and tourism businesses, actions to purchase or maintain built or natural infrastructure or develop new programming will require funding. The two major foundational funds to help continue this work are the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) funding and the Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT). This funding should be aligned, where possible, with the actions in this plan.

Immediate Next Steps 2022-2023

Implementation action	Lead	Partner	6 Months	Year 1
Tourism Plan received and recognized by the District of Ucluelet and Tourism Ucluelet	DoU/TU		X	
Partnership Agreements signed and actions considered	DoU/TU	Others	X	
Creation and commitment to a Tourism Plan Implementation Committee	DoU/TU	Others	X	
Tourism Plan Implementation Committee Meeting 1 to set culture and report on initial actions	DoU/TU	TPIC	X	
Commitment postcard, pledges, or other efforts to engage the tourism sector in working toward the vision and goals and industry activities outlined in this plan	TU	TPIC	X	
Tourism specific stakeholder/sector working group sessions at least annually	TU	TPIC		X
Implementation Committee Meeting 2	DoU/TU	TPIC		X
Implementation Committee Meeting 3	DoU/TU	TPIC		X
Implementation Committee Meeting 4	DoU/TU	TPIC		X

DoU - District of Ucluelet

TU - Tourism Ucluelet

TPIC - Tourism Plan Implementation Committee

Go here to review the full tourism plan



