



**Tourism Fernie MRDT Program
2026 Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey Results &
Analysis of 2025 Programs**

Tourism Fernie 2026 MRDT Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey



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Executive Summary



BACKGROUND

The Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) is a provincially regulated tax applied to short-term accommodation stays to support local tourism marketing, programs, and projects. In Fernie, these funds are used to promote the destination and strengthen the visitor economy.

Tourism Fernie, as the community's Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), administers MRDT funding in alignment with provincial guidelines.

This is the summary of the *"Tourism Fernie 2026 MRDT Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey"*

METHODOLOGY

The "Tourism Fernie 2026 MRDT Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey" was sent to 169 stakeholders in the Tourism Fernie MRDT Collecting Partners database between April 7, 2026 and April 22, 2026. The survey was administered by a third party, The Web Advisors. The survey invitations and responses were recorded via an online survey platform.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Assess the level of awareness of tourism marketing activities of Tourism Fernie
2. Assess the level of satisfaction with the use of MRDT funds

REPORTING

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and summarize the results in this report. All quantitative questions include a five point response scale with '1' ratings being 'not familiar/strongly disagree/very dissatisfied/' and '5' ratings being 'very familiar/strongly agree/very satisfied.' 'Don't know/Not Applicable' answers have been excluded from the analysis for all questions.

Open ended question responses have been accumulated and grouped by theme.

CHANGES IN THE 2025 SURVEY

Where possible, questions were maintained with little or no change to provide consistent, reliable data for year-over-year comparisons. Changes are noted on individual question pages with footnotes.

– Summary continued on next page –

Executive Summary

RESPONSE AND COMPLETION RATES

- **Total Recipients:** 169 unique partner organizations received the 2026 survey via SurveyMonkey email invitation.
- **Total Responses:** 40 complete and 1 partial = 41 Total
 - 2025 Results: 50 complete and 3 partial = 53 Total
 - YoY change: -10 complete and -2 partial = -12 Total
- **Response Rate:** 24.2%
 - YoY Change: -4% (absolute) | -14.2% (relative) - 24.2% in 2026 compared to 28.2% in 2025.
- **Completion rate:** 97.5%
 - YoY Change: +3.2% (absolute) | +3.4% (relative) - 76.7% in 2026 compared to 94.3% in 2025.
 - *Analysis: 5 questions were removed from the 2026 survey to help improve completion rates. The reduction in length seems to have helped improve the overall completion rate.*

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Respondents are primarily tourism-facing businesses, with 77.5% providing products or services directly to visitors—up notably from 2025. A smaller share represent tourism support organizations (12.5%), while government (2.5%) and other respondents (7.5%) make up a limited portion. Overall, results are strongly reflective of front-line tourism operators in Fernie.

SECTION 1: EVALUATION OF TOURISM FERNIE'S PERFORMANCE & VALUE

Tourism Fernie continues to be highly valued by stakeholders, with overall agreement increasing to 4.68 (+0.37 YoY) and strong gains in “strongly agree” responses. Satisfaction with MRDT fund use remains high (4.50), while familiarity with Tourism Fernie’s activities also improved (4.20).

Performance ratings remain strong across most areas—particularly staff expertise, industry collaboration, and destination promotion—though slight declines are noted in responsiveness and understanding of business needs. Overall, results reflect continued confidence in Tourism Fernie, with opportunities to strengthen industry alignment and communication.

SECTION 2: INDUSTRY OUTLOOK & FUTURE OF TOURISM IN FERNIE

Business performance in 2025 was slightly below expectations overall (3.20), with most respondents indicating results met or exceeded expectations, though a notable share reported underperformance.

Looking ahead, sentiment is more positive, with outlook improving to 3.72. The majority of respondents are optimistic about 2026, suggesting cautious confidence despite recent performance softening.

Key themes for the future centre on the need for investment in indoor infrastructure, sustainable trail funding, and climate adaptation, alongside opportunities to diversify the local tourism economy.

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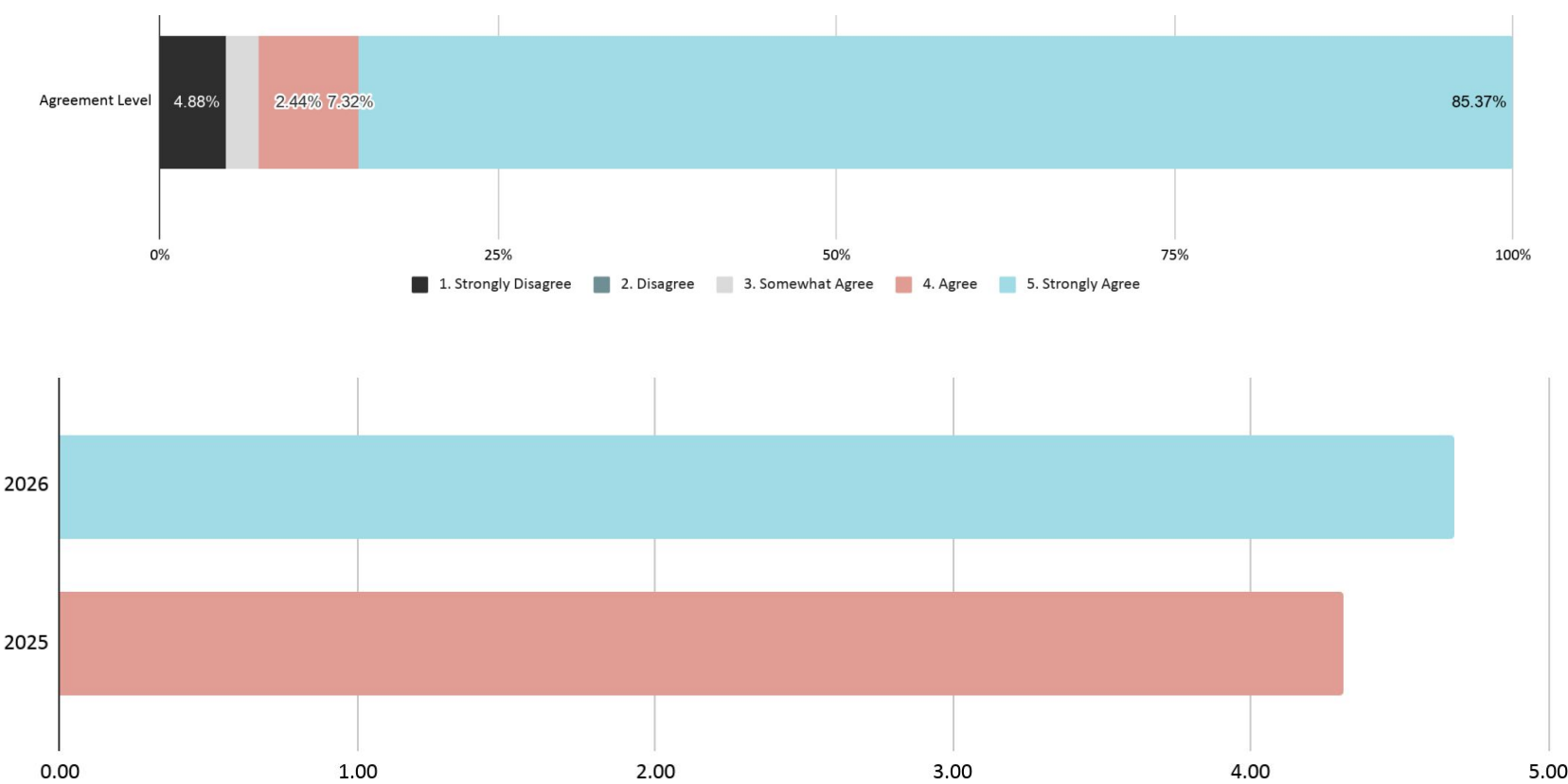


Section 1: Evaluation of Tourism Fernie's Performance & Value

Section 1: Evaluation of Tourism Fernie's Performance and Value



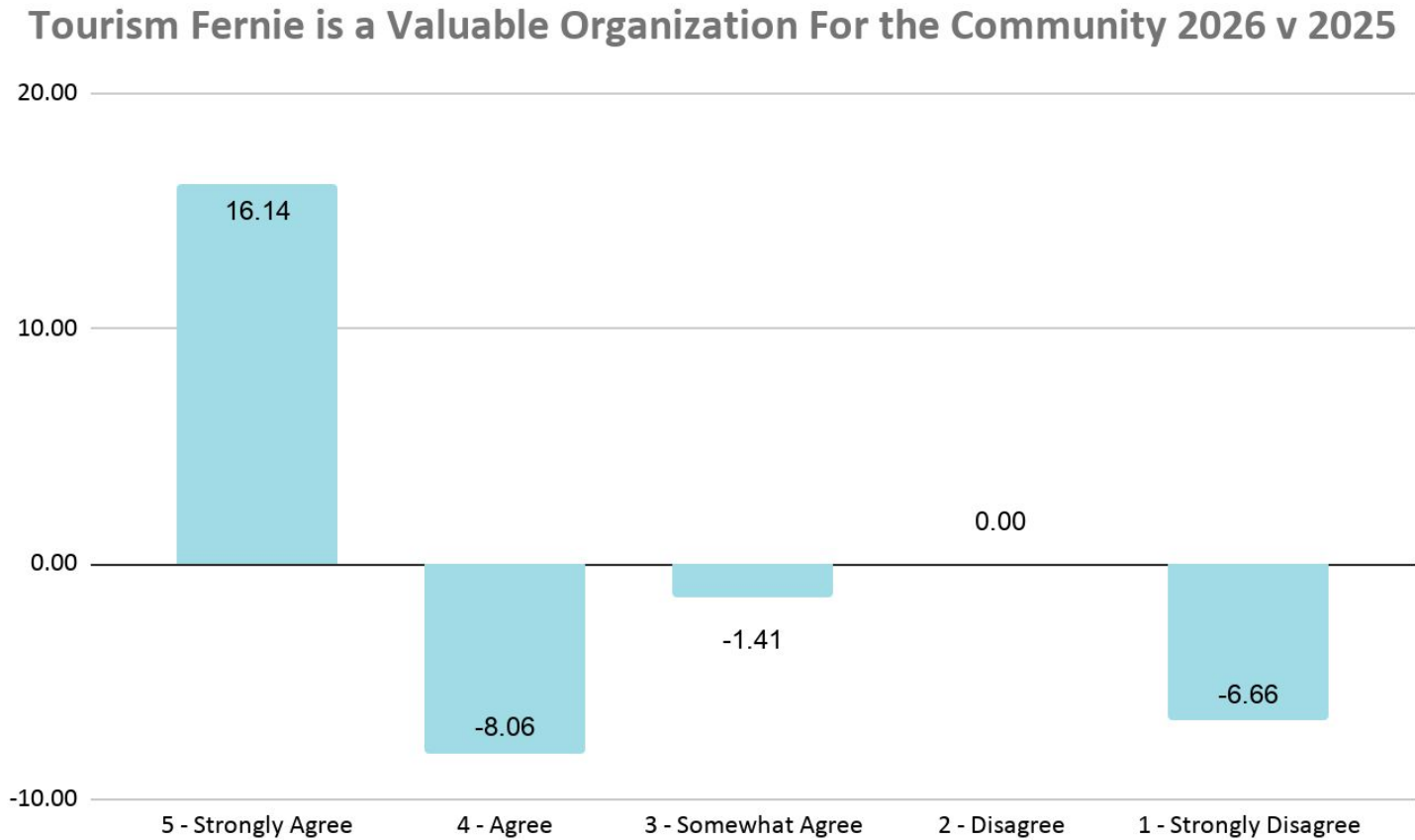
Question 1: Tourism Fernie is a valuable organization for the community. Please rate on a scale where 1 - Strongly Disagree and 5 - Strongly Agree.	2026	2025	YoY Change (points)
Weighted average of familiarity level	4.68	4.31	0.37



Section 1: Evaluation of Tourism Fernie’s Performance and Value



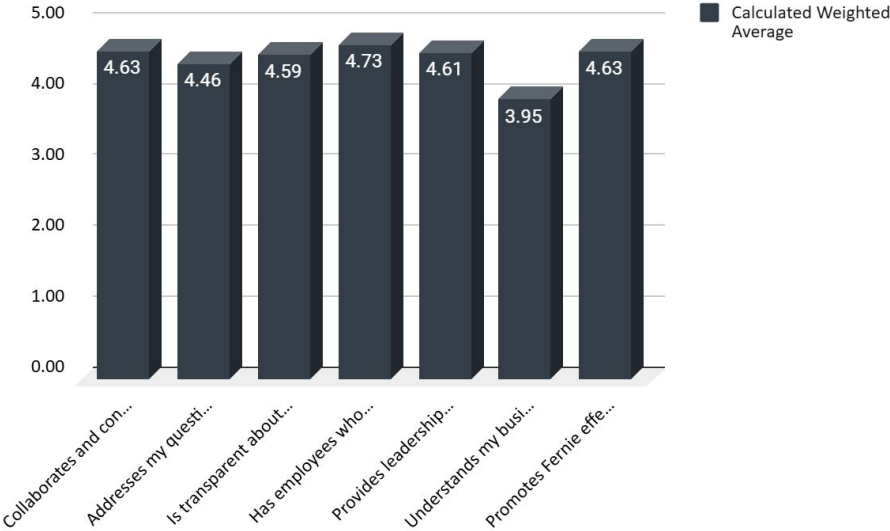
Question 1: Tourism Fernie is a valuable organization for the community. Please rate on a scale where 1 - Strongly Disagree and 5 - Strongly Agree.



Section 1: Evaluation of Tourism Fernie’s Performance and Value



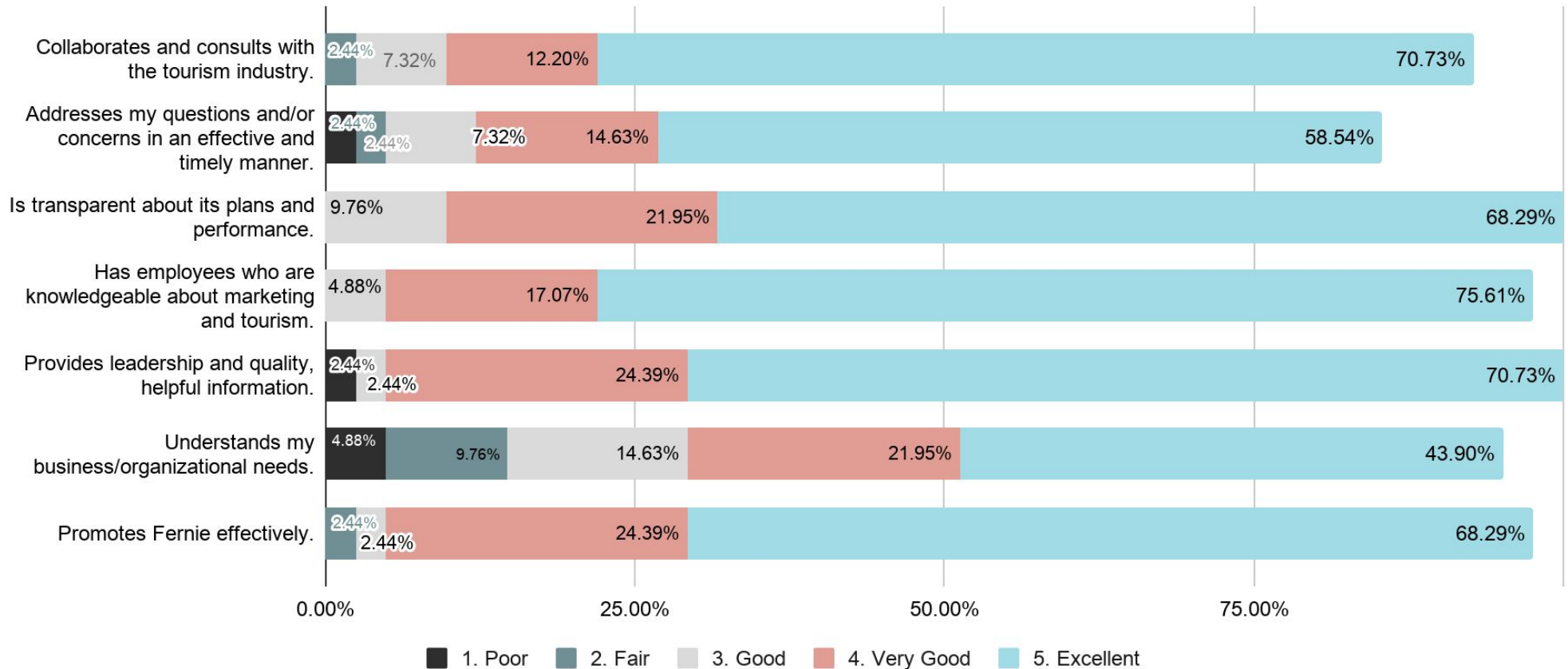
Question 2: How do you rate Tourism Fernie’s performance on the following ways of conducting business? Please rate each on a scale where 1 = Poor and 5 = Excellent	2026	2025 ⁽¹⁾	YoY Change (points)
Collaborates and consults with the tourism industry.	4.63	4.65	-0.02
Addresses my questions and/or concerns in an effective and timely manner.	4.46	4.67	-0.22
Is transparent about its plans and performance.	4.59	4.42	0.16
Has employees who are knowledgeable about marketing and tourism.	4.73	4.71	0.01
Provides leadership and quality, helpful information.	4.61	4.50	0.11
Understands my business/organizational needs.	3.95	4.16	-0.21
Promotes Fernie effectively.	4.63	4.60	0.03



⁽¹⁾ 2025 data has been normalized from the original reported value to exclude "Don't Know/NA" responses, ensuring a consistent year-over-year comparison with 2026 methodology

Section 1: Evaluation of Tourism Fernie's Performance and Value

Question 2: How do you rate Tourism Fernie's performance on the following ways of conducting business? Please rate each on a scale where 1 = Poor and 5 = Excellent. If 4 or lower, what could Tourism Fernie do to improve your satisfaction for the use of MRDT funds? Fill in your response.

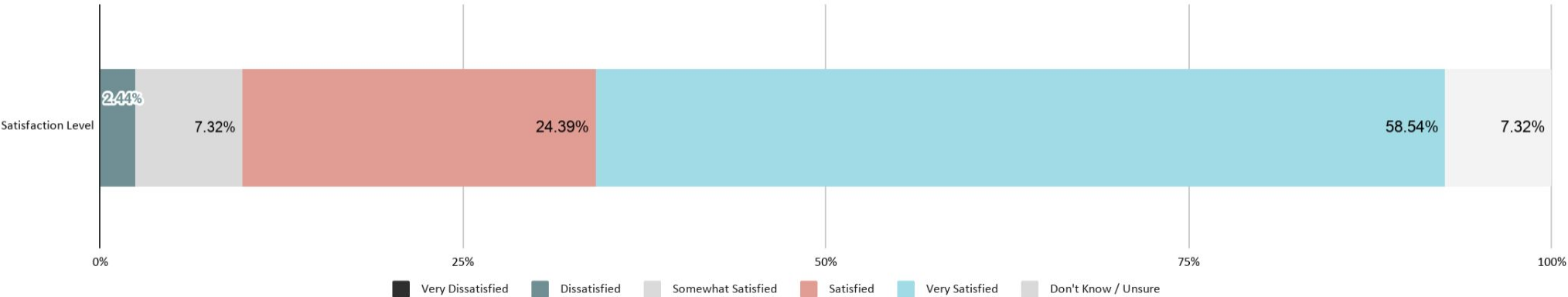


Section 1: Evaluation of Tourism Fernie’s Performance and Value



Question 3: Please rate on a scale where 1 - Very Dissatisfied and 5 - Very Satisfied: Based on your knowledge and experience, and after reviewing the 2025 Annual Report, how satisfied are you with Tourism Fernie’s use of MRDT / Hotel Tax funds overall?

	2026	2025 ⁽¹⁾	YoY Change (points)
Weighted average of satisfaction level	4.50	4.48	0.02



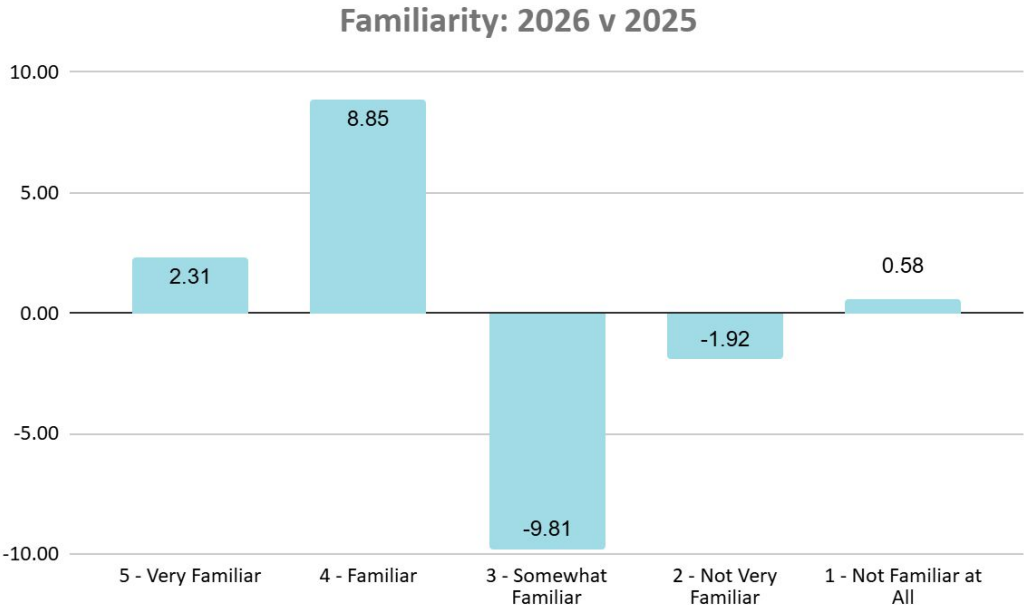
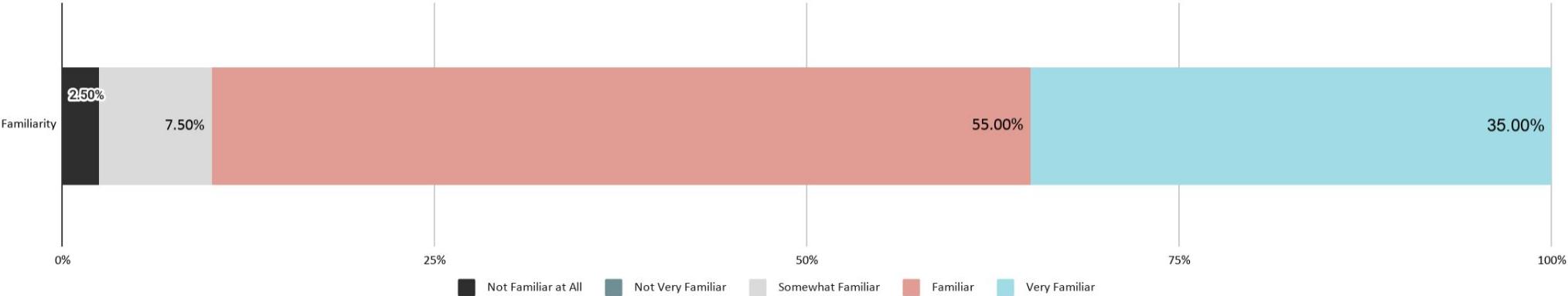
⁽¹⁾ 2025 data has been normalized from the original reported value to exclude "Don't Know/NA" responses, ensuring a consistent year-over-year comparison with 2026 methodology

Section 1: Evaluation of Tourism Fernie’s Performance and Value



Question 4: Based on your familiarity with Tourism Fernie’s activities, and after reviewing the 2025 Annual Report, how familiar are you with Tourism Fernie’s marketing and destination management activities?

	2026	2025	YoY Change (points)
Weighted average of familiarity level	4.20	4.06	0.14



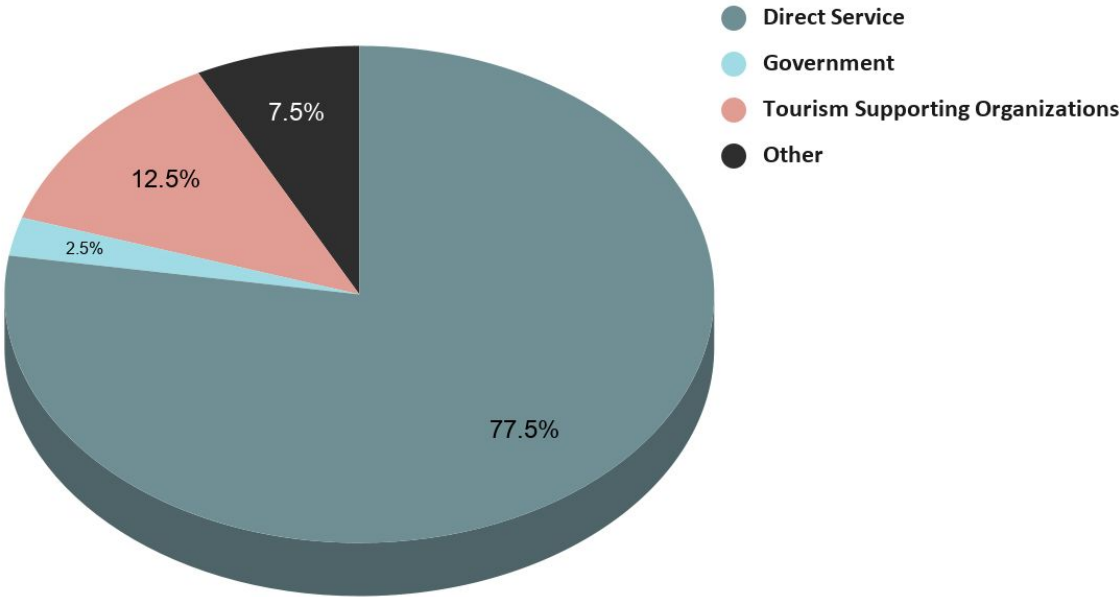


Section 2: Industry Outlook & Future of Tourism in Fernie

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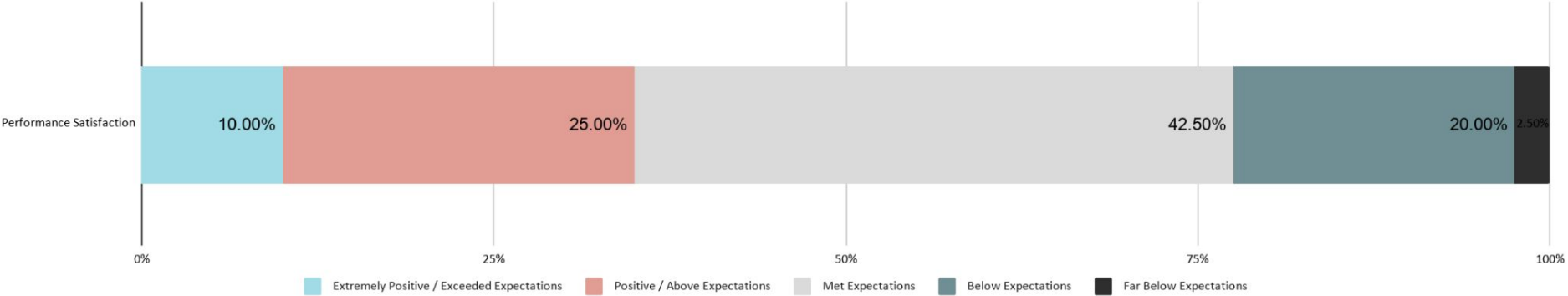
Question 5: How would you describe your business/organization?	<u>2026</u>	2025	YoY Change (points)
Unsure/Don't Know	0.00%	3.85%	-3.85
A business or other organization that provides products or services directly to tourists (e.g. hotel, restaurant, activity operator, attraction).	77.50%	69.23%	8.27
A government organization (federal, provincial, regional or local).	2.50%	3.85%	-1.35
An organization, association, business or agency that supports tourism industry but does not provide services directly to tourists (e.g. community organization, a support business).	12.50%	17.31%	-4.81
Other, please specify.	7.50%	5.77%	1.73



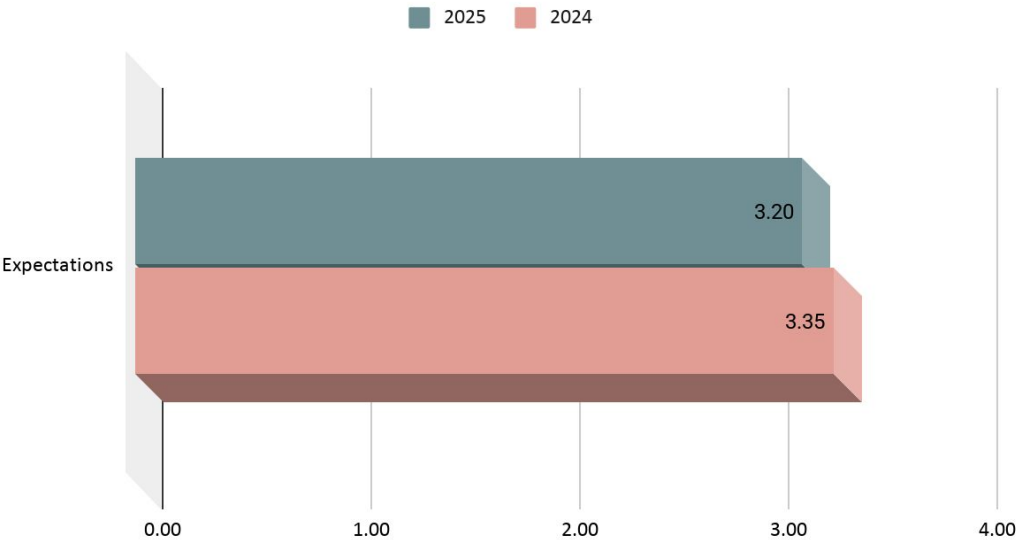
Section 2: Industry Outlook & Future of Tourism in Fernie



Question 6: Overall, how did 2025 compare to your expectations for your business or organization?	2026	2025	YoY Change (points)
Weighted average of performance level	3.20	3.35	-0.15



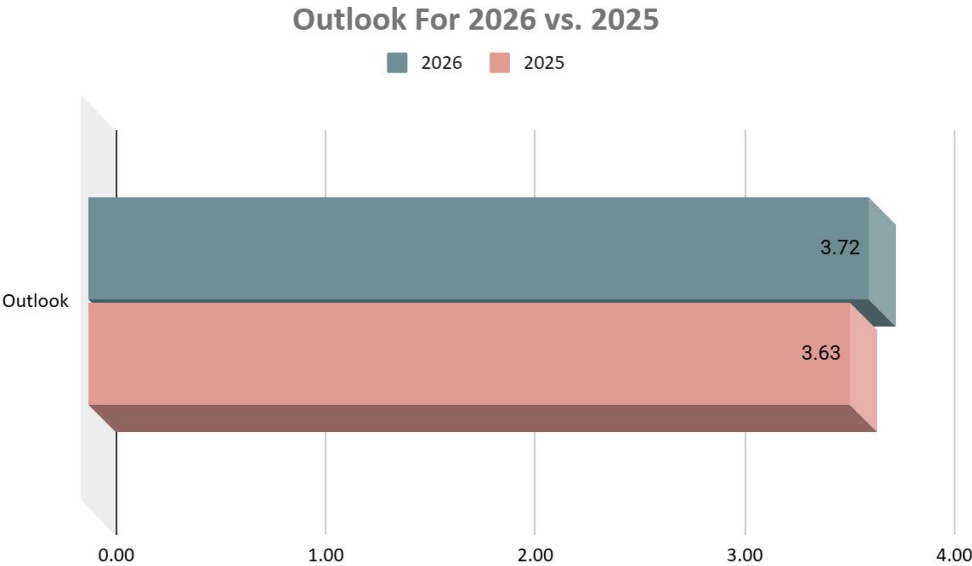
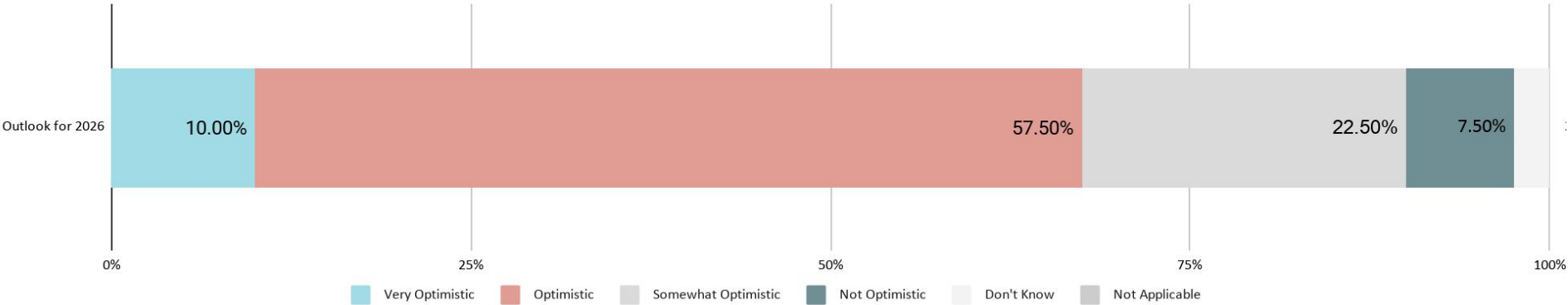
Business Performance Based on Expectations 2025 v 2024



Section 2: Industry Outlook & Future of Tourism in Fernie



Question 7: Compared to 2025, what is your outlook for your business or organization in 2026?	2026	2025 ⁽¹⁾	YoY Change (points)
Weighted average of outlook for 2026	3.72	3.63	0.09



⁽¹⁾ 2025 data has been normalized from the original reported value to exclude "Don't Know/NA" responses, ensuring a consistent year-over-year comparison with 2026 methodology



Appendix A - Responder Comments Overview

Appendix A - Responder Comments

Question 1: Tourism Fernie is a valuable organization for the community. Please rate on a scale where 1 - Strongly Disagree and 5 - Strongly Agree. If 4 or lower, what could Tourism Fernie do to improve your perspective?

TOTAL COMMENTS: 3

"Work more closely with other community organizations"

"They do not do enough to promote the cultural side of Fernie"

"I think I need to explain the #5 level I selected. Reading the report and attending the AGM, the work your team does for Fernie, the cooperative communities and the not for profits. I do think you do a great job in this and its only going to get better."

Appendix A - Responder Comments

Question 3: Please rate on a scale where 1 - Very Dissatisfied and 5 - Very Satisfied: Based on your knowledge and experience, and after reviewing the 2025 Annual Report, how satisfied are you with Tourism Fernie's use of MRDT / Hotel Tax funds overall?

TOTAL COMMENTS: 12

"Tourism services - continue to used for master plans like the Facilities plan and the biking plan. Support a plan to enhance the visibility of the TransCanada Trail through Fernie. Support a plan to drive more Christmas and seasonal lights for Whitefish. Have the main shopping district like the movie production that was set in Fernie. Create a plan to develop the wellness trades in Fernie through the Global Wellnes Institute"

"The Fernie Trails Alliance is hoping that Tourism Fernie will work with the province so that the Fernie Trails Alliance will have access to MRDT funds for trails maintenance. Tourism Fernie advertises our extensive trail network but does not provide funds to maintain it."

"I feel some of the funds should go back into the city to help with the cost of needed infrastructure upgrades to help support the extra demand tourists add to the issues we are having. A big one for me is the waste water system. If we don't work together and get it fixed we will not be able to invite our tourists to come. That would put all of us out of a job."

"Represent all accomidations fairly"

"Direct further to core infrastructure in town."

"I like the idea of knowing everything that it CAN be used for, even if we don't use all avenues. Quite beneficial."

"Most of the the money goes to funding trails and outdoor activities"

"I am not knowledgeable enough about MRDT to comment."

"My only suggestion is promotion of tourism Fernie to the everyday folks of Fernie. The what you do, how you do it and the benefits to Fernie'ites"

"Need to lobby the Province for avenues to include better destination management costs for trails, river amenities, etc."

"Great marketing work team!!"

"I think we've got a lot of older assets that need renewal to keep welcoming visitors in a good way."

– Responses continued on next page –

Appendix A - Responder Comments

Question 4: Based on your familiarity with Tourism Fernie’s activities, and after reviewing the 2025 Annual Report, how familiar are you with Tourism Fernie’s marketing and destination management activities?

TOTAL COMMENTS: 4

“valuable facts and data”

“I’m not sure where to find this info”

“However, we need to do more for the locals in town, RDEK and EV. We could all be tourists in our back yard and our neighbours should also want to come here and be tourists.”

“If i were less lazy, i would read the reports. Sorry !”

Appendix A - Responder Comments

Question 8: Do you have any comments or insights on how 2025 was and/or how 2026 is shaping up for your organization or business?

TOTAL COMMENTS: 16

"Still unsure but with people still avoiding the U.S and the familiarity with Fernie growing, I'm expecting an increase in the spring/summer/fall"

"Summer and the shoulder seasons is where we grow"

"It could be better"

"We are excited to open Everwild Fernie. Everwild Canmore performance has exceeded our projections."

"Of course the weather was not optimal but a lack of visitors year after year in the ski industry. The busy winters full of skiers coming from all over Canada has not been the same for the past 5 years I would say."

"2026 will be a challenge. However, all parties must work together with a common purpose for the common good."

"Awareness of our organization is trending upwards"

"2025 saw a ton of trail use. Somehow with support from Tourism Fernie we would like to be able to capture those tourist \$\$ so that it can go back into trail maintenance for the network that they advertise."

"I am concerned about smoke and fire"

"2025 was another excellent year for us, however we continue to see restraints in finding kitchen staff that can attain housing. Another challenge is that we still speak with tourists who have been in Fernie for a week, but just learned we have a downtown. I think we need better signage and better marketing directing our tourists downtown."

"Our business is directly impacted by the health of our business community. We have seen a decline in advertising as many had a challenging winter, and are tightening budgets to ensure they can weather spring with hopes there is not a fire season."

"On par so far."

"Unforeseen events in 2025 affected the outcome."

"We are doing a lot of great things. Our attendance average was 705 for the regular season games and playoffs were maxed at 1140. We need to get our attendance up early in the season before the ski hill opens which would be great for the business."

"March and April are are painfully slow the last two years. Bringing events or tournaments during that window. Tourism doesn't manage events but can act as a facilitator. Like economic development but for tourism"

"less wedding bookings and slight concern over how weather impacts winter operations"

Appendix A - Responder Comments

Question 9: What opportunities, challenges, or considerations should Tourism Fernie be aware of as it plans for the future of tourism in the region?

TOTAL COMMENTS: 28

“Lack of funds throughout all levels of government to support initiatives”

“Transportation”

“Contractors will not be so impactful in the future”

“Transportation”

“From my view, I believe Tourism Fernie could try and influence the city (planning department) stressing the economic importance our new tourism assets for the long term viability of the town. From the outside looking in, I see the city bureaucracy really hindering the town of Fernie. My fear is that people will start going elsewhere, due to the lack of new attractions, which leaves the city and residents struggling for a piece of a shrinking pie.”

“Wellness is more than a trend. Please keep us in mind for year round activities in late 2027. :)”

“The winters are not what they use to be and we need to pivot if the skiers aren’t coming. I believe without the mine we would see a major impact in overnight stay.”

“Staff shortage”

*“Problem- too many users for trails, Silver Springs, Elk River
Opportunity - support high value tourism, low impact initiatives, spas, dining etc. Need - Separate real estate advertising away Tourism Fernie advertising. Presently separate in Jackson Wy and Whitefish MT Separate and remove all alcohol brand images (Fernie Brewing) in photos. Need to support non alcohol entrepreneurs - kitchen shops, furniture, chocolate”*

“I know it’s not directly related to tourism fernie but we need to start pushing the city for new recreation places as we all know the arena is in rough shape community center is already condemned and pool will not be far behind I know these are popular places for visitors and could affect tourism if they keep deteriorating with no plan to upgrade tourism fernie could be pushing for upgrades like this or putting money towards it which the whole town would benefit from”

“Plan for the future of Fernie will include affordable housing, sustainable tourism that will contribute to local improvements, carefully planned investments to boost shoulder season tourism and indoor activities.”

“Winter tourism is changing/busier in summer. With economy unstable, it’s affecting ppl’s spending habits. Fernie is expensive and unaffordable for mid-income ppl.”

– Responses continued on next page –

Appendix A - Responder Comments

Question 9: What opportunities, challenges, or considerations should Tourism Fernie be aware of as it plans for the future of tourism in the region?

"Upgrading some of the local tourism infrastructure and sustainability of the tourist products"

"Affordable and regular transportation to Fernie that can cater to the younger traveller. I also wish that our product of a single pod could be sold on the Tourism Fernie website. Currently prospective travellers only view rooms based on double occupancy, when browsing through the Fernie website looking for deals. I know guests can click on our listing to find out about pods if they really want to, but they do not see it as the best available price point in Fernie when looking through the site. I would really love to encourage the solo young traveller to come to Fernie through being aware that there is great solo back packer option at a reasonable price point."

"I think fernie needs to improve it's off season and poor weather activities. confernece center, rec center, trampoline gym, arena, indoor courts, would all be a draw that are not weather/season dependant."

"I was really concerned when the new Nordic spa presented and announced they had removed the employee-housing component that was originally part of their plan. We all know how serious the housing shortage is—so where are nearly 100 staff members supposed to live?"

"Based on the AGM, I think you are on the correct track."

We could use indoor facilities that offer a fun experience to travellers when the weather is poor.

Indoor sports facility, convention center, indoor games and entertainment business."

"That we continue to have the capacity to accommodate guests in our community in a manageable way. That it is not too busy or crowded, that it is still affordable, that the community feeling and local vibe people love so much about Fernie continues to be at the forefront."

"There is currently a lot of mining contracting filling rooms and restaurants, with the ebbing economy, those consistent revenues could reduce, at the same time as fewer people have vacation money."

"I really am in support of the indoor activity/tournament centre. It will draw a lot of tourism dollars and attract more young families to move to the valley."

"Regulatory issues with a fragmented socialist government."

"They are already being addressed"

– Responses continued on next page –

Appendix A - Responder Comments

Question 9: What opportunities, challenges, or considerations should Tourism Fernie be aware of as it plans for the future of tourism in the region?

"Fernie's trail network is a primary motivator for visitation across biking, hiking, and trail running. Opportunity to position trails as year-round tourism infrastructure (shoulder seasons, winter grooming expansion). Expansion of adaptive, inclusive trails, green trails and signature experiences."

"Fernie area trails need to secure funding sustainability. Lack of long-term funding models. Grants for new projects but not maintenance. Tourism demand outpacing maintenance capacity. Invest in stewardship. Support and invest in effective trail collaborative organization. Importance of data to show use on trails."

"I think that it would be great for Tourism Fernie to look at the value of different types of tourists to the town. A cultural tourist spends over 2x the amount in restaurants, stores and accommodation than a recreation tourist. I think that telling the story of Fernie from that perspective would be invaluable. The feedback I get from tourists is that they were pleasantly surprised by how much there was to do downtown. Based on the imagery they had been exposed too they thought Fernie was too adventurous and hadn't visited before because of it."

"As mentioned before is local tourism needs to happen. There are those that are anti growth but if they see the benefits and are ambassadors of Fernie locally and within their networks, this is a win. Your presentations nailed it when it came to infrastructure and the draw. like the field of dreams, build it and they will come. Don't get me wrong, you are doing exceptional work and we appreciate this. Anything we can do to help please let us know. Like having a pop up booth at and some of our home games, stats in our programs, we are open as you support us and we need to support you."

"Shorter ski season, smokier summers. Inside tourism infrastructure is a top priority"

"Securing funding for programs and services"

"impact of climate on tourism and creating more tourism opps that are indoor"

– End of all comments –

Report prepared by:



For further information or questions, please contact:

Chris Elder

Managing Director

chris@thewebadvisors.ca

250-889-0973