



WAIMAKARIRI
DISTRICT COUNCIL



WAIMAKARIRI VISITOR MARKETING STRATEGY 2020-2025

STRENGTHENING DESTINATION APPEAL
AND BUILDING AWARENESS OF THE RANGE
OF EXPERIENCES WE OFFER



Visit
Waimakariri



CONTENTS

Executive Summary	5
Introduction.....	8
Background	9
Current Situation.....	10
Covid-19 Impact and Changes to Visitor Spend	13
Key Issues and Opportunities	14
Our Vision and Values	16
Our Target Audiences: Potential Visitors in the Future.....	18
Our Objectives	20
Our Plan on a Page	22
Action Plans	24
Objective 1. Create new collaborations locally and beyond the district to support greater promotion of the district.....	24
Objective 2. Generate new destination appeal by building on what we have and leveraging new investment.....	27
Objective 3. Improve local awareness & encourage locals to act as ambassadors/champions.....	28
Objective 4. Grow visitor awareness and affinity for the experiences of our district	28
Objective 5. Protect our nature, heritage, culture & town character.....	31
Measures of Success.....	32
Key Performance Indicators	33
Budget Allocation	34
Monitoring and Review	34

Disclaimer:

While every effort has been made to ensure the information in this document is accurate, Quality Tourism Development Limited is not liable to any person for any damage or loss whatsoever which has occurred or may occur in relation to that person taking or not taking action in respect of any statement, representation, interpretation or advice referred to in this document.

Cover photo credit: Port & Eagle Brewpub -
Christine Watton





Photo credit:
Ashley Rakahuri Estuary
Waimakartiri District Council



Photo credit:
Waimakariri Aerial
Waimakariri District Council



Executive Summary

The Waimakariri District Council (WDC) with support from Enterprise North Canterbury (ENC) has led the production of this strategy. It aims to provide a framework that maximises the impact of the visitor sector on the local economy as well as guide WDC and ENC's efforts and activities.

This strategy is focused primarily on destination marketing rather than a broader destination management approach - which is more appropriate to regions with greater resources and visitor sector investment.

A clear and refreshed strategy, that continues the momentum of the previous one, is needed to ensure optimal results can be achieved via new methods of public and private collaboration and communication.

One overarching current need for the tourism sector is to consider the disruption caused by Covid-19 to visitor numbers and spending behaviour. Those involved in the visitor sector must look at new ways to respond to this evolving situation.

The disruption caused by Covid-19 has the potential to last many years resulting in dramatically reduced international visitation and spend as well as recessionary effects impacting the domestic travel market. One shining light for the Waimakariri District is that visitors from Canterbury have, in the past, spent far more in the district than visitors from overseas. So, there is an ever-present base of nearby visitors that should cushion the impact of reduced visitation from further afield.

Waimakariri District is also benefiting from significant current investment including major roads and cycle trails, river marina areas and the new Stadium Waimakariri. These and potential new investments into other visitor attractions of scale will generate greater appeal for the district as a visitor destination.

This strategy has identified several key issues and opportunities:

1. Tourism spend is different in the Waimakariri District with a high proportion of spending (nearly 60%) going to retail.
2. Waimakariri District has changed dramatically over the past decade but perceptions may not have.
3. Visitor flows to, and through, the district are not well understood.
4. Town centre offerings are strong and improving.
5. Improved destination appeal will underpin future marketing activity.
6. Connecting the dots in new ways e.g. via new themed road trips can provide a critical mass of relevant activities that will appeal to visitors.
7. The district suffers from a lack of marketing resources (both public and private) given businesses are generally small.
8. Event opportunities exist – especially with the new Stadium Waimakariri about to open.

Our vision for the visitor sector in the Waimakariri District is:

Encouraging locals and visitors to see the Waimakariri District in a whole new light - inspiring them to enjoy more of our friendly towns and charming countryside.

Five objectives will ensure we address the key issues and opportunities above as we seek to achieve this vision for the district:

1. Create new collaborations locally and beyond to support greater promotion of the district
2. Generate new destination appeal by building on what we have and leveraging new investment
3. Improve local awareness & encourage locals to act as ambassadors/champions
4. Grow visitor awareness and affinity for the experiences of our district
5. Protect our nature, town character, culture and heritage.

The main difference between this strategy and those created previously will be the way in which drivers for consumers to travel to and through the district are created and promoted e.g. a new set of themed road journey maps, continued events marketing support and encouraging locals to act as ambassadors when hosting visitors in the district.

In addition to the generation of new destination appeal, based on the existing strengths of the district e.g. our towns with their popular cafes and retail experiences, there will be new facilities and attractions constructed and launched during the term of the strategy, such as the new Stadium Waimakariri. Coordinating district-wide activity around these openings can create media attention and awareness of the burgeoning visitor offering in the district.

Finally, with the district expected to grow to nearly 100,000 residents by 2048, ongoing growth in visitation is likely to naturally occur as an increasing number of friends and relatives come to stay and enjoy being shown around by their hosts.

It is therefore more important than ever to educate residents, many new to the district, on the benefits of discovering their own backyard and being open to sharing it with visitors.



Photo credit:
Rangiora Festival of Colour

Introduction

This strategy has been produced by Quality Tourism Development with support from, and on behalf of, the Waimakariri District Council and Enterprise North Canterbury.

The preparation of the strategy was to commence in early 2020 but had to be delayed due to the first Covid-19 lock down.

Due to global lockdown and restrictions on international travel we have seen significant changes to the global and New Zealand economy. The visitor sector has changed and will undergo further change over the next few years – depending on when quarantine free international travel resumes.

The previous Visitor Strategy expired in 2015 so a new strategy is required to reflect new priorities and learning gained over the prior period while incorporating new considerations that reflect the district's growth estimates, future developments, and Covid-19 recovery considerations.

This strategy outlines a framework that maximises – through destination marketing – the positive outcomes of a growing visitor market on the district's economy, and guides Waimakariri District Council and Enterprise North Canterbury's efforts and activities to help achieve this.

Two stakeholder workshops were held in Rangiora on 22 July 2020 and on 24 August 2020 to support the development of this strategy. These workshops were attended by community representatives, councillors and tourism stakeholders from across the district including ChristchurchNZ, Environment Canterbury and the Department of Conservation.

Photo credit:
Inland Scenic Route 72
Visit Waimakariri



Waimakariri District



Background

The Waimakariri District is a short 20 minute drive north of Christchurch. The major urban areas are Rangiora and Kaiapoi, with key urban settlements including Woodend and Oxford, as well as a number of village and beach settlements.

District population has grown from 49,989 in the 2013 census, to approximately 62,800 in 2019¹. Despite rapid growth, Waimakariri District has retained its rural/small town character. The district's population is expected to increase to approximately 97,000 by 2048, which leads to increased opportunities within the visitor industry e.g. as locals host their friends and relatives.

Key industries that contribute most to the district's gross domestic product (in order of priority) include: construction, forestry/fishing/mining/electronics, agriculture, manufacturing, property related businesses and retail trade.



The visitor sector in the Waimakariri District has been growing steadily over the past decade with visitor spend in the district doubling between 2009 and 2019 (please refer to Figure 1.0 in the next section). Waimakariri District is ranked 46th of New Zealand's 67 territorial local authorities in terms of visitor spend (according to the Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates for the year ended August 2020). This position is around 60% of the total spend generated in neighbouring Hurunui with its ranking of 33rd and slightly below Selwyn district ranked at 41st.

Enterprise North Canterbury is the official promotions agency for the Waimakariri District.

¹ Statistics New Zealand Post-Enumeration Survey 2018, estimated resident population projection for 2019 at 23 September 2020.

Current Situation

Waimakariri District generated 2.3% of the total visitor spend of the Canterbury region in 2019. Looking at Waimakariri alone, total spend has grown significantly, averaging 7% per annum, over the past 11 years totalling an estimated \$93m in the 12 months ended December 2019.

Figure 1.0 Waimakariri District Visitor Spend for the Year Ended December

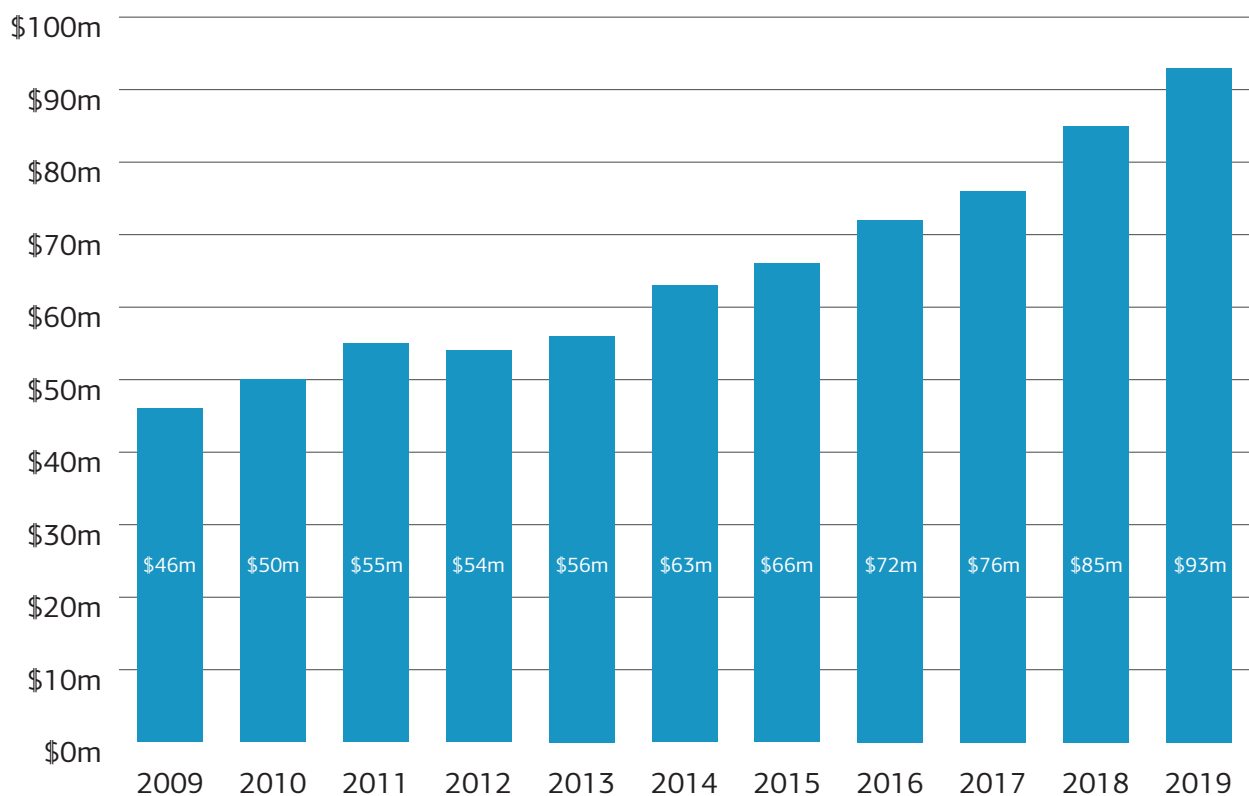
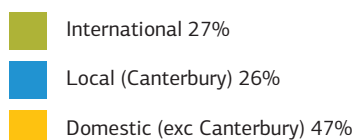


Figure 2.0 Origin of Visitor Spend in Waimakariri District for the Year Ended December 2019

The majority of visitor spend in the Waimakariri District (73%) is generated by domestic visitors. Approximately 27% of spend is generated by international visitors.



Source: Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates (MRTE), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

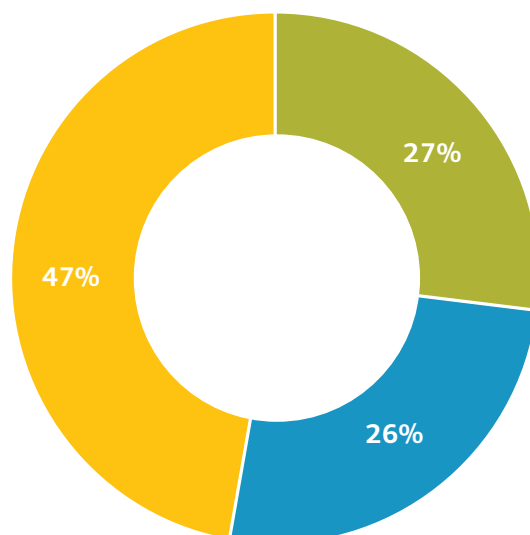


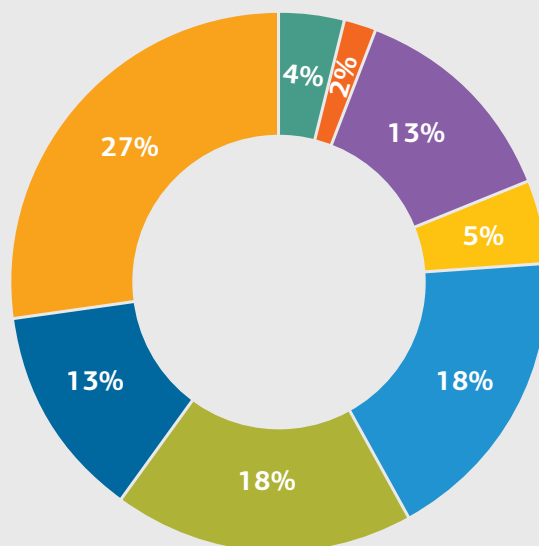
Figure 3.0 Waimakariri Visitor Spend by Product Category for Year Ended December 2019

Retail spend makes up 58% of the total visitor spend in the Waimakariri District with 'Retail sales – other' encompassing clothing, furniture, electrical goods, hardware and houseware contributing nearly half of the retail sales total.

Spend on accommodation is relatively low at 4% given the proximity of major accommodation providers in Christchurch. Comparatively, accommodation spend makes up 19% of total visitor spend in Hurunui and 16% in Napier (a city/district with similar population to Waimakariri).

Food and beverage visitor spend makes up 13% of the total in the Waimakariri District, this proportion is lower than the likes of Hurunui and Napier (both wine regions) where F&B spend comprises 20% of total visitor spend.

This MRTE² expenditure does not include all spend from within Canterbury as much of this 'local' spend does not fit the definition of being generated by a visitor³. Table 1.0 on the following page shows the difference in spend in Waimakariri District when spend from Christchurch and the rest of Canterbury are included.



Source: Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates (MRTE) December 2019, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

²MRTE values are based on estimates of visitor related spending and survey data, specifically: a base of ECT data, International Visitor Survey (IVS) data from MBIE, and the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) dataset from Statistics New Zealand. The data is revised each month so values may change, it should be treated as indicative only and not definitive. The MRTEs match Marketview data to a national view of spending including cash spending and unattributed online spending.

³Domestic visitors are classified as travelling more than 40km outside their usual place of residence so a visitor from Christchurch City to Kaiapoi or Rangiora would not have their expenditure included in the MRTEs unless they were travelling more than 40km from their home to reach these locations.

Table 1.0 Estimates of Visitor Spend by Origin of Visitor in the Waimakariri District in 2019

Estimated Visitor Spend in the Waimakariri District	Marketview	MRTE (MBIE)
Christchurch City	64,300,372	n/a
Rest of Canterbury ⁴	49,361,471	24,045,723 (incl CHC)
Domestic and international visitors	39,063,407	68,711,584
Total Spend (including Canterbury)	152,725,250	92,757,307

Source: Marketview October 2020, Verisk Analytics; MRTE December 2019, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Marketview⁵ figures for 2019 show a total spend in Waimakariri District, from people outside the district, of approximately \$152m when Christchurch and Canterbury spend is added to domestic and international visitor spend. This compares to the estimated visitor spend in 2019 from the Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates (provided by MBIE) of \$93m. The key difference being spend in Waimakariri District from people outside the district, such as from Christchurch, who are not travelling 40km or more are not officially counted as visitors.

Current Visitor Spend

Christchurch and Canterbury are the main sources of visitor spend, with Auckland being the third largest source, followed by Nelson-Tasman then Marlborough. Visitors from Australia are the largest source of international visitor spend as shown in Table 2.0 below.

Table 2.0 Estimates of Visitor Spend by Origin of Visitor in Waimakariri District in 2019⁶

Origin of Visitor	Accommodation	Arts & Revreation	Food & Beverage	Retail Trade	Transport & Travel Services	Total
Auckland	203,599	74,672	714,034	4,663,651	107,359	5,763,315
Nelson Tasman	151,478	24,266	481,166	3,361,229	48,209	4,066,348
Marlborough	149,234	26,846	398,072	2,083,912	46,120	2,704,185
Wellington	106,181	47,567	345,039	2,109,443	10,897	2,619,127
Dunedin	81,903	19,583	324,758	1,855,588	9,695	2,291,526
Australia	134,390	32,154	427,219	1,620,081	43,784	2,257,628
Timaru	105,469	20,081	299,476	1,654,936	24,609	2,104,572
West Coast	87,999	13,385	253,472	1,568,310	35,636	1,958,802
Southland	93,178	13,437	215,153	1,368,562	55,106	1,745,436
Waikato	59,104	23,333	215,757	1,385,476	508	1,684,179
Kaikoura	24,452	6,825	219,500	1,164,370	77,262	1,492,409
Northland	34,320	9,647	101,206	1,128,609	50,218	1,324,000
United Kingdom	77,809	12,912	194,404	877,334	57,820	1,220,279
Coastal Bay of Plenty	42,992	20,586	135,901	940,042	1,164	1,140,686
Hawke's Bay	35,647	17,150	112,318	842,449	4,880	1,012,444
Manawatu	50,646	14,978	130,548	764,690		960,861
Central Otago	22,859	10,072	107,993	760,048	3,264	904,235
Queenstown	22,272	7,115	110,537	670,861	16,135	826,919
U.S.A	34,314	8,637	138,106	547,989	26,458	755,503
Rest of Europe	43,092	6,060	88,147	417,224	9,785	564,306

Source: Marketview June 2020, Verisk Analytics

Covid-19 Impact and Changes to Visitor Spend

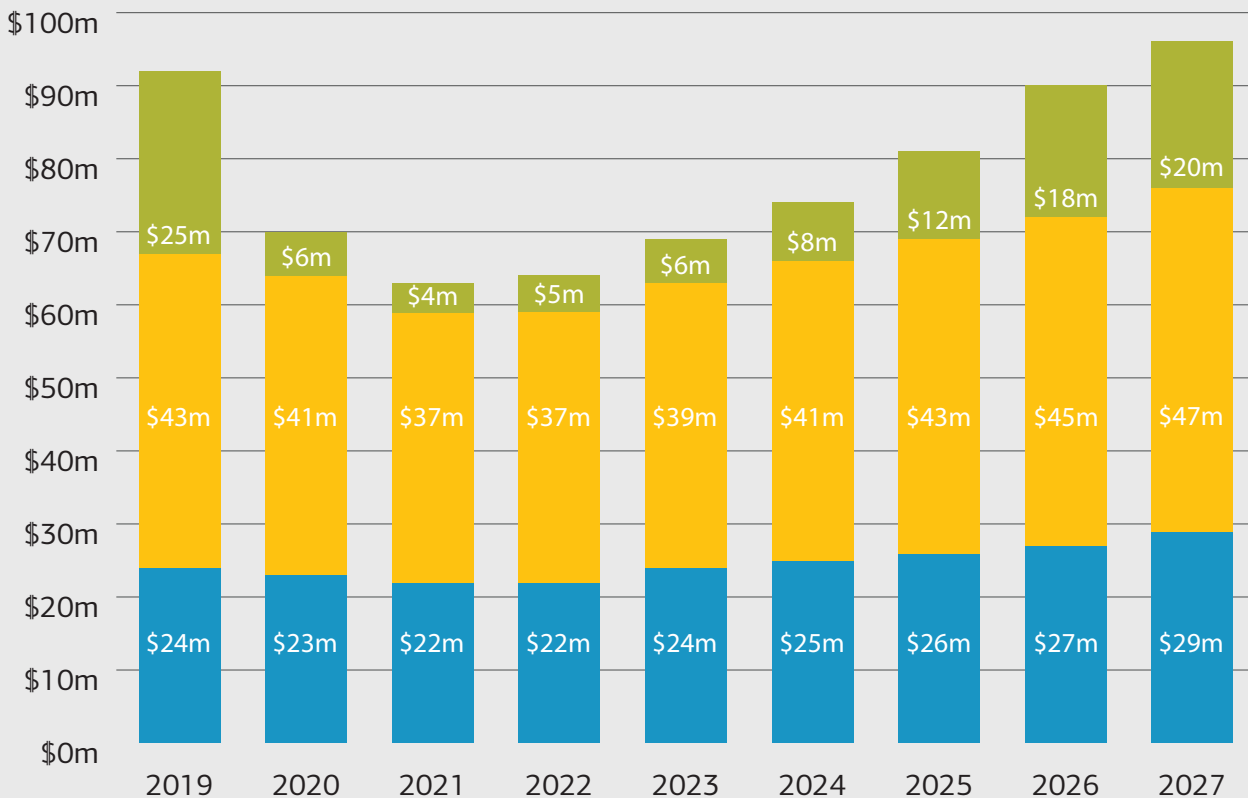
New Zealand and overseas estimates of tourism sector recovery⁷ suggest a much longer time to return to spending levels of 2019 than originally thought. Some research companies have suggested that international tourism may never return to pre-Covid-19 levels and visitor spend may be impacted for a considerable period.

Figure 4.0 below is an estimate of how long a full recovery may take. It is likely that it will be 2026 before we see visitor spending tracking at 98% of 2019 levels.

However, the district's proximity to Christchurch and the ongoing potential for day trips plus the high proportion of domestic visitor spend that is received should shield it from significant declines in visitor spend overall. Current estimates are that 2022 may see visitor spend drop to approximately 70% of the 2019 level.

Shifting our focus to encourage more local travel within the district and region should provide a more resilient base of visitors and referrers – as illustrated in the graph below.

Figure 4.0 Estimated Visitor Spend in Waimakariri to 2027⁸



Source: Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates (MRTEs), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

⁴Includes spend by visitors from the wider Canterbury area such as Hurunui, Selwyn, Ashburton, Kaikoura, Timaru, Waimate and Mackenzie.

⁵ Marketview employs Paymark merchant base, the largest of New Zealand's eftpos networks used by 75% of New Zealand retailers to capture retail spending. Additional data is included from a hybrid dataset to capture any data from retailers who are not on the Paymark network.

⁶Table 2.0 excludes spending by residents of Christchurch and Canterbury as it is based on a 'visitor' dataset from Marketview which does not include spending in the Waimakariri District by those living in the Canterbury Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) area.

⁷ The USA Funding Futures Report (August 2020) by Miles Partnership, Civitas and Tourism Economics highlighted that the recovery in hotel revenues across the USA is likely to take 15 quarters i.e. nearly 4 years.

⁸ These estimates are illustrative only to show the likely resilience of local spend compared to the more volatile international spend.

Key Issues and Opportunities

This summary of opportunities and issues was compiled following a review of the district's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats completed in the first stakeholder workshop held in July 2020.

1

Tourism spend in the Waimakariri District relies on locals:

Daytrips appear to be important drivers of spend as evidenced by the significant spend from Christchurch locals in the district and nearly 60% of visitor spend in 2019 going to the retail sector. In contrast, it is estimated that only 4% is spent on accommodation compared to 19% in Hurunui while 13% is spent on food & beverage in Waimakariri compared to 20% in comparative areas such as Hurunui and Napier.

2

Waimakariri District has changed dramatically over the past decade but perceptions may not have with the growth in resident population and upgrades of town centres, retail and café offerings. Even though the district has changed, many people may still have outdated perceptions of the district, its towns and natural attractions.

3

Visitor flows to and through the district are not well understood:

Like most regions of New Zealand, there is little information available on the way visitors travel to and around the towns, natural attractions and businesses in the Waimakariri District. Day trip visitors and overnight visitors are both important to the district. However the travel patterns and purchase behaviours of these visitors will vary greatly.

4

Town centre offerings are strong and improving:

However, the towns can be bypassed so there is potential for local residents, Cantabrians and visitors to miss them as they travel through the district. Leading people to our town centres via new wayfinding systems (maps, online information and road signage) can motivate both day trippers and overnight visitors to spend more time and money in our towns.

5

Improving destination appeal:

The towns of the district are likely to be the primary drivers of destination appeal i.e. people in Christchurch will say they are going to Oxford or Kaiapoi for the day not to the Waimakariri District. Strengthening destination appeal in the future should therefore build on our iconic towns adding natural areas plus any new major attractions as they are developed.

6

Connecting the dots to provide a critical mass of relevant activities:

Stakeholders in our first workshop commented on the opportunity to better connect cycle & walking trails in the district and to promote relevant themes that will appeal to visitors and locals e.g. boutique retail, second hand stores (vintage hunters), locally made food & beverage, scenic points etc.

7

Lack of marketing resources (public and private):

It is difficult to compete effectively with neighbouring destinations when they have bigger marketing budgets. However, we are closer to Christchurch and could make the most of being an add-on for trips to destinations further afield. So, there are opportunities to be included in itineraries to other destinations e.g. to Kaikoura or along SH72 as well as stimulating day trip travel with new messaging about what's on offer in the district. Targeting segments of the market more likely to enjoy what we have to offer will save money on advertising.

8

Event opportunities:

There is already a good calendar of events in the district and the new Stadium Waimakariri, once complete, will generate more events. It is timely to explore the types of events that locals and visitors are more eager to see hosted in the district and to explore options to grow existing or develop new experiences as signature events that promote the unique identities of the towns in the district.

Our Vision and Values

Vision

Encouraging locals and visitors to see the Waimakariri District in a whole new light - inspiring them to enjoy more of our friendly towns and charming countryside.

This vision statement represents our aspiration for the Waimakariri District as a visitor destination and the reason why this strategy has been created. The values below represent what the district could stand for and seek to retain, as a place for people to visit.

Table 3.0 Values of Waimakariri District as a Visitor Destination

Values (Things we want to retain as a district)	Workshop participant comments
Integrity	North Canterbury’s natural assets will be preserved for future use e.g. food provenance and effective environmental practices
Sustainability	Our natural environment is valued more, relying on each other to get through the tough times, long term financial sustainability
Tranquillity, relaxed pace	Leisurely pace of life in the country environment
Warm, welcoming	People say ‘hi’ and smile in the street
Community	Safe, clean and people care about the environment and each other
Atmosphere	Village feel of our towns (character), sense of place, small town feel
Inclusive, linking tracks, connecting with Christchurch	Fantastic walk/cycle network along our rivers, and lovely places to stay, eat and relax
Stylish	The district retains its natural, real and raw feel whilst incorporating the best of contemporary amenity in our town centres
Quirky, unique combination of small towns	Special nature and identity of Kaiapoi, Rangiora and Oxford remain valued
Open, transformative	Promoting what we have and enjoy, coupled with what is to be developed to make the district even more appealing and a place that can offer exceptional experiences



Photo Credit: Ryde Falls - Enterprise North Canterbury

Our Target Audiences: Potential Visitors in the Future

The stakeholder workshops highlighted a substantial list of activities that visitors participate in within the district – these can be broadly grouped as:

Day trippers enjoying the following activities⁹

- Indulgent relaxation including Sunday drives, café lunches, motorbike and car club groups
- Active outdoor pursuits e.g. walking, biking, swimming, horse riding, fishing
- Shopping and farmers markets
- Sporting competitions as spectators and participants
- Events and festivals – music and other events e.g. A&P shows
- Arts and culture e.g. galleries, cinema, museum visits
- Functional trips e.g. boarding school pick-ups, medical visits or weekly shopping trips.

Overnight visitors

These visitors may engage in the above activities and:

- Stay with friends and family (family occasion, group event or function, family catch up, school holidays)
- Participate in, or support local sports events
- Stay for business reasons
- Seek stop-offs on longer trips (multi-day South Island holidays or journeying on the inland highway route 72)
- Prefer to stay in the country or a smaller town rather than a big city
- Like to get close to nature e.g. by camping
- Be visiting to familiarise themselves with the area and assessing the options for relocating here (those checking out the district in advance of a future move).

The Importance of Locals

The significance of visitors from within Canterbury¹⁰ combined with the closure of our border to international visitors reinforces the importance of our own resident population as a source of 'visitor' spend.

Focusing marketing activity on Canterbury locals as well as visitors to the district has two purposes:

- Building resident awareness, participation and pride in our visitor offering, and
- Encouraging locals (as ambassadors/champions) to invite their friends and family to visit for a day trip, weekend or longer to enjoy spending time and money in the district.

The following diagram shows a summary of the types of visitors we are targeting to visit and spend money in order of focus priority by market type. These visitors have also been identified as being those most likely to be receptive to what we have to offer.

The target audience groups will inform the type of marketing and communication channels that will be used to cost-effectively promote reasons to travel to the district by these visitors.

There will be default channels such as the Visit Waimakariri website (www.visitwaimakariri.co.nz) that can be used to communicate to all visitors while other communication might be specific to one group e.g. people interested in a sporting or musical event.

⁹ These activities are relevant to Waimakariri District residents as well as visitors.

¹⁰ In accordance with October 2020 Marketview data (Table 1.0), residents of Canterbury (including Christchurch) outside the Waimakariri District spent more than \$113m in the Waimakariri District during 2019.

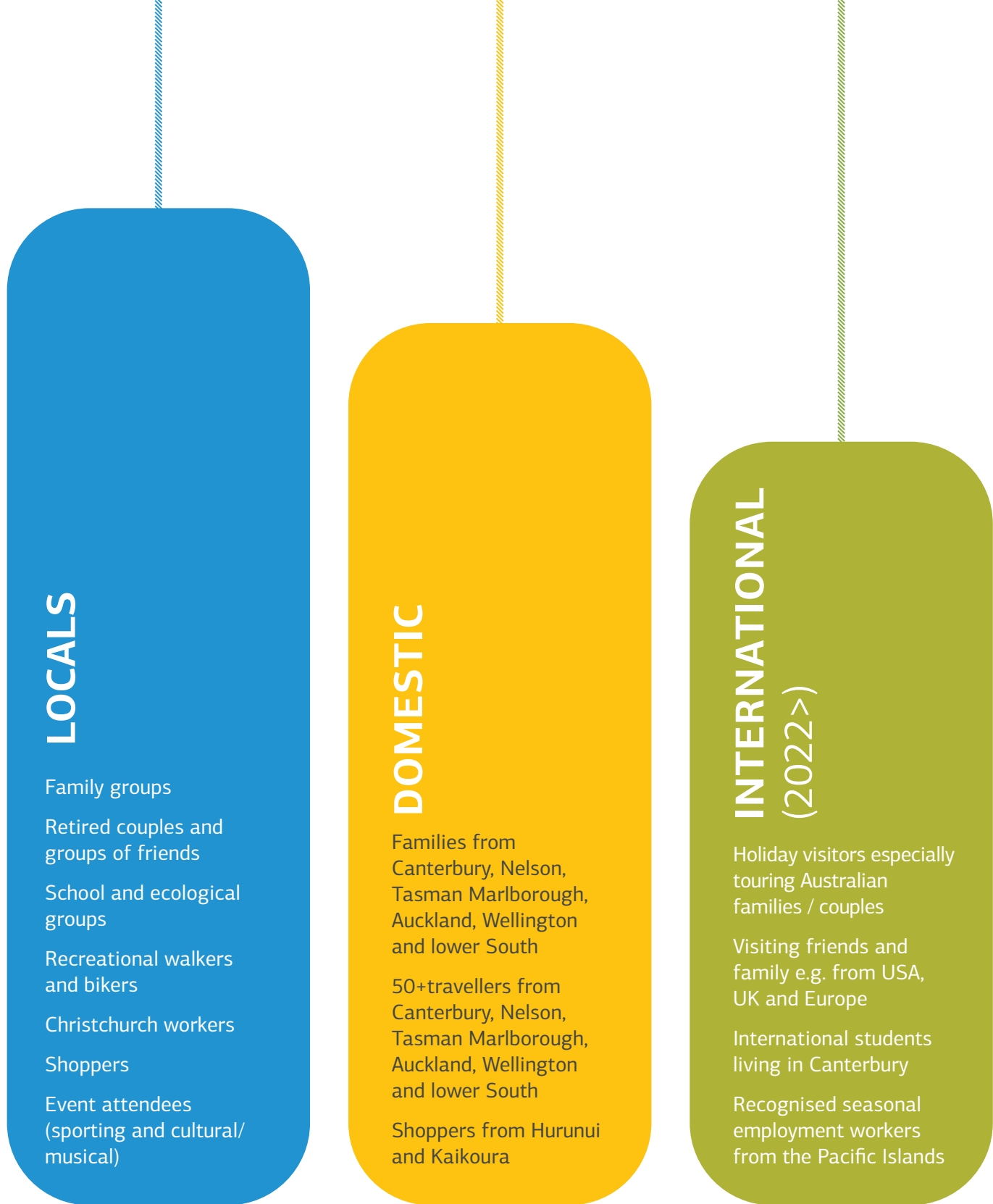


Figure 5.0: Summary of Target Audiences Segments

‘Locals’ are visitors from within the wider Canterbury region (covering the geographical expanse of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Organisation area) while ‘Domestic’ includes visitors from the rest of New Zealand and ‘International’, visitors from overseas.

Our Objectives

The following diagram shows the five key areas of focus for this new destination marketing strategy.

Figure 6.0 Objectives



Strategies supporting each objective are listed below:

- 1. Create new collaborations locally and beyond the district to support greater promotion of the district**
 - a. Create new cost-effective collaborations within the district
 - b. Formalise arrangements with neighbouring agencies able to promote and develop Waimakariri District's visitor offering
- 2. Generate new destination appeal by building on what we have and leveraging new investment**
 - a. Create new themed road trips (ideally with distinctively designed maps) within the district
 - b. Support and leverage new major attractions and facilities that open in the district e.g. the new stadium and other assets of scale
 - c. Support event activity that will fill venues off-peak, help define the district and that can be anchored permanently (i.e. not lost to other regions)
- 3. Improve local awareness & encourage locals to act as ambassadors/ champions**
 - a. Encourage locals to try new things and improve their awareness of things to do in the district at the same time
- 4. Grow visitor awareness and affinity for the experiences of our district**
 - a. Create a critical mass online of reasons to visit and promote via visitor interest / motivation
 - b. Work with others to promote for us – ideally for free
- 5. Protect our nature, heritage, culture and town character**
 - a. Protect our nature, heritage & culture and our stories
 - b. Build our foundations as a sustainable destination.



Photo Credit: Mount Oxford
Enterprise North Canterbury

Our Plan on a Page

The following range of activities have been proposed to help deliver on the objectives.

Figure 7.0
Action Items



Photo credit: Waikuku Beach - Enterprise North Canterbury

Local awareness and ambassadors

Identify affordable communication channels to locals

Refocus activities of i-SITE to promote to locals & visitors

Identify and engage with locals prepared to be ambassadors/champions

Conduct community survey to measure levels of district pride and sentiment

Visitor awareness and affinity

Continue to enhance Visit Waimakariri website

Promote new maps and content via affiliated websites e.g. Tourism NZ

Support Christchurch NZ domestic activity

Create stronger presence in key regional guides e.g. AA

Generate positive media stories profiling the district

Protecting our nature, heritage & culture

Identify and protect our stories (of arrival and making a living)

Work with DOC / iwi / landowners to protect special places

Encourage businesses to support the Tiaki Promise

Work with i-SITE NZ and key regional stakeholders to decide the long-term future of i-SITE

Encourage light footprint travel incl public transport and EV journeys

Establish new measures of visitor travel patterns and spending

Align activity in town centre plans with promotional activity

Secure long-term funding to deliver this strategy

Action Plans

ENC = Enterprise North Canterbury
WDC = Waimakariri District Council

Objective 1. Create new collaborations locally and beyond the district to support greater promotion of the district

1.1 Create new cost-effective collaborations and communications channels within the district

1.1.1	Coordinate networking and familiarisations of new and existing attractions, accommodation places, food and beverage establishments and other visitor facing businesses within the district to get to know each other better.	1Q21&3Q21, repeat annually	ENC
1.1.2	Review communications channels and processes for engaging with visitor facing businesses in the district (including via the promotions associations) so that businesses, promotions associations and ENC can communicate with each other cost-effectively.	1Q21, repeat annually	ENC
1.1.3	Work with the Promotions Associations and other promotion organisations to ensure their independent promotional activities are well aligned with the official district destination branding and messaging, and to source general content for district wide promotions conducted by Enterprise North Canterbury.	2021 then annually	WDC & ENC
1.1.4	Facilitate provision of business capability services and promote opportunities to the visitor sector appropriately.	2021 then annually	ENC
1.1.5	Celebrate business to business cross-selling success in stakeholder communications (e.g. good news stories) and consider regular recognition of a business that has provided a lead or booking to another business.	2021 then annually	ENC

1.2 Formalise arrangements with neighbouring agencies able to promote and develop Waimakariri's visitor offering

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead	
1.2.1	Review important co-promotional relationships with Visit Hurunui and Christchurch NZ as well as other districts involved in the Inland Scenic Route and formalise these e.g. via MOU agreements. Investigate whether new government funding for these neighbouring agencies may result in additional promotional or product development opportunities that will cross district boundaries. Also consider event optimisation (to avoid clashes) and business capability building services in producing any MOUs.	2Q21 and then annually	ENC
1.2.2	Advocate for signage and wayfinding information across the district in conjunction with NZTA to promote road trips and cycle trails. Also investigate financial support from NZTA for road signage or other promotion of what was previously State Highway 72.	3Q21 then ongoing	WDC/ENC
1.2.3	Establish a Tourism Advisory Group and terms of reference, to include representatives from the tourism sector (i.e. accommodation, adventure tourism, retail and food & beverage) and other Christchurch relevant public sector and private sector agencies.	2Q21 meet every six months or annually	ENC



KAIAPOI RIVER QUEEN

Photo Credit - Kaiapoi River Queen - Enterprise North Canterbury



Photo credit: Alpine Jet Thrills

Objective 2. Generate new destination appeal by building on what we have and leveraging new investment

2.1 Create new themed road trips (ideally with distinctively designed maps) within the district

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
2.1.1 Produce / update design style guide for district wide promotional material including how towns can align with district messaging – incorporate new logo and design elements into the new website and other designed material e.g. brochures and maps.	2Q21, then annually	ENC
2.1.2 Create five to six themed road trips through the district (up to two per year in 2021, 2022 and 2023) that will have broad market appeal for Cantabrians and domestic visitors. Ideally earn revenue from advertising or sponsorship of new maps. Include input from the Tourism Advisory Group.	3Q21, 3Q22 & 3Q23	ENC
2.1.3 Explore the reinvigoration of the Inland Scenic Route (Highway 72) as a touring route with other districts and update promotional material on Tourism NZ (TNZ), ChristchurchNZ (CNZ) and Visit Waimakariri (VW) websites.	4Q21	ENC

2.2 Support development of, and leverage, new major attractions and facilities that open in the district e.g. the new stadium

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
2.2.1 Support development of new major attractions and facilities in the district where these will have a positive impact on visitation and district profile.	As required	ENC / WDC
2.2.2 Build district profile by leveraging off major new attractions / facilities / trials or experiences that are opened or launched in the district and coordinate media activities to generate additional "new district attraction" stories. Incorporate these new reasons to visit into district wide promotions including the VWwebsite, road trip maps and visitor guides. Also update CNZ and TNZ websites.	Annual major attraction / facilities launches	ENC
2.2.3 Promote the development of a connected network of cycleways (on-road) and cycle trails (off-road). Also advocate for a significant investment in new cycle trail infrastructure that connects Christchurch with our towns and beyond e.g. an off-road easy trail to Waipara via Kaiapoi.	Annually	WDC/ENC
2.2.4 Prioritise investment in council built and maintained facilities where there is likely to be a significant benefit for visitors to the district as well as to locals e.g. public toilets, footpaths, trails etc.	Annually	WDC

2.3 Support event activity that will fill venues off-peak, help define the district and that can be anchored permanently (i.e. not lost to other regions)

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
2.3.1 Continue to promote regular events and markets including community events that have potential to attract visitors. Increase prominence of smaller events that have the potential to grow over time to generate greater regional awareness, particularly earned media coverage and to attract more visitors.	Ongoing	ENC
2.3.2 Work with major venues to set up an event specific e-newsletter and distribute quarterly to database of subscribers.	3Q21 then quarterly	ENC
2.3.3 Outline a plan that seeks to anchor signature events to the district where they are significant generators of visitation. Up to three homegrown events may become future signature events.	3Q21	ENC / WDC

Objective 3. Improve local awareness & encourage locals to act as ambassadors/champions

3.1 Encourage locals to try new things and improve their awareness of things to do in the district at the same time

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
3.1.1 Continue to identify and operate cost effective communication channels to distribute promotional material and event information to Waimakariri District residents. Also piggyback these communications featuring more offers / incentives relevant to locals asking them to support visitor facing businesses in the district.	2Q21, review annually	ENC
3.1.2 Refocus the activities of the i-SITE moving from a reactive provider of information to visitors to a more proactive promoter of local businesses, road trips and themed maps to residents and their visitors.	2021 then annually	WDC & ENC
3.1.3 Identify and engage with locals who are prepared to be champions for the district e.g. people wanting experiences for families, walking groups etc. Coordinate timings so that seasonal messages can be more easily communicated. Recognise champion' supporters & referrers in quarterly communications in order to drive further interest and participation in the programme.	3Q21 then quarterly	ENC
3.1.4 Conduct community survey to measure levels of district pride and sentiment regarding visitation within the district.	3Q21 then annually	ENC

Objective 4. Grow visitor awareness and affinity for the experiences of our district

4.1 Create a critical mass of reasons to visit online and promote via visitor interest / motivation

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
4.1.1 Continue to enhance the Visit Waimakariri website and online platforms to promote the district and all offerings ensuring the site is optimised for search engines and any themed maps, articles / blogs are mobile responsive.	Annually	ENC
4.1.2 Promote new maps and relevant district content via affiliated websites and online platforms, other social channels and relevant databases. Also negotiate a greater presence for the Waimakariri District and its businesses on CNZ and TNZ websites.	Annually	ENC

4.2 Work with others to promote for us – ideally for free

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
4.2.1 Support ChristchurchNZ domestic activity when they are coordinating region wide activity e.g. hosting domestic or Australian travel writers, media influencers or travel trade.	Annually	ENC
4.2.2 Create a stronger presence in the AA Traveller Guide to Christchurch and Canterbury and other relevant domestic media to promote new road trips and possibly events.	3Q21 then annually	ENC
4.2.3 Generate positive media stories profiling the district in newspapers of interest, relevant tourism mags, online platforms etc. This includes hosting visiting media.	Annually	ENC



Photo credit: Rangiora Festival of Lights - Colleen Linnell



Photo credit:
Bike Trails
Derek Adair

Objective 5. Protect our nature, heritage, culture & town character

5.1 Protect our nature, heritage & culture and our stories

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
5.1.1 Identify and protect our stories of origin, arrival and making a living. Use some of these stories (that have been approved by relevant iwi, communities and people) to reinforce points of interest or themes within new road trip maps.	Ongoing	ENC
5.1.2 Work with DOC / iwi / landowners to protect special places for future generations and communicate relevant improvement projects to local businesses and residents in ongoing local communications as per Objective 3.	Ongoing	WDC
5.1.3 Encourage tourism, retail and food & beverage businesses to support the Tiaki Promise.	Ongoing	ENC
5.1.4 Work with i-SITE New Zealand to decide the long-term future of the i-SITE as an information centre and local business resource hub.	2Q22	ENC

5.2 Build our foundations as a sustainable destination

Action / Project	Timing	Project Lead
5.2.1 Encourage light footprint travel within the district by promoting available public transport and EV journey options relevant to visitors e.g. on a page within the website and in other marketing material.	Ongoing	ENC
5.2.2 Establish new measures of visitor travel patterns and spend in conjunction with other districts and regions in the Top of the South. This may include counters on new cycle trails.	3Q21	ENC
5.2.3 Incorporate and/or consider upgrades to or new public facing visitor assets when developing town centre strategies and plans for the district, i.e. public toilets, cycle racks, signage etc.	Annually	WDC
5.2.4 Secure long-term district promotions funding for ENC in order to deliver on this strategy.	2Q21 then annual	ENC



NorWest arch from Pines Beach
- Angela Torrie

Measures of Success

Regional plans have been requested to contribute to the following goals of The Aotearoa New Zealand Government Tourism Strategy (2019):

- Tourism supports thriving and sustainable regions
- Tourism sector productivity improves
- New Zealand-Aotearoa delivers exceptional visitor experiences
- Tourism protects, restores and champions New Zealand- Aotearoa's natural environment, culture and historic heritage
- New Zealanders' lives are improved by tourism.

Incorporating the direction provided by the five goals above, the new Waimakariri Visitor Marketing Strategy to 2025 includes strategies covering rebuilding / growing visitation levels (including locals as visitors), business prosperity & employment, our identity, culture and heritage and sustainable places including our environment, infrastructure and towns. Given the importance of raising awareness of just how much our district has to offer, the strategies for building local and visitor awareness have been further split to provide greater clarity on the outcomes sought.

Key Performance Indicators

The ultimate outcomes of sustainably growing visitation and spend to the Waimakariri District are supported by the strategies and actions above including the collective efforts of the visitor sector to enhance destination appeal and generate media presence to drive awareness.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that follow provide a general indication of the progress being made as the strategies and actions are delivered over the next three years. KPI targets factor in historical trends/ data, the current Covid-19 environment and the aspirations of this Strategy.

It is important to note that the achievement of some KPI's will not necessarily be due to the sole influence of this Strategy and its actions, for example visitor and accommodation spend is also influenced by other things outside the scope and delivery capability of this Strategy. KPI's have been established for the first three years of the strategy only. Once these have been achieved it will be necessary to establish a set of revised KPIs for the remaining two years.

KPI	Baseline	2021	2022	2023
Collaboration	N/A	MOUs signed	Consultation achieved	Consultation achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-promotional MOUs in place with Hurunui and ChristchurchNZ Consultation with the Tourism Advisory Group, Promotions Associations and businesses when developing themed road trip content 		Consultation achieved		
Destination Appeal				
Visitor spend (using MRTEs and Marketview)	2020 baseline data	+1%*	+5%*	+5%*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall spend Accommodation spend Maintain share of Canterbury spend 		+1%*	+4%*	+4%*
Increased number of high-quality visitor experiences in the district:		maintained	maintained	maintained
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New combinations of activities e.g. road trip maps launched 		2 new road trip themed maps	2 new road trip themed maps	1-2 new road trip themed maps
Improve local awareness & establish ambassadors	2021 baseline data			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local champions / ambassador database growing Local sentiment toward hosting visitors remains positive or improves Local pride maintained or increased 		Grow 20% p.a.	Maintained or increased	Maintained or increased
Grow visitor awareness and affinity				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor usage of website is growing Downloads of maps and brochures Database of events / special interest visitors Facebook following is growing Positive media stories of the district's visitor offering 	2020 baseline data	+5%	+8%	+8%
		n/a	+20%	+8%
	5,500 on FB	+25%	+20%	+8%
		+5%	+5%	+5%
	Number of stories	4+	5+	5+
Other / Protecting Places & Stories				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for destination marketing agreed for 3+ years Attendee numbers grow at selected supported events Database of authentic origin / arrival stories established (that can underpin new themed road trips) 	Service agreement	Funding maintained	Funding maintained	Funding maintained
		+10%	+15%	+15%
	2020 baseline data	Database updated	Database updated	Database updated

*Notwithstanding Figure 4.0, due to Covid-19 and the uncertainty around future visitation we have opted to include aspirational targets in case the local visitor sector recovers more quickly than previously indicated. However, these targets have been constrained accordingly and are less than the 7% per annum (average) growth in visitor spend experienced by pre-Covid markets from 2009-2019 (Table 1.0). There remains a risk that these targets are not achieved if tourism sector recovery tracks alongside Figure 4.0 or experiences a worse outcome than predicted.

Budget Allocation

The Waimakariri District Council provides an annual funding grant to Enterprise North Canterbury of around \$340,000 to support visitor related activities or services for the district.

Enterprise North Canterbury allocates the funding each year to support staffing for promotions related work, visitor related district promotions/marketing activity and event funding.

In the delivery of this five year Strategy, future funding allocations will be reprioritised around the five objective areas (collaboration, destination appeal, local and visitor awareness, and protecting our nature, heritage, culture and character) to support achievement of the implementation actions for both Enterprise North Canterbury and the Waimakariri District Council.

Opportunities to seek further funding in support of district promotions will occur as appropriate throughout the duration of the Strategy.

Monitoring & Review

It is important that we are accountable and committed to the vision, objectives and desired outcomes envisaged in this Strategy. While this Strategy has a five year lifespan, it is intended to be a living document that is subject to ongoing review and adjustment as a result of learnings gained and new or evolving situations within the national and global tourism landscape.

Both Enterprise North Canterbury and the Waimakariri District Council will have an ongoing role in overseeing the implementation of this Strategy with support from the Tourism Advisory Group and other sector bodies as appropriate. The key actions in this Strategy will form the basis of a visitor related work programme for both organisations.

A review of the Visitor Marketing Strategy and yearly achievements will be included in the annual reporting that Enterprise North Canterbury completes for the Audit and Risk Committee of the Waimakariri District Council.



Photo credit:
Waimakariri Gorge & Night Sky
G.VanHout



For more information please contact

Waimakariri District Council

Phone: 0800 965 468 (0800 WMK GOV)

Email: office@wmk.govt.nz

Photo credit:
Waimakariri Aerial
Waimakariri District Council