

Port au Port Peninsula Tourism Development Plan

October 2020

GOAL



To bring together tourism stakeholders on the Port au Port Peninsula to establish tourism development priorities to increase visitation and spending.

Objectives



1. Identify the gaps and opportunities in the Visitor Journey in the region.
2. Identify actions/recommendations for addressing gaps and opportunities.
3. Prioritize list of actions to increase visitation and spending.

Tourism Development Planning Process

Opportunities Identification Session – March 3, 2020

- Build awareness of provincial and regional priorities & partners
- Build awareness of trends, customer profiles, tourism opportunities
- Engage stakeholders in a facilitated session to identify priorities, gaps, opportunities and potential actions

Validation of Key Findings Session – October 27, 2020

- Presentation on the key findings and recommended actions
- Engage stakeholders to validate the gaps, opportunities, and priorities

Actioning/Implementation November 2020

- Engage stakeholders to prioritize and action the key recommendations

Tourism Planning Framework

What are the touchpoints on the visitor journey?

**PRE-
Journey**

Planning &
Booking

↑
**Make
the
brand
promise**

Getting here &
getting around

Visitor
Services

**Visitor
Journey**

Food

Accommodations

Things to Experience!

**POST-
Journey**

Word of
Mouth &
Mouse

↑
**Share
the
brand
promise**

Deliver on the brand promise



Four Areas of Focus



Provincial Tourism Product Development Priorities

- People and program-based
- Food
- Accommodations
- Natural and Cultural Attractions
- Festivals and Events
- Destination Trails
- Craft and Arts
- Indigenous Tourism

- Market-Readiness Guidelines
- Experience Development Support
- Planning & Booking
- Visitor Services
- Sense of Arrival
- Digital/Online Presence



- Using research to inform decisions
- Market potential, customer profiles, survey results
- Establishing performance baselines, measuring success

- Destination areas versus silo tourism development
- Filling in gaps along the journey, clustering
- Leveraging existing infrastructure and attractions
- Sustainability of Anchor Attractions
- Packaging, itineraries, content
- Season extension

Our typical vacation visitor

Visitor Characteristics



Travel as couple (2)



Stay 10.4 nights



Always wanted to visit



Rent a vehicle



NL = Primary destination

Demographics



55+ years old



\$100,000+ HH Income



University graduates

Trip Planning



Plan ahead 5 months



Online

Destinations
Accommodations
Things to do
Reviews



In-destination

Printed materials
Locals
NL Traveller's Guide
Destinations (online)
Attractions (online)

Trip Characteristics



Hotels B&Bs/Inns



Top destinations

- St. John's
- Gros Morne area
- Bonavista area
- Twillingate area



\$3,500



Highly satisfied



Share experiences through email and Facebook

Visitors love walking and hiking

Top 5 outdoor activities visitors participate in (% of vacation travel parties)



Pleasure walking

89%



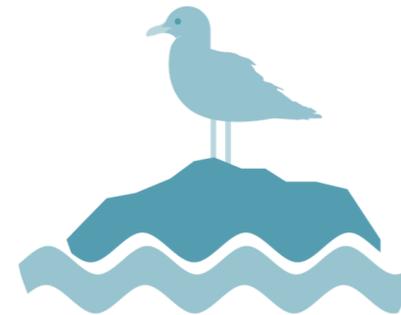
Hiking

79%



Visiting National Parks

59%



Seabird watching

55%



Whale watching

52%

Visitors enjoy history, culture and food

Top 5 culture and heritage experiences (% of vacation travel parties)



Historic Sites/
museums

78%



Exploring small
communities

76%



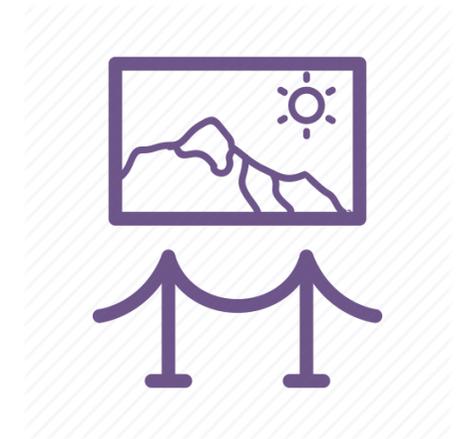
Lighthouse
experiences

74%



Culinary
experiences

70%



Galleries/exhibits

50%

Tourism Development Plan Challenge

The challenge is to create and deliver experiences that drive visitation and spending.

These experiences and how they are promoted will have to:

- Be relevant to the target market;
- Differentiate Port au Port Peninsula;
- Reflect the provincial brand pillars of people, place and culture;
- Be packaged and available to purchase; and
- Address gaps and opportunities for high quality for all touchpoints along the Visitor Journey.



Port au Port Peninsula Tourism Development Plan

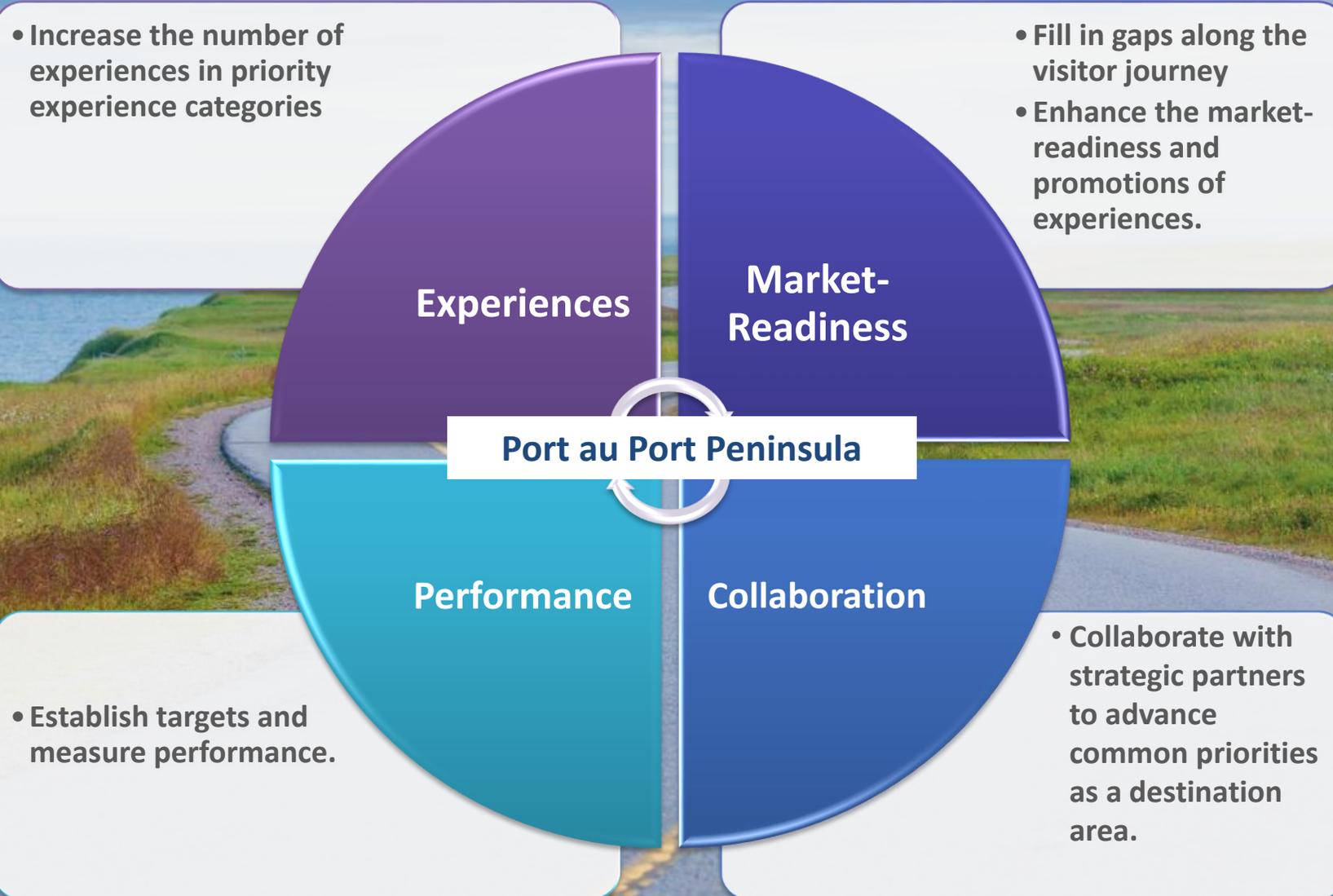
GOAL

Increase tourism spending on the Port au Port Peninsula by attracting more visitors and encouraging longer stays.

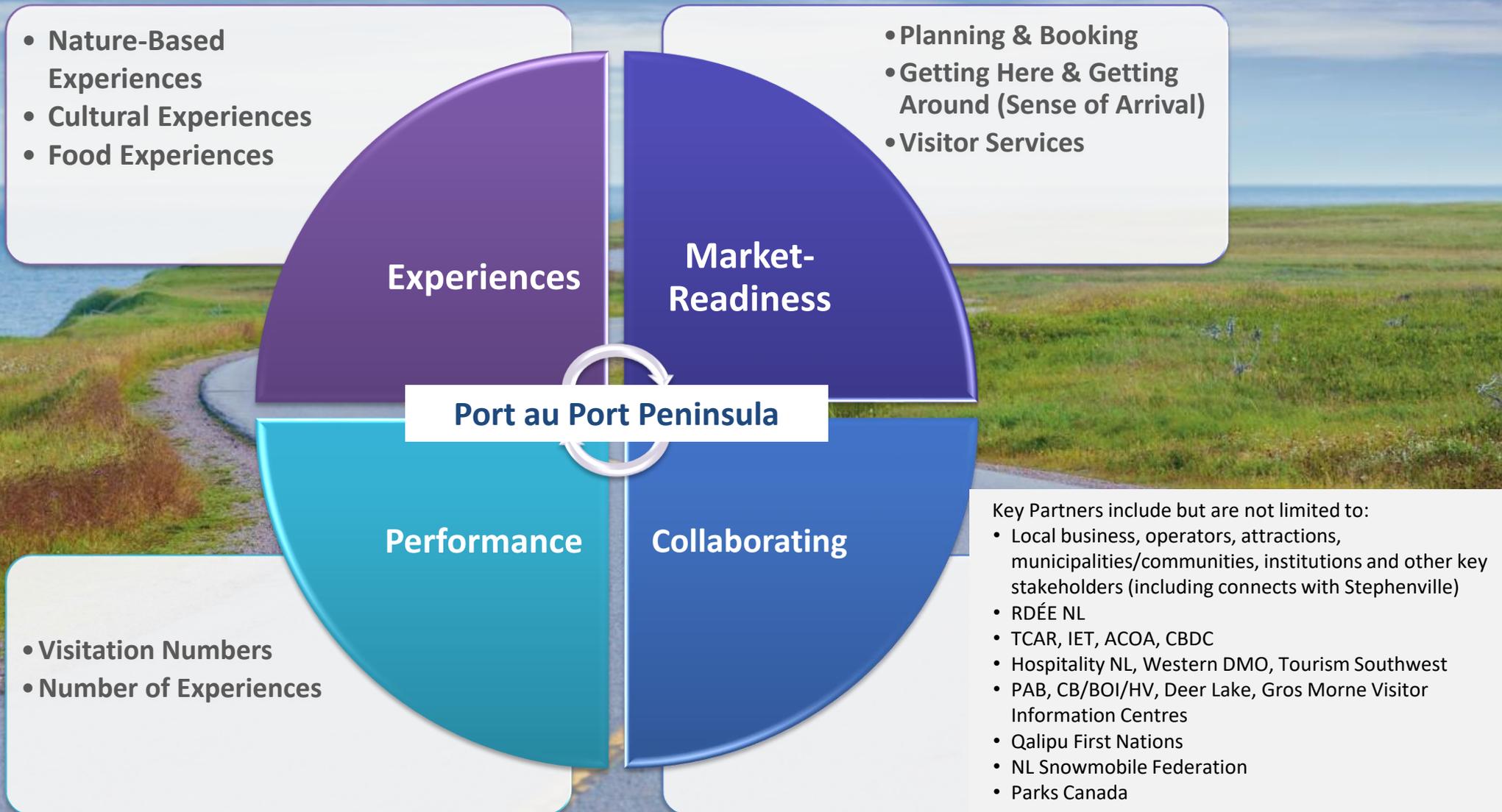
Four Areas of Focus



Objectives



Tourism Development Plan Priorities



Priorities for Market-Readiness



Tourism Planning Framework

What are the touchpoints on the visitor journey?

PRE-Journey

Planning & Booking

Planning & Booking

- Regional USP/Positioning
- Newfoundlandlabrador.com
- Individual websites
- Partnerships/Promotions
- Social Media
- Customer Service (email, text, voice, etc)
- How to book your product

Getting here & getting around

Visitor Services

Visitor Journey

Food

Accommodations

Things to Experience!

POST-Journey

Word of Mouth & Mouse

Key Findings – Planning and Booking 1



- There is a need for a cohesive, collaborative approach to promote the distinct unique selling proposition for the area as a destination.
 - Specifically, collectively embracing the region's unique selling propositions – French Ancestors Route, French culture, Indigenous culture
- There are gaps in listings from the region (either attractions/services not listed or not using photos/videos effectively).
- There is a need to improve the region's tourism presence and awareness on Newfoundlandlabrador.com, travel offers, and social media to build more reasons for visitors to stay in the area before they head to their next destination.

Key Findings – Planning and Booking 2



- There is a need to build more connections and awareness about what is available and what events are happening that all operators can use for promoting longer stays (as well as avoiding multiple events happening on the same days).
- Operators could use more guidance/training about who is eligible to be listed on newfoundlandlabrador.com and how to use all the promotional tools available (i.e. travel offers).
- There is a need to ensure operator and town websites have accurate information, information is current and dynamic and tourism operators are accessible year-round.
- Operators could use more training in website development, social media, content development, etc.

Recommended Actions – Planning and Booking 1

1. Work with NL Tourism and Western DMO to arrange a **marketing-focused session** with tourism partners.



Focus should include:

- Unique selling proposition of the region
- Marketing partnerships and packages
- Itinerary development
- Experiential content for marketing and promotions
- Online presence enhancements
- Experience listing on Newfoundlandlabrador.com and engaged in NL Tourism promotional opportunities
- Engagement with regional marketing partners
- Networking opportunities with regional partners, especially other local businesses
- Social media training and engagement
- Tourism Assurance Plan

www.newfoundlandlabrador.com

Instagram/NewfoundlandLabradorTourism

Facebook/NewfoundlandLabradorTourism

Youtube/NewfoundlandLabrador

Twitter/NLTweets

#ExploreNL

#IcebergsNL

Next step: Western DMO/TCAR/IET to arrange a marketing-focused; customer research session for Port au Port Peninsula.

Recommended Actions – Planning and Booking 2



2. Engage local attractions and services to **get their business listings on newfoundlandlabrador.com** and enhance existing listings with **experiential language, photos, stories** – with particular emphasis on more fall and winter experiences.
3. Create a **calendar of events** where all towns/operators in the region can list their events so that all stakeholders know what is happening daily/weekly.
4. Enable more operators to **engage in social media content development** by offering training and guidance.
5. Offer **engagement sessions and networking opportunities** so that operators are familiar with what is in the region and to encourage more partnerships/packages.
6. Ensure all **town and operator websites** have accurate information, promoting each other and the region's USP's.

Tourism Planning Framework

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getting around

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Accommodations

Things to Experience!

**Getting Here &
Getting Around**

- Transportation
- Signage and Wayfinding
- Sense of Arrival
 - Welcome
 - Greeting
 - Wayfinding
 - Wow factor
 - First Impressions

Key Findings – Getting Here & Getting Around



- Locals are friendly and engaging with visitors...what an asset!
- There could be a stronger welcome and sense of arrival at the gateway to the region than currently exists.
- Signage can be inconsistent and confusing; there is a need to place focus on wayfinding.
- Viewscapes are amazing. It is important to ensure there are safe places to pull over for photos, selfies, etc.

Recommended Actions – Getting Here & Getting Around



1. Investigate opportunity for a “**Welcome to ...**” sign as you enter the Port au Port Peninsula.
2. Partner with local municipalities/community representatives and local operators on an initiative to **address known gaps with signage and wayfinding.**
3. Identify, **enhance and promote iconic scenic viewpoints and pull offs** for ‘selfie’/social media/sense of arrival opportunities.
4. Work with local tourism operators, attractions and taxi companies to **enhance the sense of arrival at and to services and attractions.**

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Things to Experience!

**Visitor
Services**

- Visitor Information (maps, guides, brochures)
- Local knowledge, validation
- Washrooms
- Wi-fi/Cell
- Charging stations
- Other amenities

Key Findings – Visitor Services



- There is an opportunity to enhance information about the region at Visitor Information Centres (Deer Lake Airport, Deer Lake Highway, Port aux Basques).
- There is a need to build familiarization among all operators and stakeholders about all there is to do and experience, what is open, operating hours/seasons, etc. Accommodations and other frontline operators/staff dealing directly with visitors, in particular, need this information to encourage longer stays.
- Most basic amenities exist but there is a need to build awareness of where everything is and can be accessed (i.e. food, washrooms, Wi-Fi, etc.).
- There is limited print material available about the destination area and much is in need of a refresh.

Recommended Actions – Visitor Services

1. Experience providers and tourism attractions engage directly with VICs to ensure they are **familiar with their products/services** and to **enhance promotions**. (Should include VIC's in Port aux Basques and Deer Lake)
2. Engage in **familiarization sessions with local businesses and frontline employees annually** to enhance knowledge of tourism experiences and **share local knowledge and stories** to help promote experiences to visitors.
3. Partner with Western DMO to explore opportunity to **develop a map/itinerary style brochure of local attractions, trails, experiences, etc.** (*TAP Approval for VICs)
4. **Collect and share information and hours of operation** about the availability of services/amenities.
 - In particular: free wifi, public washrooms, dumping stations, gas stations, etc.



Tourism Planning Framework

What are the touchpoints on the visitor journey?

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Things to Experience!

**Food &
Accommodations**

- Availability
- Options
- Opportunities

Key Findings – Food & Accommodations

FOOD

- Food establishments are key frontline ambassadors that can promote all the things to do and experience in the area.
- There are food options within the region.
- However, there is a lack of food establishments listed on newfoundlandlabrador.com.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- Accommodations are often the first point of contact in the planning/booking stage for visitors, which make them vitally important in encouraging longer stays.
- Accommodations also often serve as on the ground validation and provide local knowledge and promote all the things to do to visitors when they're here.
- Strategic partnerships/packages with accommodations could help create more experiences to be listed on Newfoundlandlabrador.com, travel offers, and social media

Recommended Actions – Food & Accommodations



1. Engage in **familiarization sessions with local businesses and frontline employees, especially food establishments and accommodations**, to enhance knowledge of tourism experiences and **share local knowledge and stories** to help promote experiences to visitors.
2. Make a concerted effort to have **more food establishments listed on newfoundlandlabrador.com**.
3. Utilize the opportunity to **enhance promotions and partnerships with craft brewery** in the area.

Priorities for Experiences

- Increase the number of experiences in priority experience categories

Experiences

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Things to Experience!

**Things to
Experience**

- People and Program-based
- Natural and Cultural Attractions
- Festivals and Events
- Craft, Art, Music
- Destination Trails
- Culinary
- Indigenous experiences

Experiences – Key Findings 1



- Port au Port Peninsula has nature-based assets and experiences already in place that are being utilized to create and deliver experiences to visitors.
- There are a number of nature-based assets that could be developed as the foundation of new experiences. The region's partners will need to collaboratively prioritize these assets for investment.
- The region could use more people and program-based experiences that tell the stories of of the Port au Port Peninsula.
- There is much potential for offering experiences but there is a need to identify local talent (talent, storytellers, musicians, guides, etc.) that could provide these experiences.

Experiences – Key Findings 2



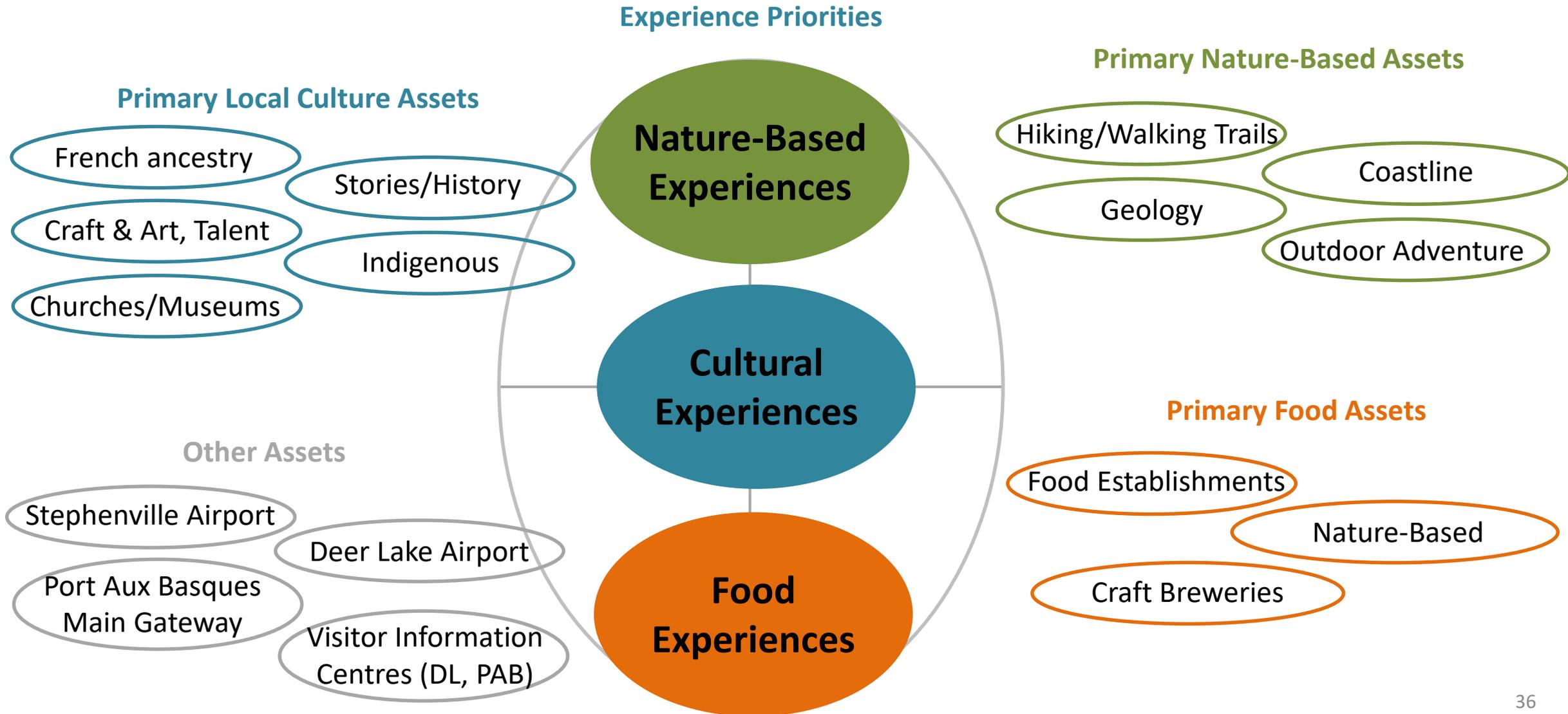
- Establishing more collaboration among the major attractions/assets will advance opportunities to better leverage the entire visitor experience in the destination area, in addition to individual promotions.
- Strategic partnerships within the region is important in providing visitor experiences that will draw and keep them into the region longer.
- Strategic partnerships with other destination areas (Port aux Basques, Deer Lake, Gros Morne) in the western region will help drive tourism growth in the western region and beyond.
- There is a need for continued experience development and market-readiness coaching and mentoring to ensure experiences are high quality, market-ready, priced appropriately and partnership opportunities are explored.

Experience Categories – Recommendations for Priority

Port au Port Peninsula
Experience Priorities



Experience Categories – PRIMARY ASSETS



Recommended Actions – Nature-based



1. Work with **existing local nature-based businesses/attractions** as key experience providers and drivers of visitor traffic to the area to support their promotions, identify potential partnerships and explore opportunities for adding new experiences.

Key areas include:

- Marketing partnerships and packages and Itinerary development
- Experiential content and imagery for marketing and promotions
- Social media presence enhancements
- Provide networking opportunities to regional partners, especially other local businesses

Recommended Actions – Nature-based



2. Work with key industry, government, community and tourism partners to **prioritize and implement market-readiness and experience development enhancements on Nature-based Assets.**

Depending on the asset, this may include:

- Wayfinding/signage
- Sense of arrival initiatives
- Parking improvements
- Trail markers
- Safety
- Experience listing on Newfoundlandlabrador.com and engaged in NL Tourism promotional opportunities
- Engaged with regional marketing partners
- Online presence best practices
- Experiential content for marketing and promotions
- People and program-based experiences or elements
- Links to regional partners, especially local businesses

Recommended Actions – Nature-based



3. Actively engage with locals, potential entrepreneurs, businesses and community stakeholders to investigate **NEW people and program-based experiences** that can be created using existing assets
 - Offer Tourism Opportunities/Experience Development sessions
4. Provide a **collaborative environment/network** that offers regular opportunities for operators to partner, share, learn from each other and build a regional brand of high quality experiences.

Recommended Actions – Cultural Experiences



1. Work with **existing culture attractions, particularly festivals and events, to identify gaps in the regional offerings and** enhance their experiential offering elements, market-readiness, and promotions.
2. **Capture the stories** of those community assets, investigate tourism experiences and advance opportunities. Stories can also be used for content development/social media.
3. **Create an inventory of local talent and artists** willing to offer their skills as storytellers, guides and/or knowledge holders.
4. Create and promote an **inventory of self-guided experiences** at local cultural attractions.
5. Work with other communities and stakeholders in the region to **develop themed itineraries** and engage in regional partnerships/promotions.

Recommended Actions – Food

1. Support the **existing local food establishments, particularly the craft brewery, as key experience providers and drivers of visitor traffic to the region**, to enhance their market-readiness, experience development using local food options and promotions.



Key areas include:

- Experience Development
- Marketing partnerships and packages
- Itinerary development
- Experiential content for marketing and promotions
- Online presence enhancements
- Experience listing on Newfoundlandlabrador.com and engaged in NL Tourism promotional opportunities
- Engagement with regional marketing partners
- People and program-based experiences or elements
- Provide networking opportunities to regional partners, especially other local businesses

Recommended Actions – Food

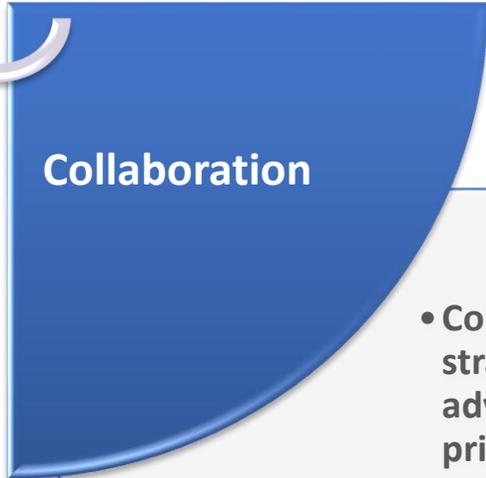


2. Actively engage with locals, potential entrepreneurs, businesses and community stakeholders to **investigate the addition of new food experiences and/or enhancement of food experiences at existing attractions, events, etc.**

Actions include:

- Offering tourism opportunities sessions
- Working with community festival and event organizers for promotional opportunities and to add food, nature-based and cultural experience offerings as part of the event programming.
- Investigating barriers that exist to accessing nature-based food assets and implement actions to address.

Priorities for Collaboration



Collaboration

- Collaborate with strategic partners to advance common priorities.

Key Findings – Collaborating to Compete



- There is a need to establish more collaboration among local operators and stakeholders as part of a concerted, collective effort to increase visitation and spending. (This is the start of that collaboration!)
- It is important to collaborate with other communities, regions and partners to identify potential partnerships, particularly Stephenville, Corner Brook/Bay of Islands/Humber Valley, Deer Lake and Gros Morne.
- There is an opportunity to enhance collaboration efforts with key partners in the larger Western region and the province.

Recommended Actions – Collaborating to Compete



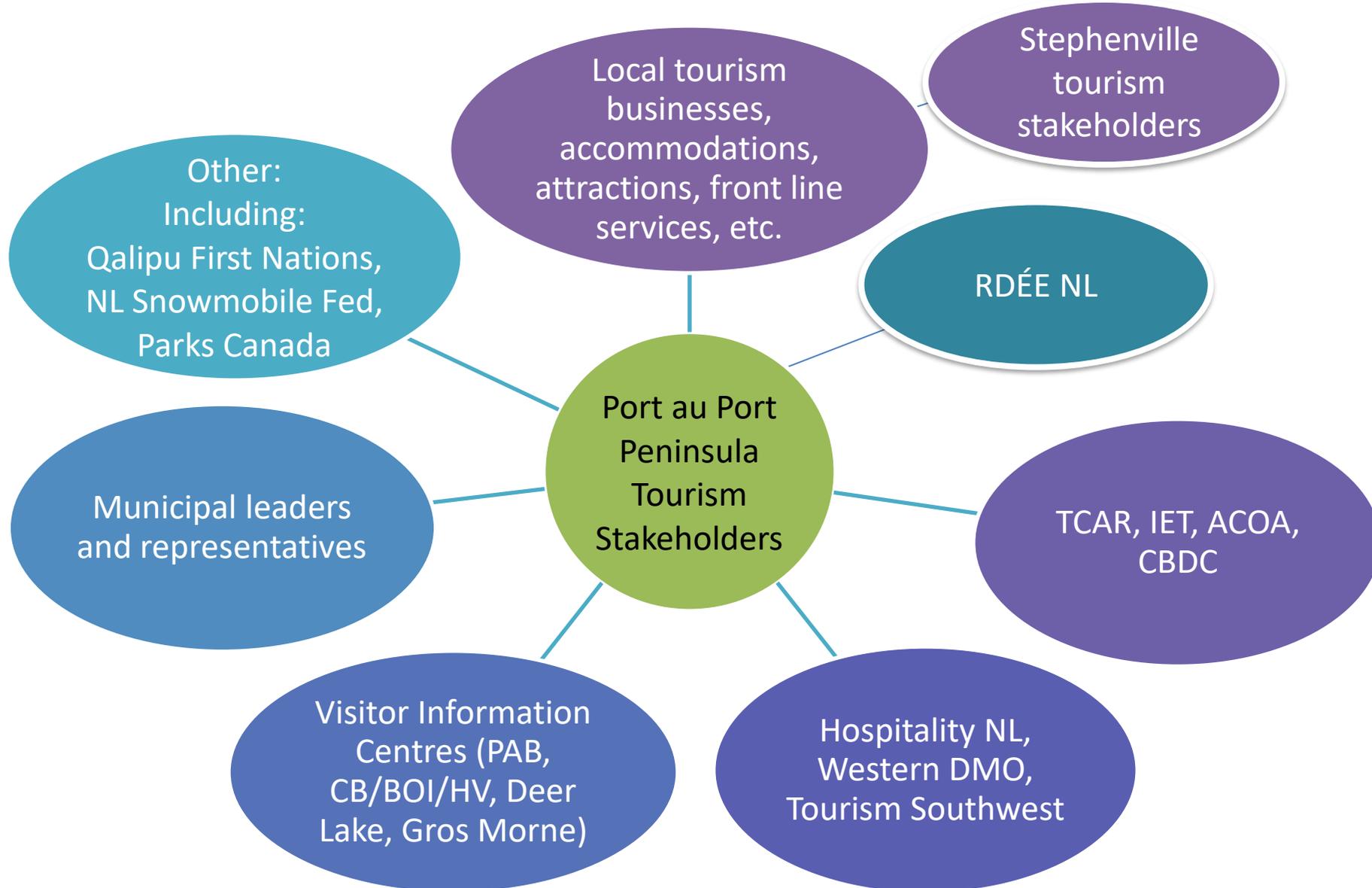
1. Explore opportunity to establish **tourism working group** to drive the implementation of tourism development plans and initiatives.
2. Enhance **collaboration with key local, regional, and provincial partners** to achieve collective priorities.

Key Partners* include but are not limited to:

- Local tourism business, operators, attractions, municipalities/communities, institutions
- TCAR/IET, ACOA, CBDC, Hospitality NL, Western DMO
- RDÉE NL
- Stephenville tourism attractions and services
- Tourism Southwest
- Qalipu First Nations
- VIC's in Port aux Basques; CB/BOI/HV; Deer Lake, Gros Morne
- NL Snowmobile Federation
- Parks Canada

*Complete list is available in March 3, 2020 Tourism Planning session overview document

Collaborations – Recommended Priorities



Priorities for Performance



Key Findings – Performance



- There is an opportunity to ensure that tourism stakeholders are familiarized with the customer profiles and motivations of visitors to the region.
- There are statistics available regarding the current performance in tourism visitation that can be used as the foundation to measure performance.
- There is an opportunity to further collect and share statistics about visitors to the region to help inform tourism development.

Recommended Actions – Performance



1. Offer an **information session** to provide research and statistics information about the types of visitors coming to the region/province, things they like to experience while visiting, who our customers are, how they travel, etc.
2. Establish a baseline **measure of visitation** through existing local sources to establish growth targets and evaluate performance over time.
3. Establish a baseline **measure of the number of experiences** in the community and establish growth targets.