A scenic landscape featuring a large lake, a dirt path, and mountains in the background. A person is riding a bicycle on the path.

Toward an Inclusive and Accessible British Columbia Tourism Industry

A Strategic Framework & Action Plan

2019-2022

Welcoming Visitors – Benefiting Locals – Working Together

“As part of our government’s commitment to accessibility and inclusivity, we are working to ensure tourism in BC is better able to meet the needs of those with varying abilities and aging visitors upholding our values of diversity, equality and inclusion.”

Message from The Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture

Our priority is to make tourism in BC more inclusive and accessible

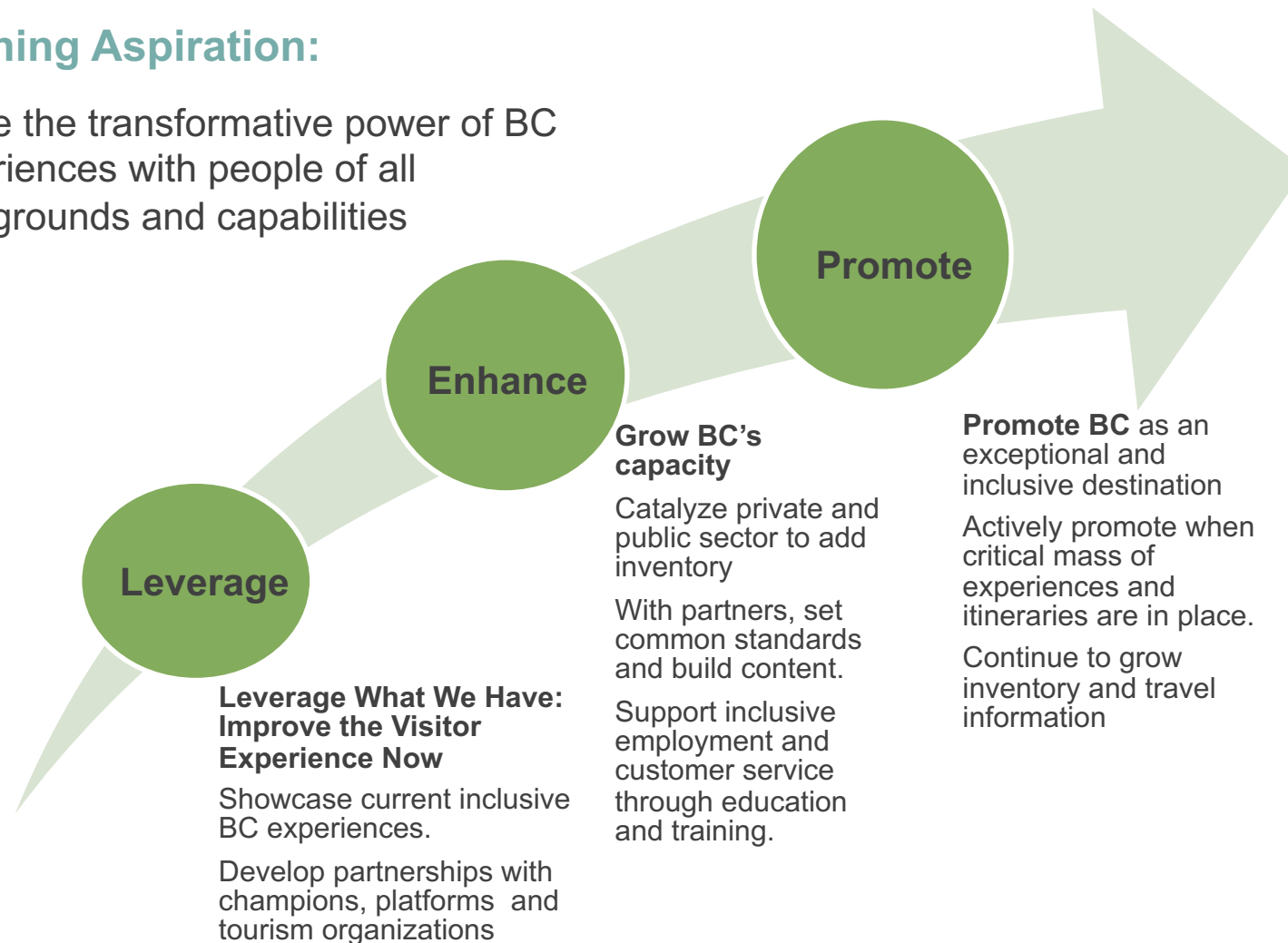
To accomplish this, Destination BC will:

- Promote BC as an inclusive and welcoming destination for everyone
- Build capacity to support more inclusive and accessible tourism products, services and experiences
- Champion meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities

Toward an Inclusive and Accessible British Columbia Tourism Industry, Framework and Action Plan

Winning Aspiration:

Share the transformative power of BC experiences with people of all backgrounds and capabilities



Key Observations

- British Columbia has many inclusive travel experiences, however there is no comprehensive source of information curated to make trip planning easy.
- Over 22% of Canadians, over the age of 15, have a disability (physical, cognitive or sensory); this number will grow as our population ages. Thus, a large segment of society is challenged to experience the transformative power of travel (Source: Statistics Canada)
- Research shows that travellers with accessibility challenges have additional and more complex information needs, at all stages of the journey, and the lack of access to this information is the biggest barrier to travel.
- Private sector accessible travel services exist in BC (largely outbound) which can be leveraged ([Travel for All](#)).
- Platforms, such as Airbnb, Google Maps and others, are beginning to add more accessibility information.
- Limited tools, training and resources are available for tourism businesses to create inclusive experiences.
- While there are many organizations and advocacy groups in BC that promote greater inclusivity, BC does not have a standalone entity for inclusive travel such as [Keroul](#) (Quebec) or [Tourism for All](#) (UK).
- The BC Provincial Government is championing improving the lives of people with disabilities. The ability to travel is an important element of life quality and is recognized in the [Strategic Framework for Tourism in British Columbia, 2019-2021](#).
- We can build strong relationships with partners that can be used to drive strategy activation (communities, regions, sectors, Presidents Club, area champions etc.)
- New federal legislation (C-81) has now passed; the BC Provincial Government has launched a series of [public consultations](#) to develop complementary provincial legislation.

THREE YEAR ACTION PLAN: SUMMARY

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Improve information on HelloBC.com (content, itineraries)	Build on year 1 actions	Build on year 1 & 2 actions
Add content to Destination BC's online industry Learning Centre	Develop business case to encourage investments by tourism industry in accessible products/services/infrastructure	Promote BC as a world leading inclusive destination
Develop and implement a business listings plan	Build on number of listings	Work with agencies to develop long-term plans.
Consult with stakeholder organizations, build partnerships, and create an advisory group	Strengthen partnerships – identify and support leading stakeholder organization(s).	Assess ongoing role of advisory group.
Research global programs and conduct consumer journey mapping.	Align with outcomes of the Provincial accessibility consultation and implement Secretariat recommendations for tourism.	Audit programs for accuracy.
Support provincial government Accessibility Secretariat	Leverage industry specialists and influencers to implement new programs, where needed.	
Create a business recognition program and award(s) with the Tourism Industry Association of BC		