

# Tremendous Beauty: Indigenous Tourism in Banff and Lake Louise

Indigenous Tourism  
Development Strategy

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Created in partnership with

STORMY  
LAKE  
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TRAILS



# Land Acknowledgement

Banff & Lake Louise Tourism is committed to walking a journey of truth and reconciliation. We recognize that this is a continuous process, and we are eager to learn how to be better allies and friends of Indigenous Peoples.

We believe it is crucial to create opportunities for listening, contemplation, as well as actively contributing to a future founded on principles of equity, respect, and inclusivity. We are determined to be a part of this journey towards a more just future alongside Indigenous Peoples.

In partnership with the Town of Banff and Parks Canada, we continue to foster meaningful and respectful partnerships while operating on the traditional territories of the Nations of Treaties 6, 7, 8, and in Métis homelands. We are headquartered in Banff, the ancestral territories of the Îyârhe Nakoda Nations of Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney, the Niitsitapi of the Blackfoot Confederacy consisting of the Nations Siksika, Piikani, Kainai, the Dené of Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Métis Nation.

We strive to actively involve and collaborate with our partners to ensure that we are working together to protect and promote the cultures and natural heritage of these lands. With that, we also acknowledge and honour the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc First Nations, the Peoples and Nations of Treaties 6, 7, and 8, and all Indigenous Peoples now living here in relationship with this sacred land.

We want to help create a better future alongside Indigenous Peoples. Elevating Indigenous tourism is an important commitment to envisioning the destination's future. In 2024, we completed this Indigenous Tourism Strategy through constructive engagement with Indigenous tour operators, First Nations communities, Elders, and partners. This strategy will guide our work for years to come as we take meaningful steps along the Indigenous Connections Trail, towards the destination's vision to *Lead Tourism for Good*.





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# 1 Engagement



# Engagement

This strategy was shaped and informed by more than 80 people, with many stories shared encompassing history, truth, education and contemporary cultural practices as the foundation of the process.

- **One** dialogic workshop
- **Sixteen** one-on-one interviews
- **Five** community visits

## Engagement activities:

- Îyârhe Nakoda (in community)
- Tsuut'ina Nation (in community)
- Siksika Nation (in community)
- Rocky View Métis District (4) (in the town of Banff)
- Ktunaxa Nation (via Zoom, follow up in the town of Banff).
- Local Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism operators and business owners.
- Indigenous Tourism Alberta
- Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada
- Parks Canada
- Town of Banff
- Improvement District #9
- Banff Canmore Foundation
- Local residents
- Banff & Lake Louise Tourism (BLLT)

Our knowledge has also been enriched by additional research and conversations we had throughout the journey, for which we are grateful.



# Engagement Learnings: What We Heard

## Indigenous tourism is important

- For economic opportunity.
- Raising the profile and presence of Indigenous Peoples.
- Protecting the land.

## Indigenous Operator needs

- Mentorship (Indigenous and non-Indigenous).
- Marketing support.
- Funding and grant support.
- More culturally appropriate communications and materials.
- Support navigating the Industry.
- Business development support.

## Industry barriers

- Red tape.
- Accessibility and affordability.
- Racist legacy, not being welcome.
- Lack of skills and experience.
- Knowledge gap between generations.

- No 'skin in the game' (land or real estate).
- Fear of failure and high-risk business investment.

## Truths to address through tourism

- Banff has a layered history, and each nation has different truths. It's not a pan-Indigenous experience and tourism can help share these stories.
- Tourism needs to share the diversity of Indigenous cultures. There is not one, they are not all the same.

## Demonstrating commitment

BLLT needs to:

- Demonstrate their intent for ongoing relationships (never one and done).
- Avoid cultural appropriation and tokenism at all costs and take action to show this commitment.
- Develop the mindset and skills to build meaningful relationships with the Nations that work – two-eyed seeing.

- Support greater visibility of Indigenous people and culture in Banff National Park – signage, events, art, information, imagery.

## Experience development

- Not all Nations feel their culture is represented.
- Experiences need to be educational, transformational, facilitate connection to the land, and be fun.
- History is important, and Indigenous people are still here. This needs recognition.
- Authenticity is key for products and experiences. Indigenous-led, Indigenous made, settler-supported.
- The role of BLLT should be a strong mentor, teacher, and activist/advocate.
- Indigenous operators will require distinct processes as operators/industry members.
- Above all, Banff National Park needs to create space and opportunity for Indigenous tourism to flourish.

# Engagement Learnings: What We Heard

## Industry collaboration

- Alignment is needed between Banff National Park's key stakeholders in building Indigenous relationships.
- There is confusion among communities about the various stakeholders in Banff and Lake Louise and the misaligned approach to tourism and relationship building (i.e. Parks Canada vs. BLLT vs. Town of Banff).

## Meaningful relationship building

### For BLLT

- There is tension between nations. Stay out of the politics, but be aware of them.
- Personal relationships are the foundation of success.
- This Indigenous tourism strategy needs to build relationships between Nations and the organization, not just one individual or department.
- There is agreement that the future of Indigenous tourism in Banff National Park should be a thriving, inclusive, and resilient industry. It should be built on strong

relationships with people and the land, rooted in trust, pride, heritage, education, and authenticity.

- BLLT will need to clarify a position on how it supports and works with the different Nations.
- Respect is timeless. BLLT needs to recognize and acknowledge both past and the contemporary respect for Indigenous Peoples.

### Between Nations

- There is a desire to make Banff and Lake Louise a gathering place once again to build relationships within and between Nations. The history of many Nations is rooted in Banff and Lake Louise being a sacred place of unity and of trade.
- There is a desire to bring back the essence of Indian Days to honor culture. Be about recognition and respect.

### With the land

- Nations want to feel welcome in Banff and

Lake Louise and to rebuild relationships with the land. Especially for youth who don't know the history or have a relationship with the area today as anything but a tourism destination.

## Community engagement

- Each nation requires a different and dedicated engagement approach.
- There will be a need to build spiritual, political, operator, and community level relationships.
- Engagement can often bottleneck at community leadership levels. There needs to also be engagement within the community among operators, youth, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers, etc.
- BLLT needs to be more visible and engaged in community.

We have looked at the complexity of the different Nations who have relationships to Banff and Lake Louise as being complicating and difficult.

This is true, but this is also our greatest strength.

There is tremendous beauty in the complexity.

There are endless opportunities to share every Nation's stories.

# 2 Stories and Story Sharing



A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, a dense forest of evergreen trees along the shoreline, and a range of majestic mountains rising in the background. The mountains are rugged, with rocky peaks and patches of snow. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue.

The true stories of Indigenous Peoples are essential  
to the experiences of Banff National Park.

These are not our stories to tell.

But we can help them be told.

These are some of the stories.

# These Mountains Are Our Sacred Places

"The old Stoney medicine man had said: 'You must continue to go to the sacred mountains. You must fast and pray for many days and nights, and perchance you will see a vision upon the mountains.' Before he went to the beautiful land of the spirits beyond the sun- set, the old man with a century of experience spoke these words: 'You must search and search and you will find ancient truths and wisdom that shall guide you in the future.' He continued: 'My grandfathers told me these things when I was just a little boy and in my youth it was told to me over and over again by the campfire and in the tribal encampment, so it has been imprinted in my heart ever since that time.'

And the medicine man stated further: 'My grandchildren, you must search and continue to search in order to find them. When a revelation is open to you, you will become a special person to our tribe. It may be that you will gain courage and bravery and become a hero in many battles. It may be that you will be given understanding and wisdom and become a Chief amongst Chiefs. It may be that you will become a great hunter, knowing the paths and circling of the four winds, knowing where the animals roam and birds migrate at the seasons appointed for them by the Creator. It may be that you will be given the gift of prophecy, see into the future, and will advise and guide your people along the straight path."

- *These Mountains are Our Sacred Places: The Story of the Stoney People* (2005), Chief John Snow, Goodstoney First Nation

# The Land Speaks To You – Part One

“They were from the United Kingdom. There was him and his wife and their two children. They were going to be in Banff and had heard about the walks that I do and were asking if they could do a private tour and spend the full day with me. What drew them to me was the name of my company, Mahikan, The Wolf. And they had a very strong interest in wolves and wanted to learn more about wolves and what it meant to our people and how we related to them on the land. I am not going to guarantee you that we'll see a wolf, but we'll certainly see signs of where they are.

We met in Banff and we went out to Highway 1A where the river comes through just as it connects to the 1A. And I took them down there because I'd been tracking wolves in that area. I brought them to the edge of the river and there were some massive wolf tracks. I took the opportunity to sit down and we talked about the tracks and about what the wolf meant to me.

I pulled out some Plaster of Paris, water, salt and a little dam. And I made a plaster cast to this track. The kids helped me mix it up and pour the plaster in. I told them stories about growing up in Jasper National Park, spending time with my uncle and other family members and being on the land, about the Elders that were in their nineties and still running their dog sleds and going out and trapping and being on the trap line and how they would use a hybrid of wolf dog or sometimes they would use wolves as well. I told them a lot of stories and gave them some of the teachings that my Kokum had relayed to me.

And I said, ‘This is your gift. You're going to take a piece of Canada. You're going to take a piece of my heritage back with you, and you need to care for it. And this has a spirit in it, it's very powerful. And the wolf in its travels as it moves to new places, this wolf will protect you. You take it with you, and you don't know where the wolf's going to lead you’. Everybody was in awe at that point in time...”

[Story continued next page.](#)

# The Land Speaks To You – Part Two

“We had a lot of fun tracking animals and looking at different habitat. And I said ‘I can hundred percent guarantee I can show you bear tracks, too, but you have to spot them first. You’ve become come trackers now’. They were looking everywhere, and nobody could find the tracks. And I said, ‘ah, you’re thinking with the colonial mindset. You’re not thinking the way we would think’. I said, ‘look up, look up, look into the trees. No, bears don’t fly but look in the trees.’ And they looked up and there was one of the training trees that the female black bear would always run their babies up. You see the claw marks in the trees all the time. This one female tends to use this tree all the time to train her babies to go up to be safe. They were in awe of that. It helped them to change their perspective a bit.

Things are not always what they seem. We don’t always look with our eyes. We look with our hearts. We feel the land. The land speaks to you. And if you’re open to the land, it’s speaking to you, you’ll hear it. And you have to know how to open yourself to hearing what the land speaks to you about. It’s very important. I can’t always interpret it for you. You have to learn that. You have to go into the depth of yourself and how you connect and relate to the land.

We finished the day off. They had a lovely time, and we said our goodbyes. And I went home, and they’d flown away and I thought that was that. And two years later I was sitting in Canmore at a new bookstore and coffee shop. The next thing I knew, there’s this gentleman that approached me and he said, ‘Brenda’. I didn’t recognize him, but I knew the voice. And then suddenly it hit me. I knew who he was. He was the dad. He said, ‘My wife and I, the day after we spent the day with you, it was so astounding to us. It hit us so hard that we immediately went back home and began preparations to emmigrate to Canada.’

She left her very successful practice as a doctor. He sold his contracting business, and they moved the whole family within two years to Canada because of the day that they spent with me and how they connected with the land. Banff was a very special place for them because they learned those teachings. And I was quite astounded to have somebody change their life that radically because they just spent a day with, well, little old me. I mean, who am I?”

- Brenda Holder, Cree/Iroquois Métis, Owner, Mahikan Trails

# We Were Called The River People

I grew up along the Bow River. Most of my life has been on the river. I got to know all the surrounding area, Lake Minnewanka, all those places. We'd be out there harvesting medicinal plants, edible fruit plants, berries, bumbleberry, mini saskatoons, wild rose hips all kinds of stuff right there in front of us. I got to learn about the forage and food, edible and medicinal plants at an early age. I got to know the lands themselves, where to find these things along the Bow River and I would harvest some and bring them to the Elders. I knew the river and the histories along the river, the mountains, Castle Mountain area and our relationship to that place.

I remember as a child, where they were washing laundry on the river when it was stone free, clear where you could just get a cup and drink the water out of it. There was very clean water. I had a passion to be along the river. I used to do a lot of fishing and trapping the beavers, shooting migratory upland game bird. That river has provided me what I have today. I understood because I learned it from the Elder.

The Elder told me 'Listen to the water. It speaks to you.' I didn't know what he was saying till I sat there one time looking at it, looking at it. Then I understood what he was saying. I can try to explain it, but you have to have a sense of the land. You have to come and walk with us to feel it, because you can only imagine what I want to try to describe to you.

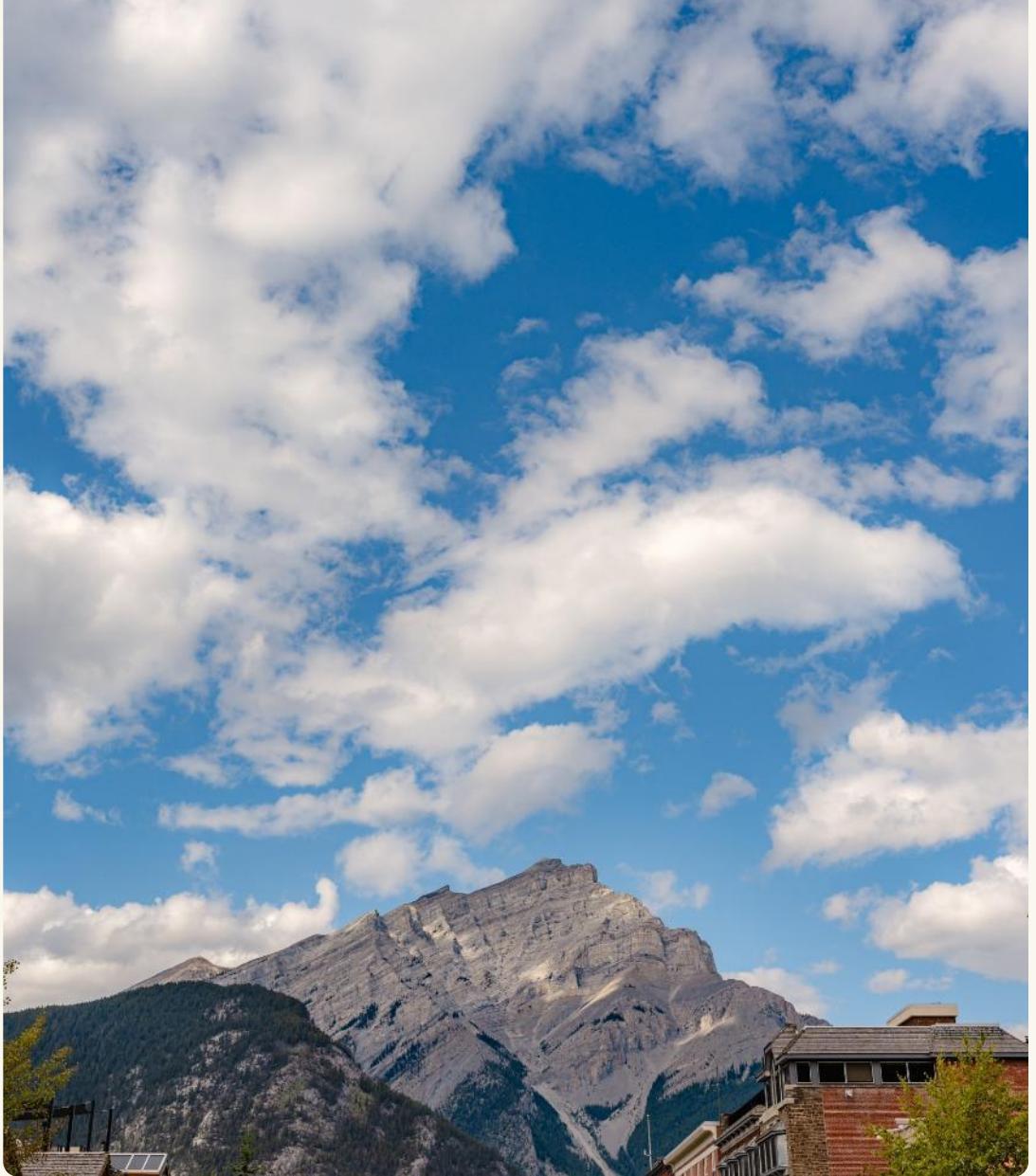
I was sitting there waiting for the drift boats to come in, and I was looking at the river. Listening just quietly. I noticed some stuff moving. The wind come, and you could hear the song. I knew then, okay, you're walking with me. Somebody's here.

That happened to me on several different times, and a few times with other people with me. My grandmother said 'Dion, they're just around you to remind you that they're there for you'. Our area is still to one of the strongest spiritual places. If you're in tune to nature, you're wide awake.

The water, it brings life. When you're in a natural area, a lot of good things happen. I was in a wheelchair for about 10 years. It was terrible, but my mind was always going and thinking, 'I'm gonna do this. The river is going to help me recover. The help is gonna be there for me'. I used the river. I tied myself up and I would let that current take me down. I would tie the rope to a tree I used it to pull myself back to the shore. That river gave me an extra lease in life.

Every morning, I look up and look down and see beautiful views of the river. These waterways, we use them. And our connection to the river is our clan. We were called the river people. Who are we without our connections to the lands?

- Dion Red Gun, Siksika Nation, Owner, River Ranche



# We Come From This Land

"We come from this land — Mînî hrpa — the place of the waterfalls, known today as the Banff, situated within the Bow Valley. As Stoney Nakoda people, our connection to this land is deep and lasting. We have always been here, caring for it, living with it, and sharing its stories. As Elder Terry Rider says, "We are here, have always been here, and will always be here."

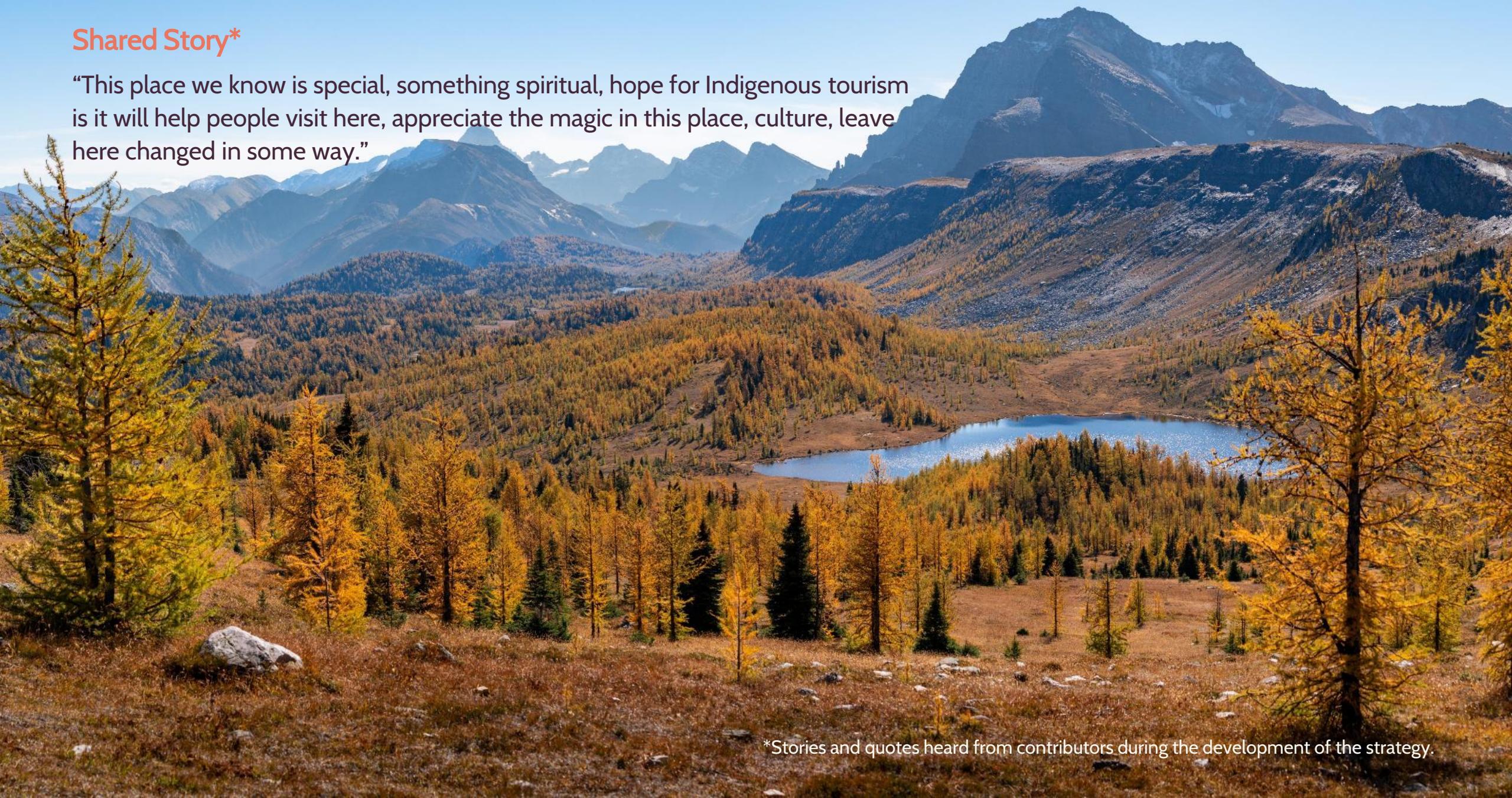
Long before new systems arrived, we welcomed others to this place. That spirit of welcome continues to guide us as we seek to walk together in a better way.

This work is rooted in who we are and where we come from. We're building something lasting — for our people today, and the generations still to come. And we invite you to walk with us.“

- **Mînî hrpa Indigenous Knowledge Circle, Îyârhe Nakoda**

## Shared Story\*

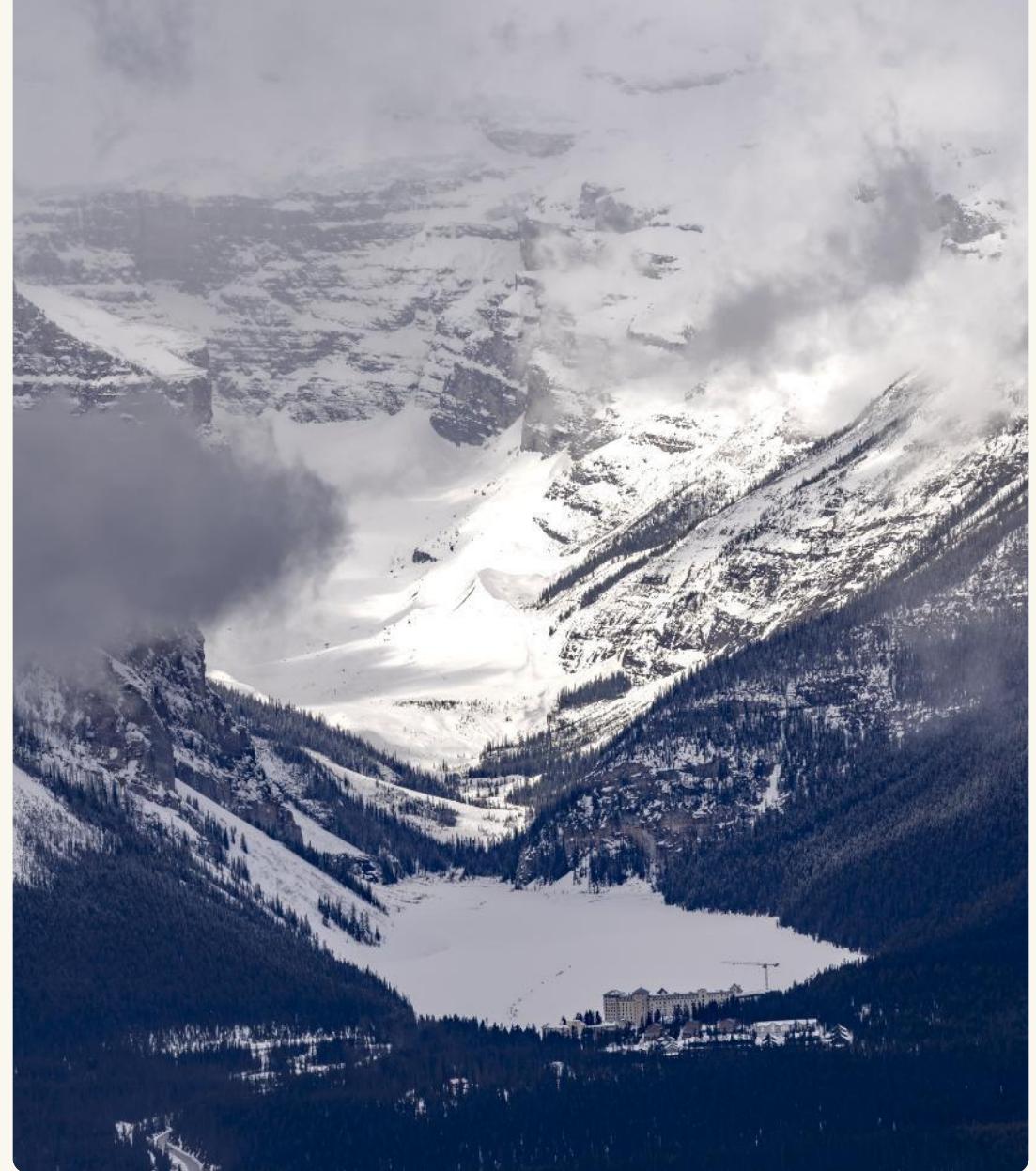
“This place we know is special, something spiritual, hope for Indigenous tourism is it will help people visit here, appreciate the magic in this place, culture, leave here changed in some way.”



\*Stories and quotes heard from contributors during the development of the strategy.

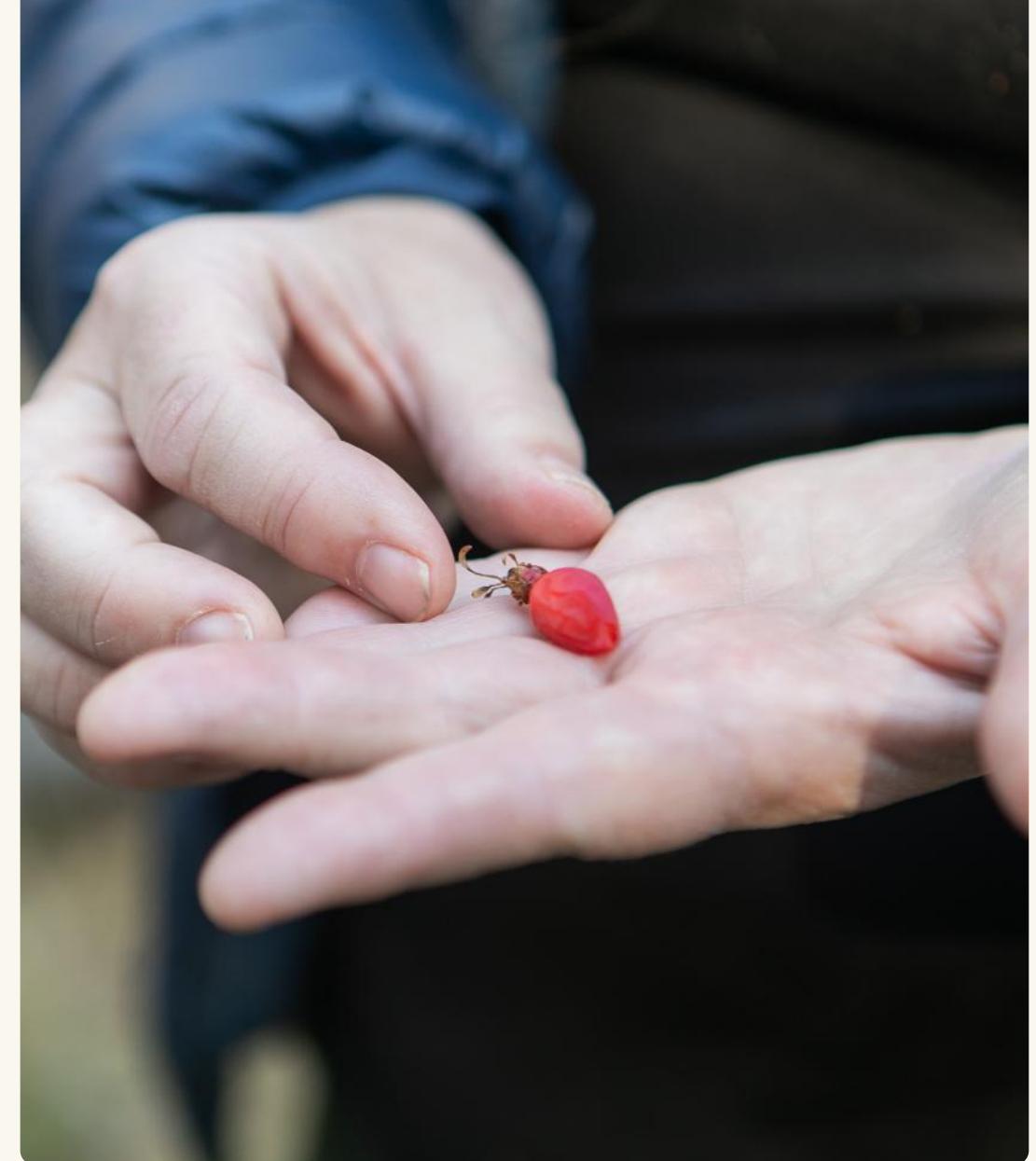
## Shared Story

“It’s not about Indian days and the dance, it’s about knowing and living off the land. By making it just about Indigenous people, you’re romanticizing the Indian. We’re never just us.”



## Shared Story

“Lots of Elders and older people know the history, but kids know it as a tourist destination. We’re working on that, we’ll reconnect them to the land-based Banff, not just the ski hills.”



# How BLLT Will Support Storytelling in Practice:

- Tourism industry supports and resources.
- Relationship-building.
- Business and experience development expertise.
- Marketing and promotions.
- Networking, connections, and partnership development.
- Industry advocacy.
- Education and awareness.



# 3 Intentions



Banff & Lake Louise Tourism is committed to developing a resilient plan that supports the growth of both our organization and the Indigenous tourism industry.

By providing essential resources, supports, and expertise, we aim to empower Indigenous tourism operators and entrepreneurs, celebrate and integrate their stories and cultures into the collective tourism landscape and facilitate commerce. This strategy focuses on engaging and building meaningful, genuine, and long-lasting relationships with Indigenous businesses and communities - ensuring their active participation and prosperity.



## Our intention is:

To support the sharing of Indigenous stories, language, and culture on these traditional lands. We intend to be students, connectors, advocates, mentors, and friends.

A wide-angle photograph of a majestic mountain range. In the center, a large, rugged mountain peak rises, its slopes partially covered in snow and exposed rock. The surrounding terrain is a mix of snow and dark, coniferous forests. The sky is overcast and hazy. Overlaid on the left side of the image is a large, semi-transparent dark red number '4' and the word 'Purpose' in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

# 4 Purpose

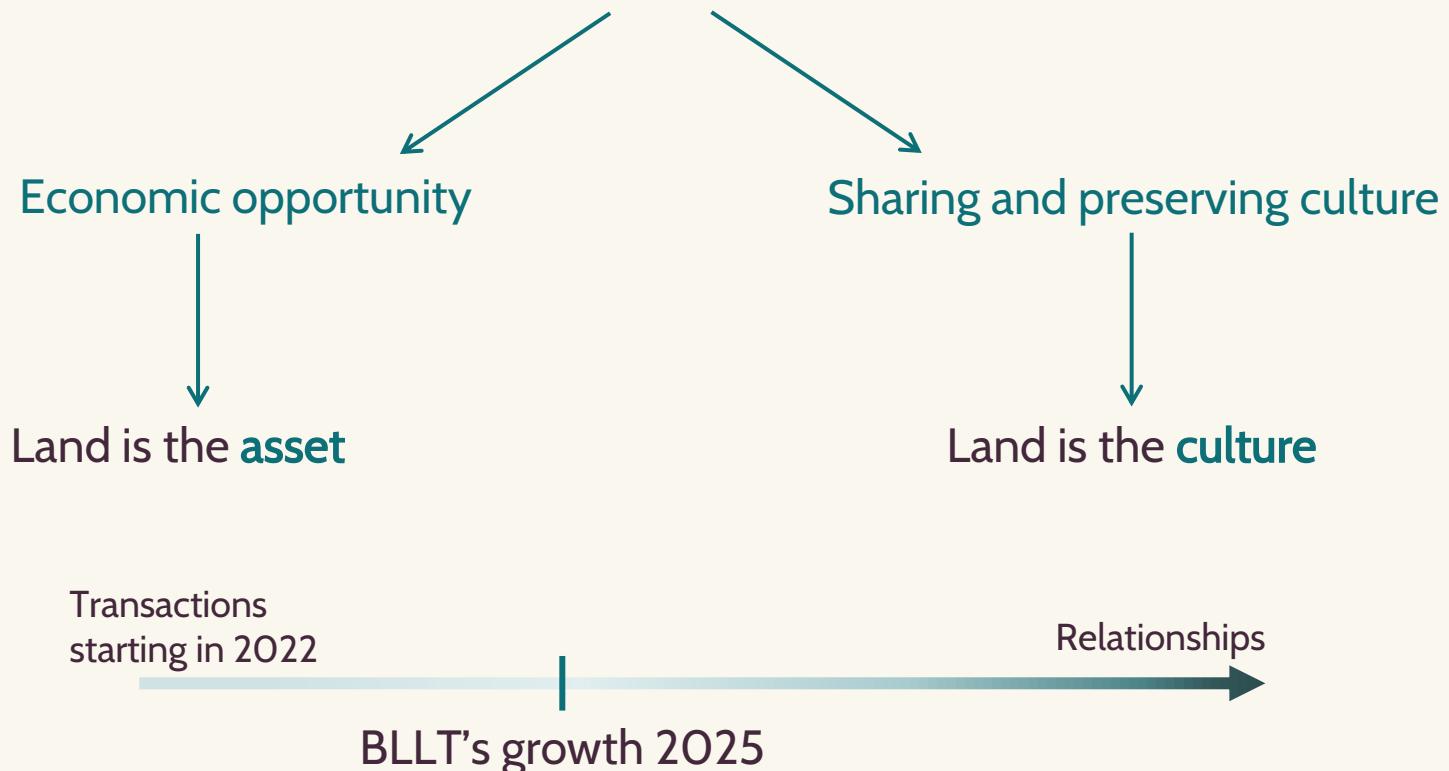
**BLLT recognizes that, since time immemorial, Indigenous people have stewarded the lands now encompassed by Banff National Park.**

**Not being able to connect with Mother Earth and these lands in traditional ways is a source of pain and loss.**

**For visitors, visiting Banff National Park is an emotional,  
soul-touching experience.**

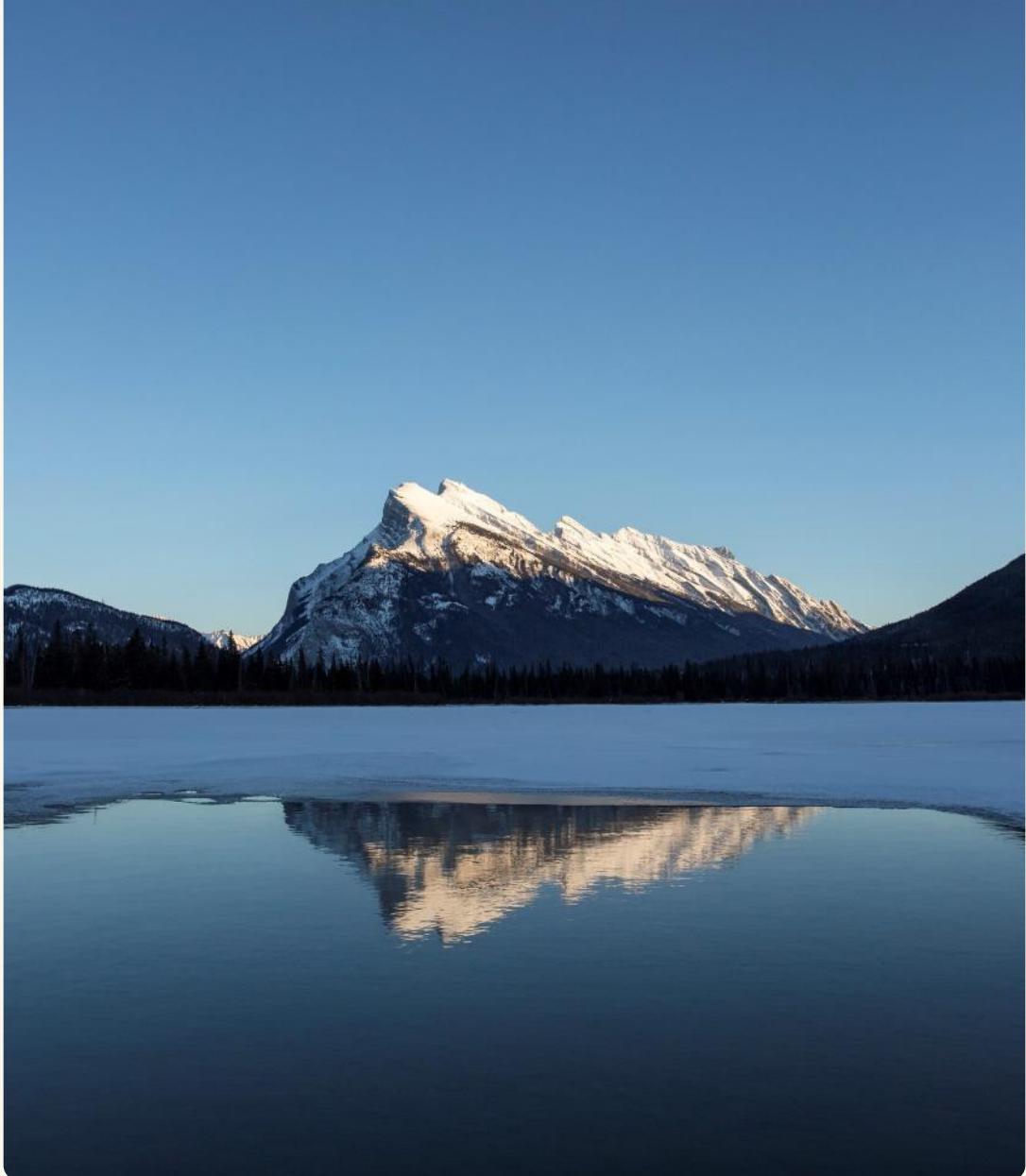
**Imagine how much more profound this would be if they  
connect with Indigenous culture.**

# Purpose of Tourism



## Interconnected perspectives:

1. The colonial perspective of tourism is as an economic driver, where land is an asset that draws visitors to our place, spending money and supporting our businesses.
2. The Indigenous perspective of tourism includes sharing and preserving culture, where the land is the culture. It is not an asset to be given or sold – it is culture itself. For Indigenous Peoples there is an intrinsic connection with the land. There is no difference between the land and culture. Land **IS** the culture.



# Strategy Objectives

- To have respectful and genuine relationships with Indigenous people who have sacred relationships with these traditional lands.
- To be a welcoming partner and place for Indigenous businesses and operators who have sacred relationships with these traditional lands.
- To enable and encourage the development, promotion, and celebration of authentic Indigenous experiences and products.
- To work in alignment and collaboration with all Indigenous tourism partners and stakeholders.
- To increase awareness and appreciation for Indigenous history and culture by visitors and BLLT members.



# Guiding Truths

The strategy is rooted in the following principles which guide the way we move forward in building relationships and living our commitments:

**Recognition** – of the unique relationship each Nation has with what is today known as Banff and Lake Louise. We acknowledge and honour the distinct histories, stories, and different cultural, spiritual, and traditional connections.

**Relationships** – are meaningful, authentic, and come first. By placing relationships first, we can ensure that decisions and actions are grounded in mutual understanding, respect, trust, and transparency.

**Respect** – is timeless. We must create a respectful environment that honours the past, the present, and looks forward to the future.

**Reciprocity** – is how to move forward for the benefit of all. We will strive for balanced and equitable relationships that ensure needs and aspirations are being met, and that growth is mutual.

**Receptive** – to anyone seeking tourism connection, partnership, and support. We are equally open to any individual, community, or company from our First Nation and Metis neighbours.

# Lead Tourism for Good

## The vision for tourism in Banff and Lake Louise

By living this Indigenous tourism strategy, we are strengthening our commitment to the vision to lead tourism for good in Banff and Lake Louise.

This [vision for tourism](#) was shaped and informed by more than 2000 community members, and 550+ ideas for a better tomorrow were generated as part of the process.

Five Trails to Tomorrow were identified during the process to address in leading tourism towards a sustainable future—one being the Indigenous Connections trail.

The objective of the Indigenous Connections trail is to:

*Champion Indigenous tourism as reconciliation in action. As protocols and interests of Indigenous groups allow, work together with Indigenous Communities, Peoples and Businesses to support market entry and elevate Indigenous tourism for a more enriching visitor experience, building cultural awareness and connection, and a thriving Indigenous tourism economy.*

# Lead Tourism for Good

## Trails to Tomorrow: Indigenous Connections

### Elevate Indigenous Tourism

This Indigenous tourism strategy will guide all we do-how we build relationships, where we focus our efforts, and how we co-create a supportive, welcoming and authentic place and sector. Elevating Indigenous tourism will be grounded the commitment and consistency of our actions through this strategy as we strive to support anyone seeking tourism connection, partnership, and support. We are equally open to any individual, community, or company from our First Nation and Metis neighbours.

### Indigenous Connections trail key actions:

1. Enhance cultural awareness and training within the tourism sector.
2. Address and reduce barriers of entry and provide support and services to Indigenous Communities and entrepreneurs in building tourism businesses.
3. Enable and support the development of meaningful, authentic Indigenous experiences.
4. Listen, learn and let collaboration be continuously informed, as connections and relations with Indigenous Peoples are nurtured and grow.



# 5 Strategies

# 5 Key Strategies

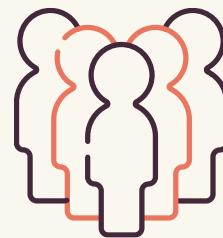
This strategy makes five key commitments to the Indigenous communities. It is essential that we honour these commitments.



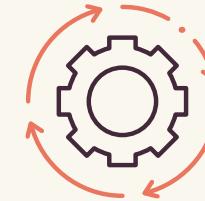
Meaningful relationships



Operator support



Empowerment and respect



True integration



Allyship

# Build Meaningful Relationships

## With operators, with communities, and with the land

relationships with tourism ambassadors.

- Lead relationship building with operators and entrepreneurs.
- Embed relationship building across the organization.
- Show up in community to share what BLLT is doing.
- Build relationships with, and seek guidance from, ITA & ITAC, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers.

- Enable and support initiatives (cultural and tourism) that strengthen relationships with the land:
  - Events and gatherings
  - Ceremony
  - Land-based retreats
  - Training and programs

# Support Indigenous Operators and Entrepreneurs

Leveraging BLLT resources and expertise to empower operators and entrepreneurs of all sizes

- Keep a current and accurate list of operators inside and outside of Banff and Lake Louise.
- Understand and advocate for industry needs.
- Promote industry training opportunities.
- Introduce operators to resources and networks.
- Create space for Indigenous artists.
- Support youth entering the tourism industry.
- Marketing strategy specifically for Indigenous experiences.
  - Indigenous-led messaging and voices
  - Modern and historical
  - Distinct
  - Local only
  - Transparent authenticity

# Build an Empowering and Respectful Industry

## Facilitate a welcoming, authentic, and connected industry

- Provide cultural awareness training for BLLT members.
- Support Nation-led cultural education for industry.
- Encourage the sale and promotion of authentic Indigenous products in Banff.
- Support mentorship and partnership connections.
- Host tourism networking events.

# True Integration of Indigenous Tourism into BLLT

## Concrete actions showing our long-term commitment

- Support the inclusion of more diverse voices on the BLLT board.
- Deepen cultural training throughout BLLT.
- Create a BLLT budget commitment for Indigenous tourism initiatives.
- Develop an Indigenous members services strategy.
- Waive fees for Indigenous operators.
- Evolve internal processes and policies.
- Expand promotional zone to include experiences in-community.
- Meaningfully incorporate more Indigenous content into events.

# Gather our Allies

## Cross-sector alignment and support

**Work better together, leveraging existing allies, and break down silos**

- Collaborate and advocate to reduce barriers to the industry and the national park.
- Bridge connections
- Permitting process
- Collaborative capacity building for businesses.
- Keep a current and accurate list of ongoing Indigenous initiatives in the Banff and Lake Louise.
- Support existing initiatives.
- Learn from our partners.

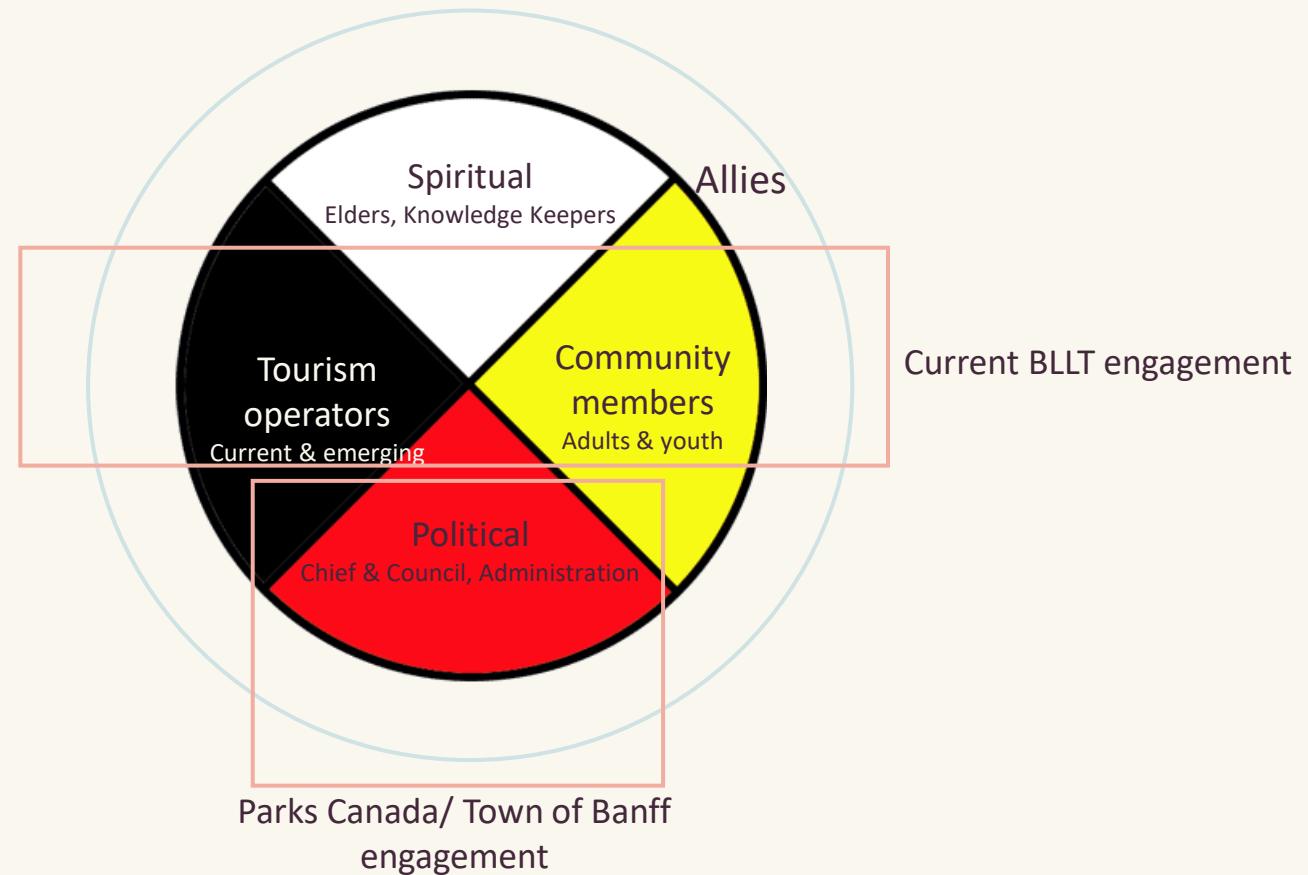
A wide-angle photograph of a mountainous landscape. In the foreground, a calm lake perfectly reflects the surrounding peaks. A group of four hikers in colorful gear are walking along a path that cuts across the lake. The background features a range of mountains with various peaks, some with snow and others with exposed rock. The sky is blue with some wispy clouds.

# 6 Engagement Plan

# Meaningful Relationship-Building

- **Medicine Wheel:** Symbolizes alignment and interaction of parts.
- **Tourism operators and community members:** Focus on developing direct relationships to create unity, ensuring tourism benefits the entire community.
- **Political:** Connections developed through partners.
- **Spiritual:** Develop relationships for wisdom and guidance.
- **Allies:** Surrounding all efforts, nurturing partnerships and support for success.

Ultimately, this approach will help facilitate the building of meaningful, lasting relationships for holistic well-being of the tourism community and the success of initiatives.

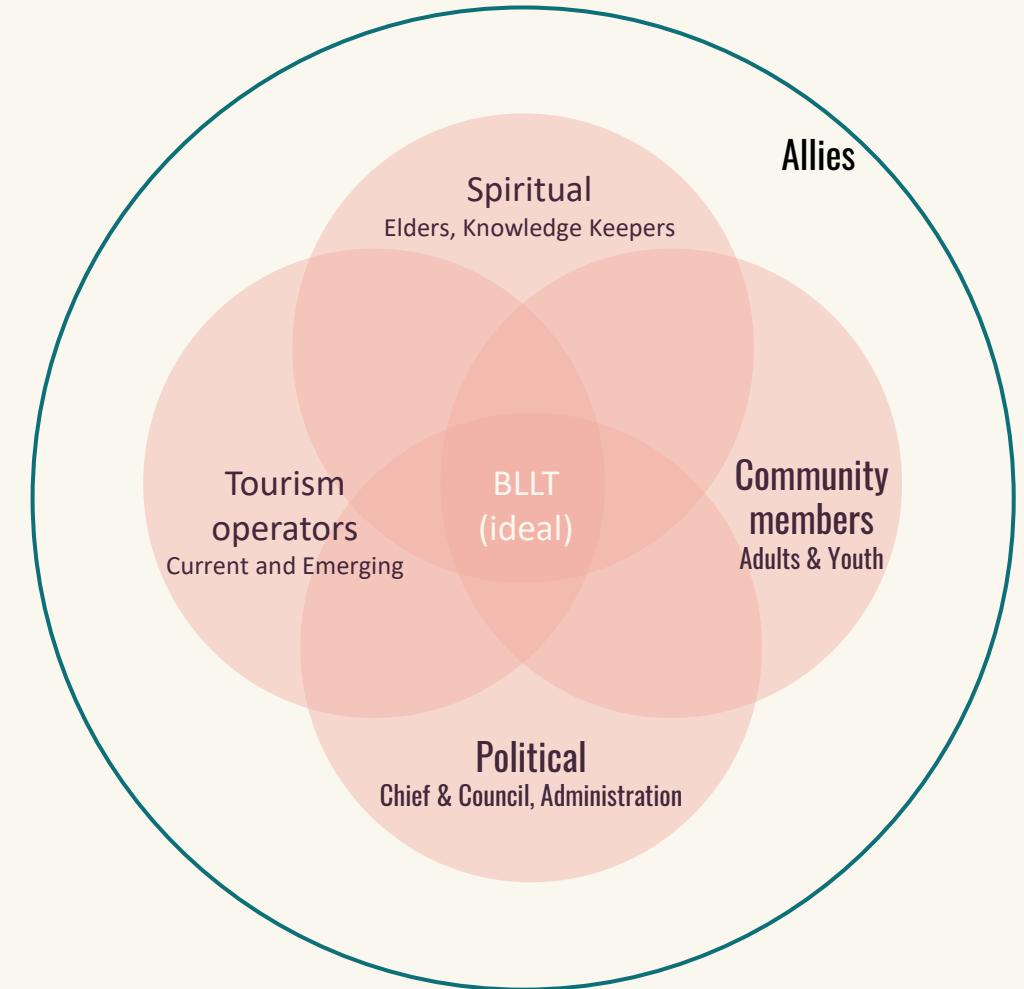


# The Ideal State

This is the Indigenous Holistic Tool.

Traditionally, the tool is about creating a balanced, fulfilled, and healthy life by recognizing and nurturing all aspects of being human – encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. It considers the person as a whole. In this case, it represents, BLLT.

To be successful long-term, BLLT will need to nurture all of these relationships to be whole. The diagram shows the ideal state of relationship building for BLLT. Each aspect interacts continuously, much like the traditional Indigenous Medicine Wheel. By nurturing these relationships, BLLT can achieve a balanced and harmonious state, ensuring long-term success and a positive impact on the community and tourism sector.



# Engagement Plan Summary

- Continue BLLT staff and member cultural knowledge foundations to support meaningful engagement.
- Share the strategy with existing operators and entrepreneurs to build awareness and leverage the guidance of these operators.
- Build relationships with Economic Development officers to support and collaborate with communities to leverage tourism sector.
- Build relationships with Elders and Knowledge Keepers to foster genuine and respectful engagement.
- Build relationships with Chief and Council to ensure alignment with community priorities and to provide appropriate support and endorsement.
- Participate in community events.
- Use social media to connect with community and operators as a platform for engagement and information sharing.
- Track engagement to understand strategy impact and ensure accountability, continuous improvement and successful outcomes This could include:
  - Attend events and meetings
  - Community visits
  - Communications
  - Share lesson learned
  - Celebrate success stories
  - Annually assess relationships to monitor reciprocity of engagement to ensure meaningful contributions to the communities engaged.

# Priority Actions to Implement

## How we're getting started

Action	Purpose
Connect with tourism ambassadors.	To kick-start and support BLLT relationship building with, and understanding of, Indigenous operators and community members.  To create a network of knowledgeable representatives who can promote and support Indigenous tourism experiences effectively across the Park's neighbouring Nations, fostering collaboration and shared best practices for industry development, relationship building, and operator support.
Build relationships, lead with operators, entrepreneurs, and community. Develop connections to Chief and Council, and Economic Development offices.	To establish strong, trust-based relationships that facilitate ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and support for Indigenous tourism development, ensuring meaningful alignment and engagement.
Embed relationship building across the organization.	To ensure that relationship building is a core value and practice within BLLT, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual respect that supports long-term partnerships with Indigenous operators and communities.
Show up in-community to share what BLLT is doing.	To maintain transparency, build trust, and ensure that Indigenous communities are informed and involved in BLLT's initiatives, fostering a sense of ownership and partnership.

# Priority Actions to Implement (Continued)

## How we're getting started

Action	Purpose
Keep a current and accurate list of operators inside and outside of Banff and Lake Louise.	To maintain up-to-date information for effective communication, coordination, and support, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are engaged and included in BLLT's efforts.
Promote Industry training opportunities.	To enhance the skills and knowledge of Indigenous operators and entrepreneurs, empowering them to succeed and thrive in the tourism industry, which in turn enriches the overall tourism offering.
Deepen cultural training throughout BLLT.	To ensure that all staff have a deep understanding and appreciation of Indigenous cultures, promoting respectful and informed interactions with Indigenous communities and visitors.
Develop an Indigenous members services strategy.	To provide tailored support and services to Indigenous members, addressing their specific needs and helping them maximize the benefits of their involvement in the tourism industry.
Keep a current and accurate list of ongoing Indigenous initiatives in Banff National Park.	To monitor and support Indigenous initiatives effectively, ensuring they receive the recognition and assistance they need to succeed, and integrating them into the broader tourism strategy.
Support existing initiatives.	To bolster ongoing efforts, ensure their sustainability, and to build relationships, demonstrating BLLT's intention and commitment to long-term partnership and the success of Indigenous initiatives.

# Voices that Shaped the Strategy

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# Honorary Mentions

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- Greg Hopf

[moccasintrails.com](http://moccasintrails.com)



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- Philip Coppard
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# Join us on this Journey

Together, we walk this trail—continuing to learn, unlearn, listen, and grow. We welcome the opportunity to connect and continue this shared journey with you.

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