



SIDNEY BIA ANNUAL REPORT // 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 marked a transformational year for the Sidney.

Over the past decade, the Sidney BIA has evolved from a traditional marketing organization into a strategic economic development partner for the Town of Sidney and the local business community.

In 2025, that work reached a major milestone with the approval of the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT), strengthening Sidney's long-term visitor economy strategy.

The MRDT followed nearly two years of collaboration between the Sidney Hotel Group, the Sidney BIA, the Town of Sidney, and the Province of British Columbia. Launching August 1, 2025, it will provide stable funding for tourism marketing, visitor services, and destination development.

Alongside this achievement, the Sidney BIA continued delivering results through destination marketing, business programming, events, visitor services, and business advocacy.

Nearly two million annual pedestrian visits, ongoing tourism growth, and a thriving downtown reflect the strength of collaboration between local government and the business community.

The Sidney BIA exists to ensure Sidney remains not only a remarkable place to visit, but one of Canada's most economically vibrant small towns.

Morgan Shaw

Executive Director
Sidney BIA



ABOUT THE SIDNEY BIA

The Sidney Business Improvement Area (BIA) is a non-profit organization representing businesses and commercial property owners within Sidney's downtown commercial district.

Our role is to strengthen Sidney's economy by increasing visitation, supporting local businesses, and enhancing the downtown experience through marketing, business development programs, events, and visitor services.

BIAs operate through a levy collected alongside commercial property taxes and reinvested directly into initiatives that benefit the district.

The Sidney BIA delivers economic value by coordinating initiatives that individual businesses could not achieve alone.

Key areas of impact include:

- Destination Marketing – Promoting Sidney as a vibrant, year-round destination for visitors.
- Business Development – Providing resources, education, and networking opportunities to support local businesses.
- Event Coordination – Supporting community events that drive visitation and increase local spending.
- Visitor Services – Connecting visitors directly with Sidney businesses and experiences.
- Advocacy – Representing and amplifying the collective voice of Sidney's business community.

SNAPSHOT OF SIDNEY

62	4600	12,600	975
average age	employed workers	residents	active business licences
49	25	17	1,016,266
restaurants	parks	beach accesses	annual pedestrian counter

The purpose of the Sidney Business Improvement Area is to increase footsteps, potential customers, clients, and event attendees through the development, implementation, and evaluation of marketing, promotion, communication, and other collaborative initiatives.

A TRANSFORMATIVE YEAR: THE MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL DISTRICT TAX (MRDT)

One of the most significant developments in 2025 was the approval of the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) in Sidney.

The MRDT is a provincial hotel tax applied to short-term accommodations. Revenue from this tax is dedicated to tourism marketing and destination development.

The tax was approved by the Province of British Columbia following a collaborative application led by the Sidney Hotel Group in partnership with the Sidney BIA.

Implementation

MRDT took effect August 1, 2025.

What This Means

The MRDT provides a new dedicated funding stream for tourism marketing, allowing Sidney to expand its visitor economy strategy and attract more overnight visitors.

Governance

- The Sidney BIA is the designated recipient of MRDT funds
- The Sidney Hotel Group oversees planning and expenditures through a Managing Committee
- Regular reporting ensures transparency and accountability.



DESTINATION MARKETING + PROMOTIONS

The Sidney BIA leads strategic destination marketing initiatives that position Sidney as a vibrant, year-round place to visit, shop, dine, and explore.

These efforts are designed to increase visitation, extend the tourism season, and support the success of local businesses.

Through coordinated campaigns and partnerships, the BIA maintains Sidney's visibility across regional and provincial travel markets, reaching potential visitors at key decision-making moments.

In the past year, these efforts included:

- Digital advertising campaigns targeting regional and provincial audiences
- Strategic social media promotion highlighting local businesses and seasonal experiences
- Print advertising and media partnerships to expand Sidney's visibility
- Tourism publications and travel media features showcasing Sidney's coastal experiences, dining, and shopping
- High-visibility marketing placements through BC Ferries and airport channels to reach incoming travellers

In total, more than 60 targeted marketing initiatives were delivered across multiple platforms, expanding Sidney's reach and helping bring new customers into the community throughout the year.



EVENTS AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER FOR SIDNEY

Events play an important role in supporting Sidney's local economy by attracting visitors, increasing foot traffic, and encouraging people to spend more time in the downtown business district.

The Sidney BIA works closely with the Town of Sidney and community partners to ensure events deliver meaningful economic value for local businesses.

Through a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the Town, the Sidney BIA co-funds and administers the Sidney Event Liaison program, helping coordinate and strengthen Sidney's overall event ecosystem.

The Sidney BIA supports events by:

- Driving economic activity by helping attract visitors and increase patron traffic to Sidney businesses.
- Coordinating events through SEAG, working with key community organizations to align schedules, marketing, and opportunities for collaboration.
- Providing marketing and promotional support to increase awareness and attendance.
- Connecting organizers with local businesses, venues, and suppliers to strengthen economic impact within Sidney.
- Supporting event planning and logistics to help ensure successful delivery and strong visitor experiences.

Through this collaborative approach, the Sidney BIA helps ensure events contribute to a vibrant community while supporting the long-term economic health of the local business district.



THE SIDNEY BIA'S ROLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT + BUSINESS SUPPORT

Economic development is a core focus of the Sidney BIA. Through a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Sidney, the BIA plays a key role in implementing aspects of the Town's Economic Development Plan and delivering programs that support the growth and resilience of Sidney's business community.

This partnership allows the BIA to extend business support services beyond the BIA district and make them available to all Sidney businesses.

Key initiatives include:

- Business consultations and business walks to understand challenges, identify opportunities, and connect businesses with resources.
- Networking and mixer events that strengthen relationships and encourage collaboration across the local business community.
- Employment expos and workforce partnerships that help businesses address labour shortages and connect with job seekers.
- Business education workshops focused on emerging trends, skills development, and sector support.
- Economic data tracking and market research to inform decision-making and guide economic development strategies.

Together, these programs position the Sidney BIA as a central partner in supporting business success, strengthening the local economy, and ensuring Sidney remains a competitive and thriving place to do business.



VISITOR SERVICES SUPPORTING SIDNEY'S VISITOR ECONOMY

Through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Sidney, the Sidney BIA operates the Sidney Visitor Information Centre, a key component of the community's tourism and economic development strategy. Located on Beacon Avenue in the downtown core, the centre serves as an important gateway connecting visitors directly to Sidney's businesses, attractions, and experiences.

Each year, thousands of travellers visit the centre seeking recommendations on where to shop, dine, and explore. By providing personalized guidance and promoting local offerings, the Visitor Information Centre plays an active role in directing visitor spending into the local economy and increasing foot traffic within the downtown business district.

Services provided include:

- Visitor information and trip planning assistance
- Promotion of local events, attractions, and experiences
- Distribution of brochures and promotional materials from Sidney businesses
- Tourism marketing and destination promotion
- Referrals to local shops, restaurants, accommodations, and services

By acting as both an information hub and economic connector, the Visitor Information Centre helps convert visitor interest into real economic activity. This service supports local businesses, enhances the visitor experience, and strengthens Sidney's position as a vibrant and welcoming coastal destination.





LOOKING FORWARD

The Sidney BIA will continue to focus on initiatives that strengthen Sidney's economic vitality, support local businesses, and position the community as a competitive coastal destination.

Working in partnership with the Town of Sidney and key stakeholders, the BIA will prioritize programs and strategies that drive visitation, increase economic activity, and support long-term business resilience.

Key priorities include:

- Implementing the MRDT tourism strategy to expand destination marketing, attract new visitors, and increase overnight stays that support local businesses.
- Expanding destination marketing efforts to raise Sidney's profile as a year-round coastal destination and encourage longer visitor stays.
- Supporting business growth and resilience through business development programs, education, and economic insights.
- Enhancing Sidney's event ecosystem by strengthening coordination, marketing, and partnerships that drive foot traffic and community vibrancy.
- Strengthening collaboration with the Town of Sidney to advance shared economic development priorities and deliver programs that benefit the entire business community.
- Continuing to invest in visitor services that connect travellers with Sidney's shops, restaurants, and experiences.

Through these efforts, the Sidney BIA will continue to play a key role in supporting a vibrant, resilient, and economically strong business district for years to come.

STAY CONNECTED

News and invitations for all Sidney BIA business community events and initiatives are shared with members through our Community Connections newsletter and occasional feature emails. Please keep an eye on your inbox for Sidney BIA communications so you don't miss an opportunity to get involved.

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