

# marble mountain development corporation



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## CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

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### Message from the Chair

#### Marble Mountain Development Corporation

The Marble Mountain Development Corporation (MMDC) was established in April 1988 as a Crown corporation to plan and oversee the development of Marble Mountain. In 2001, governance of MMDC was transferred to the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation (TCR). As such, we have a responsibility to help fulfill TCR's mandate: to support the development of sustainable economic growth in the tourism and cultural industries; support the arts and foster creativity; preserve the province's cultural heritage and historic resources and recognize their importance; and promote participation in recreation and sport and support sport development.

Today, Marble Mountain is a cornerstone for tourism on the west coast and is the province's premiere winter attraction. Over the next 3 years, the MMDC will build upon this strong foundation by working to identify opportunities for improvement and expansion.

Our business model is already evolving. We are enhancing our key internal operations to ensure a consistent and positive experience for our customers, partners, suppliers and employees. Our renewed approach involves: putting safety and customer service first and foremost; tapping into new markets; investing to ensure the long term viability of our capital infrastructure; and, expanding IT capabilities and online offerings; all while seeking input from our most important stakeholders – our customers.

I extend my sincerest thanks to the MMDC Board of Directors and employees for offering their talents, hard work and commitment. I look forward to continuing this proud tradition during my tenure as Chair.

My signature below is indicative of the entire corporation's accountability for the preparation of the plan and for the achievement of the identified goals and objectives.

Sincerely,



Bob Pike, Chair

Marble Mountain Development Corporation

## 1.0 MARBLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION: OVERVIEW

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Marble Mountain Resort is located near Steady Brook, in the Humber Valley in Western Newfoundland. The Marble Mountain Development Corporation (MMDC) was established in 1988 to develop the Marble Mountain ski facility into a year-round, full-service resort. The Corporation's mandate is to develop the resort so that it will act as a catalyst for tourism development both locally and in the province as a whole. Government's role was to construct the initial critical mass infrastructure to attract private sector investment.

In 1995 the base lodge was constructed and the detachable high-speed quad chair lift was installed. In 1999, just before the Canada Winter Games, Marble Villa, the resort's condominium-style hotel was opened. To date, there has been one private tourism development at the base area; the company is Marble Zip Tours which began operations in 2008.

MMDC's management team normally consists of four full-time managers who oversee the year-round operation of the resort. During the ski season, an Outside Operations Manager, Snow School Manager and Ski Patrol Manager are hired (*see Appendix A for the current MMDC organizational chart*). The summer operation consists of weddings, meetings and conferences and Marble Zip Tours, which is run by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party operator. A typical summer wedding, meeting or conference event requires between 10 and 15 employees. The majority of employees of Marble Mountain Development Corporation are from the Humber Valley region.

The 2010-11 MMDC Board of Directors consisted of eleven directors. They represent the Marble Mountain Ski and Ride Club, the City of Corner Brook, the Town of Steady Brook, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and, where feasible, tourism related businesses. The Board's structure has been established according to the MMDC by-laws and the Board reports to the Government through the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. Mr. Bob Pike, Chair of the Board has been Chair since April 2011 and continues to serve in this capacity.

Skier visits to Marble Mountain had increased, to a high of 95,270 in 2007-08. The following year saw a decrease to 90,728, largely because of the global economic downturn and the cancellation of direct flights from Europe, which affected the number of international visitors to Marble Mountain. Although skier visits decreased in 2009-10 to 85,564, this can be attributed to the late start and early end to the season, along with a general lack of snow. The 2010-11 season was similarly affected by weather conditions including a late start and as a result skier visits dropped to 72,551, a reduction of just over 15%.

The Corporation is facing a number of continuing challenges and opportunities over the planning period. As with many multi-season resorts, MMDC is experiencing increased global competition, continuing high infrastructure and operating costs, the impacts of climate change especially on the anchor winter season and changing demographics that are shaping market size and preferences. Air

access to the province is improving, and Marble Mountain will continue to work with both the public and private sector to improve its financial management and increase sustainable opportunities to extend seasons, diversify the product offering, and increase revenue streams. The Corporation is also focusing on improving client services and service quality as a source of sustainable, competitive advantage. This includes an increased focus on providing and promoting opportunities for, and benefits of, increased physical activity especially in winter and through other multi-season activities and special events.

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## 2.0 MANDATE

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The mandate of the Marble Mountain Development Corporation is to serve as a catalyst for tourism development both locally and in the province as a whole. As stated in MMDC's Articles of Incorporation, the mandate of the Board is as follows:

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- *The Marble Mountain Development Corporation shall have marketing as an important priority of its mandate and shall designate a portion of its generated revenues solely to marketing;*
  - *Promote the area as a four-season resort area;*
  - *Actively pursue operators, tenants and/or owners to occupy the lands in the area for the following purposes:*
    - *Ski facilities*
    - *Summer activities and attractions*
    - *Accommodations and services*
    - *Any other activity consistent with the development of a four-season establishment*
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*The Vision of Marble Mountain Development Corporation is of a high quality, safe and memorable experience for its clients in a world-class all-season resort area.*

Customer service and safety are top priorities at Marble Mountain. Friendly and efficient service ensures that our guests enjoy their visits. The Outside Operations

team follows a stringent maintenance plan and the lifts and machinery are regularly inspected to ensure they are in safe running order. Marble Mountain's risk management specialist from Gougeon Insurance was impressed, once again, with the work of our Outside Operations crew, especially in the face of such challenging snow conditions. His 2010-11 report stated:

“The operations staff at Marble Mountain, both inside and outside, are dedicated professionals with a keen desire to provide a safe, quality product for their guests and staff...”

*By 2017, the Marble Mountain Development Corporation will seek sustainable visitation and client service performance.*

Over the next two planning cycles, the Marble Mountain Development Corporation will have enhanced sustainable visitation and improved its client service performance. It will have sought to promote Marble Mountain as a key tourism destination while maintaining fiscal responsibility and seeking to increase revenues from sources other than alpine skiing. This mission statement strengthens links to, and is consistent with, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation's Strategic Directions.

**Mission:**

By April 30, 2017, the Marble Mountain Development Corporation will have sought to enhance sustainable visitation and client service performance.

**Measure:**

Enhanced sustainable visitation and client service performance improved.

**Indicators:**

- Enhanced visitation and increased yield-per-visitor
- Maintained or increased visitor satisfaction
- Increased revenues from both alpine and non-alpine sources
- Increased infrastructure reliability

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## 5.0 VALUES

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The values expressed below are intended to reflect operational values for Marble Mountain Ski Resort. In this context, the values of Marble Mountain Development Corporation have been identified as follows:

Teamwork	▪ Each person will work in a cooperative and effective manner as part of the Marble Mountain Team.
Responsiveness	▪ Each person will respond in a timely manner, appropriate to each situation as it arises.
Accountability	▪ Each person will be individually responsible for his/her actions. ▪ Each contributing member of a working group will be accountable for the outcomes.
Innovation	▪ Each person will avail of opportunities to create an enhanced guest experience at Marble Mountain Resort.
Lead	▪ Each person will aspire to deliver operational excellence.

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## 6.0 LINES OF BUSINESS

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### **Alpine Activities and Services**

Skiing and Snowboarding are still the primary activities at the resort. Chair lift rides are offered in the winter season.

Marble Mountain offers equipment rentals and repairs, snow school instruction and child supervision, locker and storage rentals and ski patrol (safety and first aid) services.

MMDC sells advertising in the form of signage on chair backs and at the top and base of the mountain. As well, sponsorships for events are available, as are advertising spaces in our resort brochure web site and in the lodge.

### **Meetings, Conferences and Special Events**

Marble Mountain Resort caters to weddings, meetings and conferences throughout the spring, summer and fall. During the winter season, events such as *Marble Cup Alpine Ski Races*, *Wild West Jib Fest* for snowboarders, *Old Sam Day* featuring ski & snowboard races and *The Race on The Rock* Snowmobile races are held to add to the total guest experience at the resort.

### **Accommodations**

Marble Villa is a 31-room hotel with condominium-style suites, which range in size from studios to two-bedroom units. These units are characterized as ski-in/ski-out, meaning that they are situated at the base of the mountain to allow easy access for skiing and snowboarding guests. Marble Villa is air-conditioned and open year-round and is convenient for guests attending weddings, meetings and conferences at the base lodge or as a central point to explore Western Newfoundland.

### **Food and Beverage**

The resort's food and beverage service operates a cafeteria and bar during the ski season. These services are available to skiers, snowboarders, snowmobilers and to the general public.

## 7.0 PRIMARY CLIENTS

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The Marble Mountain Development Corporation identifies its primary clients as those individuals, groups, or organizations who are the principal users and/or beneficiaries of the Corporation's lines of business, and include the following:

1. **Alpine sport enthusiasts** – Skiing and snowboarding can be enjoyed at any age. Research shows that most skiers and snowboarders are in the 18 to 34 age range. Marble Mountain's snow school provides lessons for people of all ages and abilities including participating with provincial schools in order to provide outdoor physical activities.
2. **Private industry** – Marble Mountain Resort partners with tourism groups to promote the area through marketing initiatives. Advertising within the lodge and on outdoor infrastructure is sold to local businesses. Events are held conjointly with other organizations such as the Western Sno-Riders, NL Snowboard and the Western NL Destination Management Organization (DMO). Marble Mountain Resort maintains positive working relationships with suppliers of alpine equipment, broadcasting and food and beverage.
3. **Travelers** – Many users of Marble Mountain's facilities are from outside the area. They travel from within the province but also from around the world. One of the largest growth markets was the UK. Marble Villa is the ski resort's condominium style accommodations that provide ski-in/ski-out convenience for skiers and snowboarders. In the summer months, tourists choose Marble Villa as a base from which to explore the surrounding attractions.
4. **Special event attendees** – Throughout the ski season special events such as concerts and competitions take place in the lodge and on the mountain. In the summer, weddings, conferences and meetings are held within the lodge and on the grounds of the resort.
5. **Non-skiing members of the public requiring food/beverages** – Throughout the ski season, the cafeteria and bar are open to the general public. Snowmobilers, non-skiing family members and area residents avail of the food and beverage service in the lodge.

In the development of its Strategic Plan, Marble Mountain took the strategic direction as communicated by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation (DTCR) into consideration. As such the following directions relate to the work of Marble Mountain Development Corporation, as follows:

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*Physical Activity, Active Recreation and Sport*

*Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships in Tourism*

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Marble Mountain is committed to becoming a major all-season tourism generator, with an emphasis on being a catalyst for further high-end destination-oriented development in the area. Skiing and snowboarding will be considered the primary activities, however, summer and other off-season activities will also be given priority.

### **8.1 ISSUE ONE: FINANCIAL CLIENT SERVICE PERFORMANCE**

Marble Mountain Development Corporation has assessed that it needs to focus in the coming planning period on committing sufficient resources to update its infrastructure and improve its financial and client service systems. This should result in decreased maintenance costs, better financial data and improved client services.

#### *Goal One:*

By April 30, 2014, the Marble Mountain Development Corporation will have initiated improvement in the areas of financial performance and client service performance.

*Measure:* Initiated improvement in the areas of financial management and client service

#### *Indicators:*

1. Timely, relevant and reliable financial and non-financial information available for better management control and accountability
2. Non-alpine revenue sources identified and opportunities developed
3. Visitor needs and satisfaction assessed, evaluated and monitored
4. Client service needs identified and client service improvements initiated
5. Infrastructure needs identified

#### *Objectives*

1. By April 30, 2012, the MMDC Board will have reviewed infrastructure reliability and will have initiated infrastructure improvements including defining maintenance and replacement needs.

*Measure:* Infrastructure reliability reviewed and areas for improvement identified and initiated.

*Indicators:*

- Identified areas for improvements
  - Reviewed infrastructure reliability
  - Defined maintenance needs
2. By April 30, 2013, the MMDC Board will have reviewed and improved financial information and management systems and practices.
  3. By April 30, 2014, the MMDC Board will have implemented mechanisms to assess and monitored visitor satisfaction and initiated improved client services.

## **8.2 ISSUE TWO: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

MMDC's mandate includes making Marble Mountain a four-season resort which would in turn; help Newfoundland and Labrador become a multi-season tourism destination. MMDC has introduced initiatives in the past with mixed results. Marble Zip Tours, a third party operator, has introduced its own activity and proven to be viable operation. This public-private partnership has proven to be hugely successful and a model that fits within MMDC's mandate. This also strengthens links to, and is consistent with, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation's strategic direction to strengthen public-private partnership in tourism.

*Goal Two:*

By April 30, 2014, the Marble Mountain Development Corporation will have taken steps to initiate public-private partnerships in tourism.

*Measure:* Steps taken to initiate partnerships with third-party operators within the tourism industry.

*Indicators:*

1. Viable non-alpine events identified
2. Identified opportunities for partnerships with third-party operators
3. Initiated steps toward new partnerships with third-party operators

*Objectives:*

1. By April 30, 2012, the MMDC Board will have identified activities that fit within the Four Season Model.

*Measure:* Identified activities that fit within the Four Season Model

*Indicators:*

- Viable non-alpine events identified

2. By April 30, 2013, the MMDC Board will have implemented initiatives to increase working relationships with 3<sup>rd</sup> party activity operators.
3. By April 30, 2014, the MMDC Board will have increased its activity toward the number of 3<sup>rd</sup> party partnerships.

### **8.3 ISSUE THREE: INCREASED PARTICIPATION**

Marble Mountain's visitation has been declining in recent years and in order to keep the facility a key sport & recreational activity center it has to align itself with sporting organizations that can utilize its assets for after school hour activity. With the development of new provincial organizations such as NL Snowboard, Marble Mountain can continue to strengthen its ties with provincial recreation and sport organizations. This also strengthens links to, and is consistent with, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation's strategic direction to promote physical activity, active recreation and sport.

#### *Goal Three:*

By April 30, 2014, the Marble Mountain Development Corporation will have increased opportunities for participation in physical, active recreation and sport activities.

*Measure:* Initiate participation in active recreational and sport activities at the Resort.

#### *Indicators:*

1. Increased night skiing visitation
2. Initiated efforts to increase provincial participation in snowsport activities

#### *Objectives:*

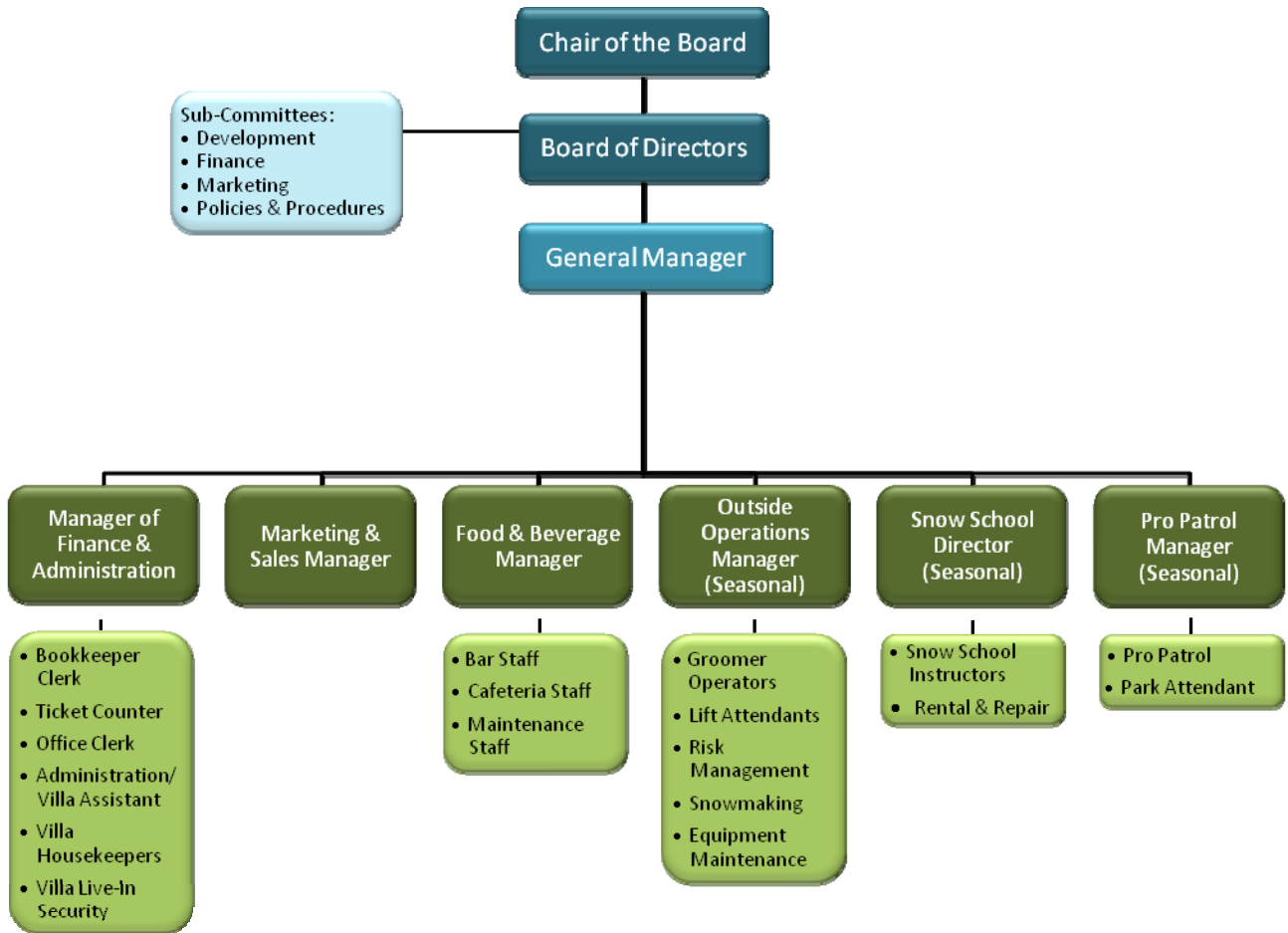
1. By April 30, 2012, the MMDC Board will have identified opportunities to increase after school hour physical activity.

*Measure:* Opportunities to increase after school hour physical activity identified.

#### *Indicators:*

- Increased efforts in marketing night skiing
  - Increased night skiing visitation
2. By April 30, 2013, the MMDC Board will have implemented sustainable after school hour programming.
  3. By April 30, 2014, the MMDC Board will have increased its partnerships in provincial snowsport organizations.

## APPENDIX A – MMDC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## APPENDIX B – STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### APPENDIX 2 – STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents, and other communiqués. The Transparency and Accountability Act requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments. Strategic Directions that are relevant to the Department are:

#### 1. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, ACTIVE RECREATION AND SPORT

**Outcome:** Supportive physical and social environments are created that facilitate opportunities for increased regular, lifelong participation in physical activity, active recreation and sport.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:		
	addressed in the MMDC Business Plan	addressed in the MMDC Operational Plan	addressed in work plans
Further advance the Recreation and Sport Strategy and its six key directions		•	
Focus on after school hour physical activity for children, youth and families	•		
Promote increased physical activity and healthy eating throughout the province	•		

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:		
	addressed in the MMDC Business Plan	addressed in the MMDC Operational Plan	addressed in work plans
Increase access and participation for under-represented groups (disabled persons, women and girls, lower income, Aboriginal)			•
Support regional recreation and sport		•	
Strengthen provincial recreation and sport organizations	•		
Support for sport development			•

## 2. STRENGTHEN PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN TOURISM

**Outcome:** Public-Private Partnerships are strengthened to increase the contribution of tourism to the province's economy.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:		
	addressed in the MMDC Business Plan	addressed in the MMDC Operational Plan	addressed in work plans
Further advance the Tourism Vision and its seven key directions			•
Organization and Coordination of the Tourism Industry			•



Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:		
	addressed in the MMDC Business Plan	addressed in the MMDC Operational Plan	addressed in work plans
Develop priority, in-demand and export ready tourism products and experiences			•
Market Newfoundland and Labrador as a tourism destination			•
Evaluation and performance measurement of the Tourism Vision and revenue target			•
Development of the tourism workforce			•