



Alberni
Valley CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

ACRD
Board of
Directors
Delegation

March 12, 2025

Who we are

The Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce is the "voice of business" for our entire region.

As a membership-driven organization, we are committed to continually improving the business climate in our community.

Registered under the Federal Board of Trade Act, we operate as a not-for-profit entity comprised of businesses, professionals, non-for-profits, and other community groups.



Our Vision

The Alberni Valley:
A vibrant and
prosperous business
friendly community



What we do

- Keep our community connected
- Networking Events
- Business Excellence Awards
- Advocacy
- Member support and benefits
- Tourism and Visitor Services, including McLean Mill Operations.



Visitor Services

The Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce is the organization that operates the Alberni Valley Visitor Information Centre, a vital asset for the community, providing personalized service, promoting local businesses, and enhancing visitor experiences.

The Chamber owns the land and building located at 2533 Port Alberni Hwy.

The building officially opened in 2011.



Role and Activities of Visitor Information Centre

- **Personalized trip~planning assistance**

Helping visitors plan their ideal itinerary and make the most of their time in the community.

- **Distribution of promotional materials**

Providing visitors with brochures, maps, and other resources to discover local businesses, accommodations, and attractions.

- **Promotion of local businesses**

Connecting visitors with the best the community has to offer and driving traffic to local establishments.

- **Real~time travel updates**

Keeping visitors informed about road conditions, events, and any travel advisories to ensure a smooth experience.

- **Visitor engagement**

Providing personalized assistance and information to visitors via phone, email, and social media channels.

- **Marketing Collaboration**

Providing feedback to organizations on ensuring accurate information in print publications and online

- **Daily and Annual Pacific Rim Park Passes + Discovery Park Pass**

THE PORT ALBERNI VISITOR CENTRE IS TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC AS OF MARCH 1ST, 2025



Welcome to the **Alberni Valley**
The West Coast Starts Here
#ExplorePortAlberni

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23 6pm-8pm Sunday Social: Jazz Night w/ The Barry Miller Quartet	24	25	26 11am-12pm Free Healing Yoga 2pm-3pm Four Pillars to Thriving in Retirement	27 7pm-9pm Death Café	28	1 7:30pm Back Beat Presents: The Beach Boys Tribute
2	3	4	5 11am-12pm Free Healing Yoga	6 7:30pm Poole & Craib Guitar	7	8 9am-12pm Spirit Square Farmers Market Mar 8th-9th Rock & Gem Show 2025
9 Mar 8th-9th Rock & Gem Show 2025	10	11 3:30pm-5:30pm Ready, Set, Learn!	12	13 6pm-8pm Knit Nights at the Museum! 7pm-9pm Death Café	14 6pm-9pm Brushes & Brews 7pm The Comedy Misfits Stand-up Tour	15 9am-12pm Spirit Square Farmers Market 2pm Tune Teasers Music Trivia Challenge 7pm St. Patrick's Music Trivia Night
16 5pm Film Fest Winter 2025 Series #3 "All We Imagine As Light"	17	18 1pm-4:30pm Workshop: Decision Making & Effective Meetings 6pm-8pm	19	20 7:30pm Valdy- Canadian Folk Legend	21	22 9am-12pm Spirit Square Farmers Market 10am-4pm Glow Into Spring

Visitor Information Centre Features & Amenities

- **Clean and accessible public washrooms**

Conveniently located, well-maintained public restrooms for visitors' comfort and convenience.

- **Outdoor picnic area**

Enjoy a treed outdoor dining experience with picnic tables and beautiful surroundings.

- **Port Alberni Photo Op**

Capture photos with the carved welcome bears.

- **Free Wi-Fi**

Stay connected with high-speed internet access, perfect for sharing experiences.

- **Parking**

Convenient parking available for cars, although RV and bus parking may have some limitations.

- **On-site retail**

Browse a selection of locally made souvenirs and tourism-related merchandise.

- **Dedicated Website and Social Media Channels**

Community Social Impact & Benefits

Community Hub

Serves as a central place for residents, providing access to local resources, event information, and community services.

Resident Support

Assist residents with finding information about the Alberni Valley, including local businesses, recreational activities, and community events.

New Resident Introduction

Playing a crucial role in welcoming and introducing new residents to the Alberni Valley, helping them settle into the community and discover its offerings.

Information Sharing

Acting as a conduit for sharing up-to-date information with residents, including updates on wildfires, road closures, natural disasters, and other important local events.

Economic Impact & Benefits

Business Promotion & Local Spending

The VIC connects visitors with local businesses, accommodations, restaurants, and attractions, increasing visitor spending and supporting jobs in the tourism sector.

Extending Visitor Stays

Through personalized trip-planning services, we encourage travelers to stay longer and explore more of the region, boosting economic activity across multiple communities.

Strategic Partnership

We work with organizations like Destination BC, Alberni Valley Tourism, and the West Coast Chamber's, leveraging resources to enhance regional tourism development and support economic sustainability.

Recreation & Environmental Benefits

Access to Outdoor Activities

We provide **locals** and **visitors** with trail maps, water sports recommendations, and adventure tourism options.

We encourage outdoor recreation across the region including Provincial Parks like Stamp Falls, Sproat Lake, and Pacific Rim National Park.

Sustainable & Responsible Tourism Practices

We educate visitors on Bear Smart, Adventure Smart and Leave No Trace principles.

Responsible recreation, and conservation efforts, ensures that tourism does not negatively impact the natural beauty of the region.

Highway Traffic Volume

2023

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD
Rte 4, Jctn Ucluelet/Tofino					98,828 14.2%	62,550 -36.9%	119,040 -7.3%	127,193 -9.8%	102,240 -5.7%	74,462 -3.3%	57,000 1.2%	44,423 10.7%	685,736 -4.6%

2024

Rte 4, Jctn Ucluelet/Tofino	41,726	53,505	65,379	70,320	92,287 -6.6%	100,620 60.9%	135,563 13.9%	145,731 14.6%	111,090 8.7%				816,221 18.3%
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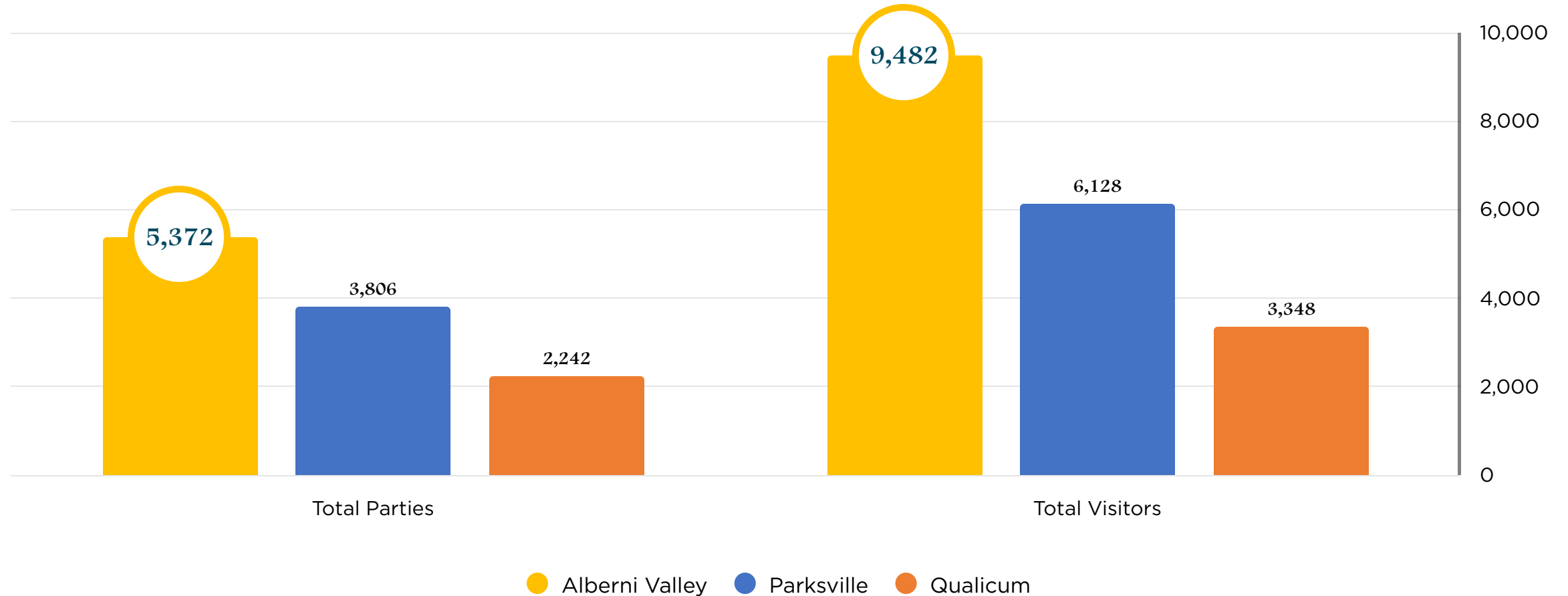
Source:

<https://www.destinationbc.ca/tourism-industry-dashboard/>

How do we compare?

Source: BC Network Statistics Program

Visitors

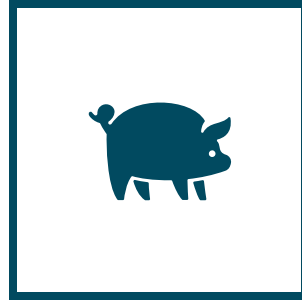


The Funding Challenge



Contract Termination

The City of Port Alberni has terminated the 'fee-for-service' contract for the Visitor Information Centre, which was a reliable funding source.



Funding Uncertainty

The Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce now needs to apply for a grant-in-aid to secure the necessary funding for the Visitor Information Centre's operations.



Potential Impact

Without stable and reliable funding, the Visitor Information Centre's ability to provide essential services and support to the community and visitors may be jeopardized.

The Chamber is seeking funding from a variety of sources. We intend to apply to the Alberni Valley & Bamfield GIA to re-open the Visitor Centre for the summer season.

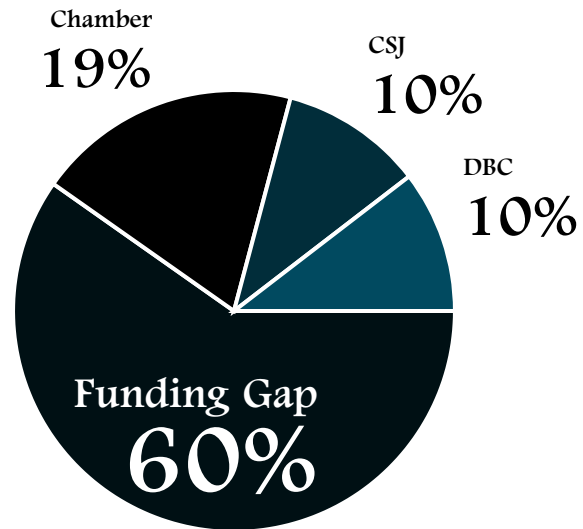
Funding Requirements

The Visitor Info Centre costs the Chamber \$178,000 to operate at a minimum. We previously received \$89,167 from the City of Port Alberni.

Source	Amount (\$)	Notes
Destination BC	\$23,022	Annual Renewal, application due March 14
Canada Summer Jobs Grants	\$23,046	Applied - Pending Confirmation
ACRD Grant In Aid - Alberni Valley and Bamfield	\$95,500	Submitting an Application by April 30
Alberni District Co-Op Grant	\$5,000	Submitting an application by April 30
Alberni Valley Tourism	TBD	Submitted a request to use MRDT funds
Port Alberni Port Authority	TBD	Collaboration with the Dock+ made in Alberni Valley products

The Funding Gap

The Visitor Info Centre costs the Chamber \$178,000 to operate **at a minimum**. We previously received \$89,167 from the City of Port Alberni.



Planned Operating Hours for 2025

Period	Hours
January 1 - February 28	Monday - Friday, 10 - 4pm
March 1 - April 30	Closed
May 1 - June 30 Subject to confirmed funding	Monday - Friday, 10-4
July 1 - August 31	Monday - Friday: 9-5pm
September 1 - December 31 (TBC)	Monday - Friday: 10-4pm

Experience & Expertise of the VIC Team



Extensive Training

Staff undergo comprehensive training in visitor services, tourism industry best practices via go2HR, and emergency preparedness.



Strong Local Knowledge

Staff are well-versed in the region's top attractions, accommodations, and services to provide exceptional guidance to visitors.



Cultural Awareness

Staff receive training in cultural awareness and Indigenous tourism education to ensure a respectful and inclusive experience.

With their extensive training and expertise, the VIC team is uniquely positioned to deliver an exceptional visitor experience.

Planned Programs for Alberni Valley



Alberni Valley Perks Program

Discounts and referrals to local businesses to encourage community support and engagement.



Familiarization Tour

Guided tours to help staff and partners discover the diverse attractions and highlights.



Events Calendar

A comprehensive listing of upcoming events, festivals, and activities in the Alberni Valley to promote community engagement.

By implementing these planned programs, the Alberni Valley aims to enhance the visitor experience, promote local businesses, and foster a greater sense of community. These programs can be expanded to include Bamfield and other electoral areas.

On Hold - Programs & Activities



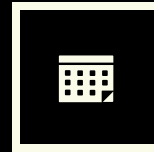
Activity Map

Update and publish the Community Map



Trail & Adventure Guide

Pilot a new print publication of the regions trails, responsible travel and safety when in the outdoors



Update Retail Offerings

We are an Island Good Licensee. We hope to expand and carry more made in the Alberni Valley products



Ambassador Program

Volunteer program needs to be redeveloped

Until funding is stabilized, these programs and activities that aim to enhance the visitor experiences are on hold. The materials and retail offerings are able to generate revenue but depend on the VC being open year-round.

Outstanding Projects - Welcome Map



By revisiting this project and partnering with local nations, the Info Centre will enhance the visitor experience. Incorporating language and place names in the welcome map adds value to educating visitors of Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations.

NEW Preliminary Programming and Partnerships



Bamfield Chamber of Commerce Partnership

Collaborate with the Bamfield Chamber of Commerce to provide visitor information and support to tourists visiting the area as there is increased traffic on Bamfield Road.



Huu-ay-aht First Nations Cultural and Info Centre

Train staff and build systems to support the Huu-ay-aht First Nations' new museum and information centre, ensuring a seamless visitor experience when the centre is expected to open in 2026 or 2027.

With stable funding, we are able to pursue these strategic partnerships beyond the Alberni Valley.

Thank
you

T: 250-724-6535

albernichamber.ca
portalbernivisitorcentre.ca

2533 Port Alberni Hwy
Port Alberni, BC V9Y 8P2



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