

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

Setting Up a Community Walking Tour Business

OCTOBER 2023



If you would like this information in another official language, call us.

English

Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, contactez-nous.

French

Kīspin ki nitawihtīn ē nīhiyawihk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

Cree

Tłı̨chǫ yati k'èè. Dı wegodı newo dè, gots'o gonede.

Tłicho

?eriht'ís Dëne Sųłiné yati t'a huts'elkér xa beyáyatı the?ą ?at'e, nuwe ts'ën yólti.

Chipewyan

Edi gondı dehgáh got'je zhatié k'ée edat'éh enahddhe nide naxets'é edahíi.

South Slavey

K'áhshó got'jne xədə k'é hederi ɬedjhtl'é yeriniwé nídé dúle.

North Slavey

Jii gwandak izhii ginjik vat'atr'ijahch'uu zhit yinohthan jii', diits'at ginohkhii.

Gwich'in

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqluta.

Inuvialuktun

Inuktitut

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnagtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.

Inuinnagtun

Indigenous Languages:

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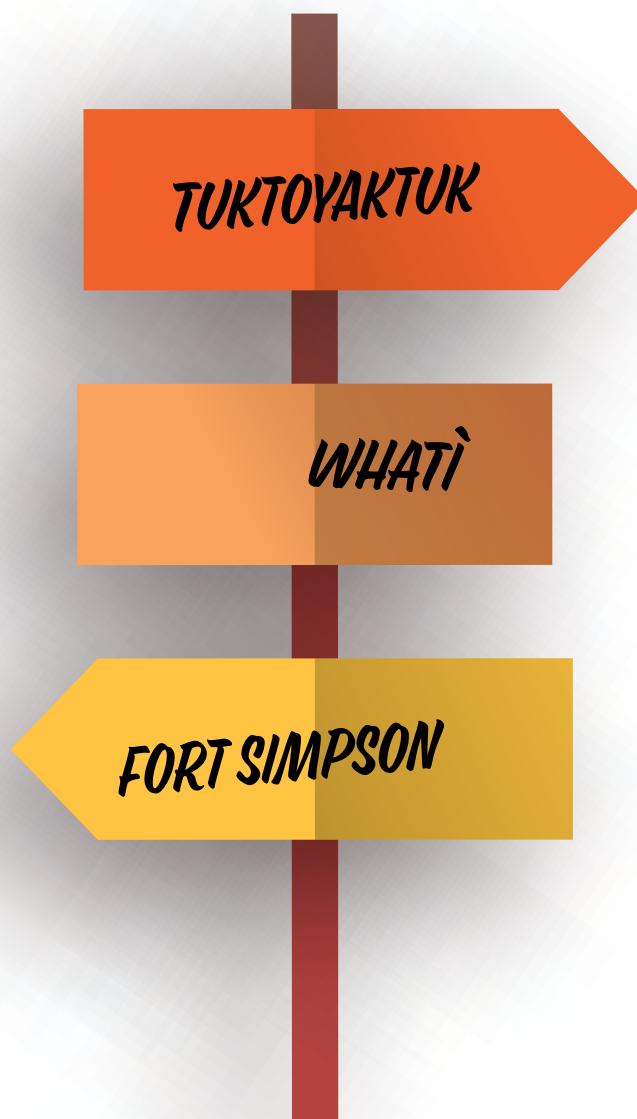
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Introduction

Tourism is an important industry for the Northwest Territories. It helps to diversify the economy and contributes to our overall wellbeing and quality of life.

One excellent way to get involved in the tourism industry is to set up your own community walking tour for visitors to your community. With low start-up costs and limited supplies required to run the business, a community walking tour business can be developed with a limited financial investment up front. It can also be a starting point to offering other tourism products as the business grows, should you be interested in expanding your tour offerings.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has developed the following resource manual that provides information on what is involved in setting up a community walking tour business and includes some helpful tips for success.





SECTION ONE:

The Benefits of Starting Your Own Walking Tour Business

For anyone looking to set up a tourism business in their community, a community walking tour is a great place to start. There are a number of benefits to owning and operating your own walking tour business.

List of benefits:

- Having the independence of running your own business
- Meeting new people from across Canada and all over the world
- Sharing your culture and knowledge with others
- Making money while doing something you love
- Making new friends and business partners
- Supporting the economy of your community

As is the case with any business, running a walking tour business will require time, dedication and passion, but for those willing to make the commitment there is a great opportunity to build a successful business that will benefit you, your family and your community.



SECTION TWO:

Understanding the Role of a Tour Guide

Before deciding to make this commitment, it is important to gain a better understanding of what is involved in running a business and what it takes to be a tour guide.



The roles of a tour guide

As a tour guide you will perform the following roles:

- **Serve as in the role of a local ambassador for your community**

It will be your job to ensure that visitors to the community feel welcome and that you are showcasing your community in the best way possible.

- **Share information about the community and highlight points of significant interest**

To do so, you may need to research the history of your community and the surrounding region. This will include key geographic landmarks and other places of interest. From a cultural point of view, you will need to know what you can and cannot share with visitors to the community.

- **Ensure the safety and comfort of your guests**

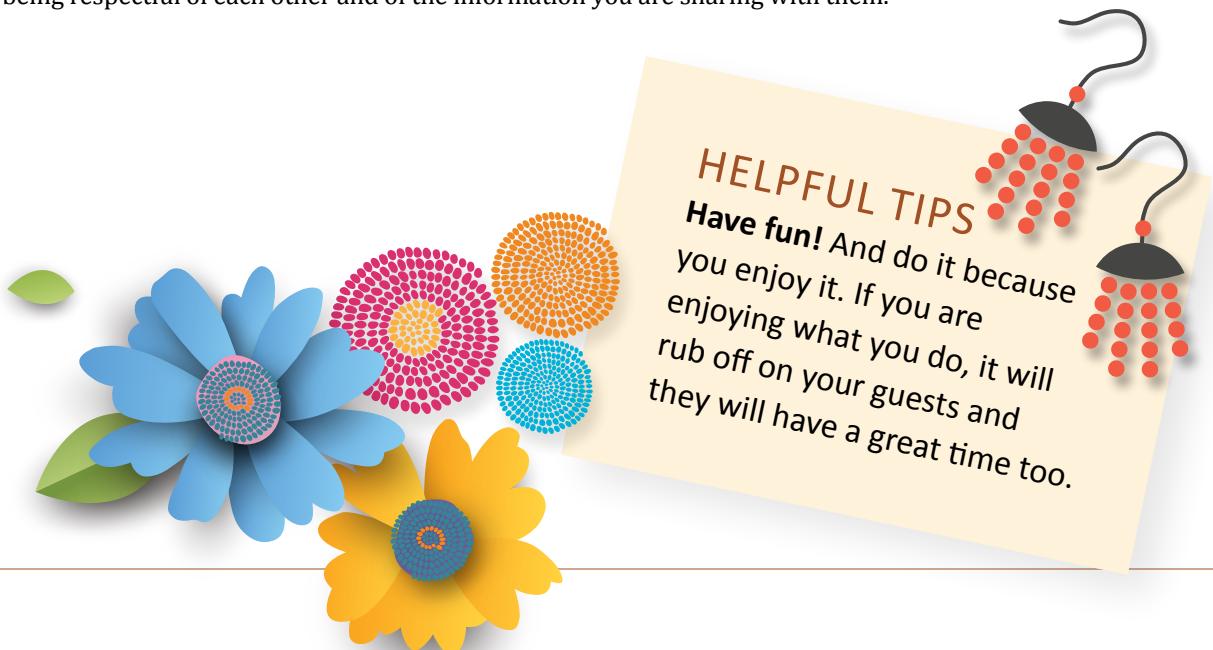
You will want to ensure that you avoid any high-risk activities, and that you have a safety plan in place in the rare, but unfortunate, case that someone should get injured during one of your tours.

- **Ensure that the tour is staying on track and on topic**

Being mindful of your visitors' time, you will need to keep the tour moving at a pace that keeps the tour on schedule. While visitors are encouraged to ask questions about the local history and culture of the area, it will also be important to ensure that the tour remains on track and that all anticipated highlights are shown.

- **Managing difficult visitors**

While most visitors will be happy to visit your community and to learn about the history, culture and way of life, there will be times when you have a difficult guest that may challenge you and/or the other visitors on the tour. If this occurs, you will need to manage the situation to ensure that everyone in the group is getting along and being respectful of each other and of the information you are sharing with them.





The key attributes of a tour guide

While each person is unique and brings different attributes to their personal and business relationships, there are a number of attributes that are essential to being a successful tour guide.

Successful tour guides are:

- **Energetic and enthusiastic**

From the time you first meet your guests to when you drop them off at the end of the tour, you will need to be energized and excited to have them on the tour. Guests will feed off your energy and get excited by what you are showing them.

- **Genuine**

It is also important that you be genuine. Most people are good judges of character and can tell if you are not being genuine with them.

- **Social people who enjoy interacting with others**

A significant part of a tour guide's duties is to interact with people and to make them feel welcome and valued. Taking a keen interest in your guests and asking questions to learn more about them will help enhance their time with you

- **Proud of their community and enjoy sharing it with others**

In order to showcase the best of their community, a tour guide must be proud of it and be excited to share it with others. This sense of pride will shine through during the tour, creating an authentic and unique experience for guests.

- **Interested in local history and culture of their community**

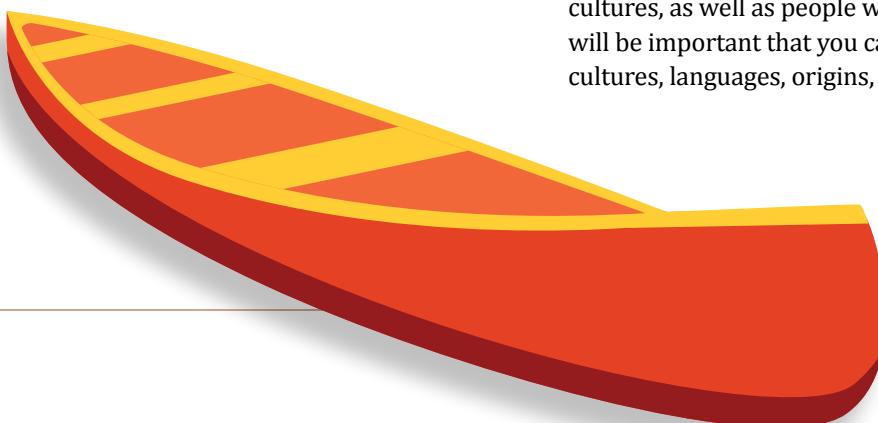
One of the primary reasons people will participate in your walking tour is to get a deeper understanding of the history and culture of the community. They will want to learn how daily life in your community is different from their home. Therefore, it is important that you possess a significant amount of knowledge of the history and culture in the area. This does not mean you have to know everything, but it will be important to take the time to know general information that you can share with your guests.

- **Well organized and punctual**

Being mindful of your guests' time, it is important that your tour starts on time and that you have all the details worked out in advance. Safety waivers should be ready to sign. Confirm that the places you plan to stop on the tour will be open, etc

- **Welcoming, and accepting of people's lifestyle, values and beliefs**

In your role as a tour guide, you will meet many people from different cultures, as well as people whose lifestyles differ from your own. It will be important that you can demonstrate an awareness of different cultures, languages, origins, identities and beliefs.





Daily operation of your business

In addition to providing your visitor with a tour of your community, there are a number of tasks associated with running the daily operations of your business.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Responding to customer inquiries
- Booking clients on tours and keeping track of inventory
- Invoicing clients
- Paying suppliers (i.e., caterers that supplied snack for the tour)
- Marketing your business (website updates, social media posts, other advertising)
- Managing your finances

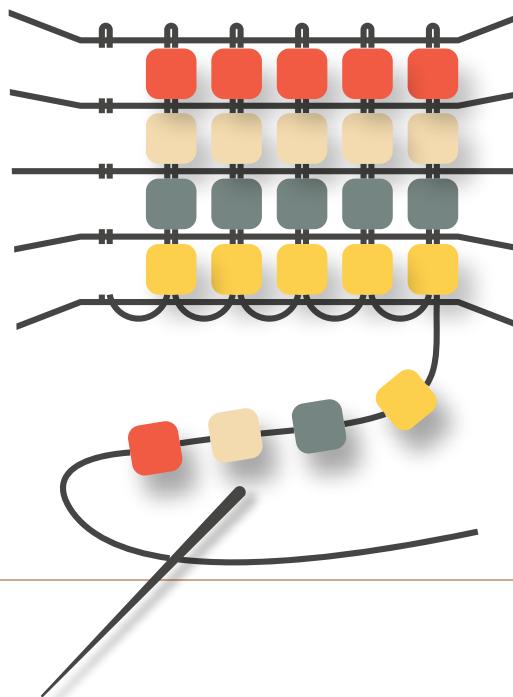


Is this the right fit for you?

Now that you have a better understanding of what it takes to run a successful community walking tour business, you need to ask yourself if this is the right fit for you. Knowing that tour guides are typically energetic people that enjoy meeting new people, if you are a shy and reserved person, or are a private person by nature, this may not be the best option for you.

It is also important to recognize that there is much more to being a tour guide than spending the time with your guests while showcasing your community to them. As the demands of the daily administration of your business will take up a considerable amount of your time, you must be willing to put in the time to run things smoothly.

For those who are passionate about showcasing their community to visitors and are willing to put in the time to run a successful business, this labour of love will bring many rewards and benefits to you, your family and your community.



SECTION THREE:

Getting Down To Business

While you may be tempted to rush out and start your community walking tour business, there are a few things you need to put in place before you begin. There are a number of licenses and registration that you will need to have in place in order to legally operate a business in the Northwest Territories.

Registering a Business Name

In order for any business to operate within the Northwest Territories they are required to register their business name through the GNWT Department of Justice Corporate Registries. For more information, please visit the website listed below.

www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/divisions/legal-registries-division/corporate-registries/

Community Business License

You must also obtain a business license in the community where their business is located. For more information on business licensing and fees in your community, please contact the community government directly.

Tourism Operator Licence

Any business that operates guided commercial activities in the Northwest Territories is required to obtain a Tourism Operator License (TOL). These licenses can be obtained through the GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) regional office.

It typically takes 60 - 90 days to receive a TOL, which includes a community consultation process that is conducted by ITI. The fee to apply for a TOL is subject to change annually. Please refer to the link below for information on the cost of obtaining a TOL.

The TOL application form, can be found at:

www.iti.gov.nt.ca/sites/iti/files/content/tourism_operator_-_application_for_new_licence_-_fillable.pdf

For more information, please refer to the document "Tourism Licensing in the Northwest Territories: A Guide for Tourism Operators in the Appendix of this manual.

You are also encouraged to contact your ITI Regional Office to discuss the process in more detail.

Liability Insurance

As part of the TOL application process a tourism operator must carry liability insurance with a value of no less than \$1 Million. It is recommended that all businesses hosting visitors in the community carry liability insurance. It is recommended that each business that is looking to purchase liability insurance do their own research on insurance agencies and to shop around for the best rates. This does not mean the cost of liability insurance is \$1 Million – that number means your business is protected from costs up to \$1 Million in the case of certain circumstances.

Training and Special Courses

While they are not specifically required to operate a community walking tour business, there are a number of additional workshops and training courses that could be beneficial. These include first aid training, food safe, and NorthernMost Host.



Collaboration with Your Community

Before setting up your walking tour business it is essential that you seek permission from the elders of the community about what parts of your community and local culture can be shared with visitors. There may also be opportunities to develop partnerships with other businesses in your community such as a local cafe that you can take your group for coffee as part of the tour, or a local artisan where you can buy a small gift for each person who goes on your walking tour.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. As part of your liability insurance, you will be required to develop a liability waiver for your guest to sign in advance of your walking tour. You can research various liability waiver forms online or contact your regional ITI officer for further information.

Things typically included in a waiver include:

- Name of your company and the name of the tour
- Information indicating that your guest is participating in the tour voluntarily
- Information indicating that guests are aware of and assume the risks, dangers and hazards of participating in a tour that takes place in public venues such as uneven walkways, slippery, ground, traffic, etc.
- A release of liability statement
- Information about emergency medical treatment as a result of injury or a health condition the manifests itself during the tour
- A spot for the guest signature at the end of the waiver to ensure they have agreed on all of the terms in the waiver.

2. If you are planning on providing any food to your guests, you will need to check in advance if they have any food allergies

3. If you would like to use any of the photos or videos your guests have taken during the tour for promotional purpose you will need your guests to sign a promotional release to ensure that you can use these assets royalty free.

SECTION FOUR:

Steps To Developing A Community Walking Tour



STEP ONE:

Become familiar with your target audience

As you begin to develop your community walking tour, the first thing you will need to do is to develop a basic understanding of who is visiting your community and why. Although your walking tour will no doubt be fantastic, it is unlikely that most visitors will travel to your community to specifically take your walking tour. Understanding who is travelling to your community and why they are doing so will help you tailor your tour to match their interests and physical abilities.

When it comes to tourism in the NWT, there are several target audiences. These include:

1. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)
2. NWT residents visiting other communities within the NWT
3. Tourists visiting the NWT from other regions of Canada and the United States and as far away as China, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Australia
4. People travelling for business purposes

Each of these target audiences will have their own set up unique interests and needs. Visiting friends and relatives may be looking for a more relaxed experience, whereas NWT residents may be looking for an adventure that they can do as part of a weekend getaway. Tourists visiting from outside the NWT are typically looking for a more immersive experience and want to learn as much as they can about the history and culture of the area they are visiting. And if they are coming from a foreign country, they may be looking for information in their own language. Business travellers typically have less free time than leisure travellers, so tourism activities need to be shorter in length and typically offered in the later afternoon or evening when they are not working.

According to NWT visitation statistics, the travellers to the NWT typically are on the older side (50+). Some of these individuals may not have the level of physical fitness to be able to walk for an extended period or time. Therefore, you will need to be clear about the level of fitness required to take your tour so that anyone who is not able to walk for long distances, navigate uneven ground or stand for long periods of time signs up for one of your tours.

Suggested Read:

- **NWT Tourism marketing plan:** The annual plan outlines the various target markets for the NWT
www.members.spectacularnwt.com/resources/marketing-plan
- Destination Canada has excellent market research on international visitors to Canada
www.destinationcanada.com/en/research



STEP TWO:

Develop an inventory of community attractions and other areas of interest

Once you know who is visiting your community and why, the next step is to complete an inventory of attractions and points of interest that would appeal to visitors from outside the community. When doing this, try to look at it from the perspective of the potential visitor. They may seem fascinated by something that you and others may think is not special as it is part of your everyday life. In addition to the attractions, you will also want to include places to stop for a coffee or snack with your guest and places to purchase locally made arts and crafts.

The following table can be used to group the various attractions and services that can be potentially added as stops on your tour, or content you would like to speak about when you are taking guests on your tour. They have been divided into specific categories to help you identify all of the attractions in the community. Depending on the type of tour you plan to offer, each of these could potentially be incorporated into our community walking tour.

Sample Worksheet

List of Community Attractions	
Historical highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Commemorative plaque» Historical photos» Information on history of community»	Cultural highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Community cultural centre» Cultural displays»»
Scenic location / viewpoints <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Hilltop viewpoint» Boat launch lakeview»»	Unique buildings in the community <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Community government office» Community Store» School»
Places to stop and have a coffee/snack <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Picnic spot» Food Truck» Local café /coffee shop»	Other points of interest <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Water treatment/delivery» Community garden»»
Places to buy local art <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Cultural centre» Community government office»»	Attractions you can create for the tour <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Fire pit to share stories» Teepee»»



STEP THREE:

Choose a topic or a theme for your tour(s)

Once you have completed an inventory of attractions within the community, the next step will be to choose a theme or topic for the tour or tours that you create for your potential visitors. Choosing the theme will help guide your selection on what is included in the tour and what things are given greater priority during a particular tour.

It is perfectly fine to have a general community tour that provides an overview of life in the community and shares information specific to the history and culture of the community. The advantage of creating themed tours is that you may reach a specific group of people who have an interest in a particular activity.

Examples of themed tours may include:

- Historical
- Cultural
- Culinary
- Architectural
- Geography (local rocks, plants and wildlife)

Choosing a theme will depend on your level of interest and knowledge on a specific subject as well as what is available within the community. For example, if you are knowledgeable about the plants in the community and the various uses they have for medicines or use in daily life, then you may want to create a specific community walking tour that focuses on this. Or, you may focus on local and cultural foods and want to create a culinary walking tour where visitors can stop by various places in the community to try bannock, dried meat or other delicacies that are popular in your community.





STEP FOUR:

Research your material

A common rule of being a local tour guide is that you should know more about the subject you are presenting than your guests do. This does not mean that you have to be the expert on the subject, but simply, take the time to research any facts that you are presenting, and to be knowledgeable enough about the subject so that if your guest asks a particular question you are able to provide an accurate answer. Research can include spending time with elders in your community to learn more about the history and culture of your community, going to the library to do research or visiting trusted online resources.

If someone asks you a question that you do not know the answer to, let them know that you do not know at this time and that you can contact them with the information once you find the answer. It is never a good idea to make up information simply to answer their questions. People who have taken your tour may also have participated in other tours during their visit to the NWT and may have asked the same questions to other tour guides. If they get a different answer each time, it calls into question your credibility and reflects poorly on your community and the NWT in general. It is always better to be honest and say that you do not know.



STEP FIVE:

Setting up the logistics of the tour

Setting up the logistics for the tour will include:

- Establishing the length of your tour;
- Developing a schedule of when the tour will be offered; and
- Planning the actual route of your tour.

Establishing the length of the tour

When you are in the process of determining the duration of your tour, there are a number of factors to consider, including:

- Who you are providing the tour for;
- What points of interest you will be highlighting; and
- How much time the participants will have for your tour.

Typical durations for community walking tours range from 1 - 2 hours depending on how many things there are to showcase in your community and how many specific stops you make throughout the tour. A tour that focuses on culinary themes would usually take longer than a general tour as guests would take time to stop at various places on the tour to sample local food. You may decide to offer a tour for business travellers that is shorter in length than your regular community walking tour as this group may have a limited time to participate in your tour between business meetings.

Once you establish the length of the tour, it will be key to ensure it is consistent each time it is offered. Once you deliver each tour a few times you will become familiar with milestones you need to meet so that it begins and ends at scheduled times.

Developing the Schedule Scheduling the Tour

The next step is to set a schedule for your operating season. This includes determining the length of your operating season, and to set specific dates and times for your tours. Regardless of whether you plan on operating all year long, or only specific months, a community walking tour that takes place in the winter may look very different than one you offer in the summer. It is, therefore recommended that tours offered during different seasons have their own specific considerations.

When establishing your schedule, it is important to keep your tours offered on a consistent basis and that your tours are offered as many times throughout the week as possible. This will make it easier for visitors to register there is a greater chance your tour will fit their schedule.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Use a community map to draw out your route to ensure that it follows a logical sequence. Number each stop along the way and take note of the information you intend to share with guests.
- When planning your route, set a specific time that you would like to reach each place of interest throughout the tour. That way you will be able to tell if your tour is going too fast or running behind schedule and you can adjust your presentation at each of the remaining stops to ensure the timing of the tour is back on track

If people are participating in other tours while visiting your community, you will need to consider your schedule so that they align with the other tours being offered. For example, if you know visitors will be up late the night before on an Aurora viewing tour, you may want to schedule your community walking tour later in the afternoon so that they can sleep in later in the morning. Or, if you know that one of the local tour operators offers a scenic boat tour in the afternoon, you may want to offer your walking tours during the morning so that visitors can participate in both.

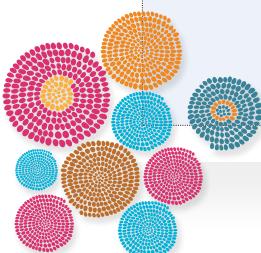
Planning your route

When planning your walking tour route, you will want to keep things moving in a way that ensures that the tour flows at a steady pace and maximizes the time participants have to see highlights. If possible, avoid backtracking. Before you establish your official tour, take the time and walk the route by yourself, or with friends, and practice saying the information you will share with your guests through the tour and work on timing of the tour.



Sample Worksheet

Community Walking Tour Schedule (example)			
Name of Tour: Gamètì Community Tour		Tour Length: 2 Hours	
Time	Scheduled Stop	Activity/Information Shared	Notes
10:00 AM - 10:15 AM	Start of Tour (Meet group outside the Gamètì Motel)	Guides meet tour participants, have group sign safety waivers, explains what they will see on the tour.	To save time, guide may get participants to sign safety waivers in advance.
10:20 AM - 10:55 AM	Community Government Building	Tour of building including great hall, explain when structure was built and provide information on the government structure of the community and other interesting facts about Gameti.	Only tour parts of building that will not disrupt workers/occupants.
11:00 AM - 11:25 AM	Community Farm	Provide information on the history of the farming in Gameti (when it started, how it supports the community, etc.	If possible, have someone who works at the farm share information with the guests. Include time for guests to stop and take photos.
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	Rae Lake Scenic Viewpoint	Highlight information on why Rae Lakes was chosen as the location for the community of Gameti, and how it was part of a historic route to travel between Great Bear and Great Slave Lake.	Include time for guests to take photos.
11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Community Store	Tour of community store Guide provides information on how food brought into community, addresses the cost of food in a remote community and discusses the importance of hunting and fishing for locals.	Leave a bit of time for participants to wander around store and to purchase something if they like.





STEP SIX:

Setting up the logistics of the tour

As with any tour product there are a number of supplies that you will need to carry out your tours. These can be divided into general equipment and guest provisions. General equipment consists of items that you need to carry out the tour, where guest provisions are things that you may include in to enhance your guests' experience and can set your tour apart from similar tours being offered in the region.

General Equipment

Items you may want to consider purchasing for your tours include:

- A pre-trip information sheet for your guests (what to pack, bring cash if you would like to buy local art, etc.)
- A first aid kit
- A map of the community with key points included
- A backpack
- A small cooler to store beverages and any perishable food items that may be served
- A thermos for coffee/tea and washable mugs
- A durable blanket to spread out on the ground or picnic table where guests can enjoy a refreshment break
- Rain gear such as waterproof ponchos and hats in case of bad weather during your tour
- Bug spray

Provisions for Your Guests

Items you may want to consider including on your tours:

- Bottled water
- Prepackaged snacks such as granola bars or cookies
- A small gift made by local artisans such as a keychain or bookmark

General equipment expenses would be included in your start-up or operating budget, whereas the tour provisions for your guests fall under the cost of delivering the actual tour.





STEP SEVEN:

Develop the content for your tours

Now that you have a solid understanding of what you plan to feature on your tour, the next step is to prepare the information that you plan to share with your guests. This is a two-part process which includes developing the story you would like to share and then sharing the story in a way that is authentic, meaningful and memorable for your guests.

Developing your story

Developing your story for the tour actually begins with the **Tour Guide Script**. This will be important information that you share with your guests right at the start of the tour. This will include:

- Introducing yourself as the tour guide and sharing a bit about you and your connection to the community
- Provide a general overview of the type of tour
- Note of any washroom locations along the tour
- Provide any safety information such as location of the first aid kit, asking guests not to approach any stray dogs in the community, etc.
- Mention the number of stops along the tour and what your guests will typically experience
- Provide information on a backup plan should we encounter bad weather, etc.

HELPFUL TIPS

1. Start the tour with a quick warm up exercise. This will be a great way to get the blood flowing and break the ice.
2. Develop a resource binder that you can bring with you on the tour that includes fun facts on the area, images and information on the wildlife and plants of the area and well any geographic or historical facts so that you can refer to this information if guests have questions you may not have the answer to. Include pictures in the binder as well so that you can show your guests pictures to help them better understand what you are referring to.
3. If you are unsure of what to speak of when you are delivering your first tours, develop a series of cue cards that you can reference. It is best to use these as a guide to your speaking point, rather than reading a prepared script as this will seem less authentic for your visitors participating in the tour.

As you begin to develop the story you plan to share with your guests, focus on developing a story that is both informative and engaging. Remember that many of these visitors have come from other parts of Canada or the world and are intrigued by how people live in our communities and will be eager to learn about the history and culture of the area. Key questions you can answer may include:

- When was the community established and why?
- What is daily life like in the community? (how do people earn a living, where do children go to school, what do they do in their free time, etc.)
- What are the most interesting historical facts to share?
- Are there any buildings of significance within the community?
- Are there approved stories that you can share with guests?
- Are there significant landmarks in the community?
- Are there plants and animals that are unique to the region and/or play an integral part in the lives of the people who live there?

Sharing your story

How you share your story is as important as the information you share with your guests. Always be sincere and speak from the heart and your passion will come through. While you may feel a bit nervous or self-conscious at the start, over time you will become more comfortable with sharing your story with others and will be able to perfect the art of storytelling.

It is also important to note that a sense of humor goes a long way. If you feel comfortable sharing some funny stories or adding a bit of humor to your tour in other ways, this will add to your guests' enjoyment of your tour. Your goals at the end of each tour should be that your participants walk away feeling like they have a greater understanding of your community and culture and that they have a lot of fun in the process.





STEP EIGHT:

Pricing Your Tour

Now that you have established the basic outline for what you will include in your walking tour. The next step in the process is to determine at what price point you will set your tour.

This process will begin by determining the fixed and variable costs associated with delivering your tour as well as applying a portion of your annual operating costs to each tour sold.

Once these costs have been calculated, the next step is to add a reasonable amount to ensure the tour is profitable. The final process is to build in a distribution fee, should you decide to work with a third-party seller such as a travel agent.

Fixed Costs

These are costs that remain the same no matter how many people are on the tour. Examples of fixed costs include:

- Tour guide salary
- Assistant to help host visitors
- Driver of shuttle bus
- Rental of community centre to offer culture activities or demonstrations are part of your tour

Variable Costs

These are costs that are based on the number of guests that are on a tour. Examples of fixed costs include:

- Bottle water for guest
- Other snacks such as granola bars or cookies
- Gift for each guest

Operating Costs

Operating costs are the costs associated with the daily operation of your business. Typically these costs include:

- Business licenses
- Membership fees (NWT Tourism, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) the local chamber of commerce, etc.)
- Insurance
- Start up equipment and supplies (maps, backpack, cooler, first aid kit, etc.)
- Marketing and promotions

When establishing a tour price, a portion of the operating costs are added to the price of the overall tour price. It is common to add 10% to the per person tour price to cover annual operating costs and between 5% - 10% for marketing expenses.



Sales Booking Adjustment

A common practice when determining your price point is to incorporate a sales booking adjustment to account for times when your tours are not fully booked. So for example you may price your tour based on four people, but sometimes you only have two people on your tour. Over the course of the season, you average 3.5 people per tour, or 87.5% capacity. As you will not know your average bookings in your first year of operation, it is common to adjust your sales booking by 85%.

Adding Profit

Once all costs are determined, add a reasonable amount of profit. A good starting point is to add 10% profit to the per-person price of each tour to see what the final price is. Once this is done, it will be important to look at what is being charged for similar experiences in the territory/region and consider adjusting the price so that it remains competitive.

Establish Specialty Rates

In addition to the regular retail rate, there are opportunities to create special rates for your clients. This could include a discounted rate for larger group sizes, or an off-season rate to try and attract visitors during the slower times.

Set Wholesale/Net Rates

If you think you may be interested in selling your walking tour through a travel agency or online booking platform, then it will be important to offer net rates to these third-party sellers. Net rates are discounted rates that travel agents and tour wholesalers receive for selling your tours to their clients. The average net rate/commission is 20%.

Sample Worksheet

Below is a sample pricing worksheet that uses the Gameti community walking tour that was used earlier in the document. A blank worksheet is included at the end of this document.

Sample Price Calculation Lots to See in Gameti: Community Walking Tour			
Calculation 1: Fixed Costs (A)			
Activity/Service	Cost per Trip	# of Spaces on Tour	Total Cost per Person
Tour Guide Salary	\$ 120	4	\$ 30.00
Hire Elder to Give Tour of Farm	\$ 50	4	\$ 12.50
Assistant to help out during tour (this would only be for groups of 8 + people)	\$ 60		\$ 0.00
Total Packaged Fixed Cost	\$ 740		A \$ 42.50

Calculation 2: Variable Costs (B)	
Activity/Service	Total Cost per Person
Bottle of Water	\$ 3.00
Snacks (granola bar, cookies)	\$ 5.00
Parting Gift	\$20.00
Total Variable Cost	B \$ 28.00

Calculation 3: Add Fixed and Variable Costs (C)	
Total Fixed and Variable Costs (A + B)	C \$ 70.50
Calculation 4: Allocate % of Overhead Expenses to Package (D)	

Allocation of Operating Expenses (Multiply C x 10%)	\$ 7.05
Allocation of Marketing Expenses (Multiply C x 7.5%)	\$ 5.29
Total Allocated Overhead Expenses	D \$ 12.84

Sample Price Calculation
Lots to See in Gameti: Community Walking Tour

Calculation 5: Total Package Cost Per Person (E)

Total Package Cost Per Person (C + D)

E \$ 82.84

Calculation 6: Sales Booking Adjustment (F)

Divide by realistic sales bookings (Divide E by 85%)

F \$ 97.46

Calculation 7: Add the Appropriate Amount of Profit (G)

Add desired profit (multiply F and % of profit 10%)

G \$ 9.75

Calculation 8: Total Cost per Package, Including Profit (H)

***Total Cost per Package Including Profit (Add F + G)**

H \$ 107.25

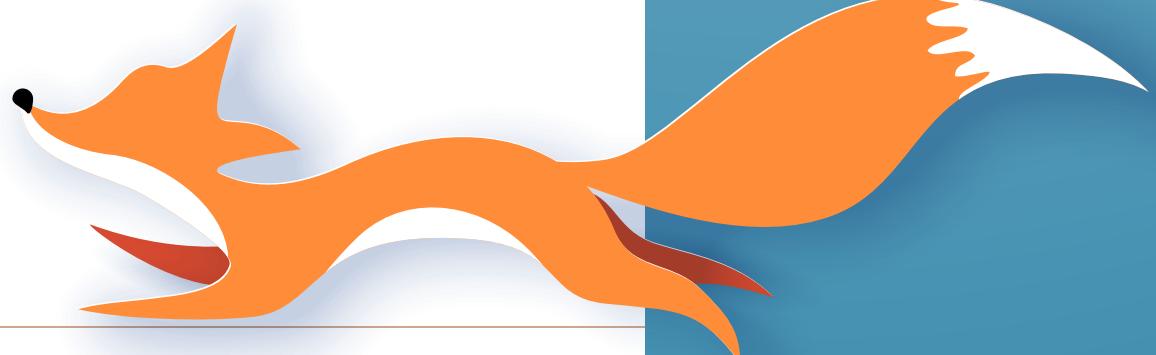
Calculation 9: Adjust price for various customer types

***Low season rate (H - 15%)**

H (1) \$ 91.12

***Group Booking Discount (H - 10%)**

H (2) \$ 96.48





SECTION FIVE:

Promoting Your Community Walking Tour

Once you have your tour developed and priced for a retail market, you will need to start promoting it so that people are aware of your tours. This will take place in two stages. The first stage will be to develop your promotional material and the second stage will be to use these promotional materials to advertise your business.

Promotional Materials

There are a variety of promotional materials you may want to consider developing to help promote your business. Some of the most popular ones include:

- A website
- Social media platforms
- Display ads
- Brochures or flat sheets

Websites

Websites are an excellent way to share information about your business. They provide the consumer with a sense of security in knowing that you are a valid company, they can act as an information hub for your advertising activities and they can facilitate bookings. On the downside, they can be a significant expense for start-up companies.

Social Media

Social media platforms are excellent ways to promote your tours to potential customers and to engage in meaningful dialogue with them. The social media platforms you choose to be active on will be determined by who you anticipate your customers to be. Facebook and Instagram skew to a slightly older audience, whereas TikTok typically has a younger audience. Having an account on Tripadvisor will also be important as this platform has proven very effective in generating tour booking for a large number of local tour operators.

While social media is a more cost-effective way to engage with your potential clients than traditional forms of advertising a great deal of your time can be spent on this platform. Fortunately, there are a number of content development and scheduling tools such as Canva and Later.com that can help you streamline this process.

Display Ads

Display ads and ad templates that you can use when you purchase ad space. These are typically produced by a marketing agency with a design specialist. Ads can be designed in both digital and print formats. Having them on hand is beneficial as they are ready to go and can typically be resized to fit the specifications of any ad space you wish to purchase.

Brochures or Flat Sheets

Brochures are another great way to promote your tours. They can be printed and displayed at a local visitor centre or other areas of town that visitors frequent such as hotels or the community store. They can also be sent by post or email to potential clients looking for more information. Flat sheets are similar to brochures but are designed as either a one or two-page spread on 8.5" x 11" paper. The advantage of Flat sheets is that they can easily be printed on a home printer. Local airlines (Northwestern Airlease, Summit Air, Air Tindi and Simpson Air) are great places to advertise your tours.

Sample Worksheet

Below is a sample worksheet that was produced to market the community walking tour. A blank worksheet is included at the end of this document.

Feature Tour: Lots to See in Gamètì: Community Walking Tour	
	
<p>Starting at \$108.00 per person Plus GST</p> <p>To book tour please contact</p> <p>JD Tours</p> <p>Phone (867) 997-0000 Email: info@jdtours.com</p> <p>For more information visit our website at www.jdtours.com</p>	<p>Join up for an authentic tour of Gameti. Learn about the rich history and culture of the Tł'chǫ people and how the community was established. Visit a working farm and learn about daily life in our remote community as you take in the beautiful scenery of Rae Lakes and the surrounding wilderness. Stop at our local craft store to purchase some authentic locally made crafts as a reminder of your visit.</p> <p>Activity Highlights</p> <p>Guides community walking tour Visit a working community farm</p> <p>Price Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Community Tour» Bottled Water» Snacks» Welcome gift <p>Price Does Not Include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Gratuity and Taxes



Advertising

Advertising will play a key role in helping to build awareness and generate sales. As a general rule, digital advertising is more effective than print advertising and is typically used to attract visitors to your community. Digital advertising can include boosted social media posts, display ads, and search engine marketing (SEM). SEM involves paying for key words so that your company website shows up near the top of their internet search. This is only relevant if you have a website and if your website has been set up to showcase these key words in your content. Print advertising is more effective in attracting guests once they are already in the community.

There are a number of excellent free or low-cost marketing opportunities that you can participate in such as through NWT Tourism or Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC). In addition to the complimentary listings on their website, NWT Tourism also offers cooperative marketing programs that provide opportunities to participate in a variety of marketing activities at a reduced rate.

It is recommended that you become a member of both associations so that you can take advantage of these free and low-cost advertising opportunities. The associated fee's for becoming a member of either NWTT or ITAC can be found at:

www.members.spectacularnwt.com/members/purchase-membership

www.indigenoustourism.ca/membership/

SECTION SIX:

Strategies for Success

When developing your community walking tour there are a number of strategies to keep in mind:

- **Practice makes perfect**

There is a common saying that is widely used in the tourism industry that you never get a second chance to make a first impression. Keeping this in mind, you will want to try out your tours on family members and friends before you offer the tours to paying customers. This will allow you to address any unforeseen issues and to perfect all aspects of your tour before your first paying customer shows up. If there is any opportunity to do so, it is also a great idea to invite staff from NWT Tourism to come out to experience your tour. They will be able to provide constructive feedback on what the market is looking for and how you may want to adjust your tours to make them more successful.

- **Start small and expand later**

It is better to develop your walking tour using existing resources and infrastructure rather than investing a lot of money on equipment and having a large debt before you even begin to host visitors. As your tours become more successful there will be opportunities to buy new equipment, create new tours and offer new products.

- **Work with existing products and reliable people**

When selecting activities to add to your tour, it is best to select activities that you have experienced yourself and that you know the people providing these services are reliable. It is important to remember that it is your reputation on the line if things do not go as planned on your tour.

- **Ask for help when you need it**

Setting up and running your own business is no simple task. Thankfully there are a number of resources that can help you to succeed. Take the initiative to ask for help and get to know the various resources that are available to assist you. The following section outlines the number of resources you can access.



SECTION SEVEN:

Resources

As you read through this manual, you will notice that there is a lot of work involved in developing your community walking tour. The good news is that there are a number of supports that you can access to make the job easier and to ensure that you are getting the help you need, including:

This section of the document down into the following categories:

- Funding Support
- Product Development
- Training
- Business Development
- Marketing
- Market Research



Funding Support

There are a number of agencies that provide funding that can be accessed to support tourism development and marketing for communities and tourism businesses:

Government of the Northwest Territories: Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI)

- **Tourism Product Diversification and Marketing Program**
www.iti.gov.nt.ca/en/TPDMP
- **BDIC or MDDF for small loans**
- **Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development (SEED)**

To find out how SEED can support you, including capital expansions and sector research, go to:

www.iti.gov.nt.ca/en/services/support-entrepreneurs-and-economic-development-seed

Application form: www.iti.gov.nt.ca/sites/iti/files/seed_application_nwt8999.pdf



Product Development

The GNWT has developed a number of information resources that communities and local enterprises can use as a guide for developing tourism products and packages.



Training

The GNWT offers the following tourism training resources:

- NorthernMost Host
 - This program is a two-day customer service workshop designed to prepare participants to welcome visitors in their community.
 - Workshop content includes, customers' expectations, effective communication, dealing with challenging customers and the importance of being ambassadors in the community.

Link to program brochure (English version on second page):

www.iti.gov.nt.ca/sites/iti/files/iti_northermosthost_brochure_final.pdf

- Tourism Training Fund (TTF): www.iti.gov.nt.ca/en/TTF
 - This fund is designed to fund short-term opportunities for people working in the tourism sector to gain new skills and assist tourism operators in the NWT to support and encourage a well-trained tourism labour force.
 - One application per applicant per year

Contact your regional ITI office for more information.



Business Development

The GNWT and the Government of Canada offer a number of business development support services to new and existing businesses that may be of use as you develop your community walking tour business.

Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation (BDIC)

- BDIC supports the economic objectives of the GNWT through
 - Providing information and financial assistance to businesses
 - Making investments in business enterprises
 - Providing access to resources such as business plan templates and financial forecasting templates

For more information visit their website: www.bdic.ca/

Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)

- BDC is a financial institution devoted to Canadian entrepreneurs
 - BDC support provides access to financing, access to working capital and advisory services to support business development

For more information visit their website: www.bdc.ca/en



Marketing



The following organizations provide free and reduced cost marketing opportunities for their members:

Northwest Territories Tourism (NWTT)

- NWT Tourism provides the following marketing benefits to their members
 - Free listing on the www.spectacularnwt.com website (members can upload photos and edit their own listings)
 - Members of NWTT can list three free packages on the website per fiscal year
 - Reduced cost to participate in consumer shows that NWTT attends
 - Members can save up to 35% when they buy NWTT co-op ads (available in both print and web)

For more information contact NWTT

Business Events and Partnerships Specialist

Email: info@spectacularnwt.com **Phone:** (867) 873-5007

Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC)

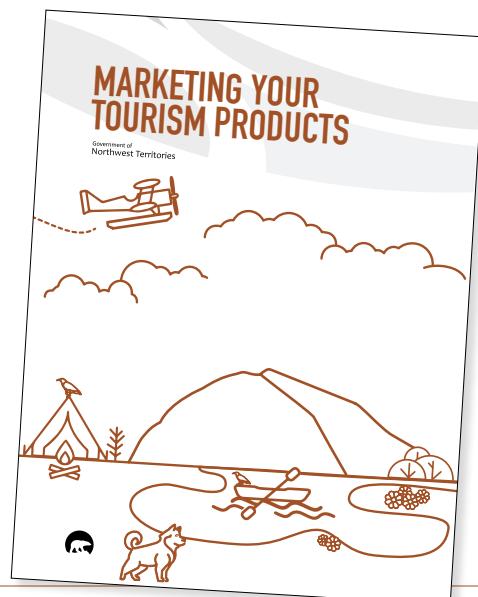
- ITAC provides the following marketing benefits to their members
 - Complimentary business listing on their consumer website <https://destinationindigenous.ca/>
 - Reduced rate to participate in trade shows
 - Access to marketing and sales programs that the association undertakes to promote Indigenous tourism

For more information contact ITAC Industry Coordinator

Email: industry@indigenoustourism.ca **Phone:** (604) 351-1028

GNWT Industry Tourism and Investment (ITI)

- ITI produces a manual that provides information and tips for marketing your tourism business





Market Research

The following organizations are excellent resources to access the latest market research and industry insights

Destination Canada (DC)

- The DC website provides detailed market research in the following areas
 - Canadian visitation statistics (broken down by international markets)
 - Sector specific research on culinary travel, Indigenous tourism and millennial travel
 - Market profiles for each of the international markets in which DC is active (Canada, USA, Mexico, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Japan, China, South Korea and India)
 - Consumer based intelligence on specific markets (Global Tourism Watch)
 - Market Highlights
 - Covid-19 Tourism related research

For a more in-depth look at their research documents, please visit the DC corporate website

www.destinationcanada.com/en

GNWT

- The GNWT produced an annual report on visitors to the NWT, broken down by sector type (Aurora viewing, fishing, touring, hunting, outdoor adventure, visiting friends and relatives, and business travel)
- The GNWT also reports on the number of annual visitors received at each of the territorial parks and campgrounds

For more information visit the ITI website and look at the Tourism Publications sections

www.iti.gov.nt.ca/en/publications?f%5B0%5D=field_document_category%3A46

Northwest Territories Tourism

- Each year NWT Tourism produces an annual marketing plan that provides excellent information on visitor statistics and market trends

To review a copy of their most recent marketing plan go to:

www.members.spectacularnwt.com/resources/marketing-plan

SECTION EIGHT:

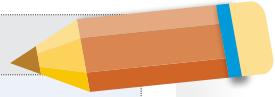
Worksheets

The following worksheets can help you establish the important information and pricing details of your tour.

Exercise One

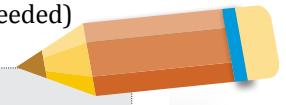
Using the table below, compile an inventory of attractions and points of interest that you would like to include in your community walking tour.

List of Community Attractions	
Historical highlights » » » » »	Cultural highlights » » » » »
Scenic location / viewpoints » » » » »	Unique buildings in the community » » » » »
Places to stop and have a coffee/snack » » » » »	Other points of interest » » » » »
Places to buy local art » » » » »	Attractions you can create for the tour » » » » »



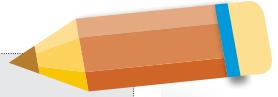
Exercise Two

Following the example on page 14, compile an inventory of attractions, points of interest that you would like to include in your community walking tour and indicate the time of each stop. (Add more lines if needed)

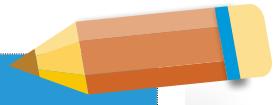


Exercise Three

Following the examples on pages 21 and 22, establish a retail price for your community walking tour. (Add more lines for fixed and variable costs if needed).



Price Calculation Worksheet			
Name of Tour:			
Calculation 1: Fixed Costs (A)			
Activity/Service	Cost per Trip	# of Spaces on Tour	Total Cost per Person
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
Total Packaged Fixed Cost	\$		A \$
Calculation 2: Variable Costs (B)			
Activity/Service	Total Cost per Person		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
Total Variable Cost		B \$	
Calculation 3: Add Fixed and Variable Costs (C)			
Total Fixed and Variable Costs (A + B)		C \$	
Calculation 4: Allocate % of Overhead Expenses to Package (D)			
Allocation of Operating Expenses (Multiply C x 10%)		\$	
Allocation of Marketing Expenses (Multiply C x 7.5%)		\$	
Total Allocated Overhead Expenses		D \$	



Calculation 5: Total Package Cost Per Person (E)	
Total Package Cost Per Person (C + D)	E \$
Calculation 6: Sales Booking Adjustment (F)	
Divide by realistic sales bookings (Divide E by 85%)	F \$
Calculation 7: Add the Appropriate Amount of Profit (G)	
Add desired profit (multiply F and % of profit 10%)	G \$
Calculation 8: Total Cost per Package, Including Profit (H)	
*Total Cost per Package Including Profit (Add F + G)	H \$
Calculation 9: Adjust price for various customer types	
*Low season rate (H - 15%)	H(1) \$
*Group Booking Discount (H - 10%)	H(2) \$

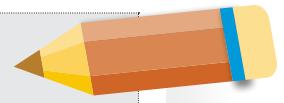
IMPORTANT NOTE

If you decide you would like to sell your tour through a travel agency, they will require a typical commission of 20% off the retail rate. Many tour operators decide to build this in a part of their tour package priced.

Exercise Four

Fill out the following worksheet as a way to promote your community walking tour.

Feature Tour: Add name here



Add Photo(s) here

Starting at
\$ _____ **per person**

Plus GST

To book tour please contact

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Website/Social Media

Description of Tour

Activity Highlights

Price Includes

Price Does Not Include

