

## **Comox Valley Economic Development and Tourism (CVEDS) Q4 2019 – Strategic Priorities Report Summary Highlights**

### **Innovate 2030 Economic Development Master Plan Process**

A presentation of the Innovate 2030 Economic Development Master Plan was provided on November 26 to the CV Regional District Committee of the Whole. Over 30 members of the Innovate 2030 Advisory Committee and community stakeholders were in attendance for the presentation, provided by the consulting team including Paul Blais, MDB Insight, Ruth and Keith Salmon, Salmon Communications, as well as Graham Truax, Innovation Island Technology Association. Next steps in the process include establishing a referral process and then submission of a final document to the CVRD.

### **Business, Banter & Beers Meet-up Series**

The inaugural small business Meet-up Series was hosted in partnership with the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce in the rural areas of Saratoga Beach and Union Bay, as well as Puntledge business area in Courtenay. The objective of the series is to provide a venue for businesses to explore challenges and opportunities within their areas, as well as provide direct feedback into the Innovate 2030 Economic Development Master Plan and CVEDS Work Plan. Additional small business support meetings were held in the quarter with Courtenay hoteliers, the Downtown Courtenay BIA and Comox BIA to finalize 2020 Memorandum of Understandings, Courtenay hoteliers, and in the case of Comox, explore Dock Days expansion with harbour, marina and downtown businesses.

### **Business Counts Fall Workshop Series Development**

Small Business Month occurs during the quarter and CVEDS developed a series of Lunch & Learn Workshops, as well as a Tourism Industry Mini-Conference, for local business owners, managers, and staff to access professional skills and business development, and networking opportunities. Over 80 participants attended the various Lunch and Learn sessions, while the Tourism Mini Conference featured 10 partner booths and attracted ~80 tourism industry businesses.

### **Destination Marketing Grant Applications and Collaborations**

This quarter saw the development of annual tourism and destination marketing planning documents and grant applications. The September Destination Marketing Advisory Committee meeting hosted numerous partners and stakeholder groups to evaluate and provide input into the development of the 2020/21 DBC Cooperative Marketing Partnerships Program applications, the DBC Sector Collaborations, as well as the Courtenay MRDT 1 Year Tactical Plan (2020). Additional input was collected via the attendees at the Tourism Mini-Conference, and surveys via DMAC and MRDT properties. DBC also provided a presentation to Courtenay MRDT properties on MRDT program updates and best practices relative to the 3% hotel tax framework.

### **Small Business, Industry and Consumer Communications**

The following communications and outreach has been provided YTD to support small business & industry sectors, and consumer engagement & visitation to the region. This content, plus other regional businesses and industry success stories have been shared via CVEDS various social media channels:

- 41 Discover Comox Valley - Consumer e-Blasts
- 9 Business Counts - Regional Stats and Upcoming Events e-News
- 8 Tourism Industry e-News
- 17 BC Seafood Expo e-Blasts
- 7%+ in Social Media Followers

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