

Comox Valley Economic Development and Tourism *Q1 2018 – Strategic Priorities Report Summary Highlights*

KEY FOCUS AREA; Business Retention and Enhancement

Export Navigator Program

Export Navigator Program contract renewal was completed with the Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology. Staff also participated in Export Navigator Update & CASL Training and Referral Process webinars during the quarter. Participated in the “New Exporter Mission to Seattle” in partnership with the Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology which included export navigator program clients.

Online Tech Database Tool development

Application to the Invest Canada-Communities Initiatives Program was approved for funding in the amount of \$12,500. The objective of this initiative is to highlight businesses in the Tech Sector and profile them and our community technology assets to act as a gateway for lead generation and FDI attraction that will enable the Comox Valley to position itself for company relocation and FDI.

Seminar Series with partners in key small business sectors

Partnered with the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce and MNP to host an Economic Forecasting event which featured panel presentations from CMHC, BDC, and MNP. Also, partnered with the Comox BIA as part of our MOU to host a Business Succession Planning Workshop on Tuesday April 10, 2018 featuring presentations from MNP’s Wendy Lewis and Karen Guinan.

KEY FOCUS AREA; Investment Attraction and Promotion

BC Seafood Festival, Expo and Buyers Mission

After 12 years the next generation of the BC Seafood Festival (June 8-17) is being unveiled in 2018. Led by CVEDS, in collaboration with seafood producers and associations, as well as tourism and culinary event partners, the Festival’s Signature Weekend (June 15-17) is expanding to three days, with new events, a record breaking number of local, domestic and for the first time, international Chefs, as well as exciting new competitions. Select limited ticket releases commenced in the latter part of March, and excellent new and returning sponsors have been secured to support the costs of what is now the largest seafood festival in Western Canada. The BC Seafood Expo has secured over 1/3 of targeted trade show booths to date, and are finalizing a robust industry training and development program in collaboration with several provincial-level seafood industry associations.

Toll Free 1.877.848.2427
Tel 250.334.2427
Fax 250.334.2414

investcomoxvalley.com

Destination Marketing

Awesome All Winter / WinterFest Campaign was extended to run January 11 to mid-March to motivate visitation to the region, during the slower shoulder season, for winter ski and après ski experiences. CVEDS collaborated with the Courtenay and Comox BIA's and numerous businesses and groups including Mount Washington Alpine Resort, Tourism Mount Washington, Pacific Coastal Airlines, local entertainment & food/beverage venues, 40 Knots Winery, Comox Valley Exhibition and Courtenay hoteliers to develop an extensive event calendar (50), featuring new events, and market Ski & Stay and Après & Stay Packages to Vancouver Island and lower mainland residents. Preliminary marketing results demonstrated success including online contest entries over 10k contest entries were received, over 3000 new signups for Discover Comox Valley e-Blasts were received. MRDT impacts and ski lift ticket sales reporting will be forthcoming in Q2.

CVEDS developed its 2018/19 Destination BC Cooperative Marketing Collaboration application with four distinct marketing and sales campaigns including the Seafood Festival, Marine and Outdoor Campaign, Culinary Campaign and its Winter Campaign; a public announcement on funding confirmations is expected in April. Further CVEDS agreed to collaborate with the Central North Island Mountain Bike Consortium Sector Application and includes Campbell River, Nanaimo, Mount Washington and Cumberland.

CVEDS also supported tour development and hosting of 19 domestic and international receptive tour operators in February via Tourism VI's Explore event. Comox Valley attractions and amenities were showcased in the tour including Mount Washington, Comox Valley Airport, local beverage producers and restaurants, downtown cores, as well as marine adventure experiences.

Inbound and Outbound Trade and Investment Delegation Support

Hosted the Province of BC Trade and Investment representatives and Managing Directors from Europe, USA, North & East China and the Philippines. Their visit featured a networking event and tour at Wayward Distillation House with Export Navigator Program clients, a roundtable with economic development practitioners on services and investment opportunities, as well as a meeting the KFN Economic Development Corporation Board regarding Foreign Direct Investment.

KEY FOCUS AREA; Economic Development Facilitation

VI Community Consortium Initiative for Regional Tech Attraction

An application for a Regional Technology Attraction Strategy to the Invest Canada-Communities Initiatives program was approved for funding. Project scope and request for proposal are currently being developed with the project committee established by the Vancouver Island and Coast Economic Developers Association.

KEY FOCUS AREA; Communications

Delivery of timely, relevant & engaging industry, tourism, business content via digital & traditional media

In Q1, E-newsletter activity continued with distribution of Tourism industry and Business Counts distribution, as well as several Discover Comox Valley Consumer E-Blasts promoting winter experiences. Social media account followers and likes continued to grow across all platforms.