

Tom Yates

Subject: FW: DBC CoOp Funding UPDATE

On Oct 11, 2018, at 4:01 PM, Kirsten Soder <kirsten@destinationthink.com> wrote:

Good afternoon - I hope this note finds you all well. Nice to e-meet you Mayor Taylor, we haven't had the pleasure to meet in person but I hope to fix that soon.

Forgive the length of this email but I wanted to provide a mid-year check in to report back to you, the community partners, who supported Destination Campbell River in leveraging Destination BC CoOp Marketing Program funds so we could roll out a regional marketing campaign in 2018/19 we've been referring to as "#MeetOurNeighbours". This has manifested itself into an enhanced community landing page for each of your communities, accessed through a regional "Meet our Neighbours" page at www.campbellriver.travel/region and we are rotating feature content from Tahsis, Gold River, Sayward and Zeballos on a monthly(ish) basis on the website. We augment this with paid social media promotions every week using #meetourneighbours (only on your posts - not the Areas who did not support the application.) These posts feature compelling, engaging content that aligns well with the Campbell River brand story - often this content includes road trip ideas, day drives and must-see spots. As part of our monthly social media report to the City of Campbell River, we've also started referencing the top-performing social media post from your communities to assist in the preparation of the Annual Report I will need to provide to each of you, and Destination BC in spring 2019. And of course, we've highlighted each community in our printed Discovery Guide too.

We're really pleased with how the program is going, it had a bit of a slow start finding fresh content on social media to feature, but we invested over \$10,000 in a software program called Crowdriff that allows us to discover content that has been 'geotagged' by location, and this has helped immensely in finding content from the partner communities. While our original course of action was to rely on businesses and residents in your communities, we've actually had more success featuring visitor photos and videos! (In the destination marketing world, this is great news!) These are generating really neat testimonial-style comments and stunning photos that we will continue to use to promote the region going forward, and are garnering a lot of social media engagements (likes, comments, shares). You'll also read in the attached report about some of the challenges we've encountered and ways we'd like to improve the remainder of this year's project. At the next partner meeting, I will request a renewed commitment by the political representatives via the appointment of a new contact person in each community specifically to assist with content generation for the remainder of the project.

You may recall we set up a preferred stakeholder model in late 2017 meant to increase 2018 participation from tourism businesses and organizations in Sayward, Gold River, Tahsis and Zeballos, offering incentives and discounts the way we would for Campbell River-based businesses, in an effort to highlight the investment support each of the municipalities provided to the project. We have secured a handful of these stakeholders (Air Nootka, Sayward Community Recreation Association, Sayward Futures Society, Straits Cafe, Nootka Marine Adventures, and Strathcona Park Lodge, all of whom are actively participating in workshops and programs) but I would be looking to grow this if we are to expand the regional program. If there are ANY tourism businesses in your community that you can convince to [register as stakeholders](#), that is extremely helpful.

Please find the mid-year report I recently submitted to Destination BC attached, and also a spreadsheet with live links where you can see some of the types of content and frequency in which we're featuring the regional content. **You can likely expect to receive a survey or some sort of request for feedback about how you each feel like the partnership is going, so please feel free to reach out and ask questions or gain clarification if you need anything.**

Next steps:

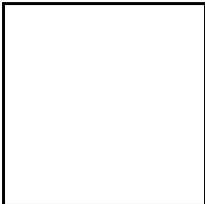
There is an opportunity to apply for the 2019/20 program intake with a due date of November 30th. Destination Campbell River has planned for a \$100,000+ spring campaign, which we are early enough in the planning stages to make a regional one if we choose to apply for the leveraged funding again. I'd personally be very interested to know if you have any feedback about this partnership to date, and what the appetite is to support another regional application in future - specifically tied to a seasonal campaign or remaining as part of our regional overarching always-on efforts. I would also like to revisit the original goal to grow this to other areas in the SRD, but I understand I may need to approach private partners to achieve this in certain areas of the region. The application and reporting process itself is quite onerous, so I will only explore it again if all the partners are in support.

I understand it is election time, and you are all very busy. The November 30 deadline is firm, so I would appreciate some preliminary feedback now, and would like the opportunity to meet with either the entire SRD or the Municipal Services Committee in early November if at all possible. As was the case last year, I just need commitment in principle to the application, and the investment would come later when the funding agreement is prepared (February 2019). I hope you can all agree that the \$500 investment was well worth the \$60,000 value we've invested in the project to date!

Thank you for taking the time to read this update, and peruse the attached materials. **I look forward to hearing back from you before October 22 if at all possible.**

Thank you,

Kirsten Soder
Executive Director
Destination Campbell River
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<MeetOurNeighbours Content Schedule.xlsx>

<DBC Provincial Coop Marketing Program - CR Interim Report FY1819 FINAL.docx>