

June 5, 2017

***MOBILE VISITOR CENTRE WILL BRING TOURIST INFO TO LAKE COWICHAN EVENTS***

COURTENAY – Bringing tourists to a community’s visitor centre is good, but bringing the visitor info centre to the tourists is even better!

The Cowichan Lake District Chamber of Commerce is embarking on a unique project to create a ‘Mobile Visitor Service Unit’ - a self-contained kiosk that can be deployed to the many events and activities around the region, providing information about the amenities and hospitality options in the area.

The Island Coastal Economic Trust is supporting this project with one-third of the \$90,000 cost. The mobile visitor centre will supplement the services that are available at the visitor information centre in town and capitalize on the tens of thousands of new visitors that the new major outdoor concert venue is attracting to the region.

“This is an innovative project that shows the value in thinking “outside the box” when it comes to economic development in small communities,” said Phil Kent, ICET Chair. “By enabling valuable face-to-face conversations with visitors in strategic locations, the mobile centre presents a great opportunity to promote the region to a wider audience.”

The unit will consist of a trailer, wrapped in customized graphics, and an interior built to hold display materials, info stations, and more. The mobile unit will feature mobile technology to showcase local and regional attractions and will be stocked full of the usual information that visitors expect to find at a visitor information centre, including visitor guides and region maps.

“Our visitor centre had more than 42,000 people come through last year, but we know that at least 50,000 more people were in the area for events,” said Jim Humphrey, President of the Chamber of Commerce. “From Sunfest, Youbou Regatta, sporting events, and more, these are major attractors for visitors, and this new mobile kiosk will allow us to interact with those people directly, supporting our tourism industry.”

The project will strengthen the tourism sector by increasing visitor stays and increasing revenues for local businesses, as well as increasing business opportunities for local hospitality and tourism providers.

The mobile unit is expected to make its debut on July 1, 2017.

## **About the Island Coastal Economic Trust**

Created by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust is celebrating its tenth year of investment in economic diversification, planning and regional revitalization.

ICET is independently governed by a Board of Directors and two Regional Advisory Committees which include more than 50 locally elected officials, MLAs and appointees from the Island and Coast. This exceptional team of leaders collaborate to set regional priorities and build vital multi-regional networks.

Through a community-centered decision-making process, ICET has approved \$49 million for over 170 economic infrastructure and economic development readiness projects. ICET investments have leveraged over \$270 million in investment into the region creating more than 2500 construction phase jobs and 2600 long term permanent jobs.

A full overview of ICET can be found at [www.islandcoastaltrust.ca](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca).

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