



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***TOURISM VANCOUVER ISLAND TO DEVELOP NEW TOURISM INVESTMENT ATTRACTION TOOLS***

COURTENAY – Tourism’s positive impact on the economy is evolving, and that means the tools that support the industry must keep pace with change. A new project, supported by the Island Coastal Economic Trust, will help Tourism Vancouver Island (TVI) as they create new web-based and social media investment attraction tools.

“Over the past few years, people, communities, and companies in the Island and Sunshine Coast regions have been at the forefront of emerging trends in tourism, including Aboriginal and cultural tourism,” said ICET Chair Phil Kent. “By helping Tourism Vancouver Island create new materials to support stakeholders and partners, we can ensure that local communities are maximizing and benefitting from the opportunities created by increasing tourism.”

The project includes a repurposing of the TVI Value of Tourism website, with a focus on creating new content to support new business attraction and sustainable tourism-related community and business development practices. This will include an investment attraction portal with information about tourism investment opportunities and the key industry data required by potential investors. New materials will also include business and community development information designed to highlight best practices and address some of the Industry’s key challenges.

“Tourism continues to be a strong contributor to the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast areas, but there are even greater opportunities through providing tools that support investment, workforce and resident attraction,” said Dave Petryk, President and CEO of Tourism Vancouver Island. “After all, most of us came to this area as tourists first.”

Along with the incremental web presence, this project will create new social media tools and workshops, highlighting new trends and best practice approaches to collaboration between tourism businesses, residents, and the broader community. TVI plans to deliver more than 15 workshops over the coming year, to audiences including First Nations, young professionals, local governments, as well as resident and tourism stakeholders.

This initiative is being supported through ICET’s Economic Development Readiness Program - Investment Attraction Tools stream. The program is designed to build community economic development capacity through a wide range of supports. Specifically, the Investment Attraction Tools stream provides up to \$30,000 to eligible applicants to support and accelerate targeted attraction of new investment to the region.

The project is expected to begin in fall of 2017, with completion anticipated by spring of 2018.

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

Created by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust has been at the forefront of economic diversification, planning and regional revitalization for the past eleven years.

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-centred decision-making process, ICET has approved almost \$50 million in funding for over 170 economic infrastructure and economic development readiness projects. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new 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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