



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 12, 2023

**“Team Nanaimo” Signs Memorandum of Understanding**

*More than \$3M in confirmed meetings and business events secured for Nanaimo*

(Nanaimo, BC): Tourism Nanaimo leads destination sales for the City of Nanaimo, working in close partnership with the Vancouver Island Conference Centre and Nanaimo Hospitality Association as “Team Nanaimo”. On Wednesday, July 12, 2023, the organizations formally signed a memorandum of understanding.

Tourism Nanaimo was formally (re)established as a non-profit society in April 2022, developing key funding agreements with the Nanaimo Hospitality Association, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, the City of Nanaimo and other partners to bring major events and conferences to the community. A strategic approach to destination sales for meetings, business events and sport tourism was missing.

Spring 2022 saw the parties establish “Team Nanaimo” as a pilot project, and have been working within a draft MOU framework for the last year. Highlights include a dedicated destination sales team, booking parameters ensuring space is allocated effectively, and a commitment to working in collaboration.

In May 2022 Tourism Nanaimo implemented a destination sales focus and has since secured more than \$3M in conferences and business events with another \$3M pending. These events will take place from 2023 – 2027, and Nanaimo is in the rotation for regional events, an exceptional return on investment in just one year. Major sporting events like the BC 55+ Games and PlayOn Canada are in addition to these figures, with several other sport event bids in development.

The Vancouver Island Conference Centre and Nanaimo Hospitality Association also serve on the Tourism Nanaimo Board and Meetings & Events Advisory Committee.

**Quotes:**

**Ian Simpson – Chair, Tourism Nanaimo Society**

“Tourism Nanaimo are thrilled to finalize this Memorandum of Understanding together with our partners. With dedicated sales efforts, we are seeing a significant return on investment and a strategic approach to securing new business. We have a solid plan to put Nanaimo on the map for meetings and events while ensuring our collective destination marketing efforts are aligned.”

**Dave Ilyn – Chair, Nanaimo Hospitality Association**

“The NHA believes in a strong destination sales strategy and this MOU helps bring that to fruition. It is critical the accommodation sector and destination marketing efforts are in alignment to drive visitation to Nanaimo.”

**Chuck Loewen – General Manager, Vancouver Island Conference Centre**

"This agreement is a tremendous step forward for Nanaimo. Together we are attracting new business events to our community that will have a long-lasting, positive impact on the City. The Conference Centre is proud to be part of "Team Nanaimo."

**About Tourism Nanaimo**

Tourism Nanaimo is a destination management organization whose passion is to promote Nanaimo as a great place to live, work, play, and stay! The organisation dedicates itself to sharing all the amazing places Nanaimo has to explore, from restaurants to farms and museums to parks and trails, telling stories about the history of the community, how to meet the locals (mammals or humans) and, of course, where to find the city's famous Nanaimo Bars!

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