



## Council of Tourism Associations

VOICE OF THE BC TOURISM INDUSTRY

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### COTA COUNCIL MEETING

On Wednesday, September 2 nearly 80 tourism industry leaders that make up the COTA Council convened in Vancouver. The meeting advanced four resolutions that focused and strengthened industry's response to recent announcements made by the Government of British Columbia.

The meeting established a consensus direction for COTA and its members in the following areas:

- The dissolution of Tourism BC,
- Harmonized Sales Tax (HST),
- 2010 Tourism Industry Conference,
- Community DMO system.

These resolutions will be communicated to government, the industry, and other stakeholder groups in order to clarify and strengthen the industry's positions going forward.

Additionally there was support for honouring the contributions of Rod Harris, former President and CEO of Tourism BC, as well as an interest in exploring how the recent announcement of \$39 million can be most effectively applied to support tourism marketing plans around the Olympics.

COTA will provide further information on the status of these critical files in subsequent Member Updates.

### Resolutions

#### **RESOLUTION: Tourism BC Dissolution**

##### Preamble

Whereas Tourism British Columbia was a recognized world leader in tourism destination development, planning, and marketing.

Whereas Tourism British Columbia's governance was considered a best practice in its constitution as a formula-funded, performance-based, independent agency guided by a private sector board of directors.

Whereas the B.C. tourism industry and government jointly support the effective and efficient use of marketing dollars, as well as alignment of government and industry objectives for tourism development and marketing.

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Council of Tourism Associations  
1208-409 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC, V6C 1T2, T: (604) 685-5956 F: (604) 685-5915

Motion

The COTA Council therefore recommends:

That the Province and COTA seek to establish a governance framework that meets government's needs of enhanced alignment and effectiveness, while meeting industry's desire to have predictable and performance-based funding, as well as the relative independence to make sound business decisions.

That COTA work with the Province to ensure that a marketing organization be established that meets the mutual needs of industry and government by no later than April 2010, including the incorporation of two key principles: an autonomous, industry-led governance model independent of political interference that operates on sound business principles, with formula-funding that enables long-term strategic planning over a multiple year long term planning horizon.

That COTA take on an enhanced role on behalf of the broader tourism industry in B.C. to ensure any future governance model is formally reviewed and assessed at an annual COTA Council meeting.

**RESOLUTION: Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)**

Preamble

Whereas the B.C. tourism industry will be significantly impacted by the proposed Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

Whereas the full impacts of the HST are not yet understood by government and the industry.

Whereas the Government of British Columbia in its Throne Speech of August 25, 2009 appears steadfast in its determination to implement the HST, but is willing to work with negatively impacted sectors.

Motion

The COTA Council therefore recommends:

That COTA be directed to advise the Province of B.C. on the costs and impacts of the HST on the tourism industry in a manner that is based on factual information on the scale and nature of negative impacts of the HST on the B.C. tourism industry.

That COTA be directed to negotiate meaningful mitigation based on the facts brought forward.

**RESOLUTION: Community Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) System**

Preamble

Whereas the B.C. government has extended the 2% AHRT to July 1, 2011, and will be undertaking consultations with all stakeholders, including municipalities, in the coming several months.

Whereas the funding role the 2% AHRT plays in the overall marketing system in B.C. is currently very high.

Whereas recent decisions in government have indicated to the tourism industry that uncoordinated efforts by various special interest groups significantly reduce the potential for success of the overall tourism industry.

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Motion

The COTA Council therefore recommends:

That COTA unite the entire tourism industry within the next month to discuss a strategy to develop a uniform position on the community DMO system with the goal of formulating one position to present to government in the upcoming consultations.

**RESOLUTION: 2010 Tourism Industry Conference (TIC) Support**

Preamble

Whereas the Tourism Industry Conference for 2010 will be one of the most important events of its kind for the B.C. tourism industry in recent memory, in light of drastic changes to the B.C. tourism system recently and the 2010 Games.

Whereas the dissolution of Tourism BC and fiscal restraint within the Government of BC may jeopardize sponsorship for TIC 2010 and beyond.

Whereas COTA relies on the Tourism Industry Conference as a primary source of revenues to independently represent the interests of the B.C. tourism industry.

Motion

The COTA Council therefore recommends:

That all members in regional, community, and sector associations, as well as individual businesses, commit to ensuring the success of TIC 2010.

That success of the conference will be dictated by the ability of the tourism industry to broadly participate in conference planning, attendance, sponsorship, and TIC alignment/concurrence of the conference with other significant industry meetings.

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