

Vol 2 Issue 2
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Welcome to the third Community Development Update e-newsletter.

In my position as Community Development Specialist, for the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, it is my role to liaise with Community Stakeholders including destination marketing/management organizations, economic development offices, visitor centres, business organizations, and local and regional government. With 90+ communities and hamlets throughout the Region, it is effective to work with an identified lead tourism organization in each Community wherever possible.

This newsletter is intended to provide general information about the activities of the Community Development department at TOTA and inform you ahead of time of initiatives that may require the support of your lead tourism organization.

Add my email to your community newsletter distribution list, I would appreciate staying current with what's happening in your community.

Please provide your comments or suggestions for the newsletter so it will be of value to you. Contact me at anytime to talk community tourism and learn how we can be of assistance!

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Community Development web link <http://www.totabc.org/trellis/commdev>

Tourism BC Online Industry Resources <http://www.jti.gov.bc.ca/industryresources/>

I hope you have had an opportunity to review and promote these industry resources to your stakeholders. There is lots of information on this site and new content is being added. TOTA features a section of this site in each of our monthly newsletters. If you would like content for your newsletter just email me and I can send copy and images ready to go! In the near future we will have these resources available for you online for easy access.

As our partners in community tourism, we encourage you to visit the site and provide any feedback/suggestions you might have. Secondly we require your assistance to share this information with your community tourism stakeholders in two ways:

- 1) Include a link to this new site on the industry portion of your community tourism website, if you have one (not the consumer section)
- 2) Include information in your newsletter/email to your stakeholders.

Community Forum Nov. 02, 2011 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. FREE EVENT OPEN TO ALL COMMUNITY LEADERS

TOTA Tourism Summit – November 2-4, 2011 <http://www.totabc.org/2011summit/>

TOTA will host the second annual Community Forum at the TOTA Summit. This session is held to present information about programs and services from Tourism BC and TOTA and for you to share information as community leaders. New this year is the *New Opportunities* segment, where communities can provide input into Tourism BC and TOTA program ideas. **This event is free and open to all community leaders by invitation only. You must RSVP by Oct. 26th if you plan to attend.** The event will be held at the Delta Sun Peaks Resort. If you wish to stay for the Opening Summit Reception the cost is \$30 plus HST. If you are a Summit Registrant there is no cost for the reception (6:00-7:30 p.m.).

Year-In-Review for Community Development at TOTA

November 2011 will mark two years for the Community Development department at TOTA and year-two of the three-year strategy. Join us at the Community Forum Nov. 02, 2011 for our annual report. For those who cannot attend a summary report will be posted on our industry website in mid-November.

TOTA Sponsors SILGA & LGMA

TOTA recognizes the important role of government in Community Tourism and we have committed to co-sponsoring both the Southern Interior Local Government Association Annual Convention and new this year, the Local Government Management Association (Thompson/Okanagan regions). As a co-sponsor we are able to network with the delegates, create awareness of Tourism BC and TOTA programs and resources and showcase examples of how we are working with communities.

TOTA Golf Tournament – Community Sponsors

The Community Development department hosted a quiz of the Unique Features of the Thompsons Okanagan at our annual golf tournament. Many quiz questions came from submissions by communities. Community donations to the prize baskets created awareness of the products from around the region. Thank you to all those communities and operators who donated, we could not have done it without you.

Community Tourism Opportunities Program

http://www.tti.gov.bc.ca/industryprograms/BuildingAndGrowingYourBusiness/Community_Tourism_Programs/CommunityTourismOpportunities.htm

Twenty-two community applicants are engaged in the CTO program this year. The TOTA region received one-quarter of the provincial program budget or \$250,100 to partner with communities resulting in half a million dollars in cooperative projects. Highlights of last year's projects will be presented during the Community Forum. The next intake for the program will be February 2012.

Community Tourism Foundations Program

http://www.tti.gov.bc.ca/industryprograms/BuildingAndGrowingYourBusiness/Community_Tourism_Programs/CommunityTourismFoundations.htm

TOTA is pleased to have Peachland and Naramata undertaking their tourism planning process through the CTF program this year. Two or three communities per year have the opportunity to have their 12-18 month tourism plans completed through stakeholder input and a full-day workshop facilitated by Tourism BC. The next intake for the program will be February 2012.

Community Development Initiatives 2011 - <http://www.totabc.org/trellis/commdev>

In order to support Communities, several initiatives are underway. TOTA is working with many communities to *pilot* projects that can be rolled out to the rest of the Region; these include: developing community profiles; recording annual tourism priorities, collecting a list of unique features, mapping projects, image bank cooperative, digital screens in Visitor Centres and ultimately, developing an online resource centre.

Initiatives Update

Community Profiles – *TOTA is compiling information for the online resource centre that will house information about each community and sub-regional area. – **Winter 2011***

TOTA's new industry website is in the final stages of re-development and will launch soon. Currently, TOTA is gathering information to create a Community Tourism Profile which includes the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation / Tourism BC program history, tourism planning history; current priorities, plans and reports; BC Stats Community profiles; Visitor Centre stats; Official Community Plans; official websites and key contacts.

Your Community Tourism Priorities – **November 2011**

*In order to develop programs and services we need to understand your needs, issues and priorities. We send a simple template asking for your 2011 and 2012 list. Information from this process is used to align communities with Tourism BC and TOTA programs and to develop new resources. This process combined with our New Opportunities segment at the Community Forum, our new annual **Community Programs Workshop** launching in spring 2012 and our current email, in-person and telephone communications provide communities ample opportunity to provide input.*

Community Unique Features Inventory – **On-going**

*This project was launched in the summer of 2010 and several communities have completed the template. **We encourage all Communities to participate in this initiative.** If you tell us your story – we can share it with others. The list of unique features by Community area will be used*

for positioning, branding, *TOTA Vacation Guide* content, media story ideas, map features, web content and regional profiling. *Information from this inventory will also be used for the Regional Tourism Strategy – so please have your community complete the template.*

Mapping Projects – Spring 2012

Regional map artwork is available for communities to use on their websites and in their print guides. A new pad map for TOTA Visitor Centres and other select locations will be launched for Spring 2012. One side will feature the TOTA Regional map with all the Visitor Centre locations and QR codes for official Community tourism websites. Side two will feature the routes and corridors between Seattle/Vancouver to Calgary, Jasper to the South and Circle tours and routes in and around the TOTA Region. Limited advertising space will be available.

Image Bank Cooperative Program – Ongoing

Cooperative funding for image bank is available through the Community Tourism Opportunities program and TOTA has partnered with Allen Jones of Ace Film Co. for still and HD B-roll for shared usage rights. Contact us for more details.

Resort TV Digital Screen in Visitor Centres – Ongoing

Cooperative funding for digital screens is available through the Community Tourism Opportunities program. TOTA has partnered with Resort TV to bring 42” digital screens and customized community and TOTA branded content for display in your visitor centre. Contact us for more details.

Resource Centre – Winter 2011-2012

The online resource centre is a key objective for TOTA. A special section for Communities will form part of TOTA’s new industry website scheduled for launch in fall 2011. The site will be built over time and access to select areas will be available to Communities to view their profiles and share information with TOTA.

The online Resource Centre will be developed as part of the new TOTA industry website and will house all information about Tourism BC and TOTA programs and services, Community profiles, newsletters, resources for Communities and communications between Community Stakeholders.

Tip Sheets – Spring 2012

Content for the tip sheets will form part of the new resource centre and will launch in the Spring of 2012. A series of tip sheets will be developed for community organizations to assist in understanding best practices for marketing communication tools.