
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Event hosting gets boost from Province

PRINCE GEORGE – Following on the success of the 2015 Canada Winter Games, the Government of British Columbia has introduced two new measures to further promote British Columbia as a world-class event hosting destination.

Coralee Oakes, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, and Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Responsible for Labour, announced today that the Province is undertaking the development of a five-year hosting strategy to support communities and organizations in making B.C. the destination of choice for sport and cultural events.

In support of the five-year strategy, Oakes also announced a \$250,000 one-time funding opportunity – EventHostBC – which encourages small events that strengthen volunteer capacity for event hosting throughout the province.

Eligible non-profits are invited to apply for up to \$5,000, awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, distributed to B.C.'s six tourism regions. The funding will provide a stimulus for new events or assist existing events that are currently ineligible for other provincial government funding.

The new five-year hosting strategy will capitalize further on the international exposure the province received during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and the success of the recent Canada Winter Games held in Prince George – both of these events resulted in positive economic benefits.

To maximize event hosting opportunities, a provincial Hosting Toolkit is being developed that will help communities and organizations attract, manage and leverage events to boost tourism revenue and support economic diversification. This toolkit will include:

- A provincewide recreation facility inventory;
- an economic impact assessment tool;
- bid package templates;
- volunteer training and management tools;
- sponsorship package templates and sponsor recruitment resources; and
- a way to document and share lessons learned.

The Government of British Columbia provides more than \$3.2 million annually toward sport event hosting, and to support arts and culture event hosting through the BC Arts Council and gaming grants.

EventHostBC grant applications and eligibility guidelines can be found online at:

http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/arts_culture/EventHostBC.htm.

Quotes:

Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development Coralee Oakes –

“British Columbia has developed a renowned reputation as a premier event-hosting destination with world-class amenities and a proven track record. We want to strengthen this position through the development of a comprehensive five-year strategy to situate the province as an international “go-to” spot for both sport and cultural events.

“EventHostBC provides a simple process, open criteria and broad access to grant funding for small scale volunteer-driven events that are at the heart of our communities. In addition to building community spirit and vitality, these events help create volunteerism and a sense of community belonging. They are important and valuable contributors to the fabric of our culture and a vibrant society.”

Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Responsible for Labour and MLA for Prince George-Valemount Shirley Bond –

“Tourism is a vital part of British Columbia’s strong, diverse and growing economy. Through the successful hosting of events such as the 2015 Canada Winter Games, we have seen first-hand the significant economic impact for our communities and province. B.C. is an ideal destination with the capacity, infrastructure and most importantly, people, to host incredible events. A five-year strategy coupled with EventHostBC funding will support communities as they plan and host unique events all across the province.”

MLA for Prince George-Mackenzie Mike Morris –

“B.C. is a beautiful province, rich with culture and unlimited experiences visitors will never forget. We have the ability to host high-calibre events, as shown by the success of the Canada Winter Games. By creating a five-year hosting strategy and providing funding to EventHostBC, we can continue to further promote and showcase B.C. as a first-rate hosting destination.”

Quick Facts:

- Currently, more than 100 sport events are hosted throughout the province each year.
- Hosting BC provides \$500,000 in annual funding to help community-sport organizations and provincial associations host competitive events.
- Since 2004, Hosting BC has invested \$4.7 million, funded by the Government of British Columbia, in sport events held in communities throughout the province.
- In 2015-16, the Government of British Columbia is investing more than \$50 million in sports, including funding for events and programs that help support athletes, coaches and public participation.
- B.C. currently hosts more than 30 major cultural festivals and events annually, as well as significant museum and art gallery exhibitions, and regional arts activities – all of which present opportunities for British Columbians and visitors to be inspired by the arts.
- The B.C. government will spend more than \$60 million on artists, arts and culture organizations in 2015-16, including approximately \$17.5 million in community gaming grants – the same funding as last year.

- In 2015-16, the BC Arts Council, an independent agency funded by the Government of British Columbia, will provide \$24 million to help artists and cultural organizations flourish in communities throughout B.C.
- Some of the events that have significant economic impact include:
 - The Honda Celebration of Light fireworks competition attracts up to 400,000 spectators along English Bay each evening and contributes in excess of \$39 million in incremental tourism and hospitality spending each year.
 - The TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival presents more than 300 concerts featuring more than 1,800 musicians from around the globe. The festival attracts about 560,000 people each year and generates \$35 million in economic activity.
 - Victoria Symphony Splash is an annual destination event that attracts more than 40,000 people around the Victoria Inner Harbour.

Media Contact:

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural
Development
250 356-6334

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