

## **New Sport Tourism Organization for Greater Victoria**

**VICTORIA, B.C.**

**Tuesday, February 13, 2018**

Tourism Victoria and SportHost Victoria (SportHost) gathered today with sport leaders in Greater Victoria to announce a new sport-tourism organization to champion sporting events in the Greater Victoria region – The Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission. Discussions have been in the works for several months with these like-minded partners exploring a strategic collaboration that would realize greater efficiencies and cumulative benefits from aligning goals, resources, skills, and responsibilities in one sport-focused entity. The Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission builds upon the achievements of SportHost, integrates the expertise of sport leaders in Greater Victoria and will be housed as an independent entity within the legal structure of Tourism Victoria drawing upon the proven professionalism and success of the region’s largest destination marketing enterprise.

One hundred major regional, provincial, national and international sporting events take place in the Greater Victoria area every year contributing approximately \$117-million to the regional economy on an annual basis. Building on the achievements of SportHost, the goal of The Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission is to strengthen the region’s competitive edge and grow this specialized economic sector.

The sporting community wishes to acknowledge the tremendous contributions of Hugh MacDonald who has provided the dedicated leadership at SportHost Victoria since 2001 nurturing and guiding the region’s reputation as a host destination for quality sporting events. Hugh will be supporting the creation of the new organization ensuring a smooth transition until March 31, the date of his retirement. Effective April 1, The Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission will operate out of Saanich Commonwealth Place, Suite 100 (the current offices of SportHost Victoria).

Tourism Victoria is currently seeking an Executive Director to lead this new organization.

### **Paul Nursey, CEO Tourism Victoria**

“This model makes good sense and is a natural evolution building on the achievements of SportHost. The Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission will have its own membership, authorities and brand distinction. Tourism Victoria will provide key support in areas like strategy, destination marketing, member recruitment, research and administration. These synergies allow for a smart, nimble, efficient and collaborative entity that will have greater reach and impact in the market.”

### **Hugh MacDonald, CEO SportHost Victoria**

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“SportHost, with the support of our Board, partners and membership, has demonstrated the value of sport tourism to our region over many years, and moving to this new model is a timely and strategic growth opportunity. The sport tourism space has become increasingly competitive and the creation of this new model strengthens our capacity to compete effectively for our share of the market.”

**Robert Bettauer, CEO PISE (Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence),**

“The Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission has the support of the sporting community across the region. Under Tourism Victoria’s leadership over the past several years, recognition and awareness of our region as a ‘must see’ destination experience has exploded. Victoria was named the #2 small city in the world a few months ago (Conde Naste). We want to leverage that powerful awareness and promote our region as a global destination for hosting quality sporting events. Those of us involved in sport development and sport tourism are very excited by the potential within this new model. We look forward to capitalizing on these exciting synergies and growing our sport tourism market here in Greater Victoria.”

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Matthew Holme

Manager of Corporate Communications and Destination Management, Tourism Victoria

**250 818-7864 or 250 414-6976**

[matthew.holme@tourismvictoria.com](mailto:matthew.holme@tourismvictoria.com)

**Tourism Victoria** (Greater Victoria Visitors and Convention Bureau) is our region’s official, not-for-profit destination marketing organization working in partnership with nearly 1,000 businesses and municipalities in Greater Victoria.