



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

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Tuesday, January 20, 2009

### **Project Title: A Tourism Sector Strategy for the Southern Interior in Response to the Mountain Pine Beetle**

#### **Background, Context and Situation:**

The Council of Tourism Associations (COTA) is facilitating the development of a “B.C. Tourism Industry Mountain Pine Beetle Strategy” to help diversify and strengthen B.C. communities and regions impacted by the mountain pine beetle epidemic. Funding for the project has been made available by Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) and the BC Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MTCA).

A tourism strategy responding to the mountain pine beetle was finalized for the Cariboo Chilcotin region of B.C. in 2008, and a strategy is being developed for northern B.C. via the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC), with the support of COTA. This request for proposals seeks a contractor to develop a tourism strategy for B.C.’s southern interior, and includes those areas that constitute the SIBAC board of directors. This includes those interior regions and communities south of the Cariboo Chilcotin Land Use Plan (CCLUP) area and east of the Fraser River, such as Lillooet, Cache Creek, Kamloops, Clearwater, Valemount, Golden, Fernie, Trail, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, Hope, and Merritt. It also includes all First Nations communities in the region.

The report will be presented to the SIBAC board of directors<sup>1</sup> and the provincial government in order to support economic diversification opportunities for the southern interior.

#### **The Project Objective:**

The objective of this project is to develop a tourism sector strategy that will enable communities to attract investment, enhance existing business opportunities, and promote overall growth in this sector. The strategy will also develop tools and recommendations for ensuring that impacts of the mountain pine beetle and associated forest management practices minimize impacts on tourism’s land base assets and interests, to support the viability of the tourism sector. The strategy will contain recommendations, advice, and positions to influence decisions that support tourism development in the SIBAC region, and will contribute to the overall report, *BC Tourism Industry Mountain Pine Beetle Strategy*. The strategy will include an Action Plan with recommended projects and requirements that will help achieve the proposed strategies, as well as key deliverables required to plan for tourism development.

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<sup>1</sup> SIBAC comprises representatives from 9 Regional Districts and 6 Tribal Councils in the Southern Interior. SIBAC was established to better understand through studies and community consultation the impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation to communities in the Southern Interior. Findings from the background research and consultation will be compiled into SIBAC’s final report and recommendations to the provincial government.

## **Project Scope and Deliverables:**

1. The proposal must present a methodology and a budget that includes the following tactical plan items for managing the overall strategy development process:
  - The establishment and facilitation of a strategy working group(s) in collaboration with the project sponsor (COTA). The working group should include representatives from communities, government agencies, sector interest groups, and industry. A suggested list is attached as *Appendix A*. (**Note:** COTA has already initiated discussion and pre-identified some possible stakeholders).
    - There may be an opportunity to present initial findings / issues in March 2009 in various communities as part of planned SIBAC community consultations. TBD.
  - Liaison with SIBAC staff and board, as requested. It is anticipated that this project will require ongoing communications with SIBAC to identify the agency's evolving interests that may impact the strategy structure and content.
  - Solicit participation and work with First Nations within the SIBAC region that express an interest in participating in this endeavour, complementing other First Nations initiatives in the SIBAC region
  - Contribute to project communications.

A recommended strategy outline is described in *Appendix B*. Suggestions from proponents about alternate structure and strategy content will be considered if presented.

2. The proposal must demonstrate that you have an understanding of the project objectives, and requested deliverables. The proposal must present clear milestones, deliverables and timelines. In those instances where proponents are proposing to deliver services in partnership with other consultants, please identify in your proposal the lead proponent (who is in charge of oversight and who will sign the contract).

Due to the compressed timeframe, large size, and scope of the project, proponents are encouraged to use multiple consultants as part of the (contractor) project team.

3. A contract is expected to begin February 11, 2009 and must be completed by May 30, 2009.
4. Deliverables include:
  - a. Identification of working group members and conducting of meetings (in-person regional meetings and/or teleconference meetings; anticipate 4-6 working group meetings in total).
  - b. (Possible) regional meetings coordinated with SIBAC to present initial findings / issue areas (TBD).
  - c. A detailed project schedule, budget, scoping framework (including specific work items / deliverables) and communications plan (Feb 24, 2009).
  - d. Short (1-page) bi-weekly progress reports to the project sponsor (COTA).
  - e. A report on progress and findings and a first draft of the strategy (April 24, 2009).
  - f. A final strategy report (May 14, 2009).

## **Payment Schedule:**

A payment schedule will be developed upon awarding of the contract. No more than 75% of the contract value will be expended by April 24, 2009. The draft strategy will be reviewed by COTA

and the final report must incorporate the project working group's review before final payment is made.

**Criteria for Selection:**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated experience in developing strategic recommendations relating to tourism development requirements, including land and resource issues, and experience with the policy and political environments at the provincial and local government levels, to ensure feasibility of recommendations that can be implemented in a timely manner.
2. Timing, quality, and clarity of the proposal methodology, and price that is in line with the budget - to a maximum of \$65,000 (Can).
3. Demonstrated experience in coordinating stakeholders as part of complex, inter-related strategy development processes, including working with First Nations communities and organizations.
4. Demonstrated skills in gathering and consolidating input from various sources, writing, research, problem analysis, strategic thinking, synthesizing and simplifying complex issues down to core elements so that these can be communicated to and understood by a broad audience.

**Submission of Proposal:**

Please provide COTA with a brief proposal (maximum 8 pages) describing your proposed methodology, relevant experience and fees and price, supported by résumés and/or references or work examples from similar projects (which may be in addition to the 8-page limit) for all members of the project team including subcontractors.

**Proposals must be received by COTA on or before:**

**Friday, February 6, 2009 at 4:30pm (PST) – late proposals will not be accepted.**

Please submit your proposal either by e-mail (preferred) or in hard copy (2 hard copies) to:

Peter Larose  
Director, Policy and Corporate Communications  
Council of Tourism Associations (COTA)

Phone: 604-685-5996  
Email: [plarose@cotabc.com](mailto:plarose@cotabc.com)  
Address: 1208 – 409 Granville St, Vancouver, BC, V6A 4L8

## **APPENDIX A: POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS FOR WORKING GROUP**

- SIBAC member community and First Nations representatives including Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Interior First Nations
- Council of Tourism Associations
- Regional and Community Destination Marketing Organization (R)DMOs
- Tourism British Columbia
- BC Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts
- BC Ministry of Community Development
- BC Nature-based Tourism Associations – e.g., Wilderness Tourism Association / Helicat Canada / BC Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association
- Select Colleges and Universities with Tourism Specialty Areas (Thompson Rivers University, UBC Okanagan, Others)
- BC Ministry of Environment (BC Parks)
- Parks Canada
- Tourism transportation providers (regional airports, rail – e.g., Rocky Mountaineer Vacations, BC Ferries)
- Tourism accommodation providers / associations (BC Hotel Association, BC Lodging and Campgrounds Association, Backcountry Lodges Association of BC)

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## **APPENDIX B: SUGGESTED TOURISM STRATEGY OUTLINE**

The following outlines the suggested processes and methodology for undertaking the strategy development. Suggested changes to the recommended process, structure, and/or content will be considered if presented.

### **1. Community and Regional Consultations to Develop and Refine Vision / Objectives**

The purpose of this section is to present and discuss the vision for tourism development of individual communities (where possible) and the region as a whole, for growth and expansion of the sector or for the development and implementation of solutions.

Public consultations have already been done by a number of communities that have completed the Tourism BC Community Tourism Foundations® program and this information should be summarized. Additional community consultations have also been undertaken by the Regional Destination Marketing Organizations (RDMOs) for the region, including Kootenay Rockies Tourism, Thompson-Okanagan Tourism Association, and Vancouver, Coast and Mountains Tourism. This information should also be captured.

Community consultations could be considered an ongoing task (not the first of many sequential tasks) in order to both solidify and solicit feedback on the vision and objectives of a tourism strategy. SIBAC is planning a round of member community consultations in mid-late March 2009 to present and this presents an opportunity to discuss initial recommendations on this strategy with SIBAC member communities.

### **2. Literature Review**

The purpose of this section is to acknowledge and to build upon the work of previous studies and initiatives and to avoid 're-inventing' the wheel.

The contractor will be expected to summarize relevant studies and initiatives in the region, as well as similar tourism-MPB initiatives from other regions. The summary report of the literature review should provide an overview of the major conclusions of these studies and initiatives. Samples include:

- Community tourism plans, through Tourism BC's Community Tourism Foundations® program. These plans will be made available to the contractor on a confidential basis.
- Relevant tourism plans of city and (regional) destination marketing organizations (R)DMOs. Select local governments, including regional districts, may also have tourism plans that are relevant.
- Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition (CCBAC) Tourism Sector Strategy and companion pieces, and/or other tourism-related MPB strategies.
- B.C. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts "Tourism Action Plan" and related strategies (e.g., Resort Strategy, Recreation Sites and Trails Strategy).

### **3. Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat Analysis**

The purpose of this section is to briefly assess external global, international, national, regional and local trends that could be a barrier to or promote the sector. The section should also briefly assess internal strengths and weakness of the region in terms of tourism development potential.

#### **4. Tourism Land Values and Interests Analysis**

The purpose of this section is to review any land base opportunities or challenges. It is anticipated that at least 50% of the overall strategy should be focused on assessing land and resource management issues relating to tourism.

The analysis should place a particular focus on communities and regions identified as being the most heavily impacted by the mountain pine beetle, as indicated in the various SIBAC background reports.

A range of materials may be utilized including the various SIBAC and partner background reports, land use plans, local government zoning, and other management plans and strategies for rural / nature-based tourism development.

Suggested types of analyses include:

- Land base mapping of high value tourism assets (high caliber nature-based tourism opportunity areas), with a particular emphasis on attributes that are of exceptional quality or that are unique to the region. Assessment could also evaluate these assets against current tourism infrastructure and the degree to which these assets have been developed, to determine gaps and opportunities.
- Specific recommendations / tools for mitigating impacts of the mountain pine beetle and associated forest management practices on high caliber tourism and recreation land values identified above, including but not limited to public recreation areas, recreation sites and trails, staging areas, commercial recreation tenure areas, etc. Recommendations and/or tools may include:
  - Best Practices Guide for managing tourism values in forest practices (stand prioritization, access management, timing, consultation processes, trail buffers, viewscape management, etc.). This would require discussions with the BC Ministry of Forests and Range and forest industry associations;
  - “Sensitivity analysis” of potential impacts on tourism of salvage logging for timber and bioenergy (including access management, eg, road building, road use); and/or
  - Other plans / agreements using Integrated Resource Management techniques and/or other methods

#### **5. Sector/Solution Development Final Report and Action Plan**

The final report should set the background and context, and include:

- An overview description of the tourism sector with baseline statistics (size, composition, trajectory);
- A geographical description – where does this apply, where tourism assets are found;
- A list of groups and individuals contacted in the preparation of the report (in an appendix); and
- The intended audience for this strategy – i.e. politicians, researchers, neighboring communities and regions, policy makers, First Nations, private sector businesses, funding sources, community members, interest group or industry group representatives, and how they can use the report.

The final report will also contain both work items developed as part of the strategy development, as well as items to be developed in the future. All items should be clearly described in a final Action Plan. Proponents should identify, develop, and describe inter-related project components in the Action Plan, to aid in prioritization. The Action Plan should include:

- A summary implementation table that lists each recommendation, identifies the organization responsible for leading completion of that recommendation, and agencies that could/should participate in implementing each recommendation.
  - Include a timetable for implementation, with a shortlist of quick-start projects identified as priorities by the contractor.
- A framework for evaluating priorities for implementation of recommended projects, including estimated economic impacts, return-on-investment, feasibility of funding agency interest, and/or other measures of to evaluate the feasibility of recommendations. It is anticipated that the contractor will work with possible funding agencies and stakeholders to enhance the probability of each recommendation being funded and delivered.
- Analysis of the various requirements for implementing projects, including policy requirements, land & resource requirements, business development requirements, social development requirements, infrastructure requirements, training and extension requirements, investment requirements, and/or others.
- Identify additional opportunities for collaboration and partnerships both within and outside of the region.

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