



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
3400 – 30th Street
Vernon, BC
V1T 5E6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 19, 2016

MEDIA CONTACT: Tanya Laing Gahr, Communications Officer

TELEPHONE: 250-550-3539

Vernon celebrates Tourism Week May 29 – June 4

Tourism Vernon is joining dozens of communities, cities and regions around B.C. to recognize National Tourism Week from May 29 to June 4. B.C.'s visitor economy has been one of the province's top performing business sectors over the past two years, expanding faster than the economy at large and outpacing traditional sectors such as agriculture and fishing.

In 2015, the Vernon Visitor Information Centre assisted 18,039 visitors. Tourism Vernon grew the Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT) by 15.1 per cent, outpacing the Thompson Okanagan regional performance of 10 per cent. Efforts were focused on increasing visitation during our shoulder season periods in the spring and fall. The economic impact to Vernon is estimated to be \$192.6 million.

Vernon Mayor Akbal Mund will recognize the achievements of tourism operators, employees, destination marketing organizations and other stakeholders by personally welcoming guest to the Vernon Visitor Information Centre on May 30 from 3 to 6 p.m. Mayor Mund will also give away a gift basket from Davison Orchards to a lucky visitor at the conclusion of his shift as a visitor services team member.

"Our community has enjoy five consecutive years of tourism growth which equates to a 77 per cent increase since 2011 for our MRDT," said Mayor Mund. "We welcome visitors from around the world to Vernon. Our community is home to over 300 tourism businesses that offer authentic experiences in Greater Vernon. Tourism is an important piece of our economy, Tourism Vernon works hard to increase Vernon as a desirable destination by promoting and actively drives traffic to our tourism partners."

"British Columbia is experiencing incredible growth in tourism," said Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour. "We saw a 7.9 per cent increase in international tourists as 4.9 million international visitor came to our province in 2015. With a strong U.S. dollar, many British Columbians are also opting to experience B.C.'s world-class tourism through a staycation and exploring B.C. It is indeed a time to celebrate Tourism Week in Canada and such an important industry that's helping B.C. be an economic leader in Canada."