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|  <b>DISTRICT OF</b><br><b>Sooke</b> | <b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>              |
|  | <b>MRDT Tourism Advisory Committee</b> |
|  | <b>Date Adopted: May 11, 2026</b>      |
| Historical Changes:  |  |

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the **Tourism Advisory Committee**, herein referred to as the **Committee**, is to monitor, evaluate, advise, and make recommendations to the District of Sooke Council with respect to the policies and strategic initiatives related to marketing and promoting Sooke’s tourism sector as outlined in the 2026 Five-Year Strategic MRDT Business Plan and the 2026 One Year MRDT Tactical Plan. **The Term of the Advisory Committee is for the remainder of 2026 and 2027.**

## **PREAMBLE**

Under the advice of the Committee, the District of Sooke aims to support the growing tourism sector through the delivery of a comprehensive marketing and management campaign to promote visitation and tourism to the community.

The Committee membership consisting of representatives from the local government, business community, and regional tourism organizations seeking to improve the marketability and demand for tourism in the local area, specifically within the municipality of Sooke. The Committee strives to identify the evolving needs and desires of visitors to the community and strengthen the local tourism sector’s ability and capacity to respond to visitor needs and offer exemplary services and experiences.

Facilitation of tourism is considered an economic benefit to not only the direct tourism sector but also to the general economy of Sooke. Front line accommodation sector is the first to benefit from tourism, however it is recognized that additional economic benefit will result from longer and enhanced tourism visits. Dedicated tourism-related marketing funding is needed to accomplish goals common to the tourism sector. The most readily available funds are MRDT (Municipal Regional District Tax) funds which are currently levied at 3% of accommodation daily rates for overnight stays.

## **MANDATE**

The Committee will monitor, evaluate, advise, and make recommendations to Council with respect to policies and strategic initiatives related to marketing Sooke’s tourism sector.

## **COMMITTEE GOALS**

It is the goal of the Committee to ensure that annual plans reflect initiatives and opportunities that promote tourism and economic growth in the community of Sooke. The Committee will review and consider reports, suggestions and recommendations brought forward from service, experience, and accommodation providers and other tourism interest holders.

1. Review reporting and planning requirements as prescribed by the Ministry of Finance and Destination BC, and update Council as required.
2. Review all annual plans, budgets, and reports prior to submission to Destination BC.

3. Report and make recommendations to Council as required.

## **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS, TERM & TERMINATION**

The term for all voting members appointed by Council will be for the remainder of 2026 and 2027. Voting members, who miss two consecutive meetings, where regrets were not received, shall be asked by the chair to reconfirm their commitment to serve on the Committee.

## **COMMITTEE CHAIR/VICE CHAIR**

A Chairperson (Chair) and a Vice Chair shall be elected from the Committee members on an annual basis at the first meeting of the New Year to preside over meetings and Committee business.

The Chair, if present, must preside at Committee meetings, if the Chair and Vice Chair are both absent from the Committee meeting, the recording secretary shall call the meeting to order and shall call for an Acting Chair to be nominated and selected by resolution.

## **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP**

The voting membership of the Committee will consist of a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 13 members comprised of the following sectors of the community:

- Local tourism sector representatives:
    - local accommodation providers;
    - Arts & Culture providers;
    - biking representative.
    - Agri-tourism/culinary experience providers; and
    - Outdoor adventure tourism provider
  - Indigenous community representatives;
  - CRD Regional Tourism Destination Management service provider.
  - Local visitor service providers:
    - Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Information Centre; and
    - Sooke Tourism Association
  - Local business association representative;
  - One youth member aged 15 to 24; AND
  - District of Sooke Councillors, as appointed by Council.
- Chair and Vice Chair of Committee shall be elected from and by the membership.
  - Members may hold more than one assigned position.
  - Where consensus is not clear, each member shall hold one vote.
  - Members holding more than one assigned position shall hold only one vote.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The roles and responsibilities of the Committee members include but are not limited to the following:

## **COMMITTEE CHAIR/VICE CHAIR**

1. Maintain meeting order.
2. Review and prepare agendas.
3. Review meeting minutes.
4. Ensure work is assigned to progress overall Committee objectives.

## TOURISM SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

1. Provide insight from the tourism industry.
2. Provide feedback to the Committee as required.

## INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

1. Provide insight from the represented community.
2. Provide feedback to the Committee as required.

## REGIONAL TOURISM SERVICE PROVIDER

1. Provide advice and guidance to assist in the development of the 5-year strategic and annual plans.
2. Provide support in the completion of annual reporting requirements.
3. Provide feedback to the Committee as required.

## DISTRICT OF SOOKE COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENTS (TWO MEMBERS)

1. Inform Council of the initiatives undertaken by the Committee to support tourism.
2. Provide feedback to the Committee as required.

## LOCAL VISITOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Advise on seasonal visitation and visitor experiences.
2. Provide direction as needed to support the overall Committee objectives.

## LOCAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

1. Provide insight from business community.
2. Provide feedback to the Committee as required.

## YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE

1. Provide insight from the perspective of youth and young adults in the community.
2. Provide feedback to the Committee as required.

The District of Sooke Community Economic Development Officer (CEDO) and Director of Finance will act in a supportive capacity to the Committee and are non-voting members.

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

1. Function as a liaison between the Committee and Council as required.
2. Assume a lead role and collaborate with other members of the Committee to ensure that a consistent, positive message regarding the benefits of marketing tourism is conveyed to Sooke hoteliers and accommodation providers whose support is necessary for the success of the Committee's efforts.
3. Ensure that marketing and strategic plans reflect the needs of the local tourism industry.
4. Present the annual MRDT Performance Report with Annual Financial Report, and the annual MRDT One-Year Tactical Plan with proposed budget to the Committee for approval prior to submission to Destination BC.
5. Provide feedback to the Committee as desired.

## DIRECTOR OF FINANCE SERVICES

1. Provide administrative support as required.
2. Coordinate assembly and submission of the MRDT renewal application as required.
3. Keep the Committee informed on the progress and items that may delay progress.
4. Report to Council on progress as required.
5. Prepare renewal bylaws as required.

## COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings shall be held at least four times a year to give the Committee opportunity to receive regular updates about new ongoing marketing initiatives and to review and provide feedback on required budget reporting and tactical planning.

Additional meetings may be at the call of the Committee chair or at the request of any two members. The schedule of meetings will be at the discretion of the chair.

## QUORUM

Quorum shall be an absolute majority of the members appointed to the Committee.

If quorum is not present within 15 minutes following the time at which the meeting was to commence, the recording secretary shall record the names of the members present at the meeting, and the meeting will stand adjourned.

## AGENDAS, MEETINGS & MINUTES

Regular meetings shall take place as per the Committee meeting schedule and shall commence at the stated time. Special or ad-hoc meetings shall be at the call of the chair or at the request of any two members. All meetings will be held in open sessions and in a location or means accessible to the public, except when closure of the meeting is authorized under section **90** of the Community Charter and the Committee adopts a resolution in accordance with section **92** of the Community Charter to close the meeting.

### 1. Conduct of Meetings

Committee members have a responsibility to make decisions based on the best interests of the community at large. Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Community Charter* including, but not limited to, the requirements for notice of meetings, the establishment of a meeting schedule, minute - taking, quorum, conduct and debate and voting.

The conduct of meetings shall enable members of the Committee to consider information presented, weigh evidence related thereto, and make informed decisions, and shall follow the rules established by the District of Sooke. Committee members will respect the following rules of meeting conduct:

- a) Provide honest, open opinions; AND,
- b) Agree to disagree; consensus may not always be achieved.

### 2. Notice

The Committee shall provide the Director of Corporate Services with a copy of their annual meeting schedule on or before December 31st of each year. Notice of the day, hour and place of special meetings shall be given at least three (3) days prior to the meeting by distributing a copy of the notice to the Director of Corporate Services

and to each member of the Committee at the place to which the member has directed such notices be sent.

### **3. Agendas**

The Chair, in collaboration with staff support shall prepare an agenda for each regular meeting. The order of business is to be as set out in the agenda package provided to each member at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting by the Chair. Staff support shall provide the Director of Corporate Services with a copy of the agenda a minimum of 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Any additions or changes to the prepared agenda may be requested by a Committee member and must be approved by majority vote of the Committee members present at the meeting.

### **4. Delegations / Public Input**

Unless otherwise authorized by the Committee, the public shall only address the Committee when there is a scheduled delegation on the agenda.

### **5. Voting**

All voting members of the Committee, including the Chair, vote on every question unless they have declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting. Any member, who does not indicate how they vote, or has left the meeting without declaring a conflict, is counted as having voted in the affirmative to the question.

If the votes are equal for and against, the question is defeated.

### **6. Minutes**

Minutes of meetings provide a written record of the Committee's activities and can track the progress of action on recommendations the Committee has made. Minutes of the meeting will be prepared by the staff support and provided to the Director of Corporate Services prior to the next regular meeting of Council.

### **7. Conflict of Interest**

Members who have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter under discussion are not permitted to participate in the discussion of the matter or to vote on a question in respect of the matter. The member must not attempt, in any way, whether before, during or after the meeting, to influence the voting on any question in respect of the matter.

If a Committee member has a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict, the member must declare their conflict of interest and leave the room until the discussion on that matter is completed. The identified conflict of interest and the removal and return time of the member must be recorded in the minutes.

### **8. Confidentiality of Information**

Committee members are required to keep confidential any financial details or other sensitive information they receive. For the Committee to function properly, all parties must be confident and trust that no improper use will be made of the information received.

### **9. Consensus**

Consensus will be the guiding principle in every debate as members strive to reach practical and feasible solutions that have, as their goal, the well-being and security of the municipality.

## **10. Media**

When speaking in public or to the media on an issue, Committee members must distinguish whether they are speaking as a member, a representative of another agency or community group or as an individual. Committee members need to convey public interest and remember that they represent the District of Sooke. This means that they must be consistent with the District's position on specific issues.

Only the Chair or Vice Chair may speak to the media on behalf of the Committee subject to authorization by Council.

## **AUTHORITY AND REPORTING**

The Committee and its members will not represent themselves as having any authority beyond that delegated by Council.

Recommendations of the Committee must be adopted by resolution prior to presentation to Council for endorsement. The Committee will report to Council and provide other reports to Council as needed.

The Committee will keep Council informed by providing minutes of each meeting and will provide an annual summary of accomplishments (MRDT report copies) and strategic and tactical plans as they are developed. The Committee is authorized to communicate with external organizations and agencies to collect information and make inquiries. Where the Committee wishes to express opinions or make recommendations to external organizations and agencies, it must first obtain authorization from Council.

## **BUDGET**

Being an advisory Committee only, there is no budget established. If the Committee deems it required, the Chair shall submit a budget request to the Director of Financial Services before September 1st of each year of estimated expenditures for the cost of maintenance and operation of the Committee work.