

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...



WHISTLER CHAMBER TRAVELS TO OTTAWA WITH BC DELEGATION

Whistler recognized as key driver of Canada's tourism industry

Whistler, February 7, 2016 – Val Litwin, CEO of the Whistler Chamber joined the BC Delegation to Ottawa on February 3 and 4, 2016, on invitation by the Honourable Shirley Bond, Provincial Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training. Thirty-five invites went out and the delegation included B.C. Premier Christy Clark and representatives from tourism, manufacturing, mining, forestry, film and LNG. Also present representing the tourism sector were go2hr, the BC Hotel Association and Joel Chevalier, VP of Employee Experience at Whistler Blackcomb.

“It was terrific to have two representatives from Whistler on the delegation and a real vote of confidence in our market’s contribution to BC’s economy and Christy Clark’s confidence in British Columbia’s tourism industry,” said Val Litwin, CEO of the Whistler Chamber

The visit to Ottawa offered British Columbia representatives the opportunity to meet with Federal Ministers and their officials responsible for immigration, labour market, skills training, workforce development, and innovation. The delegation was able to create awareness of issues unique to BC and engage with the federal government to support each of BC’s key sectors with regard to workforce development policy and programs.

“Whistler came up again and again which speaks volumes to our contribution to Canada’s tourism industry,” said Litwin.

“BC really put it’s best foot forward and was the first province to go to Ottawa as a delegation and state what we are doing to drive the overall economy. The federal government seemed to welcome us with open arms and our message was heard loud and clear that we are a key economic engine for Canada moving forward,” said Litwin. “We want to be leading economic growth so, we’re always going to jump to the pump to address workforce needs and we are committed to developing and recruiting Canadian talent, but to meet growth demands we need to look to the federal government for support.”

Whistler Chamber CEO, Val Litwin was able to speak clearly (and with current data) of Whistler’s labour market needs and share some of the Chamber’s innovative initiatives to recruit and retain Canadians, including The Whistler Experience program. The delegation’s agenda included a BC Labour Roundtable meeting chaired by Minister Bond, Provincial Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Mihychuk, Federal Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour. Also in attendance were BC Premier Christy Clark, Minister Chagger, Minister of Small Business and Tourism ; Minister Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities and Minister McCallum's chief of staff.

“During Q&A and full-delegation round table discussion Whistler was mentioned no less than four times and Minister Bond specifically named the Whistler Chamber's training programs. Premier, Christy Clark also mentioned Whistler in relation to labour needs. Whistler stayed impressively top of mind and, I believe, the groundwork has been laid for our next steps advocacy work.”

More information on Whistler’s workforce needs and the Whistler Chamber’s four key policy considerations to improve access to workers please see the attached Whistler Labour Flatsheet.

About the Whistler Chamber of Commerce

The Whistler Chamber is making business easy. Representing a robust 50% of the community - with over 700 members – we are the voice of business in Whistler and to the World. Whistler Blackcomb, Tourism Whistler and the Resort Municipality of Whistler are our closest collaborators and partners. Whistler comes to the Chamber for timely support. We lift as we climb, building a community of leaders and elevating Whistler's businesses.

For more information, visit www.whistlerchamber.com

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