

## **Op-Ed: Destination Greater Victoria marks Global Meetings Industry Day 2019**

**By Paul Nursey**  
**April 3, 2019**

On January 1, 2017, Destination Greater Victoria deepened our relationship with the City of Victoria by assuming joint leadership of the Victoria Conference Centre (VCC). Meetings, events and conferences are part of destination marketing organization lines of business in many jurisdictions, and Destination Greater Victoria was happy to assume this responsibility. Greater Victoria is an attractive meetings, events and conferences destination, but there was room for growth as well – specifically in the shoulder seasons and off-season months.

April 4 is Global Meetings Industry Day. It is an appropriate time to reflect on our work attracting meetings, events and conferences to Greater Victoria. In the two years since Destination Greater Victoria assumed the sales and marketing responsibilities (through Business Events Victoria – or BEV), the meetings, events and conferences line of business has been a tremendous success. There have been many lead opportunities and converted bookings, leading to room nights in our partner hotels – especially in months with traditionally lower occupancy rates. Several tactics have been deployed to generate business: a focus on sectors that naturally align with the Greater Victoria economy such as clean technology and natural resources, utilizing in-market sellers and client events, partnering with third-parties to increase BEV’s marketing presence and lead opportunities, as well as the creation of a Customer Advisory Board to have influential members of the meetings industry provide insight and collaborate with BEV on how to improve the meetings program. This list goes on.

The results of these efforts were successful in 2018 by every measure. In 2017 the economic impact of VCC events was \$49M. In 2018 it was \$54.6M. VCC delegate days increased by 11.57 per cent (121,430 from 108,836). 2018 confirmed hotel room nights generated by meetings, events or conferences at the VCC surpassed the total for all of 2017 by September (26,399 in 2017 to 26,872 as of September 2018). Major events such as the 2019 IIHF World Junior Hockey Championship brought a focus to Greater Victoria from across the country and around the world. Our partnership through the Cities in Sync initiative with Saskatoon and St. John’s has meant meetings, events and conferences bookings three or even four years in advance. Cities in Sync is a collaboration of these three destinations working together to provide planners with an efficient tool to book their meetings in rotation while receiving added value and benefits. This is predictable business for the destination, not only for hotel partners but other businesses that benefit from visitation in Greater Victoria.

# DESTINATION GREATER VICTORIA

The success in 2018 is expected to be matched in 2019. Destination Greater Victoria will continue to focus on shoulder season and off-season meetings, events and conferences to create a vibrant, sustainable and robust visitor economy benefiting small business and residents alike.

For more information on Global Meetings Industry Day, please visit:

<http://meetingsmeanbusiness.com/gmid>

*Paul Nursey is the CEO of Destination Greater Victoria*

**Destination Greater 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.

-30-

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Matthew Holme

Manager of Corporate Communications and Destination Management, Destination Greater Victoria

**250 818-7846 or 250 414-6976**

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

DESTINATION GREATER VICTORIA

Mailing address: Suite 200 – 737 Yates Street, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8W 1L6 Tel: (250) 414-6999 Fax: (250) 361-9733

Visitor Centre: 812 Wharf Street, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8W 1T3 Tel: (250) 953-2033 Fax: (250) 382-6539

[www.tourismvictoria.com](http://www.tourismvictoria.com)