

TIANS Response to Visitor Services Reduction in Nova Scotia's \$3.5 Billion Industry

The closure of provincially operated Visitor Information Centres announced this week, without any consultation with the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS), is extremely disappointing. In contrast TIANS, in cooperation with government, recently launched a new Strategic Plan for Tourism (A Roadmap for Sustainable Growth - nstourismstrategy.ca) which identified the need for better industry/government collaboration and enhanced tourism infrastructure - particularly in rural communities.

While visitor trip planning has evolved, it is TIANS's belief that strategically located welcome centers can play a critical role in increasing tourism activity and economic impact with a sales focused approach. The provincial centers offered a tremendous opportunity to increase the length of stay of visitors and further enhance brand Nova Scotia.

Consulting TIANS and affected regional Destination Marketing Organizations would have ensured tourism's interests were protected as government transitioned from operating these locations, (including small community museums). There are several options that could have met government's quest to reduce costs while ensuring tourism infrastructure not be dismantled.

Tourism is a revenue center for government. Tourism generated \$3.5 billion dollars last year and employed 59,000 Nova Scotians. It does not just happen!

For every dollar invested in tourism, \$3.20 is generated on main street. The tourism sector has the highest multiplier effect on the economy. Eliminating infrastructure that helps sell tourism product and experiences and moves people around is counter-intuitive to our stated and shared goals. Working together, we could have found solutions that served Nova Scotia's interests – this is what we thought commitment to the Tourism Strategy meant.

TIANS stands ready to work with tourism partners and Tourism Nova Scotia (TNS) to advance solutions that ensure visitors to Nova Scotia are appropriately serviced and the communities affected have the tools to support their local tourism economy.