

EASTMAN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT – APRIL 14, 2021

MEL PARENT, PRESIDENT - EASTMAN TOURISM ASSOCIATION

I am extremely pleased to be here today to tell you about some exciting new regional tourism initiatives that are in the early stages of development. Firstly, the Eastman Tourism Association will be working with our regional economic development partners and provincial tourism agencies to develop an Eastman Tourism Sector Development Strategy. This strategy is being developed to see regional partnerships continued for addressing tourism sector recovery and growth after the conference. Working together to address larger regional issues and opportunities is more effective, collaborative and resourceful. Community Futures Winnipeg River will be leading the strategy development and your input into identifying regional challenges, opportunities and priorities is very important. This conversation starts during the final session of this conference on Thursday. You will also be able to provide strategy input on your post conference evaluation, so please fill that out when you receive email notice.

One important regional initiative has already been identified and is going to be rolled out starting immediately after the conference. Thanks to funding support from Western Economic Diversification and the Rural Opportunities Fund, Eastman Tourism and Community Futures will be implementing a coach the coaches program that will train 8-10 experience development coaches. The coaches will form a new Eastman Experience Development Team and the Eastman Tourism Association will have a new support service for tourism agencies in the Eastman Region. Coaches will work with tourism businesses and organizations to help develop marketable tourism products and experiences that visitors can purchase. Through the training course, four new legacy experiences will be developed in the region in conjunction with corresponding tourism agencies.

We are equally as excited to announce that Celes Davar with Earth Rhythms will be the facilitator working with our Eastman experiential tourism coaches and select experience partners. Celes has designed a virtual learning experience that consists of advance instruction, coaching, presentations, learning conversations, and a series of live Zoom coaching sessions. This facilitated visitor experience coaching program will empower the new coaches and experience partners to work together from start to launch of the four new experiences which are expected to be in-market by spring of 2022. Following the completed training program, the Eastman Experience Development Team will assist tourism agencies and businesses to develop marketable experiences in subsequent years. Requests for assistance can be made through Eastman Tourism as this will be a new ongoing service that we will deliver.

Selection processes will be underway shortly to identify our future coaches and our four experience partners that will be coached to create a legacy experience in Eastern Manitoba. If you would like to know more about either of these opportunities, please note this on your conference evaluation form to be added to the distribution list.

I hope you are as excited as I am about these exciting new regional tourism initiatives. Together we can rebuild the tourism sector and come out stronger than ever!