

# MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS CALGARY IS AN INDUSTRY LEADER

Meetings and Conventions Calgary (MCC) operates as a destination sales and marketing organization with a mandate to assist meeting planners, corporate clients, and association executives interested in Calgary as a prime location for their meetings, conventions, and incentive programs. MCC was established through a partnership between the Calgary Hotel Association (CHA) and the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre (CTCC). The MCC model, implemented by the CHA, was one of a few in North America back in 2009 and is now followed by several more cities across Canada and the United States. Clients have many destination options to choose from in today's global market and it is imperative to Calgary's local economy to attract business travelers and convention delegates to our city.

Building on its successful sales record, MCC has a long-term focus to deliver business opportunities enhancing Calgary's reputation as a Convention destination for the future. Dave Sclanders, Executive Director with MCC explains, "our sales team is working with planners who are considering cities to host their congress beyond 2020."

Farmers Insurance from the US, is hosting one of their many annual incentive trips for qualifying employees and their spouses here in Calgary this July. MCC recognizes that Calgary has not had success in attracting this type of business sector in the past, making the opportunity to host the Farmers Insurance group that much more exciting. Sclanders adds, "Along with having business sessions and plenaries, these delegates will disperse around our city and the immediate area utilizing restaurants, attractions, guest ranches and many hot spots in Calgary's cultural scene. However the real bonus is these large incentive groups all talk, so the Farmers experience in our city very well could parlay us into being considered for other future corporate incentive trips".

MCC is also working with a number of Calgary's educational institutions and business partners to attract congresses that will expand beyond the economic benefits of the convention delegate, and into the exchange of "intellectual capital" that international delegates will share with local attendees. Sclanders says, "As much as technology has revolutionized the world and continues to do so every day, face-to-face meetings remain the preference and seemingly the most productive way to accomplish measureable results. This is not only true for the association market or for successful corporations, but even world leaders still defy all the security and logistics hassles to hold G-8 style meetings". Meeting Planners are always on the look out to work with cities that are creative and offer unique ranges of options, this helps them both expand membership and create outstanding events.

Expanding the traditional view of conventions, Sclanders states that "the future of the meetings and convention industry involves a much more elongated sales cycle than was the case in the past". He explains, "International associations now have global members, hence the need to rotate their meetings around the world. For example, the next North American rotation could be 6 years away, so we need to know when the bid date is, and start working to be considered as a eligible bidder. That often includes engaging a local champion within that industry sector to collaborate with us and present the bid on behalf of the city."

Calgarians who are members of National or International associations are invited to connect with the Meetings + Conventions Calgary team to learn more about becoming a local host (champion).