



MEDIA RELEASE

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Introducing Hospitality Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Hotel and Hospitality Association (SHHA) today announced that it has rebranded to become *Hospitality Saskatchewan* and enhanced its mandate to now serve as the tourism industry association for the province.

“Hospitality Saskatchewan will focus on advocacy, collaboration, and the education of operators and our industry partners,” said Board Chair Gary Hoffert. “We will continue to work closely with our national, provincial and municipal tourism partners on issues that affect operators in this great province.”

The rebranding has been in the making for the last three years as the SHHA began advocating for a more diverse membership that includes restaurants, conference/convention centres, tourism, and cultural attractions and even cannabis producers. This is in addition to its traditional membership, which includes hotels, motels, taverns, pubs and offsale outlets.

This advocacy reached a peak last year when the pandemic devastated the hospitality sector and put pressure on the association to engage governments at all levels. The association found itself in the position of advocating for the entire tourism industry thereby providing governments with a single point of contact. With the association acting as the de facto unified voice for the industry, today’s announcement formalizes those efforts into a new organization.

“I would like to congratulate Hospitality Saskatchewan on their launch,” Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan Jeremy Harrison said. “Saskatchewan’s tourism sector has been hit hard by the global COVID-19 pandemic and as our economy recovers, a strong and growing tourism sector will be an important part of that recovery.”

The new association is being warmly welcomed by both the tourism and business sectors in the province.

“Tourism Saskatchewan values its longstanding relationship with the SHHA,” said Tourism Saskatchewan CEO Mary Taylor-Ash. “Partnerships, collaboration and mutual support are fundamental to tourism recovery in the wake of COVID-19. We look forward to working with *Hospitality Saskatchewan* and its members.”

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“The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce is very pleased to see the launch of *Hospitality Saskatchewan* as the new private sector advocate for the hospitality sector. The expansion of the mandate of the hotel association is a much needed addition to better serve the important tourism and hospitality sector in Saskatchewan. We fully support the move and will do all we can assist in their success, because when business in any sector succeeds, we all win,” said Steve McLellan, CEO, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce

Despite the challenges facing the industry today, Jim Bence, Hospitality Saskatchewan’s President & CEO said Saskatchewan’s visitor economy has an incredibly bright future. “Our province can offer the world a unique tourism experience unlike anything on the planet, and we are ready for that challenge,” he said.

The association’s roots stretch back to 1906 when a small group of enthusiastic and ambitious hotel operators met and decided that an industry association was needed to confront the many common issues facing hotel owners in the province. In that spirit *Hospitality Saskatchewan* will continue to aggressively advocate on behalf of the entire visitor economy.

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