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Sustainable Tourism Planning in Small Towns

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TTRA 2016 CONFERENCE Submission

Presentation Format: Presentation (20 minutes length)

Theme: Sustainable Tourism Planning in Small Towns: Irricana Tourism Asset Assessment & Strategy

The presentation will revolve around the main findings of different tourism related research projects in the Calgary Region and a specific tourism assessment process developed in the Town of Irricana. The purpose of the *“Tourism Asset Assessment and Action Plan Project”*, in Irricana, AB., has been to provide a community-based assessment process of local tourism assets to support the development of a tourism strategy and action plan for the town. Tourism is recognized as one element of a broader economic development approach for the town. The proposed process was designed to integrate the perspectives of local residents and businesses, together with the expert advice and support of resource persons and organizations active in the regional tourism industry. The process has been used to assess the town’s current potential for tourism, to develop an understanding of the costs, benefits and implications (social, economic and environmental) of a stronger tourism focus for the town, and to develop and begin implementation of a strategy and Action Plan to serve as the basis for future initiatives. This assessment process provides a method to assess the viability of tourism in a specific destination to design a comprehensive strategy for tourism development.

Session Description: presentation of the project’s main findings using PPT format, covering the following subjects:

- Sustainable tourism approach in the Calgary Region
- Data collection project in the Calgary Region. Summer 2015 in Black Diamond, Chestermere, Cochrane, Irricana, Nanton and Strathmore
- *“Tourism Asset Assessment and Action Plan Project”*, Irricana, AB: learnings from this process

Presenter: Bibiana Cala M.S. (STM Consulting / Calgary Regional Partnership)

Bibiana Cala is a leading expert in Sustainable Tourism Management. Throughout her career, she has worked with a variety of organizations and communities in the planning, implementation and evaluation of tourism development projects. Bibiana is an anthropologist with a Master’s Degree in Sustainable Tourism Management. She has extensive experience and training in social research focused on sustainable tourism, community participation and social development.

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