

4/16/2020

Valued Partner,

As the industry continues to navigate these uncharted waters, your Tourism department has continued to focus on being vital to our partners by providing informational resources and promoting what is safe and responsible in this time of social distancing.

We are also looking at the future and strategizing how we can best position our organization to be a driving force for economic recovery when the time arrives. In order to do this given the budgetary realities this situation has created, we are forced to undergo a dramatic reorganization that will change the way we operate as a destination organization.

Tourism's staff will be reduced from 13 to 2, and the department will temporarily become a division of county administration and align communication strategies with Public and Government Affairs. The tourism director position will change to a Tourism Program Manager, while a second position will continue to serve as the coordinator for the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program's Hood-Gorge region. I will continue to lead tourism for the county in the manager role with the continued guidance of the Tourism Development Council.

The impact on staff will be immense and the loss of a dedicated and stellar team will be felt by all of us. They have served you, our partners, with dedication and provided value to the destination beyond measure. I want to publicly thank our entire staff for their work on behalf of Mt. Hood Territory, and each of them will be available to you through May 1.

None of these decisions have been made lightly as I, the Tourism Development Council's executive committee and county leadership worked over the last few weeks to chart a course that will allow us to best serve our partners. Tourism grants and partnerships have supported programs, events and organizations in our community and these changes will undoubtedly have a ripple effect on our partners and stakeholders. While our funding deficit changes how we participate today, our mission and vision remain intact—to enhance the quality of life for residents by optimizing the economic impacts of the tourism industry.

These new changes are slated to take effect May 1. In the meantime, I invite you to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. We are in this together, and through that partnership, we will emerge on the other side stronger.

Sincerely,

Samara

Samara Phelps
Executive Director
Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs