

## VISITOR INDUSTRY PLAN 2.0

### Plan Implementation Amendments

#### **Introduction**

Several members of the initial stakeholder group, as well as some members of the current working group, find the current “plan implementation” strategies of the VIP 2.0 to be highly unsatisfactory. As a result, we the undersigned offer the following proposal to amend the current version.

We propose alternatives to the current section entitled “Tourism Work Group” in section 6. Plan Implementation: Coordination and Information. The most troubling factors in our opinion regard work group composition and decision-making processes. Version 1.0 did not specifically address the issues of work group composition and process for good reason: these elements of the plan were thought to be of critical importance, and therefore, must meet with broad support from all stakeholders. Version 2.0 falls short in this regard.

#### **Work group composition**

First, the composition of the work group is unbalanced in several ways. The proposed composition advocates for a “diverse, balanced mix of community perspectives, yet proposes the inclusion of organizations with specific perspectives. In addition, the current plan assumes that the organizational members represent visitor industry expertise and opportunity. As such, the plan *acknowledges* that at least half of the group’s members do not present a neutral or unknown viewpoint regarding the visitor industry, but rather, a known viewpoint, consistent with the organization’s goals and objectives. This presents a serious challenge to the goal of providing a “balanced” composition. It would effectively require that the “citizens not involved in the tourism industry” be chosen for having perspectives in opposition to organizational members.

We are also concerned with the selection process of group members. It is our understanding that the organizations identified as members of the group will nominate their own representatives to serve. It is further assumed that these representatives are expected to share the viewpoint of the organization that has nominated them. However, there is no such process outlined for the citizen (non-tourism) members. It is likely that they will be chosen not by their “organization” (the public), but by either the LRPC or Assembly, thus making their appointment a political one.

We propose that the VIP 2.0 be amended as follows:

First, we recommend that no organization receive membership status, but, that instead, all seats be made open to the general public. Second the text describing the “balanced” nature of the group be amended to read, “members of the work group are selected based on the following criteria: knowledge and/or contributions to the subject at hand (visitor industry planning); willingness/ability to engage in a collaborative decision-making process and; effect of the individual’s selection on the balance of the overall group composition.”

These changes would allow individuals with perspectives similar to many of the current organizations to have a seat, while ensuring a balance of perspectives are present.

### **Decision-making Process**

VIP 2.0 does not ensure that a collaborative process be used in decision-making. Rather, while it advocates for a “working consensus” model, it allows for majority and minority opinions should consensus not be reached. We feel strongly that the plan must adopt a policy that consensus be reached on all decisions, especially important when contentious issues are being taken up. Therefore, we recommend that the following language be adopted:

“The VIP 2.0 work group will adhere to a collaborative process for decision making that includes the following components:

- Consensus decision-making: all decisions of the work group require consensus in order to be approved. At no time will voting or other non-consensus decision-making processes be incorporated.
- Public Process: The work group will at all times incorporate opportunities for public participation in decision-making including forums, public comment periods, open meetings, and information sharing.
- Diverse Perspectives: The work group will seek the input of diverse perspectives in all decision-making.”

### **Conclusion**

It cannot be overstated that the composition and decision-making process of the work group will dramatically impact the implementation of VIP 2.0. For this reason, we feel that it is critical that this component of VIP 2.0 carry with it the full support of the community. The current wording in VIP 2.0 does not satisfy this requirement. Should our suggestions meet with similar disapproval, and should no immediate solution be found, we recommend that NO provision be made for plan implementation as it relates to work group composition and decision-making process until there is agreement on the issue.