



NEWS RELEASE

www.penticton.ca

For immediate release

Penticton presents air service business case

Nov. 1, 2012

PENTICTON — The City of Penticton is pleased with the response to the presentation provided to Air Canada officials this week. The delegation members are optimistic as to a positive outcome.

“Our presentation to Air Canada was extremely well-timed, as the airline is currently in the middle of planning their schedule for the coming year,” said Mayor Dan Ashton. “They clearly understood Penticton’s challenges with respect to the lack of adequate seat capacity and flight frequency to Vancouver, and well as the need for direct service to Alberta.”

A City of Penticton delegation flew to Montreal this week to meet with Air Canada officials about the level of air service in the South Okanagan, and the potential opportunities for expanded offerings. The airline currently provides three daily flights from Penticton to Vancouver Monday through Saturday, with two flights on Sundays. The feedback received from the travelling public indicates that there is a strong demand for an additional daily departure from Penticton between 7 to 9 a.m., and arrival at Penticton between 6 and 10 p.m.

The City has been aggressively pursuing enhanced air service for the Penticton Regional Airport (YWF) after forming a stakeholder steering committee earlier this year. City staff has been working with a consultant to prepare business cases for consideration by both Air Canada and WestJet. Research clearly identified that the region is underserved and that the local market can support additional service to Vancouver as well as new service to Calgary, the two top destinations of local passengers. Currently more than 50 percent of the local market uses the Kelowna International Airport to fly to these two destinations.

Air travel within the South Okanagan was extensively studied using actual ticket data from residents who travel by air from the region. In addition, consultation was carried out with surveys of local travel agencies, airport passengers and 70 key local businesses. Their responses were used to substantiate market demand for non-stop air service to Calgary, as well as the need for an additional daily flight to Vancouver.

In 2011, Penticton Airport served approximately 80,000 passengers; however, market analysis identified that the total air travel market is more than 210,000 annual passengers – sufficient to support an additional daily flight to Vancouver and two daily flights to Calgary.

- 30 -

Contact:
Dan Ashton
Penticton Mayor
250-809-2540