

Maple Creek Trans-Canada Visitor Reception Centre
Retail Pop-Up Store Program
Request for Expressions of Interest

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Town of Maple Creek in partnership with Cypress Hills Destination Area Inc. (CHDA Inc.) is seeking expressions of interest from businesses located within the Town of Maple Creek to operate pop-up stores at the Maple Creek Trans-Canada Visitor Centre.

There are six pop-up store retail display cases located at the VRC that are approximately 6' tall and approximately 2' x 2' square (the cases are best described as tall and skinny – see attached photos).

The objectives of the pop-up store cases are:

- Raise awareness of the retail experiences available to visitors in Maple Creek and encourage visitors to travel into Maple Creek just 5 minutes south of the Trans-Canada.
- Generate operating revenue for the VRC through the payment of a \$150.00 rental fee for the use of the pop-up store display case for the season, and a 15% commission on all merchandise sold from the pop-up store cases over the course of the season.

Selection of the local businesses offered the opportunity to operate a pop-store at the VRC will be based on:

- Is the business located within the Town of Maple Creek?
- Does the business have a storefront retail location that is open to the public regular business hours a minimum of five days per week?
- The tourism appeal of the retail business. Does the business offer a unique retail experience and range of products that appeal to a tourism market and that are unique / compelling enough to motivate travel into Maple Creek off the Trans-Canada?
- Do the retail items offered by the business physically fit within one of the existing pop-up store display cases in a way that maximizes the range of products displayed in and sold from the pop-up store case.
- Will the products offered by the retail business in the pop-up store display case be of a price-point, size and appeal that will ensure regular on-going sales from the pop-up store throughout the operating season to an extent that maximizes the commission that the VRC can expect to realize in support facility operations?
- Preference will be given to Active Partners of CHDA Inc., followed by businesses recognized as serving the tourism industry.

Expressions of interests can be submitted to tourism@maplecreek.ca no later than 5:00pm on Thursday April 26th, 2019.

In 2017, the Maple Creek Trans-Canada VRC received approximately 25,000 visitors.

Businesses not selected for participation in the pop-up store program can still be featured at the VRC for the 2018 season by displaying brochures & rack cards for a nominal \$25.00 rack fee.

BACKGROUND:

In the 2017-2018 Provincial Budget, it was announced that Province of Saskatchewan would be closing the Trans-Canada Visitor Reception Centres operated by Tourism Saskatchewan at Maple Creek and Fleming.

Given that the Trans-Canada Visitor Reception Centre (VRC) at Maple Creek sees 20,000 to 25,000 visitors annually, and that these visitors are at the gateway to the Cypress Hills Destination Area and only five minutes away from the Town of Maple Creek's commercial core, it was felt that closing the Trans-Canada VRC would have a detrimental impact on the region's tourism industry.

As a result, the Town of Maple Creek and Cypress Hills Destination Area Inc. (CHDA Inc.) formed a partnership to take over the operations of the Trans-Canada VRC in 2017.

In 2017 approval for a one-year pilot project was granted to the Town of Maple Creek and CHDA Inc. by the Province of Saskatchewan to assume the operations of the Trans-Canada VRC for the 2017 summer season.

Given the success of the pilot project, the Town of Maple Creek & CHDA Inc. were awarded the opportunity to operate the VRC again in 2018. The Town of Maple Creek & CHDA Inc. are currently finalizing a three year agreement to operate the VRC (2019 – 2021).

The objectives in continuing the operations of the Trans-Canada VRC are to put the visitor experiences offered by the Town of Maple Creek and CHDA Inc. before the eyes of 20,000 to 25,000 visitors annually, and to use the Trans-Canada VRC as a "point of conversion" to encourage these visitors to turn south at the junction of the Trans-Canada and Highway #21.

POP-UP STORES:

As a way of showcasing the unique retail experiences offered by Maple Creek and the CHDA, six display cases have been installed at the VRC to serve as "pop-up stores."

The objective of the pop-up stores is to raise awareness and interest in Maple Creek and the CHDA as a destination for retail experiences, and to entice visitors to further explore the broader range of shopping opportunities that exist just five minutes south.

Each display case will feature one retail business. Selection of the local businesses offered the opportunity to operate a pop-store at the VRC will be based on:

- Is the business located within the Town of Maple Creek?
- Does the business have a storefront retail location that is open to the public regular business hours a minimum of five days per week?
- The tourism appeal of the retail business. Does the business offer a unique retail experience and range of products that appeal to a tourism market and that are unique / compelling enough to motivate travel into Maple Creek off the Trans-Canada?
- Do the retail items offered by the business physically fit within one of the existing pop-up store display cases in a way that maximizes the range of products displayed in and sold from the pop-up store case.

- Will the products offered by the retail business in the pop-up store display case be of a price-point, size and appeal that will ensure regular on-going sales from the pop-up store throughout the operating season to an extent that maximizes the commission that the VRC can expect to realize in support facility operations?
- Preference will be given to Active Partners of CHDA Inc., followed by businesses recognized as serving the tourism industry.

Each pop-up store will feature examples of the unique products of the retailer and may also include a small panel of information about the retailer and their value proposition as a retail tourism destination.

The products selected by the retailer for their pop-up store at the VRC should convey the essence of the retail experience that visitors can expect to have at the main retail location. The products selected should also serve to inspire visitors to further explore the broader extent of the products and services offered by the retailer at their primary location.

The products on display in the pop-up store display case must be something commonly available at the main retail location, and must be able to be sold out of the pop-up store display case by VRC staff to visitors at the VRC.

The products on display in the pop-up store display case should be the same retail price for the product as the product is sold for at the primary retail location so that visitors are given an accurate impression of the pricing offered at the primary retail location.

DISPLAY CASES:

Given the limited space in the Trans-Canada VRC, the pop-up store display cases are somewhat compact. Each case is two feet square, six feet tall, feature two to three glass shelves, and have a small storage compartment in the base for additional inventory. The top of the display case can also be used to display products.

Each case will have a glass door that can be left on the display case requiring the public to open and close the case should they wish to have a closer look at products, or the door can be removed in order to create open shelving for ease of customer access.

POP-UP STORE CONDITIONS & LOGISTICS:

1. The retailer pays a \$150.00 fee in advance. The fee is the “lease” of the display case for the 2019 operating season (May – Sept.). The cheque is to be made payable to the “Town of Maple Creek.”
2. The retailer is responsible for the initial stocking and set up the pop-up store display case.
3. When products in the pop-up store need to be re-stocked after a sale:
 - a. VRC staff will re-stock from extra inventory stored in the base of the display case, or;
 - b. VRC staff will contact the retailer notifying them of the need to re-stock products and make arrangements for the retailer to either bring replacement products out to the VRC or have them dropped off at the W.R. Orr Building in Maple Creek so

that the products can be picked up by VRC staff and taken out to the VRC the following day.

4. Retailers will be responsible for providing VRC staff with a copy of their inventory for all products provided for the retailer's pop-up store. This inventory will be confirmed by VRC staff and signed off by both parties.
5. Each pop-up store will have its own department key on the VRC cash register that will be used to track all sales from each pop-up store. The department key will be pre-programmed to automatically add the requisite tax to the items being sold. However, as each pop-up store will only have one department key, the requisite tax charged on items sold through the pop-up store must be the same for ALL items (i.e.: Only stock products in the pop-up store that require both GST & PST as there will not be an opportunity to do tax exemptions on a product by product basis).
6. If the retailer is a CHDA Inc. "Active Partner" that normally adds a DMF charge to products at the point of check-out; for the purposes of the pop-up store program at the VRC, it is requested that CHDA Inc. members simply increased the sales price of all products sold through their pop-up store by 2% in order to ensure that the 2% DMF is collected consistently and efficiently.
7. A 15% commission will be deducted by the Town of Maple Creek from the sale of all items sold by VRC staff out of the pop-up store display cases.
8. CCRA regulations require that whomever collects the GST & PST also be the one who remits the GST & PST. Therefore, as GST & PST will be collected at the VRC using the GST number of CHDA Inc., CHDA Inc. will remit all GST & PST collected on sales from the pop-up stores. CCRA has a form that each pop-store vendor signs transferring the sales tax collection and remittance responsibilities from the pop-up store owner to CHDA Inc.
9. Retailers will be issued a cheque from CHDA Inc. shortly after the end of each month as payment for all the product sold out of their pop-up store over the course of the month. This payment will represent the full retail value of the sales from their pop-up store, minus the 15% commission retained by the Town of Maple Creek on each sale. GST & PST will not be included in the cheque as this will have already been remitted to the government by CHDA Inc.
10. Although the VRC is equipped with an alarm system and there is typically a minimum of two employees on site at the VRC watching the pop-up stores at all times; in the unlikely event of theft, the retailer is responsible for covering any losses or insurance claims.
11. The Town of Maple Creek reserves the right to prohibit the exhibition and sale of products in the pop-up stores that in the opinion of the Town of Maple Creek and/or CHDA Inc. are inappropriate.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

The Trans-Canada VRC is open seven days a week 9:00am to 7:00pm from the Victoria Day long weekend to the Labour Day long weekend.

After the Labour Day weekend, the VRC will be operated 9:00am to 5:00pm five days a week until the end of September.

Pop-up stores must be stocked and ready to open on Saturday May 18th, 2019.

END OF SEASON / DISSOLUTION OF AGREEMENT:

Selection for participation in the pop-up store program is for one year only. Therefore, retailers should not anticipate an on-going arrangement as a result of being selected in 2019.

At the end of the 2019 season, retailers will be asked to pick up all remaining inventory from the VRC during in early October 2019.

The agreement for a pop-store at the VRC can be terminated by either party at any time before the end of September 2019 by means of written notification.

If termination is triggered by the retailer prior to the end of September 2019, no part of the \$150.00 lease fee for the pop-up store will be reimbursed. If the termination is triggered by the Town of Maple Creek/CHDA Inc. prior to the end of September 2019, the reimbursement of the \$150.00 lease fee will be prorated.

PHOTO:



The photo above shows three of the pop-up store display cases at the Maple Creek Trans-Canada Visitor Reception Centre. There are six identical cases in total. Each case will house a separate pop-up store.