

Tourism Industry Association of BC

2020 All Candidates Information Package



About TIABC

For 50 years, the Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC) has served as the provincial voice of tourism, working with communities and tourism sector interest holders across rural, urban and Indigenous communities throughout B.C.

Its members and partners include accommodation providers, attractions, Destination Management Organizations, restaurants, sector associations, transportation companies and tourism operators of every size.

TIABC works with municipal, provincial, federal and Indigenous governments to advance policies that support tourism growth, investment and strong communities.

For municipal candidates, TIABC provides practical information and a province-wide perspective on how decisions related to housing, infrastructure, land use, transportation, regulation and community investment affect local tourism businesses and the people they employ.



PHOTO CREDIT KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM/MITCH WINTON

TIABC respectfully acknowledges that our work takes place across the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of First Nations throughout BC. We honour the Indigenous Peoples and communities who have cared for these lands and waters since time immemorial and remain grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and welcome visitors throughout the province.

Information Package

The All Candidates Tourism Information Package is designed to give municipal election candidates the information they need to understand, discuss and act on the importance of tourism to the economic and social well-being of their communities. This package brings together practical resources, key messages and the leading issues affecting local tourism from a municipal perspective, helping candidates see clearly how decisions about infrastructure, housing, transportation, land use, investment and community planning shape the strength of the visitor economy.

Resource Links

Tourism Industry Association of BC
<https://www.tiabc.ca>

DestinationBC - Value of Tourism

<https://www.destinationbc.ca/who-we-are/the-power-of-tourism-bc>

2024 value of tourism data, released in February 2026, demonstrates the economic powerhouse that is tourism in BC.

Look West Tourism Sector Action Plan

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/look-west-strategy/diversifying-markets-and-growing-targeted-sectors/tourism-action-plan>

A strategic roadmap launched by the BC government to double the province's tourism revenue to \$48 billion by 2036.

BC Destination Management Organization Association

<https://bcdmoa.ca/bcdmoa-members/>

A list of local Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), along with contact information for each organization. Your local DMO will be able to assist you with tourism information about your community.



Key Messages: Economic Impact



Tourism Generates Tax Revenue That Supports Communities

Tourism-generated tax revenues help fund the public services and infrastructure such as roads, public spaces, transit and emergency services that communities rely on. The BC tourism industry generates approximately **\$2.1 billion in combined provincial and municipal tax revenue annually**.

Source: Destination BC, 2024 Value of Tourism: A Snapshot of Tourism in BC



Tourism Creates Jobs

Tourism provides employment in communities of every size, including rural, remote and Indigenous communities. It supports careers in accommodation, food services, transportation, attractions, recreation, events and many other sectors. **In 2024, tourism supported more than 113,000 direct jobs in British Columbia and nearly 163,000 full-time jobs when indirect and induced employment was included.**

Source: Destination BC, Tourism in BC: New 2024 Data Highlights a Growing Economic Engine and Lasting Community Impact



Tourism Is One of BC's Largest Resource Industries

BC's mountains, forests, coastlines, lakes, wildlife and outdoor recreation opportunities are among the province's most valuable tourism assets. **Tourism generates \$23 billion in provincial revenue and contributes nearly \$8 billion to BC's GDP; more than other resource sectors including forestry, mining, and oil & gas.**

Source: Destination BC, Tourism in BC: New 2024 Data Highlights a Growing Economic Engine and Lasting Community Impact



Key Messages: Economic Impact



Tourism Is One of BC's Largest Exports

When international visitors purchase accommodations, transportation, meals, attractions and other tourism services, they bring new money into British Columbia's economy. **Tourism generates \$5.2 billion in annual export revenue**, exceeding agriculture, mining and quarrying and ranking behind only forestry and oil and gas extraction among the sectors compared.

Source: Destination BC, The Visitor Economy



Tourism Depends on Supportive Public Policy

Municipal decisions related to housing, land use, permitting, infrastructure, transportation, public safety and community investment directly affect the ability of tourism businesses to operate, invest and grow. Nearly **17,000 businesses directly provide services to visitors across British Columbia**, and **77 per cent of residents agree that provincial investment in tourism infrastructure is important**.

Source: Destination BC, Residents' Perceptions of British Columbia's Tourism Industry



Tourism Is Central to BC's Future

The Province's Look West Tourism Sector Action Plan recognizes tourism as a priority economic sector. Achieving its objectives will require coordinated action from industry and all levels of government. The plan sets a goal of **doubling annual tourism revenues to \$48 billion by 2036** by improving destination access, supporting events, attracting investment, strengthening marketing and creating a more supportive business environment.

Source: Government of British Columbia, Look West: Tourism Sector Action Plan



TOURISM: BC'S ECONOMIC SUPERPOWER

Tourism is one of British Columbia's most powerful economic engines, supporting jobs, communities, Indigenous tourism, small businesses, and long term provincial prosperity.

STRONGER ECONOMY.
STRONGER COMMUNITIES.
STRONGER BC.

1 TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS



\$23 BILLION

Annual Tourism
Revenue



NEARLY
**\$8
BILLION**

Contribution
to BC GDP



16,925

Tourism
Businesses



163,000

Jobs directly
supported by
visitor spending



340,000

Tourism & Hospitality
Workforce



**\$5
BILLION**

Annual Wages
& Salaries



**\$2.1
BILLION**

Provincial & Municipal
Tax Revenue



400+

Indigenous Tourism
Businesses



**\$1.1
BILLION**

Indigenous Tourism
Economic Impact



**\$6
BILLION+**

Export Revenue
Generated Annually

• All figures sourced from TIABC Budget Submission 2027. •

2 BC'S GOAL

LOOK WEST TOURISM SECTOR ACTION PLAN

TODAY
**\$23
BILLION**

Annual Tourism Revenue



GOAL BY 2036

**\$48
BILLION**

Annual Tourism Revenue



Tourism revenue is projected to more than double through strategic investment and coordinated action.

3 TOURISM INVESTMENT PAYS BACK

DESTINATION
MARKETING ROI



**\$1
INVESTED
=**

\$23.85

ECONOMIC IMPACT

DESTINATION
DEVELOPMENT ROI



**\$1
INVESTED
=**

\$2.25

ECONOMIC IMPACT

BUSINESS
EVENTS ROI



**\$1
INVESTED
=**

\$16.4

ECONOMIC IMPACT



For More Information
About TIABC
info@tiabc.ca
or visit our website
www.tiabc.ca

Look West Tourism Sector Action Plan

The Province of British Columbia's **Look West Tourism Sector Action Plan** identifies tourism as a priority industry with the potential to strengthen communities, diversify the economy and create jobs throughout the province. Although the action plan has a provincial focus, its success will depend on decisions made by municipal governments.

Built around a **five-point action plan**, the strategy establishes a goal of increasing annual visitor spending to **\$48 billion by 2036**.

#1 Marketing: Inspiring the World to Explore BC

Municipal governments support this work by partnering with **Destination Marketing Organizations** and accommodation providers. Protecting the integrity of the **Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT)** ensures visitor-generated revenues continue to fund tourism marketing and destination development

#2 Destination Access: Widening the Doors to BC

Municipalities contribute by improving local transit connections, roads, parking, sidewalks, cycling routes, signage and access to attractions, downtowns, accommodations and recreation areas. They also have an important advocacy role in securing better air, ferry, highway and intercommunity transportation services.

#3 Event Hosting: Hosting the World Through Culture and Commerce

Municipal governments are essential partners because they control many event venues, public spaces, permits, and local services. Communities can support this goal by developing event strategies, simplifying approval processes and investing in facilities capable of hosting cultural, sporting, business and community events.

#4 Investment Attraction: Fuelling B.C.'s Tourism Economic Potential

Municipal governments influence whether investment proceeds through zoning, development charges, servicing requirements, approval timelines and the availability of suitable land. Communities can support investment by identifying development opportunities, providing clear information and creating predictable approval processes. Investors have choices.

#5 Enabling Growth: Removing Roadblocks to Tourism Growth

Municipalities can advance this work by reviewing outdated bylaws, improving permitting timelines, coordinating municipal departments and consulting tourism operators before introducing new fees or regulations. They can also use reliable tourism data when making decisions about housing, infrastructure, transportation and economic development.

Key Messages: Community Impact



Tourism Enhances Quality of Life

Tourism supports the events, cultural programming, vibrant public spaces, local experiences, and community gathering places that make communities more enjoyable places to live. For residents, this creates more opportunities to connect with one another, celebrate local identity, and feel a stronger sense of belonging and pride in their community.



Tourism Helps Create Vibrant Downtowns

Visitor spending supports local retailers, restaurants, cafés, galleries, and entertainment venues. For residents, this means more local choices, stronger main streets, fewer vacant storefronts, and a downtown that feels active and welcoming.



Tourism Expands Recreation Opportunities

Tourism helps build demand and support for trails, waterfront access, cycling routes, sports facilities, and outdoor recreation infrastructure. Residents benefit directly through better access to recreation, healthier lifestyles, and more ways to enjoy their community year-round. These opportunities also contribute to the mental and physical health of residents.



Key Messages: Community Impact



Tourism Supports Community Amenities

Tax revenues generated by tourism help support the maintenance and enhancement of community amenities, from sidewalks, parks, and public spaces to museums, conference facilities, cultural venues, transportation services, and recreational infrastructure. These investments benefit residents every day while ensuring communities remain welcoming, functional, and attractive for visitors.



Tourism Strengthens Workforce Attraction and Retention

Communities with strong restaurants, recreation, cultural activity, and a clear sense of place are more attractive to workers and their families. This helps local employers recruit and retain people, while giving residents access to a broader range of services and employment opportunities.



Tourism Helps Create Places Where People Want to Live

Tourism encourages investment in a community's identity, appearance, accessibility, and overall experience. For residents, that creates greater local pride, stronger neighbourhoods, and a community that is more attractive to businesses, workers, families, and future investment.



PHOTO CREDIT DESTINATION BC/REUBEN KRABBE

Sector Issues

This section highlights the key tourism issues municipal candidates should be aware of and provides practical questions to ask yourself as you consider your position on the sector. Use these resources to consider how municipal decisions affect tourism businesses, workers and residents, and to help ensure the decisions you support contribute to a strong and sustainable local visitor economy.

ISSUE: Build Safe, Accessible & Welcoming Communities

Visitors and residents value the same things: clean public spaces, safe streets, accessible facilities, clear signage, working washrooms and well-maintained parks, downtowns and waterfronts. Municipal investments in accessibility, public safety and community amenities improve the visitor experience while making communities better places to live.

Questions to Ask Yourself

How will you improve the safety, cleanliness and accessibility of public spaces used by residents and visitors?

Will you support accessibility audits of municipal facilities, parks, trails, events and visitor services?

How will you address public safety concerns while ensuring vulnerable residents receive appropriate housing, health and social supports?

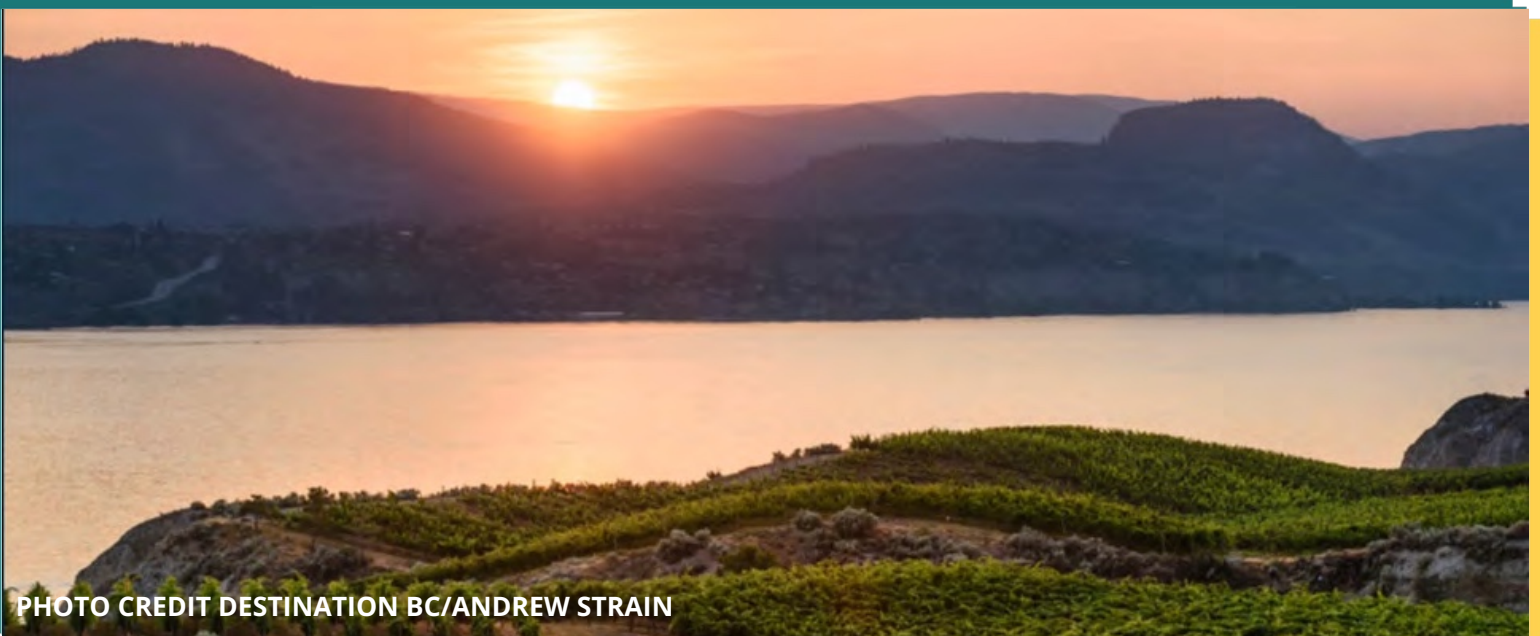


PHOTO CREDIT DESTINATION BC/ANDREW STRAIN

ISSUE: Create the Conditions for Tourism Investment

Tourism businesses need predictable rules, reasonable timelines and clear municipal processes. Investment stalls when permits are delayed, bylaws conflict or applicants cannot get a straight answer from municipal departments. Communities that are prepared for investment are more likely to attract new accommodation, attractions, restaurants, events and visitor services.

Municipalities influence land use, zoning, development fees, business licensing, servicing requirements and approval timelines. Investors compare communities before committing capital. Municipal certainty matters.

Questions to Ask Yourself

Will you establish clear timelines and service standards for permits, inspections, rezoning applications and business licences?

How will you reduce unnecessary duplication and delays affecting tourism businesses?

Will you support a tourism investment-readiness plan that identifies suitable land, infrastructure capacity and development opportunities?

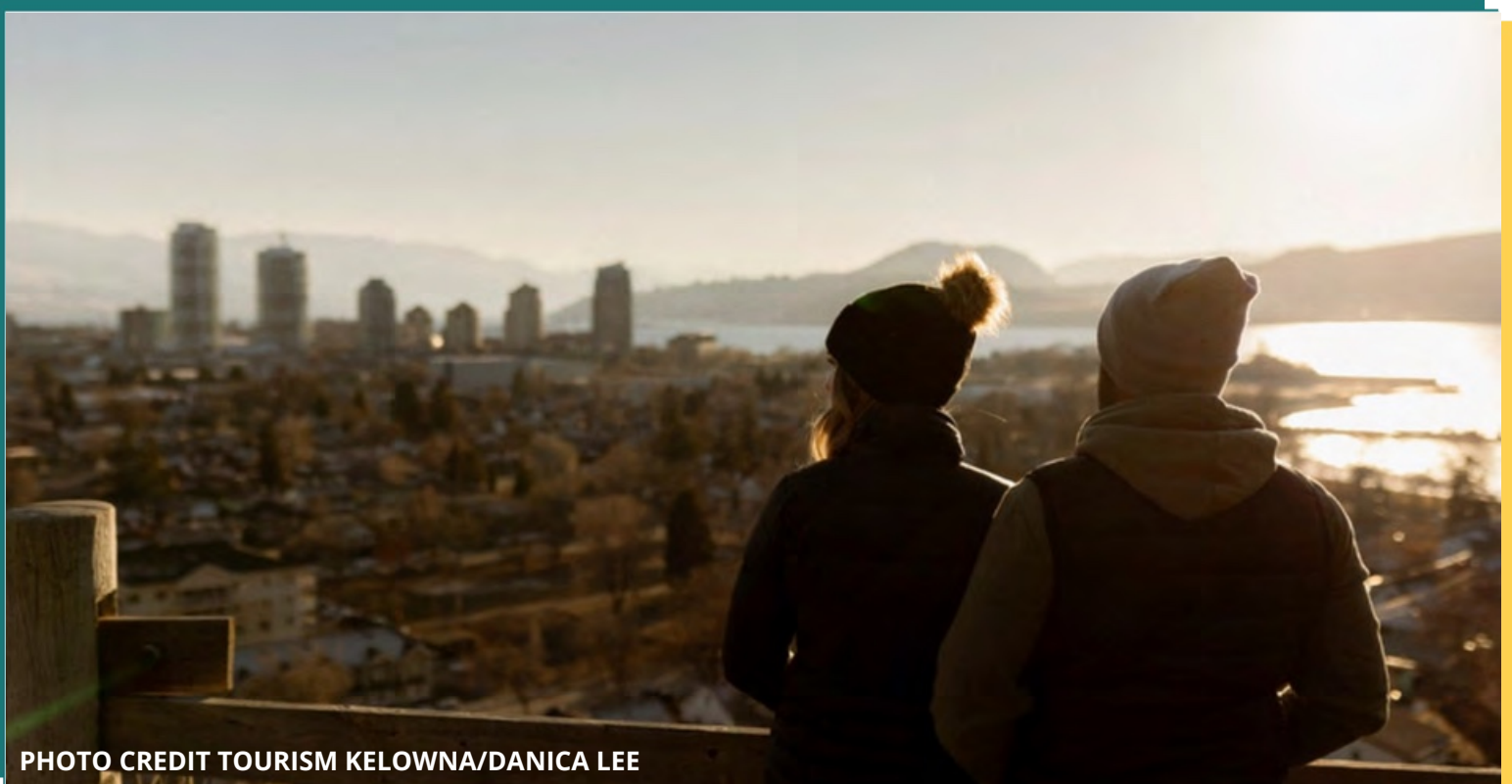


PHOTO CREDIT TOURISM KELOWNA/DANICA LEE

ISSUE: Ensure Tourism Workers Can Live in the Community

Tourism businesses cannot operate without workers, and workers cannot remain in communities where housing is unavailable or unaffordable. Municipal housing plans should include the needs of tourism workers, seasonal employees and other people who support the local visitor economy.

Local governments control important housing decisions through zoning, density, development approvals and land-use planning. Housing, workforce stability and visitor accommodation should be considered together rather than treated as unrelated policy files

Questions to Ask Yourself

How will you increase attainable rental and workforce housing in the community?

Will you support staff housing, seasonal housing and other appropriate housing models?

How will you balance the need for permanent housing with the need for legitimate visitor accommodation?

Will Short Term Rentals impact staff housing in our community? if so, what will you do to ensure that the impact is minimized?



PHOTO CREDIT DESTINATION BC

ISSUE: Include Tourism in Community Planning

Tourism should be included in official community plans, economic-development strategies, transportation plans, emergency plans and municipal budgets.

Municipal plans influence where tourism businesses can operate, where investment can occur and what infrastructure will be available. Early tourism-sector involvement produces better decisions and fewer expensive surprises later.

Questions to Ask Yourself

Will you recognize tourism as an economic sector in the official community plan and municipal strategic plan?

How will tourism operators and Destination Management Organizations be included in planning and policy decisions?

What measures will you use to assess whether tourism is benefiting the community?



PHOTO CREDIT DESTINATION BC/KARI MEDIG

ISSUE: Invest in Infrastructure and Visitor Access

Tourism depends on reliable roads, water and wastewater systems, broadband, cellular service, public transit, parking, trails, recreation facilities, washrooms and signage. A community cannot promote visitor growth while ignoring the infrastructure required to support it.

Municipalities may not control highways, ferries or air service, but they control many local transportation connections and have a strong advocacy role with senior governments. Infrastructure used by visitors also serves residents and local businesses

Questions to Ask Yourself

What infrastructure investments are needed to support tourism growth in this community?

How will you ensure that accessibility considerations are part of infrastructure and community planning?

How will you improve connections between downtowns, accommodation, transportation hubs, attractions and recreation areas?

Will tourism demand be included in the municipality's long-term infrastructure and asset-management planning?



PHOTO CREDIT DESTINATION BC/MITCH WINTON

ISSUE: Partner with Indigenous Communities

Tourism development should be planned in partnership with the First Nations on whose territories communities are located. Effective partnerships may include shared planning, infrastructure, signage, events, visitor information and investment opportunities. These relationships require early engagement, respect and a willingness to listen before decisions are made.

Indigenous tourism must be Indigenous led. Municipalities have an important role as respectful partners in planning, investment, events, infrastructure and destination development

Questions to Ask Yourself

How will you strengthen relationships with local First Nations?

Will Indigenous governments and tourism businesses be included in tourism planning and economic-development discussions?

How will the municipality support Indigenous-led tourism opportunities without speaking on behalf of Indigenous communities?



PHOTO CREDIT DESTINATION BC/ABBY COOPER

ISSUE: Plan for Emergencies Year-Round

Good municipal planning supports tourism growth in ordinary times and protects the community when conditions change quickly. Communities must be prepared for wildfires, flooding, extreme weather and transportation disruptions that affect visitors and tourism businesses.

Visitors may not know local geography, evacuation routes or where to find accurate information. Tourism businesses and destination organizations can assist with communication, preparedness and recovery, but they need to be included before an emergency occurs.

Questions to Ask Yourself

How will tourism operators and destination organizations be included in emergency planning and exercises?

Does the municipality have clear visitor communication, evacuation and economic-recovery plans?



PHOTO CREDIT DESTINATION BC/KARI MEDIG

ISSUE: Protect Tourism Funding & Strengthen Local Partnerships

The Municipal and Regional District Tax, or MRDT, is an important source of funding for local tourism marketing, destination development, visitor services and other initiatives that support the long-term health of the visitor economy. The MRDT is paid by visitors and is intended to support tourism marketing, programs and projects that strengthen the local visitor economy.

Its integrity depends on municipalities working in genuine partnership with Destination Management Organizations and accommodation owners when setting priorities, approving plans and determining how revenues will be used.

Questions to Ask Yourself

Will you protect MRDT revenues and ensure they continue to be used for their intended tourism purposes?

How will you work with destination management organizations and accommodation owners when developing MRDT plans and tourism priorities?

Will you support transparent decision-making, clear performance measures and regular reporting on how tourism revenues are invested?

Will you consult tourism partners before proposing changes to the use, administration or governance of MRDT funds?



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Your Leadership Matters

As a municipal candidate, the decisions you support will influence local businesses, workers, infrastructure, investment and the experiences that make your community a place people want to visit, live and build a future.

Take the time to learn about the issues affecting tourism, speak with local operators and work closely with your Destination Management Organization. Their knowledge, data and experience can help you make informed decisions that strengthen the visitor economy and deliver lasting benefits for residents.

Your leadership can ensure tourism is understood, valued and reflected in future municipal priorities.

The next step is yours to make BC Tourism Count!

For further information on TIABC or the value of tourism to your community please reach us using the contact details below:

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#BCTOURISMCOUNTS



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