

# **TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (TIABC)**

## 2025 ADVOCACY REPORT



[WWW.TIABC.CA](http://WWW.TIABC.CA)

2025



# CONTENTS

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Message from TIABC Leadership   | 03 |
| About TIABC                     | 04 |
| Partnerships & Sector Alignment | 05 |
| Advocacy Framework              | 06 |
| 2025 Advocacy at a Glance       | 07 |
| Priority Files & Submissions    | 09 |
| Looking Ahead to 2026           | 17 |
| Acknowledgements                | 18 |



# MESSAGE FROM TIABC LEADERSHIP

Along with being one of British Columbia’s most valuable business sectors, tourism is a significant export industry that creates jobs, supports families, generates investment, drives entrepreneurship, advances regional prosperity, and builds community vibrancy in every corner of the province.

**In 2025**, TIABC advanced a high-impact advocacy agenda focused on strengthening competitiveness, improving investment readiness, building resilience, and reducing barriers that limit growth of the tourism sector. We heard clearly from members that regulatory complexity, infrastructure deficiencies, permitting delays, transportation constraints, and emergency-related pressures continued to affect the sector’s ability to plan, invest, and retain labour.

In response, TIABC elevated tourism’s role in BC’s broader economic narrative and championed practical, solutions-focused policy recommendations grounded in operator reality and aligned with government decision frameworks. A key milestone this year was TIABC’s work supporting sector representation on the Premier’s Task Force on Trade and Economic Security, reinforcing tourism’s contribution to economic growth and stability during a period of global uncertainty.

TIABC also strengthened its policy capacity through a partnership with the Wilderness Tourism Association (WTA). The addition of a dedicated Policy Director increased our ability to support multiple files simultaneously, deepen regional engagement, and advance reconciliation-aligned partnerships and stewardship priorities.

TIABC is proud to represent and unite the visitor economy—supporting a competitive, sustainable, welcoming British Columbia.



**Walt Judas, CEO**



**J.J. Belanger, Chair**



# ABOUT TIABC

The Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC) advocates for the interests of BC's \$22+ billion visitor economy. As a not-for-profit tourism industry association, TIABC works collaboratively with its members – private sector tourism businesses, industry associations, destination management organizations, and post-secondary institutions to ensure the best working environment for a competitive tourism industry, and to help the sector reach its full potential economically, socially, culturally, and through the lens of sustainability.



## OUR VISION

Through consistent, focused and strategic advocacy, establish BC's tourism sector as the most recognized and valued industry for residents of British Columbia.

## OUR MISSION

TIABC works to influence government policy and regulation on behalf of its business, education, sector association and destination management organization members to empower British Columbia's tourism industry to reach its full potential economically, socially, culturally, and through the lens of sustainability.

Practically, this includes:

- ▶ Championing tourism as a trade-ready export sector and an investment driver across urban, rural, and Indigenous communities
- ▶ Lobbying government and advocating as the Voice of Tourism on policy, regulation and barriers to growth and prosperity
- ▶ Connecting operators, DMOs, sector associations and other stakeholders to government decision-makers to help shape the tourism business environment



# PARTNERSHIPS & SECTOR ALIGNMENT

TIABC acknowledges that the tourism industry operates and benefits from lands within the unceded and traditional territories of British Columbia's Indigenous Peoples.

TIABC's advocacy is strengthened through active partnerships with:



Provincial, Regional and community destination management organizations (DMOs) and destination partners



Associations representing all sub-sectors of tourism and hospitality



Indigenous partners and collaborators



Provincial and federal tourism counterparts



Economic development and community leadership organizations

*The TIABC-Wilderness Tourism Association partnership model enabled expanded capacity and strengthened sector alignment within the wilderness and adventure tourism segments.*



# ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK

TIABC’s advocacy work is guided by member priorities and informed through structured policy review, regional engagement, and partner alignment.

Our approach is rooted in collaboration. We work alongside provincial and federal agencies, regional and community destination management organizations, sector associations, post-secondary institutions, Indigenous partners, and economic development leaders to ensure tourism remains a priority for all levels of government.

TIABC’s advocacy work is rooted in the organization’s rolling Strategic Plan, which prioritizes **Advocacy & Policy Development, Membership, Communications, Operations, and DEIR (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Reconciliation).**

In 2025, our efforts aligned across four core pillars:

|                |  |  |
|----------------|--|--|
| <b>COMPETE</b> | Position tourism as a productivity and competitiveness driver        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export growth</li> <li>• Investment readiness</li> <li>• Market strength</li> </ul>                 |
| <b>BUILD</b>   | Advance policies enabling development and infrastructure             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MRDT</li> <li>• Permitting</li> <li>• Land-use</li> <li>• Capital investment</li> </ul>             |
| <b>PROTECT</b> | Strengthen business resilience and continuity                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency readiness</li> <li>• Recovery tools</li> <li>• Stable operating environment</li> </ul>    |
| <b>CONNECT</b> | Unite the entire tourism ecosystem through evidence-based engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roundtables</li> <li>• Partnerships</li> <li>• Intelligence gathering</li> <li>• Surveys</li> </ul> |

*Tourism is not discretionary, it is a strategic investment in jobs, exports, communities, and regional prosperity.*



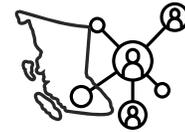
# ADVOCACY AT A GLANCE



**7** KEY POLICY FILES  
ADVANCED



**3** MINISTERIAL/GOVERNMENT  
ROUNDTABLES CONVENED  
WITH SECTOR



**8** MEMBER & PARTNER  
ROUNDTABLES HELD  
ACROSS BC



**1** PREMIER'S TASK  
FORCE TOURISM  
SUBMISSION  
DELIVERED



**2** BUDGET  
SUBMISSIONS  
DELIVERED  
(PROVINCIAL & FEDERAL)



**450+** INDUSTRY LEADERS  
CONVENED AT THE  
ANNUAL BC TOURISM  
INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

# KEY ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

| <br><b>COMPETE</b> | <br><b>BUILD</b> | <br><b>PROTECT</b> | <br><b>CONNECT</b> |
|---|---|--|---|
| Task Force submission   | MRDT modernization  | STR registry engagement  | Roundtables across BC   |
| Federal budget brief  | Land-use & tenure advocacy  | Emergency & business continuity  | Partner coalition work  |
| Aviation policy engagement  | Heritage Conservation Act   | Business resilience  | Policy committee  |



# MEMBER & PARTNER ROUNDTABLES ACROSS BC

TIABC convened and participated in a series of member and partner roundtables across the province throughout, with additional sessions continuing into early 2026. These roundtables included members representing DMOs, sector associations, Indigenous partners, tourism operators, municipalities, and regional economic development organizations.

## What we heard and validated:

- ▶ Short-term rental regulations are creating operational uncertainty for legitimate operators
- ▶ The use of the Municipal & Regional District Tax is under greater scrutiny by local governments and requires additional legislative protection to ensure its original purpose is retained
- ▶ Land-use and permitting delays remain major barriers to investment
- ▶ Transportation access and affordability are competitiveness issues
- ▶ Emergency readiness and business continuity needs are rising

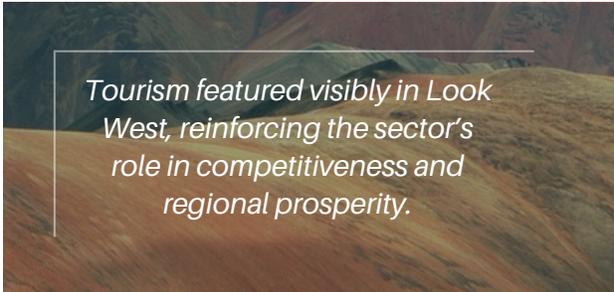
## Outcome:

Roundtable intelligence directly shaped TIABC's submissions and policy positioning across multiple files.

# ALIGNING TOURISM WITH BC'S ECONOMIC PRIORITIES (LOOK WEST, MANDATE LETTERS, TOURISM GROWTH STRATEGY)

Where possible, TIABC aligned its advocacy with government's economic competitiveness objectives through ongoing engagement with ministries and partners.

In late 2025, tourism featured more visibly in the Province's Look West strategy, reinforcing the visitor economy's role in economic growth and regional development. We acknowledge the leadership of the team at the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport (TACS) in advancing this work and ensuring tourism was positioned within broader government priorities, including the emerging Tourism Growth Strategy.



*Tourism featured visibly in Look West, reinforcing the sector's role in competitiveness and regional prosperity.*



# PRIORITY FILES & POLICY SUBMISSIONS

## A) PREMIER'S TASK FORCE ON TRADE & ECONOMIC SECURITY - TOURISM SUBMISSION **COMPETE**

In 2025, TIABC enlisted extensive sector, business and DMO input on a comprehensive tourism brief to the Premier's Task Force on Trade and Economic Security. This submission positioned tourism as a trade-ready export sector that can rapidly contribute to provincial economic stability and growth.

### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Promoted tourism as a non-tariff, export sector driving regional prosperity
- ▶ Identified shovel-ready investment opportunities and destination development needs
- ▶ Offered solutions to regulatory and permitting barriers limiting competitiveness
- ▶ Highlighted the importance of improving transportation access and market readiness in regional prosperity
- ▶ Outlined opportunities for innovation, productivity, and diversification across regions

*Tourism is one of BC's fastest-to-scale growth sectors unlocking benefits across more than 400 communities.*

### Outcome:

This work helped reinforce tourism's relevance as part of BC's broader competitiveness and economic security agenda, and contributed to tourism's inclusion in the Province's Look West strategy.





## B) MUNICIPAL & REGIONAL DISTRICT TAX (MRDT) STABILITY AND PROGRAM MODERNIZATION **BUILD**

MRDT remained a policy priority in 2025. TIABC worked with BC Destination Management Organization Association (BCDMOA), BC Hotel Association (BCHA), and multiple destination management organizations to reinforce that MRDT remains focused on its original intended purpose - marketing, projects and programs that attract visitors, promote tourism development, and enhance visitor experiences.

### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Streamlining the MRDT renewal process for DMOs
- ▶ Clarifying what constitutes a tourism project
- ▶ Reducing administrative burdens for established DMOs
- ▶ Improving transparency and alignment for Online Accommodation Platform revenue and reporting

### Outcome:

TIABC helped ensure MRDT discussions remained anchored in tourism competitiveness, not revenue diversion. Recommended MRDT regulation adjustments will be advanced in 2026.





## C) SHORT-TERM RENTAL (STR) REGULATIONS AND THE PROVINCIAL STR REGISTRY **BUILD**

The rollout of the provincial STR registry created concern among operators, particularly seasonal businesses and commercial accommodators inadvertently captured in the regulatory framework.

### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Improved clarity and simplified guidance for tourism accommodation providers to register
- ▶ Flexibility in timing of compliance, and simplifying early-bird registration requirements
- ▶ Stronger differentiation between bona fide commercial accommodations and non-tourism STRs
- ▶ Ongoing engagement to address unintended impacts in rural and resort communities

### Outcome:

TIABC advanced registry changes, helped resolve issues by operators inadvertently included in the regulations, and provided recommendations that assisted the Housing Ministry with its communication to accommodation providers.





## D) LAND-USE CERTAINTY, TENURES, AND ADVENTURE TOURISM POLICY MODERNIZATION **BUILD**

TIABC worked closely with the Adventure Tourism Coalition on recommendations to modernize the Adventure Tourism Policy, improve tenure pathways, and clarify cumulative impacts and benefits. TIABC also engaged in terrestrial and marine planning processes across BC, emphasizing:

### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Reconciliation-aligned collaboration and respectful engagement
- ▶ Co-governance readiness and planning certainty
- ▶ Consistent, transparent inclusion of tourism in land-use decisions
- ▶ Investment certainty for operators in rural and wilderness settings

### Outcome:

TIABC, as part of the Adventure Tourism Coalition (ATC), met multiple times with the Ministry of Water, Land & Resource Stewardship to address issues and redefine adventure tourism policy, with ongoing work scheduled in 2026.





## E) EASE OF DOING BUSINESS - REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS

COMPETE

TIABC responded to the Province’s Ease of Doing Business consultation led by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development & Innovation. Our submission highlighted the unique burden tourism faces as a multi-ministry, multi-permit sector.

### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Streamlining permitting and tenure processes while increasing term lengths
- ▶ Improving service standards for timelines and approvals
- ▶ Reducing administrative friction for SMEs through standardized guidance and coordinated inspections
- ▶ Advancing digital tools and coordinated systems across government
- ▶ Strengthening cross-ministry alignment so tourism is consistently recognized as a priority sector

### Outcome:

The Province has accepted the recommendations and continues to work with TIABC and other sector partners on reducing regulatory barriers.

## F) HERITAGE CONSERVATION ACT TRANSFORMATION

BUILD

TIABC submitted industry views and recommendations on the Province’s modernization of the Heritage Conservation Act, emphasizing:

### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Clarity around Indigenous authority and processes
- ▶ Practical pathways for disaster recovery and rebuilding
- ▶ Implications for private land and infrastructure development
- ▶ Respectful partner engagement with Indigenous governments

### Outcome:

Consultation on the Heritage Conservation Act has been extended into 2026 with further opportunities for TIABC input.



## G) EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES POLICY ADVOCACY

### COMPETE/BUILD

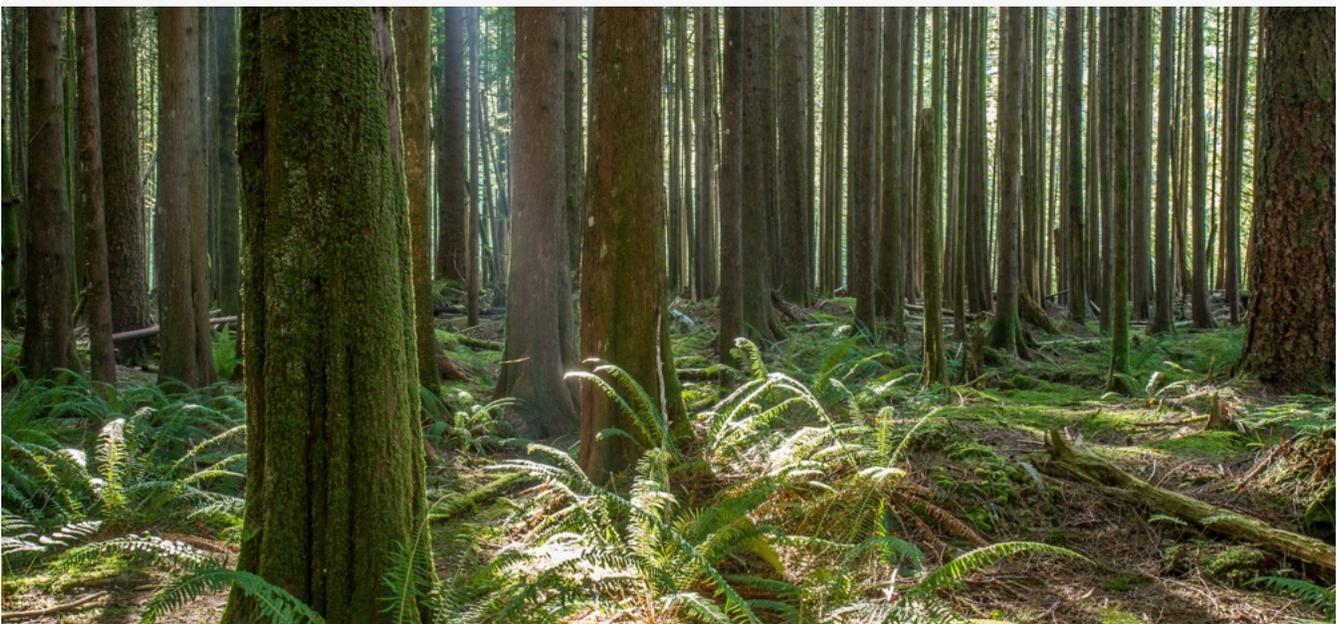
With increasing overlap between tourism and natural resource development, TIABC continued advancing its Extractive Industries Policy to promote fair consideration for tourism operators within land-use decisions, forestry planning, tenure applications and permitting, and compensation frameworks for impacted businesses.

#### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Formal recognition of tourism as a compatible economic land-use within forestry and resource planning frameworks
- ▶ Improved consultation pathways for tourism tenure holders impacted by adjacent industrial activity
- ▶ Compensation and mitigation mechanisms for tourism businesses adversely affected by extractive development
- ▶ Integration of tourism considerations into permitting modernization initiatives

#### Outcome:

Tourism policy considerations informed multiple provincial land-use and permitting consultations in 2025, with ongoing engagement scheduled with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship in 2026 to support Adventure Tourism Policy modernization and improved tenure certainty for operators.





## H) TRANSPORTATION ACCESS, AVIATION FEES, AND EMERGING AVIATION POLICY COMPETE/BUILD

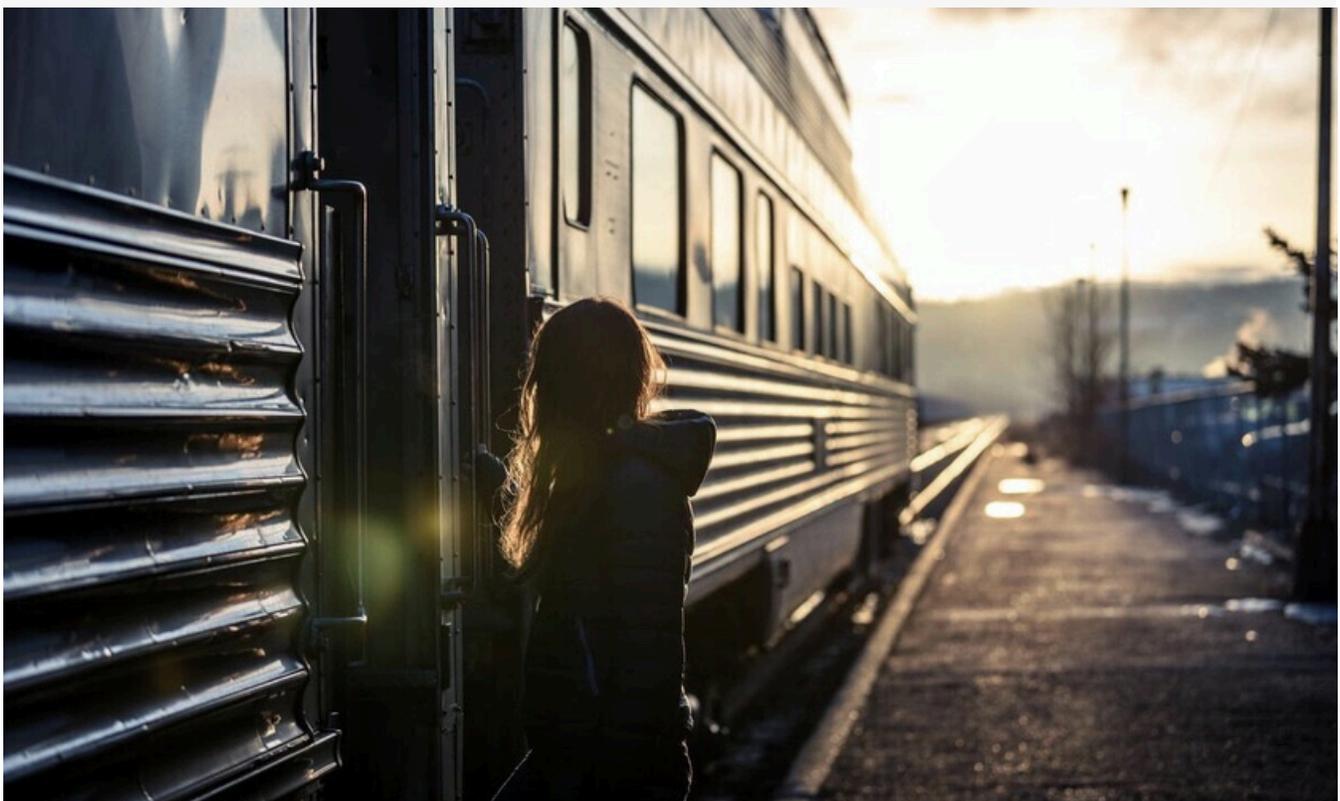
Together with national, territorial and provincial advocacy partners, TIABC developed a new aviation sector policy to help inform the new federal government on changes required to build air capacity and remain competitive as a sector.

### What TIABC advanced:

- ▶ Aviation fee and tax reform
- ▶ Improved regional air access
- ▶ Readiness for Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) requirements
- ▶ Recognition that transportation access is an economic development and competitiveness issue

### Outcome:

TIABC, along with federal, provincial and territorial industry association partners continued to advance the recommendations within the federal government with anticipated changes to aviation policy to come in 2026.





## I) PROVINCIAL BUDGET SUBMISSION (2025) **COMPETE**

- ▶ Recognition of tourism as a multi-ministry, land-based export sector requiring coordinated permitting pathways
- ▶ Increased investment in emergency preparedness and business continuity supports for climate-impacted tourism regions
- ▶ Continued support for MRDT as a destination development and competitiveness tool
- ▶ Streamlined land-use and tenure processes impacting wilderness and adventure tourism operators
- ▶ Enabling infrastructure and workforce housing investments in tourism-dependent communities

### Outcome:

Elements of TIABC's submission were reflected in the Province's broader economic competitiveness priorities, including increased attention to permitting modernization and emergency readiness measures impacting tourism businesses operating on Crown land and within natural resource planning areas.

## J) FEDERAL BUDGET SUBMISSION **COMPETE**

TIABC submitted a federal budget brief outlining five high-impact actions:

- ▶ A dedicated tourism infrastructure and attraction fund
- ▶ A national multi-modal connectivity strategy
- ▶ Destination marketing and international competitiveness (including Destination Canada funding and International Convention Attraction Fund)
- ▶ Emergency preparedness and business continuity tools
- ▶ Modernized tax rules for seasonal tourism businesses

### Outcome:

These priorities focus on unlocking investment, improving access, strengthening competitiveness, and sustaining tourism as one of Canada's highest-return growth sectors.



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

In 2026, TIABC will continue building on 2025 momentum. Priority focus areas include:

**Economic development and investment competitiveness for tourism**

**Transportation affordability and access (air, ferry, rail, motorcoach)**

**Permitting reform and land-use certainty supporting long-horizon investments**

**Emergency readiness and business continuity planning**

**Strengthening MRDT certainty while supporting sustainable destination development**

**Stronger data and research capacity to support “Value of Tourism” outcomes**

**Continued refinement of STR regulations to benefit tourism dependent communities**

**Continued collaboration with Indigenous partners and sector coalitions**





## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The TIABC team wishes to thank members of the Board of Directors, Policy Committee members, regional DMOs, sector partners, Indigenous collaborators, and member businesses for their continued leadership and input.

Tourism is strongest when we work together and TIABC is proud to represent the industry as the Voice of Tourism.



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**Brenda Baptiste**  
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