



LOOK WEST:
**Tourism Sector
Action Plan**



StrongerBC
for everyone



Stone Mountain Provincial Park
Destination BC/Andrew Strain

MAIN COVER PHOTO: Kinuseo Falls
Northern BC Tourism/Abby Cooper



Victoria
Destination BC/Tanya Goehring

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Chilko River
Destination BC/Yuri Choufour

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Tourism in British Columbia is more than an industry – it’s a cornerstone of community vitality. It fuels small businesses, sustains local jobs, and ensures residents enjoy enriching experiences close to home. From waterside restaurants to ski hill summits, from cultural festivals to hiking trails, tourism in B.C. strengthens local economies and creates vibrant communities.

B.C. stands at a pivotal moment. Amid global uncertainty and rising fiscal pressures, we need sectors that can deliver resilient, long-term growth – and tourism is ready to lead. With our breathtaking natural beauty, exciting cities, rich Indigenous culture and diversity, B.C. is already a world-class destination, and we have the opportunity to build on this foundation. We are uniquely positioned to drive economic diversification, attract international investment, create jobs across every region of the province, and enhance livability for residents.

We respectfully recognize this work takes place on the territories of all Indigenous Peoples in B.C., and we value partnerships with Indigenous Peoples through tourism. These relationships are essential to sharing authentic cultural experiences and supporting inclusive growth and self-determination.

I am pleased to release ***Look West: Tourism Sector Action Plan*** (the plan) to grow tourism in our province and B.C.’s economy. The plan is built on five pillars – marketing, destination access, event hosting, investment attraction, and enabling growth.

This plan is our roadmap to capitalize on the global exposure of FIFA World Cup 26™, enhancing B.C.’s position as a global destination, attracting high-value international travelers, unlocking development potential in our mountain resorts, diversifying markets, and strengthening rural economies. It powers Destination BC’s new global marketing strategy – *Invest in Iconics* – to put B.C. firmly on the world stage and position the province as a premier destination for visitors and investors alike.



Honourable Anne Kang
Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of British Columbia's most dynamic and resilient sectors – creating jobs, supporting communities, and driving economic growth throughout the province. Today, the visitor economy generates approximately \$23 billion in annual gross revenue, contributes \$8 billion to provincial GDP (2017\$), and directly supports more than 113,000 jobs. Its strength lies in its diversity: 92% of tourism businesses are small enterprises, deeply rooted in communities, with nearly 40% located outside the Lower Mainland – making tourism a vital economic driver for rural B.C.

B.C.'s visitor economy is built on strong partnerships and a shared commitment to excellence.

An extensive network of partners – including local governments, Indigenous Peoples, destination organizations, industry associations, economic development agencies, and thousands of tourism businesses – work together to drive growth and prosperity. This deep-rooted co-operation creates a strong, unified foundation that enables B.C. to innovate, adapt, and deliver exceptional visitor experiences.

B.C. offers world-class competitive advantages: breathtaking natural beauty, vibrant cosmopolitan cities, rich Indigenous culture, diverse tourism products, unique communities, and a reputation as a safe, welcoming destination. These qualities position B.C. to capture growing global demand for authentic, nature-based, and culturally rich experiences.

Tourism may seem self-sustaining – visitors arrive, and economic benefits follow. The reality is far different: Global competition for travelers has never been more fierce. With international visitor spending projected to surge by more than 8% annually through 2036, B.C. must act decisively to secure its share. The opportunity is significant: B.C. can double its tourism economy by 2036, unlocking billions in new revenue, investment and good jobs.

Targeted investment in high-value tourism activities and innovative policy changes is essential to unlock tourism's full economic potential. Aligned with *B.C.'s Look West: Jobs and Prosperity for a Stronger BC and Canada Strategy*, the Tourism Sector Action Plan positions tourism as a key driver of economic diversification and growth – creating good jobs, strengthening communities, and enhancing livability for residents.

Major events will create unprecedented global exposure, with potential to generate more than \$1 billion in revenues through 2030. Closer to home, there is untapped potential to redirect Canadian travel spending back into B.C. Historically, Canadians spent heavily on travel to America, creating a \$25 billion annual travel deficit. Welcoming our fellow Canadians to explore B.C. will deliver substantial benefits to B.C.'s economy.

The plan is a bold, focused approach to build on B.C.'s position as a premier destination – encouraging visitation across all seasons and places, creating good jobs, and driving investments into major tourism projects and resorts. The plan outlines our path to growing visitor spending to \$48 billion by 2036. By seizing opportunities and leveraging B.C.'s natural and cultural strengths, we're positioning B.C. to lead in a fiercely competitive global tourism market – strengthening economic prosperity for B.C. and delivering lasting benefits for communities and British Columbians.

Throughout the next decade, tourism will play a central role in diversifying markets and local economies while fueling growth. This targeted five-point plan sets the foundation for bold action to strengthen B.C.'s global position, attract investment, and create lasting economic benefits.



Salish Sea
Destination BC/Abby Cooper

A BOLD FIVE-POINT PLAN

10-Year Target

Double Tourism Revenues by 2036



Marketing *Inspiring the World to Explore B.C.*



Destination Access *Widening the Doors to B.C.*



Event Hosting *Hosting the World Through Culture and Commerce*



Investment Attraction *Fueling B.C.'s Tourism Economic Potential*



Enabling Growth *Removing Roadblocks to Tourism Growth*

Tweedsmuir Provincial Park
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast/Jonny Bierman



Glacier National Park
Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Mitch Winton

Marketing

A person wearing an orange jacket and a hat stands on a rocky peak, looking out over a vast mountain valley. The valley is filled with green forests and a winding river, surrounded by steep, rocky slopes. In the distance, majestic mountains are covered in snow under a cloudy sky. A large, semi-transparent blue circle is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image, containing the word 'Marketing' in white text.

Tweedsmuir Provincial Park
Destination BC/Kalum Ko

Inspiring the World to Explore B.C.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Promote Destination BC's new Iconic brands in key international markets
- Leverage FIFA World Cup 26™ to grow international visitation and B.C.'s global brand exposure
- Grow visitor demand across all seasons and places
- Integrate tourism with trade and talent attraction



Prince Rupert
Northern BC Tourism/Marty Clemens

Tourism and destination marketing create measurable economic impact by building awareness that inspires travel. Increased awareness leads to bookings and those bookings translate into visitor spending that supports local businesses, creates jobs, and strengthens communities.

To capture international interest now and in the years to come, Destination BC will leverage this global event, our trusted *Super, Natural British Columbia*® brand, and its new global marketing strategy – *Invest in Iconics* – to amplify awareness and interest, driving greater visitation. By focusing on core markets – U.S., United Kingdom, Germany, Mexico, Australia, and China – and exploring options to expand into high-potential markets like Japan and South Korea, B.C. will strengthen economic ties and reinforce its role as Canada's gateway to the Asia Pacific. At the same time, we will continue to encourage Canadians to travel closer to home, keeping more tourism dollars in B.C., while intensifying marketing efforts to promote travel across all seasons and regions, ensuring benefits reach every corner of the province.

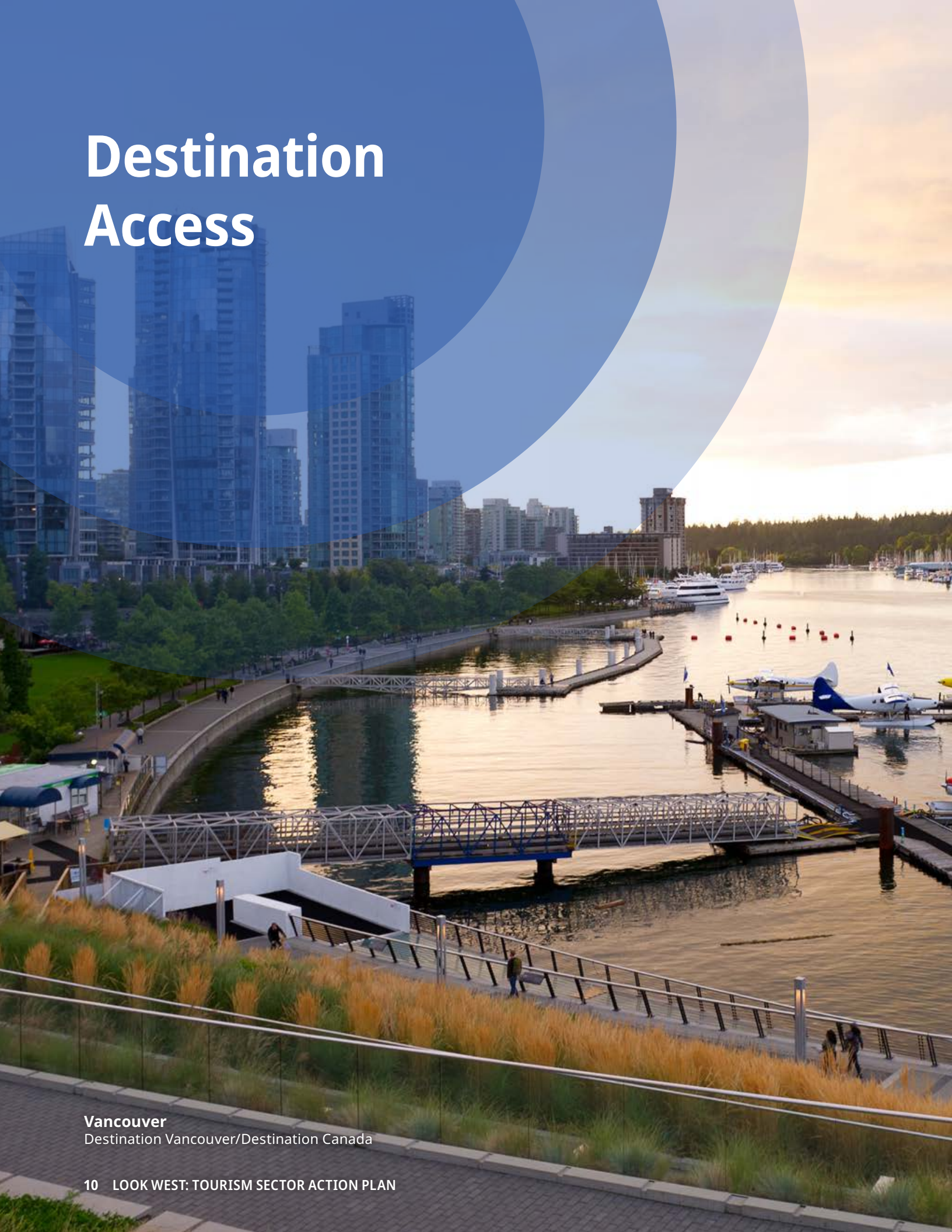
BUILDING FROM A STRONG FOUNDATION

In October 2025, Destination BC launched six new destination brands, part of the *Super, Natural British Columbia*® brand family through its *Invest in Iconics Strategy* – promoting more year-round travel throughout B.C. This marks a bold shift in the province's global tourism positioning.

Destination BC's *Super, Natural British Columbia*® brand and global campaigns continue to earn global recognition from the World Travel Awards for its innovative storytelling and digital engagement – showcasing B.C.'s success as a leading global destination.

Indigenous tourism is a powerful driver of B.C.'s global tourism brand. One in four visitors seek authentic Indigenous experiences – fueling \$1.1 billion in annual economic impact, supporting more than 400 Indigenous tourism businesses and nearly 10,000 jobs throughout the province.

Destination Access



Vancouver
Destination Vancouver/Destination Canada

Widening the Doors to B.C.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Collaborate with partners and carriers to expand direct international flights throughout B.C.
- Strengthen multimodal connectivity along regional travel corridors, in alignment with Destination BC's Iconic routes



Access to B.C. is vital for tourism, trade, and investment. Strong air connectivity links B.C. communities to key markets and fuels economic growth, while integrated transportation networks make it easier for visitors to explore the province year-round. Each new international air route delivers significant benefits – for example, a daily year-round service between Vancouver and Seoul results in \$88 million in economic output annually, \$45.2 million in GDP and supports 545 jobs.

Working with airlines, airports, Transport Canada, and transportation and tourism partners, we aim to maintain and enhance air connectivity, ensuring B.C. is easily accessible for visitors and trading partners around the world. Similarly, improvements to multimodal options – by air, land, and sea – will help visitors experience B.C.'s diverse regions and support local businesses, positioning the province as a welcoming and connected destination.

BUILDING FROM A STRONG FOUNDATION

Regional airports are better connected and support rural, remote, and Indigenous communities thanks to upgrades delivered through the B.C. Air Access Program, made possible by more than \$70 million in provincial investments since 2017.

New campgrounds, signage, upgraded trails and better amenities have elevated accessibility and visitor experiences throughout B.C., enabled by \$134 million in support by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, across 326 tourism projects from 2020 to 2023.

Travel in B.C. is cleaner and more connected, with 345 active transportation projects, including a completed provincewide Electric Highway, powering zero-emission mobility enabled by nearly \$185 million for active transportation and \$118 million for public charging infrastructure.

Event Hosting



Vancouver Convention Centre
Destination Vancouver/Sara Borck Photography

Hosting the World Through Culture and Commerce

KEY ACTIONS:

- Invest in destination events that drive economic benefits in all regions of B.C.
- Develop a multi-year event attraction plan, prioritizing high-impact international events and conferences
- Formalize a provincial event hosting framework for evaluating and co-ordinating event opportunities



Events fuel B.C.'s tourism economy by generating strong returns and elevating the province's global profile. While B.C. already excels at hosting business events and destination celebrations, there is still significant untapped potential. Conferences, conventions and trade shows are essential to the tourism sector and often held during the shoulder and off-seasons, helping to balance demand throughout the year. Business travelers also contribute more to the local economy, frequently spending up to four times more than leisure visitors. In 2024, every dollar invested in business events generated \$59 in direct visitor spending in Vancouver.

Destination events – such as cultural and music festivals and major sporting competitions – draw visitors and generate economic activity in and around the event, filling hotels, restaurants and other entertainment offerings, as well as using local goods and service providers. These events are also great sources of community vibrancy, enjoyment, and pride.

By building on these strengths and co-ordinating efforts throughout regions and sectors, B.C. can secure more international conferences, cultural celebrations, and sporting events that create lasting legacies, global exposure, and stronger local economies.

BUILDING FROM A STRONG FOUNDATION

The Province's Destination Events Program supported 245 events through nearly \$8 million in funding in 2025. These events spanned music, arts, culture, community and sport. These events drew visitors and strengthened local economies.

B.C.'s business events sector delivers strong results, generating an average of 1.8 million event participation days annually, across major convention centers – driving significant economic impact and reinforcing B.C. as a premier destination for meetings and conferences.

BC Place and the Vancouver Convention Centre achieved a record-breaking year in 2024-25, delivering \$818 million in economic impact and \$167 million in revenue through 400+ events, including major concerts and global showcases like Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, the Grey Cup, and Invictus Games.

Investment Attraction

Malahat
Malahat SkyWalk/Milen Kootnikoff

Fueling B.C.'s Tourism Economic Potential

KEY ACTIONS:

- Launch an investment attraction plan to facilitate private sector investment in tourism and outdoor recreation
- Create an attractive investment environment for hotels, tourism experiences, and convention and event spaces
- Create opportunities for communities in transition to expand tourism
- Support Indigenous-led destination development and stewardship



Prince Rupert
Northern BC Tourism/Marty Clemens

B.C.'s tourism sector offers significant opportunities for private investment, driven by growing global demand for authentic, outdoor, and Indigenous experiences. A co-ordinated approach to investment attraction will help unlock new products, strengthen communities, and keep B.C. competitive in a rapidly evolving market. We will work with communities to connect private capital investment with tourism opportunities, supported by compelling investment pitches and a clear pipeline of ready-to-go projects that showcase tourism's position as a priority growth sector.

By leveraging B.C.'s position as Canada's gateway to Asia and integrating clear investment pathways with Trade and Invest B.C.'s mandate, we will create partnerships and attract capital for resorts, accommodations, and new tourism experiences – fueling innovation, good jobs and long-term prosperity.

With world-class attractions and infrastructure, and vibrant Indigenous and outdoor experiences, B.C. is ready to compete globally. Strategic investment attraction will capture more private-sector capital, generate revenue, attract visitors, and enhance livability for residents.

BUILDING FROM A STRONG FOUNDATION

Private investments in new attractions throughout B.C. such as canyon boardwalks, skywalks, summer coasters and aerial parks, marine tours, and inland rainforest experiences are strengthening B.C.'s tourism brand and elevating visitor experiences.

B.C. is seeing a surge in hotel-development interest, with 70 new projects in the pipeline, totalling more than 9,800 rooms demonstrating strong 17% growth in both projects and rooms year over year.

B.C.'s world-class mountain resorts have invested approximately \$37 billion in infrastructure on public land and surrounding communities. They generate \$2 billion in annual revenues and have identified up to \$22 billion in potential future infrastructure investment.

Enabling Growth



Victoria
Destination BC/Jordan Dyck

Removing Roadblocks to Tourism Growth

KEY ACTIONS:

- Modernize B.C.'s Resort Strategy
- Streamline authorization and regulatory processes for tourism development
- Modernize tourism-related funding frameworks
- Expand access to tourism data to support local planning and investment



Creating the right conditions for tourism businesses to invest, grow, and innovate is essential to keeping B.C. competitive on the global stage. The provincial government will work alongside industry, communities, and Indigenous partners to strengthen the business environment and enable tourism operators to thrive.

By modernizing regulatory processes, supporting investment, and creating new opportunities across resort development, adventure tourism, agri-tourism, and hospitality, we are building a tourism system where entrepreneurs and investors can confidently develop world-class experiences that drive jobs, community vitality, and long-term economic growth and diversification. This includes updating B.C.'s Resort Strategy, streamlining approvals, modernizing tourism funding frameworks, and expanding access to tourism data – empowering local governments, Indigenous communities, and operators to plan and invest with confidence.

These actions will foster a more agile, innovative, and collaborative environment – helping B.C. capture new opportunities, strengthen communities, and deliver exceptional experiences for visitors year-round.

BUILDING FROM A STRONG FOUNDATION

B.C.'s Ease of Doing Business initiative aims to remove barriers to starting and growing businesses. A dedicated portal allows businesses to share ideas and work to solve challenges together to support a competitive environment for hospitality and tourism.

Smart policy changes are strengthening agri-tourism by enabling wineries, breweries, and distilleries to offer seated tastings during guided tours, expand opportunities for packaged sales, and modified picnic spaces – enhancing visitor experiences and supporting growth in B.C.'s wine and beverage sector.

Destination BC's Destination Insights Platform provides participating partners in B.C. with centralized access to key industry data insights, including visitor behaviour, flight arrivals, and accommodation performance. These dashboards support industry planning, innovation and shared decision-making.



Sector Highlight: Workforce

Tourism is powered by people. Every unforgettable experience begins with someone who welcomes visitors, shares local stories, and delivers exceptional service – from hotel staff and chefs, tour guides and transportation providers. These human connections set B.C. apart from others on the global stage and remain central to our competitiveness as a world-class destination.

Building on this strength, our tourism workforce is a cornerstone of B.C.'s economic success. Skilled workers sustain small businesses, strengthen communities, and bring B.C.'s iconic experiences to life – fueling growth and resilience throughout the province.

THE VALUE:

- More than 113,000 people are directly employed in the tourism industry – driving local economies in every region
- Tourism wages and salaries total \$5 billion, supporting families and communities
- Largest employer of youth, who represent more than 30% of the workforce

Kitimat

Northern BC Tourism/Mattias Fredriksson

Sector Highlight: Indigenous Tourism

Indigenous tourism in B.C. is a vital connector and powerful driver of cultural integrity and economic opportunity, grounded in the living traditions of 204 First Nations communities. With more than 30 First Nations languages and 90 dialects, B.C. offers visitors authentic, place-based experiences rooted in knowledge systems that span millennia.

Indigenous tourism empowers Indigenous futures, inspires visitors from around the world, and is woven into the fabric of B.C.'s tourism landscape, creating a competitive, distinctive destination. Tourism supports self-determination by enabling Indigenous communities to build economic sovereignty while sharing Indigenous cultures on their own terms.

Guided by principles of responsible and regenerative travel, Indigenous tourism connects visitors to the land, water, sky, and the deep sense of place that defines B.C. These experiences strengthen cultural continuity and community well-being while shaping a future where economic prosperity and cultural integrity advance together.

Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) is a non-profit, Indigenous-led organization dedicated to growing Indigenous tourism in B.C. ITBC is mandated by the First Nations Leadership Council as the voice of Indigenous tourism in B.C. to support the growth and development of Indigenous tourism. An Indigenous Tourism Accord between the Province of B.C. and ITBC reaffirms the Province's commitment to advancing Indigenous tourism and reconciliation.

THE VALUE:

- ▶ One in four visitors to B.C. seeks authentic Indigenous experiences
- ▶ B.C. is home to more than 400 Indigenous tourism-related businesses – over 20% of all such businesses in Canada
- ▶ Contributes \$1.1 billion annually to B.C.'s economy



Sector Highlight: Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation is a major economic engine, generating approximately \$17 billion in participation-based revenue in 2023. B.C.'s vast and varied landscape ranges from lush coastal rainforests to high alpine environments and is one of the few places in the world where visitors can ocean kayak and traverse glaciers within the span of a single day. This natural diversity supports everything from well known travel experiences to everyday activities that reflect the character of communities across the province. Recognizing this significance, the Ministry of Environment and Parks is developing a new provincial outdoor recreation strategy to help strengthen and co-ordinate the sector.

Outdoor recreation is part of daily life for many British Columbians, contributing to physical and mental well being and supporting a broad range of jobs – from guides and outfitters to trail builders, small businesses, and volunteers – whose

work maintains the infrastructure that makes these experiences possible. Events led by local communities, including mountain bike races and climbing competitions, often earn international recognition and bring visitors to small towns throughout the province in all four seasons.

THE VALUE:

- Outdoor recreation generates approximately \$17 billion annually in participation-based revenue, contributing \$4.8 billion to provincial GDP
- Supports thousands of jobs and small businesses throughout all regions. The sector is an integral part of the B.C. economy supporting good jobs, tourism, manufacturing, and retail
- Builds global recognition through events that attract visitors and investment

Dawson Creek
Northern BC Tourism/Marty Clemens





Vancouver
Destination Vancouver/Vision Event Photography Inc.



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