



TOURISM
INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION OF

BC

TIABC's Guide to the 2019 Federal Election

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About Election 2019

Canadians go to the polls on October 21st, 2019 to elect Members of Parliament (MPs) to represent them in the House of Commons. In British Columbia, there are 42 ridings.

In the 42nd general election in 2015, the Liberal Party, under the leadership of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, was elected with a majority government of 184 seats. The Conservative Party under the leadership of Stephen Harper elected 99 members; the New Democratic Party under the leadership of Thomas Mulcair earned 44 seats; Block Quebecois 10; and the Green Party one. Of the total 338 candidates elected to the House of Commons, 88 were women, setting a new record.

Prime Minister Trudeau will again lead the Liberal Party into Canada's 43rd general election. Andrew Scheer leads the Conservative Party, Jagmeet Singh is the leader of the NDP, and Elizabeth May heads up the Green Party.

The tourism industry portfolio is currently led by the Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Tourism, Official Languages and La Francophonie. The official opposition critic for tourism is Banff-Airdrie MP Blake Richards.

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About TIABC

The Tourism Industry Association of BC (TIABC) advocates for the interests of British Columbia's \$18+ billion+ visitor economy. As a not-for-profit trade association, TIABC works collaboratively with its members – private sector tourism businesses, industry associations and destination marketing organizations – to ensure the best working environment for a competitive tourism industry.

Our vision is for tourism to be recognized as one BC's leading and sustainable business sectors. As the primary advocate for British Columbia's visitor economy, TIABC's mission is about Uniting operators, sectors, DMOs, government and residents to support and be passionate about making BC a great place for tourism.

To grow BC's visitor economy and generate incremental revenues for operators and government, we need the right mix of marketing investment, infrastructure and product development, access to labour, and policies that facilitate and enable success. That's where TIABC's role benefits BC's tourism industry.

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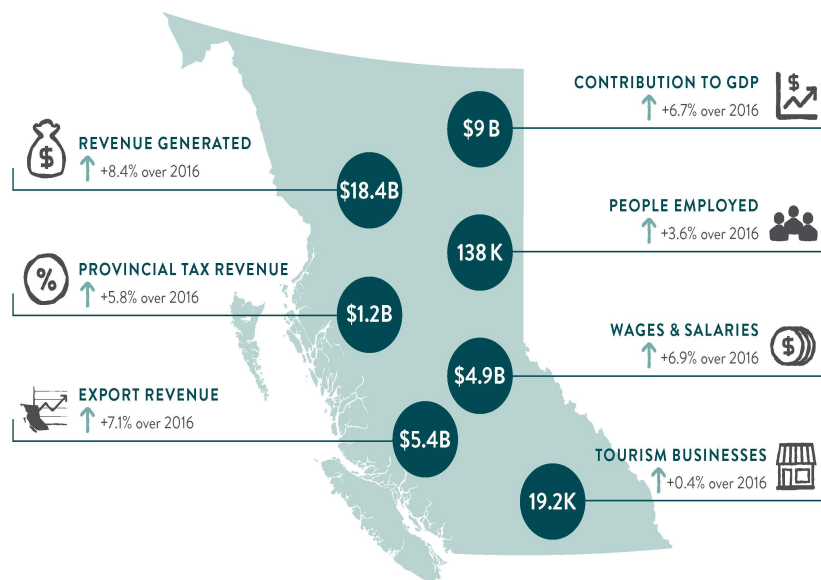
About Tourism in B.C.

Tourism is a critical sector within BC's economy. In 2017 (the latest statistics available), the tourism industry generated \$18.3 billion in revenue, an increase of 8.4% over 2016. In addition, tourism contributed some \$9 billion to provincial GDP and employed upwards of 133,000 people in 19,000+ businesses.

Aside from economic benefits, BC's visitor economy also generates social and cultural benefits for all British Columbians by supporting the viability of community amenities and increasing international exposure to our heritage, education system, trade opportunities and immigration prospects.

In spite of challenges with wildfires and flooding in both 2017 and 2018, BC's visitor economy continues to grow due to increasing demand for British Columbia's tourism products and services, largely attributed to the marketing efforts led by Destination British Columbia and its community and sector partners. Tourism is the province's third largest industry with potential for further growth, particularly within Indigenous and rural communities.

2017 Value of Tourism



Sources: BC Stats for Destination BC, and derived by Destination BC based on the International Travel Survey from Statistics Canada

To Get Started...

- [Find your candidates](#) through Elections Canada at electionscanada.ca
- [Get the facts](#) on the impact of tourism in British Columbia through www.tiabc.ca, www.destinationbc.ca or go2HR.ca
- Find out [how many tourism jobs](#) are in your riding
- See what the parties have to say about British Columbia's visitor economy
- Compile a list of questions to ask candidates about the tourism industry
- See what TIABC members are saying about tourism through www.tiabc.ca
- Use *#BCTourismMatters* on Twitter and Facebook to show that tourism matters

How to Engage With Your Local Candidates

It is vital that industry stakeholders connect with local candidates from all parties to inform them about any issues and barriers to growth facing British Columbia's visitor economy. Let them know that *#BCTourismMatters*.

There are several ways for you to be directly engaged in the lead-up to the federal election to ensure **tourism's** voice is loud and clear in the debates, discussions and within party platforms. Here are some examples:

1. Attend or [organize](#) an all-candidates debate
2. Invite candidates to an event you are hosting or to visit your business
3. Write a letter to your candidates with your ideas
4. Call into radio talk shows to express your views or question a candidate on tourism related matters
5. Become a spokesperson on behalf of your sector/business and make yourself available to media to discuss various tourism issues
6. Inform candidates about what your business or organization brings to the community (e.g. economic impact, taxes paid, employment, services, etc.)

Tourism Priorities & Questions for Candidates

Transportation & Access

Getting into Canada is problematic for visitors from many countries due to long wait times for visitor visas and other obstacles.

1. *Is your government willing to streamline the visa application process for low-risk countries?*
2. *How can your government ensure that the new biometric requirements do not hamper tourism growth?*
3. *Will your government look to expand pre-clearance options at border points across the country, and ensure that adequate CATSA investments are made to meet service levels?*
4. *How will your government help the Province develop its transportation infrastructure (e.g. airports, highways, ferries) to ensure safe, cost-efficient and convenient access to all regions, and to help meet the growing expectations and demand of residents, visitors and tourism operators?*

Species at Risk

On-going negotiations between BC and Canada about mountain caribou recovery under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA) are creating significant uncertainty for adventure tourism businesses in BC, and for communities reliant on adventure tourism and public recreation. Adventure tourism businesses could see their access to backcountry areas significantly restricted, and that decisions by government to do so will not be fully informed by thorough socio-economic analyses. This will negatively impact businesses and communities and the province's ability to grow its visitor economy.

1. *What will your government do to ensure that adventure tourism businesses (and communities reliant on adventure tourism) can continue to thrive in the context of mountain caribou recovery?*
2. *What will your government do to ensure that adventure tourism businesses are directly involved in bringing innovative recovery solutions to the table?*

Tax on Campgrounds

Campgrounds across Canada face a 300% tax increase due to government's recent interpretation of campgrounds as a *Specified Investment Business* instead of an *Active Business* that would qualify for the small business tax deduction with less than five FT employees. The tax increase will put many campgrounds out of business.

1. *Will your government consider re-classifying campgrounds as active businesses so they can qualify for the small business tax deduction?*
2. *What assurances can your government provide to campground owners that allow them to retain their longstanding status as active businesses?*

Tourism Priorities & Questions for Candidates

Recreational Fishing

The federal Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) has introduced regulations that limit or eliminate recreational fishing in both tidal and non-tidal waters throughout the province. Yet, sport fishing has the least impact on stocks, especially in a catch and release regime practiced by freshwater anglers.

1. *How will your government improve the consultation process to include the recreational fishing community in major decisions concerning conservation?*
2. *How will your government address the urgency regarding habitat protection, restoration, improved stock assessment, and predator control concerns?*
3. *Do you believe that to protect wild salmon stocks we must move toward a closed containment approach for salmon farming?*

Marketing, Product & Economic Development

Destination Canada's funding is now at \$95.5 million annually yet it lags behind other countries and competitors in its marketing investments.

1. *Will your government commit to raising Destination Canada's base funding level from \$95 million to \$135 million annually in order for Canada to remain competitive, and to continue driving economic results?*
2. *What will your government do to help develop and support British Columbia's festivals, events, natural and historic sites to attract more visitors to the province?*
3. *What will your government do to encourage further tourism product development (particularly Indigenous Tourism) to ensure new, export-ready experiences for visitors to all regions of the country?*

Cost Competitiveness

Taxes on tourism products add to the cost of travel to this enormous country. Canada is one of the few countries that charges tax to foreign visitors buying tourism products, making it the only Canadian export that is not zero-rated (tax removed). This is especially problematic for tour, as well as meetings and incentive travel.

1. *Would your government consider removing GST on tourism products sold abroad to international visitors?*
2. *How would your government reduce the sizeable costs attributed to fees, levies and taxes on air travel to help make us more competitive?*

Tourism Priorities & Questions for Candidates

Short-term Vacation Rentals

The platforms that promote short-term vacation rentals do not pay corporate income tax in Canada, nor do they collect or remit GST to the Canadian government. Consequently, government is losing tens of millions of dollars in revenue from short-term vacation rental hosts and companies.

1. *Would your government consider modernizing tax laws to collect GST and other requisite taxes (e.g. corporate income tax) from vacation rental platforms and homeowners that offer short-term vacation rentals to visitors?*

Tourism as a Primary Business Sector

Local, provincial and federal governments have all recognized tourism's contribution to their respective economies and, by and large, have provided widespread support. Yet, some decision-makers overlook the tourism industry in the context of planning, policy and investment opportunities.

1. *How would your government support and build tourism into one of Canada's leading and sustainable industries, and elevate its priority amongst other business sectors vis-à-vis investment and policy?*

Environment & Climate Change

With hotter, dryer summers, less snow in winter, increasing wildfires, warmer lakes and rivers, fewer fish, among other symptoms, BC is experiencing the impact of climate change in profound ways.

1. *What plan does your party have to reduce the risks associated with man-made marine catastrophes?*
2. *What steps will your government take to prevent hazardous cargo spills and to enhance coordination of spill response between federal and provincial agencies?*
3. *How will your government ensure the long-term sustainability of British Columbia's 'super-natural' forests, mountains, lands and waterways?*

Tourism Workforce/Labour

Over the next 10 years, some 100,000 tourism jobs in BC alone will become vacant due to changing demographics, retirement and other factors.

1. *Would your government consider industry's labour need as the main determiner to access all immigration streams, regardless of skill level?*
2. *Would your government consider a 'seasonal tourism workers program' to address the need for employees in the tourism sector?*

TIABC Policy Positions (top-line overview)



Funding for Destination Canada

TIABC believes the need for increased funding for Destination Canada is paramount to maintain industry momentum, remain competitive in the international marketplace, and to ensure long-term funding security for tourism marketing.



Labour

TIABC is urging government to consider a *Seasonal Tourism Workers Program* similar to the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program that allows for exemptions to the TFWP under certain terms and conditions, to help address labour shortages throughout British Columbia.



Short-term Vacation Rentals (STVRs)

TIABC believes that operators of short-term vacation rentals should pay corporate income tax, as well as remit GST to the federal government, as do operators of other commercial accommodation providers.



Campground Assessments

TIABC believes that government should reconsider its assessment of campgrounds as specified investment businesses and instead reclassify campgrounds as active businesses so as to allow these legitimate tourism businesses to qualify for the small business tax deduction.



Pre-clearance

TIABC believes that the Government of Canada should implement measures and systems that allow seamless and efficient movement of people and goods across the border with the United States.

TIABC Policy Positions (top-line overview)



Species at Risk

TIABC recognizes the need for suitable caribou habitat and supports ensuring those habitats retain their value for caribou recovery. At the same time the approach taken to recover caribou populations must make sense for recovery outcomes vis-à-vis ROI.



Fishing

TIABC maintains that the sport fishery be recognized, consulted and supported by all levels of government in the context of proposed regulation changes that impact recreational fishing operators.



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