

British Columbia
Tourism & Hospitality

Provincial Election Toolkit 2020

October 2020

TOURISM
INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION OF

BC



BRITISH COLUMBIA
HOTEL ASSOCIATION



Restaurants
Canada

ABLE BC

Introduction

TIABC, ABLE BC, BCHA and Restaurants Canada are among the largest tourism and hospitality sector associations in British Columbia, representing hundreds of thousands of employees and businesses throughout the province.

Together with our partners and stakeholders, we have been working with all levels of government, particularly at the provincial level, to address the enormous challenges our sector has faced since the start of the COVID-19 crisis.

With the unexpected variable of a provincial election in the middle of a pandemic, our individual and collective efforts become even more important. Informing, educating and questioning candidates of all parties on the issues and needs of the tourism and hospitality industry is paramount to government decisions on recovery efforts post-election.

This Election Toolkit is your guide to ensure our sector's voice is both heard and understood by those running for office, and that each party is prepared to address the issues and opportunities to help tourism and hospitality rebound in the months and years ahead.



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CEO

Tourism Industry Association of BC



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About Election 2020

British Columbians go to the polls for the 42nd time on October 24, 2020 to elect members of the Legislative Assembly.

In the 2017 general election, the New Democrat Party, under the leadership of John Horgan, was elected with a minority government of 41 seats, thanks to an alliance with the Green Party that elected three MLAs and held the balance of power. The Liberal Party, under the leadership of Christy Clark, formed the Official Opposition with a total of 43 seats.

Premier John Horgan is the leader of the New Democrat Party, which is seeking its second

consecutive term as government. Andrew Wilkinson is the leader of the Liberal Party, while Sonia Furstenau is head of the Green Party.

The tourism industry portfolio within the current government is led by Hon. Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture. The official opposition critic for tourism is Parksville-Qualicum Liberal MLA Michelle Stillwell.

Hon. David Eby, Attorney General, is responsible for the hospitality portfolio (liquor, restaurant/food services). The official opposition critic is Richmond Liberal MLA John Yap who is not seeking re-election.



About Tourism & Hospitality in BC

British Columbia's visitor economy normally generates more than \$21 billion in annual revenues, with some \$2.1 billion in taxes paid to the province. Tourism and hospitality is one of British Columbia's leading and sustainable industries, representing some 19,300 small businesses that employ approximately 320,000 workers.

2019 represented five straight years of record tourism numbers in many regions of the province, while 2020 was projected to be another strong year until COVID-19 virtually shut the industry down in March.

Key industry measures for 2019 showed increases in virtually all major categories compared with 2018:

6.2M

Total international
overnight visitors
+2.6% over 2018

22.3M

BC Ferries
passenger volume
+0.4% over 2018

26.37M

Passenger
volume at YVR
+1.8% over 2018

\$4.05B

Hotel room revenue
+2.6% over 2018

70.8%

Hotel room occupancy
same as 2018

\$193

Average daily room rate
+2.1% over 2018

\$14B

Restaurant receipts
+3.2% over 2018

2020 Tourism & Hospitality State of the Union

When the Government of BC announced the provincial State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency due to COVID-19 on March 17th, tourism and hospitality was the largest industry impacted by the pandemic, the most severely impacted by restrictions on personal travel and business closure orders, and was expected to suffer the most significant long-term negative impacts of any industry. Since then and looking forward this is precisely the case.

Tourism and hospitality is the only industry almost entirely based on the discretionary movement of people. After more than three months of being virtually shuttered, the sector gradually resumed operations, with skeleton crews, vastly diminished markets, and amidst a groundswell of foreclosures that have dismantled tourist supply chains.

Although local travel within BC was strong in certain pockets of the province during July and August, it was insufficient to replace lost revenues incurred earlier in the year to sustain BC's tourism businesses. Given the imperative for an effective vaccine against COVID-19 before critical international source markets and business channels can be accessed, BC's tourism and hospitality businesses will be impacted severely for at least the next 18-24 months.

2020 Projections

↓ **69%**

Revenue
Industry wide

↓ **50K**

Employees
Industry wide

↓ **73%**

Revenue
Hotels

↓ **55%**

Occupancy
Hotels

↓ **25-50%**

Restaurant
Revenues

↓ **70-90%**

Revenues
Major Attractions

↓ **85%**

Revenue
Guide Outfitting

↓ **95-100%**

Revenue
Tour Bus Operators

↓ **60-80%**

Revenue
*Whale Watching
Companies*

↓ **80%**

Revenue
*Bear Viewing
Operators*

↓ **85%**

Revenue
Wilderness Tour Operators

To Get Started

1

Find your [candidates](#) through Elections BC ([View](#))

4

See what the parties have to say about British Columbia's visitor economy

2

Find out [how many tourism and hospitality jobs](#) are in your riding

5

Use #BCTourismCounts on Twitter and Facebook to show that tourism matters

3

Get the facts on the impact of tourism and hospitality in British Columbia through [tiabc.ca](#), [destinationbc.ca](#) or [go2HR.ca](#)

6

Compile a list of questions to ask candidates about the tourism and hospitality industry



How to Engage With Your Local Candidates

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.

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 *#BCTourismCounts*.

There are several ways for you to be directly engaged in the lead-up to the provincial 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)

Use **#BCTourismCounts** on Twitter and Facebook to show that tourism and hospitality is a vital part of our province



Tourism & Hospitality Priorities/ Questions for Candidates

Tourism & Hospitality as a Primary Business Sector

Q1:

How would a (*party name*) government help to re-build tourism and hospitality into becoming one of British Columbia's leading and sustainable industries once again, and elevate its priority amongst other business sectors vis-à-vis investment and policy post COVID-19?

Q2:

What relief measures will a (*party name*) government introduce to ensure rural and urban tourism and hospitality businesses remain solvent until the pandemic is over?

Education

Q1:

What will a (*party name*) government do to encourage more graduating high-school students to enrol in tourism and hospitality programs throughout the province to ultimately help re-build the tourism workforce post COVID-19?

Q2:

What will a (*party name*) government do to build and strengthen tourism and hospitality programs in BC's post-secondary institutions?

Q3:

Will a (*party name*) government work with industry to reintroduce tourism and hospitality courses back into middle and high school curriculum?

Tourism & Hospitality Priorities/ Questions for Candidates

Workforce

Q1:

How will a (*party name*) government help BC's tourism and hospitality industry rebuild a skilled workforce as the industry recovers and rebounds in the post-pandemic economy?

Q2:

Would a (*party name*) consider funding for HR support to promote tourism and hospitality sector employment post-pandemic?

Q3:

Is a (*party name*) willing to offer training grants to enable idle tourism and hospitality workers to pursue the skills needed to adapt to the new tourism operating environment post-pandemic?

Q4:

What will a (*party name*) government do to support mental health initiatives in the workforce?

Q5:

Will a (*party name*) government advocate to streamline the process for working holiday visas and LMIA applications to ensure that recovery is not hampered by a lack of skilled workers?

Q6:

Would a (*party name*) government considering maintaining the liquor server wage at its current level of \$13.95 instead of eliminating it in June 2021?

Tourism & Hospitality Priorities/ Questions for Candidates

Product & Economic Development

Q1:

What will a (*party name*) government do to help rebuild, develop and support British Columbia's festivals, events, natural and historic sites to attract more visitors to the province once the pandemic is over?

Q2:

What will a (*party name*) government do to encourage further tourism and hospitality product development and investment to ensure new, export-ready experiences for visitors to all regions of the province post-COVID-19?

Q3:

What will a (*party name*) government do to encourage more investment in the tourism and hospitality sector, particularly in rural British Columbia, to help rebuild the visitor economy post-COVID-19?

Q4:

How would a (*party name*) government rebuild consumer confidence and work with other provinces to encourage safe domestic travel both during and following COVID-19 to help BC's tourism and hospitality sector recover?

Q5:

What is your party's plan to work with the federal government and industry to safely re-open international borders in a measured and timely way to prevent the collapse of the visitor economy?

Q6:

How will a (*party name*) government work with the meetings and events sector within the confines of public health and safety measures that would allow for professionally organized, larger-scale events at selected venues around BC to prevent a complete collapse of this vital sector?

Q7:

Would a (*party name*) government support linking all future minimum wage increases to a consumer price and/or average wage indexation formula?

Q8:

Would a (*party name*) government commit to allowing restaurants, pubs, and bars to purchase products from private liquor stores?

Tourism & Hospitality Priorities/ Questions for Candidates

Policy & Regulation

Q1:

Would a (*party name*) government implement permanent wholesale pricing for liquor licensees?

Q2:

Would a (*party name*) government make the delivery of alcohol with take out food permanent?

Q3:

Would a (*party name*) government consider changing current forestry and mining policies or regulations to mitigate the impact of those activities on Adventure Tourism (AT) viability?

Q4:

What policy changes would a (*party name*) government make to decrease threats and strengthen business/tenure security for AT operators?

Q5:

Would a (*party name*) government consider suspending 2020 property tax payments for struggling tourism and hospitality businesses, and extending the payback term for 2021 payments into 2022?

Q6:

Would a (*party name*) government consider extending the temporary layoff provision beyond December 31st until such time tourism and hospitality businesses are able to generate a minimum 75% of their operating revenue when compared with 2019?

Q7:

Would a (*party name*) government consider allowing larger gatherings in larger venues for the meetings and events sector, as long as health and safety protocols and other measures are in place and monitored?

Tourism & Hospitality Priorities/ Questions for Candidates

Transportation & Access

Q1:

How will a (*party name*) government maintain and/or further develop the province's transportation infrastructure (e.g. airports, highways, ferries) to ensure safe, cost-efficient and convenient access to all regions, and to help the tourism industry rebuild after the pandemic?

Land Use

Q1:

What will a (*party name*) government do to help mitigate the increasing number of conflicts between tourism operators and other users of crown lands including forest and mining companies and other stakeholders?

Q2:

Would a (*party name*) government consider compensating adventure tourism operators that are displaced from their tenures on crown land due to government priorities vis-à-vis other users?

Q3:

To increase business certainty and investment in adventure tourism businesses, would a (*party name*) government support the ability for operators to buy the crown land where current infrastructure is located?

Tourism & Hospitality Priorities/ Questions for Candidates

BC Parks

Q1:

What will a (*party name*) government do to support the protection, maintenance, and/or further expansion of the British Columbia park system for the enjoyment of residents and visitors, and for use by commercial tourism operators?

Sharing Economy

Q1:

Would a (*party name*) government commit to a provincial sales tax for online short-term rental booking platforms that currently don't remit taxes but conduct business in British Columbia?

Q2:

How would a (*party name*) government hold short-term vacation rental platforms accountable for operating illegally in regulated areas throughout the province?

Environment

Q1:

How will a (*party name*) government ensure the long-term sustainability of British Columbia's 'super-natural' forests, mountains, oceans and lakes?

Q2:

Would a (*party name*) government postpone plans to allow municipalities to further restrict or eliminate takeout and delivery packaging until the pandemic is over?"

Working Together, Ensuring #BCTourismCounts



The Tourism Industry Association of BC (TIABC) advocates for the interests of British Columbia's \$21.5 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 industries. 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.*

[Visit Website](http://www.tiabc.ca)



BC's Alliance of Beverage Licensees (ABLE BC) is the voice of British Columbia's private liquor and cannabis retail industries. Our membership includes private liquor stores, pubs, bars, nightclubs, hotel liquor licensees, and various agents, industry suppliers, and benefit providers.

Following the legalization of non-medical cannabis in October 2018, membership also includes licensed non-medical cannabis private retail stores in British Columbia. On behalf of our over 1,000 members, we advocate for a thriving and sustainable private liquor and cannabis retail industries.

[Visit Website](http://www.ablebc.ca)

Working Together, Ensuring #BCTourismCounts



Restaurants Canada is the largest membership organization of its kind, and the only national association that serves the unique needs of the foodservice industry. Our members are as diverse as the industry itself – from independent operators to regional and national chains, including restaurants, bars, caterers, franchisors, hotels, institutions, food trucks, convenience stores and other emerging business types. Our membership also includes industry suppliers, who play an integral role in the success of operators across Canada.

Restaurants Canada (Western Region) is here to support your success. We provide invaluable research and insights, advocacy on key issues, updates on industry news, networking and trade events, and programs to keep you competitive.

[Visit Website](#)



With over 800 member hotels and associate members representing over 60,000 employees and 80,000 rooms contributing in excess of \$3.2 billion in revenue, the hotel industry's value to the hospitality sector, the tourism industry, and the BC economy is significant.

The BCHA works with the government and regulatory authorities to ensure a positive operating environment for the hotel industry to thrive in, particularly during economically challenging times. As the voice of the hotel industry at the Federal, Provincial and Community level, the BCHA is acknowledged as the champion of hotel related issues, including matters of taxation, tourism, marketing, corporate relations, labour, and consumer services.

[Visit Website](#)

Connect With Us!

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