

Preamble

The tourism industry in British Columbia is an industry with significant growth opportunity. We acknowledge the strong support and leadership of the provincial government. Our past successes are shared successes. We also share in the belief of the provincial government, as stated in the February 16, 2009 Speech from the Throne, that we have “enormous potential.” Now, as the global economy falters, is a time to recognize industry and government are stronger together. The tourism industry has a rare opportunity to significantly enhance its impact on the provincial economy, due to the exposure of our province resulting from the Olympics. We must capitalize on this opportunity. The next two years will be critical in leveraging the Olympics to create jobs and double revenues.

Goal

To stimulate demand from close-in markets in the critical pre- and post-Olympic Winter Games period, while providing for efficient access to/around the province and showcasing for the world our many natural landscapes and regions, generating revenues (including tax revenues) and a legacy of benefits from the Games throughout the province.

Integrated Three Point Plan

1. Enhance access to / around B.C. Prioritize tourism transportation infrastructure projects in the next four years (2009-2012) to provide long-term tourism benefits “beyond the gateway,” and work with federal agencies to enhance access to B.C. Industry seeks the formation of a joint industry-government Task Force to identify, review and assess industry’s specific proposals.
 - i. The tourism industry has developed an extensive list of transportation projects and priorities for all modes of transit based on regional/local tourism development plans and key gaps in accessing these areas and their premier attractions, which can serve as a starting point for discussion by the Task Force identified above.
 - ii. Industry and government in B.C. must formally collaborate to promote and capitalize on an open and competitive air transportation system, with the priority being liberalization of agreements with key overseas tourism markets, addressing facilitation issues (TWOV, ADS), and reducing the air transportation cost structure.
 - iii. Raise awareness in Ottawa and press for reduced border wait times, maintenance of NAVCAN services in regional airports, and elimination of Canada Border Services Agency cost-recovery requirements.
2. Enhance destination marketing efforts pre and post-Olympics to stimulate short-term demand. Tourism businesses have the capacity to support job creation and drive tax revenues in the near-term. Incremental marketing investments into high return, industry-leveraged marketing initiatives in the next two years will enable our marketing system to utilize this capacity, facilitating a quicker rebound for the provincial economy.
 - i. Provide resources to implement marketing initiatives at the regional (RDMO) and community (DMO) level that had been previously developed but which now lack the resources to be executed, due to untimely funding shortfalls stemming from the recent decline in hotel room revenues. These high return, industry-leveraged (often 3:1) initiatives will respond to not only the current economic circumstances but to take full advantage of the Olympic spotlight.
 - ii. Establish an industry-government forum for reviewing the AHRT base for community and regional DMOs, to identify new revenues opportunities and ensure a level playing field.
3. Safeguard tourism’s natural resource base. Our province’s tourism industry is critically dependent upon our SuperNatural® brand. Industry has identified specific priority areas that require concrete and concerted action by government, including i) access to Crown land (particularly with regard to First Nations consultation requirements); ii) natural resource sustainability (including iconic species); iii) access management; iv) off-road vehicle management; v) interaction with other resource sectors (particularly forestry but also mining/exploration, IPPs, aquaculture, and others); vi) tourism tenure security.