



## TOURISM INDUSTRY RESPONDS TO 2020 BC BUDGET

**Vancouver, February 18, 2020** – The Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC) welcomes tourism-related investments announced in today’s budget, but says government’s reduced funding for Destination British Columbia (DBC) in each of the next three years could have long-term impacts on BC’s visitor economy.

While a legislated formula funding model for DBC was again absent from this year’s budget, there is more immediate concern about how a reduction of \$850,000 in DBC’s annual core revenues over the next three years will affect efforts to attract domestic and international visitors and keep BC’s visitor economy on a positive trajectory.

“This is the exact reason we’ve been advocating for legislated formula funding for many years,” said TIABC Chair Alroy Chan. “Not having funding certainty for Destination BC means that they’re susceptible to the annual budget priorities of government, making it difficult for them to commit to any long-term investments. With some signs of softening within BC’s visitor economy, industry is nervous,” he added.

TIABC does acknowledge the Province’s commitment to other initiatives that benefit tourism including the freezing of rates on BC Ferries, as well as investment in infrastructure such as highways and incentives for the electrification of BC’s transportation network.

As part of its 2020 budget, the Province also committed additional funding to help communities recover from emergencies such as wildfires and flooding, which significantly affected tourism businesses throughout the province in recent years. TIABC notes the funding is both needed and welcome, particularly for rural and Indigenous communities.

“We will continue to press for legislated formula funding that puts the onus on the entire tourism industry to generate the necessary revenues to invest in marketing and destination development initiatives that drive the visitor economy,” said Chan.

BC’s tourism industry consists of some 19,100 businesses that employ over 300,000 people - 133,000 of which service the visitor economy directly. The sector has enjoyed several years of record results for visitation, revenues and other key measures in most regions of the province.

*The Tourism Industry Association of BC advocates for the interests of British Columbia's \$18.4B+ tourism industry. As a not-for-profit tourism industry 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.*

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