



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

Tourism Action Plan



February 2007

Province of British Columbia's
Tourism Action Plan

February 2007

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Minister's Message



One of the secrets to being successful is the ability to recognize when you're in the right place at the right time.

The tourism industry in British Columbia is in the right place. We have a spectacular natural environment, a dynamic urban scene and a diverse collection of activities. National Geographic Traveler says Gwaii Haanas in the Queen Charlotte Islands is the best national park in North America; Australia's Luxury Travel Magazine says Whistler and Big White are two of the world's top 10 ski resorts; and Condé Nast says Vancouver is the best city,

and Vancouver Island is the best island in the Americas.

We're also in the right time. Global tourism rates are up, and forecasters expect it to continue to grow at about four per cent for the next 15 years. British Columbia's tourism industry is mature and more than able to give guests the kind of quality experiences they're looking for. And we're building momentum. We're hosting a series of world-class events, starting in 2008 when we'll celebrate 150 years of B.C. achievement. In 2009, we'll host the Police and Firefighters games, and, of course, the biggest spotlight will shine on B.C. during the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in 2010.

But it's not enough to look at our beautiful province and high-profile events and pat ourselves on the back for a job well done. With a thoughtful and comprehensive plan, we can build on timing and opportunity to move the tourism industry to the next level of worldwide recognition.

This is why the government of British Columbia has developed the *Tourism Action Plan*. It is our commitment to helping the tourism industry take full advantage of these golden opportunities, our growing reputation, our spectacular natural resources and our talented and committed workforce, to build for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stan Hagen". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stanley B. Hagen
Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts

Executive Summary

The *Tourism Action Plan* is a detailed outline of British Columbia government's commitment to the tourism industry over the next ten years and beyond.

The plan articulates the government's goal of enabling British Columbia's tourism industry to grow from "good" to "great" and double tourism revenues by 2015. It identifies actions in four key strategic areas that government and its agencies will carry out to help industry increase the demand for and supply of tourism and outdoor recreation products and experiences.

1. **Marketing and promotion:** The *Tourism Action Plan* identifies 18 specific actions by government that will clarify roles and enhancing coordination across government ministries, crown corporations and the tourism industry; attract more visitors and encourage them to stay longer; leverage the 2010 Winter Games; identify and promote emerging markets and products; and promote Aboriginal tourism and parks and outdoor recreation.
2. **Development and investment:** The plan identifies eight specific actions by government that will encourage a positive business climate; increase investment in tourism; maximize potential of Crown assets; and develop and expand cultural attractions.
3. **Access and Infrastructure:** The plan identifies four specific actions by government that will coordinate investments; encourage hassle-free entry to and travel through B.C.; and improve air-lift capacity.
4. **Tourism Workforce:** The plan identifies three specific actions by government that will enhance training; attract more workers to B.C.; and raise the retention rate within the tourism sector.

The Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts will establish an industry advisory group. A tourism research advisory council will also be formalized.

Government and its agencies will initially focus efforts on six actions expected to result in the most significant incremental gain toward doubling tourism:

- ▶ Ensure new resorts are approved and developed in an expedited manner. (Action 5)
- ▶ Increase First Nations investment in the tourism and outdoor recreation sectors. (Action 4)
- ▶ Increase the number of skilled and unskilled tourism workers coming to BC from other countries as well as from other parts of Canada. (Action 15)
- ▶ Work with Tourism BC to maximize government's return on its tourism marketing investments by placing a priority on markets with high revenue growth potential or recently lost market share so as to achieve optimum short term growth. (Action 27)
- ▶ Work with the federal government to improve air access to British Columbia in support of the Pacific Gateway Strategy. (Action 12)
- ▶ Leverage the tourism benefits of hosting the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. (Action 22)

The plan is comprehensive and cohesive, running across and through all ministries and government agencies with tourism-related duties and responsibilities.

By clearly identifying what government is doing to support the tourism sector, the industry will be able to invest and implement plans and strategies that take advantage of all opportunities.

Province of British Columbia's Tourism Action Plan to 2015

The Goal

To enable the British Columbia's tourism industry to grow from "good" to "great" and double total annual tourism revenues to \$18 billion by 2015.

Guiding Principles

- ▶ Aggressively seize opportunities and leverage BC's competitive advantages.
- ▶ Take a visitor/tourist centric approach.
- ▶ Adapt best global practices from other leading tourism jurisdictions.
- ▶ Destination management guided by a whole-of-government approach and commitment to managing the Province as a destination for visitors and investors.
- ▶ Smart use of sound research, timely analysis and future insights.
- ▶ Utilize effective partnerships with clear accountabilities and deliverables.

Key Strategic Areas for Action

Built on made-in-BC strategies and aimed at increasing **demand** for and **supply** of our province's tourism and outdoor recreation products and experiences.

Marketing & Promotion

18 Actions aimed at:

- ▶ Clarity of roles and enhanced coordination
- ▶ Attracting more visitors and increasing length of stay
- ▶ Leveraging the 2010 Winter Games
- ▶ Emerging markets and products
- ▶ Parks and outdoor recreation
- ▶ Aboriginal tourism

Development & Investment

8 Actions aimed at:

- ▶ A positive business climate
- ▶ Increased tourism investment
- ▶ Maximize tourism potential of Crown assets
- ▶ Develop & expand BC's cultural attractions

Access & Infrastructure

4 Actions aimed at:

- ▶ Coordination of investments
- ▶ Hassle-free entry to BC
- ▶ Ease of travel around BC
- ▶ Increased air lift capacity for BC

Tourism Workforce

3 Actions aimed at:

- ▶ Enhanced tourism training
- ▶ More workers attracted to BC
- ▶ Higher worker retention within tourism sector

Introduction

“Tourism remains one of our strongest strategic building blocks, and a huge strategic advantage for every region of the province. B.C. has the world’s most spectacular places, diverse cultures, amenities and landscapes and amazing resorts. We want to work with the tourism industry to ensure we provide funding in the most effective way possible to double tourism revenues, and to make sure communities across B.C. can achieve their full tourism potential.”

Premier Gordon Campbell, September 2004

In 2003, Premier Gordon Campbell challenged the tourism sector to double provincial tourism revenues from \$9 billion to \$18 billion by 2015. This was confirmed by Cabinet, identified in the government’s 2005 election platform, and cited as a priority in the government’s 2006 strategic plan.

The timing is perfect for such an ambitious goal. From 2005 through to 2010, British Columbia hosts a series of high-profile events. It began with World Curling Championships and the World Junior Hockey Championships. In 2008, the province celebrates its 150th anniversary and hosts the North American Indigenous Games. In 2010, British Columbia will invite the world to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. With a potential television audience of three billion people, the Olympic Winter Games will be a golden opportunity to profile all that British Columbia offers as a premier tourism destination, and build on B.C.’s growing reputation as a destination to experience.

The government of British Columbia designed this

Tourism Action Plan to build on the momentum the upcoming opportunities will create. The Action Plan incorporates work that has already been developed over the past few years and supports strategies that are currently being implemented across the tourism sector¹. The result is a cohesive, comprehensive plan that will direct government’s actions across numerous ministries, Crown corporations and agencies. This, in turn, will enable the tourism industry to grow across the province.

The Action Plan focuses on four key areas (development and investment; access and infrastructure development; tourism workforce; and marketing and promotion) that have been identified as vital to achieving the goal. Each key area identifies specific actions to be completed, and ties them to measurable outcomes.

The extensive background material used in the development of the *Tourism Action Plan* is available on a supporting website. For more information, please visit www.tsa.gov.bc.ca.

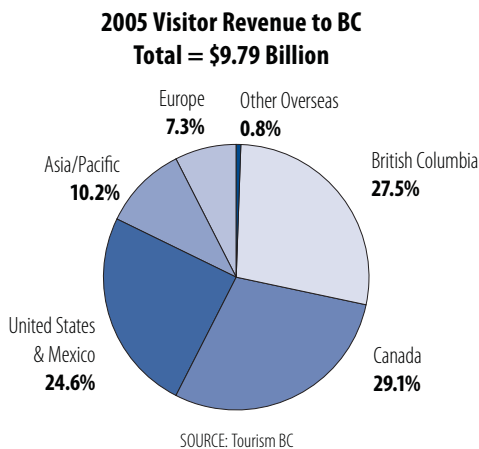


¹ Spirit of 2010 Tourism Strategy; Tourism 2015: Ten Year Marketing Framework; British Columbia Resort Strategy and Action Plan; Recruit, Retain and Train: Developing a Super Natural Tourism Workforce in BC; BC’s Freshwater Recreational Fishery Strategy and Action Plan; Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy for BC; BC 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Business Plan Summary; Tourism and Hospitality Training and Education Consortium Recommendations; Premier’s Competition Council and Tourism Industry Advisory Council report; Foresight Project Task Force: Tourism Drivers and Supporting Research (Council of Tourism Associations of BC); and the Cruise BC strategy

Why double tourism?

Ranking 10th in provincial GDP, tourism is already one of British Columbia's most successful economic sectors. In 2005, visitors injected \$7.1 billion of new money into the provincial economy, bringing total tourism revenues to approximately \$9.8 billion². Tourism and outdoor recreation provide almost 120,000 direct jobs³ and contribute to over 170,000 indirect jobs throughout the province. With a strong focus on outdoor recreation, tourism has been identified as a primary growth opportunity in rural British Columbia.

While B.C.'s tourism industry is robust, there is considerable room to expand. The province is very successful in attracting British Columbian and Canadian tourists, and enjoys a stable U.K. and German tourism market⁴. Globally, tourism is a growth industry: 2006 saw a worldwide increase in tourist traffic of 4.5 per cent, and the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer predicts a long-term annual growth rate of 4.1 per cent through 2020. With just under one per cent of the global tourism market



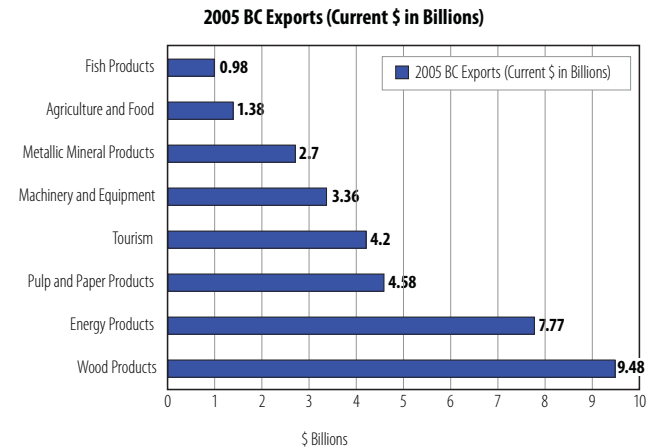
² Measured by overnight tourism revenue (OTR) where OTR is the annual gross revenue resulting from all spending by overnight visitors to BC. Although it does not capture all tourism spending that takes place within a jurisdiction (e.g. day trips, overnight camping, cruise ship related spending), it is recognized as the standard revenue measure in many jurisdictions.

³ More than 5.3 per cent of the provincial workforce

⁴ 75 per cent of tourism overnight tourism revenue comes from "bread and butter" markets in B.C., Canada and the USA

vacationing British Columbia, there is plenty of room to grow.

Increasing tourism revenues is not an end in itself, however. Ultimately, the reason to further develop the tourism industry is that it will continue to



improve economic stability and prosperity in British Columbia. Increasing tourism will fuel new jobs and support communities across the province. Doubling tourism revenues will also double the \$1.1 billion the industry contributes to the provincial budget each year. That translates into more money for British Columbia's priorities of education, health care and healthy living, social supports and environmental sustainability.

Increased tourism revenue can introduce a new economic value for B.C.'s natural resources, supporting the preservation and protection of environmentally significant areas. The accompanying development of outdoor recreation facilities, from parks and trails to ski hills and golf courses, can provide new interest in and opportunities for British Columbians to improve their health and fitness, and enjoy all the province has to offer.

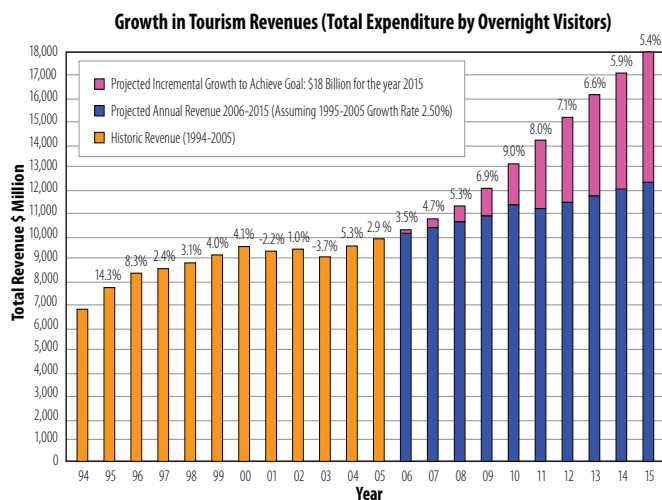
Finally, meeting the increased demand for tourism activities will provide the impetus to develop cultural and heritage assets, activities and opportunities in communities across the province, for the pleasure and enjoyment of tourists and residents alike.

How to double tourism: opportunities and challenges

British Columbia has already identified opportunities for growth in the tourism sector:

One

Building on existing tourism markets: Vancouver, Whistler and Victoria will continue to draw a large portion of tourists, but visitors are also seeking other experiences and vistas. For example, circle route driving tours will draw visitors and residents alike into the Cariboo and the Kootenays. Promoting the 100-plus festivals and events across Northern B.C. and a growing interest in exploring B.C.'s Aboriginal culture will encourage residents to explore other parts of their own province.



⁵ See page 1 - Introduction.

Two

The link between traditional tourism and outdoor recreation is getting stronger. Guests visiting a spa in the Okanagan will cycle the Kettle Valley Railway and tour the wineries. Visitors to resorts on Vancouver Island or the Gulf Islands will take the time to go whale watching or hiking. Whether they're from British Columbia or Japan, they're increasingly interested in having more experiences while they're here.

Three

B.C. is ready to take advantage of the global market and Canada's efforts to gain Approved Destination Status (ADS) from China. The province is already moving ahead with plans on the Pacific Gateway and Asia-Pacific projects, as well as a new Asia-Pacific Centre of Trade and Culture.

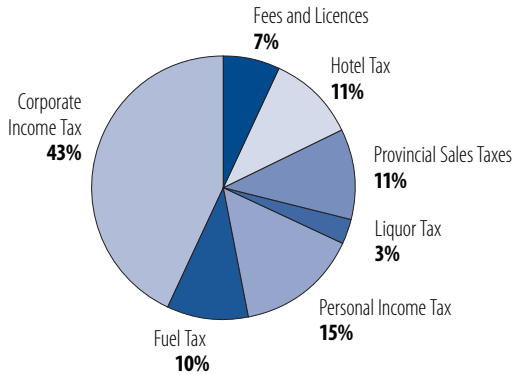
Four

British Columbia has more than 50 recognized tourism products, from skiing and river rafting to wine and food experiences. There is great opportunity to increase return on investment by developing more high-end tourism experiences, and experiences that attract higher volumes of visitors.

Five

Finally, British Columbia already has a wealth of research and a number of comprehensive strategies prepared by both the industry and across government⁵. The Tourism Action Strategy builds on work already done, coordinating strategies that are in various stages of implementation across B.C.

**2005 Provincial Government Tourism Revenue
By Source Total = \$1.10 billion**



There are, however, significant challenges to doubling tourism revenues by 2015.

The annual cumulative growth rate for the tourism industry has averaged 2.5 per cent, and it will take an enormous amount of work to increase that to an average 6.5 per cent over the next nine years, including a growth spike to nine per cent in 2010.

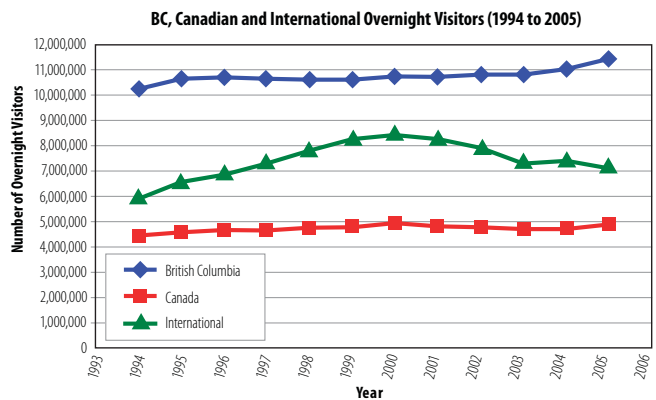
British Columbia's workforce, like other jurisdictions across North America, is declining: by 2010, more workers will be retiring from the workforce than entering it, creating a labour shortage in British Columbia and across Canada.

The tourism sector is very diverse. There are 50 industry organizations and associations, 18,000 companies, 14 provincial ministries, seven provincial Crown agencies, the federal government, First Nations and communities involved in B.C.'s tourism industry. Their roles are complementary, but must be clearly defined so all partners can work together, fill gaps, eliminate cross-purposes and reduce duplication and overlap.

While B.C. has had strong growth in international visitors (doubling from 3.5 million to 7 million between 1972 and 2005), this growth was tempered by a sharp decline after 2000, particularly in U.S.

visitation. This was due to various unforeseen "wild cards" such as the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the 2002 SARS and BSE outbreaks, the 2004 Okanagan fires, a strong Canadian dollar and record high fuel prices.

The good news is that these events had a much lower impact on domestic travel to British Columbia. During this period of negative events, our high-volume domestic markets have shown consistent stability and recent growth (71% of all visitors and 59% of total tourism revenues in 2005). This attests to the importance of increasing our "bread and butter" domestic markets to insulate us from future uncontrollable events.



What is the competition doing?

In developing the *Tourism Action Plan*, the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts looked at more than 20 jurisdictions around the world that have successfully doubled tourism revenues and found only two comparable to British Columbia: New Zealand, and the State of Victoria, Australia. Competition for tourist revenues is fierce, and having succeeded in doubling tourism revenues once, New Zealand and Australia are now working to redouble those numbers.

B.C. identified six strategies successfully used by these destinations:

- ▶ competitive and comprehensive transportation to and through the region;
- ▶ development of the tourism industry and products;
- ▶ a well-trained, client-centred and service-oriented workforce;
- ▶ strategic, focused and coordinated marketing;
- ▶ funding for accurate, timely research and analysis of the tourism market and trends; and
- ▶ concerted and committed efforts across the many ministries and agencies.

In short, successful tourist destinations understand what visitors want, and they provide it. They make it easy to get to attractions and activities. The workforce is friendly, professional, and allows travelers to comfortably access a variety of activities. All parts of the sector work together in a coordinated and cohesive way.

The *Tourism Action Plan* identifies the role of each player in British Columbia's tourism industry in addressing these key issues.

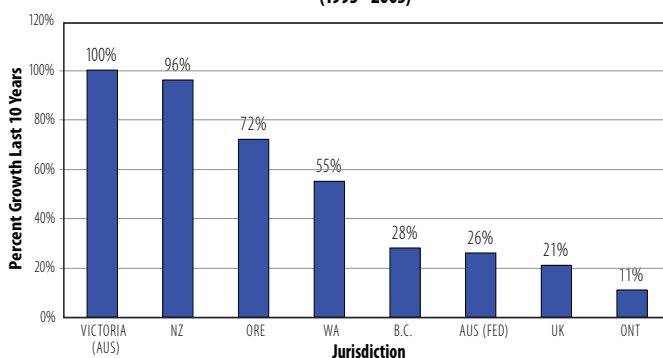
The role of the Tourism Industry

The tourism industry, as the face-to-face supplier of adventures, attractions and experiences, is the key player in doubling tourism revenues by 2015. It is the responsibility of industry to develop activities and new sectors that will attract more visitors to the province and provide them with a more diverse experience when they are here. The tourism industry will need to focus on:

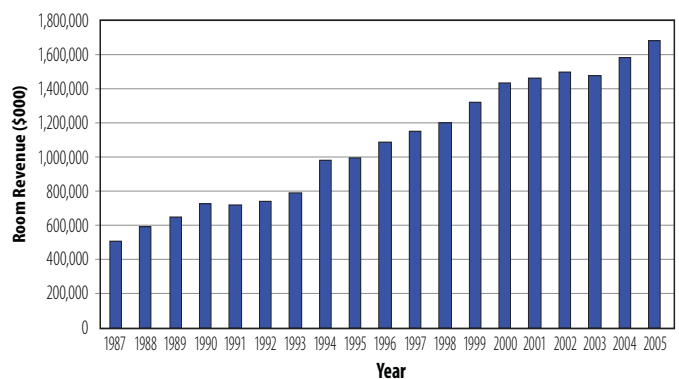
- ▶ investing in and developing new tourism and outdoor recreation products;
- ▶ identifying labour needs, hiring and training staff, and providing a high-quality, client-centred service; and
- ▶ marketing specific destinations, tourism products and individual businesses.

Partnerships among businesses and between the tourism industry and government will be important to tourism growth. The provincial government's role is to help set the conditions to allow and encourage that growth.

BC Tourism Revenue Growth Compared to that of Key Competitors (1995 - 2005)



BC Room Revenue Trends (1987 to 2005)



The role of the B.C. Government

- ▶ While government has no influence over such things as fuel prices, currency fluctuations, terrorism, global economies, insurance rates, natural catastrophes and weather, for example, there are areas that are clearly within its jurisdiction:
- ▶ ensuring cross-government coordination of tourism initiatives;
- ▶ supplying, and creating demand for, a myriad of tourism products and experiences;
- ▶ promoting and marketing the province of British Columbia as a premiere destination, showcasing and leveraging the 2010 Games and B.C.'s attractive physical environment;



- ▶ providing access to Crown land for tourism and recreation development;
- ▶ ensuring tourism and outdoor recreation infrastructure is in place; (roads, ports, parks, airports, etc.)
- ▶ working with the federal government on common goals (Approved Destination Status from China, air policies, etc.); and
- ▶ developing public policy that encourages private sector investment in tourist activities and attractions.

Simply put, the tourism sector will increase the number of tourists and the length of their stay; government will ensure that appropriate regulatory and economic climates are in place, as well as provide planning, coordination, and infrastructure investments, to help the tourism industry meet that goal.

The Tourism Action Plan

The Goal

To enable the British Columbia's tourism industry to grow from "good" to "great" and double total annual tourism revenues to \$18 billion by 2015.

The Tourism Action Plan identifies four key areas of focus for the B.C. government and provincial public agencies:

- ▶ Encourage **development and investment** with a positive business climate and publicly supported infrastructure.
- ▶ Improve **access and infrastructure** with regular and safe transportation to the destination; hassle-free entry into the destination; sufficient air lift capacity and landing rights from foreign cities to the destination; and transportation infrastructure that allows visitors to move around the province.
- ▶ Ensure a strong **tourism workforce**. B.C. will need more than 80,000 well-trained, well-managed, client-centered, service-oriented workers by 2015. Availability of employees will be the number one limiting factor constraining future tourism growth.
- ▶ Target **marketing and promotion** using highly strategic, focused and coordinated marketing efforts to ensure competitive advantages are sustained and expanded.

Key Area 1: Development & Investment

Tourists want friendly, safe, welcoming holidays that provide value for money. They want easy access to attractions, experiences and services, and to take home great memories from their holidays. Today, tourists are taking charge of their vacations like never before. Instead of relying on traditional destinations or recommendations from friends and family, they're going on-line to scout out their destinations first-hand. They bookmark appealing attractions, compare accommodations and work out a myriad of possible holiday scenarios before making a decision.

If government and industry want to catch the attention of these travelers by ensuring a growing supply of high-quality products at various price points in British Columbia, they must invest in existing attractions and develop new ones.

Objective: Increased tourism investment on Crown land.

More than 90 per cent of British Columbia's land base is Crown land, owned and managed by the provincial government. Since most outdoor recreation activities happen on Crown land, developing or expanding these types of tourism businesses falls under the jurisdiction of land use. Accessing Crown land can be

complex, often involving community consultation, First Nations obligations and property tax issues.

Government agencies will examine and act upon the opportunities to streamline the land-use application process, and work together on the following actions to pro-actively promote tourism development investment opportunities on Crown land:

Action 1 Government agencies and ministries will reduce the amount of time and paperwork required to approve a tourism related land-use application including:

- ▶ Creating and disseminating (via Front Counter BC) a new handbook for tourism operators on gaining access to Crown lands in BC for commercial tourism purposes.
- ▶ Harmonizing regulatory and policy regimes for tourism operations in parks and on other Crown land (e.g. tenure terms, contract language and clauses, application administration streamlining, etc.)
- ▶ Seeking legislative and regulatory changes to enable a more modern framework for tenure pricing for tourism on all Crown lands, including parks (e.g. a percentage of gross business revenues)

Action 2 Government agencies and ministries will increase access to and enjoyment of BC's parks and protected areas for tourism and outdoor recreation by developing a business plan for new management framework and delivery model. The framework will:

- ▶ Expand recreation services opportunities and user



access in parks, protected areas and Crown land areas adjacent to them.

- ▶ Establish partnerships to facilitate private- and public-sector funding to support tourism and recreation program delivery and infrastructure development inside and outside of provincial parks.
- ▶ Promote entrepreneurial activities for existing and new commercial operators in or adjacent to parks and protected areas.
- ▶ Establish a provincial trails program (BC Trails) for both urban and rural trail systems on Crown land.
- ▶ Develop and implement (via Tourism BC) a comprehensive marketing plan for tourism and outdoor recreation in parks and protected areas.
- ▶ Implement a quality service program to ensure client satisfaction levels are meeting or exceeding expectations.

Action 3 Government and agencies will establish lodges in selected parks.

Action 4 Government and agencies will increase First Nations investment in the tourism and outdoor recreation sectors:

- ▶ Identify opportunities for First Nations to partner with new or existing resort operations.
- ▶ Facilitate Aboriginal Tourism BC's implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy:
 - Tourism BC will provide \$5 million over three years to Aboriginal Tourism BC for implementation of the strategy's business plan.
 - Confirm Aboriginal tourism as a marketing priority for Tourism BC.
- ▶ Establish a legacy of First Nations art at Olympic venues
- ▶ Establish First Nations cultural visitor centres and

name significant First Nations features and/or sites in selected parks and protected areas.

Action 5 Government and agencies will work to ensure new resorts are approved and developed in an expedited manner:

- ▶ Draft legislation that would enable alternative forms of governance for resort development projects (e.g. creation of resort municipalities for "greenfield" or new resorts).
- ▶ Resolve the concerns about Short Term Overnight Commercial Accommodation Properties (STOCAPs) to stimulate investment and development.
- ▶ Investigate options and prepare a business case to facilitate First Nations involvement in resort approvals.

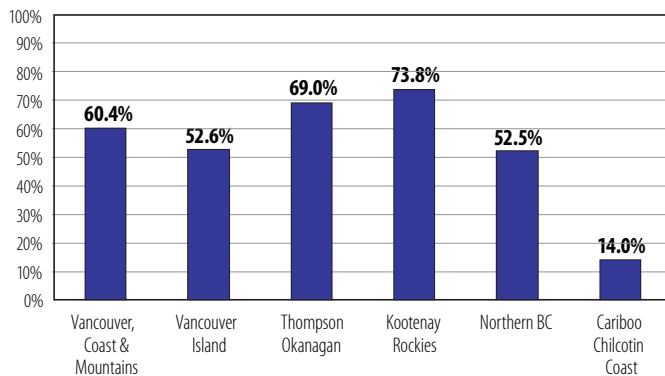
Expected Outcomes:

- ▶ Establish a baseline in Aboriginal tourism businesses in 2007. Increase Aboriginal tourism businesses by five per cent by 2008.
- ▶ Eight new resorts under construction by December 2008, a total investment value of \$3.5 billion.
- ▶ Three new joint-venture resorts/lodges with First Nations partners by 2010.
- ▶ Twenty per cent reduction in the processing time for tourism tenure applications by December, 2009.
- ▶ Increase park visits by twenty per cent by 2010.
- ▶ Six new lodges approved for construction by the private sector in selected parks by 2008.

Objective:

Maximize the tourism potential of Crown assets and develop and expand B.C.'s cultural attractions.

**Accommodation Room Revenue Growth
By Tourism Region 1995-2004**



Several Crown corporation mandates play a key role in supporting the development of tourism in B.C. including the Royal British Columbia Museum and the Provincial Capital Commission. The province has also committed to the development of a cultural precinct in Vancouver.

Action 6 Complete a plan to develop the Belleville Street ferry terminal in Victoria in collaboration with the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, the City of Victoria, the Provincial Capital Commission and federal agencies.

Action 7 Develop a vibrant “cultural precinct” in Vancouver, including:

- ▶ Asia Pacific Centre for Trade and Culture
- ▶ Aboriginal Art Gallery

Action 8 Royal BC Museum to:

- ▶ Develop a program to celebrate BC’s 2008 sesquicentennial.
- ▶ Develop a World Women’s History Museum as a satellite to the RBCM.

Expected Outcomes:

- ▶ Three new icon museums/centers established in Vancouver by 2012.

Key Area 2: Access and Infrastructure Development

By definition, tourism requires the movement of people into and around British Columbia. The journey – by rail, plane, ferry, bike or vehicle – can be a highlight of tourists’ (and residents’) B.C. experiences.

Many of the province’s transportation improvements were made in response to population growth, increased demand, commitments around the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and the expansion of Canada’s Pacific Gateway.

Doubling tourism revenues by 2015 will create even more demand for facilities in or near parks, cultural facilities, sports venues and RV campgrounds, as well as expanded port access for cruise ships and improvements to highways and regional airports. The province will ensure that tourism and outdoor recreation are key considerations as transportation is improved, often in partnership with other levels of government and possibly the private sector and First Nations. Depending on market conditions, building or expanding hotels, golf courses, resorts, attractions, etc. are opportunities for the private sector.

Unfortunately, very little quantitative analysis has been done with respect to the other infrastructure elements, in particular, the projected need for additional accommodation units/beds. This work needs to be undertaken early in the implementation of the Action Plan.

Objective:

Investments in infrastructure are coordinated to support tourism development.

Action 9 Establish a mechanism for periodic analysis of projected infrastructure enhancements

by region (public and/or private sector funded) to meet anticipated future tourism demand. This will include: air and marine ports, other transportation infrastructure, parks, RV facilities, trails, accommodations, etc.

Action 10 Ensure planning processes identify infrastructure gaps necessary for tourism development (expansions or enhancements to airports, roads and highways, ports etc.) and devise specific government actions required to fill those gaps and support Canada’s Pacific Gateway.

Action 11 Leverage transportation infrastructure investments and other tourism-related development by:

- ▶ Identifying potential tourism product or business development opportunities that may arise in areas of high tourism demand or when specific infrastructure developments occur (i.e. where regional airport will be expanded; along circle routes; in areas where we are currently selling lots when a larger lodge is possible; etc.).
- ▶ Identifying Crown land-based tourism development opportunities, establishing a reasonable level of pre-approval and marketing the opportunities to investors.
- ▶ Capitalizing on BC’s cruise and pocket cruise opportunities by working with key coastal communities to further develop day activity tourism products and services.
- ▶ Reviewing road/highway signage for tourism:
 - Rationalize existing multiple standards for tourism signage and enlist private sector to implement a single province wide road sign program;
 - Leverage provincial highway rest areas through better branding and signage.

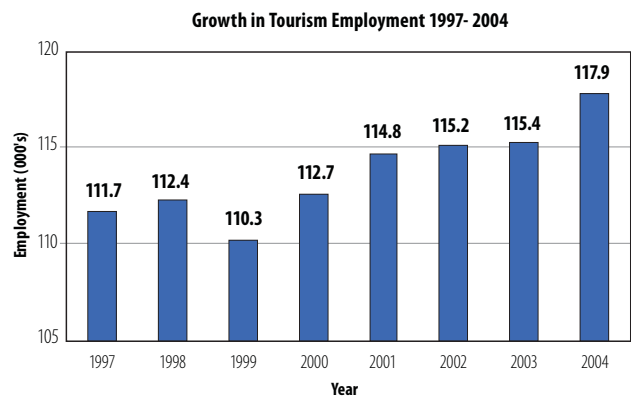
Expected Outcomes:

- ▶ Identification and marketing of one new tourism development opportunity on each of nine provincial Circle Routes per year.
- ▶ Quantitative inventory of forecast tourism infrastructure needs to better inform private and public sector planning and investment decision making.

Objective:

Address barriers to travel to British Columbia.

Federal policies and international negotiations on border access and security, immigration policies for tourism workers, air access to B.C. from Asia and Europe and Approved Destination Status with China



must be addressed in order to achieve the province’s revenue targets.

Action 12 Work with the federal government to improve air access to British Columbia in support of Canada’s Pacific Gateway Strategy. Provincial priorities include:

- ▶ Increasing federal investment in regional airports (e.g. Pemberton airport)
- ▶ Expanding direct access to Vancouver

International Airport and B.C.'s regional airports from the U.S., China, Singapore, India and Europe under Canada's recently announced "Blue Sky" policy initiative.

Expected Outcomes:

- ▶ Five per cent more direct flights from key Asian and European markets into B.C. by 2009 (establish baseline in 2007).
- ▶ Increased federal investment in transportation infrastructure projects in B.C.

Key Area 3: Tourism Workforce

A professional and well-managed workforce is essential to the success of a tourism business or destination. Friendly, high-quality service and enjoyable personal interactions can determine whether visitors have a great tourism experience that they tell their friends about and want to repeat, or one they simply write off as an unfriendly or sub-standard destination.

Around the world, labour shortages are considered to be the number one barrier to tourism growth. By 2015, more than 84,000 new tourism jobs will need to be filled in B.C., usually at starting salaries that historically have been lower than those offered by competing employers.

A coordinated approach by government, training and education institutions, workforce organizations and industry can help ease the critical labour short-

ages faced by BC's tourism industry. The objectives are:

- ▶ to increase and focus tourism training in the secondary and post-secondary systems, as well as in the workplace;
- ▶ to improve awareness and perceptions of tourism career opportunities;
- ▶ to expand recruitment efforts targeting foreign workers and under-represented groups (Aboriginals, older workers, youth at risk, etc.);
- ▶ to improve retention rates within organizations and across the tourism sector, as well as with individual employers.



Objective:
Assist industry to address looming labour shortages.

While the tourism industry is responsible for developing its workforce, government needs to ensure that industry has the tools to address this shortfall. Government will:

Action 13 Create a tourism Industry Training Organization (ITO) to allow industry to address training requirements for the sector in a manner similar to other industry sectors.

Action 14 Shift tourism labour/workforce training programs from Tourism BC to industry in a phased approach so as to ensure program continuity and delivery through to the end of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

Action 15 Increase the number of skilled and

unskilled tourism workers coming to B.C. from other countries as well as workers from other parts of Canada:

- ▶ Accelerate efforts with the federal government to develop international labour agreements to provide B.C. with greater authority over temporary foreign-worker applications.
- ▶ Negotiate an expansion of the Provincial Nominee Program.
- ▶ Develop an intergovernmental plan to address labour market issues in the tourism sector in the priority areas of:
 - foreign credentials recognition
 - enhanced leveraging of existing workforce immigration programs including, but not limited to: Temporary Foreign Workers Program; Working Holiday program; International Students off-campus work permits; Co-op Internships, etc. in collaboration with industry and the federal government.

Expected Outcomes:

- ▶ B.C.'s first tourism Industry Training Organization is established in 2007.
- ▶ Workforce programs are transferred from Tourism BC to private agencies by April 2010.
- ▶ Increased number of immigrants and workers from other provinces in tourism jobs.
- ▶ More than 80,000 new jobs created and filled in tourism businesses throughout B.C. by 2015.

Key Area 4: Marketing and Promotion

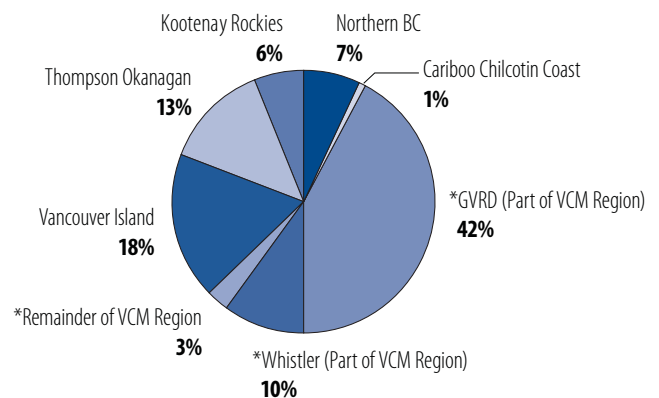
B.C.'s major competitors are sharpening the focus and mandates of their Crown marketing agencies, investing more money into marketing and employing those resources in more strategic ways. It is essential that B.C. improve its effectiveness in enticing specific tourists to vacation in British Columbia.

The province must employ effective and progressive "demand-side" strategies to retain, develop and grow high-volume domestic market, and high yield long-haul markets to maximize overall tourism revenues by:

- ▶ building on and leveraging B.C.'s tourism brands and sub-brands;

2005 Room Revenue by Tourism Region (Total: \$1.6 Billion)

Note: *VCM refers to Vancouver, Coast, & Mountains Region (VCM Accounts for 55% of the Total)



- ▶ attracting more volume from short haul markets that generate more trips per person. This includes residents of B.C., Western U.S.A. and the rest of Canada;
- ▶ extending marketing efforts in new and emerging leisure markets (i.e. China, India, Mexico) while increasing marketing efforts in key current leisure

tourism markets (domestic, U.S. and Europe);

- ▶ capturing a larger share of the international educational tourism market;
- ▶ expanding and strengthening arts, cultural and sport tourism offerings; and
- ▶ making smarter use of better information to target specific audiences, improve marketing and compete effectively on the world stage.

Objective:

Coordinated approach to the promotion and marketing of British Columbia.

Government will:

Action 16 Amend legislation to increase Tourism BC's core funding to three per cent of the eight per cent Hotel Room Tax by 2008. In the interim, the Province will continue to supplement Tourism BC's funding to \$50 million annually (roughly the equivalent of three per cent of the tax today).

Action 17 Undertake an independent governance review of Tourism BC Board of Directors and implement recommendations to enhance board effectiveness, clarify roles and responsibilities and confirm accountabilities.

Action 18 Work with tourism marketing organizations to establish clear roles and responsibilities and sign collaboration agreements with parties external to government. This includes the Canadian Tourism Commission, the B.C. government, Tourism BC, municipalities, regional destination marketing organizations (DMOs) and tourism businesses.

Action 19 Institute a timely process to assess and refresh British Columbia's brands and sub-brands to ensure continued effectiveness in positioning this province to key target audiences both domestically and internationally.

Action 20 Clarify and monitor the conditions for use of the 2% Additional Hotel Room Tax by cities and municipalities.

Action 21 Work with Conventions BC to establish an integrated, long-term marketing plan for all B.C.'s convention centres.

Action 22 Leverage the tourism benefits of hosting the 2010 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of governments and leading agencies:

- ▶ Olympic Games Secretariat
 - Implement an Olympic sponsor management program to maximize both B.C.'s profile and government's investment in the Games.
 - Establish B.C./Canada Place in Beijing for 2008; investigate options for long-term presence to promote B.C.
 - Establish a centralized Olympic presentation centre in Robson Square in conjunction with new 2010 Commerce Centre.
 - Deliver a series of Economic Business Summits in key target countries aimed at leveraging economic opportunities presented by the Olympics and showcasing B.C. as a destination for both business and leisure travel.
- ▶ Tourism BC
- Maximize promotional and marketing activities at Beijing 2008.



- Develop an integrated International Olympic Committee and spectator accommodation program for Olympic visitors.
- Deliver an integrated hosting and accommodation program for the unaccredited media.
- Develop consumer promotions integrating the 2010 message in key markets (Canada, U.S., Europe, Asia)
- Coordinate visitor servicing and volunteer training during the Games
- Leverage marketing assets with Olympic sponsors (e.g. Olympic Torch Relay) in collaboration with Olympic Games Secretariat.
- Market tourism for the 2010 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games, including a strategy for enhanced collaboration between key marketing organizations (e.g. regional & city destination marketing organizations, Canadian Tourism Commission).

Action 23 Facilitate provincial efforts to encourage the federal government to secure Approved Destination Status (ADS) with China to enhance B.C.’s Pacific Gateway initiatives and identify specific marketing tactics to attract Chinese visitors prior to receipt of ADS.

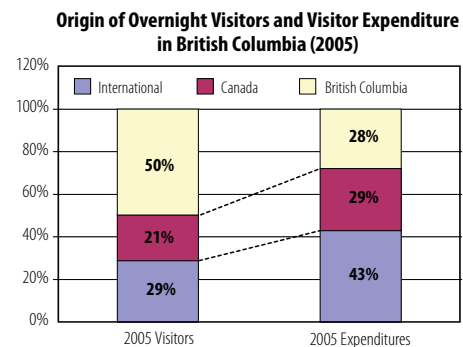
Action 24 Work with the Provincial Capital Commission to focus on its mandate “to connect and celebrate the Capital with all British Columbians” by developing and implementing a progressive business plan and budget for review by the province.

Action 25 Work with the BC Pavilion Corporation to develop and implement a robust plan for the future governance of the expanded Vancouver Convention Centre and BC Place, including operation, sales and marketing of the convention centre component. BC Pavilion Corporation to submit a

management and marketing plan to the province for review to maximize the use of the existing Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre and BC Place, and increase government’s return on its investments.

Action 26 Work with Tourism BC to incorporate the following provincial priorities into its business plans for marketing and product development:

- ▶ 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games;
- ▶ Aboriginal tourism;
- ▶ Asia Pacific opportunities;
- ▶ BC Parks;
- ▶ Outdoor recreation opportunities;
- ▶ Provincial environmental stewardship linked to “Super, Natural BC” marketing initiatives;
- ▶ Growth of B.C.’s market share in international education tourism; and
- ▶ Marketing program for provincial circle routes, in partnership with DMOs.



Action 27 Work with Tourism BC to maximize government’s return on its tourism marketing investments by placing a priority on the following markets of origin so as to achieve optimum short-term growth and the following revenue targets for 2009⁶:

- ▶ Markets with high revenue growth potential
 - China: \$148 million to \$158 million

⁶The growth targets are for 2009 overnight tourism revenues by market of visitor origin as compared to 2005 actuals; 2009 target ranges are based on Tourism BC projections used to generate growth necessary to achieve \$18 billion in annual revenues in 2015.

- South Korea: \$145 million to \$165 million
- United Kingdom: \$413 million to \$458 million
- Australia: \$226 million to \$302 million
- Domestic markets:
 - Alberta: \$1.7 billion to \$1.91 billion
 - Ontario: \$810 million to \$858 million
 - BC: \$3.23 billion to \$3.32 billion

▶ Major markets which B.C. must regain recent losses in market share:

- U.S.A.: \$2.26 billion to \$2.55 billion
- Japan: \$283 million to \$300 million

Action 28 Establish common provincial approach to promoting B.C. in, and attracting investment from, Asia Pacific and other key markets by:

- ▶ bringing together tourism marketers and investment marketers and using complementary messaging where it is beneficial for British Columbia, while still recognizing the needs of different target audiences; and
- ▶ developing and implementing a joint-marketing plan to position B.C. tourism-investment opportunities in key Asia Pacific countries including creating an electronic gateway that would link B.C. businesses with overseas investors via a multilingual Internet site.

Action 29 Establish and develop green certification and/or awards programs for B.C. tourism businesses that meet provincially established standards for environmental responsibility in tourism operations, including:

- ▶ urban businesses (e.g. hotels) that minimize the environmental impacts of their activities; and
- ▶ tourism businesses that meet high standards of environmental stewardship (e.g. adventure tourism operations, resorts, etc.).

Action 30 Tourism BC to increase focus on regional tourism growth through key strategic partnerships with the six regional tourism DMOs by:

- ▶ directing \$5 million annually via Tourism Partners programs for partnered initiatives allowing regional DMOs to better target key markets (primarily B.C., Alberta and Washington State) with a focus on each region's unique attractions, activities and features;
- ▶ directing supplemental marketing funds to enable regions to effectively promote B.C. in strategic U.S. and international markets through trade shows, tour operator familiarization and media relations;
- ▶ delivering an enhanced Community Foundations program to assist individual communities in establishing tourism development plans to capitalize on their unique tourism offerings;
- ▶ delivering an expanded BC Escapes Program targeting Lower Mainland residents and encouraging them to explore other regions of the province via short-stay, getaway trips; and
- ▶ reviewing and assessing annually the regional marketing activities by market, by activity and tourism experience, to gauge progress and update marketing plans.

Action 31 The province will undertake specific actions to advance potential growth markets or product development that will benefit one or more tourism regions, including:

- ▶ engaging in a province-wide development and marketing initiative for campgrounds and RV travel by developing a new partnership between Tourism BC, Ministry of Tourism Sport and the Arts Recreation Sites and Trails group, BC Parks, DMOs and industry;
- ▶ investing in cooperative promotion and signage campaigns in conjunction with Alaska, the Yukon, and Alberta to increase visitation and stay length in B.C.'s northern tourism region; and

- ▶ expanding B.C.'s incentive-based travel⁷ by working with DMOs to increase efforts to attract national and international group incentive trips.
- ▶ increasing sport tourism and major event hosting in B.C. communities.

Action 32 Develop and implement a wine/cuisine/agri-tourism strategy that will guide the establishment of new products, necessary infrastructure and effective and coordinated marketing. Key areas of focus will be based in part on the sector assessment and strategic framework developed by the BC Wine Institute and BC Agri-Tourism Alliance. Priorities include:

- ▶ increasing visitation to and within B.C. where a primary motivator is B.C.'s wine, food and agricultural experiences by focusing on key markets of B.C., Alberta, Ontario and Washington State; and
- ▶ working with Tourism BC to launch a wine and food consumer direct marketing campaign in spring 2007.

Action 33 Increase participation in B.C.'s freshwater and saltwater recreational fisheries by implementing the B.C. Angling Market Development Plan developed by government, industry and recreational angling organizations. The focus will be on:

- ▶ increasing awareness of the resource and the wide array of angling opportunities offered in B.C.;
- ▶ undertaking innovative and targeted marketing campaigns with partners including destination marketing organizations, industry and non-governmental organizations;
- ▶ rationalizing angling regulations for freshwater and saltwater fishing in B.C.; and
- ▶ creating an electronic gateway to provide one-stop

access to fishing and hunting licenses as well as park and recreation site passes.

Expected Outcomes:

- ▶ Increased annual overnight tourism revenues of \$11 billion by the end of 2008 with a long-term target of \$18 billion by the end of 2015.
- ▶ Approved Destination Status with China achieved for Canada before 2010.



- ▶ Twenty per cent growth in both non-resident delegate days and economic benefits generated within one year of opening the expanded Vancouver Convention Centre.

- ▶ 10 per cent increase in annual visitation from Asia Pacific and European markets by 2009.

- ▶ 5 per cent increase in meetings, incentive, conventions and events market share from key target countries by the end of 2009.
- ▶ Twenty per cent of all B.C. tourism operators receive "green certified business" status by the end of 2009.
- ▶ 5 per cent increase in sales of recreational fishing, hunting, park use and recreation site licenses or permits by 2009, with tangible cost efficiencies over time.

⁷ Incentive based travel is where the primary motivation for travel is part of a corporate reward or incentive initiative

Implementing the Tourism Action Plan

The *Tourism Action Plan* was built on an extensive collection of research, strategic plans and background material. This material is available on the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts' website at www.tsa.gov.bc.ca.

It is important to note that the plan is a living document, designed to be updated as outcomes are met, new opportunities arise and circumstances change.

The *Tourism Action Plan* helps coordinate the tourism-related activities of many ministries, Crown corporations and agencies, as well as industry and community organizations that have a role to play in B.C.'s tourism industry. These include:

- ▶ Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
- ▶ Ministry of Advanced Education
- ▶ Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
- ▶ Ministry of Attorney General
- ▶ Ministry of Community Services
- ▶ Ministry of Education
- ▶ Ministry of Environment
- ▶ Ministry of Finance
- ▶ Ministry of Forests
- ▶ Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services
- ▶ Ministry of Transportation
- ▶ Ministry of Small Business and Revenue
- ▶ Tourism BC
- ▶ Integrated Land Management Bureau
- ▶ Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- ▶ Canadian Tourism Commission
- ▶ BC Pavilion Corporation
- ▶ Conventions BC

- ▶ Royal British Columbia Museum
- ▶ Regional and local Destination Marketing Organizations

The Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts is already providing many existing and complementary programs and services and these actions complement the *Tourism Action Plan*.

The Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts will establish a Minister's Tourism Industry Advisory Group to provide feedback and independent advice on priorities and implementation timing. A B.C. Tourism Research Advisory Council will also be formalized to identify information gaps and set priorities, provide strategic advice and enhanced information-sharing, identify standard performance measures, and annually evaluate research programs and outputs.

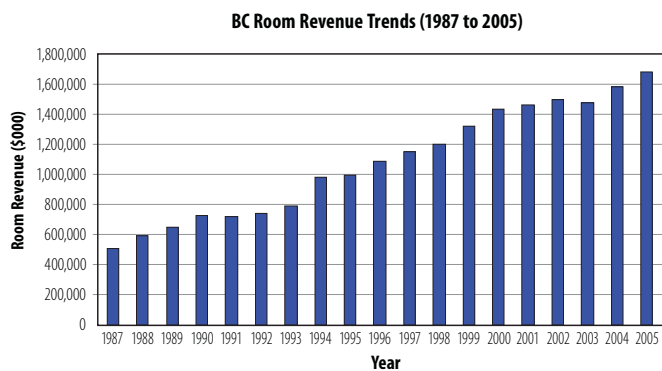
Government and its agencies will initially focus efforts on six actions expected to result in the most significant incremental gain toward doubling tourism:

- ▶ Increase First Nation investment in the tourism and outdoor recreation sectors. (Action 4)
- ▶ Ensure new resorts are approved and developed in an expedited manner. (Action 5)
- ▶ Work with the federal government to improve air access to British Columbia in support of the Pacific Gateway Strategy. (Action 12)
- ▶ Increase the number of skilled and unskilled tourism workers coming to BC from other countries as well as from other parts of Canada. (Action 15)
- ▶ Leverage the tourism benefits of hosting the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. (Action 22)
- ▶ Work with Tourism BC to maximize government's return on its tourism marketing investments by placing a priority on markets with high revenue growth potential or recently lost market share so as to achieve optimum short term growth. (Action 27)

Doubling Tourism Revenues: what will 2015 look like?

Doubling tourism revenues by 2015 sets the bar high. But British Columbia has the raw material required to succeed: a motivated and skilled workforce, a wealth of high-value activities and destinations, a strong reputation around the world, committed governments, communities, organizations and Crown corporations, and a comprehensive plan with clear actions and outcomes.

One technique in accomplishing such a challenging goal is to visualize what British Columbia will look like in 2015. What will be the result of doubling tourism revenues?



- ▶ Tourism generates \$18 billion a year in total revenues, supporting tourism businesses across the province.
- ▶ There is more access to key overseas markets as a result of expanded Open Skies policies and more direct flights into Canada's Pacific Gateway.
- ▶ Aboriginal tourism flourishes across B.C., attracting domestic and international visitors.
- ▶ More international calibre winter sport events take place in the legacy infrastructure built for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.
- ▶ Improved highway transportation makes it easier for residents and tourists to travel to and through B.C. This is accomplished in part with private-sector partners.

- ▶ British Columbia increases the annual revenues from Chinese visitors to \$158 million by 2009 from \$91 million in 2005.
- ▶ Strong immigration helps fill 84,000 new tourism jobs by 2015.
- ▶ B.C. remains consistently ranked as one of the world's top tourism destinations by Condé Nast and other publications.

Doubling tourism revenues will leave a strong legacy for British Columbians.

- ▶ New recreational opportunities will benefit residents who like to golf, ski, hike, walk, swim, or enjoy a myriad of active pursuits;
- ▶ More environmentally significant areas are protected and preserved for future generations;
- ▶ B.C.'s cultural and heritage sites are developed and expanded;
- ▶ Tourism underwrites cultural activities that will be enjoyed by residents; and
- ▶ Tourists drawn to B.C.'s rural areas contribute to vibrant and economically sustainable communities.

The key to turning this vision into reality is in implementing a flexible and strategic plan that takes advantage of all opportunities, recognizes and addresses challenges, identifies key actions and ties them to measurable outcomes.



BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Ministry of
Tourism, Sport
and the Arts