

A Call to Action to Accelerate the Recovery and Resilience of Alberta's Visitor Economy

Significant, timely and comprehensive actions and supports for all sectors of the tourism industry are needed now, and over the mid to long-term, to enable the visitor economy to accelerate its recovery and contribute to the diversification of our provincial economy.

Alida Visbach, TIAA Board Chair

June 9, 2020 (Calgary, Alberta) The visitor economy is an essential and growing component of many of Alberta's local and regional economies and community well-being. The visitor economy generates significant employment, drives economic growth and diversification, stimulates investment in community infrastructure and programs and deepens the conservation and appreciation of unique cultures and the natural environment.

As a leading advocate for Alberta's Tourism Industry, the Tourism Industry Association (TIAA) of Alberta has launched a collaborative industry-wide process to develop recommendations to the Government of Alberta for: a) accelerating the recovery of the province's visitor economy; and, b) positioning the industry for a resilient and sustainable future.

To champion the process, TIAA has established the Alberta Tourism Industry Associations Advisory Panel which is comprised of leaders from several of Alberta's major tourism sector associations, including:

- Tourism Industry Association of Alberta
- Restaurants Canada
- Canada West Ski Areas Association
- National Airlines Council of Canada
- Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association
- Indigenous Tourism Alberta
- Alberta Media Production Industries Association
- Meetings Means Business Canada

The panel is also working to engage other visitor economy related sector associations in Alberta through an online engagement process. The panel intends to table its recommendations with Premier Kenney and the Economic Recovery Council towards the end of June, 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the measures introduced to contain its spread, has had an immediate and catastrophic impact on Alberta's \$8.9B visitor economy. Millions of Albertan's, Canadian's and international visitors have stopped travelling. Many businesses in all sectors of the visitor economy have closed or have significantly reduced their services and thousands of Albertans in the industry have lost their jobs or been laid off. Federal and provincial government responses such as the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy and tax relief programs have greatly helped many tourism businesses to date. However, the substantive recovery of the visitor economy is expected to be slower than previously anticipated and greater supports are required in order to avoid significant increases in business closures and job losses and local community impacts.

As the panel prepares its recommendations, it will also be considering recommendations and plans developed by other organizations such as Travel Alberta, Destination Canada and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada.

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The Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAA) is a not-for-profit, tourism association that advocates on behalf of all segments of Alberta's tourism economy for a competitive and sustainable business environment that generates substantial economic value for the province.