
Tourism and Hospitality: Key to British Columbia's Recovery and Identity

A Tourism and Hospitality Labour Recovery
Framework

December 21, 2021

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In the fall of 2021, after a summer glimmer of post-pandemic recovery, the tourism and hospitality industry began to consider what challenges and opportunities would lie ahead.

Consensus was that a lack of labour is preventing tourism and hospitality from partnering in rebuilding the province and our economy. As we looked at economic recovery of the businesses that form our industry, we agreed on the need for a complementary, concerted effort on the people that deliver tourism and hospitality throughout British Columbia.

As an industry we agreed there was little time to waste. Knowing the deep experience of our industry associations and destination management organizations, go2HR asked them to come together as an industry engagement working group to determine how we might fuel labour recovery, and in turn, recovery for tourism and hospitality employers that operate in every corner of our province. Past collaboration had proven successful – including partnerships between associations and destination management organizations to address destination development planning – and we believed it could benefit us in building a labour recovery framework.

This labour recovery framework is the result of a two-month-long, roll-up-our-sleeves process to determine the areas instrumental to labour recovery, key priorities and objectives, and – of utmost importance – proposed new initiatives that could demonstrate a clear return on new and existing investment.

To be sure, the timeline was ambitious. However, as an industry that should, as one of our working group members wisely noted, be ***embraced as part of our identity as a people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous***, we knew it was critical to create a labour recovery framework with pace. And, concurrently, do it with the future in mind.

Part of our work included discussing what, if we had a magic wand, would it fix to support labour recovery. Our industry engagement working group members were aligned on the need to improve our storytelling: to ensure youth and parents see our industry as a career option; to create a deeper understanding of the role of tourism and hospitality in community and provincial economic success; to support sustained change in working conditions; and to measure ourselves against new metrics that take into account our desire to focus on the tourism and hospitality industry's role in sustainability, innovation, diversity and inclusion, and the green economy.

Our industry engagement working group is owed a debt of gratitude for their commitment to this framework. They themselves have been tested over the past 22 months, admirably serving their members and teams in support of tourism hospitality workers and employers. Yet they wholeheartedly offered their time and talent to this effort.

We are aligned as an industry on this labour recovery framework. Should we be able to secure support for its implementation, we want government to know that we are fully committed to coordinated implementation.

Krista Bax
CEO, go2HR

LABOUR RECOVERY FRAMEWORK PROCESS

In mid-October, we asked representatives from tourism and hospitality industry associations and destination management organizations to join us in developing a labour recovery framework for the tourism and hospitality industry.

We outlined their role in developing this labour recovery framework over a tight timeline of about 60 days. We asked them to complete a detailed survey, review and respond to a white paper summarizing their feedback, and devote a full day to engaging in-person to develop the content and consensus for what would become this framework.

Together, our industry engagement working group then finalized and signed-off on this labour recovery framework and began developing companion engagement and communications materials to support our whole-of-industry approach.

LABOUR RECOVERY FRAMEWORK INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Organization	Name	Sector	Region
Adventure Tourism Coalition	Kathy McRae	Recreation	BC
BC Destination Marketing Organization Association	Nancy Small	All	BC
BC Hotel Association	Ingrid Jarrett	Accommodation	BC
BC Lodging and Campground Association	Joss Penny	Accommodation	BC
BC Meetings & Event Industry Working Group	Joanne Burns Millar	Meetings & Events	BC
BC Restaurant & Foodservices Association	Ian Tostenson	Food & Beverage	BC
BC's Alliance of Beverage Licencees	Jeff Guignard	Food & Beverage	BC
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association	Amy Thacker	All	Cariboo Chilcotin
Canada West Ski Areas Association	Christopher Nicolson	All	BC
Destination BC	Susan Rybar	All	BC
Indigenous Tourism BC	Brenda Baptiste	All	BC
Kootenay Rockies Tourism	Kathy Cooper	All	Southeast BC

Organization	Name	Sector	Region
Northern BC Tourism Association	Clint Fraser	All	Northern BC
Restaurants Canada	Mark von Schellwitz	Food & Beverage	BC
Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association	Ellen Walker Matthews	All	Interior
Tourism Industry Association of BC	Walt Judas	All	BC
Tourism Vancouver Island	Anthony Everett	All	Vancouver Island
Vancouver Attractions Group	Nancy Chilton	Attractions	Vancouver
Vancouver Coast & Mountains	Jody Young	All	Vancouver Coast & Mountains
Wilderness Tourism Association of BC	Scott Benton	Recreation	BC

LABOUR RECOVERY FRAMEWORK CHALLENGES AND REALITIES

“The challenges of this year have put the tourism industry on a pause, and at the same time, have given it a unique opportunity to stop and reflect on itself.”
 Williem van Rossem, International Business School of Barcelona

In this framework we have prioritized areas – or pillars – of focus where a foundation for success (via existing infrastructure and investment) already exists, or where new investment is merited.

In many ways tourism and hospitality has the early lead in the potential to partner with governments on recovery – from the beauty of our province where we ourselves want to visit along with everyone else, to tourism and hospitality’s ubiquitous, province-wide reach, to its importance as a source of employment for Indigenous Peoples, women, newcomers to Canada and visible minorities. As we look at our pillars of labour recovery, we can recognize the following challenges and opportunities upon which to capitalize, or challenges to solve.

Attracting Talent

Tourism and hospitality can make a great first job, or a fulfilling life-long career. Post-pandemic it can’t be either/or, it must be yes/and. We may not know the exact number of existing and future vacancies, but we know we have more jobs than workers. *As such, our first pillar is ensuring labour supply for tourism and hospitality recovery that benefits British Columbia’s businesses and communities.*

Our Identity

As British Columbia works to remain a destination of choice for visitors, the tourism and hospitality industry must recover as a destination of choice for employment. This requires a critical eye to how we are viewed as an industry. Some elements resulting from a global pandemic, such as lay-offs, new safety protocols and customer conflict, were unexpected and/or required adjustments. As we emerge from the pandemic, it is timely to look at how the

work we offer reflects what people need. Are we aligning with diverse and modern values of people who might look for work in tourism and hospitality? Are we measuring our contributions in the right ways? *As such, our second pillar is renewing the value of tourism and hospitality to workers and to all British Columbians.*

Community Infrastructure

The tourism and hospitality industry creates community benefits in the form of jobs, revenues, and experiences for locals as well as visitors. Employers also rely on community infrastructure, housing being of critical importance. We are a people-powered business with little remote employment. Tourism and hospitality employers rely on accessible and affordable housing in relatively close proximity to work to accommodate the ability of workers to be flexible, start early, or stay late. Workers also want to work and play in their community. *As such, our third pillar is demonstrating the intersection between affordable and accessible housing and tourism and hospitality labour recovery.*

Business Transformation

As our industry recovers, many employers are – to use an oft-quoted phrase – walking and chewing gum at the same time. Employers are trying to assess potential recovery, attract and retain talent, encourage experienced staff to come back, navigate supply chain challenges, address customer uncertainty and lead times, and create a safe workplace. Our industry also has a deep connection to our communities and wants to build back better for our families, employees, clients and communities. Labour recovery will require human resources business capacity to address these challenges. *As such, our fourth pillar is creating the capacity for new tourism and hospitality business practices.*

Training

Our goal is that the tourism and hospitality workforce of tomorrow includes people who come back to the industry post-pandemic, and those who join the industry right now. Each of these people will need some form of training – to feel supported as they fill front-line roles, to feel safe and protected from violence, harassment and conflict (internal or customer-facing), to return to a different tourism and hospitality industry than the one they left, and to lead teams as new or returning supervisors and managers. As our industry becomes more sustainable, innovative, technology-driven and diverse, we will also need to modernize our training to fit the future. *As such, our fifth pillar is developing the skills to fuel the tourism and hospitality workforce of tomorrow.*

Technology

The application of technology in the tourism and hospitality industry has benefited visitors during a global pandemic – providing them with options to maintain or enhance customer service. This has included e-commerce solutions for reservations and booking, digitization of sales or services, or automation of processes that traditionally required active human involvement. While the people-facing foundations of tourism and hospitality will never disappear, understanding how technology could power processes in throughout our industry

could deliver benefits to visitors and workers. As such, our sixth pillar is using technology to transform the tourism and hospitality industry.

LABOUR RECOVERY FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

This labour recovery framework focuses on six pillars identified as integral to labour recovery. In each pillar you will find:

- Context on the role this pillar plays in labour recovery;
- Priorities – or objectives – to ground us on what we want to achieve; and
- Proposed new initiatives to deliver on our priorities.

The proposed new initiatives are intended to serve as a prioritized order of importance. This does not mean that other initiatives do not have merit; instead, we chose to focus on the ones that we view as critical solutions that should be immediately considered for action.

This framework is also intended to be a living document that allows for adjustment based on additional stakeholder or government input. It will also need to align with other strategies underway, including Indigenous Tourism British Columbia's 5-year Indigenous Tourism Labour Force Strategic Plan, the province's StrongerBC for Everyone – BC's Economic Recovery Plan, and revitalization of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport's Strategic Framework for Tourism in British Columbia.

The Industry Engagement Working Group will now focus on determining the partnerships required for implementation, the costs of each initiative, and the prioritization of initiatives over the short, medium and longer term.

PILLAR 1: ENSURE LABOUR SUPPLY FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY RECOVERY THAT BENEFITS BC BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES

Prior to COVID-19, the tourism and hospitality industry directly employed about one out of every eight British Columbians, accounting for more than 12% of total provincial employment. WorkBC’s sector outlook for tourism and hospitality includes the following sectors and employment data:

Tourism and Hospitality Sectors	BC Employment	Percentage
Food and Beverage	163,282	53%
Recreation and Entertainment	71,980	23%
Transportation and Travel Services	43,280	14%
Accommodation	32,009	10%
Total Transportation and Hospitality Industry	310,551	100%

In terms of labour supply needed for expected job openings, pre-pandemic, the BC Labour Market Outlook identified 108,026 job openings between 2019-29. Key areas of projected demand are:

- Management and supervisory roles including: restaurant and food services managers, chefs and accommodation service managers;
- Skilled occupations including: cooks, bus drivers, program leaders and instructors in recreation and sport, and taxi and limousine drivers and chauffeurs; and
- Front line, entry-level roles including: food counter attendants and kitchen helpers, food and beverage servers, light duty cleaners (including housekeepers) and cashiers.

While these numbers have not yet been updated to reflect the impact of COVID-19, we know that we will need to attract, maintain and retain, and engage new people to work in tourism and hospitality. At the same time, we will have to remove barriers for anyone willing to work in tourism and hospitality.

We believe that people working in the tourism and hospitality industry will help build a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

PRIORITIES

Priority	New Initiatives
Maintain and retain people that work in tourism and hospitality	1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8
Remove barriers for people willing to work in tourism and hospitality	1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8
Encourage more people to work in tourism and hospitality	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.8
Re-engage people who have left tourism and hospitality	1.6, 1.8

PLANNED NEW INITIATIVES

Initiative 1.1: Tourism of Tomorrow Initiative

- Create secondary school crediting system for tourism and hospitality work experience in geographic areas of significant labour shortages to allow high-school students to work, intern, apprentice or volunteer to earn credits applicable to a high school diploma.

Initiative 1.2: Experience Tourism Initiative

- Develop and offer program for secondary school field trips inclusive of a wide range of related tourism and hospitality industry experiences such as festivals and events, museums, outdoor recreation, heritage sites (Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural sites) accommodation and food and beverage businesses.
- Experiences will showcase the diverse industry opportunities and position entry-level jobs as the best place to gain foundational, cross-sectoral, recognized work experience.

Initiative 1.3: Teaching Tourism Toolkit Initiative

- Create outreach program to secondary school teachers to revitalize existing learning materials for careers in tourism and hospitality to ensure they are inclusive of areas of work such as technology and innovation, marketing, energy management, business and financial careers that currently exist in the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Augment outreach program with any new materials, promotional items or other resources created as part of the Multi Modal Messaging Initiative in Pillar 2 as well as the SuperHost Starter Initiative in Pillar 4.

Initiative 1.4: Post-Secondary Pursuit Initiative

- Create Post-Secondary Pursuit role(s) to revitalize tourism and hospitality experiences and training at the post-secondary level, inclusive of both tourism and hospitality-based and non-tourism and hospitality-based programs. Post-Secondary Pursuit roles will serve industry through:
 - Funding for resumption and expansion of post-secondary tourism and hospitality field trips and experiences
 - Instructor familiarization program(s) to re-introduce tourism and hospitality careers to post-secondary faculty
 - Funding for dedicated co-op advisory services to facilitate tourism and hospitality specific placements and support early co-op placements to ensure required co-op training takes place within school programming
 - Adjusted post-secondary tourism and hospitality programs that begin in late fall, allowing students – including international students – gain a full summer season of employment experience
 - Materials to equip university business schools to showcase entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism and hospitality industry
 - Create and maintain a database of Canadian colleges with foreign students who are enrolled in arts and business programs to showcase employment

opportunities within the tourism and hospitality sector, and work with colleges to provide work opportunities to those already in British Columbia or with pending enrollment.

Initiative 1.5: International Worker Access Initiative

- Create International Worker Access role to serve the industry by focusing on three guiding principles to successful international worker recruitment and retention:
 - Strategies and frameworks for hiring international workers to work in tourism and hospitality: this is not an “on-demand” solution, it requires assessment of appropriate programs to utilize and enough planning and lead time to execute
 - Resources to support employers hiring international workers: providing guidance and navigation of programs (applications, documentation, processing times)
 - Additional supports for international workers: many of whom will need assistance with housing and transition to living in Canada
- The International Worker Advisor will also serve the industry by:
 - Establishing connections with registered organizations that provide employment opportunities to international youth (e.g. SWAP working holidays) to increase tourism and hospitality placements
 - Advocating for a set of industry-wide recommended policy changes at the provincial level (e.g. Provincial Nominee Program) to support access to international workers
 - Advocating for a set of industry-wide recommended policy changes at the federal level (e.g. sector-specific dedicated tourism and hospitality immigration stream) to support access to international workers
 - Liaising with Tourism HR Canada and other national organizations to recommend needed potential policy changes at the federal level to support access to international workers

Initiative 1.6: Indigenous Inclusion Initiative

- Collaborate with Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC) to align go2HR labour recovery framework with ITBC’s 5-year Indigenous Tourism Labour Force Strategic Plan, including (but not limited to):
 - Inclusion of ITBC in implementation of Pillar 2 Initiatives 2.1, 2.2., and 2.3 as well as Pillar 4 Initiatives 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3

Initiative 1.7: Newcomer Advocate Initiative

- Create Newcomer Advocate role to serve industry and recruit and retain newcomers to Canada. Newcomer advocate will:
 - Establish strong working relationships with Immigrant Services Society of BC, SUCCESS and Mosaic to support placements in tourism and hospitality industry

- Support delivery of existing and future federal funding allocated to these organizations for tourism and hospitality industry employment, including through targeted tourism and hospitality training and skills development
- Support tourism and hospitality employers with advisory services to establish the human resources systems and practices to access assistance to newcomers such as housing, transportation, and transition supports provided by provincial immigrant services organizations

Initiative 1.8: Opportunity for All Initiative

- Create Opportunity for All advocate role(s) to serve the industry by assisting under-represented people get their first job in the tourism and hospitality business. Opportunity for All advocates will focus initially on unemployed workers and workers with a disability:
 - Establish strong working relationships with WorkBC and BC Centre for Abilities and support placements in the tourism and hospitality industry
 - Ensure employers understand how to access existing funding opportunities that support hiring under-represented workers (e.g. WorkBC wage subsidy, BC Centre for Ability Opportunities Fund)
 - Support employers with advisory services to remove barriers to accessing tourism and hospitality employment including workplace accessibility, gradual return to work, flexible hours or other wellness and integration supports.

CONCLUSION

We have prioritized seven initiatives in Pillar 1. Other ideas that merit mention for possible future action include advocating with national tourism and hospitality organizations for government policies that allow re-skilling and up-skilling for tourism and hospitality workers while on employment insurance programs, developing an online accessible accreditation for rural and remote potential students, and a research project to understand teacher, parent, mentor and influencer views of tourism and hospitality as a career option.

PILLAR 2: RENEW THE VALUE OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY TO WORKERS AND TO ALL BRITISH COLUMBIANS

People who work in tourism and hospitality help deliver on our Super, Natural British Columbia® reputation and help fuel tourism and hospitality’s contribution to the province’s Strategic Framework for Tourism in B.C. and, in turn, contribute to the provincial economy.

It is true that tourism and hospitality is often the perfect first job for young people – eliminating the chicken and egg of needing experience but being unable to secure a job to gain experience, learn how to navigate flexible scheduling, obtain training and life skills, and practice team building.

Tourism and hospitality is also a viable career option. While one third of Canada’s tourism workforce falls under the categories of students, new Canadians, casual employees and those securing their first job, the rest of the workforce is as diverse as Canada’s economy – made up of those for whom tourism is a career representing their main source of income.

COVID-19 has exacerbated pre-pandemic shortages of people working in tourism and hospitality. Furthermore, former workers have left the tourism and hospitality industry and found new jobs. The disproportionate impact of the pandemic in tourism and hospitality has created uncertainty and misconceptions of the stability of our industry.

The tourism and hospitality industry must redefine the value of tourism and hospitality to people for work. It is unlikely there is one, single value proposition to fit all audiences. We must invest in understanding why people might want to join our industry and then make it their career.

We must also learn what the barriers, misconceptions and/or lived experience might influence their view of the value of working in tourism and hospitality. This must be done through hearing the obstacles to making tourism and hospitality a first choice for work, or a long-term career directly from those impacted. Only then can we begin to address how those barriers might be overcome.

At the same time, as an industry we can better demonstrate that in addition to a source of revenue, tourism and hospitality supports lasting and meaningful reconciliation, diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism, a low-carbon economy and small business and community sustainability.

PRIORITIES

Priority	New Initiatives
Renew the value proposition of the tourism and hospitality industry as a place for people work	2.1, 2.2
Renew the value proposition of the tourism and hospitality industry to government	2.3

PLANNED NEW INITIATIVES

Initiative 2.1: Recalibrating our Value to Workers Initiative

- Invest in additional research and focus groups to better understand worker views of the value of tourism and how to improve it, including the views of youth and students, international workers, newcomers to Canada, Indigenous Peoples, unemployed and workers with a disability
- Ensure views are collected from those currently working in tourism and hospitality as well as those who have left the industry and those who are willing – or uncertain – about re-joining
- Ensure a wide-range of participants are included in focus groups to allow application of a gender-based analysis plus lens to understand the perceived or identified barriers to entering the tourism and hospitality industry for people from under-represented groups
- Refine and tailor value propositions – including cross-over between groups, such as Indigenous youth, women newcomers to Canada where there will be nuances to the value of tourism and hospitality for work

Initiative 2.2: Multi-Modal Messaging Initiative

- Use data collected during Recalibrating our Value to Workers Initiative to create a sustainable, multi-year communications campaign – across multiple channels – to showcase the value of working in the tourism and hospitality industry
- Ensure communications channels reach parents, educators, mentors, and other job/career influencers to better explain the value of tourism and hospitality as a career option

Initiative 2.3: Research and Metrics That Matter Initiative

- Invest in additional research to identify new areas of measurement and metrics for the tourism and hospitality industry's contribution to the province's *Strategic Framework for Tourism in B.C.* – and, in turn contribute to the province's economic strategy – including: compensation (wage and benefits), working conditions, demographics and inclusion.
- Secure government agreement on the data that will be used to define the tourism and hospitality industry in British Columbia – including workforce data, interdependency of tourism and hospitality with other industries, regional impacts and provincial revenue contributions
- Develop a new set of tourism and hospitality metrics aligned with provincial foundational principles such as: safety, reconciliation, diversity, equity and inclusion, community growth, and investment in people by tourism and hospitality businesses

- Use metrics to report on the contributions of the tourism and hospitality sector to BC's economic strategy, both short and longer term.

CONCLUSION

We have prioritized three initiatives in Pillar 2.

PILLAR 3: DEMONSTRATE THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY AND TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY LABOUR RECOVERY

Tourism enables a broad range of community activities, infrastructure investments, arts and culture, sport and multi-cultural festivals that improve the quality of life and well-being of a community. Pre-pandemic, no British Columbia development region had less than 9% of employment attributed to tourism and hospitality.

British Columbia’s tourism and hospitality employers all rely on people: people at the front door, front desk, front of stage, and front of house. Employers rely on finance, information technology, human resources, marketing, sales, communications, energy management, maintenance, and supply chain logistics expertise. Long commutes are not an option for most workers, nor is regular remote work. While accessing efficient and effective transportation to meet tourism and hospitality industry work also presents a challenge, this labour recovery framework is focused on housing.

Factors impacting availability and affordability of housing existed prior to COVID-19: population growth, secondary homeowners removing or no longer renting suites; the cost and lead time required to secure staff housing (seasonal or year-round); and the proliferation of short-term accommodation platforms (e.g. Airbnb, VRBO), some of which are not full contributors to municipal, regional or provincial tax systems.

A global pandemic has exacerbated these issues. In addition, many employees working outside the tourism and hospitality sector who are able to work remotely have taken the opportunity to move into communities where they can work and play – many of which are tourism and hospitality based – further impacting available housing supply.

In its 2020 Rental Market Report, the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation listed miniscule vacancy rates in most communities, including: Kelowna (2.1%), Courtney (1.1%), Campbell River (0.7%), and Nelson (0.5%).

While supported by municipalities and regional and community destination management organizations on housing issues, the tourism and hospitality industry has not played a proactive role in housing-specific discussions. However, similar to other industries throughout British Columbia, the above-noted factors influencing housing affordability and availability have affected tourism and hospitality economic output.

The tourism and hospitality industry, therefore, has a vested interest in sharing what we know – and what we learn – about the impacts of housing on labour.

PRIORITIES

Priority	New Initiatives
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Take a holistic, whole of tourism and hospitality industry approach to discussions on community infrastructure, with a priority on impact of housing affordability and accessibility on labour	3.1
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PLANNED ACTIONS

Initiative 3.1: Tourism and Hospitality Community Housing Liaison Initiative

- Create Tourism and Hospitality Community Housing Liaison role to serve the industry. This role will:
 - Research and quantify the impact of housing availability and affordability on tourism and hospitality employment within each tourism and hospitality economic region
 - Gain industry-wide consensus on potential solutions to housing affordability and availability and potential collaboration with provincial, indigenous and municipal governments to plan and develop infrastructure including long-term housing, short-term rental accommodation, seasonal temporary housing, or other programs, policies or best practices that merit consideration and advocacy
 - Act as a liaison with provincial destination management organizations to access work underway as part of the destination development strategy implementation, share industry’s community-level challenges, and investigate potential solutions
 - Act as a single source of contact – and representative of the tourism and hospitality sector – to bring tourism and hospitality housing needs to relevant community, regional and provincial housing discussions, including the impact of tourism and hospitality infrastructure and revenue growth and destination management

CONCLUSION

We have prioritized one initiative in Pillar 3. Other ideas that merit mention for possible future action include creating positioning documents to empower local government, community-level destination management and community chambers to advocate on the role of housing in tourism and hospitality labour recovery.

PILLAR 4: CREATE THE CAPACITY FOR NEW TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY BUSINESS PRACTICES

As the tourism and hospitality industry looks to recovery, the challenge of labour is a very real obstacle to realizing the full extent of business opportunities. Post-pandemic labour shortages require tourism and hospitality businesses to be innovative at a time when resources and time are tight.

While British Columbia’s tourism and hospitality industry creates potential for workers to see entrepreneurialism, leadership and “all hands on deck” teamwork in action, the challenge for businesses – particularly during recovery – is having to be an employer and potentially also a front-line worker, landlord, international recruiter, and newcomer settlement expert.

While employers navigate their own recovery, we know they are an important part of community recovery – delivering products and services across the breadth of tourism and hospitality sectors that bring back visitors, and revenues. Our industry is ready to partner with our communities as they address how investments from governments to benefit both job seekers and employers can advance hospitality and tourism recovery.

As they partner with communities, regions, and the province in recovery – and long-term economic strategy – employers also want to build back more sustainably, innovatively and inclusively. This will require advisory services that fuel a longer-term change to how employers do business and who they recruit, attract and retain.

PRIORITIES

Priority	New Initiatives
Provide tourism and hospitality businesses with human resources advisory support and workforce development services to understand and adjust to new business practices	4.1, 4.2

PROPOSED NEW INITIATIVES

Initiative 4.1: Raise the HR Bar Initiative

- Create a regional human resources consultant lead and network of advisors to serve employers, allowing them to put their people first through:
 - Recruitment strategies, HR standards and practices, and advisory services that allow employers to focus on workers as they navigate business recovery
 - Advice on accessing new employer and community-led workforce strategy funds including the new Community Workforce Development Program.
 - Strategies to improve working conditions and compensation as tourism and hospitality small businesses begin to fully recover

Initiative 4.2: Business Practices Pilot Initiative

- Research businesses with existing successful implementation of living wage practices and document learnings and best practices
- Develop proposed pilot program for tourism and hospitality employers to assess the impact on worker recruitment and retention through potential implementation of business practices including: living wages, non-monetary benefits (free access to mental health and wellness services), employer-funded retirement savings contributions or matches.
- Identify potential Business Practices Grant (similar to Northern Development Initiative Trust's small business recovery consulting rebate) to provide advisory services to employers who participate in the pilot
- Share results and any successful go-forward implementation of new business practices.

CONCLUSION

We have prioritized 2 initiatives in Pillar 4.

PILLAR 5: DEVELOP SKILLS TO FUEL THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

In many areas of skills needed by the tourism and hospitality industry, an ecosystem exists today, in the form of programs and funds, to deliver skills development. To fuel labour recovery, we must maintain and enhance availability and access to existing training for employers and workers.

It will also be important to identify new training specific to the workforce of tomorrow, including areas where greater breadth or depth of training is required. As an example, go2HR has developed skills training for emerging areas such as violence and sexual harassment in the workplace. Furthermore, provincial and regional destination management organizations have invested in the skills required for digital transformation. These efforts contribute to employers and workers viewing our industry as a source of continuously relevant skill development and also contribute to a renewed value proposition.

As we work to maintain and enhance access to skills training – existing and new – we must continue to support employers who are balancing training needs and costs with a slow and/or uncertain recovery timeline. This will likely require both advisory services and direct financial supports.

PRIORITIES

Priority	New Initiatives
Improve applicability of tourism and hospitality training	5.1
Remove barriers to skills development for individuals and employers	5.2
Prioritize training in key areas of labour shortages (management and supervisory roles, skilled occupations, front-line, entry-level roles)	5.1., 5.2

PROPOSED NEW INITIATIVES

Initiative 5.1: Skill Sustainer Advisor Initiative

- Create Skill Sustainer Advisor to serve industry. This role will be responsible for:
 - Advising employers on effective strategies and plans for long-term employee skills development – particularly in key areas of future demand (management and supervisory, skilled occupations and front/line entry level roles)
 - Identifying emerging training required in tourism and hospitality industry to ensure that tourism and hospitality workers are prepared for the workplace of tomorrow and the industry is seen as a source of updated/relevant skills
 - Developing and/or sourcing training to meet above-listed needs – including foundational skills bundles applicable to all roles and/or specific training required for in-demand roles, worker safety, or leadership development

- Deliver advisory services to help tourism and hospitality employers leverage existing or new training funds (BC Employer Training Grant) to support investment in their people

Initiative 5.2: Train @ Work in Tourism Grant Initiative

- Improve employer access to BC Employer Training Grants to facilitate paid training for new and returning workers – and upskilling existing workers to spur employment growth and remove barriers to hiring individuals without skills required by tourism and hospitality industry
- Improve employer access to federal funding programs that support skills training or skills development of tourism and hospitality workers.

Initiative 5.3: SuperHost Starter Initiative

- Develop “Tourism and Hospitality 101” SuperHost Starter training module for students, newcomers to Canada, and International Workers to showcase the new value proposition to joining or remaining in the tourism and hospitality industry
- Invest in free SuperHost Starter training for grades 10-12 across BC secondary schools with promotion of program as applicable to the full breadth of tourism and hospitality employment
- Connect participants in Superhost Starter training with go2HR learning management system registry to provide student access to employers with work experience opportunities

CONCLUSION

We have prioritized three initiatives in Pillar 5.

PILLAR 6: USE TECHNOLOGY TO TRANSFORM THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

British Columbia is a leader in entrepreneurship and technology start-ups – and a source of global tourism demand. At the same time, technology will prove increasingly important to the tourism and hospitality businesses looking to continuous improvement of guest and employee experience.

Amidst a bumpy pandemic recovery, many tourism and hospitality employers lack the resources available to uncover and/or implement new technology in their businesses.

This includes technology that could replace repetitive tasks and/or free employers and employees to focus on guest experience while improving working conditions.

We believe that tourism and hospitality is one of the industries where BC technology could contribute to our labour recovery framework.

We also believe that this technology pillar will be instrumental to delivering on additional pillars of this labour recovery framework – including technology and innovation as part of the reason to work in tourism and hospitality, or the technology skills of the future tourism and hospitality workplace.

PRIORITIES

Priority	New Initiatives
Identify and share technological solutions to help tourism and hospitality businesses invest in their people and products	6.1, 6.2
Partner BC tech together with the tourism and hospitality industry to pilot solutions	6.2

PLANNED NEW INITIATIVES

Initiative 6.1: Tech/Tourism Hub Initiative

- Build upon existing digital transformation efforts underway by working with go2HR Industry Engagement Working Group, Destination BC, regional and community destination management organizations and Small Business BC to establish tech/tourism hub team to collect technology and innovation challenges in tourism and hospitality sector
- Use tech/tourism hub team to identify gaps, address priorities for collaborations with existing BC technology roundtables and task forces, and develop go-forward actions, including potential pilot projects that could be targeted for investment

Initiative 6.2: Tech in Tourism Innovation Grant Initiative

- Create innovation grant for tourism and hospitality small businesses to implement technology within their organization, including required staff training on new systems.

CONCLUSION

We have prioritized two initiatives in Pillar 6. Another idea that merits mention for possible future action include researching the potential use of technology to support dual-season employment partnership between summer and winter tourism and hospitality businesses.

CLOSING SUMMARY

The journey to developing this tourism and hospitality labour recovery framework has been brief, but it has been guided by these important principles:

- Achieving industry consensus on solutions to labour recovery;
- Identifying and prioritizing targeted actions versus a trying to do it all approach; and
- Recognizing that capacity and investment will be required for implementation.

The process has been informed through significant engagement from across British Columbia's tourism and hospitality industry. Together we used our experience and expertise – pre-pandemic and throughout COVID-19 – to collect and leverage work done to date and map a path forward in the form of this labour recovery framework.

Systematic labour shortages were visible before COVID-19, and there is no magic bullet to bring in, or bring back labour – whether workers are sitting on the sidelines, never planning to return to tourism and hospitality, or facing significant barriers due to vulnerability or access to services or supports.

Our goal with this framework was to bring visibility to the seriousness of the issues in front of us, secure support for implementation, and structure coordinated execution of new initiatives to deliver on priorities in six key areas instrumental to labour recovery.

The pace of post-pandemic recovery is unlikely to match the pace with which this labour recovery framework was developed. Furthermore, recovery may be bumpy and uneven across development regions, tourism and hospitality sectors, and within communities. Given this reality, we are targeting investment in this labour recovery framework to extend 12 months past the recovery of tourism and hospitality industry to 2019 levels, which is estimated to take until 2024 or 2025. Therefore, we expect to need two to three years to implement new initiatives. This will ensure initiatives support immediate recovery and also sustain it. The Industry Engagement Working Group will now focus on determining the partnerships required for implementation, the costs of each initiative, and the prioritization of initiatives over the short, medium and longer term.

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