

October 1, 2020

Mr. Mark Brisson, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister
Corporate Planning and Red Tape Reduction
Treasury Board and Finance
9515 – 107 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2C1

RE: TIAA Submission of Issues for Consideration by the Tourism & Hospitality Sector Red Tape Panel

Dear Mr. Brisson:

I was pleased to co-chair this week's Red Tape Panel discussion and to have observed a high degree of engagement from the government and industry professionals that participated on the call.

The biggest piece I took away from the meeting was the need to align policy and procedures to the current realities facing the market as a function of the COVID-19 crisis. As it pertains to the tourism and hospitality sector, this means government policy, regulation and administrative processes not only need to be laser-focused on supporting business liquidity needs in the short-term, they must go further to support our shared strategic objective to grow tourism and hospitality to a \$20B industry by 2030. This will require nothing less than a whole of government approach to support the industry.

In this context, there are a few issues I would like to advance as part of our Panel workplan. Items 1-4 arise from a recent TIAA report (Call to Action: Recommendations to Accelerate the Recovery, Sustainable Growth and Resilience of Alberta's Visitor Economy). The remaining two items were brought to our attention in discussions with other Alberta tourism sector partners.

I believe the work of the Red Tape Panel must accommodate for the emerging views and concerns of our industry partners and that the Panel is positioned to advance recommendations to various government ministries, believing that quick and decisive actions will be taken.

Select Recommendations Arising from TIAA's Call to Action Report

1. Support for Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Development

Ensure that high value and high potential tourism and outdoor recreation areas on public lands are identified and that steps are taken to ensure their value and potential are maintained through Land Use Framework regional and issue specific plans. One possible measure through the Land Use Framework regional planning process would be to adjust policy to provide for a dedicated and legislated land base for future tourism and recreation development that provides for greater certainty of investment.

2. Modernize All Alberta Parks and Public Land Legislation

Modernize all Alberta Parks and Public Land legislation, regulations and policies to support and enable world-class sustainable nature-based, adventure and indigenous tourism. The government should also review and update the Tourism and Commercial Recreation leasing process to ensure there is a timely and efficient decision-making framework in place.

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3. Government of Alberta As Advocate on Parks Canada Agency Issues

Alberta's tourism industry and its attraction of international visitors rests heavily on its national parks value offer, notably in the mountain parks of Jasper and Banff. Given the significance of these places to Albertans and given their economic contribution to the province as a whole, the province should appoint the Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation to engage with the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change on matters of concern to national park tourism operators, ensuring that federal environmental aims for national parks are pursued in tandem with the delivery of sustainable, world-class tourism experiences.

4. Accelerated Tourism Projects Approvals Framework

The future of Alberta's tourism industry relies on new and innovative product development. Alberta's ability to land these types of investments continues to be at risk because due to the lack of clear and predictable process for project proponents to navigate the approvals process. Alberta should introduce a Accelerated Tourism Projects Approvals Framework, to ensure proponents are given guidance about required approvals and active support during the review and due diligence stage. The Red Tape Panel would play an oversight role in ensuring said processes move expeditiously so new projects become a reality in support of the government's aim to create a \$20B industry by 2030.

The second part of this is the process through which government grants are managed within the Government of Alberta. As discussed at our meeting, this process is inconsistent, cumbersome and slow. It assumes that not for profit organizations who do receive approval of these critical capital grants must comply with requirements that are frequently changed, added or omitted in previous grant processes. They are also inconsistent in what expenses are permissible under the grant and the manner in which these expenses are reimbursed. The burden of underwriting these expenses rest with the not for profit organization who is ill equipped to carry these expenses for the 90 to 120 days that it takes to turn around a claim.

5. Efficiency of Corporate Registry Services

Alberta's business incorporation process is slow and outdated and lags markets such as BC. The application and approvals process can take up to several weeks as there is no established process to identify and expedite applications of businesses who require immediate approval to arrange things such as purchase of inventory, financing, etc. Delays like this can threaten a businesses chance of survival before they even get started.

Alberta needs to immediately move this system to an open, online applications process that can result in instantaneous issuance of a corporate registry number. This is what being open for business looks like.

6. Municipal Development and Appeals Process

To ensure the recovery and growth of the tourism industry, the Government of Alberta should proceed with amendments to the Municipal Government Act that restrict appeals to immediate or adjacent neighbours, or that no appeals be permitted on matters of 'approved uses'.

Sincerely,



Alida Visbach
 Chair, TIAA Board of Directors
 Co-Chair, Tourism & Hospitality Sector Red Tape Panel

Cc Michelle Evans, Assistant Deputy Minister, Jobs, Economy & Innovation
 Lisa Sadownik, Assistant Deputy Minister, Lands Division, Alberta Environment & Parks
 Cynthia Farmer, Deputy Minister, Service Alberta
 Paul Wynnyk, Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs