Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon
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March 26, 2026

Re: YG Budget 2026 – Tourism holds steady in a tight environment

Dear TIA Yukon Members,

The Government of Yukon has released its 2026–27 budget at a time of real fiscal pressure.

The message is clear: spending has outpaced what the Yukon can sustain, and this marks the start of a more disciplined, focused approach.

Across government, the direction is consistent: control spending, improve efficiency, and focus on core priorities like health, housing, energy, and infrastructure. We are also seeing structural changes, including the amalgamation of Economic Development and Tourism and Culture, aimed at improving coordination and service delivery.

There is limited room for new spending. This is a reset budget.

Where tourism stands

In that context, what stands out for tourism is stability.

There are no new operational investments for tourism. At the same time, there are no significant cuts to existing funding.

That balance matters.

Across Canada, including at the federal level, tourism budgets are being reduced or reallocated. That is not what we are seeing in the Yukon.

In a tight fiscal environment, holding steady is meaningful. It signals that tourism continues to be recognized as part of the territory's economic base - and part of its future.

Signals that matter

There are also clear signals of continuity.

The continued support for the Yukon Gathering Place reflects sustained recognition of the role business events play in the territory's economy. Through coordinated efforts with the Yukon Convention Bureau, there has been a consistent and credible case made for the importance of this project and the broader meetings and events sector. It is a positive outcome to see that this message has been heard.

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The budget also reinforces a stronger focus on the private sector. Growth is expected to come from businesses, not government. For tourism, that aligns with reality. Operators drive growth - government creates the conditions.

At the same time, there are signals of alignment across priorities. Through tourism funding, we are already advancing work in areas like emergency preparedness - strengthening the resilience of businesses and communities. Broader investments in emergency preparedness across the territory point in the same direction. This alignment matters. It reinforces that the work underway in tourism is part of a wider effort to strengthen readiness, response, and long-term resilience across the Yukon.

The fundamentals remain front and centre. Investments in housing, energy reliability, and transportation infrastructure are not labelled as tourism priorities, but they directly shape the visitor economy. Businesses feel these pressures every day - from staff housing shortages to operating costs to infrastructure that impacts access and seasonality.

This didn't happen by accident

It's important to recognize how we got here.

Over the past year, the tourism industry has shown up more cohesively than ever - representing businesses across the territory and making a clearer, more consistent case for the sector. We are seeing more coordinated efforts to demonstrate tourism's value, particularly in areas like business events and sport tourism, where being able to clearly articulate economic impact is critical.

That is why investments in better data matter. The acquisition of new economic impact calculators - supporting both the Yukon Convention Bureau and Sport Yukon - is an important step forward. Showing impact, with evidence, changes the conversation.

In a budget where difficult decisions are being made across government, maintaining support for tourism is not accidental. It reflects a growing understanding of the sector's role in the Yukon economy.

This aligns directly with the direction we have set - tourism recognized as the Yukon's leading sector - a driver of long-term economic growth and resilience for the territory.

What comes next

This is not a growth budget for tourism. But it is also not a retreat.

Maintaining support matters. Continuing key projects matters. Keeping tourism at the table matters. The environment ahead will be more disciplined and more results-driven. Programs will need to demonstrate impact. Partnerships will matter more.

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There are areas where we need more clarity. The announced amalgamation of Economic Development and Tourism and Culture signals a shift, but the details of how this will work in practice have not yet been outlined. For businesses, what matters is how programs are delivered, how decisions are made, and whether this results in a simpler, more effective system. That is something we will be watching closely.

As the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, our focus is clear: continue advocating for tourism as a core economic driver, ensure business needs are reflected in decisions, and keep strengthening alignment across the sector.

Businesses are under real pressure - from rising operating costs, ongoing labour shortages, limited housing for staff, and infrastructure constraints that impact access and seasonality.

What happens next will depend on how clearly and consistently we continue to show the value of this sector.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Ryan
Chair, TIA Yukon

Caroline Anderson
Executive Director, TIA Yukon