

11 October 2016

Media Release

TIA welcomes pro-tourism mayors

Tourism was a winner in Saturday's local government elections, with two of the country's top destinations voting in Mayors who intimately understand the value visitors offer their communities, says Tourism Industry Aotearoa Chief Executive Chris Roberts.

Tourism champion Steve Chadwick was re-elected Mayor of Rotorua, while tourism industry stalwart Jim Boulton beat off the competition to emerge successful in Queenstown.

Mr Roberts says TIA had encouraged tourism operators to vote for candidates who support their \$30 billion industry in order to capitalise on strong projected visitor growth.

"We know that the Mayors of Queenstown and Rotorua 'get' tourism. But we will now be urging all councils around the country to take tourism into account in their planning and decision-making in order to reap the economic and social rewards international and domestic visitors offer their communities.

"Only a fraction of the \$82 million visitors spend daily actually occurs in places commonly considered tourism specific, such as holiday parks and attractions. The balance takes place in cafes, bars, supermarkets, petrol stations, farmer's markets, vineyards and other local businesses."

Mr Roberts says TIA's **Local Government Manifesto** identifies eight priority actions for councils over the next two years:

Destination Management

This is the most important thing councils can do – look after and invest in the quality of their region as a destination.

Infrastructure Facilitation

With the rapid growth in visitor numbers, councils have to invest in essential infrastructure and enable the private sector to develop infrastructure by minimising red tape.

Events Programming

Events are one of the best tools for encouraging people to visit a community.

Measuring Visitor Satisfaction

It's important to understand what visitors think of your community. If they are happy businesses can grow. If there is low satisfaction it can be addressed.

Off-Peak Marketing

Attracting people to visit throughout the year will develop a sustainable visitor industry with more permanent jobs.

Regional Development & Tourism

Tourism supports regional growth and needs to be incorporated into regional development strategies. It also complements a community's other industries, such as wine, horticulture and farming.

Enabling Airport & Port Facility Development

Better connections through great air and cruise links are vital to growing tourism. If an airport or port is council-owned, long-term plans need to be aligned with tourism industry forecasts.

Sustainable Tourism Positioning

Every region needs to demonstrate its commitment to look after its economic future and the resources it uses to operate.

Mr Roberts says these actions are closely aligned to the industry's [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework, which aspires to increase annual tourism turnover to \$41 billion.

"Local government is an important partner for the tourism industry and key to achieving that \$41 billion target. TIA is keen to work with councils and their chief executives to help them maximise the opportunity visitors offer their communities.

"We will be sending our Local Government Manifesto to all successful mayors and councillors, and have been invited to speak to a local government forum early in the New Year."

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is an \$81.6 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$32 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$49 million in economic activity every day
- Tourism is one of New Zealand's biggest export industries, earning \$11.8 billion or 17.4% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2015)
- 12.1% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 295,908 people are working in the visitor economy
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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