



Value of Tourism in Sicamous

Economic Impact Study

May 2025




DESTINATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA®



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A hiker with a backpack and trekking poles is seen from behind, standing on a rocky mountain trail. The sky above is filled with large, dramatic clouds, with the sun breaking through in the center, creating a bright glow. The hiker is wearing a blue jacket and a tan backpack. The trail is rocky and steep, with a forested valley visible in the background.

DOSDC gratefully acknowledges the participation of Sicamous accommodations and houseboating operators who made this vital report possible. Special thanks are also owed to Destination BC for their support and work applying their Value of Tourism Model.



1. Executive Summary

In 2024, Sicamous attracted an estimated 71,400 visitors, with overnight leisure guests comprising the majority (53%) and generating most of the \$28.6 million in direct visitor spending. Sicamous' local tourism industry generated \$25.57 million in revenue from leisure overnight and day visitation, \$44.75 million in economic output, and \$25.24 million in GDP, primarily driven by the Recreation and Entertainment, Accommodation, and Food and Beverage sectors.

Last year, Sicamous' tourism industry delivered some impressive numbers:

- \$25.6M in revenue*
- \$45M in economic output
- \$25M in tourism GDP
- \$6M in taxes to federal, provincial and local levels of government
- Kept 331 people in jobs = 232 full-time positions

*sources: Value of Tourism Model, DBC, 2025. Remainder from Travel Local using StatsCan Input/Output Model calculations.

All this tourism activity generated an estimated \$5.94 million in tax revenue across federal, provincial, and municipal levels. As a major employer, the tourism sector supported 331.4 total jobs, the equivalent of 232 full-time positions, with the Food and Beverage, Recreation and Entertainment, and Accommodation sub-sectors delivering the largest share of employment.

The District of Sicamous Development Corporation's new destination marketing and development strategy has set a focus for the next five years that's aiming to create a visitor economy that's sustainable, attractive, and supports a competitive advantage in new and underleveraged arenas of opportunity.

This tourism economic impact study will not only support Sicamous' new destination development and marketing strategy, but it will also help get the work done by offering the business case for the new funding, investment and partnerships that will be needed.

The following report details the story behind these numbers starting with the study method and then, the economic models used to estimate tourism's important contributions to Sicamous' community wellbeing and prosperity.

2. Study Method

The goal of the study was to determine the value of tourism and its economic impact in the District of Sicamous. Travel Local was retained by DOSDC to oversee the work and conduct the study.

The study was undertaken in two parts: 1/determine visitor volume and revenue, and 2/ calculate tourism's economic, employment and taxation impacts in the District of Sicamous.

Tackling the first phase, Destination BC and Travel Local applied the *DBC Value of Tourism Model*. In the second phase, Travel Local then oversaw application of the *StatsCan Input-Output Model* to determine economic impact, employment and taxes returned to all-levels of government.

Due to the competitive sensitivity of the information and data privacy restrictions, Sicamous accommodation operators were informed that the information they provided will be kept CONFIDENTIAL and will only be seen in detail and used by Travel Local and Destination BC, who developed the economic impact model. Data will only be reported in aggregate, where one cannot infer from the data the performance of individual properties.

Datasets associated with this report will not be made available to DOSDC staff, directors or anyone in the Sicamous community.

Method Overview

- **Study goal:** Measure the Annual Value of Tourism and Tourism Economic Impact for Sicamous in 2024
- **Study Method:** Destination BC and Travel Local applied the DBC Value of Tourism model. Travel Local then oversaw application of StatsCan Input-Output Model to determine economic impact, employment and taxes returned to all-levels of government.
- **Survey population:** Sicamous Fixed Roof Accommodations, RV and Campgrounds, Short Term Rentals and Houseboating Operations.
- **Sampling Method:** DOSDC provided an asset inventory of fixed roof accommodations, RV parks and campgrounds, short-term rental companies and houseboat operators. Desk research and interviews revealed available capacity monthly from January to December, 2024. The survey population was considered to be the average number of available rooms, sites and houseboats, giving a total survey population of 679, including rooms, sites and houseboat units. At a 95% Confidence Level +/- 5%, the required sample size is 246.
- **Survey Instrument:** Official Destination BC Value of Tourism Questionnaire

- **Survey Fielding and Interviews:** January - March, 2025
- **Distribution Method:** The target population received an introductory email about the research project from the District of Sicamous tourism representative at Travel Local who then replied with a link to an online questionnaire built in Google Sheets with advanced sharing capabilities. A Travel Local accommodations expert then followed up and interviewed accommodation respondents to help them complete the online survey. Where data gaps existed, the Travel Local accommodations expert conducted online desk research of operator Websites.
- **Data Quality Assurance:** Each respondent's Value of Tourism questionnaire was carefully reviewed by Travel Local experts and Destination BC market research team to ensure data quality, validity, and reliability
- **Confidence Level:** The survey population was considered to be the average number of available rooms or sites per accommodation type, giving a total survey population of 679, including rooms, sites and houseboat units. At a 95% Confidence Level +/- 5%, the required sample size is 246. Travel Local logged direct operator responses totalling 509 rooms, sites and houseboats delivering a 75% response rate and 99% Confidence Level +/- <3%.
- **Leisure Counts:** RV and campground and short term rental responses are leisure only. Due to the small number of houseboat operations and required data privacy protections, houseboat data was adapted to fit and then included in fixed accommodations volume and revenue estimates. For houseboats, spending habits were assumed to be similar to other fixed roof accommodations, and therefore the latter's spend multiplier was applied.
- **Short term rentals:** Short-Term Rentals questionnaire data was supplemented with AirDNA data and associated heuristics.

Sampling and Confidence Level

The survey population was considered to be the average number of available rooms or sites per accommodation type, giving a total survey population of 679, including rooms, sites and houseboat units (see table below).

Table 1.0 Sicamous Sample Population and Size by Accommodation Type

Accommodation Type	Available Units (Peak Season Average)	Sample Size
Fixed Roof (Hotels, Motels, Houseboats)*	288	198
RV Park & Campground	353	296
Short Term Rentals	38	15
Total	679	509
Response Rate	>30% = Extremely High	75%
Confidence Level	95% +/- 5% (standard)	99% +/- 3%

source: Value of Tourism Study, Destination BC and Travel Local, April 2025

*Due to data privacy concerns, data from the 2 houseboat operations interviewed was included in the fixed roof accommodation counts. The total fleet of 101 houseboats was taken as the average number of peak season units available. To make the data further comparable, the following assumptions were made:

- Number of available rooms per day: Boat fleet (monthly) / # of days per month
- Total occupied rooms: boat sailings/month average
- Average party size: Total PAX/ boat sailings per month average

Trip party spending habits were also assumed to be similar to other fixed roof accommodations, and therefore the same spend multiplier was applied.

The study also met DBC sampling goals requiring 50% of accommodations identified in the inventory stage fill out the data collection stage, that 50% of total rooms/sites identified in the inventory stage represented in the data collection stage, and to collect a representative sample form within each accommodation type (not only fixed-roof, not only campgrounds, etc..).

At a 95% Confidence Level +/- 5%, the required sample size was 246. Travel Local logged direct operator responses totalling 509 rooms, sites and houseboats delivering a 75% response rate and 99% Confidence Level +/- 3%.

3. Respondent Profile

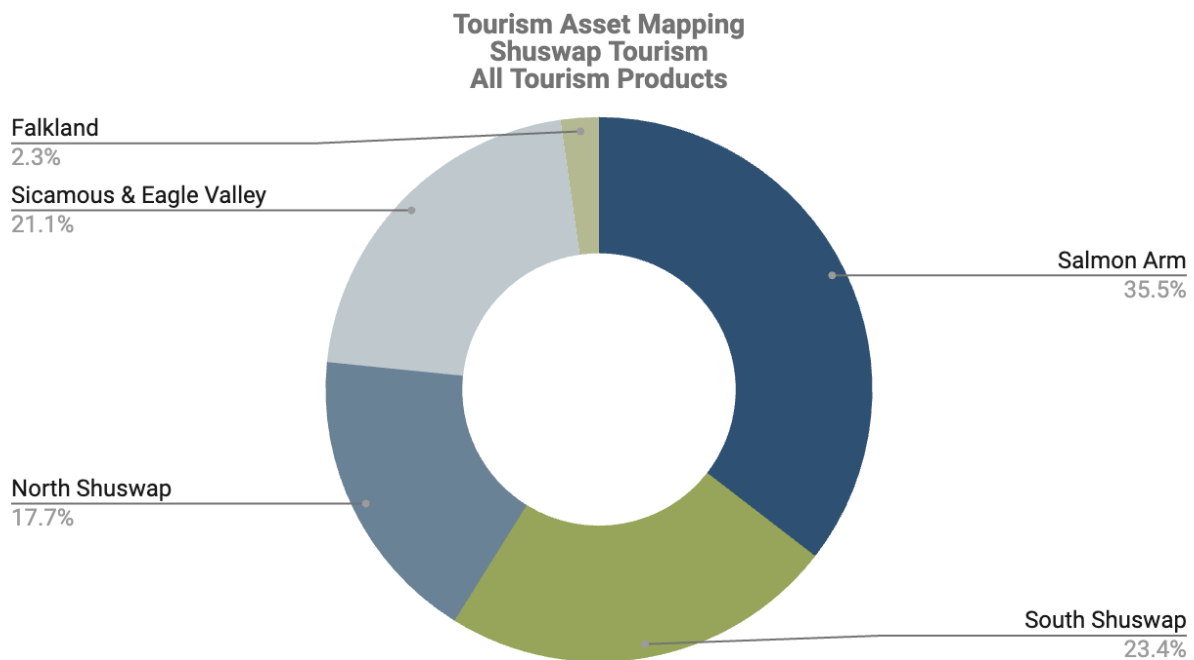
Sicamous is a key anchor to the Shuswap region. In summer, Sicamous is a major lakeside lifestyle destination with two major houseboat rental companies that have attracted tourists and potential new residents to the area for years. The destination's new brand "Live More" really speaks to how you can have a great quality of life while you do business, work, or settle into retirement in this picturesque community.

In addition to a busy summer tourism season, Sicamous has the strongest and most developed winter tourism industry within the Shuswap region. This industry is experiencing rapid growth thanks to its sledding (snowmobiling) sector. A key driver, local motels receive healthy bookings from sledders and skiers throughout the winter season. There are four nearby snowmobile areas – Blue Lake, Eagle Pass,

Owlhead and Queest Mountain – that continue to win awards for their deep powder snow, open bowls, endless meadows, groomed trails and well maintained cabins.

Sicamous accounts for over 21% of the tourism assets found in the Shuswap region. The rest are primarily distributed among Salmon Arm (35.5%), South Shuswap (23.4%), and North Shuswap (17.7%) respectively. This distribution varies, however, when reviewing specific tourism products such as accommodations, dining, and experiences.

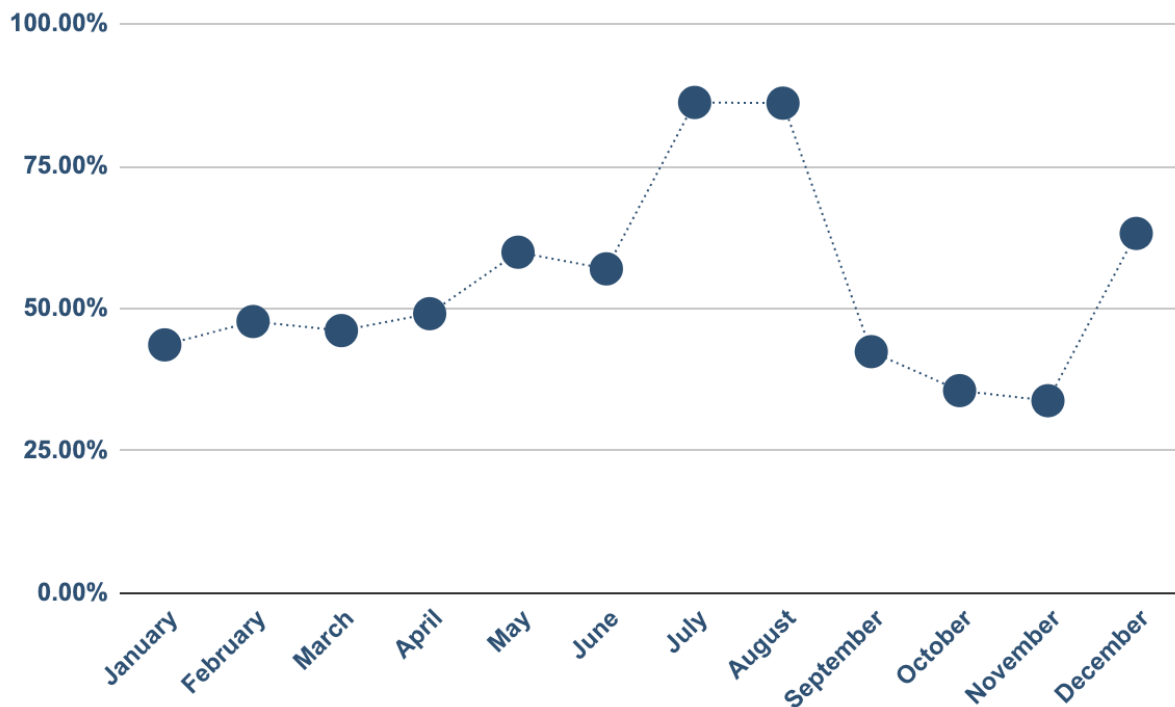
Figure 2.0 Shuswap Tourism Asset Mapping (All Tourism Products)



source: +Views: DOSDC Destination and Development Strategy 2030, DOSDC, 2025

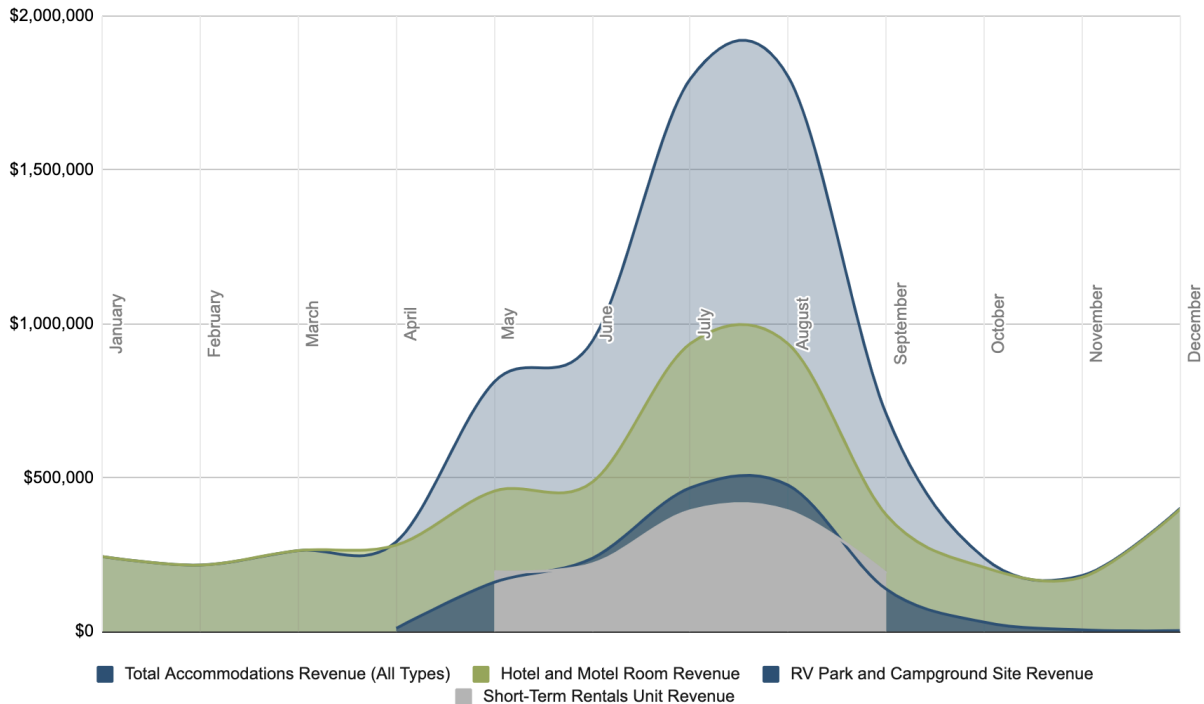
Data quality was highest for fixed roof accommodations and provides clear insights into monthly occupancy rates that paint a picture of the full Sicamous sample population for the year 2024. As shown in the figure below, occupancy rates are highest during the peak summer months of July (86.21%) and August (86.09%). There is a noticeable increase in occupancy starting in May (59.90%) and extending through September (42.42%). The lowest occupancy rates are observed in the shoulder and off-seasons, particularly in November (33.80%) and October (35.57%). January (43.61%), February (47.72%), March (46.12%), April (49.09%), June (56.97%), and December (63.20%) show moderate occupancy levels compared to the summer peak and the fall lows. This data clearly illustrates the seasonality of tourism in Sicamous, with a strong summer demand for fixed-roof accommodations.

Figure 3.0 2024 Sicamous Fixed Roof Accommodations Monthly Occupancy (Sample Population)



Looking at 2024 total accommodations revenue in Sicamous for the sample population, total accommodation revenue peaks in July and August, reaching approximately \$1.8 million each month. Hotel and motel revenue follows a similar trend, also peaking in July and August but with slightly lower figures. RV park and campground revenue is concentrated in the warmer months, from May to September, with July and August being the highest.

Figure 4.0 2024 Sicamous Total Accommodations Revenue by Month
(Sample Population)



Short-term rental revenue is also highest during the summer months of June through September. Notably, RV park and campground revenue, as well as short-term rental revenue, show no recorded income for January, February, March, October, November, and December in the sample.

4. Value of Tourism in Sicamous

The Value of Tourism Model was developed by the Research and Analytics team at Destination BC to provide a conservative and credible estimate of visitor volume (for overnight, day and visiting friends & relatives visitors) and direct tourism expenditures within a community for a specific year. It is derived from the data of commercial accommodation operators (including campgrounds and RV parks), in combination with local, regional, provincial and national tourism indicators.

The model allows communities to have a defensible estimate of tourism's contribution to a community which is central in developing an informed planning approach, strengthening the support of community stakeholders and local government and encouraging an appreciation of tourism's economic potential.

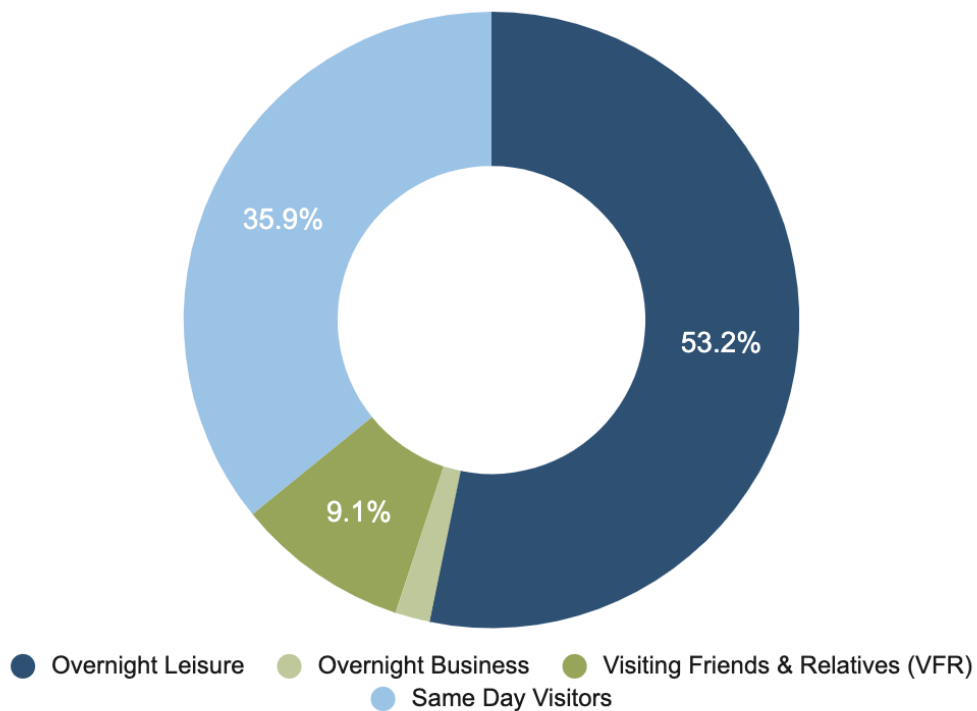
Table 5.0 2024 Visitor Volume by Commercial Accommodation Type (est.)

Fixed Roof (Hotels, Motels, Short-Term Rentals, Houseboats)	
Leisure	29,700
Business	1,300
RV Campground	8,300
TOTAL	39,300

source: Value of Tourism Study, Destination BC and Travel Local, April 2025

Based on Travel Local sampling work and the resulting dataset, Destination BC estimates that Sicamous welcomed 71,400 visitors in 2024. Tourism's main traveller types, overnight leisure guests accounted for 38,000 (53%) that year with same-day travellers coming in second at 25,600 (36%).

Figure 6.0 2024 Sicamous Visitor Volume by Traveller Type (est.)



2024 Sicamous Visitor Volume by Traveller Type (est.)

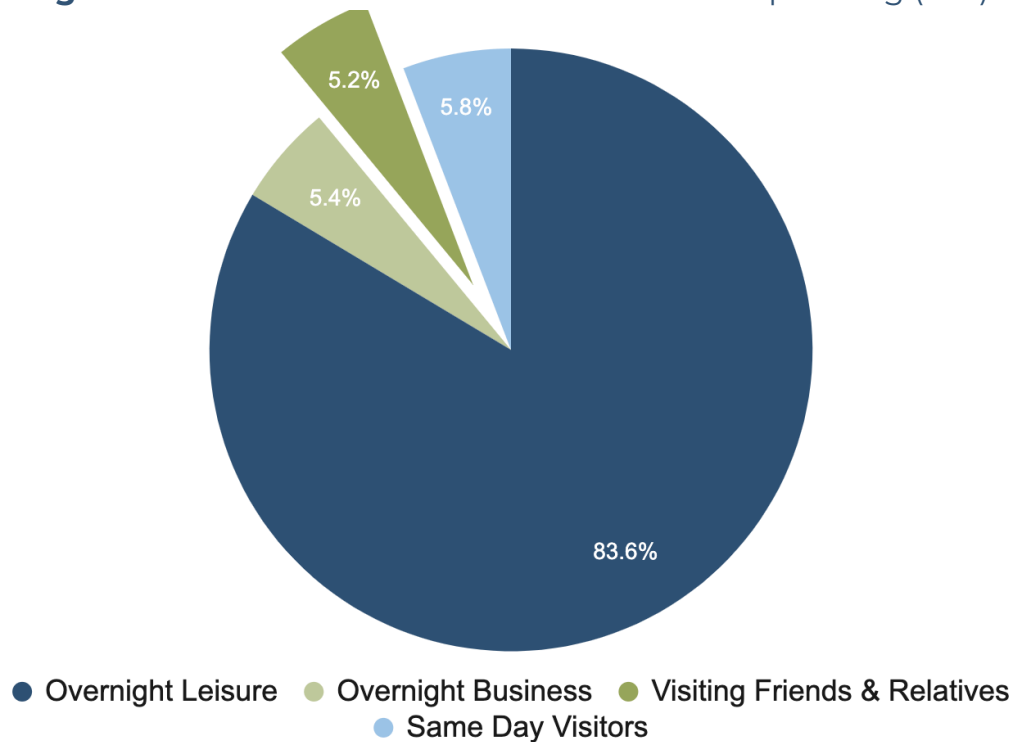
Overnight Leisure	38,000
Overnight Business	1,300
Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR)	6,500
Same Day Visitors	25,600
Total	71,400

source: Value of Tourism Study, Destination BC and Travel Local, April 2025

Notes: Overnight Leisure includes fixed accommodations (hotels, motels, short-term rentals, and houseboats) as well as RV parks and campgrounds.

The DBC Value of Tourism model also estimates total direct visitor spending broken down into overnight leisure, same-day visitors, overnight business and people visiting friends and family. Looking below, Sicamous generated an estimated \$28.6 million in total direct visitor spending in 2024.

Figure 7.0 2024 Sicamous Total Direct Visitor Spending (est.)



2024 Sicamous Total Direct Visitor Spending (est.)

Overnight Leisure	\$23,910,000
Overnight Business	\$1,550,000
Visiting Friends & Relatives	\$1,480,000
Same Day Visitors	\$1,660,000
Total	\$28,600,000

source: Value of Tourism Study, Destination BC and Travel Local, April 2025.

Notes: Overnight Leisure includes fixed accommodations (hotels, motels, short-term rentals, and houseboats) as well as RV parks and campgrounds.

Overnight leisure travel accounted for the majority at \$23.91 million (84%), followed by same-day visitors at \$1.66 million (6%), with overnight business at \$1.55 million and visiting friends and relatives at \$1.48 million, each earning just over a five percent share.

5. Economic Impact

The Statistics Canada Input-Output (I/O) model is a powerful economic tool that shows how different industries in the Canadian economy are interconnected. It traces how spending in one sector (like tourism, construction, or manufacturing) ripples through others, generating broader impacts on output, GDP, employment, and taxes. The model is based on comprehensive national and provincial data, making it one of the most accurate and detailed economic modeling systems in Canada. Its strength lies in its ability to quantify both direct and indirect effects, helping governments, businesses, and researchers understand the full economic contribution of an activity or policy decision.

Final demand is the starting point for calculating how spending ripples through the economy to produce:

- Output (total sales)
- GDP (value-added)
- Employment
- Taxes

Statistics Canada's Input-Output (I/O) model defines Final Demand as the total value of goods and services purchased not used for further production — i.e., end-use consumption. It's the demand that drives economic activity rather than intermediate production.

In 2024, pure tourism delivered a total \$25,570,000 in revenue to Sicamous when limiting the count to overnight leisure stays and same-day visitors. Based on latest regional indicators from Destination BC, Accommodation and Recreation &

Entertainment were the largest sectors, contributing 27% and 26% respectively. Food and Beverage made up 25%, Transportation 18%, and Retail 4% of the total revenue.

Table 8.0 2024 Tourism Revenue (Final Demand) by Service Area

	Share of Total*	Revenue
Total	100%	\$25,570,000
Accommodation	27%	\$6,903,900
Food and Beverage	25%	\$6,392,500
Transportation	18%	\$4,602,600
Retail	4%	\$1,022,800
Recreation and Entertainment	26%	\$6,648,200

*source: See spending by category. Kootenay Rockies Regional Tourism Profiles, Destination BC, 2025

Notes: Kootenay Rockies data is more relevant and reliable to Sicamous which exists at the very eastern edge of the Thompson Okanagan. Unlike Sicamous, BC residents are the biggest market in the Thompson Okanagan, not Alberta, welcoming 61% of visits and tapping in 44% of its revenue. The Alberta market is a distant second for the Okanagan logging 19% of visits and 28% of spending according to Destination BC numbers.

Final demand, as used in Statistics Canada's I/O multipliers, is typically measured at purchasers' prices, which includes:

- Basic prices (actual value of goods/services)
- Margins (transportation, wholesale, retail)
- Taxes less subsidies on products (e.g., GST, excise taxes)

Statistics Canada multipliers are calibrated based on final demand at purchasers' prices. For this reason, final demand in this study (ie. tourism revenue) includes taxes.

Economic Output and GDP

Sicamous' local tourism industry generated \$44.75 million in economic output, and \$25.24 million in GDP, primarily driven by the Recreation and Entertainment, Accommodation, and Food and Beverage sectors.

In Statistics Canada's Input-Output (I/O) model, economic output (also called gross output or total output) refers to the total value of all goods and services produced by an industry, including goods and services sold to final demand AND goods and services sold to other industries as intermediate inputs.

Economic output = Intermediate inputs + Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Intermediate inputs are goods and services consumed in the production process (e.g., materials, utilities, services). GDP (value-added) is the sum of wages and salaries, gross operating surplus (profits, depreciation), taxes less subsidies on production.

Multipliers

Stating the full economic impact of tourism revenue (final demand) requires the use of multipliers. Simply put, Statistics Canada's Input-Output model defines a multiplier as a number that shows how much total economic activity (like output, GDP, or jobs) is generated in the economy for every \$1 of new final demand.

Statistics Canada publishes Input-Output Multipliers at the national and provincial levels, which estimate how changes in demand in a given industry affect:

- Output (total gross production)
- GDP (value-added)
- Employment
- Taxes

Using multipliers valid for within BC, these show the economic impact that occurs only within the province as the final demand. They exclude interprovincial effects, meaning they ignore economic activity triggered in other provinces due to supply chain linkages.

The multipliers are listed by NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes, and only those that relate most directly to the tourism industry spending categories were selected.

With the primary purpose of this study being to estimate high-level economic impact, measuring overall business activity generated and net new value created in the economy (GDP) were the main focus. As is standard practice for many sectors, only *Total Economic Output* and *Total GDP (Market Prices)* multipliers were selected. These total multipliers measure the sum of the direct, indirect and induced multipliers.

Table 9.0 Total Tourism Economic Impact in Sicamous by Spending Category (within BC)

	Tourism Revenue (Final Demand)	Economic Output	GDP (Market Prices)
Accommodation	\$6,903,900	\$11,274,069	\$6,420,627
Food and Beverage	\$6,392,500	\$11,186,875	\$5,791,605
Transportation	\$4,602,600	\$8,114,384	\$5,223,951
Retail	\$1,022,800	\$1,877,861	\$1,088,259
Recreation and Entertainment	\$6,648,200	\$12,299,170	\$6,714,682
TOTAL	\$25,570,000	\$44,752,358	\$25,239,124

source: Input-Output Model, Statistics Canada, 2021

The table above reveals the following story:

Economic Output: This figure represents the total sales generated in the BC economy due to tourism spending in each sector. The total economic output is estimated at \$44,752,358. Notably, Recreation and Entertainment has the highest economic output (\$12,299,170), closely followed by Accommodation (\$11,274,069) and Food and Beverage (\$11,186,875). Retail has the lowest economic output (\$1,877,861).

GDP (Market Prices): This figure represents the value added to the BC economy due to tourism spending in each sector. The total GDP generated is \$25,239,124. Recreation and Entertainment also shows the highest GDP (\$6,714,682), with Accommodation (\$6,420,627) and Food and Beverage (\$5,791,605) being the other significant contributors. Retail has the lowest GDP (\$1,088,259).

In summary, Table 9.0 demonstrates the significant economic impact of tourism in Sicamous. Recreation and Entertainment, followed by Accommodation and Food and Beverage, are the primary drivers of both economic output and GDP. These sectors show the highest levels of both total sales generated and value added to the local economy.

Taxation

In 2024, the Sicamous tourism industry generated an estimated \$5,943,077 in total tax revenue. This revenue is broken down by level of government: \$3,028,695 for Federal (12% of GDP), \$2,271,521 for BC Provincial (9% of GDP), and \$642,860 for Sicamous Municipal (2% of GDP + 2% MRDT). Again, these figures are based on average tax-to-GDP ratios due to limited access to specific data sources.

Table 10.0 Sicamous Tourism Industry Tax Revenue Generated 2024

Level of Government	Method*	Tax Revenue
Federal	12% of GDP	\$3,028,695
BC Provincial	9% of GDP	\$2,271,521
Sicamous Municipal	2% of GDP + 2% MRDT	\$642,860
	TOTAL	\$5,943,077

*Without access to StatsCan custom tables, Statistics Canada's Tourism Satellite Account and other macroeconomic sources provide average tax-to-output or tax-to-GDP ratios by government level. For example, federal and provincial tax rate estimates were derived from Statistics Canada's System of National Accounts (SNA) and Tourism Satellite Account (TSA). These sources report total taxes on production and products (e.g., income tax, sales tax, excise tax) collected at each level of government. The ratios are calculated as:

Tax to GDP ratio = Total taxes collected / Total GDP by level of government [by level of government]

These proxy ranges vary slightly by industry, region, and year: 1/Federal Taxes: Roughly 11–13% of GDP across industries. Includes income tax, GST, excise taxes, etc. 2/BC Provincial Taxes. Roughly 8–10% of GDP (PST, provincial income tax, fuel taxes, etc.). 3/Municipal Taxes. Typically 1.5–2.5% of GDP depending on property tax and local levies. This includes the additional MRDT (Municipal and Regional District Tax).

To calculate federal, BC provincial, and municipal taxes generated from final demand using Statistics Canada's Input-Output model, a valid proxy method was needed.

Since StatCan does not publish tax multipliers directly in the standard I/O tables (only available via custom tabulations); however, Statistics Canada's Tourism Satellite Account and other macroeconomic sources provide average tax-to-output or tax-to-GDP ratios by government level.

Employment

Using similarly framed multipliers to estimate jobs, Sicamous's tourism industry supported 331.4 total jobs and 232 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in 2024. The recreation and entertainment sector accounted for 88.9 jobs (62 FTEs), followed by food and beverage with 108.7 jobs (76 FTEs), accommodation with 69.9 jobs (49 FTEs), transportation with 48.1 jobs (34 FTEs), and retail with 15.8 jobs (11 FTEs).

Table 11.0 Total Tourism Jobs in Sicamous by Service Area 2024 (est.)

	Total Jobs*	FTEs
Accommodation	69.9	49
Food and Beverage	108.7	76
Transportation	48.1	34
Retail	15.8	11
Recreation and Entertainment	88.9	62
TOTAL	331.4	232

source: Input-Output Model, Statistics Canada

*Total jobs include direct + indirect + induced. Jobs are headcount only (not FTE).

Tourism jobs typically involve fewer hours per week than the national average, primarily due to a higher prevalence of part-time and seasonal roles. It's also important to note that different segments within tourism (e.g., accommodation, food services, recreation) may have varying average hours worked. In British Columbia's tourism and hospitality sector, the average hours worked per week per individual were reported as 28 hours in 2021¹. Dividing this by a 40-hour work week, the FTE Ratio for the tourism and hospitality industry is 0.70. Multiplying the FTE Ratio by total jobs delivers an estimate of FTEs.

¹ source: BC Tourism and Hospitality LMI Research Project, go2HR & Catalyst Research Group, 2022



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