

— Tourism —  
**KINGSTON**

# *FIRST QUARTER REPORT 2025*



# Tourism Kingston quarterly report



Attn: Lanie Hurdle  
Chief Administrative Officer  
City of Kingston  
216 Ontario Street  
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3

**April 15, 2025**

**RE: Tourism Kingston Q1 2025 report**

Please find attached our summary report on the activities undertaken by Tourism Kingston for Q1: January through March 2025.

Outlined in the service level agreement with the City of Kingston, Tourism Kingston will work cooperatively and collaboratively with the city, other levels of government, partner organizations, and other tourism stakeholders in developing products and services that will attract visitors, ensure longer stays, and increase spending. The core tourism activities will align with the updated Integrated Destination Strategy (IDS) and Council's Strategic Priorities.

We are pleased to deliver our first-quarter activity within each of the seven portfolios. This report measures and reflects our continued efforts this quarter to maximize the economic impact of tourism for the City of Kingston.

I would like to call your attention to our 2024 economic impact assessment numbers on page 4. Last year, tourism generated \$775 million of economic activity in Kingston – or \$2 million of business revenue per day – through direct, indirect, and induced impacts. We welcomed 2.6 million visitors who spent \$512 million on local accommodations, dining, attractions, and experiences.

We look forward to our continued work together. If you have any questions or require clarification on our activities or outputs, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Knott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

**Megan Knott**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
Tourism Kingston



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



In January, we launched our Q1 campaign, focusing on Kingstonlicious and wintertime reasons to visit Kingston, including the return of Kingstonlicious packages featuring \$100 Visa gift cards. Our media plan included programmatic digital ads (YouTube, Google Demand Gen, Narcity content); social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok); radio (MOVE and BOUNCE FM); and connected TV and remarketing (The Weather Network). Our content marketing included stories about food & drink, Family Day, March Break, winter wellness, and new restaurants.

Complementing our paid tactics, our focus for earned media pitching in Q1 included Kingstonlicious, the 25th anniversary of the Kingston Canadian Film Festival, and the Spirit of Winter installation downtown. We also confirmed media and influencer visits for the year.

In January, as a result of a pitch on Kingston's historic inns, we hosted Dave LeBlanc (The Globe & Mail). He wrote "[A banquet of heritage architecture in Kingston](#)" plus an article on Bellevue House, "[Sir John A. Macdonald's historic home tells a fuller tale](#)" in his column The Architourist.

We also partnered with Destination Ontario to host the show "Things to Know TO" in support of Kingstonlicious. This broadcast saw 17,290,957 in media impressions. In partnership with Attractions Ontario and RTO 9, we hosted Solmaz Khosrowshahian of [The Curious Creature](#) (a Travel Media Association of Canada member) and Ildiko Siklodi for a multi-day culinary experience aligned with Kingstonlicious. They also visited Prince Edward County, as part of this regional hosting initiative.

The Culinary Tourism Alliance's content team, in partnership with RTO 9, was in Kingston in late February. Their coverage was shared through [Ontario Culinary Instagram](#), [two blog articles](#), and additional content capture. Finally, we hosted [film critic Teri Hart](#) during the Kingston Canadian Film Festival.

In total, our Q1 campaigns and tactics resulted in 20,573,609 advertising impressions, 986,778,883 earned media impressions and 164 stories, 427,194 website sessions, and 58,146 referrals to partners.

The Marketing and Communications team continued to work with Alphabet, our agency of record, to complete a full redesign of [visitkingston.ca](#) (English, French, Chinese sites). We have completed the wireframe, user interface, and design phases. We delivered 100 pages of content for the site and reviewed 1,000+ existing stories. We have now entered phase 3 of the project, which is on track for launch in late May.

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



We continue to make enhancements to our Destination Insights Dashboard, which captures key sector metrics such as hotel and short-term rental occupancy/room nights; visitor insights via mobile data; and economic impact. In January, we added ratings and reviews to the dashboard. This product captures visitor reviews on platforms like Tripadvisor and Google, allowing us to assess visitor sentiment. An additional 45 points of interest went live on our visitor mobile insights dashboard. Finally, we have added more detailed economic impact and visitation data, working with our partners at ROVE and using data from Destination Canada's Tourism Data Collective, allowing us to see visitation and visitor spend monthly, quarterly, and annually.

We recently completed an economic impact assessment for 2024. In 2024, tourism generated \$775 million of economic activity in Kingston – or \$2 million of business revenue per day – through direct, indirect, and induced impacts. Last year, the city welcomed 2.6 million visitors who spent \$512 million on local accommodations, dining, attractions, and experiences. This direct spending in turn generated further business-to-business spending and more than \$200 million of income for those employed in the sector. Tourism provides 6% of Kingston's jobs (4,310) and upwards of 10% when tourism-related jobs, such as food service, are considered.

Locally, the tourism sector, which was devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic, continued to recover in 2024. Compared to 2023, Kingston saw 1.5% more visitors and a 4.4% increase in visitor spending. Compared to 2019 (pre-pandemic), Kingston welcomed 200,000 fewer visitors in 2024. However, visitor spending outpaced 2019 levels by 4% when adjusted for inflation, marking the first time it has exceeded pre-pandemic levels.

The Marketing and Communications team also supported Tourism Kingston sales portfolios this quarter, ensuring the full integration of the Kingston brand and strong messaging at trade shows and other sector events:

- // Kingston presence at the Tete-à-Tete and Destination Direct trade shows, plus a new unique business event venues look book
- // Preparation for the relaunch of the business events campaign, which will run April–December
- // Kingston presence and branded material for the upcoming Seatrade and Rendez-vous Canada trade shows, supporting travel trade
- // Promotional material for sport & wellness, including an updated sport facilities guide used at the Sport Events Congress
- // Filming and production of new videos for music and film & media



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

# storytelling



The Marketing and Communications team, along with our colleagues at Tourism Kingston and partners across the sector, was recognized with several industry awards recently:

- // Best in Category, Summit Marketing Effectiveness Award: Consumer website – Creative Kingston Walking Tours
- // Platinum, Summit Marketing Effectiveness Award: Integrated consumer campaign – total solar eclipse
- // Honourable Mention, Economic Developers Council of Ontario Awards of Excellence: Visitor Attraction & Tourism Product Development – total solar eclipse
- // Finalist, Canadian Event Awards: Best Event for a City or Municipality – total solar eclipse (awarded April 30)

Chief Marketing Officer Alison Migneault recently joined the [City Nation Place Advisory Group](#), a network of global leaders across place branding, economic development, and destination marketing organisations that meets regularly to share best practices, identify emerging place branding trends, and collaborate to address challenges.

## These activities supported our 2025 annual plan goals:

- // Connect travellers and residents with Kingston.
- // Drive sales for local businesses, supporting the full recovery of Kingston's tourism industry.
- // Leverage incentives, funding opportunities, partnerships, and strategic campaigns and initiatives to extend marketing reach.
- // Support the sales sectors with targeted communications strategies and tactics that reach their unique audiences.
- // Communicate the value and impact of tourism.

## PARTNERSHIPS

### Estimated economic impact of partnerships in Q1: \$60,330

Kingstonlicious returned for a season-long culinary festival, offering premier prix fixe menus at 39 locations (restaurants, cafés, breweries, and the Memorial Centre Farmers' Market). The program offered four different price points and menus that ranged from casual to fine dining. Kingstonlicious also offered five culinary events, with Kingston chefs collaborating with guest chefs to create one-off menus for an exclusive dining experience. These events were facilitated in partnership with the Culinary Tourism Alliance. Additionally, we supported four culinary events with Kingston chefs and artisans that leaned into community events or local partnerships. We worked with Music Officer Moira Demorest to support music inclusions at select events to further raise profile for the local music scene.

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



Kingstonlicious “dine on us” hotel packages provided a \$100 Visa gift card with select overnight stays at 14 accommodation partners. This package was valid for one-night stays during the week and two-night weekend stays from February 3 through March 31. Hotels reported the sale of 250 one-night packages and 73 two-night packages.

We finalized our media trade show and in-person engagement activities. In addition to attending sales events, we have outlined various speaking opportunities across Tourism Kingston’s portfolios and have submitted nine applications. In Q1, we secured speaking opportunities at City Nation Place Americas, Taste of Place Summit, Lawnya Vawnya, Tourism Opportunities Forum, and Cornwall and SDG Regional Tourism Summit. In addition, Megan Knott was recently featured on the [Tourism Association of Ontario \(TIAO\) podcast, Forward Motion](#).

We partnered with Attractions Ontario to host an Instagram contest with a Kingstonlicious culinary stay in Kingston at Delta Hotel Kingston Waterfront, two tickets to Kingston Food Tours, and a \$100 Visa gift card. We partnered with Attractions Ontario again ahead of March Break to support another stay in Kingston at Hampton Inn by Hilton with family passes to March of the Museums and a \$100 Visa gift card. This contest was shared with their email subscribers.

This quarter we joined Golf in Ontario, a partnership of seven tourism regions from across the province with the goal to promote golf tourism to our regions and province through curation of custom packages for any size groups and continue to grow partners, courses and new golf travelers. To date, Kingston offers three packages with five hotels at two local and regional golf courses. This partnership helped Kingston gain traction as a golf destination, with 102 trip quotes sent since February, representing 164 golfers and a potential impact of \$145K.

Kingston hosted its first Feast On® Mixer in partnership with the Culinary Tourism Alliance at Black Dog Tavern on March 24. This networking event was attended by 55 culinary professionals from across Southeastern Ontario. The event raised profile for the Culinary Tourism Alliance’s Feast On® program. This local food certification program verifies that a minimum of 25 per cent of a restaurant’s annual spend is on Ontario-grown and raised ingredients. This event raised \$540 from ticket sales, which was donated to Lionhearts Inc.

This quarter, we began outreach to partners about the weddings microsite and campaign, which promotes [Kingston as a destination for weddings](#).



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



Our partnership work for this quarter aligned with our marketing strategy with a focus on culinary with Kingstonlicious and family-friendly programs such as Maple Madness and March of the Museums. Year-round packages continue to be curated and shared with accommodation partners including culinary, culture, and wellness experiences. A total of 24 packages were curated in Q1 and 6,881 referrals were sent to partners.

## **These activities supported our 2025 annual plan goals:**

- // Create destination packaging.
- // Grow destination partnerships.
- // Develop engaging multi-month destination activations.
- // Effectively promote packages to both visitors and partners.
- // Raise profile through earned media.
- // Further strategic partnerships with provincial and national organizations.
- // Grow partner engagement.

## **Marketing and Communications work this quarter supported the following IDS initiatives:**

- 3 – Collect and share consumer and resident sentiment research.
- 7 – Expand adoption of Kingston's brand.
- 9 – Support creation of flexible packages and itineraries.
- 10 – Develop/enhance enticing shoulder/winter tourism products.
- 11 – Enhance culinary tourism in Kingston.
- 13 – Create a sustainable tourism development plan.
- 15 – Create targeted, flexible campaigns in Ontario.
- 16 – Create flexible campaigns targeting key provincial markets.
- 17 – Create flexible campaigns targeting new markets.



2025 annual goals

Marketing and Communications	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025 result	% goal actual
Website sessions	2,600,000	427,194				427,194	16%
Website pageviews	3,200,000	570,985				570,985	18%
Referrals to partners (web + phone)	375,000	58,146				58,146	16%
Advertising impressions	175,000,000	20,573,609				20,573,609	12%
Social media link clicks	525,000	133,901				133,901	26%
Social media engagements	1,175,000	212,587				212,587	18%
Social media impressions	37,250,000	6,873,370				6,873,370	18%
Total followers	133,000	129,540				129,540	97%
Proactive high-value earned media stories*	150	39				39	26%
Total media stories	650	164				164	25%
Total earned media impressions	2,100,000,000	986,778,883				986,778,883	47%





## 2025 annual goals

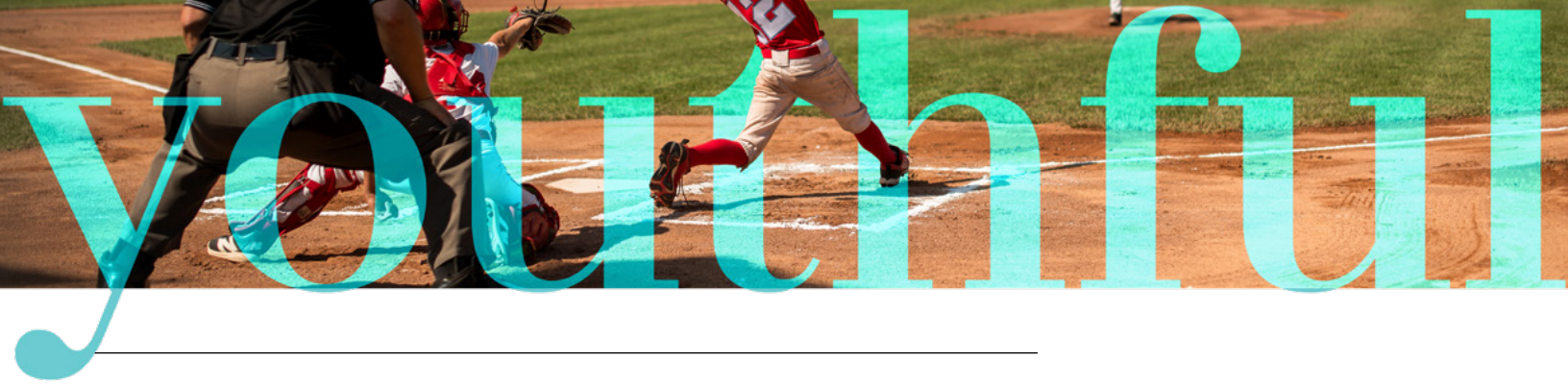
Packages	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2024 result	% goal actual
See + Do packages	45	4				4	9%
Eat + Drink packages	34	14				14	41%
Rest + Relax packages	15	1				1	7%
Family packages	20	5				5	25%
Package referrals to partners	46,269	6,881				6,881	15%
Minimum room nights *	836	400				400	48%
Estimated economic impact		\$60,330				\$60,330	

*\*Tourism Kingston supported or created packages*

Special projects	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2024 result	% goal actual
Facilitated events or activations	67	9				9	13%
Attendees, facilitated events or activations	11,477	564				564	5%
Partners involved or impacted	231	58				58	25%

*Economic impact source: Destination Insights Dashboard. Direct spend based on average daily rate and room night data.*

# SPORT AND WELLNESS



## **Economic impact of sport & wellness initiatives in Q1: \$10,767,270**

A highlight this quarter was participating at Sport Tourism Canada's Sport Events Congress, a four-day conference in Calgary. We met one-on-one with leaders from 24 different national sport organizations, promoting Kingston as a reliable host city partner, and collecting valuable information about sport organizations' priorities, bid cycles, and upcoming opportunities. These new relationships will be maintained year-round through email communication, phone calls, and in-person meetings when possible. Tourism Kingston has more than 50 leads from this event of individual sport events or training camps that could be hosted for Kingston, which will be explored further with our facility and local sport organization partners.

We led a successful bid to host an international volleyball championship at Queen's University this summer. The U19 Pan Am Girls' Volleyball event will take place June 24–29, driving overnight stays with eight teams of international players and their supporters coming to Kingston. Kingston will also host the Team Canada training camp the week before the competition, furthering our relationship with Volleyball Canada and showcasing Queen's University's suitability for international sport hosting. To support this event, Tourism Kingston secured provincial grant funding through the Ontario Sport Hosting Program.

We focused this quarter on supporting high school sport championships and events, which also drive mid-week overnight stays by visiting participants. These included:

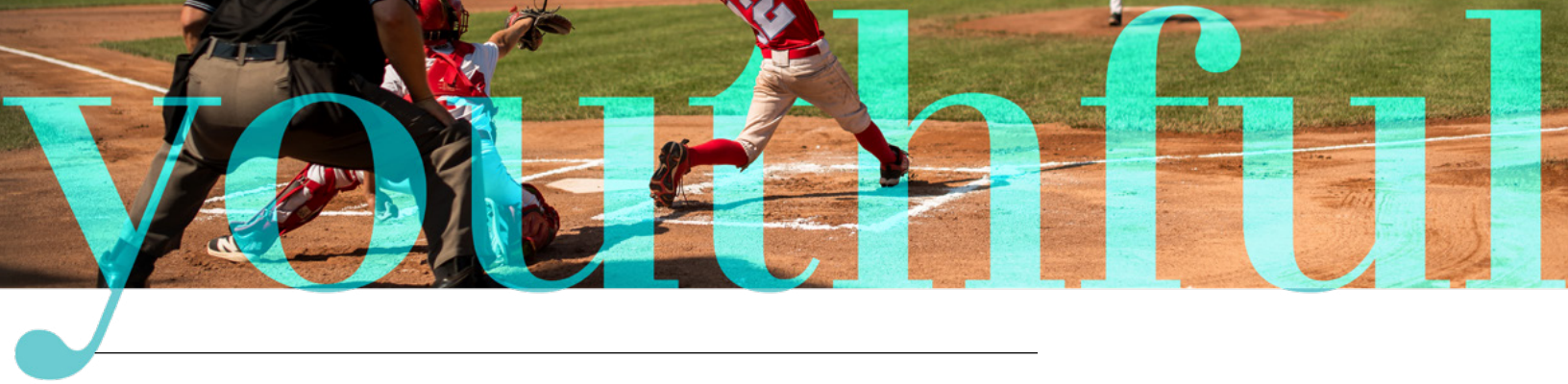
- // Ontario Federation of Athletic Coordinator Conference
- // AAA Boys OFSAA Basketball Championships
- // EOSAA Boys Hockey Championships
- // OFSAA Cheerleading Regional Championships
- // Tournoi Franco de Hockey

Hockey and ringette tournaments welcomed teams to Kingston on the weekends, led by GKGHA Ice Wolves, GK Jr. Gaels Hockey, KAHMA Kingston Canadians, the Kids for Kids tournament organizing committee, and the Kingston Ringette Club. Looking ahead to Q1 2026, we are leading bids to host both Skate Ontario and Ringette Ontario events in an effort to bring more visitors to Kingston during this priority quarter.

In partnership with Queen's University, we have a kinesiology student researching and advising on projects related to increased accessibility of Kingston's sport and recreation spaces. An audit of facilities conducted through this partnership is informing the



# SPORT AND WELLNESS



next iteration of our Kingston sports facilities guide, a key tool in our sales missions and meetings with provincial and national sport partners. These advanced insights into building accessibility equip our team with the knowledge to speak about Kingston facilities' suitability to host parasport events, a growing sector and opportunity for our partners. For example, Queen's University will be hosting a Team Ontario Wheelchair Basketball training camp later in year, possible only because their sport facility surpasses provincial code for accessibility and provides a positive competition environment for parasport athletes.

We continued to advocate for facility investment and attended meetings to discuss sport infrastructure, specifically with local soccer, sailing, and baseball organizations. We were glad to support the Kingston Baseball Association with their advocacy efforts to keep the baseball fence at City Park's Cricket Field, solidifying Kingston's position as host for the Little League U13 Canadian Championships later this year.

## **These activities supported our 2025 annual plan goals:**

- // Work with local organizations to support off-season events and tournaments.
- // Prospect sport-adjacent events to Kingston in collaboration with Business Events.
- // Proactively build our business in the sport tourism industry through networking, business-to-business, and educational opportunities.
- // Showcase the contribution of sport to Kingston's tourism economy.
- // Act on key strategy documents developed to support Kingston's sport tourism capacity.
- // Collaborate with local educational institutions to enhance their sporting events.
- // Measure and report on the economic impact of sport and wellness events in Kingston.

## **Sport and Wellness activities this quarter supported the following IDS initiatives:**

- 10 – Develop/enhance enticing shoulder/winter tourism products.
- 21 – Improve relationship with Queen's University.
- 25 – Implement a sport and wellness tourism strategy.



2025 annual goals

Sport and Wellness	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025 result	% goal actual
Tentative leads	120	17				17	14%
Definite leads	40	10				10	25%
Events supported	100	27				27	27%
Event attendees	85,000	39,380				39,380	46%
Room nights	60,000	17,793				17,793	30%
Estimated economic impact	\$40,000,000	\$10,767,270				\$10,767,270	27%

**Definite leads** – potential business that has turned into booked business  
Economic impact: Destination International's Event Impact Calculator Sport Model



# TRAVEL TRADE



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## **The estimated impact of travel trade in Q1: \$75,041**

This quarter, we prepared with our partners for key trade shows in Q2. These include Seatrade Cruise Global and the Canada England Cruise Symposium, to promote Kingston and Southeastern Ontario to major cruise ship operators; Rendez-vous Canada to promote Kingston to a variety of international tourism buyers; and the Student & Youth Travel Association (SYTA) conference, to promote Kingston to educational travel operators.

We worked with marketing colleagues on two new videos, one for travel trade promotion and one specific to tour bus parking.

### **Cruise operator support**

We worked on setting up dock bookings with Navitrans Shipping Agency for incoming cruise ships.

We continued to work with the Great Lakes Cruising Association to attract new cruise lines to Kingston. In March, we hosted Victory Cruise Lines for a site visit and sample arrival ceremony in Kingston. Victory a U.S. company specializing in small luxury Great Lakes and Maritimes cruises. This was part of a tour of the region organized by the Great Lakes Cruising Association.

We worked with Pearl Seas, operator of the Pearl Mist cruise ship, to plan an arrival ceremony on Crawford Wharf and itinerary planning for the ship's May 21–22 visit.

### **Tour operator support**

We worked with the following tour operators on their upcoming travel plans: WorldStrides, Barb's Musical Tours, Amplitudes, New England Coach Tours, Dolphin Tour Vietnam, Mayne Travel Services, Jonview, East Coast Tours, Group Travel Family, Pearl Seas, NGH, Taipan, Omega Tours, McLean Kennedy, New Market Holidays, Canada Vac, Cardinal Lakeshore, PRT Tour, Marlin Travel, and Ottawa Valley Tours.

We submitted a proposal to the Ontario Motor Coach Association to host a marketplace for its members in 2026. This would allow motor coach tour operators to experience all there is to see and do in Kingston for their customers, as well as the support supplied by Tourism Kingston for their tours.



# TRAVEL TRADE

# Historic

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As part of a Destination Ontario webinar, we presented about Kingston to our tour operators from Germany. The webinar was co-presented by FVW, Germany's leading travel publication. Germany is one of Kingston's top emerging travel trade markets. This quarter, the marketing team created a German-language brochure in anticipation of numerous German bus tours expected for overnight stays this year. The same brochure can be used for future German cruises.

**These activities supported our 2025 annual plan goals:**

Continue to lead the bus strategy in partnership with the City of Kingston, to offer an enhanced parking system, reduce traffic congestion and bus idling, and to transition current day traffic to full-day or overnight stays.

Partner with VIA Rail to include train travel in FAM tours when partners are located within the corridor, i.e., Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto tour operators.

Collaborate with partners such as KAM, SLPC, and KAP to offer education-specific itineraries and student-friendly accommodations.

Connect with international markets through Destination Canada.

**Our work this quarter supported the following IDS initiatives:**

18 – Support multi-channel visitor services program with a focus on operators.

23 – Activate and access the waterfront.





2025 annual goals

Travel Trade	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025 result	% goal actual
Traces	1,600	308				308	19%
Definite leads (future business booked)	127	4				4	3%
Referrals to partners	500	45				45	3%
Cruise passengers	1,741	0				0	0%
Number of buses booked	125	2				2	2%
Estimated economic impact	\$4,439,935	\$75,041				\$75,041	2%

Numbers are based on the date traces/leads begin and buses booked; cruise numbers reflect actual passengers each quarter.

Traces – contact with clients and prospects

Definite leads – potential business that has turned into booked business

Referrals – provision of local partner information to clients

Buses booked are accommodation partner statistics and do not always reflect the booking and the activity in the quarter recorded.

Economic impact sources: TourTracker Pro (buses); University of Minnesota (Duluth) Great Lakes traffic study calculator (cruises)



**Estimated economic impact of business events in Q1: \$213,440**

In January, we hosted a conference centre workshop for local industry partners at the DoubleTree/Home2 Suites by Hilton. The event featured speakers with expertise in the conference/convention space in Canada, plus activities designed to bolster our Team Kingston approach to city-wide events once we have a conference centre.

We attended Destination Direct Canada. Over the course of two days, we held 20 one-on-one meetings with vetted hosted buyers (association, government, and corporate event planning representatives) from across Canada. While we made valuable connections at this event, several buyers are planning conferences that Kingston is unable to host without a conference centre. These are outlined in the Lost business section.

With VIA Rail Canada, we hosted the Tourism Kingston booth at the Tete-à-Tete trade show in Ottawa (produced by the Canadian Society of Association Executives). Six Kingston hotel partners attended with us; we connected directly with over 120 of the 400+ attendees.

The Food Recovery and Redistribution Program (a partnership between Tourism Kingston and Lionhearts Inc.) moved from pilot phase to full rollout in January, allowing all hospitality and tourism industry partners to have surplus prepared food recovered, repurposed, and redistributed to people in the community living with food insecurity.

In preparation for the CanSPEP national conference June 23–26, we hosted the CanSPEP marketing team for a site visit. The national conference will bring professional event planners from across Canada to experience Kingston.

**New leads/proposals (future business)**

**2025 EVENTS**

// Kruger Products management meetings	// New York/Ontario Shrine Association annual conference	// Great Canadian Cheese Festival
// Ontario Attorney General – Court Services divisional meetings	// Canadian Insurance Accountants Association conference	// Queen’s University sustainability conference
// VIA Rail Canada business development meeting	// Postpartum.ca conference	// ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability climate summit
// Venture for Canada annual training camp	// Venture for Canada alumni summit	// RED Canada EmpoweRED symposium





# BUSINESS EVENTS

## 2026 EVENTS

- // WSC municipal sponsorship conference
- // Canadian Association of Exposition Management conference
- // Folk Music Ontario conference

## Lost opportunities

The following organizations are currently planning national conferences that we are unable to host without a conference centre. Estimated economic impact (EEI) of these lost opportunities has been calculated.

// Canadian Investment Regulatory organization	\$390,000	// Canadian Elevator Contractors Association	\$350,000
// Canadian Construction Association	\$1,700,000	// Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences	\$1,500,00
// CGI Canada Inc.	\$750,000	// Canadian Association of Research Administrators	\$610,000
// Canadian Chiropractic Association	\$600,000	// Health & Safety Professionals of Canada	\$650,000
// Canadian Communication Systems Alliance	\$470,000	// Canadian Institute of Steel Construction	\$850,000
// Association of Canadian Pension Management	\$900,000	// Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society	\$920,000
// Canadian Academy of Sport & Exercise Medicine	\$635,000	// PwC Canada	\$750,000

## Our activities this quarter supported the following 2025 annual plan goals:

- // Promote Kingston as a year-round destination for business events and conferences.
- // Continue conference centre development.
- // Ensure the success of the 2025 CanSPEP conference being hosted in Kingston.
- // Leverage the Business Events portfolio to generate revenue and drive further economic impact.
- // Work with Lionhearts to formalize a structure for the Food Recovery & Redistribution Program.
- // Work with the Business Development team at VIA Rail Canada to establish a formal business events transportation partnership.



**Activity in Q1 supported the following IDS Initiatives:**

- 10 – Develop/enhance enticing shoulder and winter tourism products
- 19 – Launch conference centre development
- 2 – Communicate tourism plans with community and key tourism stakeholders
- 13 – Create a sustainable tourism development plan

**2025 annual goals**

Business events	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025 result	% goal actual
Traces	60	11				11	18%
Tentative leads	49	3				3	6%
Definite leads	50	3				3	6%
Contracted room nights	10,965	356				356	3%
Estimated economic impact	\$5,823,621	\$213,440				\$213,440	4%

*Traces – contact with clients and prospects*  
*Definite leads – future business booked*  
*Economic impact reflects room nights and indirect spend by delegates.*  
*Economic impact calculator: Destinations International Event Impact Calculator*



# FILM & MEDIA



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**Estimated economic impact of film & media productions in Q1: \$991,616**

## **Productions**

Following location tours in Q4 and a technical location tour this January for 40 production crew, we hosted the production *Devil in Disguise* at the Kingston Penitentiary in February for a week of prep, filming, and wrap. The NBC Universal production used 116 local crew and background actors throughout the production and stayed for eight nights at Kingston hotels, utilizing 2,000 hotel nights. The production also used local services including electricians, waste removal, and smoke alarm monitoring.

On March 31, we hosted *Burps, Butts and Bones*, a kids' TV series for TVO, at St. Lawrence College. The production stayed overnight in Kingston (using nine rooms) and hired one local production assistant. The production filmed the day before in Trenton; we helped provide filming recommendations within the region. This production was also the result of a location scout late last year.

A Q4 location tour we conducted at Kingston Pen for a new Netflix series secured the production, which is filming April 7 to May 7. A call for 150+ background actors for this production has gone out to the community. We held five additional location and technical scout tours from January to March in preparation for this month-long production.

We also supported three student films this quarter with location recommendations and permits.

## **Location scouts**

We hosted location scouts for a big-budget competition reality series and an Amazon series that will be filming in Q2 and Q3. In addition to Kingston Pen, location scouts viewed Kingston City Hall, Springer Market Square, and Frontenac County Courthouse.

## **Events**

In January, in collaboration with the Cinema Society of Kingston, we co-hosted the fourth edition of *Show and Tell: A Filmmaker's Open Mic Night* at The Screening Room. Six short films were shown, with a Q & A session after each film.



# FILM & MEDIA



We were proud to support the 25th anniversary of the Kingston Canadian Film Festival, February 26–March 2. Three films that we assisted with were shown at the festival.

During the festival, we hosted a VIP industry brunch and tour for 40 industry professionals, including location managers, location scouts, filmmakers, and producers. The event included a presentation on filming in Kingston, a downtown trolley tour, and a guided walkthrough of Kingston Penitentiary. This event has already garnered a tangible lead for an upcoming feature film (\$5–8M) that the executive producer is considering filming entirely in Kingston, contingent on financing.

## Film hub

We developed a service-based membership for Southeastern Ontario communities interested in developing their capacity for attracting and supporting film and TV productions. In addition to creating a small revenue stream, this annual membership provides workshops, on-site support, guidance on industry standards for location fees and labour rates. The basic membership is \$2,500 a year, with à la carte options for communities needing fewer services, and extra fees for services including location photos and organization of location tours.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Producer Accelerator Program

Four workshops held in February and March covered topics on the fundamentals of producer responsibilities: production management, how to pitch your project, how to secure funding, and business affairs. 15 highly motivated participants took part in the workshops. Four of them will be chosen for paid two-week work placements and mentorship on productions in the region. Canada Media Fund and Ontario Creates provided financial support for this program.

Over two days in March, video game actor, director, and artist Sophie Ann Rooney delivered a workshop for 40 students at école secondaire publique Mille-Îles. Through hands-on activities, students learned about acting, cinematography, and voice-over performing for video games. This workshop was made possible by Francophone Community Grants program support.

Also in March, we held a Zoom webinar, “Filming for your business 101,” in collaboration with Tourism Brockville, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, and Gananoque. We had 25 participants, and following the webinar, added three new support services and three new locations to our online production directory.



# FILM & MEDIA



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## These activities supported our 2025 annual plan goals:

- // Expand the workshop series.
- // Promote locations beyond Kingston Penitentiary for big-budget studio productions to increase the pipeline and diversify the style and genres of productions in Kingston.
- // Build on key local partnerships.

## Film & Media work this quarter aligned with the following IDS initiatives:

- 4 – Develop a creative industries tourism plan.
- 14 – Leverage underutilized assets.



2025 annual goals

Productions	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025 result	% goal actual
Tier 1 (over one week)	5	1				1	20%
Tier 2 (overnight to one week)	12	0				0	0%
Tier 3 (single day)	11	0				0	0%
Local productions (within 100 km)	16	0				0	0%
Non-local productions (>100 km travel)	10	1				1	10%
Estimated economic impact	\$2,000,000	\$991,616				\$991,616	50%

Workshops/events							
Events	15	10				10	67%
Participants	800	233				233	29%

Location tours							
Tours	20	7				7	35%
Participants	200	82				82	41%

Location/production directory							
Location listings	100	12				12	12%
Vendor/crew listings	90	21				21	23%
Vendor/crew/talent hires on productions	200	102					0%

Economic impact source: Reel-Scout EI calculator



# MUSIC

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## **Estimated economic impact of Sponsored music events in Q4: \$149,978**

### **Industry engagement**

We attended the Folk Alliance International Conference in Montreal, which brought together 3,000 delegates and featured over 175 folk artists. We connected with international creative offices from Texas, Ireland, and Portugal, as well as festival programmers. The event was an opportunity to foster future collaborations for Kingston-based artists and events and to connect with representatives from Folk Canada, Music Declares Emergency, and the Canada Folk Awards.

Early in January, the Music Officer participated in Queen's Conference on the Entertainment Industry, sitting on a panel titled "Building Resilience: thriving in uncertainty" alongside industry leaders from film and music sectors.

In January, the Music Officer attended the media launch of the Canadian Live Music Association's "Hear and Now" economic impact report. The report found that in 2023, the Canadian live music industry supported more than 101,000 jobs; contributed \$5.84 B in labour income through live music operations and tourism; and produced \$3.73 B in tax dollars.

### **Community engagement**

The Youth Open Jam saw 10 young musicians participate in a genre-diverse session led by five local mentors. Hosted in partnership with Roswell Rehearsals, the event was well received, with participants highlighting its welcoming and inclusive environment.

The Intergenerational Open Mic expanded from the Youth Open Mic to include artists of all ages at the Kingston Senior Centre on February 20. With 20 performers and four local arts professionals employed, the event also integrated a pop-up art showcase focused on climate crisis solutions. A pop-up showcase from Youth Imagine the Future showcased art from local youth with a theme of research and solutions to the climate crisis and a more socially equitable future. Long & McQuade offered free merchandise, information, and raffle prizes for guests. The Youth Open Mic initiative continued throughout the quarter with a showcase at Memorial Centre Farmer's Market.

In collaboration with the Union of Professional Musicians Local 518, we hosted a Sound & Video Workshop on March 8 at the RCHA Club, equipping eight musicians with technical skills to enhance their live and online performances. Given the high demand, we are exploring additional sessions and follow-ups.

# MUSIC

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In celebration of International Women's Day, the Music Office facilitated a showcase in partnership with local musician Emily Fennell (Miss Emily). The evening featured performances by Savannah Shea, Kyra Daniel, and Clara Smallman, as well as a moderated fireside chat exploring songwriting, and the challenges of navigating the music industry as underrepresented voices by local musician Megan Hamilton. The sold-out event with 100+ attendees offered accessible ticketing options to remove cost barriers. 100% of merchandise proceeds from the artist merchandise tables went directly to artists. In addition, two women-owned local businesses participated in the merchandise market.

Local Francophone artists Nathan Graham and Benjamin Hueglin joined in on a rehearsal with EXPLOMusique, a music program led by secondary music teacher Nicholas Jodoin of école secondaire publique Mille-Îles. Funding for this project was supported by the Francophone Community Grant. Facilitator Nathan Graham shared, "The EXPLOMusique workshop was a fantastic experience. It had been a while since I'd had the opportunity to be part of a project within the Franco-Ontarian community, so it felt great to reconnect and re-immense myself."

### **Showcasing local talent**

The Slight Music Video Program premiered 11 locally produced music videos at the Kingston Grand Theatre as part of the Kingston Canadian Film Festival (KCFF). The event attracted 500 attendees, reinforcing Kingston's reputation as a hub for music and film collaborations.

Prior to the showcase's premiere, five music participants in the music video program were paired with digital marketing communication students from St. Lawrence College. Through this initiative, emerging artists received free marketing support to promote their music videos, new releases, and overall artist branding development. This opportunity was eligible to all program participants. Students were paired with musicians to craft strategic marketing plans, create promotional content, and explore innovative ways to amplify their reach.



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During KCFF's Creative Industries Day, the Music Office co-presented a sold-out panel featuring Sook-Yin Lee and Dylan Gamble, filmmakers and composers working within the industry. Additionally, we hosted representatives from Creative Industries Mississauga, fostering inter-city collaboration and networking. Jury members of the Slight Music Video Program also participated in Creative Industries "Breaking In" roundtable sessions at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Overall, 1100 people registered for the Creative Industries Day, with 90 attendees at the Music Panel and 400 during the Breaking In sessions.

The music officer worked to organize four roadshows for Kingston artists that will launch in Q2, in partnership with local promoter Flying V Productions and their emerging artist series. These roadshow initiatives will connect local Kingston artists to national booking agencies, management, and venue bookers.

The Kingston Frontenacs, supported by the Kingston Music Office and the Sport and Wellness portfolio, have initiated a program that gives performers from local schools and community choirs the opportunity to sing the national anthem before home games at Slush Puppie Place. This initiative not only showcases local talent but also strengthens community engagement by integrating musical groups into the sporting events.

Our Release Radar initiative showcased 31 local artists, up from 20 in the previous quarter. The Release Radar initiative is supported by CFRC 101.9, with radio play on Mondays at 11 am, and with weekly promotion on Kingston Live social media channels.

#### **These activities supported our 2025 annual plan goals:**

- // Strengthen music-friendly infrastructure.
- // Expand outreach and talent investment by assisting emerging artists with professional tour support.
- // Create professional development and networking opportunities for local artists.
- // Support activation and development of spaces for musical experiences.
- // Provide support for local promoters, organizers, festivals, and venues.
- // Support creative industries' growth through key educational partners.

#### **Music work this quarter supported the following IDS initiatives:**

- 4 – Develop a creative industries tourism plan.
- 14 – Leverage under-utilized assets.

A large crowd of people is gathered at a night concert. In the background, a stage is lit up with bright blue and white lights. A sign above the stage reads "REWIN THE SQUARE". The word "MUSIC" is written in a large, white, serif font in the top left corner. The word "resonant" is written in a large, red, serif font across the bottom of the image.

# MUSIC

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**Our work this quarter addressed the following Kingston Music Strategy goals:**

- 1.2 – Support community and industry efforts to create and activate music spaces, hubs, and incubators where artists can gain access to resources and support.
- 1.7 – Leverage outdoor and city-owned public spaces for performance opportunities with a focus on getting outside of the downtown core.
- 1.8 - Explore partnerships with the Union of Professional Musicians to create professional venue standards guidelines.
- 2.1 – Develop new programming and performance opportunities that promote local musicians and access to music in neighbourhoods across Kingston.
- 2.3 – Partner with local experts, community organizations, and post-secondary institutions to expand reach of city-sponsored residency programs for both musicians and music industry workers, develop barrier-free workshops, programming, and tool kits, and resources on building a career in music.
- 2.8 – Identify collaborative opportunities between City of Kingston and local schools to provide Kingston youth access to early career supports and services.
- 3.5 – Facilitate networking opportunities for local musicians (music and other creatives) through further investment in existing programs (Bandwidth, Slight Music Video Program) and collaborate with partners to create new initiatives.



# MUSIC

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## 2025 annual goals

Live events	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025 result	% goal actual
Kingston facilitated roadshows	9	0				0	0%
Artists/bands impacted	20	0				0	0%
Workshops/professional development events	34	9				9	26%
Attendees at workshops/events	1,238	351				351	28%

Sponsored events							
Sponsored music events	15	4				4	27%
Attendees - sponsored events	11,499	2,218				2,218	19%
Artists/bands impacted	350	132				132	38%
Estimated economic impact of sponsored events	\$291,510	\$149,978				\$149,978	51%

Kingston Production Directory							
Music listings	50	33				33	66%

Economic impact source: TREIM



# VISITOR SERVICES

## Staffing

In preparation for the busy summer season, most of last year's team has returned, and we've welcomed two new bilingual employees (French and Italian).

We completed a staff training plan to be delivered in early Q2 and focusing on:

- // updating processes and customer service enhancement
- // updates to data collection processes
- // training with partners on ticket sales and field trips to local attractions

We are also building on our partnership with Destination Ontario for their summer ambassador program.

## Q1 visitor insights

We track data on visitors to Kingston as a whole. These insights are based on Near mobile data, part of our Destination Insights Dashboard. These data showed that:

- // 98.1% visitors to Kingston were from Canada.
- // 1.3% were from the U.S.
- // 0.6% were international.
- // 46.6% of visitors stayed overnight.
- // Canadian visitors travelled an average of 760 km.
- // American visitors travelled an average of 1,154 km.
- // Non-U.S. international visitors travelled an average of 9,578 km.
- // 80% of all travellers were repeat visitors to Kingston.





# VISITOR SERVICES

## **Visitor engagement**

At the Visitor Information Centre, we welcomed nearly 3,500 visitors this quarter, based on internal door counter tracking. From interactions with a selection of guests, we learned they travelled from Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, Europe, South America, and Australia.

Despite weather challenges, we hosted successful community events for Lunar New Year and Family Day. We saw an increase in visitors at the start of March Break and we promoted March Break events like March of the Museums to visiting families.

## **New partnerships**

We are relaunching our makers program to expand our offerings of locally made art and crafts, while standardizing our selection process. Makers must apply to the program with samples of their work, which will be reviewed by a jury. Successful candidates will have their work offered for sale for a year; they will also receive 100 per cent of the ticket price of their merchandise. Through the application process, we also hope to identify local makers interested in giving talks, demonstrations, or workshops at the Visitor Information Centre. This program is set to launch in late April.

## **Marketing support for tourism partners**

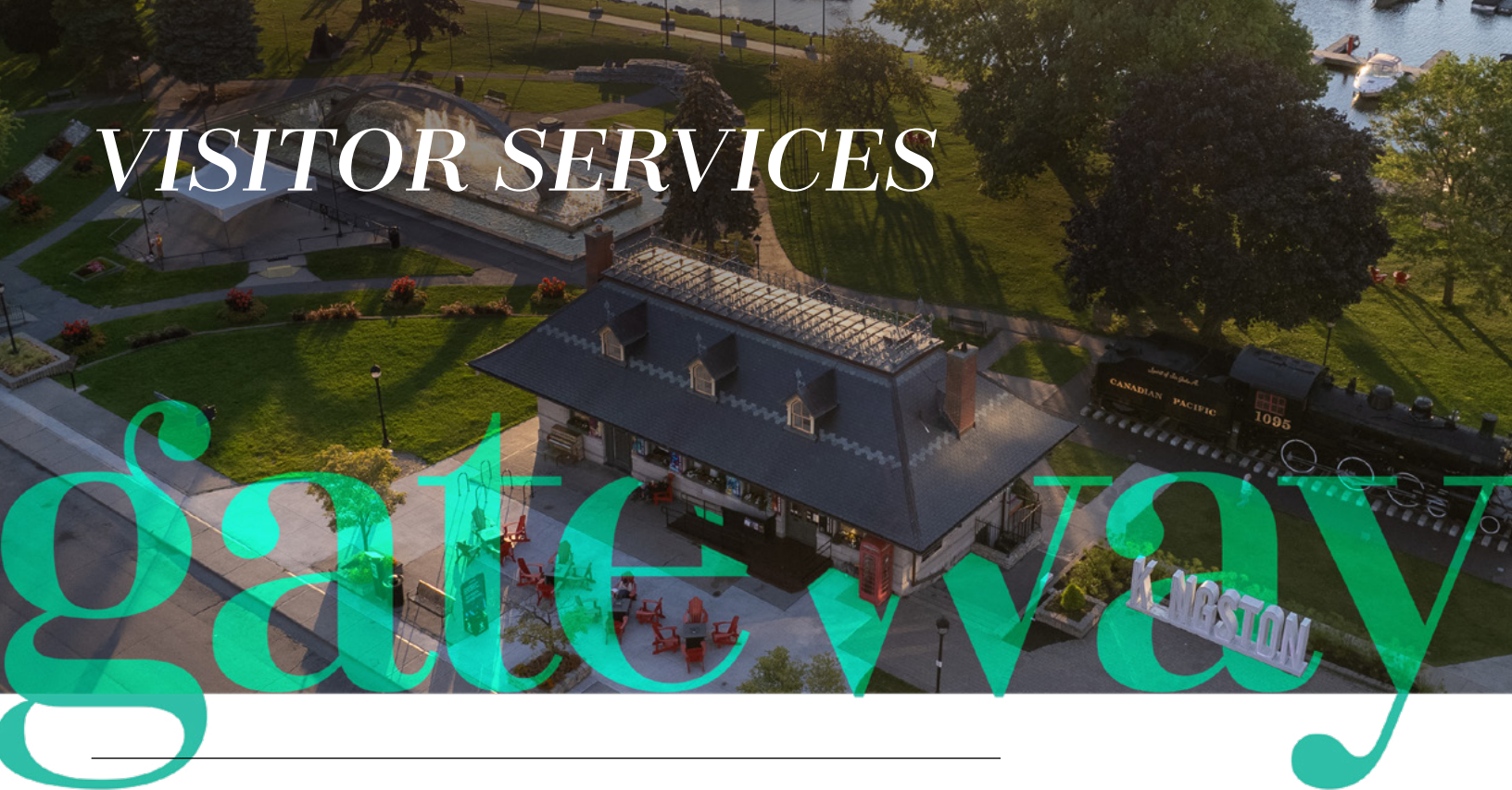
Our Enhanced Partnership Program provides on-site marketing options to our tourism partners, with both brochure racking and digital displays available at the Visitor Information Centre and other locations. This quarter, five new partners signed up for the year, in addition to our renewing partners. We are also working with partner sites to grow locations for print and digital options. In 2024, we added a brochure rack at the Athletics & Recreation Centre at Queen's University. This year, we are adding racks at Bellevue House, the Great Lakes Museum, and the Endaayaan – Tkanónsote Residence at Queen's. The latter is a popular summer residence for sport and conference groups. Other sites are INVISTA Centre (with a digital display coming in 2026); Kingston Airport; Portsmouth Olympic Harbour, and Kingston Penitentiary (seasonally).

## **Sustainability initiatives**

We created a survey to monitor printed marketing materials to ensure supply meets reasonable demand (to avoid overprinting) and to help establish guidelines.

We organized a workshop on sustainable practices & initiatives led by Sustainable Kingston for all staff.

We purchased cleaning supplies for the Visitor Information Centre from a locally owned refillery.



# VISITOR SERVICES

**These activities supported our 2025 annual plan goals:**

- // Develop a strong and diverse seasonal staff team.
- // Develop a strong multilingual staff team.
- // Expand retail offerings.
- // Grow the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) as a one-stop shop for tourism experiences.
- // Champion sustainable practices.
- // Review Tourism Kingston’s policies to advance sustainability.

**Visitor Services work this quarter supported the following IDS initiatives:**

13 – Create a sustainable tourism development plan.

**2025 annual goals**

Visitors	2025 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025 result	% goal actual
Number of interactions	140,000	3,373				3,373	2%

Partner support							
Tickets sold for partners	\$28,700	\$832				\$832	3%

Revenue							
Enhanced Profile Program	\$27,000	\$11,100				\$11,100	41%
Merchandise	\$83,000	\$6,847				\$6,847	8%



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# GUIDING DOCUMENTS

Work each quarter is measured against a number of guiding documents, including:



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Kingston's Integrated Destination Strategy 2022-2027



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Tourism Kingston 2024 Annual Plan



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Kingston Music Strategy



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Sport Tourism Strategic Framework



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY: YEAR TO DATE

Revenue	Total Budget	YTD Actuals	Variance	% Spent
Municipal Funding	\$ 1,619,676	\$ 1,619,676	0	100%
Municipal Other - Cultural Services SLA	\$ 148,500		\$ 148,500	0%
<b>Other Revenue</b>				
KAP Contribution	\$ 1,750,000	\$ 437,500	\$ 1,312,500	25%
KAP Contribution - Other	\$ 28,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 21,000	25%
MAT 35% - Film & Media	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	0	100%
MAT 65% - STR	\$ 70,000		\$ 70,000	0%
Francophone 2024 - 2025	\$ 22,700	\$ 16,500	\$ 6,200	73%
Experience Ontario 2024 - 2025	\$ 30,000	\$ 13,500	\$ 16,500	45%
VIC Sales & Commissions:				
Resale	\$ 77,000	\$ 11,912	\$ 65,088	15%
Ticket sales & other revenue	\$ 25,000	\$ 235	\$ 24,765	1%
Brochure racking	\$ 28,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 16,000	44%
Music Revenue	\$ 53,500	\$ 1,460	\$ 52,040	3%
Film Revenue	\$ 18,500	\$ 6,028	\$ 12,472	33%
Business Events Revenue	\$ 7,500	\$ 3,625	\$ 3,875	48%
Travel Trade Revenue	\$ 3,000		\$ 3,000	0%
Sport & Wellness Revenue	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	0	100%
Marketing Revenue	\$ 80,000	\$ 43,765	\$ 36,235	55%
Partnership Revenue	\$ 40,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 30,000	25%
Other Funding	\$ 312,020	\$ 44,139	\$ 267,881	14%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 4,668,896</b>	<b>\$ 2,582,840</b>	<b>\$ 2,086,056</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
Wages & Benefits	\$ 1,828,166	\$ 418,679	\$ 1,409,487	23%
Other Administrative Expenses	\$ 300,000	\$ 97,241		32%
Reserve	\$ 50,000			0%
Software Maintenance	\$ 65,000	\$ 5,703		9%
<b>Project Expenses</b>				
Marketing Digital Content Media Relations	\$ 1,728,065	\$ 369,889		21%
Partnerships	\$ 40,000	\$ 19,516		49%
Francophone Community Grant 2024 - 2025	\$ 22,700	\$ 4,985		22%
Experience Ontario 2024 - 2025	\$ 30,000	\$ 25,085		84%
Business Events	\$ 95,000	\$ 23,220		24%
Travel Trade	\$ 95,000	\$ 19,847		21%
Sport & Wellness	\$ 135,465	\$ 43,669		32%
Film	\$ 56,000	\$ 20,912		37%
Music	\$ 53,500	\$ 12,626		24%
Visitor Services	\$ 98,530	\$ 19,293		20%
COGS	\$ 71,470	\$ 20,629		29%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 4,668,896</b>	<b>\$ 1,080,665</b>	<b>\$ 1,409,487</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 1,502,176</b>		





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