

– Tourism –
KINGSTON

FIRST QUARTER REPORT 2026



TOURISM KINGSTON QUARTERLY REPORT



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

April 10, 2026

RE: Tourism Kingston Q1 2026 report

Please find attached our summary report on the activities undertaken by Tourism Kingston for Q1: January through March 2026.

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.

Of note this quarter, the Hon. Stan Cho, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, visited Kingston in March. During his visit, having heard about the Kingstonlicious program, he enjoyed the Kingstonlicious prix fixe menu at Tango Nuevo. He also toured Kingston Penitentiary with SLPC staff, and visited Limestone Animation, Kingston's new animation studio.

During Q1, our community engagement and consultation work continued through sector-wide meetings of the Sales/Destination Marketing, Attractions, Digital and Visual Creators, and Music Advisory committees.

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,

Megan Knott
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Tourism Kingston



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

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The Marketing and Communications team continued to work with our agency of record Alphabet to finalize the Q2–Q4 media plan and overall marketing strategy. The 2026 marketing focus remains on driving overnight stays year-round by leveraging key cultural and destination moments, including the FIFA World Cup 2026 and the tenth anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert. In addition, we will strengthen sector support and improve coordination across marketing channels to maximize impact. Target markets remain Toronto/GTA, Ottawa, and Montreal, with the addition of the New York State and northern U.S. drive market. This approach supports Tourism Kingston's mandate to increase visitation, overnight stays, and visitor spending while supporting local tourism partners and businesses year-round.

Q1 marketing priorities focused on promoting Kingstonlicious, the Kingston Canadian Film Festival (KCFF), Family Day, March Break getaways, hotel packages, and historic inn promotions. These campaigns were delivered through a multi-channel marketing strategy including social media, web content, paid media, partnerships, and the Insiders program, allowing us to reach audiences at multiple touchpoints and successfully support seasonal tourism and overnight stays.

Paid media

The Q1 media plan focused on Kingstonlicious, KCFF, Family Day, March Break, Historic Inns of Kingston, the Bathhouse Spa at the Belvedere Hotel, and Kingston's culinary scene. Advertisements ran in the March/April issue of *Edible Ottawa*, with additional placements scheduled for Q2. A double-page advertorial featured the Belvedere Hotel and Spa; it was supported by a promotional overnight package that included Kingston Food Tour tickets, helping to drive culinary-focused overnight stays. In addition, a collaboration with the Historic Inns of Kingston resulted in a two-page spread highlighting six properties and further promoting Kingston's historic accommodation offerings.

In preparation for two primary marketing priorities, we created two new website landing pages, Forever Hip and Beyond the Match: World Cup 2026. The World Cup landing page has two goals: to drive international travellers to make Kingston their homebase for their Ontario stay and to persuade these travellers to make Kingston part of their itinerary. We are highlighting the ease of travelling to Kingston, plus overnight packages, things to do/attractions, what to eat/drink, and visitation planning. We continue to update this page as we receive information and data relevant to the needs of international travellers. We launched focused FIFA World Cup 26 digital campaigns, with local, domestic, and international visitor targets. The Forever Hip landing page is a hub for all things Kingston and The Tragically Hip-related – places that shape their story, Hip-related events, Hip finds in Kingston, and our Creative Kingston Walking Tours, which feature stories of The Hip and other Kingston musicians.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Owned media

In Q1, the team focused on owned social media channels to reinforce the digital storytelling priorities outlined in the Integrated Destination Strategy (IDS) and the 2026 annual plan. Our content strategy aligned with key seasonal narratives, including Family Day, KCFF, March Break, Maple Madness, and March of the Museums.

To bring these stories to life, we continued to invest in short-form video. Across Instagram Reels and TikTok, we produced 27 in-house videos that generated more than 2.8 M views, amplifying Kingston's culinary, cultural, and family-friendly experiences and priming the visitor pipeline heading into peak travel periods. Our local Insiders program contributed an additional 24 videos showcasing "in-the-know" recommendations on where to eat, what to see, and what to do in Kingston.

On LinkedIn, we expanded our industry-facing communications, highlighting conferences, meetings and business events, and team achievements. This supported stronger industry engagement and reinforced Kingston's position as an active, collaborative destination partner.

In January, the winter issue of *Fresh/Frais*, our culinary magazine finalized in Q4, 2025, was distributed to community partners. The English version went to 28 hotels and the French version to 18 hotels. Additional copies went to other partners like the Memorial Centre Farmers' Market and le Centre culturel Frontenac. Stories from the magazine are also republished on Tourism Kingston's English and French websites throughout Q1.

Earned media

In January, as a result of a pitch on Kingston's historic inns, we hosted Lara Pingue (*The Globe & Mail*). She wrote "[Kingston's revamped Belvedere hotel gets the big things right – especially its new spa.](#)" Journalist Sabrina Pirillo, whom we hosted last fall, included the Bathhouse Spa in her article [12 of the Best Outdoorsy Spas in Canada](#) for *Explore* magazine.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

youthful

Building Kingston's culinary profile, we secured journalist Alana Lapierre (Canada's 100 Best) to dine at two Kingstonlicious signature events. These stays resulted in paid social media coverage, personal social media coverage from the journalist, and the article "[24 Hours in Kingston.](#)" This high-value coverage shines light on Kingston's culinary scene, with an eye to support Kingston restaurants named within the coveted Canada's 100 Best list in the coming years. Additionally, we hosted Marie-Noel Ouimet (a Travel Media Association of Canada member) during Kingstonlicious. She wrote "[Kingstonlicious : le prétexte parfait pour une virée gourmande à 3 h de Montréal](#)" for the French publication *Noovo Moi*.

During KCFF, we hosted influencers Becca Rhodes of [thefilmtripper](#) and Liz Duff of [Producer Liz](#). Liz's visit was part of a collaboration with KCFF to support a panel, "Beyond the Cottage: Inside the Heated Rivelry revolution." The goal of Becca's visit was to showcase Kingston's diverse film landscape, from Kingston Penitentiary (the city's most popular site for film and TV productions) to modern high-rises; from Victorian lakeside mansions to time-worn motels and diners. In Kingston, filmmakers can travel through the decades – and the centuries – to find the perfect location. [Becca's content highlighted Kingston's diversity of locations.](#) Additionally, we secured coverage in *The Globe and Mail* from journalist Barry Hertz: "[In Middle Life, a Canadian rock-star couple trade the concert hall for a big-screen romcom](#)" and NOW Toronto: "[The world's largest all-Canadian film festival kicks off in Kingston this week.](#)"

In March, aligned with family-friendly programming, we hosted influencer [Hannah Robinson](#), a lifestyle content creator whose story reflects a meaningful connection to Kingston. Her journey – from attending post-secondary school in Kingston to returning to Atlantic Canada for military service and ultimately choosing to come back to Kingston with her young family – offers a relatable and authentic perspective. [This type of content](#) moves beyond traditional tourism narratives, aiming instead to connect with audiences through shared lifestyle experiences and evolving life stages. Last, we hosted *Zoomer* journalist Antonia Whyatt and her family and we expect her coverage to launch later this spring.

Ashley Bradshaw, Manager, Trade and Media, and Amanda Tryon, Destination Marketing Specialist, recently completed a City Nation Place CNP Accelerator course as part of an international cohort. This interactive, expert-led, place-branding program blends strategic insight with hands-on learning to help emerging leaders confidently promote destinations through collaboration, practical assignments, and real-world feedback.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

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PARTNERSHIPS

ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PARTNERSHIPS IN Q1: \$28,197

Kingstonlicious returned for its sixth season. The February–March culinary festival offered premier prix fixe menus at 42 locations (restaurants, cafés, breweries, and the Memorial Centre Farmers' Market). The program offered four different price points with menus ranging from casual to fine dining. Kingstonlicious also offered six 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 three 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.

We brought back the “Our city is your city” hotel packages provided up to \$150 off a three-night stay with select overnight stays at nine accommodation partners. This package offered \$100 off a two-night stay and an additional \$50 off the third night from February 3 through March 31. Hotels reported the sale of 63 two-night packages and 18 three-night packages for a total of 180 room nights.

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 six applications. In Q1, we secured speaking opportunities at Destinations International Marketing & Communications Summit, Economic Developers Council of Ontario, and Queen’s University’s QUTV. In addition, Megan Knott was recently featured on the [DMOU with Bill Geist](#) podcast.

We partnered with Culinary Tourism Alliance/Ontario Culinary to host an Instagram contest with a Kingstonlicious culinary stay in Kingston at the Belvedere Hotel and Bathhouse Spa, with gift cards to AquaTerra, Atomica, Cha Cha Tea, and Daft Brewing. We partnered with Attractions Ontario 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 Attraction Ontario’s email subscribers.

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



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

youthful

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 with a focus on culinary, culture, wellness experiences. A total of 44 packages were curated in Q1 and 3,240 referrals were sent to hotel partners.

These activities supported our 2026 annual plan goals:

- // Champion, steward, and amplify the Kingston brand across campaigns, initiatives, programming, and partnerships.
- // Continue to foster beneficial relationships with partner businesses and organizations.
- // Implement special projects.
- // Develop high-impact destination experiences and packages.
- // Enhance and grow key local and regional partnerships.
- // Raise profile of Kingston through earned media.

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

- 1 – Develop a tourism engagement and communication strategy with residents and community leaders.
- 16 – Create flexible campaigns targeting key provincial markets.

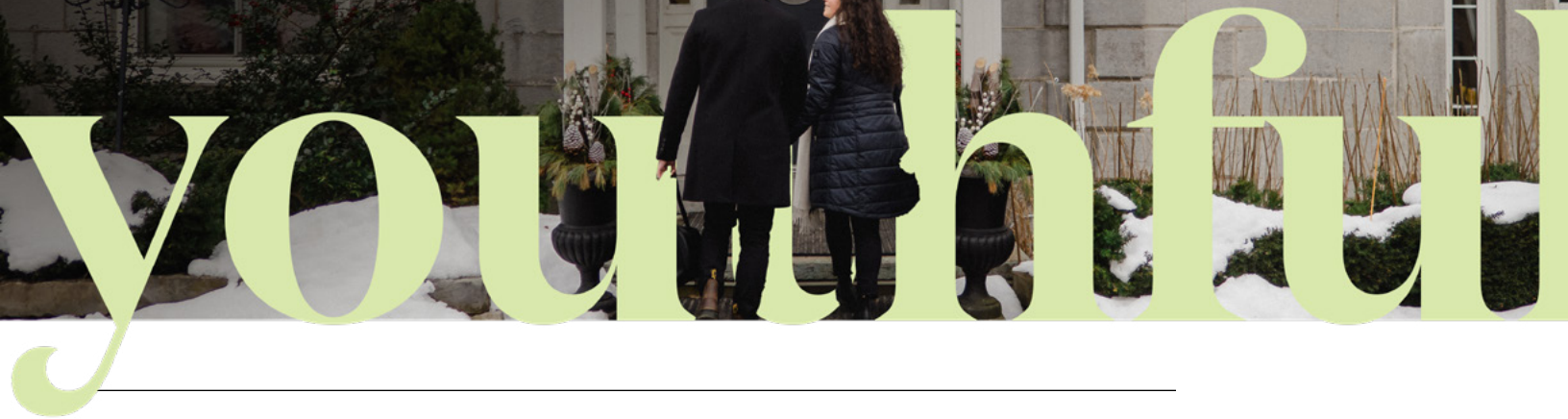
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



2026 annual goals

Marketing and Communications	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Website sessions	2,100,000	510,198				510,198	24%
Website pageviews	2,500,000	662,520				662,520	27%
Referrals to partners	375,000	32,198				32,198	9%
Advertising impressions	180,000,000	22,306,618				22,306,618	12%
Social media link clicks	600,000	131,324				131,324	22%
Social media engagements	2,000,000	321,135				321,135	16%
Social media impressions	38,400,000	8,602,314				8,602,314	22%
Total followers	175,000	138,500				138,500	79%
Proactive high-value earned media stories	200	96				96	48%
Total media stories	725	320				320	44%
Total earned media impressions	2,100,000,000	1,027,308,637				1,027,308,637	49%

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



2026 annual goals

Packages	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
See + Do packages	50	17				17	34%
Eat + Drink packages	40	11				11	28%
Rest + Relax packages	15	7				7	47%
Family packages	25	9				9	36%
Referrals to accommodation partners	46,269	3,240				3240	7%
Minimum room nights **	900	185				185	21%
Estimated economic impact		\$28,197				\$28,197	

*Tourism Kingston supported or created packages

Special projects	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Facilitated events, activations, or campaigns	65	31				31	48%
Attendees	5,000	1,728				1,728	35%
Partners involved or impacted	250	60				60	24%

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

SPORT



energized

Economic impact of sport initiatives in Q1: \$21,295,356

This quarter was busy with on-ice events. Besides annual events like Kids for Kids, Kingston Ringette, KAMHA tournaments, and the Taylor Hall Classic, Kingston also hosted the Ringette Ontario AA Provincial Tournament, Skate Ontario Synchro, OMHA Championships, plus the return of the Kingston Impact Legacy tournament, several Kingston Marlin swimming events, and a provincial tennis tournament.

Tourism Kingston provided financial support to these local organizations and events this quarter:

- // Kingston Impact
- // CORK
- // Kids for Kids
- // Ringette Ontario AA Tournament
- // Kingston Ringette
- // Skate Ontario Synchro

The team provided marketing and social media amplification, support for event RFPs and accommodations, and discounts at attractions or local businesses, to these events and organizations:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| // Taylor Hall Classic Cup | // Beast of the East Cheer Challenge |
| // Eastern Ontario Regional Swimming Championships | // QMED Fights Cancer |
| // KAMHA U10/U11 A/AA Tournament | // KAMHA March Break Classic |
| // Carr-Harris Cup | // Middleground Kingston Smash |
| // Kingston U12 U16 Provincial Circuit (Tennis) | // OMHA Championships |
| // KAMHA Select Tournament | |
| // Kingston Blue Marlins Heats and Finals Meet | |

SPORT



energized

Events secured:

- // Little League Nationals 2026
- // FIFA Canada Celebrates 2026
- // Eh! Game Expo/Fight for the Throne Esport 2026
- // GSOC Players' Cup 2026
- // Skate Ontario Synchro 2027
- // OFSAA Volleyball 2027
- // OFSAA Rugby 2028

This quarter, we submitted bids to host the future sport events:

- // (with CORK) 2027 VX One Championships, 2027 Lightning World and Master World Championships, and 2027 Soling World Championships
- // 2027 Road Running Nationals
- // 2027 Canada Cycling BMX Nationals

In March, we attended Sport Tourism Canada's Sport Events Congress in Mississauga. We were joined by representatives from Queen's University, City of Kingston Recreation Services, and several accommodation partners. This approach allowed us to speak with more rights holders and match each conversation with the right expertise, whether those organizations were looking for facilities, dorms, sponsorship opportunities, or accommodations. We met with 40 national or provincial rights holders or sporting organizations, including Curling Canada, Tennis Canada, and Hockey Canada.

SPORT



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Our sponsorship of the Prestige Awards further allowed us to pitch Kingston as a sport host. After a short promotional video, Managing Director of Sales Alex Elliott addressed the audience of 350 to 400 sport and tourism professionals, and showcased Kingston's unique ability to add fascinating cultural experiences to large sporting events. Alex used the example of the upcoming OFSAA Ultimate Frisbee banquet that will be held at Kingston Penitentiary. We left Mississauga with several strong leads.

In March, we met with the athletic directors from the Kingston Area Secondary Schools Athletic Association (KASSAA) to outline how Tourism Kingston can help in their bids for EOSSAA and OFSAA events. High school tournaments are an important market for sport tourism: they bring young visitors into the city for their first taste of Kingston; they visit during the week; and often in shoulder seasons.

Golf in Ontario has established packages with three local golf courses (Smuggler's Glen, Loyalist, and Rivendell) and five accommodation partners (Kingston Marriott, Marriott Kingston Water's Edge, Holiday Inn Kingston-Waterfront, Holiday Inn Express Kingston West, and Quality Inn and Suites Kingston). In addition, they have started booking groups at the Strata Hotel. We have brokered introductions with four other accommodation partners that can offer more competitive prices outside of the downtown core. While the quality of golf is still the main driver for group bookings, there is increased interest in Kingston as a city with a vibrant downtown and waterfront.

Golf in Ontario continues to provide marketing support for our golf courses via social media, email marketing, and partnerships with the Toronto Golf Show and upcoming promotions at the Beer Store.

In March, as part of our Esport strategy to nurture grassroots events, we supported (through marketing, media outreach and discounts with business partners) a locally led tournament called Middleground: Kingston Smash, hosted by Byrd Esports and the Queen's University Fighting Game Club. The event drew 145 competitors from across Ontario and New York State. The event also served as a marketing play to disseminate a pre-announcement for Eh! Game Expo/Fight for the Throne (FFTT) coming July 3–5 to Slush Puppie Place. This was also important because the team at Byrd Esports have committed to work with Carl-Edwin Michel, producer of Eh! Game Expo/FFTT, this summer.

Kingston has been confirmed as a host for a FIFA Canada Celebrates stop, one of 40 stops Canada-wide on this tour. The event consists of a public screening of a FIFA game in Springer Market Square, plus community activations. Tourism Kingston worked closely with the City of Kingston to secure this event.

SPORT

A photograph of a golfer in mid-swing on a lush green golf course. The golfer is wearing a white polo shirt, a black cap, and black shorts. The background shows a well-maintained golf course with trees and a sand trap.

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Tourism Kingston has created a Volunteer of the Year Award in honour of Garry McColman, a long-time Kingston volunteer with the Kids for Kids hockey tournament. The inaugural Garry McColman award will be presented at our April AGM to a volunteer with a local sport organization. In addition to the award, Tourism Kingston will make a \$500 donation to the volunteer's organization.

These activities supported our 2026 annual plan goals:

- // Establish a strong Kingston presence at the 2026 Sport Events Congress.
- // Continue to foster relationships with education partners.
- // Build and execute a Kingston Esport strategy.

Sport activities this quarter supported the following IDS initiatives:

- 12 – Support Esport development.

SPORT



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2026 annual goals

Sport	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Events prospected	250	95				95	38%
Events qualified	120	30				30	25%
Events supported	105	23				23	22%
Event attendees	87,000	44,531				44,531	51%
Room nights	60,000	20,129				20,129	34%
Estimated economic impact	\$42,500,000	\$21,295,356				\$21,295,356	50%

Economic impact: Destination International's Event Impact Calculator Sport Model

TRAVEL TRADE



The estimated impact of travel trade in Q1: \$150,082

Q1 involved organization and logistics ahead of our travel to Rendezvous Canada in Toronto, May 26–29. We will have a strong Team Kingston presence at this important trade show, with six partners joining us. Ashley Bradshaw, Manager, Trade and Media, and Ella Wang, International Travel Trade Coordinator, will facilitate separate meetings with more than 140 one-on-one appointments. Ashley will target key European markets like U.K., Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, and will build relationships with Australian and U.S. markets. Ella will support the Asian market, focusing on China, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore.

We have also worked with Destination Ontario to secure three pre- and post-familiarization tours (FAMs) that will see upwards of 60 international tour operators in Kingston in May. Through these FAMs, we will showcase 20 attractions, experiences, and accommodations. In addition, we will invite niche experience partners to join during meals to showcase the diverse offerings available in Kingston.

In addition to the Destination Ontario-facilitated FAMs, we have also received requests to host Lernidee Erlebnisreisen GmbH, Newmarket Holidays, Discover Holidays, and Prestige U.K. operators leading up to Rendezvous Canada. We will also host German journalists Holgar Jacobs with FVW Medien GmbH (Germany's leading travel trade industry publishing house) and Ulrich Clef of *Reisegenuss* (a German travel magazine) in May and June.

Tourism Kingston's [Chinese New Year video](#) was shared with Destination Canada, Destination Ontario, and tour operators.

We welcomed Bao Kuo, a Chinese influencer, as part of a pan-Ontario winter itinerary. He stayed in a historic inn, partook in culinary activities during Kingstonlicious, took a helicopter tour with 1000 Islands Helicopters in Gananoque, and went ice fishing with Blue Rock Charters on Collins Lake, north of Kingston. The range of outdoor activities we arranged for Bao Kuo aligns with the Chinese market's affinity to experience nature in Ontario.

We renewed our membership with Canadian Inbound Tourism Association Plus (CITAP+), an industry association representing receptive tour operators and tourism partners focused on growing international inbound travel to Canada, particularly from key China and Asia-Pacific markets. Ella Wang has shared Kingston information for use in the Eastern Canada Elite Inbound Tour Guide Training Program.

TRAVEL TRADE



We recently welcomed a Mandarin speaker to our Visitor Information Centre team who will support language requests and assist with various attractions, as this need arises.

Tourism Kingston is a member of Attractions Ontario, which offers a niche student youth marketing partnership. We supported two attractions to join their Win a Field Trip contest, with winning schools coming to Kingston in May–June. We will foster these relationships and aim to grow interest in Kingston from those connections.

Focus Tours, a Southwestern Ontario company, brought a new tour to Kingston this quarter., Additional operators we are working with: Barb's Musical Tours, Brightspark by WorldStrides, Concord Travel, Travel Link, You Ask, GZL International Service Ltd, Pear Seas, Jonview, Hammond Tours & Travel, Champman Cultural Tours, Discover Canada Tours, Newmarket Holidays, TUI Austria, and McCoy Bus Service.

We have confirmed that the cruise ship *Pearl Mist* will again visit Kingston twice in 2026. This year, cruise ships will dock at the coal dock in Portsmouth Village, Kingston's temporary deep-water dock that will support longer port of call stays in Kingston.

These activities supported our 2026 annual plan goals:

- // Promote destination tour packaging and itineraries.
- // Position Kingston as a hub for Great Lakes cruises.
- // Increase demand for Kingston in international markets.
- // Increase demand for Kingston in the education travel market.

Travel Trade work this quarter aligned with the following IDS initiatives:

- 6 – Facilitate transportation access for visitors.
- 8 – Advance waterfront infrastructure.

TRAVEL TRADE



2026 annual goals

Travel Trade	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Definite leads	150	13				13	9%
Referrals to partners	500	102				102	20%
Cruise passengers	1,400	0				0	0%
Number of buses booked	130	4				4	3%
Estimated economic impact	\$4,600,000	\$150,082				\$150,082	3%

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

Definite leads – future business booked

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)

BUSINESS EVENTS



Economic impact of business events in Q1: \$358,659

In January, we had a day of site visits with Bain & Company (a global management consulting firm) in advance of its partner planning conference this summer in Kingston with 265 attendees.

Also in January, we attended the Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners "CanSPEP" Day in Toronto. Tourism Kingston was the education sponsor of this day of workshops, keynotes, and networking with independent meeting planners, mostly from the Greater Toronto Area.

In February, we participated in Ottawa Meet Week, which had 10 events over five days, attracting meetings industry professionals from across Canada. Of particular importance were:

- // Destination Direct Canada (DCC): The anchor event of the week, DDC is a two-day hosted buyer program, bringing vetted, hosted buyers together with 40 destination marketing organizations, primarily in one-on-one 15-minute scheduled meetings, as well as in multiple networking events and meals. This year's DDC meetings resulted in six strong leads and receipt of three requests for proposal (RFPs).
- // The Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE) Tête-à-Tête trade show: This event brings together leaders from associations, not-for-profits, and government agencies nationwide with a diverse range of meetings industry suppliers. Tourism Kingston's booth included representatives from five Kingston hotel partners and highlighted this year's tenth anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert. Visitors were entertained by Kingston musician Nolan Hubbard, who performing covers of Hip songs. The day resulted in over 40 new strong leads and one confirmed RFP.
- // The principal industry association bodies – CanSPEP, CSAE, Meeting Planners International (MPI), and the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) – each hosts events during the week. These included a networking reception, two education sessions, a lunch event, and a charity auction and dinner. Tourism Kingston attended all of them and is the Education Series sponsor for the MPI Ottawa Chapter.

In March, we attended the first Venue Series event of the year in Mississauga. The Venue Series is built around curated meetings between local meeting planners and suppliers, with each event consisting of 15 10-minute "speed meeting" sessions plus two group networking sessions. The March event in Mississauga resulted in one RFP received and four strong leads for which RFPs are expected in the next quarter. We will be attending three more Venue Series events later in the year in other cities.

BUSINESS EVENTS



Events hosted in Q1:

- // Easter Ontario Wardens Caucus January and March meetings
- // WSC Municipal Sponsorship Conference (in partnership with the City of Kingston)
- // AbbVie Corporation Canada spring meeting
- // Ontario Principals Council Eastern Region conference
- // Blackberry/QNX Radar Group meeting

New leads in Q1:

- | | |
|---|--|
| // Canadian Home Builders Association | // Canadian Leadership Congress/The Conduit |
| // Canadian Federation of Medical Students | // Premier Soccer Leagues of Canada |
| // Canadian Accredited Independent Schools | // Rowing Canada |
| // National Police Federation | // Institute of Municipal Assessors |
| // Health First Network | // Canadian Baptists of Ontario & Quebec |
| // Canadian Association of Nuclear Medicine | // United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada |
| // Baker Tilly Canada | // CSAE Symposium for Chief Staff & Chief Elected Officers |
| // Royal Society of Canada | // Bain & Company |
| // Canadian Institutional Research & Planning Association (renewed) | |

Lost opportunities (including economic impact):

- // Canadian Institutional Research and Planning Association Conference (\$404,200) – lost due to lack of air service.
- // Regional Canada Pageants (\$456,500) – lost due to lack of air service.
- // POGO Multidisciplinary Symposium on Childhood Cancer (\$231,500) – lost due to lack of space in venues/breakout room capacity.

BUSINESS EVENTS



We launched our new CRM system, HubSpot, strengthening how we manage relationships, track event leads and confirmations, and drive efficiency across our processes. Looking ahead, we will introduce a new RFP process through HubSpot later this year.

These activities supported our 2026 annual plan goals:

- // Promote Kingston as a year-round destination for business events and conferences.
- // Build sales pipeline for a future conference centre.
- // Generate new revenue and maximize Kingston presence at key national events
- // Promote Kingston sustainability initiatives to event organizers.
- // Enhance formal transportation partnerships for business events.
- // Demonstrate the value of business events.

BUSINESS EVENTS



2026 annual goals

Business events	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Tentative leads	65	15				15	23%
Definite leads	50	8				8	16%
Events supported	60	6				6	10%
Contracted room nights	10,000	627				627	6%
Estimated economic impact	\$5,200,000	\$358,659				\$358,659	7%

Numbers are based on the date that traces/leads begin.

Definite leads – booked business

Economic impact reflects room nights and indirect spend by delegates.

Economic impact calculator: Destinations International Event Impact Calculator

FILM & MEDIA



Estimated economic impact of film & media productions in Q1: \$15,000

Productions

March 13, the Kenhteke Paranormal Society filmed *Indigenous Paranormal* at the Pumphouse Museum

Location scouting

Independent filmmaker Farhad Paktel scouted Kingston Pen, Fort Henry, and the historic SDG County Jail in Cornwall.

A location scout for *Criminal Minds* toured local train tunnels, stone archways and pathways.

Black Elephant Productions scouted local ravines and Firetrucks.

The feature film *The Cottage* scouted local properties to stand in for an English countryside cottage in the 1920s.

March 17, a drone flight path scout took place during Limestone Race Weekend.

Tom Harrison toured St. Lawrence College for a microbudget mockumentary project.

Through Ontario Creates, we provided location scouts for:

- // location doubles for Concord, Massachusetts in the 1800s
- // 81 King Street
- // ski resort and hill
- // location doubles for Buffalo, N.Y. (hockey rinks, neighbourhoods, college campus)
- // nightclubs

We also provided location scouts at campgrounds with cabins for a Scott Brothers project; large mansions/estates for a Netflix competition series; and on-screen office spaces plus makeshift studio locations for Boat Rocker Studios.

Releases this quarter (productions filmed in Kingston in 2025)

Borderline series on CRAVE

Devil in Disguise: John Wayne Gacy released on NBC Peacock

FILM & MEDIA



In January, Film Commissioner Joanne Loton attended Prime Time, the conference of Canadian Media Producers Association in Ottawa. There, she had several one-on-one meetings with production companies and networks, including BELL/CRAVE. Sarah Fowlie, BELL/CRAVE's head of programming, is interested in Kingston as a potential filming location for an upcoming series. She has requested a FAM tour for herself and her business partners in the spring. Joanne was also a presenter at Prime Time; during a spotlight session, she promoted Kingston to over 1,000 attendees promoting Kingston as a key filming destination and production partner.

In February, for the second year, we hosted an industry brunch during Kingston Canadian Film Festival. This was an opportunity for us to connect to Ontario producers to invite them to take in the festival, and to showcase Kingston Film & Media's services, as well as the city's diverse locations. We connected with 53 industry professionals at the brunch.

In March, Joanne had a week of one-on-one meetings, industry events and information sessions at the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Studio Summit. Meetings were held with U.S.-based location scouts, heads of physical production, heads of incentives, and producers at major studios and independent producers based in L.A. Ontario Creates organized a VIP meeting with the heads of the film offices from Kingston, Ottawa, and Mississauga. This included a specific networking location showcase with heads of production from Legendary Films, 20th Century, Paramount, Lucas Art, Bad Robot, PictureStart, MRC, Annapurna, and Arc49. Out of this summit, four FAM tours to Kingston have been requested from Amazon Studios U.S. and Canada, Hollywood Ventures Group, Co-Labs location scouting, and Ouvert Media Group.

Community events

Tyler Platt, Manager, Film & Media Strategy, joined the KEYS Spotlight Series panel on careers in film, sharing insights and career pathways with youth and career-transitioning community members.

In February, Joanne Loton was a panellist and workshop facilitator at an all-day QUTV Film Finance conference, discussing how films and content get funded, structured for tax incentives, and sold to domestic and international markets. The conference was attended by 60 Queen's business and film students.

The February Makers Meetup saw 45 attendees for an afternoon of connection and conversation. Featuring nine speakers, the event welcomed students, emerging artists, and established professionals from across the music, film, gaming, and digital arts communities.

During the Kingston Canadian Film Festival, we held our inaugural Kingston Script to Screen live pitch, which was very successful. The winning teams, for the projects *Parkies* and *Seeking Why*, have gone on to have several positive meetings with production

FILM & MEDIA



companies. The *Parkies* creators have had fruitful meetings with production companies in Toronto including Shaftesbury, New Metric Media, Counterfeit, and Indian & Cowboys, which may be interested in co-producing on projects that would film exclusively in Kingston.

Shaftesbury continues to be an excellent partner, not only with filming and series (*Murdoch*, *Borderline*) but also because Susan Alexander, Head of Creative at Shaftesbury, has agreed to mentor the *Parkies* team, Melissa Eapen and Mickayla Pyke, throughout the year in preparation for Prime Time in January 2027. Jenn Kuzmyk, the publisher of *Playback* and the ED of the Banff Media Festival, offered a free Banff pass to Kaycee Leigh, creator of *Seeking Why*.

In March, the Cinema Society of Kingston and Kingston Film and Media invited local creators to see their work on the big screen at the winter Show and Tell Filmmaker's Open Mic.

For the Slight Music Video Program, Kingston Film & Media held a Production Business 101 workshop for the program's production companies. The workshop was led by Alicia Petrusa, film producer and head of RBC's small business development portfolio. Our office also helped secure film permits and a city bus for one of the production companies.

These activities supported our 2026 annual plan goals:

- // Continue to collaborate with Ontario Creates to ensure Kingston is included in outreach efforts to national and international production communities.
- // Follow up with leads made at industry events to pitch Kingston locations and amenities to producers.
- // Attract and support independent productions.
- // Grow key community partnerships.

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

- 2 – Position Tourism Kingston as the lead agency for music and film.
- 9 – Integrate pre-existing creative strategies into the IDS.

FILM & MEDIA



2026 annual goals

Productions	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Tier 1 (over one week)	6	0				0	0%
Tier 2 (overnight to one week)	8	0				0	0%
Tier 3 (single day)	10	1				1	10%
Local productions (within 100 km)	12	1				1	8%
Non-local productions (>100 km travel)	14	0				0	0%
Room nights from non-local productions	5,000	0				0	0%
Estimated economic impact (direct spend)	\$5,000,000	\$15,000				\$15,000	3%

Workshops/events							
Events	40	14				14	35%
Participants	900	375				375	42%

Location tours							
Tours	25	5				5	20%

Location/production directory							
Location listings	40	3				3	8%
Vendor/crew listings	60	9				9	15%
Vendor/crew/talent hires on productions	200	0					0%

Economic impact source: Reel-Scout EI calculator

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Estimated economic impact of sponsored music events in Q1: \$132,497

Community events

Youth Open Mic continues in 2026 with growing participation. Q1 sessions welcomed new and returning youth artists from a variety of schools and musical genres. The initiative also continued to feature youth hosts, providing leadership opportunities for young musicians, while youth vendors remained part of the events, including local maker Beaded by Ari. Overall, Youth Open Mic remains a vibrant space that supports youth creativity and strengthens connections within Kingston's music community. During Q1, we showcased more than 30 performers, and we provided artist payment for additional three local creators who served as sound technicians, music mentors, and event organization support.

In Q1, we launched the VIC Mixtape series at the Visitor Information Centre, a new initiative developed in partnership with local arts organizations Cultivate Art Commons (formerly Modern Fuel Gallery) and Kingston School of Art to combine live music, creative activities, and a welcoming community atmosphere.

The first events, held in February and March, featured Francophone artist Nicci Rea performing music from her Sunshine children's project. The events were well received, with visitors spending additional time at the Visitor Information Centre to enjoy the live music, crafts, and light refreshments. Early engagement demonstrates strong potential for the series to support local artists while enriching the visitor experience through accessible, family-friendly cultural programming. These musical events were supported by our grant from the Francophone Community Grants Program through the Government of Ontario, as were the following two Francophone musical events:

The Kingston Music Office supported Kingstonlicious programming through Terre & Tradition, an intimate culinary event at Dianne's celebrating the shared heritage and regional flavours of Kingston and Northern Ontario. The evening featured a thoughtfully curated multi-course dinner by host chef Dave Tosh (Dianne's) and guest chef Linda Loranger (Dida's Gastropub in Earlton), highlighting Acadian, Francophone, and Northern Ontario culinary traditions. The experience was complemented by live music from Kingston-area pianist and composer Nicholas Jodouin-Lund, whose expressive blend of jazz, blues, and contemporary influences helped create a warm and immersive atmosphere.

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We partnered with Centre culturel Frontenac to support programming for International Francophonie Day at Théâtre Le Sésame. Support from the Francophone Community Grants Program allowed us to offer complimentary access to individuals facing financial barriers, supporting greater accessibility and inclusion in Kingston's Francophone cultural community. The evening, which drew more than 200 attendees, featured a performance by Brian St.-Pierre, with an opening set from Kingston artist Kelsey McNulty (Good Fortune).

Through our ongoing Release Radar initiative, delivered in partnership with CFRC Music and Kingston Live, we continued to support local artists by promoting new music releases from the Kingston region. In Q1, we highlighted more than 27 local artists across our platforms, generating 15,297 impressions across 12 posts. These results reflect the reach of the Kingston Music Office's promotional efforts alone and do not include the additional amplification provided by CFRC through on-air play and release features, or by Kingston Live through their social channels.

In February, a special workshop took place as part of KCFF. "Sound to Screen: Music Supervision & Sync in Canada" brought together artists, managers, and industry professionals for an afternoon focused on the world of sync and music supervision. Presented with support from Canada's Music Incubator, the sold-out event welcomed more than 30 local artists alongside industry attendees. The panel featured insights from Rich Brisson (Cadence Music Group), Danica Bansie (Pirate Sound), Evan Dubinsky (Bear Tracks Music), and Michelle Allman-Esdaille (The Hook Sync Group).

The discussion generated strong engagement, with thoughtful audience questions and conversations that continued into the networking portion of the event. At least one artist reported back that through this connection they were able to gain a successful sync licensing placement the following day. We look forward to building on this momentum by strengthening our partnership with Canada's Music Incubator and welcoming them back for future workshops to coincide with Spring Reverb Festival on the topic of financial literacy for artists.

The Slight Music Video Program returned to the Kingston Canadian Film Festival on February 28, with this year's music videos premiering to a sold-out audience at the Kingston Grand Theatre. The program pairs regional musicians with local filmmakers to collaborate on original music videos, highlighting the depth of creative talent across Kingston's music and film communities. The premiere brought together artists, filmmakers, and audiences to celebrate the completed projects on the big screen for the first time.

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Special recognition went to Tiny Horse and Little Friday, whose video received the Best Music Video award, and to Cantabile Choirs, Skeleton Park Arts Festival, and director Allen Bergeron, who received the Favourite Video Award, voted by the audience.

Further distribution and promotion of these videos will continue throughout strategic screening engagements into Q2 and Q3, aligning these works with showcasing opportunities during Toronto's Departure Festival and through the City of Kingston's upcoming Music Exhibition.

March 7, in celebration of International Women's Day, the Kingston Music Office hosted its second annual showcase at the Broom Factory, co-presented with JUNO-nominated artist Miss Emily.

The sold-out event brought together over 120 attendees for an afternoon of music and conversation, spotlighting the incredible talent of female and non-binary artists in Kingston. Performances by Piner, Luella, Atiari, and Kyra captivated the audience, while a fireside chat moderated by Margaret Evans (of Balancing Act) offered an honest and inspiring discussion on songwriting, creativity, and navigating the music industry as underrepresented voices.

Beyond the stage, the event fostered meaningful connections across Kingston's creative community, featuring a curated lineup of local collaborators and women-owned businesses, including W.C. Creatives, Shiva's Delight, Commanda Collective, and Angela Stever.

Partnerships with Balancing Act, a national initiative aiming to increase equality, accessibility, and employment and leadership opportunities in Canada for mothers, parents, and caregivers in the arts sector, and with CFRC provided further industry support for local artists.

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The Kingston Music Advisory Committee (KMAC) and the Fair Wage policy working group met twice this quarter, continuing to advance key priorities of the Kingston Music Strategy. Discussions focused on the ongoing development of a fair wage policy for musicians, as well as identifying ways to better support local music venues as essential partners within Kingston's live music ecosystem. Building on previous work, the committee continued refining considerations around fair and sustainable compensation practices, recognizing their importance in strengthening Kingston's music sector and supporting long-term growth for artists and industry professionals.

Professional development and outreach

We participated in national industry conversations at Wavelength Music Festival in Toronto. Music Officer Moira Demorest moderated the panel "Pulse Check on Canada's Festivals + Touring Landscape," which brought together festival presenters and industry leaders to discuss current challenges and opportunities related to touring, programming, and audience trends. Participation in events like Wavelength helps ensure Kingston remains connected to broader national dialogue, strengthening opportunities for local artists, presenters, and the wider music community.

We also participated at a KCFF-moderated discussion on music and performance with Pavan Moodie (director, *Middle Life*), Leah Goldstein (musician, *July Talk*; actor, *Middle Life*), and Peter Dreimanis (musician, *July Talk*; actor, *Middle Life* and *Sinners*). The event was sold out, with 100 participants.

Moira was also a guest on the podcast "Leave it on the stage" at CFRC studios, hosted by local artists and organizer Tom Savage. They discussed how music builds community.

Moira also made a presentation on the Canadian music industry at a Queen's Film & Media's creative industries class.

Throughout the quarter, we continued our collaboration, with community partners, on plans for special events celebrating The Tragically Hip in 2026.

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These activities supported our 2026 annual plan goals:

- // Continue to foster existing partnerships and sponsor local music as part of existing festivals.
- // Continue to coordinate the Kingston Music Advisory Committee, supporting policy development, music sector advocacy, and local industry trends.
- // Partner with groups including Kingston Immigration Partnership, Kingston Literacy & Skills, Centre culturel Frontenac, and Youth Imagine the Future.
- // Participate in music programming and planning related to the tenth anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert in Kingston.

Music work this quarter supported the following IDS initiatives:

- 2 – Position Tourism Kingston as the lead agency for music and film.
- 9 – Integrate pre-existing strategies into the IDS.

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2026 annual goals

Live events	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Kingston facilitated roadshows	9	0				0	0%
Artists/bands impacted	15	0				0	0%
Workshops/professional development events	35	8				8	23%
Attendees at workshops/events	1,300	390				390	30%

Sponsored events							
Sponsored music events	15	7				7	47%
Attendees, sponsored events	12,000	3,330				3,330	28%
Artists/bands impacted	600	355				355	42%
Estimated economic impact of sponsored events (direct impact)	\$345,000	\$132,497				\$132,497	38%

Kingston Production Directory							
Music listings	75	11				11	15%

Economic impact source: Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model (TREIM): Government of Ontario



VISITOR SERVICES

This quarter, we added new partners and renewed existing contracts for our Enhanced Partnership Program, which provides print and digital marketing opportunities at the Visitor Information Centre and satellite locations for tourism businesses and organizations.

At the Visitor Information Centre (VIC), we created special activities, like the VIC Mixtape Series and new programming with Kenny Maple Syrup to promote Maple Madness. These events helped drive engagement with visitors during a traditionally lower tourism period. We also partnered with Little Cataraqui Conservation Area (host of Maple Madness) and the Kingston Association of Museums to deliver collaborative programming and in-VIC activations.

We introduced new apparel, accessories, and seasonal merchandise, responding to visitor demand, and increasing our partnerships with local makers and suppliers. We also enhanced our presentation of retail offerings through updated displays, seasonal storytelling, and improved e-commerce imagery. In the back end, we completed full inventory barcoding and updated our POS systems, increasing our efficiency, accuracy in revenue tracking, and overall retail performance.

These activities supported our 2026 annual plan goals:

- // Grow retail offerings to reflect the Kingston brand.
- // Grow the Visitor Information Centre as a one-stop shop for visitors.

VISITOR SERVICES



2026 annual goals

Visitors	2026 goal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2026 result	% goal actual
Number of interactions	147,000	2,525				2,525	2%
Partner support							
Tickets sold for partners	\$28,500	\$125				125	0.4%
Revenue							
Enhanced Profile Program	\$30,500	\$19,100				\$19,100	63%
Merchandise	\$83,500	\$6,449				\$6,449	8%

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

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



Kingston's Integrated Destination Strategy 3.0



Tourism Kingston 2026 Annual Plan



Kingston Music Strategy



Sport Tourism Strategic Framework



TOURISM KINGSTON FINANCIAL SUMMARY

First quarter, ending March 31, 2026

Revenue	2026 Budget	Year to Date	Variance	% YTD
Municipal Funding	\$ 1,675,000	\$ 418,750	\$ 1,256,250	25%
Cultural Services SLA	\$ 100,000		\$ 100,000	0%
Other Revenue				
KAP Contribution	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,500,000	25%
KAP Contribution - Other	\$ 30,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 25,000	17%
MAT 35% - Creative Industries	\$ 450,000	\$ 450,000	0	100%
MAT 65% - STR	\$ 80,000		\$ 80,000	0%
Francophone 2025 -2026	\$ 18,100	\$ 12,208	\$ 5,892	67%
Experience Ontario 2025 -2026	\$ 38,000	\$ 21,500	\$ 16,500	57%
VIC Sales & Commissions:				
Resale	\$ 80,000	\$ 7,399	\$ 72,601	9%
Ticket sales & other revenue	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000	0%
Brochure racking	\$ 28,500	\$ 21,600	\$ 6,900	76%
Music Revenue	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,850	\$ 150	93%
Film Revenue	\$ 20,000		\$ 20,000	0%
Business Events Revenue	\$ 11,750	\$ 2,500	\$ 9,250	21%
Travel Trade Revenue	\$ 3,000	\$ 300	\$ 2,700	10%
Sport & Wellness Revenue	\$ 2,000	\$ 12,500	\$ -10,500	625%
Marketing Revenue	\$ 55,000	\$ 12,936	\$ 42,064	24%
Other Funding	\$ 350,780	\$ 2,280	\$ 348,500	1%
Total Revenue	\$ 4,969,130	\$ 1,468,823	\$ 3,500,307	30%

TOURISM KINGSTON FINANCIAL SUMMARY

First quarter, ending April 31, 2026

Expenditures	2026 Budget	Year to Date	Variance	% YTD
Wages & Benefits	\$ 2,045,000	\$ 499,534	\$ 1,545,466	24%
Other Administrative Expenses	\$ 350,000	\$ 88,973	\$ 261,027	25%
Reserve	\$ 50,000	\$ 8,333	\$ 41,667	17%
Software Maintenance	\$ 75,000	\$ 20,639	\$ 54,361	28%
Project Expenses				
Marketing Digital Content Media Relations	\$ 1,728,065	\$ 464,282	\$ 1,263,783	27%
Francophone Community Grant 2025 – 2026	\$ 18,100	\$ 18,100		100%
Experience Ontario 2024 – 2025	\$ 38,000	\$ 21,500	\$ 16,500	57%
Business Events	\$ 95,000	\$ 48,933	\$ 46,067	52%
Travel Trade	\$ 95,000	\$ 30,363	\$ 64,637	32%
Sport & Wellness	\$ 184,165	\$ 37,774	\$ 146,391	21%
Film	\$ 69,800	\$ 14,174	\$ 55,626	20%
Music	\$ 53,000	\$ 32,603	\$ 20,397	62%
Visitor Services	\$ 98,000	\$ 24,635	\$ 73,365	25%
COGS	\$ 70,000	\$ 45,694	\$ 24,306	65%
Total Expenditures	\$ 4,969,130	\$ 1,355,536	\$ 3,613,594	27%
Surplus/(Deficit)		\$ 113,287	\$ (113,287)	2%



Tourism Kingston
177 Wellington Street, Suite 200
Kingston, Ontario
K7L 3E3

– *Tourism* –
KINGSTON