MISSION

Tourism Kingston’s mission is to be the best-in-class, four-season tourism destination.

VISION

Tourism Kingston’s vision is to generate increased overnight visitation that outpaces provincial industry results, by working closely with our community partners and executing against Tourism Kingston’s strategic sales plan in the following sales pillars; Film, Meetings & Conferences, Travel Trade, Sport and Wellness, and Destination Marketing, all fully supported by the Visitor Information Centre.
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2021 Travel Trade Annual Plan

The travel trade industry, specifically large group travel, will continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic into 2021. The industry has pivoted to regional, domestic travel with a focus on fully independent travellers (FIT) and small groups, and preparing for the return of large group and international travel when possible. This annual plan focuses on continuing long-term strategic priorities while assisting operators and partners to adjust their offerings to the FIT and small group markets. Strategies in this plan have been informed by the Integrated Destination Strategy, market research, and feedback from key operators.

2021 Plan

1 / Increase brand awareness and travel trade business with a focus on FIT and small-group travel from Ontario and Quebec, followed by motorcoach business as recovery progresses.
   // Participate in and promote overnight stops in Kingston through Destination Ontario sales missions
   // Attend (virtually or in-person): Rendezvous Canada (RVC), Bienvenue Quebec (BVQ) and the Ontario Motorcoach Association (OMCA), promoting Kingston itineraries and partners
   // Promote Kingston as a safe travel destination as certified by WTTC’s Safe Travels Stamp, focusing on COVID-19 protocols that allow for the return to travel

2 / Product development
   // Use market research and feedback from operators to inform product development and ensure products and experiences are competitive
   // Develop year-round destination experiences, including tour packages

3 / Destination packaging
   // Develop seasonal and evergreen packages including accommodations, attractions, and dining offers that focus on the FIT and leisure market, increasing overnight stays in lower-traffic seasons

4 / Regional partnerships
   // Develop partnerships with Prince Edward County and its operators focused on itineraries for the FIT and group markets, creating products that leverage demand for the County, such as wine and culinary tours
   // Leverage partnerships with other destinations, such as Ottawa and Sherbrooke, to create multi-destination itineraries for the FIT and group markets
5 / Itineraries

// Develop and promote itineraries geared to FIT and group markets, segmented by demographics and seasons

// Focus on multilingual itineraries, COVID-19 safe-travel itineraries, and itineraries geared towards young adults, young adults with no children, and those over 55 years old

6 / Host prospective clients from primary markets to improve outreach and targeting of key operators.

// Tourism Kingston hosted familiarization (FAM) tours in spring and fall

// Create pre and/or post opportunities for tradeshows, providing authentic activities and participation in-market when destinations allow

// Develop virtual FAM and training materials to ensure brand awareness for key operators if unable to travel due to COVID-19

7 / Position Kingston as a key cruise tourism hub and target the emerging Great Lakes Cruising industry for more stops in Kingston that do not require tendering services or deep-water docks.

// Attend Seatrade, either virtually or in-person, alongside Cruise Ontario to strengthen great lakes cruising potential

// Prospect the emerging Great Lakes cruising industry by approaching cruise lines and excursion companies, and creating cruise ship excursion-specific itineraries

// Collaborate with the City of Kingston on options for a deep-water dock, or improvements to current docks and wharfs

8 / Increase demand for Kingston in international markets.

// Maintain current and develop new connections with international operators in key markets to ensure demand throughout the recovery period

// International Travel Trade Coordinator to provide monthly updates to the Chinese landing page (visitkingston.cn)

// Focus on key markets such as Europe, China, and the United States

9 / Sales calls

// Tourism Kingston will independently connect with key travel trade clients monthly, separate from tradeshows and sales missions, to ensure that clients feel engaged and informed about all offerings in Kingston

// Virtual meetings will continue until business travel resumes, supporting clients, offering assistance, and adjusting offerings to include Kingston

10 / Expand Kingston’s educational travel sector.

// Focus on growing the education sector in all seasons through regional public schools, private schools, and student tour operators

// Create COVID-19 safe-travel itineraries that connect with curriculum links and school programming objectives to showcase Kingston as a key educational destination

// Collaborate with partners to offer education-specific experiences

// Develop university experiences with Queen’s University and the Enrichment Studies Unit

11 / Partner committee meetings

// Engage travel trade partners by hosting quarterly sector committee meetings to focus on growth markets, better measure the collective efforts of the sales efforts, and offer support where possible

12 / Busing

// In partnership with the City of Kingston, continue to lead a bus strategy that will create a better parking system for partners and the City, and aim to transition current traffic to full-day or overnight stays

// Work with operators on COVID-19 safe-busing protocols to establish Kingston as a safe busing city
Establish YGK Airport as a key regional airport with increased traffic.

- Represent Tourism Kingston on the YGK Airport Advisory Committee, leveraging business development opportunities and partnerships to increase air traffic.
- Attract and retain regional carriers with connections to national carriers to increase connectivity through the YGK Airport.
- Collaborate with airlines to offer vacation packages in Kingston, including accommodations, experiences, and flights.

### Partnership and Professional Development Activities (virtual or in-person)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Destination Ontario Sales Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Seatrade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April / June</td>
<td>Tourism Kingston hosted familiarization (FAM) tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Rendez-Vous Canada (RVC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Student and Youth Travel Association Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Bienvenue Quebec (BVQ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Ontario Motor Coach Association (OMCA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2021 Kingston Sport Tourism Annual Plan

Sport tourism continued to make a significant contribution to the Canadian economy prior to the devastation of the worldwide economy caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the most recent data (2018) compiled on behalf of the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance (CSTA) using Statistics Canada data, Canada maintained its historical high in the value of sport tourism, with a total expenditure of $6.8 billion.

In early 2020, Tourism Kingston added wellness to this portfolio, creating the Sport and Wellness Tourism portfolio. The inclusion of wellness tourism, a key trend, ties in very closely with sport and is predicted to reach $919 billion by 2022 (World Wellness Institute), a number that could become even higher with the impacts of COVID-19. Wellness tourism will be an integral part of the regrowth of the sport and wellness tourism portfolio.

DEFINITIONS

Wellness Tourism: “A specific division of the global tourism industry defined by the common goal of marketing natural assets and activities primarily focused on serving the wellness-minded traveller and those who want to be.” - Wellness Tourism Association

ISF: International Sport Federation, also known as an events-right holder

NSO: National Sport Organization, also known as an events-right holder

PSO: Provincial Sport Organization, also known as an events-right holder

IDS: Integrated Destination Strategy

2021 Plan

1 | Continue to foster relationships with local sport organizations to grow tournaments, develop new sport products, and increase bidding capacity.
   // Specific focus on events in 2022, 2023, and beyond

2 | Foster relationships with parks, business operators, and third-party wellness companies to expand product offerings and create wellness experiences and itineraries (i.e., YGK YogaFest, Frontenac Provincial Park).

3 | Meet and collaborate with the Sport Tourism Advisory Committee on upcoming opportunities each quarter. Work to develop and grow events in the sport-hosting sector to provide year-round offerings.
   // Work with hotels and partners to create wellness-driven packages
   // Support new events, such as YGK YogaFest and any new partnerships in Frontenac County
4/ Partner with surrounding communities to increase regional hosting capacity.

5/ Source grants from private and public sectors to offset bidding and staging costs of sport and wellness events.

6/ Contribute content to the industry newsletter and Events Calendar to communicate up-to-date information highlighting how sports support Kingston's tourism economy.
   // On a quarterly basis, confirm that all sport organizations, parks, business operators, and partners are on the subscription list

7/ Work with partners and local sport organizations to support sport and wellness, esports developments, and tourism events with incentives while maintaining a balanced budget.
   // Review and adjust previous year’s incentive list where appropriate

8/ Support Marketing and Communications portfolio partnership with Ontario by Bike: update and create new cycle route maps and hotel packages

9/ Use Simpleview to turn leads into bookings. Encourage sport organizations to utilize Tourism Kingston’s RFP process via Simpleview to book with hotels.

10/ Following completion of the Sport Tourism Framework in the first quarter of 2021, implement recommendations outlined by Floor 13.

11/ Following the IDS, work towards implementing a sports tourism concierge service to provide a seamless experience for event organizers.

12/ Attract sport conferences, training events, and annual general meetings to Kingston, using similar bidding tactics and working alongside the Meetings and Conference Specialist to help service these conferences/meetings.

13/ Represent Tourism Kingston in the community as an active participant on boards/committees such as Sport Tourism Canada committee, Kids for Kids, and CORK. Continue membership with Sport Tourism Canada to build our business in the sport tourism industry through networking, business-to-business, and educational opportunities. Explore membership with Wellness Tourism Association and possible attendance at WTA annual meetings.

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**Partnership and Professional Development Activities** (virtual or in-person)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Sport Tourism Sport Events Congress</td>
<td>Ottawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Wellness Tourism Association Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Annual Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Sport Tourism Forum</td>
<td>Ottawa</td>
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### Tentative 2021 Major Sports Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Month</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U Sports National Women’s Basketball Championships</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids for Kids Hockey Tournament</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Women’s Individual Chess Championships</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trampoline &amp; Tumbling Cup</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric Utility Hockey Tournament</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFSAA Girls AAA Rugby Championships</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Olympics Ontario High School Championships</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9RunRun</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U Sports Women’s National Rugby Championships</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian University Men’s Rugby Championships</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Cross Country Championships</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFSSA Football Championships</td>
<td>November</td>
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### Tentative Annual Events Supported by Tourism Kingston (subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C420 International Regatta/Canadian Championships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laser Canadian Championships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork International Optimist Regatta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cork Olympic Classes Regatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork Fall Regatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELM Girls Hockey Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELM 3-on-3 March Break Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELM High School Hockey Showcase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELM Youth Boys Hockey Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELM Adult Hockey Classic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELM Prospects Elite Boys Showcase</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELM Original Hockey Hall of Fame Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>HockeyFest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taylor Hall Cup Classic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taylor Hall Ball Hockey Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kids for Kids Hockey Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kingston Kids Triathlon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaels Cup (Girls/Boys)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kingston United First Capital Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>1000 Island Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kingston Ringette Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trillium Blooms Meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickleball Limestone Cup</td>
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2021 Meetings & Conferences Annual Plan

The execution of events in 2021 will continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which put a complete stop to all medium and large (50 people +) meetings and conferences in March, 2020. Event planners across Canada have shifted to digital platforms to host hybrid and virtual events, but there will be potentially even more demand for in-person events when a vaccine and/or effective treatment is widely available. The introduction of vaccine certification requirements, rapid testing, and/or increased safety measures must be implemented as events begin to return.

This annual plan is designed to attract the small meetings and hybrid events that will be first to return, while also building Kingston’s brand awareness and market readiness for the return of live events in full, whether this is summer of 2021 or beyond. Our efforts will ensure there is a steady stream of event leads, supplying our community partners in future years.

2021 Plan

1/ Target local tire-traffic markets of Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal to host their regional meetings, offering a safe and central meeting place.
   // Utilize planner networks of Meeting Planners International (MPI) and Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE)
   // Virtual and in-person sales calls based on planner sentiment
   // Post industry news and updates on LinkedIn and Twitter
   // Attend industry events, tradeshows, and virtual meetings

2/ Develop and promote signature corporate experiences for small, medium, and large events.

3/ Further develop meetings microsite.
   // Develop evergreen packages for corporate event and meeting planners in a centralized location with seasonal pricing to drive demand in need periods
   // Packages include Tourism Kingston conference services, overnight stays, event space rentals, group activities, and/or transportation
   // Create sample event itineraries based on client testimonials and/or partner capabilities and use for sales and marketing purposes
   // Build planner resources
   // Introduce blog content about meetings and events in Kingston
   // Create central location for corporate
4. Create and collect digital assets for virtual site tours and marketing purposes.
   - Work with partners to create digital assets where updated material is required
   - Collect updated photography from venues and hotels

5. Revisit the conference feasibility study, consider new developments and insights from 2020.
   - Interview professionals in the events industry to identify updates
   - Identify new opportunities and event requirements in a post-vaccine world

6. Encourage the use of Tourism Kingston’s incentive fund to secure business.
   - Use incentive fund to attract new, cancelled, or rescheduled business meetings
   - Deploy incentive funds to book repeat business, i.e., paying for parking, hiring transportation

7. Create more engagement with city activities from booked events by offering Tourism Kingston “value-adds” to local partners hosting qualified gatherings.
   - Tourism Kingston welcome booth for registration/event check-in
   - Conference microsite for large multi-day events
   - Conference concierge service
   - Itinerary planning services and activity sourcing

8. Consult with meeting planners about event design and execution post vaccination.
   - Use knowledge from the “Pandemic Meeting and Event Design” certificate to offer advice on industry best-practices for hosting safe meetings
   - Provide group activity/dining resources

9. Execute targeted campaigns
   - Queen’s University-targeted campaign to engage meeting and conference attendees with off-campus Kingston activities.
   - Business travel
     - Increase ease of use for conference attendees through expanded airport operations.

10. Increase brand awareness by attending industry events.
    - Utilize volunteer opportunities and interaction with potential clients through annual memberships, networking events, and galas
    - Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE)
    - Meeting Planners International (MPI)
    - Virtual or in-person sales calls to qualified prospects from contacts at MPI, CSAE, and LinkedIn

11. Host quarterly Meetings and Conferences stakeholder meetings for partners. Tourism Kingston will provide an update on activities, future plans, and any partner initiatives in progress, and opportunity for questions and feedback.
Partnership and Professional Development Activities  
(virtual or in-person)

- **January / February**: Ottawa-based Tete-A-Tete tradeshow
- **February**: Canadian Society of Association Executives Winter Summit
- **April**: The EVENT in Toronto
- **June / July**: Canadian Society of Association Executives Summer Summit
- **August**: Canada’s Meetings & Events Expo
- **October**: Executive Travel Corporate Planner Luncheon Series
- **November**: Tourism Kingston sales missions (tire-traffic markets)

Tourism Kingston-led sales missions to tire-traffic markets when regulations and meeting planner sentiment allow
2021 Kingston Film Office Annual Plan

Film and television production in Ontario and Canada are at an all-time high. Ontario’s film and TV industry, contributed a record-breaking $2.16 billion to Ontario’s economy in 2019, an increase of more than 14.5% over 2018, with 343 film and television productions creating 44,540 high-value full-time equivalent direct and spin-off jobs for Ontarians (Source: Ontario Creates, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture). Within our province, the industry remains anchored around the City of Toronto, which struggles to meet current demand. Supported by an additional regional bonus tax credit awarded to production outside the Greater Toronto Area, production has begun spilling over to communities across Ontario.

2021 Plan

1. Attract 3 to 4 major Tier 1 productions.
   // Target major international production and leverage the expanded YGK Airport. The Film Office has already tentatively confirmed a new Paramount television series for spring 2021, as well as an independent feature film to be shot entirely in the Frontenac region for summer 2021.

2. Increase access to key locations and strengthen revenue model: Kingston Penitentiary, Springer Market Square, Rockwood Asylum.
   // Revisit and expand on the trial agreement with the City of Kingston, Correction Services Canada, and the St. Lawrence Parks Commission for increased access to the Kingston Penitentiary

3. Expand locations portfolio to include surrounding areas
   // Pursue access to the former Rockwood Asylum with the City of Kingston and Ontario Government
   // Revisit the pricing structure for key facility rentals to continue movement towards self-sufficiency
   // Expand locations, suppliers, resources, and outreach to commutable surrounding areas with no formal film policy or active representation in partnership with RTO 9, potentially including Wolfe Island, Napanee, Gananoque, Frontenac County, and Lennox and Addington
// Secure formal partnerships and pursue funding opportunities with surrounding municipalities

4 / Form a South Eastern Ontario Film Office Association and lobby for regional funding.

// Create an official working group of Film Offices from Belleville to Ottawa, towards common interests such as union representation, funding opportunities, and heightened incentives. Lobby for a game-changing new South Eastern Ontario Production Fund (SEOPF) modelled after the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund

5 / Explore expanding the current incentive program to include local labour spend.

// Upon developing the local crew base and/or creating an SEOPF, explore expanding the current incentive program that covers 50% of travel and accommodations expenses to further include 50% of local labour spend up to a cap, to encourage more hiring of local talent

// Consult with KEDCO, Queen’s University, and St. Lawrence College. Explore new funding opportunities

6 / Develop the local production community: expand and refine production training program and workshops

// Refine and expand the pilot practicum program developed with the Queen’s University Department of Film & Media to potentially include St. Lawrence College, Leahurst College, LCVI, Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School, and Correction Services Canada’s Offender Release Program. Reimagine program for online delivery. Explore relevant new funding opportunities.

// In the highly successful 2019-2020 pilot, 20 upper-year Queen’s students were credited and insured to complete 100 hours of practical training through a combination of workshops, training exercises, and placements with local production companies as well as on-set experiences with visiting major productions.

// This practicum program expands upon the regular monthly workshops offered by the Film Office from September to April, helping to develop a local crew base and strengthen the production community

// Explore a strategic partnership with TIFF Industry or TIFF Higher Learning

// Develop advanced professional development workshops specifically for local production companies.

7 / Continue to revisit and simplify permitting processes.

// Propose and implement City of Kingston Film Policy changes to lessen administration and simplify permitting processes, potentially to include:

• Expanded trial of annual permits for established local production companies

• Reduced permit requirements for minor productions below a threshold (per NYC precedent)

• Update drone requirements pending Transport Canada changes

8 / Develop and host specialized scout tours (TBC)

// Offer location tours in person or virtually for targeted subsections of the production industry, such as factual/lifestyle including food or travel shows. Increase international industry outreach, highlighting expanded YGK airport.

9 / Leverage key international industry events (TBC)

// Attend and promote Kingston at key industry events in person or virtually, including the Toronto International Film Festival, the American Film Market (Los Angeles), Locations Manager Guild Awards (Los Angeles) and the Prime Time Conference (Ottawa)

10 / Actively pursue production studio interest and partners (TBC)

// Based on production volume and growth, target and pursue partners and/or investors for a potential production studio or soundstage in consultation with KEDCO, Queen’s University, and St. Lawrence College

11 / Expand portfolio to include broader creative industries (TBC)

// Pending the outcome of the City of Kingston’s ongoing Creative Industries Study, work with the City and KEDCO to expand the Film Office’s portfolio to support broader creative industries including interactive digital media; videogames are now a larger industry than film, television, and music combined
Annually Recurring Key Activities

- Production incentive development, promotion, and administration (currently 50% of travel/accommodations to a cap, including increased utilization of airport)
- Group location tours for industry (pending COVID-19 situation)
- Location shooting and entry for promotion in provincial locations library
- City of Kingston film permitting
- Monthly community workshops (September to April - moving primarily online)
- Formal community training exercises and/or professional development programs
- Community pitch opportunities (Telefilm Talent Fund, Cogeco, Bell Fibe TV1)
- Monthly newsletter with community profiles

Partnership and Professional Development Activities (virtual or in-person)

- **January**
  - Prime Time Conference (Ottawa)
  - Reelout Queer Film Festival
- **March**
  - Kingston Canadian Film Festival
- **September**
  - Toronto International Film Festival
  - Locations Manager Guild Awards (Los Angeles)
- **November**
  - American Film Market (Los Angeles)
2021 Visitor Information Centre Annual Plan

Visitor Services ensures that visitors are welcomed and well informed regarding Kingston’s tourism offerings. Working with tourism partners, we aim to continue to improve the visitor experience and recuperate operating costs through the sale of attraction/event tickets, in addition to our own branded line of clothing and products. We are ready to enhance the customer experience in a safe and efficient manner through our newly renovated Visitor Information Centre in spring 2021.

2021 Plan

1 / The Visitor information Centre will continue to grow services in three key areas.
   // Information – working with partners to ensure that their visitor information is readily available and up to date.
   // Retail sales – launch of our unique and proprietary line of clothing and gift items
   // Commission sales – provide attraction tickets from our various local partners and act as a primary ticket vendor for visitors coming to Kingston

2 / Continue to promote economic spending by providing timely, personally tailored information to visitors about Kingston-area attractions, events, and tourism-related businesses.

3 / Following 2020 renovations to the Visitor information Centre, staff will be positioned front and centre on the arrival of visitors. This will allow us to greet them immediately and promptly direct them with use of our tech stations, in addition to our new brochure walls. The overall intention is to increase length of stay, along with repeat visits and referrals to Kingston.

4 / Increase Visitor Information Centre visitation and awareness among Kingston residents through web, social media, and other digital communications.

5 / Continue to grow the use of the Visit Kingston chatbot and assist visitors who are communicating via visitkingston.ca and Facebook.
6 / Contribute content to the industry newsletter and populate the visitkingston.ca Events Calendar to communicate what is happening with tourism in the city and how promotion of local events assists in generating overnight stays.

7 / Visitor Information Centre summer staff will participate in FAM tours with tourism partners in order to obtain, retain, and better communicate information about our local attractions to enhance the customer service experience for visitors.

8 / As the frontline staff to arriving visitors we are privy to their needs and wants. Working closely with the Tourism Kingston Marketing & Communications portfolio, we will enhance some current and highly requested brochures.

9 / Grow the 2021 partnership program with expanded satellite brochure racking in the Visitor Information Centre, Portsmouth Olympic Harbour, Kingston Airport, The Kingston Pen, and the INVISTA Centre. We will also introduce digital advertising in the Visitor Information Centre to promote participating partners and their events. A hybrid racking program option, as well as a quarterly payment option, will be made available to businesses to ensure that we are supporting them through these challenging economic times.

10 / Work to improve and enhance the Visitor Information Centre back patio to make it a space where visitors can enjoy food from local establishments, utilizing a similar ordering process implemented to the tables in Springer Market Square in 2020, thereby creating our own waterfront patio experience.
2021 Marketing & Communications Annual Plan

In 2021, it is anticipated that leisure travel will continue to be substantially affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan assumes that tourism recovery may not occur for another 12 to 36 months and that the sector will not see a return to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2021. The 2021 annual plan is focused on brand building, connecting current and future travellers with stories of our place and people.

Guiding Principles

// The status of the travel sector in 2021 is unknown
// Destination marketing remains critically important, even if COVID-19 restrictions are in place
// Destination marketing will play a central role in supporting local businesses
// Leisure travel will recover faster than business travel
// Domestic markets will provide the greatest prospects; the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market will be crucial
// Support and execute against the Integrated Destination Strategy
// Balance return on investment to protect resources and fund recovery
// Be nimble. Digital first.

Objectives:

1 | Connect travellers and residents with Kingston
2 | Mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis in our community
3 | Support the local tourism community during this unprecedented time
4 | Communicate the value and impact of tourism to the Kingston community
5 | Be ready for recovery: enhance and invest in our channels, assets, and collateral
6 | Leverage incentives, staycation credit, and funding opportunities to support pre-recovery campaigns (vaccine rollout period)
7 | Support the sectors: develop targeted communications strategies and tactics
COVID-19 Considerations:

Local tourism
Tourism improves the quality of life for residents. In 2020, Kingston residents became our tourists. Hyperlocal tourism was fundamental to the sector’s survival, as Kingstonians chose to support their community by staycationing and exploring the region. It is anticipated that hyperlocal tourism will continue to be pivotal to the local industry’s survival in 2021. Destination marketing will be central to raising awareness, engaging residents, and driving partner sales.

Key trends
In 2020, outdoor activities trended up with more Ontarians than ever choosing to spend time outside. Google Mobility Data shows that park usage in Frontenac County was up substantially in 2020, peaking at a 240% increase in August compared to pre-COVID-19 levels. Additionally, interest in attending Farmers’ Markets remained high throughout summer and Google searches for activities like boating and cycling increased significantly in response to the pandemic. This trend is expected to hold for the duration of the pandemic as residents and visitors seek ways to get away from the everyday safely.

Traveller Targets:
The following targets support the Integrated Destination Strategy’s focus on Up-and-Coming Explorers, Youthful Socializers, and Knowledge Seekers, prioritizing segments with behavioural traits that suggest they may travel in the near future.

Connected Explorers are young couples under 40, both with and without children. They are a confident, youthful, optimistic group. They have a deep-seated need to travel and expose themselves to many new experiences. Travel for them is about expanding their horizons, and they are looking for a fully packed schedule of activities. They use technology at all phases of a trip including researching, booking, planning, and especially when sharing their travel experiences once back home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kingston + region; Ottawa; Toronto</td>
<td>Montreal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

// Though our paid marketing will focus on these targets, we will continue to create touchpoints with other markets through our newsletters, website, and organic social media, including Chinese social media channels – WeChat and Weibo – to maintain relationships and keep Kingston top of mind.
**Knowledge Seekers** are couples in or nearing retirement, age 55+, with a higher income. They are entering a new phase of life as empty nesters with the time and money to go enjoy themselves, and travel is a part of this new lifestyle. They are looking to understand the places they visit by getting exposure to local customs. Trips usually last 8 days as they want to fully appreciate where they are and explore all aspects of history, art, and culture. Travel for them is about expanding and stimulating the mind.

**Pampered Relaxers**, as their name suggests, see vacation as a chance to indulge in total relaxation and pampering. They want an ultimate spa and resort experience that lets them unwind, recharge, and reconnect with friends. This group is composed mainly of couples travelling with an above-average income and travel budget. They want to make the most of their getaway by enjoying the finer things in life as well as some youthful, carefree fun.

**Mellow Vacationers** Many of these travellers are couples above the age of 40 vacationing without children (with a skew towards the 55+ age bracket). They are fairly quiet, low-energy people looking for a home away home where they can relax and find tranquility. Travelling is often a chance to visit family or friends. They are natural homebodies and when on vacation want to enjoy some simple R&R. Travel for them isn't found through a particular activity or passion, but rather simply getting away from it all.
Strategic Approach:

BRAND BUILDING

KEEP KINGSTON TOP OF MIND. THE PEOPLE ARE THE PLACE.

Brand-building campaigns supported by rich storytelling will be the hero in 2021, with direct calls to action playing a supportive role, layered into targeted campaigns and amplified when appropriate. We will continue to enhance the Visit Kingston brand through paid, earned, and owned opportunities, leveraging proven tactics to increase awareness of Kingston as a four-season tourism destination for travellers, now and future.

- Bring our brand stories into people’s homes
- Amplify the good
- Leverage positive social capital
- Human-interest stories are timeless
- More content now than ever
Brand Positioning

Kingston will become known as a place for the creative class – where design and ideas are born, artisans prosper, and the culinary scene excels.

authentically

hip

A destination that celebrates artisans
Travellers do what locals do
We don’t do ‘touristy’
The home for impassioned curators & creators

culturally

vibrant

A smart, affluent population that embraces creativity
We celebrate ‘different’
Our history and architecture are the textural backdrop for modern arts

costantly

evolving

A young city full of new ideas
An incubator community and innovation hub
We always look for new ways to attract and engage visitors
At the forefront of the creative and culinary arts

WHY KINGSTON

We are a 300-year-old city filled with innovators and creators. The maker movement thrives here – be true to that.

Our culinary and arts scene compares to cities 10 times our size. Our population is affluent and educated, and our experiences are tailored to the educated traveller.

Historic location plus vibrant creative energy means surprise and delight around every corner.
Media Strategy

To keep marketing efforts nimble and responsive, the 2021 marketing approach will be digital first, with limited print media. Tactical campaigns and media plans will be developed on a quarterly basis, informed by the latest research data, trends, and COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines.

Key campaigns will include Makers of Kingston, brand anthem, culinary, Kingston weddings, wellness and active living, and seasonal 25 Things to Do in Kingston.

A new brand anthem video, filmed over the last 18 months and featuring Kingston in all seasons, will be released in 2021 to build awareness about Kingston as a destination. The video will be produced in both English and French.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paid</th>
<th>Owned</th>
<th>Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Website and microsites</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display</td>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>SEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEM</td>
<td>Organic social</td>
<td>Media coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>Visitor information channels – webchat, email, phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencers</td>
<td>Visitor Guide and supporting collateral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News and regional media (sponsored content)</td>
<td>Tradeshow and events (virtual or in-person)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Owned Digital Strategy

With our brand positioning, pillars, and traveller targets in mind, we will inspire our audience to keep Kingston top of mind and encourage them to travel when it is safe to do so. We will focus on fostering partnerships with Kingston businesses and organizations through giveaways and highlighted posts. Our channels continue to thrive by featuring user-generated content from the #VisitKingston hashtag and new photography assets.

We continue to grow our consumer and industry newsletters through attractive incentives: encouraging subscribers to share testimonials in exchange for contest entries. Our newsletters will reflect in-market campaigns by distributing blog content, packages, and highlighted experiences, segmentation and persona development to refine campaign targeting.

Total Audience (October 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>61,239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>13,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>7,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consumer Newsletter: 5,059

Industry Newsletter: 332

Content Pillars

- **Makers:** Telling authentic stories and shining a light on Kingston’s creative community. In 2021 this will include filmmakers, musicians, and writers.

- **Food & Drink:** Promoting Kingston’s dynamic culinary scene.

- **Arts & Culture:** Featuring Kingston’s unique arts and culture scene, museums, historic sites, galleries, festivals and events (online and in-person).

- **Wellness & Leisure:** Experiences anchored by health-focused and active exploration, including cycling, hiking, yoga and fitness, spas, and pampering.

- **Weddings:** Promoting Kingston as the perfect backdrop for a destination wedding close to home.

- **Sectors:** Sport and wellness, meetings & conferences, travel trade, film.

Stories from the sectors: athletes of Kingston, unique venues, targeted itineraries, educational tours, film venues/productions.
**visitkingston.ca**

Tourism Kingston manages and maintains visitkingston.ca, a popular website that sees more than 1,000,000 pageviews annually. visitkingston.ca includes three language websites – English, French, and Mandarin – and four microsites, providing comprehensive information about Kingston as a destination.

**ALTERNATIVE-LANGUAGE WEBSITES:**
French – comprehensive French-language site that includes seasonal 25 Things to Do content, timely articles, and evergreen content primarily targeted to the Quebec market.

**visitekingston.ca**

Chinese – a dedicated landing page for content presented in Mandarin, which includes timely and evergreen stories relevant to Chinese-Canadians and their visiting friends and relatives. This website will be enhanced in 2021 to prepare for recovery of international markets.

**visitkingston.ca/cn**

**MICROSITES:**
Makers of Kingston – a website dedicated to the creative scene in Kingston, featuring profiles of local makers, artists, and culinary creators. The site primarily features evergreen content.

**visitkingston.ca/makers**

Music – a website focused on Kingston’s live music scene, providing event listings, Kingston playlists, and stories about musicians and bands.

**visitkingston.ca/music**

Culinary – a website presented in partnership with Frontenac County profiling the farm-to-table connection of the neighbouring regions through story and video content.

**visitkingston.ca/culinary**

Weddings – a microsite that positions Kingston as a close-to-home destination wedding location, offered as a pay-to-play partnership with local attractions, accommodations, and wedding-service providers. A free listing is available to all partners.

**weddingsinkingston.ca**

**2021 Plan**

1 / Leverage visitkingston.ca as the content hub and landing page for Visit Kingston marketing campaigns, presenting a compelling image of Kingston as a destination, and connecting residents and visitors with partners.

2 / Work with search agency and agency of record to identify and implement back-end improvements to strengthen organic search traffic.

3 / Develop a comprehensive content calendar, using identified content pillars, that supports new timely and evergreen content across all websites and microsites.

4 / Create strategy for regular sector website updates in support of Film, Sport and Wellness, Travel Trade, and Meetings & Conferences portfolios.

5 / Develop content translation strategy to ensure timely updates to French and Chinese websites.

6 / Continue to build on website visual refresh completed in fall 2020 to enhance the user experience on visitkingston.ca.
Launch weddings 2021 campaign, raising profile for Kingston as a wedding destination, and driving traffic to weddingsinkingston.ca and partner websites.

Identify opportunities to promote music in Kingston given limited live music experiences due to COVID-19.

Use updated photography and videography assets across visitkingston.ca to communicate Kingston’s appeal as a destination.

Special Projects

Research & Audience Development
Audience segmentation and persona development to refine campaign targeting for recovery. Create research sub-committee. Review and refine Kingston dashboard survey and data.

Enhance strategy to connect with LGBTQ+ market; develop experiences, packages, and collateral.

Continue to grow and encourage interactions in our industry and consumer newsletters. Gather testimonials using incentives that increase open and clickthrough rates.

Product Development
Working with sales team, continue to build complementary marketing partnerships with nearby regions, i.e. Frontenac County and Prince Edward County.

Enhance culinary microsite with additional Kingston and Frontenac stories; expand to include other regional partners.

Align with Great Taste of Ontario province-wide recovery campaign.

Work with sales team and operators to develop an Ontario Signature Experience related to Kingston’s thriving culinary scene as a new product offering for recovery.

Asset Development
Continue to augment Kingston imagery, using an inclusive approach mapped to strategies, identified gaps, and current trends.

Invest in Kingston Photo Library infrastructure and photo/video archiving.

Partnerships
Develop sponsorship strategy in light of COVID-19 impacts on festivals and events, and reduced funding capacity.

Continued partnership with Kingston Association of Museums, Galleries and Historic Sites.

Profile & Promotion
Develop an earned media and influencer strategy to secure positive media coverage, including assessment matrix and metrics.

Explore innovative ways to host giveaways on our social media channels that increase engagement and positive sentiment with the brand.
**Strategic Partnerships**

// City of Kingston  
// Kingston Accommodation Partners  
// Kingston Association of Museums, Galleries and Historic Sites  
// Downtown Kingston  
// RTO 9  
// Destination Ontario  
// Destination Canada  
// Kingston Economic Development Corporation

**Destination Marketing Committee:** advisory group that provides strategic advice and oversight for destination marketing efforts.

**Measurements**

// Continue to build value and resonance in the Kingston brand  
// Engage prospective visitors across their path to purchase  
// Connect visitors to Kingston operators to close the sale  
// Utilize Kingston dashboard for data analysis  
// Key insights: website sessions and pageviews, paid and organic digital impressions, clickthrough rates, partner referrals

**Partnership and Professional Development Activities** *(virtual or in-person)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td>Brand Manage Camp Virtual Keynotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>City Nation Place Americas Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Tourism Industry Association of Ontario Tourism Summit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Tourism Industry Association of Canada Tourism Congress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2021 Tourism Working Group

As part of COVID-19 recovery efforts, Tourism Kingston has been charged with leading and guiding the Tourism Working Group, a sub-committee of the Kingston Economic Recovery Team, created to develop and design products and experiences that attract visitors to the region, encourage resident and visitor spending in the city of Kingston, and support tourism businesses.

Membership

// City of Kingston // Tourism Kingston // KEDCO // Downtown Kingston BIA

// Sector representation: arts & culture; restaurants & hospitality; accommodations; attractions

Projects

Love Kingston Winterfest

From December 2020 to March 2021, Kingston’s downtown core and historic market square will be wrapped in light as part of Love Kingston, a celebration of the community’s perseverance. The grand heritage, history, and architecture of Kingston are paired with an illuminated outdoor experience that simply requires a stroll through the city’s limestone streetscapes and waterfront pathway.

// Designed to drive resident and visitor foot traffic into the downtown core, supporting local businesses.

// Supported by regional marketing campaign through Q1 of 2021.
Culinary Product Development:

Grounded in the culinary strategy for Kingston, *Growing Food Tourism in Kingston*, we will develop a program to support restaurants throughout the winter season and beyond.

// The program will be annual to be maintained and developed in future years.

// The program will be appropriate and thoughtful about COVID-19 restrictions, current and future.

// The program will have a range of marketable offerings that roll out over the course of the program with a focus on in-person dining within your bubble and takeout, supported by a comprehensive regional campaign.

Love Kingston Marketplace 2.0

Spring 2021 will see the return of Love Kingston Marketplace, a project that reimagines the downtown, specifically Springer Market Square and patio spaces, to create more public space for pedestrians and businesses, and create opportunities for new, creative experiences aimed at rejuvenating the downtown.

The 2021 edition of this program will build on the successes and opportunities from 2020 to create spaces for businesses to safely operate, and residents and visitors to safely engage in community experiences, aimed at supporting the economic and social health of the city.