

— Tourism —
KINGSTON

discover

ANNUAL PLAN

2025

Tourism Kingston

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Visitor Information Centre

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Website

visitkingston.ca

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Mission

Tourism Kingston's mission is to promote Kingston, Ontario as a uniquely historic and hip destination to explore year-round.

Vision

Tourism Kingston's vision is to excel in creating, promoting, and growing opportunities for Kingston, Ontario to be a premier destination for individuals, groups, and businesses; to leverage tourism as a key driver of a healthy economy of Kingston; and to champion Kingston as a destination for local, regional, national, and international tourism.

Land acknowledgement

Welcome/Boozhoo/Tekwanonwera:tons to Kingston/Ka'taroh:kwi/Ken'tarókwen/Cataracoui

Kingston remains on the ancestral homelands of the Huron-Wendat, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

Tourism Kingston acknowledges the everlasting presence of these Nations and other First Nations, Métis, and Inuit who share this landscape today. We are grateful to reside in and remain visitors to this territory, while acknowledging our responsibility to honour the land, water, and skies with gentle respect and purifying preservation.

Hear land acknowledgement

→ visitkingston.ca/about

Watch land acknowledgement video

→ [History of Katarokwi](#)

Certifications



Tourism Kingston has received Rainbow Registered certification from the CGLCC, Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce. This certification shows our proven commitment to providing a welcoming and accepting experience to 2SLGBTQI+ visitors and residents.



The Visitor Information Centre has received Bronze certification from GreenStep Canada, acknowledging our sustainable measures in place and in progress.



Kingston is Sustainable Tourism Silver certified, acknowledging our measures in place and in progress as a destination.



uthentic

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Marketing and Communications

Music

Film & Media

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Integrated Destination Strategy

When possible, each unit's tactics are aligned with initiatives of the Integrated Destination Strategy (IDS) for 2023–2027, in order to demonstrate our work toward our long-term goals.

Guiding principles of the IDS:

1. We focus on the betterment of Kingston residents through tourism, balancing economic objectives with social and environmental priorities.
2. We collaborate across all tourism stakeholders – residents, tourism industry members, local/regional government, and key institutions and industries in Kingston to leverage tourism opportunities.
3. We align with major city government and other public and private sector initiatives that reflect the tourism potential including leveraging creative industries, environmental initiatives, and similar priorities.
4. We celebrate the diversity of our destination by striving to ensure all players in our tourism ecosystem are represented and included.
5. We root our decisions in evidence and measure results of our actions enabling us to take calculated risks while also being accountable and responsible to our stakeholders.



Learn more about Kingston's Integrated Destination Strategy:



visitkingston.ca/about-tourism-kingston

Strategies

Tourism Kingston also works towards several sector-specific goals that complement the IDS.

These include:

- // Kingston City Council strategic priorities
- // Growing Food Tourism in Kingston (CTA Culinary Strategy)
- // CGLCC Destination Audit
- // Kingston Sport Tourism Venue Inventory and Assessment
- // GreenStep Sustainability Certification
- // Sport Tourism Strategic Framework
- // Kingston Music Strategy
- // Creative Industries Strategy

Strategic partnerships

Industry

- // American Bus Association
- // Canadian Live Music Association
- // Canadian Society of Association Executives
- // Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners
- // Cruise Lines International Association
- // Culinary Tourism Alliance
- // Destination Canada
- // Destination Ontario
- // Destinations International
- // Destinations International (Canadian Destinations Leadership Council)
- // Great Lakes Cruise Association
- // GreenStep
- // Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada
- // Indigenous Tourism Ontario
- // Interactive Ontario
- // Jonview
- // Meetings Mean Business Canada
- // Meeting Professionals International: Ottawa Chapter
- // Ontario Creates
- // Ontario Motor Coach Association (OMCA)
- // Parks Canada
- // Professional Convention Management Association (PMCA)
- // RTO 9
- // St. Lawrence Parks Commission (SLPC)
- // Sport Tourism Canada
- // Student and Youth Travel Association
- // Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC)
- // Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO)
- // Travel Media Association of Canada

Local

- // City of Kingston
- // Downtown Kingston BIA
- // Frontenac County
- // Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce
- // Kingston Accommodation Partners
- // Kingston & Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites (KAM)
- // Kingston Canadian Film Festival
- // Kingston Economic Development Corporation
- // Queen's University
- // St. Lawrence College (SLC)
- // Sustainable Kingston

Committees

- // Attractions Committee
- // City of Kingston Heritage Fund Committee
- // Cruise Committee
- // Destination Marketing Committee
- // Digital and Visual Communications Committee
- // Hospitality & Tourism Program Advisory Committee (SLC)
- // Music Advisory Committee
- // RTO Destination Committee
- // Sales Committee (Business Events, Sport and Wellness, and Travel Trade)

ESTABLISHED

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications portfolio is responsible for developing and implementing strategic campaigns to generate leisure tourism to Kingston, as well as supporting sales activities and ensuring the Kingston brand is cohesively applied across all of Tourism Kingston's portfolios.

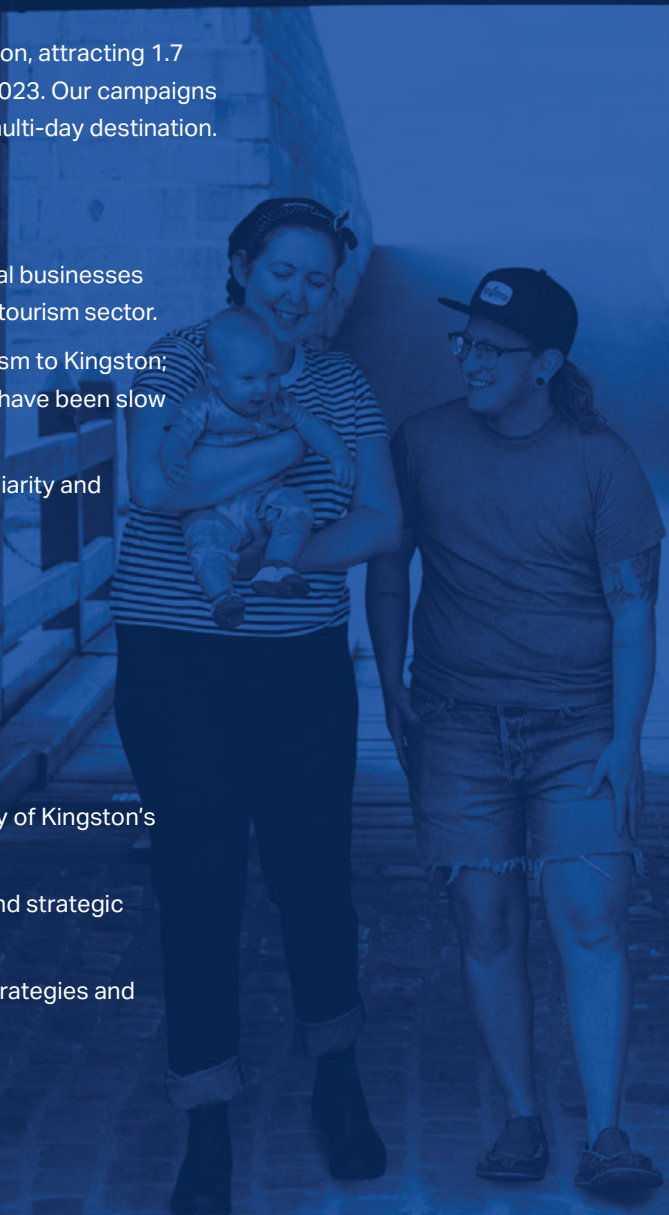
Leisure tourism generates more than 90% of visitation to Kingston, attracting 1.7 million visitors and creating a \$482 million economic impact in 2023. Our campaigns and tactics promote Kingston as a compelling year-round and multi-day destination.

Guiding principles

- // Destination marketing is critically important, supporting local businesses and building profile for Kingston and with impact beyond the tourism sector.
- // Domestic drive markets continue to drive most leisure tourism to Kingston; New York State (U.S.) drive markets hold great potential but have been slow to recover.
- // Kingston is an anchor for the RTO 9 region, with higher familiarity and appeal than other destinations in the region.
- // Strategic partnerships can amplify brand awareness.
- // The Integrated Destination Strategy guides all programs.

Objectives

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



IDS

Leisure tourism markets

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Though our leisure marketing and communication efforts will focus on these targets, we will continue to create touchpoints with other markets through our newsletters, website, sales sector communication and trade show support, and organic social media, including Chinese social media channels – WeChat and Weibo – to maintain relationships and build profile for Kingston.

Audience profile: leisure marketing

The Kingston brand was in part developed to uncover the city's appeal to a millennially aligned traveller – showcasing authentic cultural experiences and “off the beaten track” places to discover. These lesser-known destinations and experiences have grown in popularity post-pandemic as travellers are keen to enjoy a more local, laid-back vibe and connecting with locals. Kingston is well positioned to deliver on this experience through our craft breweries, farmers' markets, live music venues, local food, museums, and local shops. The city's history and location at the confluence of Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence River, and the Cataraqui River make it an exciting destination for travellers seeking educational and outdoor adventure experiences.

**Authentic
cultural
experiences
and “off the
beaten track”
places to
discover**



Traveller targets

Canadian leisure travellers across all destinations rank food & drink, exploring nature, festivals & events, arts & culture, and water-based activities highly. Kingston's strength in these categories, supported by targeted brand-building strategies, sees awareness of Kingston growing. Consumer sentiment research shows that familiarity of Kingston is higher than any other destination in the RTO 9 region. Fourteen per cent of Canadian travellers have visited Kingston in the past five years, placing it in the top 15 destinations nationally.



Ontario travellers

Millennial couples (travelling without kids) are by far the largest leisure segment, followed by younger families (South Asian families are a top multicultural consumer group), and empty nesters. Ontario is seen as good for short getaways (one to three nights), with charming small towns and "hidden gems." We are an easy place to visit – it's relaxing. A primary marketing opportunity will be for couples on long weekend trips. Walking/hiking, nature, culinary, and arts & culture continue to be the main activities for Ontario travellers.

Quebec travellers

Primary leisure audiences from Quebec are couples, friend groups, and families. They choose frequent trips to Ontario because it is close to home and easy to plan. The main types of travel are family vacations with lots of kids' activities, sightseeing, nature, and touring.

U.S. travellers

Our U.S. drive market (within 7 hours) targets are aligned with our domestic leisure traveller targets. Young couples are a priority. Ontario is seen as welcoming and down to earth, providing relaxing, leisurely trips that require less planning and offer great scenery and food experiences. Kingston and the Thousand Islands have the greatest familiarity in the RTO 9 region, which can be leveraged for a hub-and-spoke model of longer stays. The main types of trips for these travellers are romantic getaways, nature, and shopping. The U.S. is also a key market for Travel Trade.



International travellers

These are our highest-yield travellers: they stay longer and spend more, though they represent the smallest percentage of leisure travellers. Visitors are primarily affluent couples. France, Germany, and the U.K. are the lead international markets for leisure travel. These travellers often have a personal connection to Canada and Ontario and are looking to learn and grow as part of their travel experience. Travel from China continues to be slow to resume, but the domestic Visiting Friends and Relatives market has potential. The U.K., Germany, Italy, Belgium, South Korea, Latin America, and Australia are all key markets for Travel Trade.

Kingston & region residents

While the COVID-19 pandemic severely affected the tourism sector, it also validated the importance of residents in the health and vitality of our local industry. Residents shop, dine, explore, and participate in special programs such as Kingstonlicious, contributing to Kingston's tourism economy, especially during shoulder and winter seasons. While overnight, out-of-town guests remain high-value travellers and our primary target, Kingstonians will be considered as part of our targeting and tactics.

Strategic approach

Brand building

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

Brand-building campaigns supported by rich storytelling continue to lead our campaigns, with direct calls to action and promotional offers layered into targeted campaigns. In 2025, we will continue to execute our multi-year brand campaign first launched in 2023.

We will also enhance the Kingston brand through paid, earned, and owned opportunities, leveraging a multi-media and multi-channel approach to build awareness of Kingston as a four-season destination.

Brand positioning

**KINGSTON IS A
YOUTHFUL, VIBRANT
CITY THAT NEVER
STOPS SURPRISING.**

**authentically
hip**

We're a destination that celebrates artisans – the home for impassioned curators and creators. Travellers do what locals do – we don't do "touristy."

**culturally
vibrant**

We're a smart, engaged population that embraces creativity. We celebrate "different." Our history and architecture are the textural backdrop for modern arts.

**constantly
evolving**

We're an old city full of new ideas – an incubator community and innovation hub at the forefront of the creative and culinary arts. We always look for new ways to attract and engage visitors and residents.

Visual and creative strategy

Building equity as a destination is best achieved through a unified brand voice and simplified brand identity.

Tourism Kingston will continue to steward the Kingston brand across a range of initiatives, products, and collateral, as well as provide guidance to brand partners. Our in-house designer will support strategic campaigns such as Kingstonlicious menus and programs, sales bids and RFPs, publications such as the Visitor Guide, as well as environmental design in public spaces across the city. Our creative and marketing agency of record, Alphabet Creative, will lead creative and production for our paid marketing campaign, as well as special projects.

Our photography should feel
real and spontaneous –

**A MOMENT
CAPTURED
IN TIME...**

Our channels thrive by featuring diverse and inclusive user-generated content from the #VisitKingston hashtag and new photography assets, captured against our strategic priorities and content pillars.

The guiding principle in all imagery is to show the joy of travelling and experiencing Kingston. Shots are authentic and celebrate the diversity of our community. We routinely engage the local community through casting calls throughout the year, scheduling photography and videography to capture new experiences in the city by season.

IDS

Content strategy

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We will continue our content strategy, creating stories and visuals that tell the authentic stories of Kingston. Content in 2025 will reflect strategic priorities including sustainability and 2SLGBTQI+ audiences. Accessibility continues to be top-of-mind when crafting online content. New content will be developed with search engine optimization in mind, creating stories that support strong rankings on Google. We will continue to ensure that messaging about initiatives articulates the community priority/IDS pillar that each one reflects. We will leverage opportunities to communicate the value and impact of tourism, including for Destination Professionals Day (February 19), Business Events Day (April 3) and Tourism Awareness Week (April 7–11).

We will continue to support all Tourism Kingston portfolios with the co-creation of trade show and event materials. We will also continue to support Business Events and Sport & Wellness with the co-creation of competitive bid documents.

In 2025, we will launch a culinary publication to showcase Kingston's thriving food & drink scene, bringing the people and producers behind the bites and brews into focus and sharing their stories to showcase our vibrant culinary community. Distribution will primarily be local through the Visitor Information Centre, hotels, and restaurants, but we will target inclusion with select culinary publications, either through packaging or advertorial.



**OUR TONE IS CONFIDENT AND CASUAL –
WE ARE COMFORTABLE IN OUR OWN SKIN.**

inspiration

Media strategy: leisure marketing

Paid	Owned	Earned
// Social	// Website and microsites	// Social
// Video	// Newsletters	// Proactive pitching and earned media
// Search, display, remarketing	// Organic social	// Media hosting
// Native	// Visitor information channels – webchat, email, phone	// Media trade shows
// Influencers	// Visitor Guide and supporting collateral	
// Online Travel Agencies	// Trade shows and events (virtual or in-person)	
// Regional media (sponsored content)	// Social	
// Radio	// SEO	

Owned media strategy

With our brand positioning, pillars, and traveller targets in mind, we will inspire our audiences to keep Kingston top of mind and encourage them to book extended overnight visits. We align organic social media posts and newsletters with planned campaigns, packages, and our monthly blog content calendars.

Working collaboratively with our search agency of record, Search Warrant, we will optimize website pages, track and implement keywords, and fix broken links on an ongoing basis to improve search engine optimization on visitkingston.ca. We will focus on fostering positive relationships with Kingston businesses and tourism partners such as Destination Ontario, Destination Canada, and RTO 9 through consistent social media content collaborations. We will support the Sales sectors through organic posts on our industry-facing channels: LinkedIn, Weibo, and WeChat, and updated content on their sector webpages.

ed

Earned media strategy

We will continue to execute against our three-year earned media road map to enhance Kingston's visitor economy. Working with our earned media agency of record, Tartanbond, we will promote key assets and infrastructure across all seasons to attract visitors – leveraging tourism's potential to positively influence resident quality of life, community partners, and the environment.

Aligning with our paid and owned media strategies and supporting the IDS, we will proactively pitch to secure media coverage, host influencers and journalists, and continue to raise awareness and build reputation for Kingston as a four-season destination with strengths in heritage, outdoor adventure, wellness and relaxation, culinary, arts and culture, and events.

IDS

Paid media strategy

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Our paid media strategy in 2025 will extend our brand campaign launched in 2023 and will reach our target audiences through a mix of channels and executions, including digital, print, search, and out-of-home, to build awareness of Kingston as a getaway destination; drive leads to operators; and create awareness for things to do in Kingston year-round.

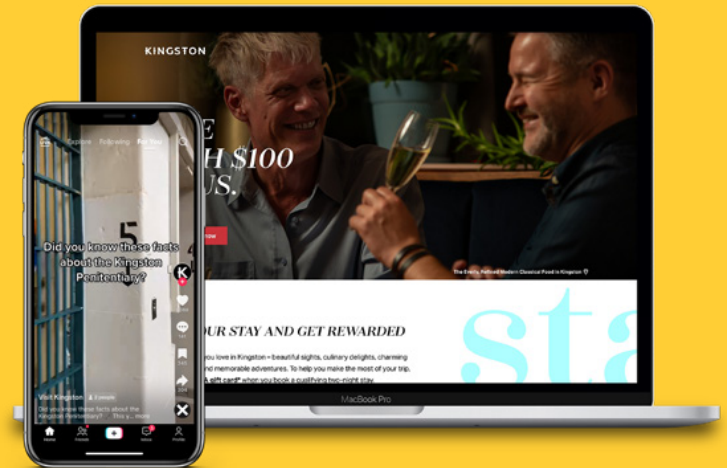
Top-level communications focused on brand awareness will be supported by direct response tactics to drive traffic to visitkingston.ca and referrals to partners. We will extend reach by partnering on Destination Ontario campaigns, which provide additional paid media budget for both domestic and U.S. campaigns.

Campaigns will include our brand campaign (year-round); 25 things to do (monthly); Kingstonlicious (winter); weddings (May to December); and business events (year-round). For select campaigns, we will offer paid partnership opportunities for local tourism businesses.



Marketing channels

visitkingston.ca	TikTok
visitekingston.ca	Pinterest
visitkingstoncn.ca	YouTube
Facebook	Consumer newsletter
Instagram	Industry newsletter
X	Weibo
LinkedIn	WeChat



Content pillars

Makers: Telling authentic stories and shining a light on Kingston's creative community

Food & Drink: Promoting Kingston's dynamic culinary scene and farm-to-table experiences

Arts & Culture: Featuring Kingston's creative industries, unique arts and culture scene, film, music, museums, historic sites, galleries, festivals, and events

Sport and wellness: Experiences anchored by health-focused and active exploration including cycling, hiking, yoga, fitness, spas, and pampering; athletes of Kingston

Weddings: Promoting Kingston as the perfect backdrop of a destination wedding close to home

Sustainability: Encouraging mindful travel and showcasing Kingston's businesses with sustainable practices

Sectors: Business Events, Travel Trade, Film & Media, Music, Sport & Wellness, Visitor Services

Internal & stakeholder communications

Equally important to external visitor marketing and communications, strategic internal and stakeholder communications ensure we share timely, relevant, accurate, engaging, and persuasive information with key internal audiences, which include tourism partners, Tourism Kingston and Kingston Accommodation Partners boards, Kingston City Council, local agency and municipal partners, funders, media, and residents.

In 2025, we will continue to proactively build reputation and profile for Kingston as a destination, secure support for Integrated Destination Strategy priorities, advocate for our local tourism sector, and strengthen local understanding of the importance of tourism. This work will include sharing Tourism Kingston and broader industry success stories; advocacy and crisis communications; bids and funding proposals; quarterly and annual stakeholder reporting; and economic impact and related reporting.

visitkingston.ca

Tourism Kingston manages and maintains visitkingston.ca, a popular website that sees more than 3 million pageviews annually. visitkingston.ca includes three language websites – English, French, and Chinese, providing comprehensive information about Kingston as a destination.

Alternative-language websites:

visitekingston.ca is a comprehensive French-language site that includes 25 things to do content, timely articles, and evergreen content primarily targeted to Francophone visitors. We continue to build out visitekingston.ca with original French content as well as monthly translations of new English stories.

visitekingston.ca

如诗如画金斯顿 is a comprehensive Chinese-language site that includes 25 things to do content, timely articles, and evergreen content, targeting both domestic Chinese and inbound markets. The development of original content is mapped to planned campaigns and English articles.

visitkingstoncn.ca

culture

IDS

2025 website plan

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1. Leverage visitkingston.ca as the content hub and landing page for Visit Kingston marketing campaigns, presenting a compelling image of Kingston as a four-season destination and connecting visitors with partners.
2. Complete design refresh of the website (all languages) to enhance the user experience, connecting them to key information efficiently. Consider how AI can be leveraged to support digital visitor services.
3. Collaborate with sectors to ensure accurate and engaging content on the sector pages: Business Events, Sport & Wellness, Travel Trade, Music, Film & Media, and Visitor Services.
4. Curate a comprehensive content calendar, using identified content pillars, that supports new timely and evergreen content across websites in English, French, and Chinese.
5. Continue to develop the Photo Share image library with updated photography and videography.

Special projects

IDS

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1. Research and audience development

- // Continue to develop the Destination Insights Dashboard with additional visitor and resident sentiment data collection.
- // Continue to share visitor research insights with Tourism Kingston staff and board, Kingston Accommodation Partners, and industry partners to inform strategies and plans.

IDS

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2. Product development

- // Develop and diversify Kingstonlicious offerings and partner on key culinary programs, supporting the culinary tourism strategy and boosting low-season tourism.
- // Support the promotion of products and experiences at Kingston Penitentiary, an under-utilized tourism asset, aligned with the Kingston Pen and Entertainment Experience Concept recommendations.



IDS

3. Partnerships

- 10 // Continue strategic sponsorships that align with the Integrated Destination Strategy and Creative Industries Strategy and have the potential to drive overnight stays in the shoulder and low seasons.
- 16 // Collaborate with the Kingston Canadian Film Festival, Film & Media, and Music to recognize and amplify the festival's 25th anniversary in March 2025.
- 17 // Work in partnership with Queen's University and Kingston Accommodation Partners to welcome students, alumni, family, and friends to Kingston.
- // Continue to develop strong partnerships through the Destination Marketing Committee, Attractions Committee, and Digital and Visual Communications Committee, sharing strategies to engage partners.

IDS

4. Equity, diversity, inclusion, and indigeneity

- 7 // Continue to augment Kingston imagery, using an inclusive approach that supports strategies and identified gaps.
- 17 // Enhance strategy to connect with 2SLGBTQI+ market; develop experiences, packages, and collateral based on CGLCC recommendations and Rainbow Registered Kingston businesses.
- // Showcase Indigenous makers, stories, and businesses.
- // Showcase Kingston-based Francophone artists, partnering with the Film & Media and Music portfolios to promote educational opportunities and produce new website content.
- // Share stories about women- and minority-owned businesses and inclusive experiences in Kingston through earned media pitching and content marketing.
- // Continue to feature diverse voices through our influencer and media hosting program.
- // Share evergreen and timely information about Kingston in English, French, and Chinese.

IDS

5. Profile and promotion

- 2 // Continue to champion the Kingston brand, identify and leverage opportunities for placemaking and brand adoption, and communicate the value and importance of the brand to partners.
- 6 // Execute strategic placemaking around special events: Q1 – food & drink (Kingstonlicious) and Kingston Canadian Film Festival 25th anniversary; Q2 and Q3 – attractions, museums & historic sites; Q4 – Queen's Homecoming and local shops & makers.
- 7 // Support Kingston Economic Development and the City of Kingston in attracting investment in the city's tourism industry.

MARKETING: PARTNERSHIPS

The 2025 partnerships strategy within the Marketing portfolio prioritizes productive relationships with local tourism partners; leverages provincial and national representation to raise profile for the destination; and encourages increased visitation and length of stay through partnerships and packages. This plan is informed by the IDS and feedback from partners, key stakeholders, and the Attractions Committee.



2025 plan

IDS

1. Create compelling destination packaging.

- // Curate stay-in-Kingston seasonal and evergreen packaging to increase visitation and length of stay in shoulder and low seasons.
- // Curate regional packages that begin and end in Kingston (hub-and-spoke model) that include activities in the RTO 9 region.
- // Develop multi-week promotional themes for packages that support shoulder- and low-season tourism, e.g., holiday "Shop on us," Kingstonlicious.
- // Build inclusive packages that reflect priorities including sustainability, 2SLGBTQI+, creative industries, and higher education communities.
- // Collaborate with Kingston Accommodation Partners to track package sales from partners to measure success and support economic impact calculations.
- // Collaborate with Business Events on packaging to extend business stays pre- and post-event.

IDS

2. Grow key partnerships.

- // Collaborate with businesses and events that are certified as Rainbow Registered to support and promote partnerships and packages.
- // Work with groups that support key sustainable pillars (environmental, economic, and social), identifying opportunities for new package inclusions and partnerships (e.g., voluntourism).

IDS

3. Raise the profile of Kingston through earned media.

- // Collaborate with Tartanbond on earned media efforts, including proactive media pitching, influencer/media hosting, and managing the associated budget.
- // Strengthen partnerships with local or regional influencers to create brand ambassadors.
- // Host a travel media press trip or individual media FAMs in Kingston during the shoulder and low seasons.
- // Represent Kingston at media marketplaces and trade shows to build awareness about Kingston and develop relationships with target media.

IDS

4. Leverage the Partnership portfolio to generate revenue and drive further economic impact.

- // Lead the coordination of the weddings campaign, collaborating with accommodation and venue partners on a multi-month campaign.
- // Lead coordination of the Threshold 360 program, working with partners to showcase Kingston's unique venues.



IDS

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- 5. Continue strategic partnerships with key provincial and national organizations.**
- // Continue to partner with Destination Ontario through content submission, hosting, trade show engagement, and media FAMs.
 - // Continue to partner with Culinary Tourism Alliance to support the “Growing Food Tourism in Kingston” strategy.
 - // Continue to partner with VIA Rail to support sustainable transportation when aligned with media hosting or package inclusions.
 - // Utilize partnerships with tourism membership organizations such as Travel Media Association of Canada to attract new business by way of networking events and attending meetings.

Sales events and speaking opportunities

May 13–15	Taste of Place Summit	Markham
May 21–22	City Nation Place Americas Conference	Ottawa
May 27–30	Rendez-vous Canada	Winnipeg
September	GoMedia Canada Summit	Jasper
November	DesignThinkers	Toronto

IDS

Measurement

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1. Continue to build value and resonance in the Kingston brand (impressions).
2. Engage prospective visitors across their path to purchase (engagement; clickthrough rate; website sessions and pageviews).
3. Connect visitors to Kingston operators to close the sale (operator referrals; package sales).
4. Utilize the Destination Insights Dashboard for data analysis (occupancy; visitor survey; economic impact).



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In 2025, Tourism Kingston will continue to follow through on its commitment to the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge, with a renewed focus to improve responsible and sustainable tourism practices within the operations of Tourism Kingston and Kingston as a tourism destination.

Definitions

Sustainable tourism: tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, industry, the environment, and host communities. (United Nations Environment Program & UN World Tourism Organization)

Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge: an initiative created by GreenStep Solutions and TIAC to encourage tourism businesses and destinations across Canada and globally to commit to measuring and improving their sustainability performance each year between now and 2030.

GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Certification: certification offered to tourism businesses and destinations who have completed the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) recognized assessment and action plan to measure and improve their sustainability performance. Tourism Kingston has undergone certification for the Visitor Information Centre as a business and for Kingston as a destination.

2025 plan

IDS

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1. Execute Tourism Kingston's sustainable tourism strategy using the GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Destination Certification.

- // Consult with stakeholders including Sustainable Kingston, the City of Kingston, and RTO 9 to align our work with larger sustainability goals and visions.
- // Support each business sector in creating, tracking, and promoting sustainability goals.
 - Promote progress in existing 2025 sustainability goals in each portfolio through marketing channels.
 - Identify emerging opportunities to adopt/track sustainability goals.

IDS

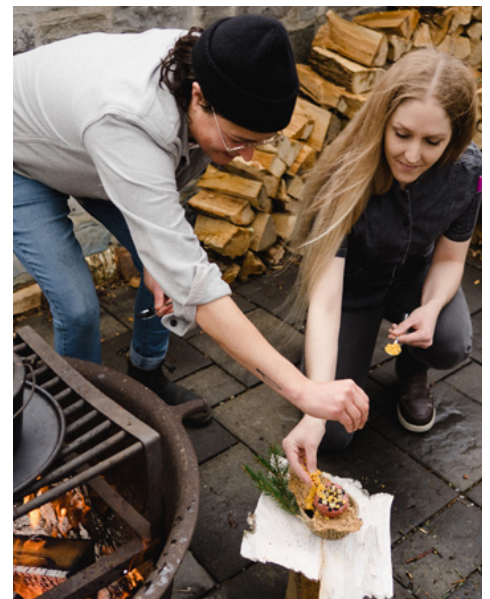
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2. Champion sustainable practices.

- // Regularly report progress on the sustainability action plan across marketing channels and to partners including the City of Kingston and RTO 9.
- // Promote tourism partners with specific certifications (e.g., Green Key certification, Rainbow Registered, GreenStep, Feast On, Ocean Wise) to amplify Kingston's reputation as a sustainable tourism destination.

3. Review Tourism Kingston's policies to advance sustainability.

- // Develop a sustainable purchasing policy.
- // Review and update internal policies to incorporate sustainability principles.



TRAVEL TRADE

This plan continues our long-term strategic priorities while assisting operators and partners to adjust their offerings for the FIT and group travel markets. Strategies in this plan have been informed by the IDS, market research, and feedback from key operators and the Sales Committee. Travel Trade will also focus on the bus, train, and cruise infrastructure throughout 2025 to attract more product development and visitors to Kingston.

Definitions

Destination Insights Dashboard: software developed by Rove Marketing and customized for Tourism Kingston to track Str, AirDNA, Near mobile, economic impact, and other local data.

FAM tours: familiarization tours of the city and its amenities, organized for industry groups including tour operators and media

FIT: fully independent traveller

Receptive tour operator: a travel professional who arranges group tours for other (often international) tour operators

Simpleview: content management system created specifically for the tourism industry to track leads, referrals, sales, and data insights

Travefy: software that creates customized quotes and itineraries for the travel trade sector

TREIM: Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model, an online tool from the Government of Ontario that calculates the economic impact of group travel, business, and sport events

2025 plan

IDS

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1. Make strong connections within the travel trade and group tour markets.

- // Continue to grow relationships with a focus on tour operators from Ontario, Quebec, the U.S., and with emerging international markets.
- // Partner with Destination Ontario to promote overnight stops in Kingston through sales missions, FAM tours, and a variety of ready-made itineraries.
- // Promote Kingston as a must-visit destination to key markets and receptive tour operators at American Bus Association Marketplace (ABA), Rendez-vous Canada (RVC), Student and Youth Travel Association (SYTA), Ontario Motor Coach Association Marketplace (OMCA), Seatrade, and Showcase Canada.
 - Coordinate a vibrant regional destination presence at Rendez-vous Canada with South Eastern Ontario partners.
- // Capitalize on changing trends in the travel trade sector through participation in webinars offered by membership partners.

IDS

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2. Enhance product development.

- // Coordinate and attend site visits with the Destination Development Manager to identify seasonal and evergreen opportunities including accommodations, attractions, and dining offers that focus on group, FIT, and leisure markets.
- // Compile market research and feedback from operators to inform product development to ensure competitive products and experiences in market.
- // Continue to use partner referrals as a method of engagement between Kingston offerings and our prospective tour operators.

IDS

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3. Create destination packaging and itineraries.

- // Create quarterly seasonal guides for tour operators, e.g., "Fall travel trade guide to Kingston."
- // Continue to focus on developing year-round destination experiences, including tour packages, and implementing customized itineraries as a new offering for tour operators.
- // Utilize Travefy to create functional itineraries that can be shared with tour operators, educational travel planners, and partners.
- // Develop and promote itineraries geared to FIT and group markets, segmented by demographics and seasons.
- // Focus on multilingual itineraries and itineraries geared towards target markets of students, young adults, and those over 55 years old.
- // Increase overnight stays in lower-traffic seasons for Travel Trade (November through April) by creating compelling shoulder-season itineraries.
- // Develop sustainable itineraries for tour operators and promote group travel that encourages sustainable travel decisions.

IDS

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10**4. Grow partnerships.**

- // Continue to collaborate with Destination Ontario in the development of regional itineraries and FAM tours that connect Kingston with its neighbouring destinations.
- // Continue partnerships with neighbouring destinations such as Ottawa and Thousand Islands, and explore new partnerships with Prince Edward County to create multi-destination itineraries for FIT and group markets.
- // Work closely with local partners and stakeholders to maximize impact and attendance of Team Kingston at trade shows.
- // Utilize partnerships with tourism membership organizations such as OMCA, SYTA, and the Great Lakes Cruise Association (GLCA) to attract net new business by way of networking events and attending virtual meetings.

5. Host prospective domestic and international clients from primary markets.

- // Continue to collaborate with Destination Ontario on the Kingston segment of South Eastern Ontario FAM tours in shoulder seasons (November through April).
- // Host a minimum of seven FAM tours for motorcoach, cruise, and rail clients.
- // Invite representatives from emerging markets and new connections from spring trade shows to a fall FAM tour.

IDS

24

6. Position Kingston as a key cruise tourism hub.

- // In partnership with the Great Lakes Cruise Association, prospect cruise lines and excursion companies.
 - Create cruise ship excursion-specific itineraries.
 - Amplify key offerings like GLCA's "galley supplies" online resource, which encourages cruise ships to shop for local food and beverage en route.
 - Help to coordinate special programming, such as an on-board chef and entertainment at the Port of Kingston.
 - Continue to offer exceptional port welcome ceremonies on Crawford Wharf to visiting cruise ships.



- // Coordinate local musicians (in collaboration with the Music Officer) and artists to provide entertainment for visiting cruise ships.
- // Provide information and outreach on the sustainable actions taken by the Great Lakes cruising industry.
- // Support development of a deep-water dock for Kingston, through activities including promoting hydrographic water depth studies and updating the deep-water dock case for support.
- // Continue to work with cruise ship operators to gauge interest and availability to add Kingston as a future port of call, securing pre- and post-cruise hotel nights and encouraging passengers to make future visits.

IDS

7. Increase demand for Kingston in the international markets.

16
21

- // Connect with international markets through Destination Canada.
 - Attend Showcase Canada in partnership with Destination Ontario.
- // Maintain current and develop new connections with international operators in key markets.
- // Focus on key markets France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Australia, South Korea, Latin America, and the United States.
- // Focus on emerging travel trends, including the unique interests and demands of different international markets.
- // Reconnect with international tour operators in the Markham region through sales missions and sales calls.

IDS

8. Expand Kingston's educational travel sector.

21

- // Continue membership with the SYTA to learn about new opportunities within the educational travel sector.
- // Focus on growing the educational travel sector year-round through regional public schools, private schools, and student tour operators by sharing educational opportunities and museum information with neighbouring school boards.
- // Collaborate with partners such as KAM, SLPC, and KAP to offer education-specific itineraries and student-friendly accommodations.

9. Measure and report on the economic impact of the travel trade sector to Kingston.

- // Using tools provided by OMCA and GLCA, develop quarterly and annual economic impact calculations for group travel and cruise travel within Simpleview.
- // Utilize tools such as TREIM, Destinations International Event Impact Calculator, and the Destinations Insights Dashboard.
- // Using FIT data from major wholesalers such as Jonview and Journeys Canada, create an annual FIT report for economic impact.

IDS

12

10. Leverage the Travel Trade portfolio to generate revenue and drive further economic impact.

- // Promote the Enhanced Profile Program and opportunities for partners to attend and cost-share industry events, as well as paid marketing channels like Jonview magazine that can be leveraged by partners.
- // Expand the number of tourism partners joining Team Kingston at 2025 Canadian trade shows and FAMs.
- // Share trade show dates in advance with early bird deadlines to assist in partners' budget planning.

11. Support the travel-by-rail sector.

- // Partner with VIA Rail to include train travel in FAM tours when partners are located within the corridor, i.e., Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto tour operators.
- // Partner with VIA Rail to create new travel-by-rail packages and itineraries.
- // Continue to collaborate with tour operators focusing on train travel, such as Fresh Tracks and Landsby, in the development of all-inclusive train packages that feature Kingston.
- // Develop pre- and post-cruise rail opportunities by connecting turn-port destinations such as Montreal with add-on stops in Kingston via rail.

12. Support the Kingston tour bus strategy.

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



- // Further our sustainability efforts by educating tour operators, guides, and drivers of the current tour bus parking areas available, by circulating the bus parking map and reminding them of idling bylaws.
 - Collaborate with Visitor Services and City of Kingston by-law department to maximize awareness of and adherence to dedicated parking areas and idling bylaw.
- // Continue to expand the bus incentive program to include new offerings and incentives for drivers and guides, like the lunch voucher program.
- // Continue to coordinate bi-annual collection of bus data from partner hotels and attractions to create master list of buses for future research and demographic insights.

Sales events and speaking opportunities

April 7–10	Seatrade	Miami
May 27–30	Rendez-vous Canada	Winnipeg
June 9–11	CNE Cruise Symposium	Halifax
August 22–26	Student Youth Travel Association	Savannah
November 3–5	Ontario Motor Coach Association Marketplace	Markham
November 5–12	Showcase Canada	Germany
November 9–12	National Tour Association Travel Exchange	Ottawa



INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TRADE

Definitions

VFR: Visiting Friends and Relatives

Weibo: a Chinese microblogging site.

WeChat: a Chinese text messaging, broadcasting, and social media app.

ESL: English as a Second Language

In 2025, the International Travel Trade Coordinator will continue to work closely with the Travel Trade and Marketing portfolios to grow the important Asia-Pacific tour market to Kingston and to connect with Chinese visitors both from across Canada and internationally.



2025 plan

- | | |
|--|--|
| IDS
<div style="background-color: #555; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; text-align: center;">18</div> | 1. Continue targeted outreach to tour operators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> // Connect with tour operators at Rendez-vous Canada (RVC). // Follow up with connections made at RVC and with leads provided by Travel Trade colleagues. // Conduct sales calls with tour operators in the GTA. // Partner with Destination Ontario and Destination Canada staff on sales missions and to promote Kingston within the inbound Asian markets. // Connect with local accommodations to provide rates for international travel groups. |
| IDS
<div style="background-color: #555; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; text-align: center;">9
16</div> | 2. Expand communication opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> // Increase number of subscribers to Chinese newsletter by 20 per cent. // Expand content on the Chinese website with new content monthly. // Continue collaboration with the Marketing team to identify stories of interest to the Asian-Pacific market. // Monitor international travel trends and restrictions and adjust messaging accordingly. // Refresh content for international audiences to highlight unique features of Kingston, such as its UNESCO World Heritage Site designations. // Continue to support communications through Weibo and WeChat. |
| IDS
<div style="background-color: #555; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; text-align: center;">9
16</div> | 3. Support the domestic VFR market. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> // Work with local organizations such as the Queen's Chinese Student and Scholar Association and the Chinese Canadian Association of Kingston and District. |
| IDS
<div style="background-color: #555; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; text-align: center;">17</div> | 4. Attend key trade shows to connect with international tour operators. |
| | 5. Connect with the educational sector. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> // Coordinate with both domestic and international tour operators in the educational sector to create itineraries for student experiences in Kingston. |

Sales events and speaking opportunities

May 27–30
August 22–26

Rendez-vous Canada
Student Youth Travel Association

Winnipeg
Savannah

SPORT & WELLNESS

Definitions

CCAA: Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association

EOSSAA: Eastern Ontario Secondary School Athletic Association

Event rights holder: a business or organization (often an NSO or PSO) that owns the rights to a sport event and that partners with cities to host that event

LSO: Local Sport Organization

NSO: National Sport Organization

OCAA: Ontario Colleges Athletic Association

OFSAA: Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations

OUA: Ontario University Athletics

PSO: Provincial Sport Organization

STC: Sport Tourism Canada

U SPORTS: the national sport governing body for universities in Canada

The 2025 Sport & Wellness plan is grounded in Tourism Kingston's vision for Kingston to be a leading mid-sized sport host city in Canada, growing visitation, reputation, economic impact, and community wellness while delivering exceptional experiences and value for visitors and sport stakeholders. Sport & Wellness has been identified as a priority market segment for future tourism growth. Therefore, the Sport & Wellness portfolio must provide a compelling case, a clear offer, and consistent support to stakeholders who decide to host events in Kingston, from local organizations to international sport governing bodies. This approach will enable Kingston to build on its history as a successful sport host city while ensuring continued relevancy and competitive offerings in a challenging and ever evolving sport landscape.

The strategies outlined in this plan were selected for 2025 to better reflect:

1. tangible steps to be taken in the continued rollout of Kingston's Sport Tourism Strategic Framework (2021) 10-Year Action Plan,
2. priority areas identified in the Kingston Sport Tourism Venue Inventory & Assessment Study (2023),
3. an understanding of current and upcoming sport tourism business opportunities and Kingston's unique value propositions as a mid-size sport host city.

2025 plan

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1. Strengthen the local sport community's capacity to host events.

- // Create and distribute a sport event hosting playbook to community sport leaders and organizations, offering supports that:
 - build the confidence of new sport organizations in their ability to host tournaments and events.
 - encourage existing organizations to develop new tournaments and events to fill gaps including underdeveloped sports, women's & girls' tournaments, and parasport.
 - develop sustainable tournament plans that enable succession planning for recurring events.

IDS

25

2. Establish clear channels for sport event organizers to access funding.

- // Create and publish a list of Tourism Kingston sport event development key priorities informed by IDS pillars and the Kingston Sport Tourism Strategic Framework.
- // Re-establish an application process through which local sport event organizers can submit a request for funding tied to a key priority.
- // Formalize partnership agreements between sport event organizers and Tourism Kingston and implement a post-event reporting process to measure return on investment, alignment with key priorities, and future fit.
- // Regularly promote grants and funding opportunities (national, provincial, foundations) to local sport organizations and event rights-holders.

3. Promote Kingston as a year-round destination for provincial, national, and international sport hosting opportunities.

- // Create and distribute a Kingston sport hosting package that promotes Kingston as a premier sport host city to event rights-holders that outlines facilities, accommodations, restaurants, and cultural experiences, with commitments to EDII and sustainability.
 - Customize the Kingston sport hosting package for different sports, encouraging local organizations and schools to leverage it as their own sales tool when bidding to host events.
- // Develop a sport bid cycle calendar to capture key deadlines and annual trends for each sport's bid cycles.
- // Leverage STC membership.
 - Meet with NSOs annually to build relationships and to keep Kingston top of mind for event rights-holders.
 - Utilize STC contact lists and newsletters to inform the sport bid cycle calendar, maintain our sales database, and stay informed of opportunities.
 - Collaborate with other members and with the STC board and staff to advocate for continued investment in sport across various levels of government.
- // Maintain the Kingston Sport Facilities Guide as a database of the current sport venue inventory, accessible by rights-holders at any time and to be used as a tool in prospect meetings and pitches.
- // Explore opportunities to host PSO representatives in Kingston to pitch Kingston as a premier host venue for provincial championship events.
- // Maintain regular communications with Ontario's Ministry of Sport.
- // Work with Queen's University, St. Lawrence College, and Royal Military College's athletic departments and sport coaches to prospect and bid on opportunities to host training camps, exhibition games, and tournaments (U SPORTS, OUA, CCAA, OCAA, and PSO or NSO-led events).
- // Support LSOs on their independent bids with information on sustainability, local and regional resources, and data, as needed.





IDS

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4. Improve channels for communicating with and about Kingston's sport community.

- // Maintain an ongoing list of Kingston sport organizations and their leadership teams.
- // Create a quarterly Kingston sport newsletter and distribution list of coaches, volunteers, parents, and fans to share funding opportunities, athlete stories, hosting tips, and calendar of events.
- // Showcase sport's contribution to Kingston's tourism economy through stories and award nominations.

IDS

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5. Prospect and support wellness, recreational, and leisure activities that drive visitation outside of traditional sport events.

- // Collaborate with the Marketing team to promote Kingston businesses' recreational and wellness offerings to visitors and event attendees.
- // Collaborate with the Film & Media team on the development and implementation of a Kingston eSports strategy.
- // Promote Kingston as a destination for wellness, recreation, and leisure leadership retreats or training.
- // Collaborate with Business Events to promote recreational and wellness offerings that can extend business stays pre- and post-event.

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6. **Leverage the Business Events campaign and hosting expertise to attract sport-adjacent events such as business meetings, training camps, development clinics, and banquets.**

- // Share sport industry case studies and business opportunities that support the investment and design of a conference centre for Kingston.
- // Include corporate events, training, and team-building experiences that Kingston can offer in the Kingston sport hosting package used to pitch Kingston to event rights-holders.
- // Work with Queen's University, St. Lawrence College, and Royal Military College's athletic departments and sport coaches to identify and bid on business meeting hosting opportunities (e.g., U SPORTS, CCAA, coach training).

IDS

25

7. **Act on key strategic documents and be an expert voice in tourism and community economic impact within the Kingston sport community.**

- // Consult stakeholders (educational institutions, City of Kingston staff and Council, private sector) on sport hosting considerations during the exploration and planning of new or upgraded sport facilities, leveraging the Kingston Sport Facilities Guide, Kingston Sport Tourism Strategic Framework, and Kingston Sport Venue Inventory and Assessment, and bringing in provincial and national sport partners for expertise as needed.
- // Use Sport Tourism Canada's Economic Impact Calculator and Destinations International's Event Economic Impact Calculator to report on the economic impact of prospective and definite sport events and communicate results to stakeholders.
- // Continue to execute the goals and recommended actions of the 10-year plan outlined in the Kingston Sport Tourism Strategic Framework.
- // Participate in community sport meetings, City of Kingston community consultation sessions and reviews of facility allocation policies, and tournament planning sessions as opportunities arise.

IDS

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8. **Deploy Tourism Kingston's sustainability commitments through all strategic planning, funding distribution, and hosting opportunities.**

- // Find opportunities to expand the Food Reclamation & Redistribution Program program to sport events and tournaments.
- // Participate in Canada Games Council's rollout of the Sports for Climate Action Framework and join the Canadian Alliance on Sports for Climate Action.
- // Bring national best practices to Kingston's local events, consulting with community sport event organizers on ways to reduce environmental impact through hosting practices.
- // Prioritize incentive funding for events that demonstrate tangible understanding of and commitment to sustainability.

IDS

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9. Collaborate with the Marketing team to elevate sport events hosted in Kingston.

- // Communicate Tourism Kingston's ability to support sport events with their marketing needs, demonstrating value to sport event organizers and incentivizing information sharing about upcoming events to better build out calendar of events and opportunities.
- // Leverage marketing channels to promote events, volunteer opportunities, development clinics, and calls for board members for sport organizations.
- // Integrate the Kingston brand and drive visitor engagement with Tourism Kingston channels through seasonal, curated pre-event mailers to sport event attendees.
- // Leverage media contacts to distribute sport event press releases.

10. Leverage the Sport & Wellness portfolio to generate revenue and drive further economic impact.

- // Promote the Enhanced Profile Program, opportunities for partners to attend and cost-share industry events, and paid marketing channels that can be leveraged by businesses in the sport and wellness sectors.
- // Explore opportunities to create and sell Kingston sport merchandise to generate revenue that can be reinvested back in the local sport system, especially around key community events.
- // Work with sport event organizers and hotel partners to promote Kingston businesses and attractions to sport event attendees to drive visitor spend.

IDS

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11. Continue to develop partnership with Queen's University.

- // Facilitate opportunities for the university, its athletes, and coaches to support and engage with the local sport system for mentorship opportunities, coach development, facility use, and event hosting.



- // Leverage Queen’s Athletics teams and coaches’ relationships with specific PSOs and NSOs to prospect sport event hosting opportunities including conferences and training camps.
- // Support Queen’s Athletics coaches and staff in bidding on events, conferences, and training camps.
- // Collaborate with the clubs and recreation staff at Queen’s Athletics on new programs and tournaments that fill gaps in Kingston’s current sport offerings and events (parasport, women & girls, eSports, sports that resonate with new Canadians).
- // Expand partnership beyond Athletics & Recreation to engage other stakeholders within the university, including the Game Plan program at the Smith School of Business, as well as the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, to promote sport and wellness opportunities for students such as placements, volunteer roles, jobs, coach training courses, or professional development.

Sales events and speaking opportunities

March

Sport Events Congress

Calgary

Major 2025 sport events

Swim Ontario Eastern Regional Championships	January 31–February 2
OFSAA AAA Boys Basketball Championships	March 3–5
Kids for Kids Annual Hockey Tournament	March 21–23
Ontario Minor Hockey Association Championships	March 29–31, April 5–7
Tennis Canada International Jr. Championships	April 12–19
Ontario Basketball U17/U19 Ontario Cup	May 9–11
REDBLACKS Training Camp	May 11–29
Football Canada Flag Nationals	May 16–19
JUEL Basketball Championships	May 23–25
OFSAA Girls & Boys AA/AAA Soccer Championships	June 5–7
Ontario Native Basketball Championships	June 13–15
U19 Pan American Girls Volleyball Championships	June 24–29
Little League U13 Canadian Championships	July 12–23
CORK x Sail Canada events	July–October



Check the website for the most current
list of confirmed sport events in Kingston.



BUSINESS EVENTS

The 2025 Business Events plan continues to build on the strong foundational work done in the sector. Expanding our prospecting reach, partnership initiatives, and long-term business events potential are key goals. Kingston's reputation as a premier destination for meetings and conferences has grown significantly and maintaining that momentum by reaching into appropriate new markets is also a key component of the plan.



2025 plan

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1. Promote Kingston as a year-round destination for business events and conferences.

- // Create compelling bids to host events in 2026 and beyond.
- // Identify new opportunities to host fall/winter events.
- // Leverage incentive funding through Slush Puppie Place to host new business events.
- // Support hotel partners on their independent bids with information on sustainability, local and regional resources, and data, as needed.

IDS

19

2. Continue conference centre development.

- // Create a comprehensive target list of potential conference centre business opportunities based on documented lost business and industry research insights.
- // Ensure the broadest possible level of community and industry support for the conference centre project through continued and expanded outreach, including regular updates to industry partners and discussions with key community groups.

IDS

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14

3. Expand the Unique Venues section on the website.

- // Use this site as the primary online tool for use with meeting planners and event organizers considering Kingston.
- // Highlight local planning resources for event organizers.
 - Resources include local speakers, Indigenous, artistic, or musical community representation, service providers, pre-planned activities, and turn-key experiences..

4. Ensure the success of the 2025 Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners (CanSPEP) conference hosted in Kingston.

- // Participate on the CanSPEP Conference planning committee and appropriate subcommittees.
- // Ensure the full integration of Kingston brand at all conference events and activities.
- // Establish a committee of industry partners to assist in planning of all off-site receptions, dinners, and other events.
- // Leverage this event in proposals to host other key business events industry meetings and conferences for future years. (e.g., MPI's The Event).

5. Expand the "travelling FAMs" model developed in 2024.

- // Take Kingston to key sales markets (Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal).
- // Engage meeting planners and event organizers in a manner that is accessible, easy, and representative of Kingston and our brand.

6. Leverage the Business Events portfolio to generate revenue and drive further economic impact.

- // Maximize participation by partners at key trade shows and networking events to generate leads and business for them.
- // Coordinate a strong South Eastern Ontario presence in partnership with RTO 9 at strategic national trade shows, such as Canadian Meetings & Events Expo.

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7. Create partnership structures with meeting planners at Queen's University and St. Lawrence College.

- // Host an annual meeting of meeting planners from all Queen's University faculties and departments.
- // Work with planners from both institutions to ensure full support for conference activity (accommodations & meeting space plus attractions, activities, group dining, etc.).
- // Create regular, targeted communications for these two planner communities.

IDS

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8. Work with Lionhearts to formalize a structure for the Food Reclamation & Redistribution Program.

- // Create a timeline for rolling out the program.
- // Establish a reporting mechanism to show the impact in the community (e.g., partners participating, amount of food reclaimed and not sent to landfill, etc.).

IDS

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9. Work with the Business Development team at VIA Rail Canada to establish a formal business events transportation partnership.

- // Implement the established partnership consistently with appropriate conference planners.

10. Calculate and report on the economic impact of hosted business events in Kingston.

- // Utilize the Destinations International Event Economic Impact Calculator to continue determining the full economic impact of hosted business events.
- // Collaborate with the Marketing team to ensure the economic impact of business events is communicated regularly and effectively.

11. Enhance cross-sector collaboration.

- // Continue working closely with all other Tourism Kingston portfolios to ensure the greatest possible impact of business events initiatives.
- // Collaborate with the Sport & Wellness and Marketing portfolios to extend/enhance business stays through wellness opportunities and packages.

Sales events and speaking opportunities

February 24-28	Ottawa Meet Week	Ottawa
April 23-25	CSAE Western Summit	Edmonton
May 6	Travelling FAM	Montreal
June 23-26	CanSPEP National Conference	Kingston
July 9-11	CSAE Summer Summit	Waterloo
August 12-13	CMEE & Travelling FAM Breakfast	Toronto
September 6-9	MPI's The Event	Fredericton
October 21-24	CSAE National Conference	Victoria
November 16-18	PCMA Canadian Innovation Conference	Mississauga

Business events booked for 2025

FUSION Clay & Glass Association of Ontario	May 30-June 1
Medical Laboratory Professionals Association of Ontario	June 11-15
Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners	June 24-27
KIN Canada National Conference	August 11-17
Ontario Municipal Tax & Revenue Association	September 7-10
NAPA Autoparts 2025 Conference	September 18-21
Creative City Network of Canada Conference	October 6-11
Canadian Movers Association	November 15-20



Check the website for the most current list of confirmed business events.



VISITOR SERVICES

In 2025, Visitor Services will continue to provide multilingual in-person and online services to visitors and residents, and to work with tourism partners to promote their offerings. The team will also continue our work on our sustainability goals.



2025 plan

IDS

8

1. Develop a strong multilingual staff team.

// Offer training:

- Include cultural heritage, sustainability initiatives, customer service, and online resources in training.
- Immerse staff in experiencing local attractions as part of their onboarding.
- Provide dedicated ticket sales training to all staff to grow sales for partners.
- Build on existing partnership with Destination Ontario for the ambassador program.

2. Expand retail offerings.

- // In collaboration with the Marketing team, expand retail offerings and promote merchandise.
- // Promote the use of local designers and suppliers and sustainable sources for merchandise.
- // Refresh branded merchandise offerings.
- // Expand special occasion merchandise.
- // Expand merchandise from local makers.
- // Explore opportunities to sell merchandise at partner locations, such as local hotels, Union Station, Queen's University, and St. Lawrence College.
- // Expand merchandise sales at off-site events.
- // Implement a merchandise vending machine off-site.

3. Grow the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) as a one-stop shop for tourism experiences.

- // Maximize ticket sales for tourism partners.
- // Refine the Enhanced Profile Program.
- // Include cultural heritage, sustainability initiatives, customer service, and online resources in training.
- // Immerse staff in experiencing local attractions as part of their onboarding.

4. Improve data collection.

- // Improve visitor data collection inside the VIC and at off-site events.
- // Introduce data collection/visitor feedback on sustainability efforts.
- // Utilize visitor data to help shape programming inside the VIC.
- // Share visitor data insights with the Marketing team to help shape marketing materials.

IDS

13

5. Grow sustainability efforts.

- // Implement the GreenStep action plan.
- // Lead sustainability initiatives through the VIC staff Green Team created in 2024.
- // Track the VIC's promotion of local cultural events, contributions to cultural conservation initiatives, and partnerships with heritage, Indigenous, and community cultural organizations.
- // Monitor printed marketing materials to ensure supply meets reasonable demand (to avoid overprinting) and establish guidelines as needed.
- // Collaborate with the Marketing team to amplify sustainability messaging and activities.
- // Engage visitors with sustainability education:
 - Create and promote a visitor sustainability pledge.
 - Promote sustainable events, activities, and initiatives to visitors online.
 - Host live events with conservation/environmental education partners.



FILM & MEDIA

Both Film & Media and Music are priority sectors in the City of Kingston's Creative Industries Strategy. These sectors enrich our community in a variety of ways, providing employment, economic impact, and tourism opportunities.

Definitions

End-to-end production: a production in which principal photography takes place in one place, i.e., all in the Kingston or RTO 9 region, whether in one or in multiple locations.

Tier 1 Production: Production lasts seven or more days.

Tier 2 Production: Production lasts two to six days.

Tier 3 Production: Production lasts one day or less.

The Kingston Film & Media 2025 plan will continue to support end-to-end productions in Kingston, attract more large studio productions, emphasize training of local filmmakers and crew, and promote sustainability in the local industry. Additionally, we will expand our focus to include ancillary media industries like Esport. We will continue to encourage a broader range of community members to get involved in the industry – as service providers, locations, and cast and crew, or workshop attendees.

2025 plan

1. Establish a continuous pipeline of end-to-end productions, creating steady work opportunities for local crew.

- // Continue efforts to build and sustain relationships with independent feature producers' films (\$5M and under) for production in Kingston, utilizing local crew and talent..
- // Nurture and expand relationships with local and non-local production companies.

IDS

14

2. Attract studio productions.

- // Continue to leverage and promote the Kingston Production Directory to demonstrate the range of venues and services Kingston has to offer.
- // Promote locations that are ideal for big-budget studio productions (S.S. *Keewatin*, Fort Henry, City Hall, Springer Market Square, historic downtown, Kingston Airport) to increase the pipeline and diversity of the style and genres of productions in Kingston.
- // Create a network of local experts (real estate brokers, municipal GIS staff, landlords) to help with nimble location identification.
- // Report quarterly on tracking, leads, and successful partnerships.

3. Expand our work into the Esport sector.

- // Create an Esport strategy in order to attract Esport events to Kingston.
- // Complete a full inventory of potential host venues and their technical capabilities.
- // Host small, community-level events to establish Kingston's presence in the Esport community.
- // In association with the Destination Development Manager, package tournaments with hotel and restaurants, local experiences, and travel partners.
- // Collaborate with Esport influencers to promote events and Kingston-based restaurants, breweries, and experiences.
- // Pitch Kingston to provincial Esport associations as an event host community.



IDS

4

4. Expand the workshop series.

- // Continue efforts to expand reach into RTO 9 communities by offering “travelling workshops” in a different RTO 9 community each quarter.
- // Utilize Francophone Community Grant funding from the Ontario Ministry of Francophone Affairs to develop and offer two French-language workshops in partnership with St. Lawrence College:
 - Film production design
 - User experience through narrative digital game design
- // Collaborate on workshop and training promotion with key partners such as Women In Film and Television, BIPOC TV & Film, and ImagiNATIVE.

5. Integrate the Ontario Green Screen Sustainable Production Initiative into production activity.

- // Ensure all members of the Kingston Film & Media team have completed the updated Climate & Sustainable Production training program.
- // Where possible, work with productions to be sustainable using programs like the electrical tie-in program, food redistribution, and reduction of waste on set.

6. Increase revenue sources for operational costs and projects.

- // Implement the rate card for use of city-owned property for productions.
- // Negotiate fees based on budget and scale of each production.
- // Charge a “rush fee” for last-minute permit requests.
- // Seek partnerships and grant opportunities where available, in partnership with the Marketing team.

IDS

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7. Measure and report on the economic impact of film and media production in Kingston.

- // Utilize the Economic Impact calculator tool in Reel-Scout to measure the economic impact of each production in Kingston.
- // Report quarterly on the number of local crew members hired by productions in Kingston.

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8. Build on key local partnerships.

- // Work with Queen's University to implement new on-campus guidelines and permit process.
- // Provide content screening support services for Queen's University, Correctional Services Canada, and Great Lakes Museum (S.S. *Keewatin*).
 - Review scripts and content proposals to ensure all productions meet content requirements and restrictions implemented by these institutions.
- // Partner with Kingston Canadian Film Festival.
 - Collaborate on workshops and industry events both during the festival and throughout the year to provide residents the opportunity to network with and learn from industry executives and creatives.
 - Introduce an industry brunch for visiting delegates during the film festival's 25th anniversary programming.
 - Use this opportunity to share images and video of Kingston locations for potential future productions.
- // Expand partnerships with ReelOut Queer Film Festival, Prince Edward County Film Festival, and the Cinema Society of Kingston.
- // Expand collaboration with Ontario Creates to ensure Kingston is included in outreach efforts to national and international production communities.
- // Expand quarterly Makers Meetup events by introducing speakers and other special events.
- // Introduce quarterly meetings with representatives from each region in RTO 9 to discuss current production news, upcoming workshops and opportunities, and identify opportunities for future collaboration.

Sales events and speaking opportunities

September

| TIFF

| Toronto

Discover

MUSIC

Definitions

Export-ready musician: a musician who has developed the necessary skills, resources, and market knowledge to successfully promote, distribute, and tour their music in national and international markets. This could include, but is not limited to, having significant experience in performing their music live, a strong domestic foundation, a well-defined brand, professional management or support, and the ability to meet the demands of foreign markets, has at least one sound recording of any format or duration that has been commercially available to the general public in and outside of Canada, and has received public and industry recognition (via radio play, video play, web hits and streams, music press, blogs, awards, etc.).

The Kingston Music Office serves as the first point of contact for the music community and is a partnership between Tourism Kingston and the City of Kingston to lead the implementation of the Kingston Music Strategy (KMS) and deliver programming and services in support of the local music community. The Music Office also supports Tourism Kingston strategies to deliver music tourism initiatives. The Music Office creates conditions for the music industry to thrive and grow while acting as a liaison between City Hall and the music community.

The overarching vision for Kingston's music strategy is to position Kingston as a hub and incubator for musician development, music careers, and a strong music scene, where music is ubiquitous and can be seen and heard by all.

The 2025 plan is to support the Kingston music ecosystem by supporting and developing music careers while empowering and engaging all contributors to the local music scene.



Key goals include:

1. Cultivate spaces and places.
2. Empower, support, showcase and invest in talent.
3. Amplify connection, collaboration, partnerships, and music tourism.
4. Bolster city leadership and support.
5. Build a dynamic and innovative music business economy.
6. Integrate music to larger community goals.



2025 plan

IDS

4

KMS

3.1

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4.2

1. Strengthen music-friendly infrastructure.

- // Oversee the Kingston Music Advisory Committee which helps to advise on annual work (based on the Kingston Music Strategy), advises on local music-related needs and monitors music-related trends and practices. This advisory collective is composed of working professionals of the Kingston music industry and key partners. This committee will renew annually.
- // Develop a sustainable financial strategy to invest in the Kingston Music Office programming and operations long-term, exploring a mixture of public and private funding (grants, municipal, partnerships, and sponsorships).

IDS

4

10

12

KMS

2.3

2. Expand outreach and talent investment by assisting emerging artists with professional tour support.

- // Continue the expansion of Kingston roadshows to help local artists take their show on the road to expand their fanbase and promote the Kingston music scene to other regions.
- // Improve access to performance and economic opportunities, ensuring Kingston artists are “export-ready” within the national music industry standards.
- // Provide consultation support including access to music business tool kits and resources.
- // Expand successful music office initiatives to include mentorship and showcase opportunities to further develop music careers.

IDS

4

KMS

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2.6

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3.5

3. Create professional development and networking opportunities for local artists.

- // Continue to develop and facilitate workshops and panels under the Bandwidth initiative, led by industry experts, providing financially accessible professional development for local artists to make music a viable career.
- // Leverage community assets like the Broom Factory, The Spire, and Théâtre Le Sésame, as well as municipal community centres, to host events and workshops, specifically seeking all-ages-friendly spaces.
- // Continue to present events like Bandwidth, Makers Meetup, and Merch Markets as needs persists.
- // Establish partnership with the Kingston Arts Council to enhance awareness of grant funding opportunities available (locally, provincially, and federally) to local musicians.
- // Participate in the review of the City of Kingston Arts Fund to create new eligibility criteria and/or grant streams to support musicians, particularly for recording projects.
- // Partner with local experts, community organizations, and post-secondary institutions to expand reach of city-sponsored residency programs for both musicians and music industry workers.
- // Develop barrier-free workshops, programming, and supporting resources on building a career in music.
- // Work with community partners to deliver an annual music industry conference to facilitate professional development, capacity building, and networking.

IDS

4

KMS

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4. Develop tool kits and promote resources for musicians and venues.

- // Expand the Kingston Production Directory to promote local talent, venues, and music industry services.
- // Enhance the Artist's Tool kit: collect and share information for musicians including fair wages, best practices, SOCAN registration, business licenses, links to promoters, studios, and other services.
- // Share information for venues including fair wages; potential funding for equipment; safety and responsibility; and how to be "live-music ready."
- // Explore partnership with union and create professional venue standards guidelines.
- // Facilitate the development of venue standards to further support professional presentation standards.
- // Create and share information on the work and impact of the Music Office/Officer, on the website, through social media, and newsletters.
- // Create a city-wide campaign to promote Kingston's ongoing commitment to fair payment standards for artists.

IDS

4

13

5. Explore sustainable destination goals for the Kingston music ecosystem.

- // Develop resources on hosting sustainable music events and festivals, including measuring an event's carbon footprint, through collaboration with partners such as Creative Green Tools and Music Declares Emergency.
- // Explore sustainable goals for Kingston's music community, using UNESCO's model as an example.

IDS

4

KMS

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2.1

6. Support activation and development of spaces for musical experiences.

- // Assist local organizers and groups to access unique Kingston spaces for projects, including sound recording opportunities, artist residencies, all-ages concerts, and pop-up showcases.
- // Support access to community assets such as the Broom Factory, The Spire, City Hall, and record shops, plus rooftop/open-air, waterfront, and other outdoor spaces.
- // Promote available rehearsal spaces for musicians and explore additional spaces in the community.
- // Leverage outdoor and city-owned public spaces for performance opportunities with a focus on getting outside of the downtown core.
- // Continue to prioritize live performance opportunities at the Kingston Grand Theatre and at municipal events and programs.
- // Develop new programming and performance opportunities that promote local musicians and access to music in neighbourhoods across Kingston, with activations in each municipal district.
- // Address gaps and work with community partners to develop a mid-size music venue and performance hall (with capacity for 400 to 700) for live performance and audience development.

IDS

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13

KMS

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1.2

7. Provide support for local promoters, organizers, festivals, and venues.

- // Work with the Marketing team to provide promotional support through Visit Kingston channels.
- // Continue to foster supportive partnerships with the Kingston Canadian Film Festival, Spring Reverb, Skeleton Park Arts Festival, and music-adjacent arts groups and key community partners.
- // Seek opportunities for local artists to open up for national acts on professional touring stages (Kingston Grand Theatre, Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts).

IDS

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KMS

2.8

8. Support creative industries' growth through key educational partners.

- // Provide consultation and programming assistance for Queen's University (Homecoming and athletic and other major events), St. Lawrence College (Music and Digital Media program), and local secondary and elementary schools (workshop programming).
- // Explore options to partner on other concerts and larger sector growth initiatives.
- // Further develop artist in-class visits for local secondary and elementary schools.

IDS

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9. Develop and activate music-related tourism packages.

- // Further work to connect all Tourism Kingston portfolios to the music community.
- // Collaborate with the Destination Development Manager to create packages such as concert ticket pairings, dinners, inclusion of musician's favourite local eateries, and artist-selected playlists and itineraries.
- // Collaborate with the Marketing team to increase visibility of Kingston music sector through stories highlighting artists, events, and venues.

KMS
4.7

10. Measure and report on the implementation of the Kingston Music Strategy and the economic impact of the music industry to the community.

- // Create key performance indicators for specific action items in the 2025 plan to share with the Kingston Music Advisory Committee.
- // Utilize tools such as TREIM and the Reel-Scout Economic Impact Calculator to demonstrate the economic impact of music events in Kingston.
- // Establish the means for monitoring key local industry metrics as well as emerging trends and practices in other jurisdictions.

KMS
4.4
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1.4

11. Collaborate with the City of Kingston to execute key components of the Kingston Music Strategy.

- // Review bylaws and standards for the music industry with planning department staff.
- // Support revisions of the existing noise bylaw to allow opportunity for more music activity across the city.
- // Work collaboratively with planning and development sectors to review development for possible creations of music spaces.

Sales events and speaking opportunities

February	Folk Alliance International Music Conference	Montreal
May	Capital Music Week	Ottawa
June	Lawnya Vawnya	St. John's
June	Departure Fest (Canadian Music Week rebranded)	Toronto
June	International Indigenous Music Summit	Toronto
September	POP Montreal	Montreal
September	Music Cities Conference	Arkansas
October	Folk Music Ontario Conference	Ottawa
November	City of Music Conference	London



— Tourism —
KINGSTON

