

2025 Tourism Vernon Annual Plan

Prepared By



✓ TOURISM
vernon

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ABOUT

Tourism Vernon is committed to enhancing Vernon's reputation as a premier year-round destination for visitors while ensuring the well-being of residents and the sustainability of the local environment. As a department under the City of Vernon, Tourism Vernon plays a dual role in promoting the region through strategic marketing initiatives and managing the destination with stewardship practices.

This year, the focus is on embracing innovation, fostering partnerships, and supporting the tourism industry in delivering exceptional visitor experiences. With community development as a guiding principle, Tourism Vernon aligns its efforts with council and resident goals to create a thriving and resilient tourism sector that benefits both visitors and residents.





 Downtown Vernon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism in Vernon is coming off two years of exceptional growth, having successfully captured its market share of the pent-up demand for travel that followed the pandemic. Shoulder season visitation, in particular, has flourished, with record-breaking MRDT revenue in September and April for both 2023 and 2024. While this growth trend underscores Vernon's appeal as a year-round destination, 2025 is expected to bring a slower growth trajectory or potentially flat year-over-year MRDT revenue, reflecting inflation and ongoing economic uncertainty.

At the same time, Tourism Vernon is hitting its stride as it enters Year 3 of the Five-Year Tourism Strategy. With an estimated hotel tax revenue of \$1,477,818 and an additional \$350,000 from hotel tax reserves, the program has reached a historic milestone, surpassing a \$2 million budget for the first time. This funding is further bolstered by small grants and visitor guide editorial sales, enabling Tourism Vernon to invest more deeply in marketing, development, and community initiatives.

As a lead driver of economic growth in Vernon, Tourism Vernon prioritizes alignment with resident and community goals. Destination Development has become a core part of the team’s daily operations, focusing on incubating new and existing tourism businesses, events, and experiences through sponsorship, marketing, visitor services, and grant programs.

Collaboration with City departments—such as the active transportation coordinator, climate action specialist, and community development manager—has proven to be a valuable approach. Integrating the visitor’s perspective into city planning,

particularly in the development of trails and parks, delivers mutual benefits for both residents and visitors. Tourism Vernon is committed to fostering these partnerships while centering its strategies on building a thriving and resilient tourism ecosystem that enhances the city for everyone.

As Vernon continues to evolve as a premier year-round destination, Tourism Vernon remains steadfast in its mission to balance growth with sustainability, innovation, and community engagement.

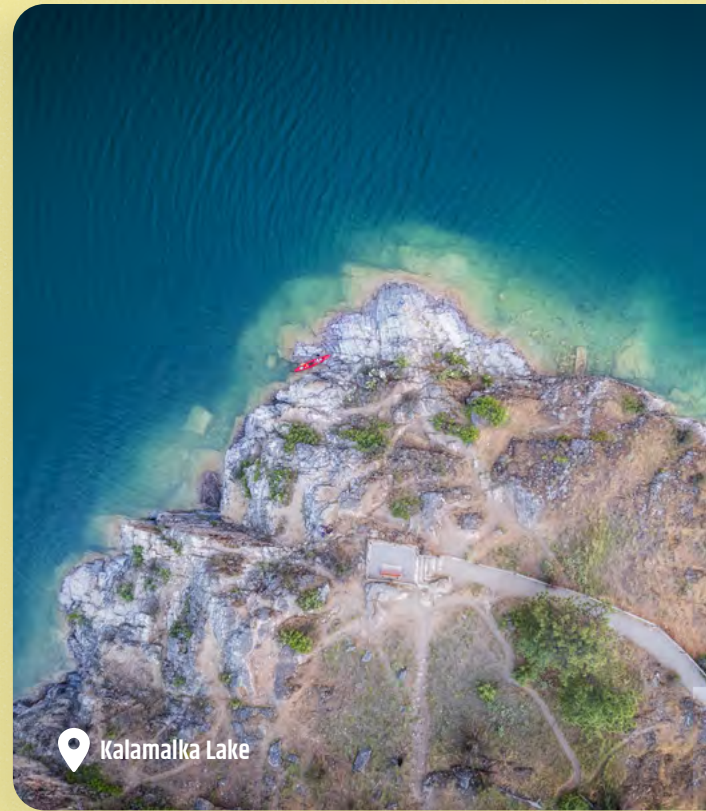


OVERVIEW

Five-Year Strategic Plan

OUR ROLE

To promote, protect and enhance Vernon's position as one of North America's premier holiday and lifestyle destinations through leading the execution of targeted marketing programs, supporting destination development programs and advocating for the sustainable growth of tourism in Vernon. We will be the most innovative and effective destination management organization in the Thompson Okanagan in inspiring our target markets to experience our destination.



Mission

To refresh the mind, body, and soul of the active explorer in the Okanagan

Vision

Vernon is the 365-day adventure capital of the Okanagan

Strategic Goals

1. Increased year-round visitation
2. Increased visitor satisfaction
3. Increased stakeholder engagement
4. Increased Community Support for tourism

Strategic Framework

We have six key strategic pillars to achieve our goals:

1. Lead with the brand
2. Focus marketing on key audiences
3. Leverage specific sports
4. Establish strong partnerships
5. Activate local pride
6. Incubate products and experience



TARGET AUDIENCE

ACTIVE EXPLORERS: Families seeking outdoor adventure and cultural experiences.

NEAR-RETIREEES: Older travelers drawn to Vernon's tranquil yet engaging lifestyle.

SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS: Visitors pursuing activity-specific experiences like skiing, biking, or golfing.



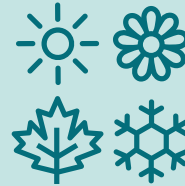
KPI'S

2025 Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for Tourism Vernon's Strategic Goals

1

Increased year-round visitation

- MRDT Revenue
- STR Hotel Occupancy Data



2

Increased visitor satisfaction

- Net Promoter Score
- Online Review and Sentiment Tracking



3

Increased stakeholder engagement

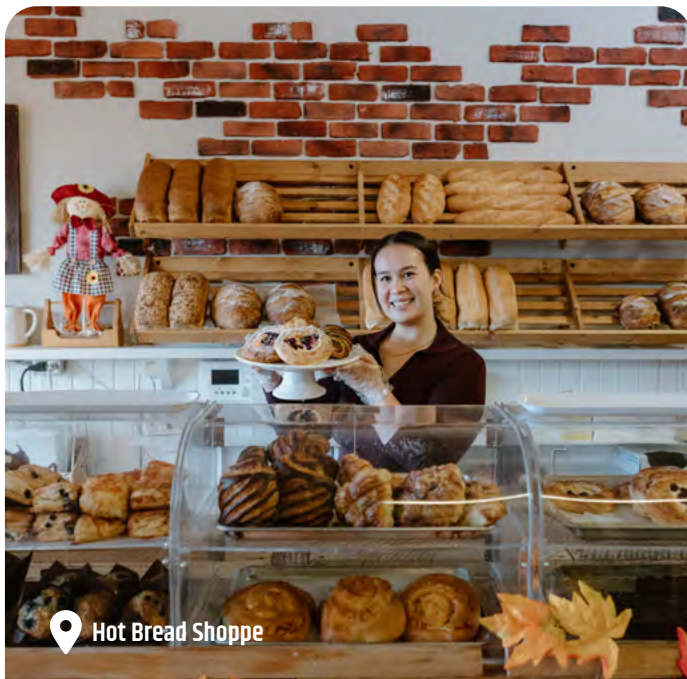
- Stakeholder Survey Results
- Program Participation Metrics




4

Enhanced Community Support for Tourism

- Local event participation numbers
- Activation of local pride initiatives



 Hot Bread Shoppe



 SilverStar Mountain Resort

2024 Insights

- Tourism Vernon achieved significant milestones in visitation growth, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability efforts.
- Key highlights from 2024 will include expanded media coverage, successful partnerships, and progress in sport tourism development.

2024 vs. 2023 KPIs

Vernon welcomed over

\$1 million 

OVERNIGHT VISITORS IN 2024

Hotel revenue per available room **increased** by

↑ 7%

Overall Stakeholder satisfaction with the use of MRDT funds is up

↑ 9.3% FROM LAST YEAR

Stakeholders Trust Tourism Vernon to help their business thrive **increased** by

↑ 9.76% OVER LAST YEAR

Tourism Vernon strategic partnerships, sponsorships and Co-op marketing programs invested

\$250,000 DIRECTLY INTO VERNON'S LOCAL BUSINESS ECONOMY IN 2024.

↑ 13%

increase in Visitor Services interactions



Stakeholder participation in Tourism Vernon's Co-op Marketing program is up

↑ 15%

43% **increase** in website sessions at tourismvernon.com



Outbound links to stakeholder websites from tourismvernon.com is up

↑ 64%



Staff hosted

13



MEDIA & INFLUENCER VISITS IN 2024, COMPARED TO **6** IN 2023.

PARTNERS

Tourism Vernon's Partnership Snapshot

Partnerships will continue to play a pivotal role in Vernon's success. In 2025, collaborations will focus on:

Regional



Provincial



Indigenous



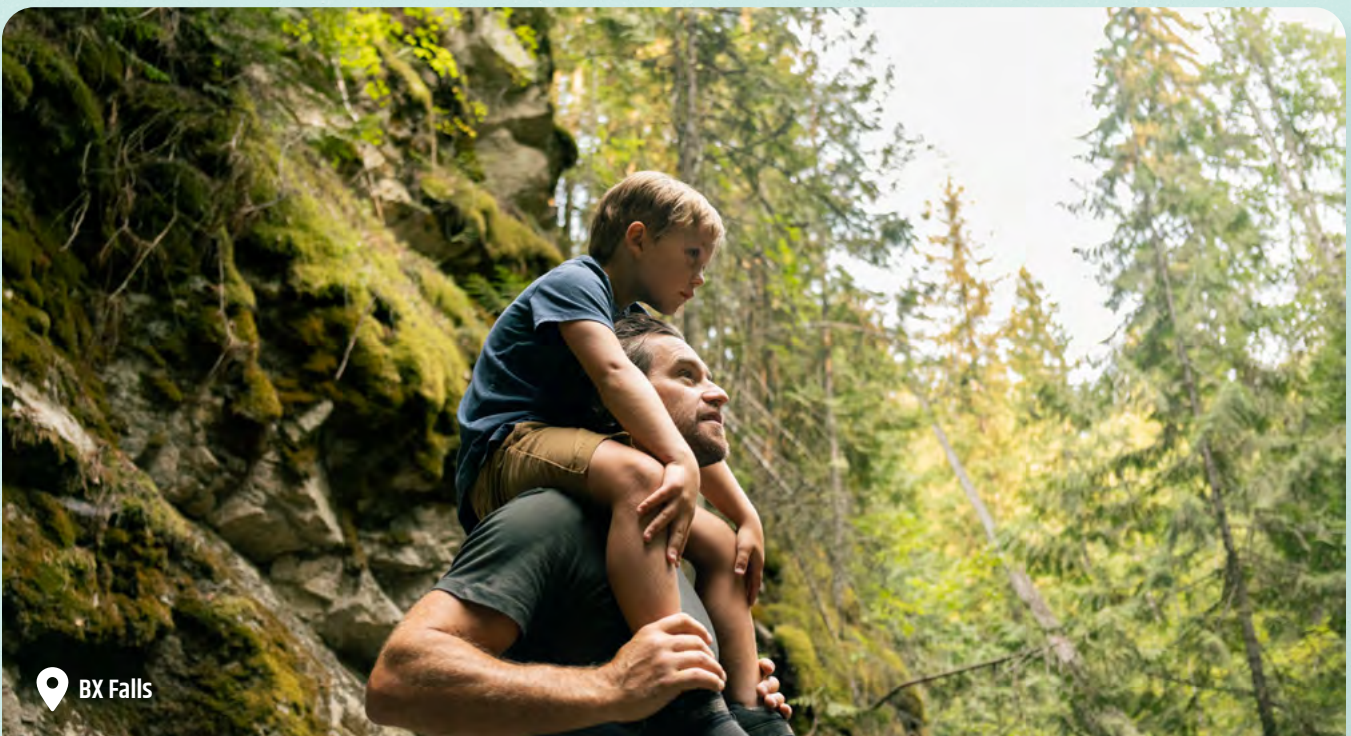
Federal



SUSTAINABILITY

Tourism Vernon remains aligned with the City of Vernon's Climate Action Plan. Key 2025 initiatives include:

1. Promoting low-carbon travel options.
2. Supporting businesses in adopting sustainable practices.
3. Encouraging off-season and low-footprint travel experiences.
4. Collaborating with the City's Climate Action Specialist on major strategies.



TOURISM VERNON'S NEW LOOK

Building on the successful brand refresh in 2024, Tourism Vernon will:

- Roll out Living the Brand workshops to engage stakeholders.
- Launch localized campaigns to highlight Vernon's unique identity and tourism offerings.

Brand Characteristics

Outdoorsy and sporty
In a laid-back, easy-going kind of way.

Humble and unpretentious
In a "we're not into the see and be seen" kind of way.

Friendly and approachable
except when you're not respecting our place kind of way.

Generous and collaborative
In a "let's come together for our community" kind of way.

Mindful and thoughtful
In a "we only want to make good decisions for our future" kind of way.

Chilled out and stress-free
In a "you be you and go at your own pace" kind of way.

Brand Values and Beliefs



Tourism should support our values.

We don't build tourist traps, but instead we offer up real experiences in a real community to people who want to get to know what we're all about. And we're proud to share it.



Nature needs us to nurture it.

Vernon is surrounded by a spectacular but sensitive environment. We understand that if we're going to invite people to play in this place we have a duty to protect it from the kind of activities that will make it unplayable in the future.



Adventure doesn't need to be hardcore to be awesome.

We don't buy into the action sport one-upmanship. This is a place where you can be laid back and up-for-anything at the same time. We think of it as "chilled out for anything".

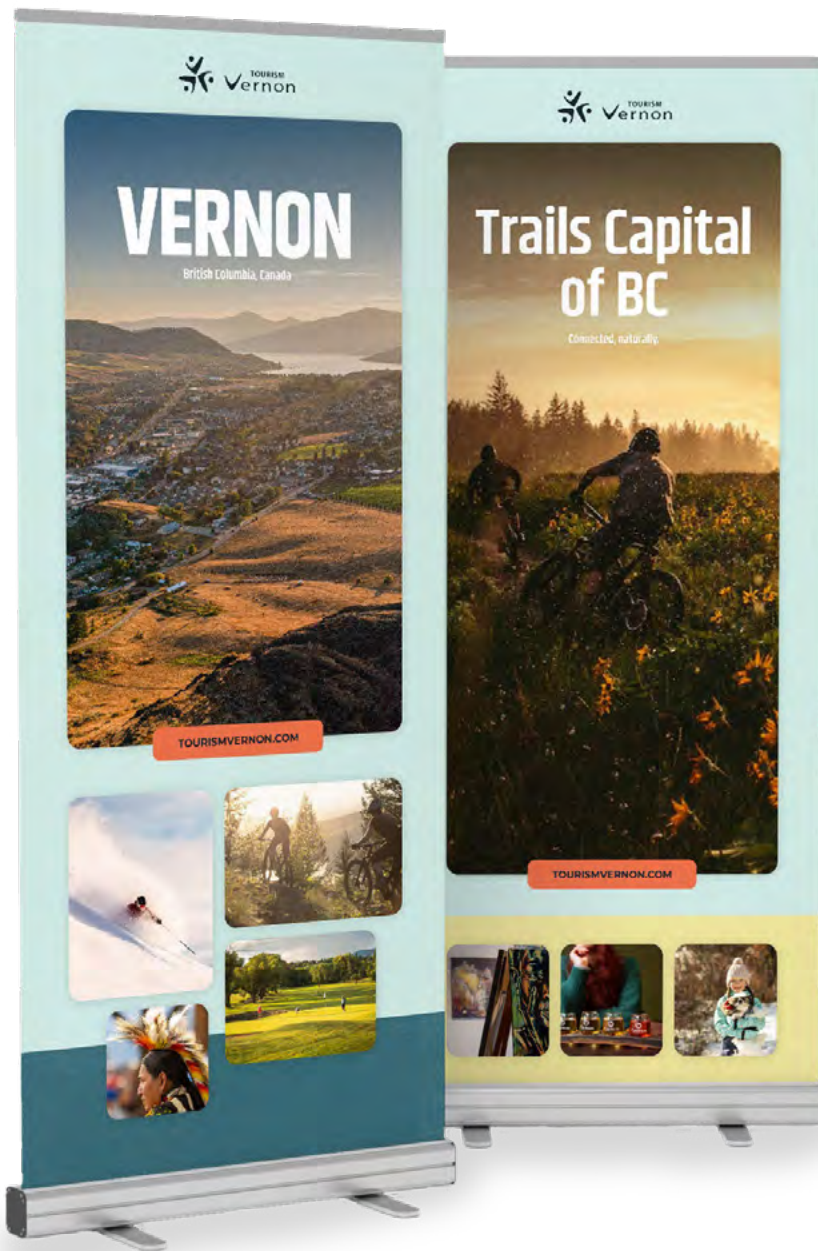


Wellness is a mindset not a mud bath.

We believe that nature is our spa, plain and simple. We use it to rejuvenate, inspire and keep ourselves youthful. Ask anyone, even our world-class spas and resorts will agree.

TOURISM VERNON'S NEW LOOK

SAMPLE BRAND EXECUTIONS:



DISPLAY BANNERS



Choose a path, and the inspiration will follow.




TOURISMVERNON.COM

Welcome to the Trails Capital of BC
A designation like "Trails Capital of BC" feels like a bold statement for this remote town, but make the trip and you'll find mountain bike single tracks and downhill parks mixed with rail trails and hiking paths. Add in the routes to our arts, culture, history and farm-fresh offerings and you'll find yourself connected, naturally.




Around here, there's a trail for everyone.




We're proud to be the Trails Capital of BC
Mtains, outdoor recreation, spectacular vistas and arts and culture take centre stage, but what's unique is how we bring them all together. From lakeside rail trails to mountainside single tracks, from hillside hiking paths to downtown art strolls, Vernon's one-of-a-kind trail network will get you connected, naturally.






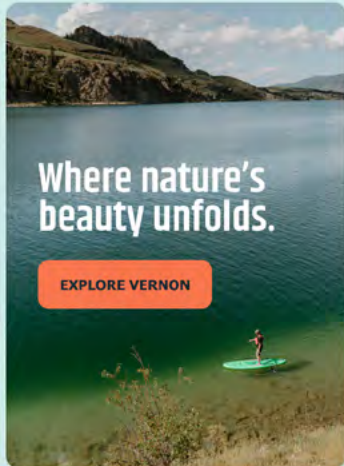


TOURISMVERNON.COM

PRINT ADS



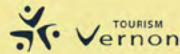



Where paddle meets turquoise water.


Where nature's beauty unfolds.

[EXPLORE VERNON](#)

Where smiles are shared freely.

[EXPLORE VERNON](#)



DIGITAL ADS/WEBSITE BANNER

CORE PROGRAM

Tourism Vernon's core programs are the foundation of our operations, running continuously in the background to maintain Vernon's position as a premier year-round destination.

These essential functions complement the new tactics and projects outlined for 2025:

Marketing:

Tourism Vernon runs traditional and digital marketing campaigns 365 days a year, including TV ads with Rogers Media, murals in the Kelowna and Calgary airports, and digital content on platforms like Instagram. Marketing accounts for over 50% of the 2025 budget and is central to promoting Vernon's brand locally and globally.

Visitor Services:

A mobile visitor services program ensures we meet visitors where they are, delivering resources and information directly to them instead of relying on a central location.



Sport and Culture Development:

Through a full-time contract with the Sport and Culture Society of the North Okanagan, Tourism Vernon pursues sporting and cultural events to bring visitors to our community, particularly during shoulder seasons.

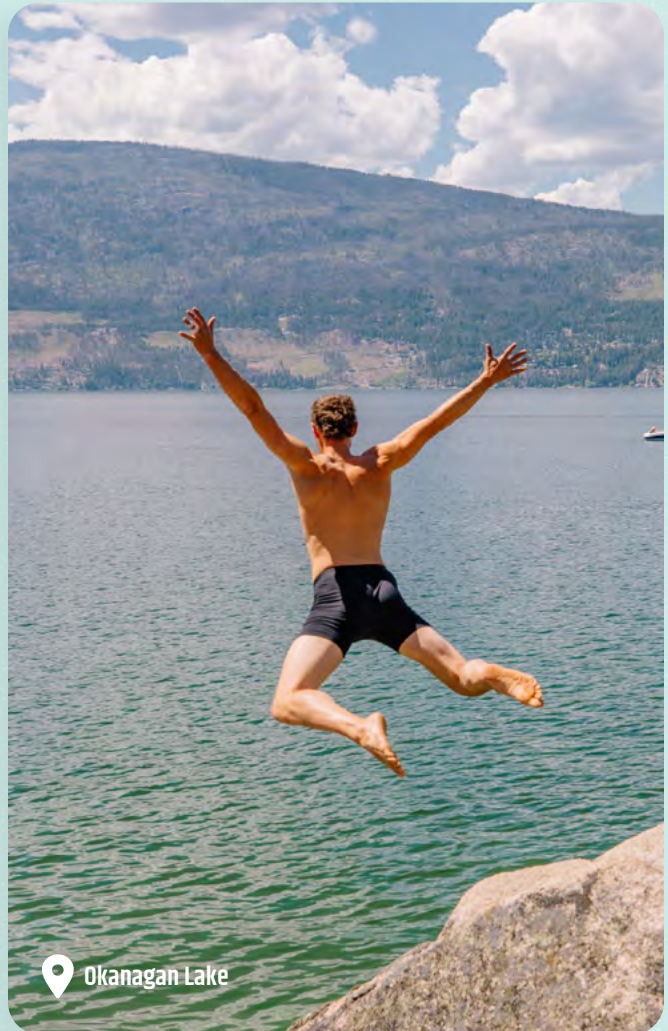
Meetings, Events, and Group Travel (New in 2025):

A new full-time contract with Evergreen Consulting focuses on attracting meetings, events, and group travel to Vernon, further diversifying the tourism economy.

Destination Development:

Strategic planning to enhance Vernon’s appeal by creating compelling experiences, building quality infrastructure, and delivering remarkable services. Destination development supports the evolution of desirable travel destinations while aligning with community needs.

These core functions operate year-round, driving Vernon’s tourism success and strengthening its reputation as a vibrant, accessible, and dynamic destination.



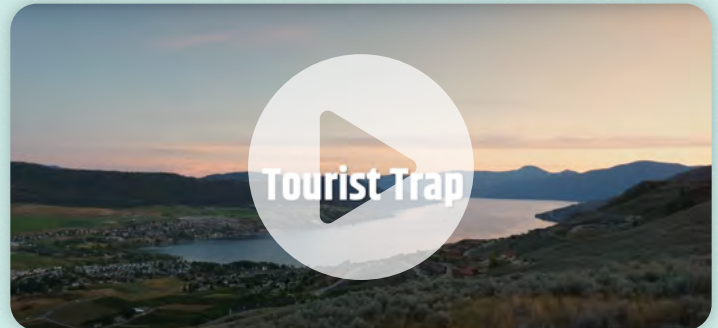
2025 TACTICS

1 Lead with the Brand

Refine and amplify Vernon’s unique identity by showcasing its standout attractions and experiences through engaging storytelling and high-quality visuals.

- Refine messaging for major attractions and experiences.
- Use video and photo assets to highlight key audience interests.

Example: “Vernon is a true Tourist Trap” video

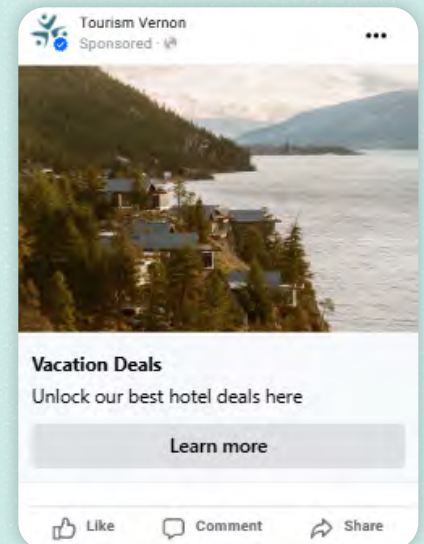


2 Focus Marketing on Key Audiences

Tailor marketing efforts to connect with families, near-retirees, and sports enthusiasts, using strategic media placements and partnerships to maximize impact.

- Expand digital and traditional marketing campaigns.
 - Example: Partner with Rogers Media to create winter-focused TV spots showcasing winter trails in Vernon, complemented by carousel Instagram ads featuring curated family-friendly travel itineraries.
- Leverage high-impact marketing partnerships to extend reach.

Example: Meta ads showcasing Vernon accommodators.



3 Leverage Specific Sports

Solidify Vernon’s reputation as a sports destination by promoting year-round outdoor activities and attracting high-profile events.

- Finalize Vernon’s Sport Tourism Strategy.
- Strengthen marketing for sport-specific travel, including golf, biking, and winter sports.

Example: Support and grow a national trail running race at Kal Park or attract a large scale sport event to Vernon.

4 Activate Local Pride

Strengthen community involvement by empowering locals to become ambassadors for Vernon's attractions and experiences, fostering pride and participation.

- Expand the Local Concierge Training Program.
- Launch a Friends and Family Fall Campaign to drive shoulder season travel.

Example: Broaden the Local Concierge Training Program to include retail staff and host workshops.



5 Incubate Products & Experiences

- Collaborate with stakeholders to create new tourism products and enhance existing experiences, focusing on sustainability and visitor appeal.
- Develop partnerships to enhance wine tourism and arts festivals like the Sundog Festival.
- Implement bike-friendly initiatives aligned with the City's Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan.

Example: Sponsor and promote OKIB's new, annual Powwow event. Partner with SilverStar Mountain Resort to expand Crankworx activities into a village festival sponsored by Tourism Vernon. Or enhance partnership with Sundog Festival to include interactive art workshops and live performances that celebrate Vernon's artistic community.

6 Establish Strong Partnerships

Build meaningful collaborations to foster inclusive tourism experiences and support a thriving local economy.

- Deepen relationships with Indigenous communities, local businesses, and regional tourism stakeholders.
- Collaborate with the Downtown Vernon Association to promote a vibrant downtown hub.

Example: Partner with the Vernon Farmers Market to bring a Saturday market to the downtown core. Partner with the DVA to support a Downtown Vernon Mural Festival, enhancing both visitor engagement and community pride.