



*Embrace our rural routes*

## 2025 Annual Review

2025 was a busy year for Oxford Tourism. The work accomplished was made possible through strong relationships, collaborations and partnership. This review highlights key actions and accomplishments in 2025.

### Visitation

Oxford Tourism monitors visitor traffic internally and through a data partnership with Ontario's Southwest providing Symphony Tourism Services data. Within this data set Trips is defined as: travellers who spend one or more nights in the destination, regardless of the number of visits, over a measured time period.

Comparing Trips in 2025 to 2024, Oxford experienced an increase in trips.

#### Trips to Oxford (2025 vs 2024)

↑ 1,350,600 (+14.6%, Canadians)

↑ 30,100 (+0.22% USA)

#### Top Regions making Trips to Oxford:

- Ontario: 12.9% London, 9.3% Toronto, 8.4% Waterloo Region, 5.3% Brampton, 5% Hamilton
- Canada: 95% Ontario, 1.2% Quebec
- USA: 30.2% Michigan, 8.9% Ohio, 7.5% New York, 7.1% Illinois, 6.4% Pennsylvania, 6.4% Texas

#### Oxford Tourism also tracks visitor information requests:

↑ 524, +23% in Visitor information requests, in 2025 compared to 2024

### Funding Partnerships

#### Highlights

Oxford Tourism is consistently looking for funding and partnership opportunities to offer more business services and increase impact of marketing. This resulted in accessing \$209,000 in grants and funding partnerships.

**Invested:** \$55,000

**To access:** \$209,000 in partnership & grants

#### Results:

- 3 New tourism products
  - 3 Tourism Innovation Grants
  - 7,415,178 Advertising Impressions (includes partner & non-partner ads)
  - 30 Businesses photographed
  - 52 Businesses filmed
  - 3 Visitor data resources accessed for research & analysis
-

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Canada 

## Tourism Growth Program

December 2025 Oxford Tourism wrapped up its three year Tourism Growth Program (TGP). End results include:

- Sustainable tourism Certification and recommended actions. Completed 2 recommendations and 17 are in progress.
- Creation of a 5-Year Tourism Plan Completing 22 year one actions.
- Creation of 6 Your Next Stop Trip itineraries in partnership with 66 tourism businesses
- Creation of a new TourismOxford.ca website improving customer service for visitors and tourism businesses.

## 2025 Ontario's Southwest partnerships

Thank you Ontario's Southwest for the following 2025 partnerships:

- Research Partnerships providing valuable tourism data for planning and marketing
- Business training and networking opportunities
- Photography partnership
- Travel media and digital advertising partnerships (*resulting in 2,366,037 impressions*)



## Destination Ontario & Ontario's Southwest

In 2025 Oxford Tourism was able to participate in two marketing partnerships with Destination Ontario and Ontario's Southwest. In 2025 it allowed Oxford County to participate in marketing campaigns with a budget of \$116,600

Oxford Tourism is grateful that Destination Ontario makes these opportunities available and Ontario's Southwest brings the region together to participate.



## Oxford Tourism Innovation Grant

In 2021 Community Futures Oxford, Rural Oxford and Tourism Oxford partnered to create the Tourism Innovation Grant. This program supports business investment in tourism development by providing \$3000 grants to successful applicants.

Congratulations to the 2025 recipients and thank you for your investments in Oxford County.

- **Transitions Equine Assisted Learning:** to make the space more accessible and to add a medicine garden among other improvements.
- **Jarful Local Refillery:** to add a Scent Your Own station and workshops for people to create their own custom blends of essential oils and learn how to create a scent.
- **Fair/Square Inc:** to revive inclusive and interactive Tasting Events that highlight fresh, seasonal produce from Oxford County in a four-course menu. Select events will allow guests to personalize their dishes to foster a hands-on connection with food.



PEOPLE • PROXIMITY • PROSPERITY



### City of Woodstock



Oxford Tourism and the City of Woodstock Economic Development Department partnered to market the new Your Next Stop route promoting visitation to Woodstock. For this partnership the City of Woodstock provided \$5000 dollar boost to marketing efforts.

### Rural Oxford

Rural Oxford partnered with Tourism Oxford to gather photography as part of the Tourism Growth Program project funded by Fed Dev Ontario. Rural Oxford's contribution of \$2500 to photography was then matched by Oxford County and Ontario's Southwest. This provided a total marketing budget of \$7500 towards photography in 2025.



### Revive Fund



In 2025 the Oxford County Federation of Agriculture (OCFA) submitted a Revive Fund application to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA). With this funding the OFA arranged for Oxford Fresh chefs and producers to join the celebrations for Big Cheese Days at the Ingersoll Cheese Museum. Thank you to the OCFA, OFA and participating chefs and producers for bring local flavours to visitors.



## Management

### Tourism 5-Year Plan Update

The [Tourism 5-Year Plan](#) was approved by County of Oxford Council in October 2024. In 2025, twenty-two actions were started or completed. Key 2025 actions completed include:

**Customer service experience and efficiency improvements with a new more dynamic, TourismOxford.ca website:** Aligning with goal 4 (Effective Marketing and Promotion), action 1 (create a new TourismOxford.ca website with an integrated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database, as outlined in the 2023 technology report). The website allows businesses to update their content through

the CRM Extranet. Consumers can filter travel information to make/share trip itineraries with fellow travelers, as well as use new filter features that support sustainability and DEI efforts.

**Your Next Stop:** The launch of 3 new town travel itineraries under the brand Your Next Stop, aligning with *goal 5 (Collaborative Tourism Network)*, *action 2 (Continue to develop Your Next Stop travel itineraries, encouraging tourism operators to promote complimentary nearby attractions)*. These routes meet visitor demand for quick and easy trip planning and promote attractions in close proximity to each other. The routes minimizing time spent driving and maximize time at each stop. These routes also reduce car use through shorter trips and promote parking the car and walking for town routes. There are currently 67 business participating the Your Next Stop program, as stops along the routes.

**Annual surveys:** Conducted 3 surveys, *meeting goal 1 (Economic, Social, and Environmental Benefit)*, *action 1 (Develop efficient systems to measure, monitor and report on the economic, social and environmental impact of the tourism industry)*. These surveys analyze tourism impact on partners, visitors, and residents. The results help better understand how support the planning and development of a sustainable tourism industry in Oxford County.

**Expansion of shoulder season:** Aligning with *goal 3 (Compelling Product Offering)*, *action 4 (Expand shoulder season tourism product and collaborations)*. Tourism products and offerings were developed and expanded for winter months to combat seasonality and promote year-round visitation. This included 3 travel writer visits and a digital advertising campaign.

[Read 5 Year Plan](#)

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## Oxford Tourism Surveys

November 2025, Oxford Tourism conducted its first annual surveys of tourism businesses, visitors, and residents. Surveys evaluated the economic, social, and environmental impact of the tourism industry. Surveys were completed by 86 business, 95 visitors and 236 residents. Key findings include:

### Business Surveys (86):

- 75% of businesses promote shoulder season travel with the quietest months being: January (77%), February (63%) and March (51%)
- Businesses are committed to fostering sustainability and well-being in their communities:
  - 34% of businesses identified 3+ ways they provide welcoming environments for customers
  - 27% of businesses identified 3+ ways they celebrate and support local culture
  - 12% of businesses identified 3+ ways they celebrate and support the natural environment
- 85% of businesses gave a satisfaction rating of 8+ out of 10 to Oxford Tourism's business services.

### Visitor Surveys (95):

- Key months they visited Oxford County were September-October (62%) and July-August (54%).
- 77% of gave a rating of 8+ out of 10 for wanting to have a positive impact on where they visit. They want to frequent businesses that support sustainability and overall well-being in Oxford County.
- 86% of visitors scored trip satisfaction at 8+ out of 10.

### Resident Surveys (236):

- 73% would recommend visiting Oxford County to a friend or relative with a rating of 8+ out of 10 for things to do in Oxford County.
- 84% of residents feel Oxford County is a desirable place to visit and feel tourism has a positive impact on the community, with a positive rating of 8+ out of 10.

A full report of survey findings will be shared in early 2026.

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## Sustainability Update

In early 2024, Tourism Oxford received silver level certification and a recommendations report highlighting 4 key focus areas and 24 recommendations to implement in the next three years. Key accomplishments completed so far in these focus areas include:

### The Oxford County Ecosystem: measuring, monitoring & mapping

- Improved data collection to monitor and plan for tourism sustainability. This includes an annual survey and measuring local ownership within the tourism industry

### Community First Tourism: Collaboration

- Educating businesses about sustainability programs and opportunities like the Water Buy Back Program and Conservation Authority programs.
- Educate businesses, residents and visitors on sustainable tourism opportunities.

### Climate Leadership & Regeneration: Advocacy

- Promote biodiversity and restoration programs to businesses.
- Support education and awareness of biodiversity opportunities through outreach to businesses, residents and visitors.

### Art of Hosting: Visitor Engagement

- Strategize and develop the right type of tourism for the community including the launch of Your Next Stop.
- Empowered consumers to make sustainable travel decisions on TourismOxford.ca with the addition of new filtering features, alternative transportation information and visitor best practices. [View sustainable tourism page.](#)
- [Publicly report](#) on progress towards sustainability goals and targets.

GreenStep

Sustainable  
Tourism

**Silver Certified**  
DESTINATION 2024-2027

## Oxford Tourism Awards

In October, four Oxford Tourism Award Recipients were recognized with an Oxford Tourism Award. Recipients recognized include:

- Tourism Partnership Award, Udderly Ridiculous Farm Life
- Best New Tourism Product, Transitions Equine Assisted Learning
- Tourism Partnership Award, Ingersoll Cheese and Agricultural Museum
- Tourism Partnership Award, Udderly Ridiculous Farm Life



[Read More](#)

Thank you to all nominees and the panel of judges from the Ontario Tourism Industry. Local businesses are encouraged to consider applying in 2026.

## Sharing Oxford's Success

In 2025, Oxford Tourism was a speaker and host of discussions on Oxford County's approach to tourism development. Learning engagements included:

- Centennial College, Canadian Food Studies, guest lecturer
- Culinary Tourism Alliance Taste of Place Leadership program, guest lecturer
- Destination Northern Ontario learning tour
- University of Waterloo Economic Development Student visit, presentation



# Product Development

## New Partners and Products

Thank you to the 19 new businesses who took advantage of having a free listing on [TourismOxford.ca](#) and the 25 businesses who invested in an [Enhanced Listing](#), in 2025.

Any business, that meets the eligibility criteria, can have a free listing on TourismOxford.ca. Businesses can also purchase enhanced listings which provide a professionally written blog highlighting the business.

Learn more about enhanced listings

## Oxford Fresh Program

In 2025, the Oxford County Federation of Agriculture (OCFA) and Oxford Tourism were busy preparing for a 2026 printing of the Oxford Fresh Map. With this update, several changes have been made to better serve local producers and consumers including:

- Switching from a 2 to 3-year Map printing cycle, providing cost savings to participating producers.
- Producers can now pay map advertising fees by e-transfer or cheque.
- Producers can add more content to their listing on OxfordFresh.ca including special events and Offers (CSA sign-up, new in season products, promote bulk ordering).

In addition to the print Map, digital advertising campaigns are also run. In 2025, these ads resulted in 115,340 impressions.

Thank you to the OCFA for continuing to recognize the importance of the Oxford Fresh partnership putting more local food on local tables.



## Your Next Stop



View Your Next Stop routes

In 2024 Oxford Tourism launched a new partnership program called Your Next Stop that minimizes travel time while maximizing fun for visitors. The partnership brings together tourism attractions in close proximity to each other to promote visitation to all stops though easy to use trip itineraries. The itineraries are promoted on TourismOxford.ca, through advertisements and signage at participating locations.

Three new Your Next Stop trips itineraries launched in 2025, extending this program to Oxford's urban areas. These new routes include: [Retro Rewind](#) in Woodstock, [Feet, Forks Finds](#) in Ingersoll, and [Only in Tillsonburg](#) in Tillsonburg. Forty-nine businesses are collaborating for these new routes with 66 total businesses on the six routes.

The program experienced significant positive outcomes and demonstrated that Your Next Stop is fulfilling a consumer need for ready to go trip ideas.

- Print advertisements in Daytripping Magazine (60,000 circulation)
- Digital ads resulted in 1,904,543 impressions

## Oxford Eats

January 2024 Tourism Oxford launched a new program to support increasing traffic to local restaurants. This program was called Oxford Eats and promoted visiting restaurants for limited time prix fixe menus in the last 2 weeks of January.

In 2025, 6 restaurants participated and reporting positive results, including one restaurant reporting the number of participants in the Oxford Eats promotion doubled from last year.



### 2026 Plans

With TourismOxford.ca website improvements the 2026 program changed - allowing all dine-in restaurants to participate, free of charge. To participate businesses simply needed add "special offers" to their listing on TourismOxford.ca. Oxford Tourism then ran a marketing campaign promoting visiting local restaurants in January-February 2026.

## Workshops & Networking



Thank you to everyone who participated in Oxford Tourism 2025 workshops and training sessions.

- Over 100 businesses attended TourismOxford.ca Extranet Training: adding events, special offers, and updating their listings.
- 331+ registrations for professional development workshops and networking opportunities.

Workshop partners included Oxford County Public Works, Ontario's Southwest, and the Downtown Woodstock BIA. Watch for 2026 networking event announcements in the industry newsletter.

## Award winners

### Congratulations 2025 award winners



- [2025 Canadian Choice Awards](#)- Congratulations to all the winners!
- Beachville Museum Assistant Curator, Sidney Williams, received the [Dorothy Duncan Leadership in Heritage Award](#)
- Woodstock Chamber Awards of Excellence Winners:
  - Agri-Business | Jakeman's Maple Products
  - Commercial Retail | Thoughtful Artisan
  - New Business | Cheesy Cow Company
  - Young Entrepreneur/ Professional | Alisha Wilson-Transitions Equine Assisted Learning
- Elm Hurst Inn and Spa Chef Philippe Coeurdassier was recognized as a [Maître Cuisiniers de France](#), one of the highest honours in French gastronomy.
- [SIAL Canada International Cheese Competition](#)- Mountainoak Cheese won 3 First Place awards: 3-year Old Gouda, Medium Gouda and Cumin Mild!
- Royal Winter Fair Winners
  - [Mountainoak Cheese](#) (1st place | Fresh Unripened Cheese - Natural | Quark, 8th place | Fresh Unripened Cheese - Natural | Gouda cheese curds)
  - [Golspie Dairy](#) (1st place | Bloomy Rind Category | St Oda, 2nd place | Bloomy Rind Category | Magpie,



## Investing in tourism

Thank you to all of the businesses that opened new businesses, launched new experiences and made significant investments in 2025.



### New businesses

- [Amicucci's Risto by Dolcetto Restaurant](#), Woodstock
- [Beautifully Obsessed](#), Tillsonburg
- [Commonplace Books](#), Ingersoll
- [Good Times](#), Woodstock
- [Home2 Suites by Hilton](#), Woodstock
- [Marriot TownePlace Suites Hotel](#), Woodstock
- [Piper&oak](#), Ingersoll
- [Reel Treats](#), Woodstock
- [Scotch and Ponder](#), Ingersoll
- [Tater's Sandwiches](#), Woodstock
- [The Olive Eatery](#), Tillsonburg

### New experiences

- [Fair Square](#), Tasting Events, Woodstock
- Jarfull Refillery- [Scent Blending](#) and [Planting Workshop](#), Woodstock
- Udderly Ridiculous- [Donkey Snuggles](#) and [Alpaca Experience and Fibre Nesting Ball Workshop](#), Blandford-Blenheim

### Significant Investments

- [Barkin Bougie](#), Ingersoll
- [Cheesy Cow Company](#) Woodstock
- [Greener Pastures Eco Farm](#), Norwich
- [Miedema's Meat Market](#) expansion
- [P.B's French Fries](#)- added a second location and events trailer
- [Snyder's Family Farm](#), Blandford-Blenheim
- [Spark by Hilton](#), Woodstock
- [Terra Nova](#), East Zorra-Tavistock

### Special Anniversaries

- [sixthirtynine](#), 20 years, Woodstock
- [Walters Music Venue](#), 50 years of Christmas Shows, Bright



## Marketing Results

### Media Coverage

Thank you to the numerous writers who took the time to explore and feature stories about Oxford County.

#### Earned Media:

- [CAA Magazine | Where in the World? \(Winter 2025\)](#)
- [Postmedia \(syndicated across 11 publications\) | This small town is Ontario's best-kept secret for delicious delights](#)
- [Destination Canada + Canada Culinary | Only in Canada: Self-guided trails](#)
- [Destination Ontario + Ontario's Southwest | Arrive As Guests, Leave As Friends: Six Ontario Experiences That Will Supersize Your Love for Locals](#)
- [Destination Ontario | Where to enjoy ice skating and hot chocolate in Ontario](#)
- [Dine Magazine Podcast | From Table to Travel - The Cheese Trail of Oxford County](#)
- [The Globe and Mail | Savour the flavours of Ontario this summer](#)
- [The Globe and Mail | Taste your way through unique culinary experiences this summer](#)
- [The Globe and Mail | Culinary tourism is travel that connects the taste buds with the people, culture and landscape of a region](#)
- [The Globe and Mail | Feast On@ certification sets the standard for food and drink](#)
- [Life Style Magazine | Oxford County Road Trip](#)
- [London Free Press | Hometown Specialty: Oxford's Gunn's Hill takes local pride global](#)
- [London Free Press | Hometown Secret: Inside Oxford County's Nordic Spa Retreat](#)
- [London Free Press | Hometown Guide: Cheese, yes, but dairy belt Oxford offers more to milk](#)
- [National Post | Buy Canadian: 5 exceptional cheesemakers that give a sense of place](#)
- [2025 Cycling in Ontario Guide | This Place: Makkink's Flower Farm & Bakery Café](#)
- [2025 Cycling in Ontario Guide | Oxford Cheese Trail by Bike](#)
- [The Spectator | Oxford Eats is back for 2025](#)
- [Toronto Life | Oxford County Cheese Trail Two Hours from Toronto](#)

#### Ontario's Southwest Partnerships:

- [Walk & Roll! An Accessible Tasting Tour Through Oxford and Norfolk Counties](#)
- [Your 9-Step Guide to a Relaxing 48 Hours in Ontario](#)
- [Family Fun On The Farm: A 2-Day Rural Roam Through Oxford and Middlesex Counties](#)
- [Must-Drive Fall Road Trips: 8 Flavor-Filled Getaways Through Ontario's Southwest](#)

#### Media Partnerships:

- [DINE Magazine: Revive and Recharge in Oxford County](#)
- [DINE Magazine: Romantic Getaway to Woodstock](#)
- [DINE Magazine: A Baseball of our Own Making](#)
- [DINE Magazine: Unique Father's Day Experiences](#)
- [DobbernationLoves: A Cozy Oxford County Winter Getaway](#)
- [JustinPlusLauren: A Weekend in Woodstock](#)

### Advertising

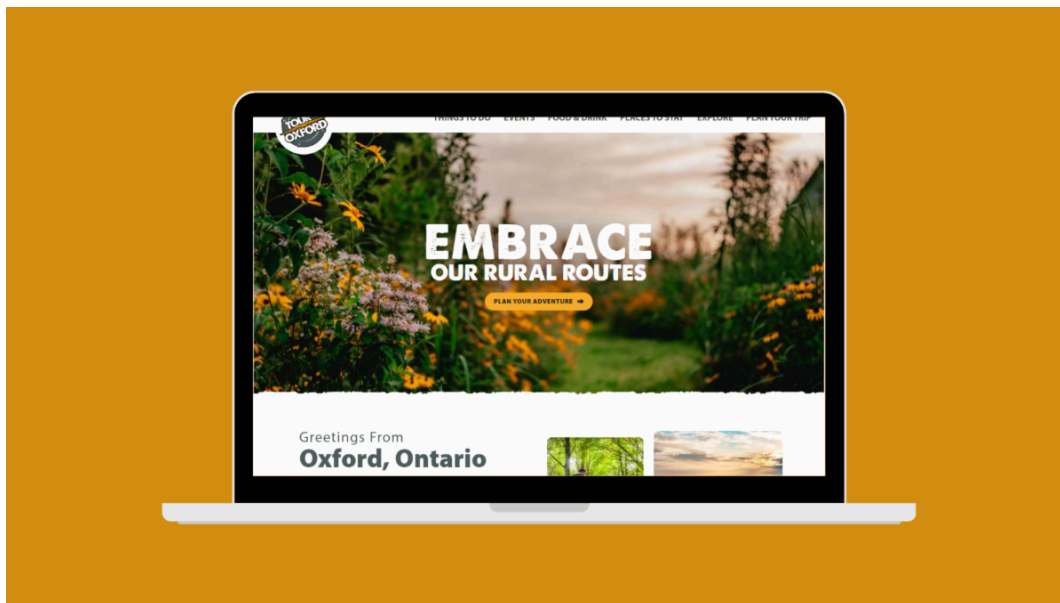
Marketing campaigns were run in all 12 months of 2025, including a mix of print, radio and digital advertising, with a circulation/reach of 14,878,124. Of this, digital advertising had 7,415,178 digital impressions and 104,546 click-thrus.

#### Advertising highlights include:

- Tourism Oxford partnered with Ontario's Southwest and Destination Ontario for two 2025 campaigns targeting US and Ontario visitors.
- Print advertisements were placed in the Globe and Mail, Daytripping and local publications.
- Printing included the 2025 Oxford County Cheese Trail and Your Next Stop signs and rack cards.



## TourismOxford.ca Traffic



August 2025, the TourismOxford.ca website was relaunched on a new platform. This new website allows business to submit content and provides visitors with improved trip planning tools.

2025 Website sessions were 276,735 (168,735 old website, 108,000 new website), compared to 315,000 website sessions in 2024. A dip was expected for two reasons.

1. When a website is revamped, it can expect to see a dip in SEO but this is followed by a rebound and improved website traffic as the site is catalogued by search engines.
2. 2025 partner campaigns with Destination Ontario drove traffic to a landing page on the Ontario's Southwest website promoting visiting Oxford County. While a successful campaign, it resulted in fewer visitors to TourismOxford.ca.

Top pages on the new TourismOxford.ca website include:

1. Events & Experiences
2. Your Next Stop: Retro Rewind
3. Your Next Stop: Feet, Forks & Finds
4. Cheese Trail
5. Ingersoll's Festival of Lights

Digital ad campaigns ran throughout the year, bringing visitors to the website, including these top pages. Events has always been a popular page. With the launch of the new website Events has a dedicated advertising budget - an incentive for businesses to input their events. Of the three new Your Next Stop routes two were in the top five, with the third route coming in 7th.

Analysis of the new website show 59% of website users are on a mobile phone followed by computer (33%) and tablet (8%). This aligns with consumer trends and demonstrates the importance of mobile friendly websites.

Oxford Tourism continues visitor experience work on TourismOxford.ca, with plans for further enhancements in 2026.

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## Photography and video

In 2025 Oxford Tourism worked with FedDev Ontario, Rural Oxford and Ontario's Southwest on marketing photography and video. Key outcomes included:

- Video recorded at 52 locations
- Photography at 30 locations



## Social media highlights

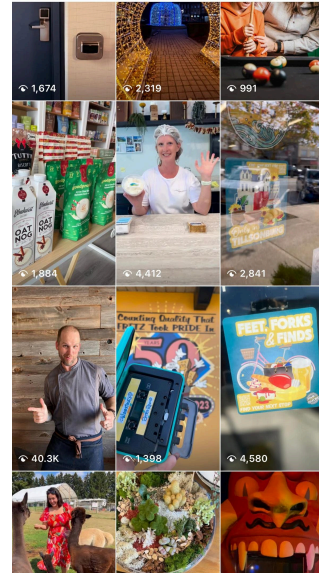
Oxford Tourism finished 2025 with 29,497 subscribers and followers across all channels (5% increase from previous year). Eye-catching content that focused on seasonal, ready-made travel itineraries was helpful to subscribers and followers.

### 29,497 Subscribers/Followers Highlights

- 4,409 Newsletter subscribers
- 25,802 YouTube views (48% more than previous year), 252.7 hours viewed & 53 new followers
- 7,000,000 Facebook views

### Content Created:

- 11 Oxford Insider Newsletter (3142 average views)
- 6 Oxford Fresh Newsletters (1857 average views)
- 70 Instagram reels (513,500 views),
- 6 YouTube videos, and 13 YouTube shorts (3551 views, 47 hrs)



## 2026 Business Plan and Budget



Looking forward is always an exciting time. Oxford Tourism's business plan for 2026 has been approved by Oxford County Council. Key actions in the 2026 business plan include:

### Discover your Roots Genealogy Tourism

In collaboration with Oxford County Archives and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Oxford Tourism will curate trip planning resources for those interested in tracing their heritage. This will assist them with seeing where and how their ancestors lived or reminiscing about their own past. Such content will include information on archives, libraries, museums, and historical societies for those interested in family research as well as information on local cemeteries, schools, historical plaques, and other points of interest. The new webpage will complement existing website information, utilize website functions and add additional information.

### Sustainable Travel

Support consumers in making sustainable travel decisions when visiting Oxford County. Provide business training and partnerships to meet the desire for sustainable travel. Incorporating more sustainable travel content and tools into TourismOxford.ca

### Handcrafted Routes

Develop a new collaborative trail with local arts organizations, artists, museums and retailers that celebrates the past and present of handcrafted arts. This new tourism product will serve a diverse audience base including creators, appreciators and those who are curious. This new trail's goal is to increase collaboration, product development and visitation celebrating the local arts and culture.

## Oxford County Business Plan and Budget

*Thank you for all of your support in 2025  
Erica, Karlee, Madelyne and Meredith*

Oxford Tourism | 519-539-9800 x3355 | [tourism@oxfordcounty.ca](mailto:tourism@oxfordcounty.ca) | [Industry website](#) | [Consumer website](#)

STAY CONNECTED



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