Tourism Strategy – Feedback Summary

Monday Market in the Park

May 18 to September 7, 2026

Overview

The Municipality of Kincardine is developing a Tourism Strategy to establish a long-term vision for sustainable tourism growth, strengthen destination experiences and balance economic opportunities with community well-being.

Municipality of Kincardine tourism staff gathered informal feedback from visitors and residents during the Monday Markets in the Park in the summer of 2026 to better understand what people value about the Municipality of Kincardine, what attracts them to the community, and where opportunities exist to enhance the visitor experience.

Overall, feedback was very positive, highlighting the Municipality of Kincardine's natural waterfront, welcoming community, vibrant events and small-town atmosphere as key strengths. Participants also identified opportunities to strengthen downtown experiences, expand dining and entertainment options, improve promotion and encourage businesses to offer extended hours.

Key Themes and Opportunities for the Tourism Strategy

Theme	What We Heard	Opportunity for the Tourism Strategy
Waterfront and Natural Beauty	Beaches, Lake Huron, sunsets, swimming, the pier and waterfront access were consistently identified as favourite experiences.	Position the waterfront as a signature tourism asset and strengthen connections between waterfront attractions, downtown and other visitor experiences.
Events and Community Atmosphere	Festivals, markets, Scottish heritage and community events were valued for bringing people together. Visitors described the Municipality of Kincardine as friendly, welcoming and having a great atmosphere.	Build on Kincardine's reputation for welcoming visitors and explore opportunities to strengthen events and experiences throughout the year.
Downtown Experience	Participants suggested further developing the historic downtown, attracting more businesses and encouraging extended business hours.	Enhance downtown as a visitor destination through business collaboration, shopping, dining and evening experiences.
Food and Entertainment	Food trucks were appreciated, while visitors expressed interest in more dining choices and recreational activities,	Explore opportunities to diversify food, entertainment and family-friendly experiences, particularly

Theme	What We Heard	Opportunity for the Tourism Strategy
	including bowling, an arcade and a movie theatre.	during evenings and in less favourable weather.
Tourism Marketing and Awareness	Participants suggested increasing advertising and promoting Kincardine more actively in the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton.	Strengthen destination marketing in targeted visitor markets, highlighting waterfront experiences, events and opportunities for longer stays.
Visiting Friends and Relatives	Visiting family, staying at cottages, attending markets and visiting attractions were identified as reasons for coming to Kincardine.	Recognize visiting friends and relatives as an important tourism market and develop itineraries and resources that encourage residents to showcase local attractions.
Local Businesses and Attractions	Participants recognized local businesses and attractions, including an art gallery, Grey Matter and The Tusk.	Encourage greater awareness of local businesses through visitor information, itineraries, cross-promotion and partnerships.

Visitor Origins and Length of Stay

Participants represented a mix of local residents and visitors from communities across Ontario, as well as Calgary, Alberta. Ontario locations included Burlington, Holland Landing, Mitchell, Stratford, Sault Ste. Marie, Ottawa and Hamilton. Other respondents identified themselves as local.

Reported visits ranged from a couple of hours and day trips to weekends and stays of one or two weeks. This suggests Kincardine appeals to different types of visitors, creating opportunities to encourage longer stays and increased spending at local businesses.

Key Insights

1. Build on what makes Kincardine distinctive. The combination of Lake Huron, beaches, sunsets, Scottish heritage, community events and welcoming atmosphere creates a strong foundation for destination positioning.

2. Encourage visitors to explore beyond the waterfront. Strengthening connections between beaches, downtown businesses, restaurants, cultural attractions and events could encourage visitors to spend more time exploring the community.

3. Expand the visitor experience beyond daytime activities. Interest in additional dining, evening business hours and indoor entertainment suggests opportunities to support longer visits and more year-round activity.

4. Strengthen promotion to potential visitors. Feedback suggests an opportunity to increase awareness in markets such as the GTA and Hamilton while also encouraging residents and seasonal visitors to promote Kincardine to friends and family.

5. Support local businesses as part of the tourism experience. Collaboration with businesses could help diversify visitor offerings and create more reasons to visit, stay longer and return.

Suggested Overall Strategic Direction

Leverage the Municipality of Kincardine's waterfront, vibrant events, Scottish heritage and welcoming community atmosphere to strengthen its identity as a distinctive Lake Huron destination, while enhancing downtown experiences, expanding visitor activities and increasing awareness in key tourism markets.

Considerations

This feedback was gathered through informal conversations at the Monday Markets in the Park and provides valuable qualitative insights rather than statistically representative survey results. Because engagement took place at a market, the findings may reflect the perspectives of people already participating in community events.

The opportunities identified are proposed strategic ideas based on participant feedback, not confirmed municipal commitments. They should be considered alongside other tourism engagement findings to identify the most impactful and achievable priorities for the Tourism Strategy.