Tourism Survey Strategy

Camp Counsellors Youth Survey

August 2026

Background

The Municipality of Kincardine is developing a Tourism Strategy to guide how tourism grows and evolves in a way that supports residents, strengthens local businesses, and enhances the visitor experience.

The strategy is being informed by input from residents, visitors, businesses, youth, and special event organizers through surveys and tourism conversations taking place throughout the summer and fall of 2026.

Youth were invited to complete a paper survey that was distributed through the Day Camp program that took place over the summer of 2026 at the Davidson Centre. The results of this survey are provided in this report.

Key Takeaways for the Tourism Strategy

1. Build on Kincardine's strongest assets.

Beaches, Lake Huron, sunsets, downtown and Scottish traditions are highly valued and should remain central to Kincardine's tourism identity.

2. Strengthen four-season experiences.

Youth identified a clear gap between summer and winter activities, highlighting opportunities for indoor entertainment, winter programming and shoulder-season events.

3. Create more experiences for youth and young adults.

More concerts, outdoor movies, sports, food events and social activities could make Kincardine more appealing to younger residents and visitors.

4. Support a vibrant downtown and waterfront.

Additional shopping, dining and evening experiences could encourage people to spend more time exploring the community.

5. Engage youth in shaping future experiences.

Youth demonstrated strong community pride and provided practical ideas for attractions, events and activities. Their perspectives can help inform future tourism programming.

Survey Responses

What grade are you in?

- 14 respondents (50%) identified as being in Grades 8–12.
- 8 respondents (29%) identified as university students without using the Grade 13 designation.
- 5 respondents (18%) identified as Grade 13, including one first-year university student.
- 1 respondent (3%) indicated they had just graduated.

Where do you live?

- The majority of youth survey participants (83%) identified Kincardine as their place of residence, with a smaller number representing surrounding communities and one international respondent.
- This indicates that the survey primarily reflects the perspectives of local youth, providing valuable insight into how young residents experience Kincardine and what opportunities could make the community more appealing as both a place to visit and a place to live.

Location	No# of responses
Kincardine	24
Inverhuron	1
Point Clark	1
Huron-Kinloss / Kincardine	1
Tiverton	1
Spain	1
Total	**29**

Note: Because the sample is small and primarily consists of Kincardine residents, the results should be viewed as an indication of participating youths' habits rather than representative of all young people in the community.

Downtown Visitation

Based on the 29 survey responses, most young people reported visiting downtown Kincardine at least once a week

How Often Do You Spend Time Downtown?

Category	No# of Responses	%
Every week	21	72.4%
A few times a month	6	20.7%
A few times a year	1	3.4%
Rarely	1	3.4%
Total	29	100%

If a friend from another town came to visit, where would you take them?

- Kincardine Scottish Festival or Phantom Piper
- Beach
- Station beach, boardwalk, lighthouse, golfing, downtown
- Beach, pier and downtown
- Golf course and beach
- Beach, Monday market, pipe band, ice cream shack
- Beach, boardwalk, pipe band, Monday market
- Beach, ice cream shack
- Beach
- Dinner at hogs breath, Kincardine pier for sunset, ice cream shack
- Downtown, beach, lighthouse
- Lighthouse
- Monday market, karaoke at Locals
- Beach, downtown stores
- Beach, out on the lake on a boat, Volleyball courts
- Beach, dairy queen, Bruce, local attractions
- Station beach, volleyball courts
- Downtown, beach
- Victoria park
- Beach
- Queen street
- Hogs breath
- Beaches
- Downtown and beach
- Beach, pipe band, restaurant, walks, downtown shops, boardwalk
- Scottish festival, rib festival
- Harbour, ice cream shack, downtown restaurants
- Beach
- Pipe band

What do you think makes the Municipality of Kincardine special?

- The beaches and summertime
- Beaches, all the local downtown stores
- History of our town and building as well as beaches and parks
- The sense of community within the municipality
- Beaches, people, along with good municipal programs like day camp
- Friendly environment, car shows, pipe band, Monday market
- The sunsets, lake and community
- Lake, sunsets
- Sunsets/pipe band
- Beaches, sunsets
- Events and pipe band
- Themed festivals
- Scottish background shines
- Sunsets/architecture
- On lake Huron, large tourist community during summer, beach activities
- Great town of people, and right on the lake
- Right on the lake, pipe band
- Right on the beach
- Lighthouse
- Lighthouse
- Beach
- Beaches and hospitality
- Kincardine events
- Kindness there is everywhere and all the beaches
- Views of walking on trails, sunsets, traditions, small town feel/community
- Monday markets
- Lighthouse, maintenance, station beach, sunsets, surfing
- Beach, restaurants
- Lake, sunsets

What makes your quality of life better or worse?

- Winter is terrible, summer is fun
- The winter gets very icy and cold
- Seeing how the environment changes while living on a great lake throughout all seasons
- Better in the summer because of the beach, worse in the winter because of the lack of things to do
- Winter traffic conditions makes transportation harder and day camp makes my summer more fun
- Better: summer activities/events, friendly atmosphere Worse: not much to do in winter
- Friends you make here, the activities
- Better: swimming in the lake, Worse: snow, minimal things to do
- Plowing of the roads in winter
- Too much snow in the winter
- Winters make it hard for people to travel, in the summer the beach and Monday market is something that makes your quality of life better

- During winter when we get heavy snow it can be hard to travel
- My friends
- Winter makes driving difficult, summer is refreshing in the beach
- Lots of activities in the summer, but not as many in the winter, our hockey programs
- Winter: Better- miss school because of snow, Worse - closed roads Summer: better- the beach and downtown Worse- not many things to do
- Summer there is lots of outside and fun activities and in winter there are lots of closed roads but fun snow
- Summer we have warm weather and beach in the winter there is to much snow and the roads are always closed
- Snow is bad in winter
- Snow is bad in winter
- The amount of snow in winter and there are not a lot of attractions in summer for kids/teens
- Lots of snow in the winter makes it hard to do transportation, making kincardine hard to live in during the winter
- With snow its hard to get around but summer is beautiful
- Better: outdoor activities, Worse: Less to do in winter and bad weather
- The amount of snow we get is fun to play in but it makes driving bad and the highway gets closed a lot
- Not a lot of activities, town looks pretty in snow
- More events happen in town
- Lake on hot days, driving in the winter
- Snow is bad in winter

What types of events or activities would you like to see?

- Live music, sports
- Food events, live music, and movies
- Beach events
- Beach events, markets
- Concerts
- Beach events, continued festivals, live music, better fall fair
- Beach dance, food events (no ticket for entry), a better fall fair
- Outdoor movies, beach events, better fall fair
- More sports events like Dogs volleyball
- Concerts/night life
- I would like to see more beach events I think that would be really fun
- Competitive sports games for entertainment
- Beach/food events
- Outdoor movies
- Live music, food truck events
- More sports and food events
- More food events
- More live music
- Outdoor movies and live music
- Outdoor movies
- Carnivals, drive in, polar plunge

- More local owned restaurants
- Beach events
- Live music, festivals, food events, outdoor movies, evening markets/activities, seasonal/holiday market, community fitness events, events for teens
- The food culture is good and so is the music downtown
- Live music, pickleball
- Live music and festivals
- music, movies, food
- More sports and food events

If you could create one new attraction, event, or experience that would make people want to visit in the Municipality of Kincardine, what would it be?

- Movie theatre or drive in
- Movie theatre
- A guides tour of the town that goes everywhere and lets you learn about kincardine
- More events geared towards teens/young adults, maybe like a festival
- More basketball courts and parks to give younger people more to do during summer
- Live music down by beach on weekends, more retails/things to do at the beach (paddle boards)
- Coffee/drink shops at the beach, pickleball courts
- Movie theater, pickleball courts
- A tour of the history of Kincardine
- Water park
- Bowling, beach food booths
- Drive inn
- Town fair that shows everything about our town including our history
- More sport arenas
- Rugby field, Starbucks
- More shops (mall)
- More shops and sports tournaments
- Mall
- Parade
- ice cream event
- Drive in
- Movie theater
- Cinema
- More of a Christmas/holiday market, more Christmas lights, outdoor vendors, hot chocolates
- Have more organized events on the beach like volleyball
- Dance battles
- Sinning competitions
- Movie theater
- Parade

What is one thing you would change to make Kincardine a better place to live?

- More activities it's really just the beach
- Everything is pretty good
- Focus on one construction project at a time
- Add more things to do and places to shop
- Make it more inviting for young people, add young activities
- More things to do in the winter months, movie theater, bowling, more shop options, add more things like pickleball courts, outdoor ice rinks, etc.
- PARKING, Walmart
- Add more things for teens and young adults to do
- Walmart
- Uber drivers
- More restaurants, more shops, beach clean ups/town clean ups
- Volunteer team to help pick up trash at the beach
- Local run businesses, sport stores
- More events
- Mores stores, restaurants, activities for kids and snowmobile trails that access downtown easier
- Make downtown bigger and nicer
- Clean some places up and add more cozy shops
- More stores or food places
- Less garbage
- Less trash on the beach
- More things for younger kids
- A wider variety of activities for other age groups
- Less fast-food places and more restaurants
- Later business hours, more things to do geared towards young adults and teens
- More restaurants that are not pizza places
- Better traffic control
- Better road conditions
- Less harsh winters
- Less trash on the beach

Putting the insights together

The following themes emerged consistently across multiple questions.

Theme	What youth told us	Opportunity for the Tourism Strategy
Waterfront is Kincardine's greatest asset	Beaches, sunsets, boardwalk and lake activities are highly valued.	Enhance waterfront experiences and programming.
Demand for year-round activities	Summer is enjoyable, but winter offers fewer activities and creates transportation challenges.	Expand winter and shoulder-season experiences.
More youth-focused entertainment	Youth want movies, concerts, sports, evening events and places to socialize.	Incorporate youth interests into event planning and tourism programming.
Strong local identity	Scottish heritage, the Pipe Band, festivals and community spirit make Kincardine unique.	Celebrate and build on local culture and traditions.
Greater shopping and dining variety	Youth want more retail options, restaurants, cafés and extended hours.	Support a vibrant downtown and complementary visitor experiences.
Community pride and beautification	Youth appreciate the community but want cleaner beaches and improved public spaces.	Encourage community stewardship and attractive public spaces.