

2025 Objectives

Tourism Vaughan

Business Plan Recommendations

- To forward the below and adjoining brief to the Voting Member as the 2025 Business Plan and Budget



**Destination
Master Plan
Pillars**

Governance and City Policy

Product Development

Partnerships

Marketing and Communications

Research and Data Analysis

Pillar 1: Governance and City Policy

Update Board and Council on Tourism Industry

Attachment 2

Continue the education plan for TVC Board and Stakeholders

Pillar 1:
Governance and
City Policy

Continue to receive feedback, insights and best practices from the TVAC

Work with Economic Development to identify Tourism opportunities for MAT spending

Review Bylaws and Policies related to Tourism

RESULTS TO DATE

- Actively worked with and received feedback and insights from the Tourism Vaughan Advisory Committee (TVAC) consisting of tourism operators and key stakeholders to deepen local industry connections and to review key strategic priorities, such as the Tourism Festival and Sports Events hosting grant and partnership funding program
- Provided the TVC Board with presentations from industry associations and key partners to educate staff, the Board and the TVAC
- Worked with Economic Development to identify MAT opportunities
- Engaged with Bylaw and Permits as necessary for tourism-related items
- Hired a Tourism Development Coordinator (Information and Data) position
- Established and initiated an audit procedure to assess accommodations stakeholders' compliance with MAT remittance and reporting processes

2025 ACTIONS

- Support the City Auditors 2025 assessment of the Municipal Accommodation Tax enforcement audit
- Board presentations continuing in 2025 through 2026 from industry associations to educate staff, Board, and TVAC
- Continue to receive feedback and insights from the TVAC for key strategic priorities, such as a Vaughan City Pass and a tourism servicing portal for tournaments, festivals and events, and business advisory
- Continue to engage with Bylaw and Permits as necessary for tourism-related items

Pillar 2:

Product Development



Pillar 2:

Product Development

Build on Product and Experience Clusters to Drive Visitation

Support Vaughan Businesses in Product/Experience Development

Work on Product/Experience Development to Extend Lengths of Stay in Vaughan

RESULTS TO DATE

- Completed the second iteration of the Tourism Innovation Lab's Vaughan "Spark" Mentorships and Grants program to encourage new and innovative tourism concepts through a pitch competition
- Supported 257 leisure events, activations and festivals, 24 business conferences, 18 sports tournaments and serviced 3 familiarization tours to drive tourist activity to the city
- Launched the Tourism Festival and Sports Events hosting grant and partnership fund ("Host in Vaughan Grant") in April 2024. The Grant supported 18 tourism activations with \$101,185.28 in funds distributed. An anticipated \$21,525 in funds will be disbursed upon the completion of late 2024 activations
- Developed the Host in Vaughan Meetings and Events booklet, which included a map of key tourism elements in Vaughan and listings of Vaughan-based event venues, including City-owned venues such as The Sports Village and the Vaughan Studios and Event Space
- Explored options for a Vaughan City Pass, with the process continuing in 2025 with the release of an RFP through procurement

2025 ACTIONS

- Support current and actively seek out new festivals, events, conferences, and marquee amateur sports events with local clubs to grow tourism activations hosted in Vaughan, including submitting bids to host future tourism-driving activations
- Launch two Host in Vaughan Grant intake periods in 2025 to support summer and shoulder season activations
- Launch the third iteration of the Tourism Innovation Lab's Vaughan "Spark" Mentorships and Grants Program and the second iteration of the Better Your Business: Tourism Diversity Program
- Develop and launch a Tourism Servicing Portal to enhance the benefit of selecting Vaughan as a host destination for festivals, events, conferences and sporting tournaments
- Provide webinars and/or seminars to local tourism businesses to position them to compete better and draw tourist visitation
 - Provide accommodations, attractions and information travel offices with a consumer-facing map with key tourism elements in Vaughan
 - Launch a Vaughan City Pass option for leisure, conferences, sports, and special events
 - Support the openings of two new accommodations, the transfer of one accommodation and the major renovation of one accommodation

Pillar 3: Partnership

Pillar 3: **Partnerships**

Host and Participate in Familiarization Tours

Host Local Industry Events

Work with Regional, Provincial, and Federal Agencies to Advance the Industry

Work With Tourism Stakeholders to Develop Leisure, Business and Sports In-Market

RESULTS TO DATE

- Conducted accommodations site visits to refresh content on HostInVaughan.ca and deepen stakeholder partnerships
- Participated in the Vaughan International Film Festival's FAM tour, and serviced two additional FAM tours happening in 2025
- Participated in local, sector-specific meetings within tourism and hospitality to further advance Vaughan's positioning as a premier destination and align strategic planning
- Hosted the Tourism Vaughan Stakeholder Networking event in November 2024, with an attendance of more than 50 individuals
- Create a dedicated landing page on visitvaughan.ca for Stay and Play packages with local accommodations, attractions and event partners
- Met with local attractions and family entertainment centres regularly to broaden in-market offerings and expand marketing opportunities through visitvaughan.ca and the Tourism Vaughan Instagram channel, @visitvaughan
- Secured the Presenting Sponsor opportunity with Central Counties Tourism to host its annual Tourism Symposium in Vaughan in 2025
- Secured joint hosting rights of the Ontario Motor Coach Association (OMCA) Annual Marketplace 2025 event in Vaughan together with Markham. The two-day event will take place November 3rd to 5th, 2025

2025 ACTIONS

- Continue to meet regularly with local attractions and family entertainment centres to broaden in-market offerings and opportunities to grow stay and play packages
- Host regular networking events in 2025, including the networking portion of the Central Counties Tourism Symposium
- Continue to participate in local, sector-specific meetings within tourism and hospitality to further advance Vaughan's positioning as a premier destination and align strategic planning
 - Continue to conduct accommodation and sporting venue tours to deepen stakeholder partnerships
 - Host the 2025 Central Counties Tourism Symposium in February 2025
 - Support new familiarization tours to Vaughan to enhance Vaughan's presence and reputation as a premier tourism destination

Pillar 4:

Marketing and Communications



Pillar 4:
Marketing and
Communications

Generate Awareness of Vaughan as a Tourist Destination

Execute Marketing Plans for Leisure, Culinary, Sports and Business Events

Distribute Material/Messaging that Operators can Incorporate in Their Communications

Update Communication Channels to Provide Greater Guest Experiences Across Website Platforms

RESULTS TO DATE

- Executed seasonal campaigns to drive leisure visitation using social, digital, out-of-home, print, and other owned channels
- Relunched the visitvaughan.ca website, which included the new Plan My Visit page and My Stay page to create custom itineraries based on local attractions, restaurants, events and activations happening nearby
- Continued to advertise through various channels hostinvaughan.ca, which targets meeting planners, business event planners and sporting tournament organizers, to enhance site visitation, duration and bid submissions
- Provided the *Vaughan Events at a Glance* document to local accommodations, the TVC Board and the TVAC, with the addition of major tourism activations happening in the Greater Toronto Area to better prepare local accommodations of potential tourism compression
- Exhibited at four tradeshow with focuses on the group tour market, the sports market and the business conferences market, to promote Vaughan as a premier destination
- Worked with the Culinary Tourism Alliance to continue the culinary-focused Taste of Vaughan campaign
- Represented the City and TVC on the Kleinburg Business Improvement Area

2025 ACTIONS

- Continue to execute marketing campaigns that focus on increasing business events and conferences and sports tournaments
- Launch a 'visit your neighbour' program with transit/subway-adjacent accommodations in Toronto to increase awareness of transit accessibility and drive visitation to local attractions and events
- Launch custom Vaughan landing pages and targeted marketing campaigns with platforms like Expedia, TripAdvisor, etc.
- Explore opportunities with Destination Ontario to promote Vaughan at a provincial level
 - Continue to exhibit at local and national tradeshow in collaboration with industry stakeholders to promote Vaughan as a destination for sports, business conferences, festivals and tours
 - Continue to grow and promote culinary tourism in Vaughan by working with the Culinary Tourism Alliance, and exploring opportunities with MICHELIN to add more Vaughan restaurants to the Guide

Pillar 5: Research and Data Analytics



Pillar 5:

**Research and Data
Analytics**

Generate Intelligence From Data

Measure the Impact of the Industry

Develop and Maintain Online Databases

Leverage Surveys Like the Business Satisfaction and Citizen Satisfaction Surveys

RESULTS TO DATE

- Renewed data agreement with Central Counties to understand visitation and visitor spending
- Assigned Economic Development Research and Intelligence Staff to support
- Ongoing monitoring of occupancy data
- Continued to share and leverage the yorkdurhamheadwaters.ca online database with Central Counties Tourism, connected with the visitvaughan.ca website and its Plan Your Visit itinerary builder
- Hired a Tourism Development Coordinator (Information and Data) to support research and analytics functions
- Delivered information and insight into Vaughan to local and regional tourism stakeholders
- Established quarterly reporting process of Vaughan accommodations occupancy rate, MAT remittances and related data

2025 ACTIONS

- Use 2021 Census and the 2024 York Region Employment Survey to drive insight
- Utilize 2023 and 2024 Environics research provided through Central Counties Tourism to assess the drivers of tourism in 16 key tourism destination areas
- Enhance data reports with the addition of room night specifications to monthly reports
- Regularly deliver insight into the tourism industry
- Deliver an annual Year in Review in Q2 2025

Budget

Description	MAT Total	City ED Total	Total	Notes
Staff	\$734,412	\$95,684	\$830,096	
Staffing Benefits	\$143,394	\$30,619	\$174,013	
Destination Development Programming/Grant Program	\$575,000		\$575,000	
Transfer to CoV for MAT admin	\$33,436		\$33,436	
Professional Memberships	\$20,000		\$20,000	
Marketing/Promotions	\$550,000		\$550,000	
General admin	\$40,000		\$40,000	
TOTAL	\$2,096,242	\$126,303	\$2,222,545	

TVC Board & TVAC: Next Steps



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Meeting Schedule and Plan - 2025

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January 15: TVC Board

- Present and approve 2025 Business Plan and Budget to be forwarded to the Voting Member (Vaughan Council)

February 13: TVAC

- Present the approved 2025 Business Plan and Budget (from TVC Board)
- Identification of priority areas of focus for TVAC
- Workshop Summer Season campaign
- Present Meetings and Events booklet

March 19: TVC Board

- Present Tourism Host in Vaughan Grant – 2025 Spring-Summer Fund Recommendations
- Present the 2024 TVC Year in Review
- Presentation about Audit procedure to assess accommodations stakeholders' compliance with MAT remittance and reporting processes
- Present and approve plans from Public Works and Recreation Events team

April 24: TVAC

- Present and gain feedback on the Tourism Servicing Portal
- Present and gain feedback on a Vaughan City Pass

May 28: TVC Board

- Present Tourism Host in Vaughan Grant – 2025 Summer-Fall Fund Recommendations
- Presentation from Central Counties Tourism (CCT)

September 25: TVAC

- Workshop strategies for business meetings, conferences and sports events tactics
- Workshop Winter/Shoulder Season campaign
- Present draft plans for the Tourism Servicing Portal

October 22: TVC Board

- Present Tourism Host in Vaughan Grant – 2025 Fall-Winter Fund Recommendations
- Presentation from Vaughan Attractions Council TBD
- Present draft plans for the Tourism Servicing Portal
- Present draft plans for the Vaughan City Pass

November 27: TVAC

- Workshop a Vaughan Visitor Guide (directory, advertising, consumer maps)

