

OPEN AGENDA

Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board Meeting

November 25, 2025 at 12:00 noon

LIVE STREAM: www.youtube.com/c/SaultstemarieCa

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes

Approval of minutes from October 21, 2025

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

4. Tourism Overview & Update

12:05 – 12:15

5. Financial Update

12:15 – 12:25

a. 2024 Audit Update

b. Draft Financial Statements

6. New Business

12:25 – 12:30

7. Tourism Development Fund

12:30 – 13:15

Move to Closed

Resolved that this Committee proceed into closed session to discuss matters concerning confidential third-party information; Further be it resolved that should the said closed session be adjourned, the Committee may reconvene in open session to continue to discuss the same matter without the need for a further authorizing resolution.

Municipal Act section 239(2)(i) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization.

a. Sport Event Bid #2025-001

b. Conference Bid #2025-002

c. Sault Pedal Pub

Return to Open

13:15 – 13:45

d. Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow

e. Indigenous Skills Trade Summit

f. Bon Soo Winter Carnival

g. Frozen Toe Fat Bike Race

h. Dave Kensit Swim Meet

8. Resolutions

13:45 – 13:55

a. Sports Event Bid #2025-001

b. Conference Bid #2025-002

c. Sault Pedal Pub

d. Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow

e. Indigenous Skills Trade Summit

f. Bon Soo Winter Carnival

g. Frozen Toe Fat Bike Race

h. Dave Kensit Swim Meet

9. Next Meeting

December 16, 2025

10. Adjournment

14:00



Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board Minutes

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

12:00

OPEN

Committee Members Present

YES	B. Barber	YES	N. Brash
YES	L. Foster	NO	G. Lacher
YES	M. Porco	YES	K. Walker
YES	R. Walker	YES	T. White
YES	K. Wyer		

Staff Resources Present

NO	B. Lamming	YES	T. Anderson
YES	A. Kenopic	YES	T. Lucarelli (Scribe)
YES	J. McClelland		

Guests

None

1. Meeting Called to Order

12:02

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 16, 2025

Moved by: N. Brash

Second by: L. Foster

All in favour, Carried.

4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

- Nil

5. Tourism Overview and Update

12:03-12:10

- Wishart Park is progressing, outstanding items to be installed include: lookout structures, safety structures, accessible and sensory play equipment
- Passing of Gary Trembinski Sr. Mr. Trembinski was a strong advocate for Tourism and the Chair of the Queen Street Cruise committee.
- No announcement from Winter Games Ontario
- The city saw a 90% occupancy rate in August
- City staff will be reaching out to Agawa Canyon Train Tour for an end-of-season statistic as well as a discussion for on-board catering and group boxed lunches
- The Tourism Development Fund is currently \$690,000

6. Financial Update

12:10-12:12

- R. Walker presented a financial update
- As a part of the 2024 audit, board members will be sent a board risk management questionnaire to be completed.

7. New Business

- Nil

12:12-12:12

8. Tourism Development Fund (TDF)

12:12-12:28

a) Soo Finnish Nordic Ski Club Ontario Cup #3

- Sault Ste. Marie has been selected through a competitive bid process to host one of four prestigious Ontario Cup (O-Cup) races for the 2025–26 provincial series.
- Up to 350 able-bodied and para-nordic athletes from U8 to Masters categories, representing 28 ski clubs across Ontario over three days.
- Staff is recommending a contribution of \$20,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the Soo Finnish Nordic Ski Club infrastructure rentals.

b) City of Sault Ste. Marie – Kayak Dock

- The accessible kayak dock was recently stolen from the Bellevue Park Marina. The dock was part of a larger waterfront activation initiative that began in 2021.
- Since their installation, both docks have been extremely well used and well received by residents and visitors.
- Through the city of SSM procurement process, the replacement dock would be ordered and installed in the spring of 2026.
- Staff is recommending a contribution of \$30,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Project Development Stream to support the purchase of the replacement kayak dock.

c) Canadian Police Curling Championships

- The Northern Ontario Police Curling Association (NOPCA), in partnership with the Canadian Police Curling Association (CPCA), will host the 70th Annual Canadian Police Curling Championship, taking place April 11–18, 2026, at the YNCU Curling Centre
- Approximately 130 out-of-town visitors are staying for 9 nights and 10 days.
- The host committee is planning a series of ancillary events and activities that showcase key local attractions such as the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre, Miss Marie / Big Ben, and the Ermatinger-Clergue National Historic Site.
- Staff is recommending a contribution of \$8,800 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support live streaming, entertainment/Opening Ceremony, venue rental (Bushplane Museum), shuttle/ transportation and marketing.

9. Resolutions

13:00-13:10

a. Tourism Development Fund - Ontario Cup Cross Country Ski Race

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$20,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the XCSO Ontario Cup #3 to be hosted January 16-18, 2026, and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

Moved by: L. Foster

Seconded by: K. Wyer

All in favour, Carried.

b. Tourism Development Fund - City of Sault Ste. Marie Kayak Dock Replacement

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$30,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Product Development stream to support the purchase cost of replacement and installation of the Bellevue Marina Kayak dock, and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

Moved by: T. White

Seconded by: M. Porco

All in favour, Carried.

c. Tourism Development Fund - 2026 Canadian Police Curling Championship

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$8,800 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the 2026 Canadian Police Curling Championship to be hosted April 11-18, 2026, and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

Moved by: R. Walker

Seconded by: M. Porco

All in favour, Carried.

10. Next Meeting

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

9. Adjournment

13:15

Moved by: T. White

Seconded by: K. Wyer

All in favour, Carried.



MARKETING & PROMOTION

Active Marketing Campaigns during October

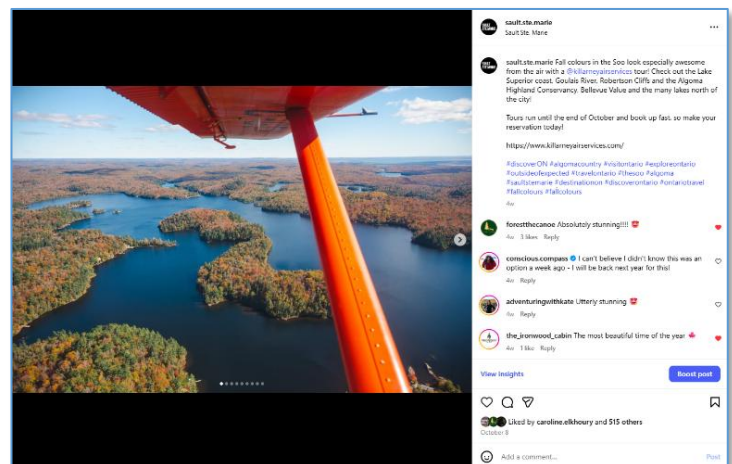
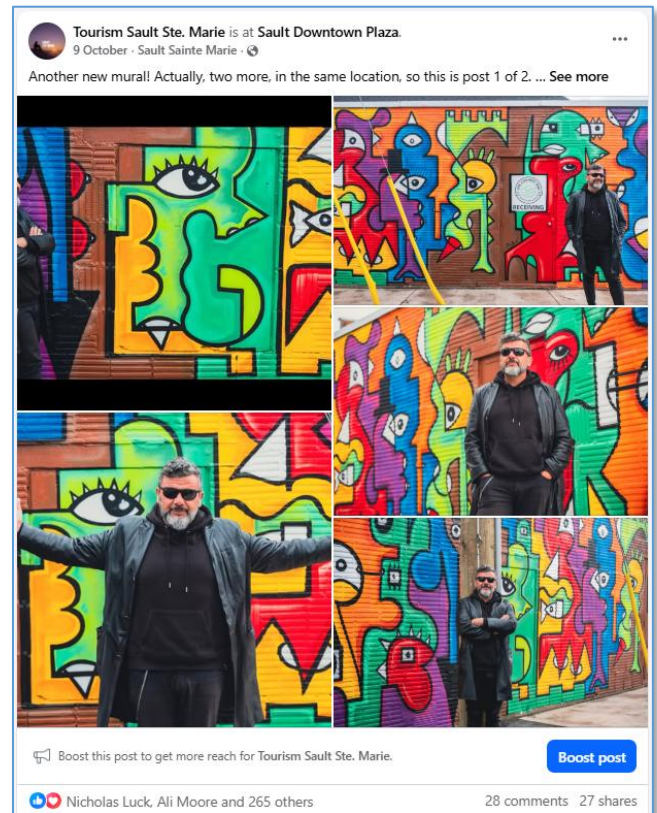
- Cavera digital marketing – pay per click, google search, paid social media ads for ‘Jan – October’, Train ads, Event marketing and SEO marketing.
- Laird Signs billboards x 4 between Sudbury and SSM + one north of SSM.
- Canada Travel Magazine – a one page feature for the ACTT, Miss Marie, Hiawatha and Lake Superior coast
- Influencer visits Singtao Media & Caroline El Khoury

Website (October)

- 30k users, (72k users in September)
- 57k page views (132k in September)
 - Agawa Train 18.4k (51k in September)
 - Home Page 6.3k (16k in September)
 - Hiking Robertson Cliffs 2.3k
 - Summer in the Soo 2.3k (13k in September)
 - Activities & Attractions 2.3k (3.4k in September)
- Canada 21k (70%), US 7.5k (25%)
- Within Canada: Ontario 17.9k (85%), Quebec 3k (14%)
- By City: (GTA around 37%) Toronto 6.4k (30%), SSM 1.9k (9%)
- Within US: Michigan 2.7k (36%), Wisconsin 400 (5%), Ohio 384 (5%)

Primary drivers

- **Paid Media:** 24k (56k in September)
- **Organic Search:** 8.4k (8.4k in September)
- **Referrals:** 9.8k (3.8k in September)
 - Agawa Train 317 (912 in September)
 - Northernontariotravel 231 (278 in September)
 - Destination Ontario 187 (204 in September)
 - Saultstemarie 111 (291 in September)
 - Welcometossm 104
 - Chatgtp 48 (41 in September)
(including for future reference)
- **Offsite clicks:** 16.2k (38.5k in September)
 - AgawaTrain 7.1k (21.6k in September)
 - SooLockTours 748 (1.3k in September)
 - Big Ben Bus 255 (451 in September)
 - Machine Shop 158 (507 in September)
 - Kinsmen Park 169
 - Canal District 127





Instagram (October, 2025)

- 24.9k page followers (867 new followers in October)
- 52.2k accounted reached (42.3k in September)

Facebook (October, 2025)

- 35.3k followers (79 new followers in October)
- 438k accounts reached (608k in September)

Newsletter (October, 2025)

- Sent October 1, 2025 at 3:00pm EDT
- 232 sends, 107 (50%) opens, 7 (3%) clicks, 17 (7%) bounces, 2 (1%) unsubscribes

GROUP TOURS

- Staff prepared for the 2025 Ontario Motorcoach Association Marketplace (OMCA), confirming approximately 50 appointments, a 44% *increase* from 2024
- Two new Group Itineraries were created:
 - Planes, Trains, Automobiles and a Bus
 - Culture and Heritage

MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

- Staff submitted a bid proposal for an annual general meeting and convention for October 2027
- Staff is working with a local group to submit a bid for an annual general meeting, conference and tradeshow for May 2027

SPORTS TOURISM

- Staff is working on a bid proposal for a 2027 National Championship
- Staff continues to support events with applications for the Tourism Development Fund

EVENTS

- Staff attended the Hospitality Fair at St. Mary's Highschool to promote the tourism industry
- Supporting Fall Curling Classic, Sault Ste. Marie Kennel Club and other local partners with home grown events

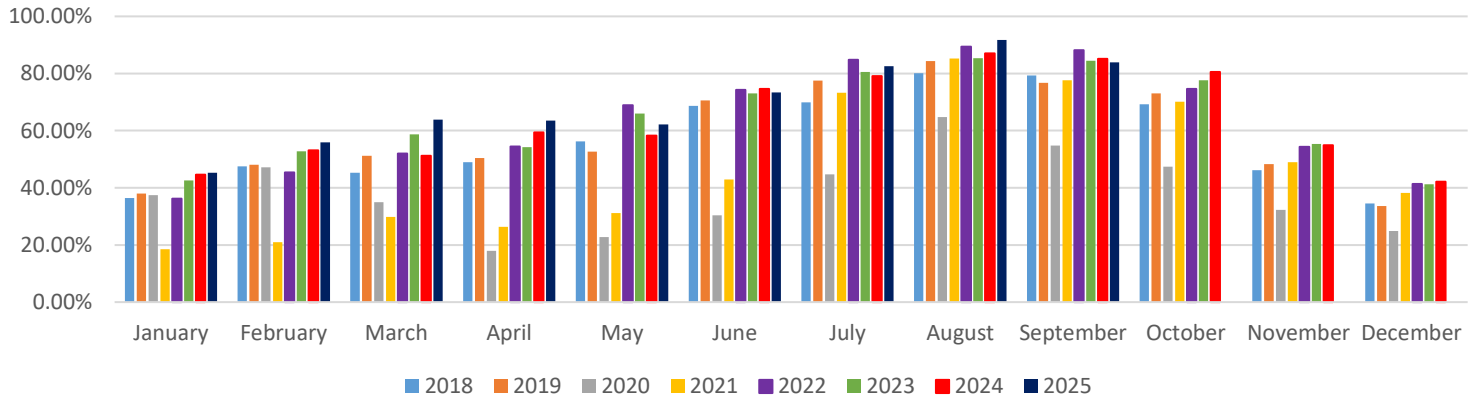
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATIONS

Three (3) Tourism Development applications were approved for recommendation at the October Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board meeting.

1. Soo Finnish Nordic Ski Club Ontario Cup Cross Country Ski Race - \$20,000
2. City of Sault Ste. Marie – Kayak Dock - \$30,000
3. Canadian Police Curling Championships - \$8,800



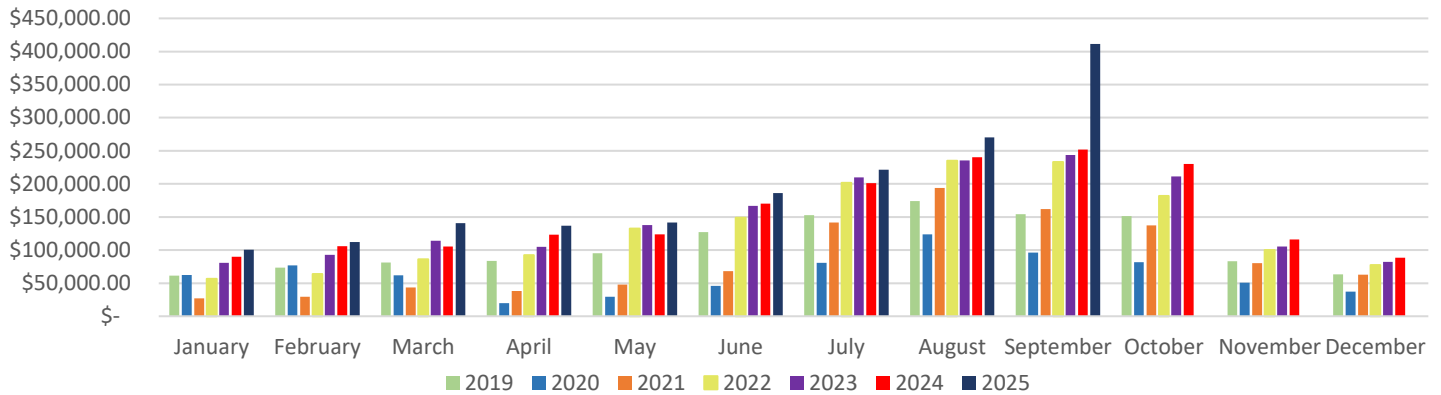
Occupancy Report Percentage



Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	36.4%	38.0%	37.4%	18.5%	36.2%	42.6%	44.6%
February	47.5%	48.1%	47.2%	21.0%	45.4%	52.8%	53.1%
March	45.3%	51.2%	35.0%	29.8%	52.0%	58.7%	51.2%
April	49.0%	50.4%	17.9%	26.3%	54.4%	54.2%	59.4%
May	56.2%	52.7%	22.8%	31.2%	68.9%	66.0%	58.3%
June	68.7%	70.6%	30.4%	42.9%	74.3%	73.1%	74.6%
July	69.9%	77.5%	44.7%	73.3%	84.8%	80.5%	79.1%
August	80.1%	84.4%	64.8%	85.2%	89.4%	85.4%	87.1%
September	79.3%	76.7%	54.8%	77.6%	88.2%	84.5%	85.1%
October	69.2%	73.0%	47.4%	70.1%	74.6%	77.6%	80.5%
November	46.2%	48.3%	32.3%	49.0%	54.3%	55.4%	54.9%
December	34.5%	33.6%	24.9%	38.2%	41.3%	41.2%	42.1%
Year	2025						
January	45.3%						
February	55.9%						
March	63.6%						
April	63.5%						
May	62.2%						
June	73.4%						
July	82.6%						
August	91.8%						
September	83.9%						
October							
November							
December							



Municipal Accommodation Tax Collection



Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	\$ 61,402.77	\$ 64,208.56	\$26,828.55	\$56,396.18	\$80,655.72	\$89,650.05
February	\$ 73,525.06	\$ 77,030.47	\$29,513.74	\$63,642.86	\$92,555.42	\$105,967.89
March	\$ 81,314.31	\$ 61,777.73	\$43,484.40	\$85,984.43	\$114,238.43	\$105,505.22
April	\$ 83,529.32	\$ 19,975.27	\$37,975.04	\$ 92,129.11	\$104,900.11	\$123,067.05
May	\$ 95,421.32	\$ 29,273.55	\$47,705.95	\$132,331.95	\$137,716.33	\$123,901.89
June	\$127,202.00	\$ 46,100.00	\$68,191.40	\$148,947.49	\$166,686.98	\$170,317.97
July	\$152,541.57	\$ 80,779.28	\$141,698.08	\$201,761.44	\$209,842.90	\$201,082.17
August	\$173,804.29	\$123,601.95	\$193,741.49	\$234,917.71	\$235,394.73	\$240,030.59
September	\$154,367.41	\$ 96,304.68	\$161,796.26	\$232,840.92	\$243,431.26	\$251,857.75
October	\$151,211.55	\$ 81,808.25	\$137,386.81	\$181,749.16	\$211,223.28	\$229,975.04
November	\$83,086.94	\$ 50,936.13	\$80,212.95	\$99,833.60	\$105,359.99	\$116,090.14
December	\$63,379.61	\$ 37,395.67	\$63,006.74	\$77,354.50	\$82,192.25	\$88,211.20
Total	\$1,300,786.15	\$769,191.54	\$1,031,541.41	\$1,607,889.35	\$1,785,365.26	\$1,845,656.96
Year	2025					
January	\$100,423.75					
February	\$112,308.49					
March	\$140,876.75					
April	\$136,726.45					
May	\$141,605.97					
June	\$185,918.00					
July	\$221,311.60					
August	\$270,285.76					
September	\$411,500.33*					
October						
November						
December						
Total	\$1,720,957.10					

* \$378,333.80 (September collection with 2% increase was applied for waterfront development) + \$33,166.53 (Prior year adjustment)

Tourism Sault Ste. Marie

Profit & Loss

January through December 2025



Income Statement @ October 2025

	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	TOTAL
Ordinary Income/Expense											
Income											
5205 · Ont Specific Grant Other	12,000.00	0.00	0.00	11,250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	172,530.13	6,250.00	37,841.87	239,872.00
5206 · Infrastructure Canada Grant	0.00	0.00	286,880.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	103,119.24	0.00	390,000.00
5405 · Mat Revenue	0.00	0.00	208,874.25	0.00	0.00	208,874.25	0.00	0.00	208,874.25	0.00	626,622.75
5847 · Interest Income	2,480.88	1,970.11	1,178.65	1,440.92	1,875.70	1,874.65	2,902.97	2,178.85	1,631.75	1,422.85	18,957.33
5852 · Misc. Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	66,727.58	88,341.16	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	70,393.64	0.00	227,462.38
5861 · Advertising Revenue	0.00	33,750.00	0.00	110.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	884.96	34,745.76
5862 · Merchandise Revenue	0.00	127.44	1,571.86	0.00	0.00	557.40	305.30	0.00	0.00	536.78	3,098.78
5863 · Ontario Cup Mountain Bike Race	0.00	0.00	0.00	900.00	398,614.56	4,445.00	5,561.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	409,521.30
Total Income	14,480.88	35,847.55	498,505.52	80,429.30	488,831.42	215,751.30	8,770.01	176,708.98	390,268.88	40,686.46	1,950,280.30
Gross Profit	14,480.88	35,847.55	498,505.52	80,429.30	488,831.42	215,751.30	8,770.01	176,708.98	390,268.88	40,686.46	1,950,280.30
Expense											
6111 · Office Expenses	158.91	15.54	158.91	158.91	158.91	158.91	158.91	158.91	158.91	525.78	1,812.60
6170 · Memberships&Subscriptions	19,840.65	493.71	5,000.00	32.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	492.20	0.00	0.00	25,858.76
6182 · Travel	2,233.87	5,102.88	1,004.08	12.88	1,831.56	523.66	0.00	1,153.90	2,528.42	848.99	15,240.24
6184 · Trade Shows/Conferences	-630.82	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	3,500.00	1,138.14	536.33	2,545.28	0.00	488.50	12,577.43
6185 · Meal Allowances	330.60	1,092.00	367.00	0.00	734.00	0.00	0.00	328.00	0.00	0.00	2,851.60
6462 · Insurance	0.00	0.00	1,829.52	1,378.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,207.60
6470 · Postal Service	5.20	8.32	93.37	30.77	168.24	358.92	0.00	97.95	0.00	49.40	812.17
6475 · Bookkeeping expense	883.49	1,073.07	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	10,271.76
6504 · Consulting Fees	0.00	1,829.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,829.34
6540 · Advertising	14,762.61	9,715.70	14,956.70	120,340.29	47,903.60	39,416.57	22,020.65	33,378.40	16,997.71	15,624.89	335,117.12
6544 · Promotions	1,427.27	1,509.12	38,405.83	0.00	9,260.00	1,913.30	1,238.96	782.50	2,976.81	311.39	57,825.18
6545 · Meetings	105.17	114.33	127.84	118.33	126.42	113.85	0.00	246.85	0.00	137.09	1,089.88
6632 · General Development	72,255.38	7,756.53	44,761.25	385,805.68	9,375.78	36,437.95	331,482.86	185,582.55	163,339.76	383,064.78	1,619,862.52

Tourism Sault Ste. Marie
Profit & Loss
January through December 2025



Income Statement @ October 2025

	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	TOTAL
6633 - Tours	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,952.78	311.82	299.54	4,373.86	2,402.33	4,016.94	16,357.27
6634 - Events	4,115.95	13,479.10	1,564.62	380.39	2,133.31	360.82	243.72	0.00	14,596.20	859.33	37,733.44
6710 - Interest Penalty AR General	0.00	4.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.69
6720 - Bank Charges	112.98	97.20	69.52	222.11	100.00	0.00	32.47	0.00	12.41	3.46	650.15
Total Expense	115,601.26	42,291.53	109,378.04	514,519.04	81,284.00	81,773.34	357,052.84	230,179.80	204,051.95	406,969.95	2,143,101.75
Net Ordinary Income	-101,120.38	-6,443.98	389,127.48	-434,089.74	407,547.42	133,977.96	-348,282.83	-53,470.82	186,216.93	-366,283.49	-192,821.45
Other Income/Expense											
Other Expense											
77000 - Exchange Gain or Loss	0.00	-132.00	629.61	23.54	0.00	-253.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.99	344.00
Total Other Expense	0.00	-132.00	629.61	23.54	0.00	-253.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.99	344.00
Net Other Income	0.00	132.00	-629.61	-23.54	0.00	253.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	-75.99	-344.00
Net Income	-101,120.38	-6,311.98	388,497.87	-434,113.28	407,547.42	134,231.10	-348,282.83	-53,470.82	186,216.93	-366,359.48	-193,165.45

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION SUMMARY

Name of the Event	Algoma University's 20 th Annual Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow
Event Date	February 14-16, 2026
Venue	GFL Memorial Gardens
Submitted by:	Paul Sayers
Reviewed by:	Stephanie Sears – July 31 2025
Ask:	\$20,000
Recommendation:	\$20,000

Overview of the Event

The 20th Annual Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow, hosted by Algoma University in 2026, will celebrate two decades of Anishinaabe culture, education, and community. This milestone event is expected to attract record participation from across the Great Lakes region in both Canada and the United States.

Led by Algoma University's Makwa Waakaa'igan, the Anishinaabe Initiatives Division, and the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association, it is organized in collaboration with partners including the Indigenous Friendship Centre, Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, Wabunung Head Start, OLG, Algoma Steel, the Métis Nation of Ontario, and the Algoma District School Board.

Recognized as the region's largest Pow Wow, Gathering at the Rapids is a celebration of dance, song, and community that honours generations of teachings and traditions. The 2026 anniversary will feature drumming, singing, competitive dancing, and an expanded marketplace for Indigenous artisans and vendors.

The Pow Wow provides opportunities for sponsors to engage meaningfully with Indigenous communities and support reconciliation through cultural celebration. It also reflects Algoma University's commitment to Chief Shingwauk's vision by promoting Anishinaabe knowledge and pathways for education and employment.

As a signature annual event, the Pow Wow strengthens cultural understanding and community connection. The 20th anniversary will be its most vibrant and impactful celebration yet.

Previous TDF Applications

YEAR	AMOUNT Approved	Summary
2025	\$20,000	Funds supported venue rental fees (covered 50% of the total cost). The GATR attracted 3100 locals, 605 regional visitors, 620 Ontario visitors, 270 from across Canada and 375 from the USA.

Attendance Projections for 2026

Local	3590
Regional	1820
Ontario	1315
Canada	850
USA	850
TOTAL:	8425

Economic Impact

3015 (out of town visitors – local and regional excluded) x 3 (number of days) x \$175 = \$1,582,875

Budget Summary

Expenses

- Estimated at \$297,523.79
- Includes: prizes, facility rental, jumbotron/sound, staff, volunteer incentives, supplies, swag, advertising, etc.

Revenue -Estimated at \$367,000 (if all sponsorship dollars are received)

Scoring Matrix

The Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow scores 105 on the scoring matrix, putting it in a recommended range of

85+	\$15,000 - \$20,000
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Staff Analysis

The Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow has demonstrated strong and sustained growth since its inception in 2005. After outgrowing Algoma University's George Leech Centre, the event moved to GFL Memorial Gardens, where the 2025 Pow Wow proved highly successful, drawing increased numbers of participants, vendors, and guests. This year also saw a notable rise in first-time attendees (both dancers and spectators), indicating expanding reach and interest. Based on this momentum, further growth is anticipated for the 2026 event.

While the new venue enabled the event to scale, it also introduced significantly higher operational costs, including ice conversion, stage and sound rentals, security, cleaning, catering, and other essential services. The Pow Wow's inclusion in the Bon Soo Winter Carnival also added value for both events, creating a mutually beneficial partnership that enriched the overall festival experience and broadened audience engagement.

Draft Resolution

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$20,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the 2026 Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND ASSESSMENT- SPORTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS STREAM

Event Name:	20th Annual Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow
Event Date:	Feb 14-15, 2026
Contact Person:	Paul Sayers
Internal Review	1-Aug-25
Board Review Date:	25-Nov-25

OUT OF TOWN PARTICIPANTS (Total of all visitors attending SPECIFICALLY for the event)		
Number of <i>Participants</i>	1000	
Number of <i>Spectators</i>	2000	
Total	3000	
Score up to 10 points		Total 10

VISITOR DAYS		
Number of Out of Town <i>Visitors</i>	3015	
Number of <i>Nights</i> they are Staying	2	
Total Visitor Days (multiply together)	6030	
Score between 0-25 points		Total 25

LOCAL ATTENDANCE (includes all spectators and participants)		
Score between 1-10 points	3590	10

EVENT BUDGET		
Up to 10 points		8

READINESS/CAPACITY/ TIMELINE		
Score between 1- 10 points		8

SEASON (Peak, Shoulder, Low)		
Score between 2-15 points		8

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION		
Score between 1-5 points		5

MARKETING AND PROMOTION STRATEGY (for festivals and events)		
RECRUITMENT/ REGISTRATION STRATEGY (for conferences)		
Score between 1-10 points		6

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION		
Score between 1-5 points		5

ALIGNMENT WITH TSSM STRATEGIC PLAN (score all that apply)	Points
5 points- Event aligns with improvements/ activation of downtown/waterfront strategy	0
5 points- Event aligns with adventure/ outdoor recreation strategy	0
3 points- Event attracts international visitors (Including USA)	3
2 points- Event generates earned media exposure outside of Sault Ste. Marie	2
5 points- Event is annual and demonstrating growth	5
10 points- Event is homegrown and occurs annually	10
10 points- Event was secured through a competitive bid process	0
TOTAL POINTS	20

Points	Recommendation Range
85+	\$15,000 - \$20,000
76-85	\$10,000 - \$15,000
66-75	\$5,000 - \$10,000
56-65	\$2500- \$5000
36-55	\$ 1000-\$2500
<35	\$0

Evaluation Criteria
Weight

1 Point for Every 100 out of town Visitors to a Maximum of 10 points	10.00%
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1 Point for Every 100 Visitor Days to a Maximum of 25 Points	25.00%
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2 Point- 100-250 people 4 Points- 250- 500 people 6 Points- 500- 750 people	8 Points- 750-1000 people 10 Points- 1000 people +	10.00%
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Score between 1-10 considering these factors:		10.00%
1. Other sources of confirmed revenue 2. Balance between Revenue and Expenses 3. Financial Need	4. Funding Ask vs. Overall Budget 5. Cost Overrun Plan 6. Comprehensiveness of proposed budget	7. Financial Sustainability

Score between 1-10 considering the these factors:		10.00%
1. Timeline (application submitted 90+ days in advance) 2. Event Plan (thoroughness)	3. Capacity 4. Data Tracking	5. Growth plan

8 Points- February and March 5 Points- April 4 Points- May- June	2 Points- July to October 15 10 Points- October 15- November 15 Points- December and January	15.00%
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5- Event involves multiple partners (8+) in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business 3- Event involves some partners (5+) in the recreation,hospitality, travel or entertainment business 0- Event involves very few <5 or collaboration in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business	5.00%
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10-Excellent- clear plan to reach out of town markets 8- Very Good plan to reach out of town markets 6- Good plan to reach out of town markets	5- Average plan, largely focused on locals 3- Below Average, does not demonstrate attempt to reach out of town travellers 0- No plan provided	10.00%
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5- Project provides a clear plan on how event will be measured for success including tracking of out of town visitors 3- Project has a plan to track visitation but does not capture all details 0- Project does not, or is not, capable of tracking out of town vistors	5.00%
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Total from Above:	85
Total from Below:	20
Total:	105

Recommendation Range:	\$15,000 - \$20,000
Recommended:	\$20,000

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION SUMMARY

Name of the Event	Northern Ontario Skilled Trades & Technology Summit
Event Date	March 25, 2026
Venue	GFL Memorial Gardens
Submitted by:	Ashley Cuglietta
Reviewed by:	Tara Lucarelli
Ask:	\$19,257.00
Recommendation:	\$12,000.00

Overview of the Event

The 2nd Annual Northern Ontario Skilled Trades & Technology Summit is presented by Skills Ontario and will take place on March 25, 2026, as a one-day event dedicated to promoting career pathways in skilled trades and technology across the region. Hosted at the GFL Memorial Gardens, the Summit will gather students, educators, employers, Indigenous leaders, and industry professionals to explore opportunities and celebrate achievements within these essential sectors. The event will showcase First Nations, Métis, and Inuit excellence in skilled trades through keynote presentations, interactive demonstrations, and networking opportunities as a large-scale career fair featuring industry booths, live demonstrations, and skill challenges designed to engage youth.

Previous TDF Applications

YEAR	AMOUNT Approved	Summary
N/A	N/A	

Attendance Projections

Local	575
Regional	420
Ontario	388
Canada	0
USA	0

Economic Impact

388 visitors x 1 day x \$175 = \$67,900

Budget Summary

Revenue: \$0
Entrance is free to all participants and vendors.

Expenses: \$68,188.37
Expenses track: venue, marketing, security, tech, a light lunch and keynote speakers.

Scoring Matrix

The Northern Ontario Skilled Trades & Technology Summit scores 77 on the evaluation matrix putting it in a recommended range of \$10,000 - \$15,000.

76-85	\$10,000 - \$15,000
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Staff Analysis

The 2025 event attracted more than 1,200 participants from across Northern Ontario. The 2026 Summit will continue to build on this success, expanding outreach to additional regions and increasing the number of exhibitors, partners, and participating schools.

Skills Ontario is in the beginning stages of applying for additional funding through FedNor – Northern Ontario Development Program (Community Economic Development Stream) and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) – Community Enhancement Program (Events Stream).

All attendees will be required to register in advance through an online form that will collect data for reporting.

Moving into 2027, the goal is to secure sponsorships and introduce a vendor fee, while continuing to offer free attendance for participants.

Staff are recommending that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors consider a funding recommendation of \$12,000 to assist with rentals and marketing.

Draft Resolution

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$12,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the Northern Ontario Skilled Trades & Technology Summit and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND ASSESSMENT- SPORTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS STREAM

Event Name:	Northern Ontario Skilled Trade & Technology Summit
Event Date:	25-Mar-26
Contact Person:	Ashley Cuglietta
Internal Review	Tara Lucarelli
Board Review Date:	25-Nov-25

OUT OF TOWN PARTICIPANTS (Total of all visitors attending SPECIFICALLY for the event)		
Number of <i>Participants</i>	1,383	
Number of <i>Spectators</i>	0	
Total	1,383	
Score up to 10 points		Total 4

VISITOR DAYS		
Number of Out of Town <i>Visitors</i>	388	
Number of <i>Nights</i> they are Staying	1	
Total Visitor Days (multiply together)	388	
Score between 0-25 points		Total 4

LOCAL ATTENDANCE (includes all spectators and participants)		
Score between 1-10 points	995	8

EVENT BUDGET		
Up to 10 points		8

READINESS/CAPACITY/ TIMELINE		
Score between 1- 10 points		10

SEASON (Peak, Shoulder, Low)		
Score between 2-15 points		8

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION		
Score between 1-5 points		3

MARKETING AND PROMOTION STRATEGY (for festivals and events)		
RECRUITMENT/ REGISTRATION STRATEGY (for conferences)		
Score between 1-10 points		10

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION		
Score between 1-5 points		5

ALIGNMENT WITH TSSM STRATEGIC PLAN (score all that apply)	Points	60
5 points- Event aligns with improvements/ activation of downtown/waterfront strategy		
5 points- Event aligns with adventure/ outdoor recreation strategy		
3 points- Event attracts international visitors (Including USA)		
2 points- Event generates earned media exposure outside of Sault Ste. Marie		2
5 points- Event is annual and demonstrating growth		5
10 points- Event is homegrown and occurs annually		10
10 points- Event was secured through a competitive bid process		
		17
TOTAL POINTS		77

Points	Recommendation Range
85+	\$15,000 - \$20,000
76-85	\$10,000 - \$15,000
66-75	\$5,000 - \$10,000
56-65	\$2500- \$5000
36-55	\$ 1000-\$2500
<35	\$0

Evaluation Criteria

1 Point for Every 100 out of town Visitors to a Maximum of 10 points	10.00%
1 Point for Every 100 Visitor Days to a Maximum of 25 Points	25.00%
2 Point- 100-250 people 4 Points- 250- 500 people 6 Points- 500- 750 people	10.00%
8 Points- 750-1000 people 10 Points- 1000 people +	
Score between 1-10 considering these factors: 1. Other sources of confirmed revenue 2. Balance between Revenue and Expenses 3. Financial Need	10.00%
4. Funding Ask vs. Overall Budget 5. Cost Overrun Plan 6. Comprehensiveness of proposed budget	
7. Financial Sustainability	
Score between 1-10 considering the these factors: 1. Timeline (application submitted 90+ days in advance) 2. Event Plan (thoroughness)	10.00%
3. Capacity 4. Data Tracking	
5. Growth plan	
8 Points- February and March 5 Points- April 4 Points- May- June	15.00%
2 Points- July to October 15 10 Points- October 15- November 15 Points- December and January	
5- Event involves multiple partners (8+) in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business 3- Event involves some partners (5+) in the recreation,hospitality, travel or entertainment business 0- Event involves very few <5 or collaboration in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business	5.00%
10-Excellent- clear plan to reach out of town markets 8- Very Good plan to reach out of town markets 6- Good plan to reach out of town markets	10.00%
5- Average plan, largely focused on locals 3- Below Average, does not demonstrate attempt to reach out of town travellers 0- No plan provided	
5- Project provides a clear plan on how event will be measured for success including tracking of out of town visitors 3- Project has a plan to track visitation but does not capture all details 0- Project does not, or is not, capable of tracking out of town vistors	5.00%

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION SUMMARY

Name of the Event	Bon Soo Winter Carnival 2026
Event Date	February 13 – 21, 2026
Venue	Machine Shop, Clergue Park, Downtown Plaza, Bushplane Museum, Northern Superior Tap Room
Submitted by:	Rachel Rankin
Reviewed by:	Stephanie Sears – Nov 6 2025
Ask:	\$20,000
Recommendation:	\$10,000

Overview of the Event

The Bon Soo Winter Carnival (BSWC) is one of Sault Ste. Marie's most iconic home-grown events. Established in 1963, the Carnival was created to inspire winter tourism, uplift community spirit during the long cold season, and showcase the resilience and creativity of Northern Ontario. Over six decades later, it remains a beloved tradition for both locals and visitors.

In recent years, the City of Sault Ste. Marie and Tourism Sault Ste. Marie have provided critical support to help stabilize and sustain the Carnival. The Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors, through their budget, provided \$150,000 (spread over 3 years) to bridge the gap and revive Bon Soo. As a result, Bon Soo is in a more stable, stronger financial and organizational position, with renewed momentum. The Carnival has broadened its programming to appeal to all ages, from toddlers to seniors, with most activities offered for free or accessible with the purchase of a Bon Soo button or jacket tag. Events range from opening ceremonies, concerts, and family activities to sporting events, culinary attractions, and outdoor winter experiences, delivered through strong partnerships with local businesses and community organizations.

The Carnival's collaboration with the Machine Shop/Canal District, the City, and Northern Superior Brewing has strengthened its footprint, allowing it to reimagine its signature events. To support its continued growth, Bon Soo is seeking Tourism Development Fund assistance for the 2026 Carnival to invest in targeted out-of-town marketing, Bon Soo merchandise, and enhanced volunteer appreciation, recognizing that volunteers remain the cornerstone of the event's success.

Previous TDF Applications

YEAR	AMOUNT Approved	Summary
n/a		

Attendance Projections

Local	9000
Regional	150
Ontario	250
Canada	
USA	20

**NOTE: attendance projections were very loosely*

estimated. Bon Soo projected 10,000 people attended (some repeat guests) over the 9 day period in 2025. No postal code tracking or data was collected.

Economic Impact

275 out of town visitors

2 nights

X \$175 per person per night = \$96,250

Budget Summary

Revenue: Festival revenue comes from button sales and sponsorship. This year BSWC has also applied to NOHFC.

Estimated revenue: \$250,000

Expenses: \$235,000

TDF funds will be used to support

- Brand presence and recognition

Scoring Matrix

The BSWC scores 78.5 on the scoring matrix placing it in the range of \$10,000 to \$15,000

Staff Analysis

The Bon Soo Winter Carnival remains one of Sault Ste. Marie's most iconic and culturally significant winter festivals. With strong brand equity, long-standing community recognition, and considerable marketing power, the event continues to play an important role in stimulating the local economy and enhancing quality of life during the slowest and darkest period of the year. Ensuring its continued success is essential to maintaining the city's reputation for delivering memorable and high-impact winter experiences.

Since being re-established, the current Board of Directors has made notable strides in strengthening the festival's operations and vision. Their work, supported by Tourism Sault Ste. Marie, reflects a clear commitment to delivering a high-caliber and inclusive event that aligns with community expectations. Efforts over the past year include expanded programming, the intentional acknowledgment of diverse cultural groups, and the recruitment of additional Board and subcommittee members. This enhanced leadership structure is further reinforced by a strong volunteer network.

Financially, the Bon Soo Winter Carnival is positioned with commitments from key sponsors and reserve funds carried over from the previous year. A pending NOHFC grant application up to \$15,000 may provide in additional support.

Draft Resolution

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$10,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the brand presence and recognition to be hosted February 13 – 21, 2026 and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND ASSESSMENT- SPORTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS STREAM

Event Name:	Bon Soo Winter Carnival
Event Date:	February 13 - 21, 2026
Contact Person:	Rachel Rankin
Internal Review	Stephanie Sears-Nov 6 2025
Board Review Date:	18-Nov-25

OUT OF TOWN PARTICIPANTS (Total of all visitors attending SPECIFICALLY for the event)	
Number of <i>Participants</i>	100
Number of <i>Spectators</i>	900
Total	1000
Score up to 10 points	Total 10

VISITOR DAYS	
Number of Out of Town <i>Visitors</i>	1000
Number of <i>Nights</i> they are Staying	2
Total Visitor Days (multiply together)	2000
Score between 0-25 points	Total 25

LOCAL ATTENDANCE (includes all spectators and participants)	
Score between 1-10 points	9000
	10

EVENT BUDGET	
Up to 10 points	7

READINESS/CAPACITY/ TIMELINE	
Score between 1- 10 points	10

SEASON (Peak, Shoulder, Low)	
Score between 2-15 points	8

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION	
Score between 1-5 points	5

MARKETING AND PROMOTION STRATEGY (for festivals and events)	
RECRUITMENT/ REGISTRATION STRATEGY (for conferences)	
Score between 1-10 points	5

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION	
Score between 1-5 points	4

ALIGNMENT WITH TSSM STRATEGIC PLAN (score all that apply)	
5 points- Event aligns with improvements/ activation of downtown/waterfront strategy	5
5 points- Event aligns with adventure/ outdoor recreation strategy	3
3 points- Event attracts international visitors (Including USA)	1
2 points- Event generates earned media exposure outside of Sault Ste. Marie	0
5 points- Event is annual and demonstrating growth	5
10 points- Event is homegrown and occurs annually	10
10 points- Event was secured through a competitive bid process	0
TOTAL POINTS	24

Points	Recommendation Range
85+	\$15,000 - \$20,000
76-85	\$10,000 - \$15,000
66-75	\$5,000 - \$10,000
56-65	\$2500- \$5000
36-55	\$ 1000-\$2500
<35	\$0

Evaluation Criteria

1 Point for Every 100 out of town Visitors to a Maximum of 10 points	10.00%
----------------------------------------------------------------------	--------

1 Point for Every 100 Visitor Days to a Maximum of 25 Points	25.00%
--------------------------------------------------------------	--------

2 Point- 100-250 people	8 Points- 750-1000 people	10.00%
4 Points- 250- 500 people	10 Points- 1000 people +	
6 Points- 500- 750 people		

Score between 1-10 considering these factors:		10.00%
1. Other sources of confirmed revenue	4. Funding Ask vs. Overall Budget	7. Financial Sustainability
2. Balance between Revenue and Expenses	5. Cost Overrun Plan	
3. Financial Need	6. Comprehensiveness of proposed budget	

Score between 1-10 considering the these factors:		10.00%
1. Timeline (application submitted 90+ days in advance)	3. Capacity	5. Growth plan
2. Event Plan (thoroughness)	4. Data Tracking	

8 Points- February and March	2 Points- July to October 15	15.00%
5 Points- April	10 Points- October 15- November	
4 Points- May- June	15 Points- December and January	

5- Event involves multiple partners (8+) in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business		5.00%
3- Event involves some partners (5+) in the recreation,hospitality, travel or entertainment business		
0- Event involves very few <5 or collaboration in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business		

10-Excellent- clear plan to reach out of town markets	5- Average plan, largely focused on locals	10.00%
8- Very Good plan to reach out of town markets	3- Below Average, does not demonstrate attempt to reach out of town travellers	
6- Good plan to reach out of town markets	0- No plan provided	

5- Project provides a clear plan on how event will be measured for success including tracking of out of town visitors		5.00%
3- Project has a plan to track visitation but does not capture all details		
0- Project does not, or is not, capable of tracking out of town visitors		

total points from above:	84
total points from below:	24
total:	108
Recommendation Range:	\$15,000 - \$20,000
Recommended:	\$10,000

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION SUMMARY

Name of the Event	Frozen Toe Fat Bike Race
Event Date	February 7, 2025
Venue	Hiawatha Highlands/ Root River
Submitted by:	Red Pine Tours- Graham Atkinson
Reviewed by:	Travis Anderson
Ask:	\$7500
Recommendation:	\$7500

Overview of the Event

The Frozen Toe Winter Fat Bike Race is a growing winter event that showcases Sault Ste. Marie as a great destination for outdoor recreation. First held in 2025, the race garnered strong interest and positive feedback, with the goal of developing it into a premier annual fat bike event that continues to grow each year. The event takes place on the second weekend of February and attracts both local riders and visitors looking for a unique winter cycling experience.

The race offers 10, 25, and 50-kilometre options, making it accessible to all skill and fitness levels. In 2026, the event will be hosted at the Root River Golf Club, which will provide a warm indoor space for registration, socializing, and après-race food and drinks. The event is organized by Red Pine Tours, a reputable tour company with experience hosting several successful events.

A major step forward for 2026 is the event's inclusion in the Northern Michigan Fat Bike Series. This will raise the profile of the Frozen Toe in the U.S. and is expected to increase participation from Michigan. The long-term goal is to continue attracting more riders from both the U.S. and Ontario, helping the event grow each year. As participation increases, revenue will rise as well, eventually allowing the Frozen Toe to become fully financially sustainable.

Previous TDF Application Summary

YEAR	AMOUNT Approved	Summary
n/a		

Attendance Projections

	Overall
Local	202
Regional	70
Ontario	160
Canada	
USA	80

Economic Impact

230 Out of Town Visitors
2 days
\$175 per person per day
Total: \$80,500

Budget Summary

Revenue: \$11,000 (Sponsorship and Registration)

Expenses: \$11,000 (venue rental, Root River Rental, hosting fee & post-race food Marketing, Prizes, Registration swag, Porta-potty rental, Volunteer appreciation, Insurance, SSAR, Timing (Zone 4), Race Plates, Signage, Photographer, Fuel - Groomers

Scoring Matrix

The Frozen Toe Winter Fat Bike Race scores 73 on the evaluation matrix placing it in the recommended range of \$5000- \$10,000

Staff Analysis

The Frozen Toe Winter Fat Bike Race is recommended for funding support as it aligns directly with the City's winter tourism priorities and has strong potential to become an iconic annual event for Sault Ste. Marie, similar in stature to the Iceman Cometh. The event is homegrown, professionally organized by Red Pine Tours, and benefits from strong local expertise in hosting sporting and recreational events.

The inaugural 2025 event received positive feedback, demonstrating clear interest from both local participants and visitors. The event has established excellent branding, which was developed last year, and representatives actively promoted the race at the Iceman Cometh in Michigan, generating strong interest from the U.S. market. Participation is expected to grow further in 2026 with the event's inclusion in the Northern Michigan Fat Bike Series, which will raise its profile and attract additional riders from Michigan and Ontario.

Sault Ste. Marie's reliable winter snow conditions provide a significant competitive advantage, allowing the event to deliver a high-quality participant experience that many other cities cannot replicate. Funding support will help the event continue to grow, attract visitors from out of town, and enhance the city's reputation as a premier winter recreation destination. The combination of local backing, experienced organizers, strong branding, and strategic marketing initiatives makes the Frozen Toe a promising investment in winter tourism

Draft Resolution

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$7500 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the 2026 Frozen Toe Fat Bike Race to be hosted February 7, 2026 and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND ASSESSMENT- SPORTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS STREAM

Event Name:	Frozen Toe Fat Bike Race
Event Date:	7-Feb-26
Contact Person:	Graham Atkinson
Internal Review	22-Oct-25
Board Review Date:	25-Nov-25

OUT OF TOWN PARTICIPANTS (Total of all visitors attending SPECIFICALLY for the event)	
Number of <i>Participants</i>	90
Number of <i>Spectators</i>	140
Total	230
Score up to 10 points	Total 2

VISITOR DAYS	
Number of Out of Town <i>Visitors</i>	230
Number of <i>Nights</i> they are Staying	2
Total Visitor Days (multiply together)	460
Score between 0-25 points	Total 4

LOCAL ATTENDANCE (includes all spectators and participants)	
Score between 1-10 points	4

EVENT BUDGET	
Up to 10 points	8

READINESS/CAPACITY/ TIMELINE	
Score between 1- 10 points	9

SEASON (Peak, Shoulder, Low)	
Score between 2-15 points	8

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION	
Score between 1-5 points	3

MARKETING AND PROMOTION STRATEGY (for festivals and events)	
RECRUITMENT/ REGISTRATION STRATEGY (for conferences)	
Score between 1-10 points	5

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION	
Score between 1-5 points	5
Total	48

ALIGNMENT WITH TSSM STRATEGIC PLAN (score all that apply)	
5 points- Event aligns with improvements/ activation of downtown/waterfront strategy	5
5 points- Event aligns with adventure/ outdoor recreation strategy	5
3 points- Event attracts international visitors (Including USA)	3
2 points- Event generates earned media exposure outside of Sault Ste. Marie	2
5 points- Event is annual and demonstrating growth	5
10 points- Event is homegrown and occurs annually	10
10 points- Event was secured through a competitive bid process	10
TOTAL POINTS	73

Points	Recommendation Range
85+	\$15,000 - \$20,000
76-85	\$10,000 - \$15,000
66-75	\$5,000 - \$10,000
56-65	\$2500- \$5000
36-55	\$ 1000-\$2500
<35	\$0

Evaluation Criteria

1 Point for Every 100 out of town Visitors to a Maximum of 10 points	10.00%
----------------------------------------------------------------------	--------

1 Point for Every 100 Visitor Days to a Maximum of 25 Points	25.00%
--------------------------------------------------------------	--------

2 Point- 100-250 people	8 Points- 750-1000 people	10.00%
4 Points- 250- 500 people	10 Points- 1000 people +	
6 Points- 500- 750 people		

Score between 1-10 considering these factors:		10.00%
1. Other sources of confirmed revenue	4. Funding Ask vs. Overall Budget	7. Financial Sustainability
2. Balance between Revenue and Expenses	5. Cost Overrun Plan	
3. Financial Need	6. Comprehensiveness of proposed budget	

Score between 1-10 considering the these factors:		10.00%
Timeline (application submitted 90+ days in advance)	Capacity	Growth plan (if applicable)
Event Plan (thoroughness)	Data Tracking	

8 Points- February and March	2 Points- July to October 15	15.00%
5 Points- April	10 Points- October 15- November	
4 Points- May- June	15 Points- December and January	

5- Event involves multiple partners (8+) in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business		5.00%
3- Event involves some partners (5+) in the recreation,hospitality, travel or entertainment business		
0- Event involves very few <5 or collaboration in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business		

10-Excellent- clear plan to reach out of town markets	5- Average plan, largely focused on locals	10.00%
8- Very Good plan to reach out of town markets	3- Below Average, does not demonstrate attempt to reach out of town travellers	
6- Good plan to reach out of town markets	0- No plan provided	

5- Project provides a clear plan on how event will be measured for success including tracking of out of town visitors		5.00%
3- Project has a plan to track visitation but does not capture all details		
0- Project does not, or is not, capable of tracking out of town visitors		

Total Top Section	48
Total Bottom Section	25
Recommendation Range	\$5000- \$10,000
Recommendation	\$7,500

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION SUMMARY

Name of the Event	Dave Kensit Memorial NEOR Championships
Event Date	Feb 6 – 8, 2026
Venue	John Rhodes - Pool
Submitted by:	Jason Thomson
Reviewed by:	Jeff McClelland
Ask:	\$6,300
Recommendation:	\$3,500

Overview of the Event

The Dave Kensit Memorial Championship is a short-course (25-metre) regional swim meet held annually in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, at the John Rhodes Community Centre pool. It is sanctioned by Swimming Canada and Swim Ontario and serves as the age-group short-course championship for the North Eastern Ontario Region (NEOR).

The meet runs over three days and includes multiple sessions divided by age categories: 10 & under, 11-12, 13-14, and 15 & over. Events feature a full range of individual and relay races, with qualifying time standards required for entry. Younger swimmers must meet set performance times to participate, while older swimmers must meet the “Dave Kensit Championship Standard” to score team points.

The competition is structured to encourage both individual excellence and team achievement. Points are awarded for individual and relay placements, contributing to cumulative club scores. At the conclusion of the meet, team awards are presented, often recognizing the top large and small clubs, along with individual high-point awards for swimmers who achieve standout performances.

In addition to competition, the event honours the memory of Dave Kensit, a respected figure in the local swimming community remembered for his dedication to developing youth sport in Northern Ontario. The meet includes an annual scholarship given in his name to a deserving regional swimmer who exemplifies commitment, sportsmanship, and perseverance, qualities associated with Kensit’s legacy.

The Dave Kensit Memorial Championship brings together over 250 athletes from across the NEOR region, drawing swimmers, families, and coaches into a celebration of athletic excellence, community spirit, and the enduring impact of mentorship in the sport of swimming.

Previous TDF Applications

YEAR	AMOUNT Approved	Summary
2023	\$2,000	Northeastern Ontario Swim Meet
2024	\$2,375	April Invitational
2025	\$2,000	Northeastern Ontario Swim Meet
2025	\$8,000	Myrtha Backstroke System

Attendance Projections

Local	279
Regional	0
Ontario	550
Canada	0
USA	6

Economic Impact

$$556 * 3 * 175 = \$291,900$$

Budget Summary

Revenue: \$34,600 (meet fees \$31,000, bake sale \$2,600, Apparel sales: \$1,000)

Expenses: \$15,450 (Scholarship \$750, Payroll \$1,200, Officials (gifts) \$100, Swim ON fees \$2,050, Bag tags \$1,200, Food \$1,800, Supplies \$100, Meet software upgrade \$500
Meet hardware upgrade \$1,000, Promotional Banner \$1,500, Trophies \$2,500
Pool Fees \$2,750

Profit: \$19,150

The event profits will be used to fund the operations of the club.

Scoring Matrix

The Dave Kensit Memorial Championship scores 58 on the evaluation matrix placing it in the recommended range of \$2,500 - \$5,000.

Staff Analysis

The Dave Kensit Memorial Championship is an annual age-group short-course championship for the North Eastern Ontario Region. This event directly supports Tourism Development Fund objectives by driving overnight stays during a traditionally lower tourism period in February and generating earned media exposure beyond Sault Ste. Marie.

As a sanctioned regional championship, attendance is guaranteed, and participation is based on qualifying standards, ensuring a high-caliber competition.

Staff recommends approving a TDF grant of \$3,500 to help offset Swim Ontario sanctioning fees and fund hardware/software upgrades.

Draft Resolution

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$3,500 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the Dave Kensit Memorial Championship to be hosted February 6th to 8th, 2026 and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND ASSESSMENT- SPORTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS STREAM

Event Name:	Dave Kensit NEOR Championships
Event Date:	Feb 6-8, 2026
Contact Person:	Jason Thomson
Internal Review	Jeff McClelland
Board Review Date:	25-Nov-25

Weight

OUT OF TOWN PARTICIPANTS (Total of all visitors attending SPECIFICALLY for the event)		
Number of <i>Participants</i>	202	
Number of <i>Spectators</i>	354	
Total	556	
Score up to 10 points		Total 5.5

VISITOR DAYS		
Number of Out of Town <i>Visitors</i>	556	
Number of <i>Nights</i> they are Staying	3	
Total Visitor Days (multiply together)	1668	
Score between 0-25 points		Total 16.5

LOCAL ATTENDANCE (includes all spectators and participants)		
Score between 1-10 points	279	4

EVENT BUDGET		
Up to 10 points		7

READINESS/CAPACITY/ TIMELINE		
Score between 1- 10 points		10

SEASON (Peak, Shoulder, Low)		
Score between 2-15 points		8

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION		
Score between 1-5 points		0

MARKETING AND PROMOTION STRATEGY (for festivals and events)		
RECRUITMENT/ REGISTRATION STRATEGY (for conferences)		
Score between 1-10 points		10

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION		
Score between 1-5 points		5

Evaluation Criteria

1 Point for Every 100 out of town Visitors to a Maximum of 10 points	10.00%
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1 Point for Every 100 Visitor Days to a Maximum of 25 Points	25.00%
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2 Point- 100-250 people 4 Points- 250- 500 people 6 Points- 500- 750 people	8 Points- 750-1000 people 10 Points- 1000 people +	10.00%
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Score between 1-10 considering these factors:		
1. Other sources of confirmed revenue	4. Funding Ask vs. Overall Budget	7. Financial Sustainability
2. Balance between Revenue and Expenses	5. Cost Overrun Plan	
3. Financial Need	6. Comprehensiveness of proposed budget	

Score between 1-10 considering the these factors:		
1. Timeline (application submitted 90+ days in advance)	3. Capacity	5. Growth plan
2. Event Plan (thoroughness)	4. Data Tracking	

8 Points- February and March 5 Points- April 4 Points- May- June	2 Points- July to October 15 10 Points- October 15- November 15 Points- December and January	15.00%
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5- Event involves multiple partners (8+) in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business 3- Event involves some partners (5+) in the recreation,hospitality, travel or entertainment business 0- Event involves very few <5 or collaboration in the recreation, hospitality, travel or entertainment business		
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10-Excellent- clear plan to reach out of town markets 8- Very Good plan to reach out of town markets 6- Good plan to reach out of town markets	5- Average plan, largely focused on locals 3- Below Average, does not demonstrate attempt to reach out of town travellers 0- No plan provided	10.00%
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5- Project provides a clear plan on how event will be measured for success including tracking of out of town visitors 3- Project has a plan to track visitation but does not capture all details 0- Project does not, or is not, capable of tracking out of town visitors		
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ALIGNMENT WITH TSSM STRATEGIC PLAN (score all that apply)		Points	56
5 points- Event aligns with improvements/ activation of downtown/waterfront strategy			
5 points- Event aligns with adventure/ outdoor recreation strategy			
3 points- Event attracts international visitors (Including USA)			
2 points- Event generates earned media exposure outside of Sault Ste. Marie			2
5 points- Event is annual and demonstrating growth			
10 points- Event is homegrown and occurs annually			
10 points- Event was secured through a competitive bid process			2
TOTAL POINTS			58

Points	Recommendation Range
85+	\$15,000 - \$20,000
76-85	\$10,000 - \$15,000
66-75	\$5,000 - \$10,000
56-65	\$2500- \$5000
36-55	\$ 1000-\$2500
<35	\$0