

Municipal Accommodation Tax Amendments (All Wards)

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That the Corporate & Finance Services Committee recommend to City Council:

Whereas at its meeting of October 20, 2020, Council approved the implementation of the Municipal Accommodation Tax (“M.A.T.”) and passed related By-law 93-2020 to implement the M.A.T.; and,

Whereas By-law 93-2020 Section 2 sets the M.A.T. rate at four (4) per cent of the Purchase Price of Accommodation provided for a continuous period of 30 days or less; and,

Whereas it is recommended that effective October 1, 2024, the M.A.T. rate be increased to five (5) per cent of the Purchase Price of Accommodation provided for a continuous period of 30 days or less; and,

Whereas the amended M.A.T. rate will result in increased revenues of approximately \$150,000 and,

Whereas By-law 93-2020 Section 9 establishes the Provider shall provide and remit monthly statements to the Treasurer; and,

Whereas accommodation related to bed and breakfast and short-term rental providers should be expected to provide and remit quarterly rather than monthly statements; and,

Whereas Section 9 of the By-law would need to be amended to allow bed and breakfast and short-term rental providers the ability to remit quarterly rather than monthly statements; and,

Whereas the Agreement between the City and the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce requires the Chamber to submit a written report to the City annually to provide the particulars of activities engaged in, a description of key performance indicators to measure outcomes, and other such information may be reasonably requested by the City; and,

Whereas the Annual report from the Chamber will form part of an open public record; and,

Whereas the Chamber has provided the City with their 2023 Annual Report which forms Attachment 2 to this report, as information;

Therefore, be it resolved that pursuant to Report CF-24-51 dated June 3, 2024 concerning an amendment to the Municipal Accommodation Tax:

1. That Section 2 of By-law 93-2020 be amended to increase the Municipal Accommodation Tax rate from four (4) to five (5) per cent of the Purchase Price of Accommodation provided for a continuous period of 30 days or less; and,
2. That Section 9 of By-law 93-2020 be amended such that a Provider identified as a bed and breakfast or short-term rental shall remit the amount of the M.A.T. collected for the previous three months and submit the quarterly statements on or before the last day every calendar quarter end; and, in the form required by the City Treasurer detailing the number of the Accommodation sold, the purchase price of each Accommodation, the M.A.T. amount collected and any other information as required by the City for the purposes of administrating and enforcing the By-law; and,
3. That By-law 93-2020 be amended as outlined in Attachment 1 to Item CF-24-51 and in the final form and content satisfactory to the City Solicitor and the Commissioner, Corporate and Finance Services Department/City Treasurer; and,
4. That the 2023 Annual Report provided to the City from the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce related to Tourism be received for information.



**By-law -2024**  
**of The Corporation of the City of Oshawa**

Being a by-law to amend Municipal Accommodation Tax By-law 93-2020.

Whereas the Council of The Corporation of the City of Oshawa considers it desirable to amend By-law 93-2020;

Therefore, it is enacted as a by-law The Corporation of the City of Oshawa as follows:

1. That Section 2 of By-law 93-2020 be amended to delete the word “four (4)” and replace it with the word “five (5)”; and,
2. That Section 9 of By-law 93-2020 be amended to number the current paragraph Part 1 and to add a new Part 2 as follows:  
  

“A Provider identified as a bed and breakfast or short-term rental shall remit the amount of the M.A.T. collected for the previous three months and submit the quarterly statements on or before the last day every calendar quarter end; and, in the form required by the City Treasurer detailing the number of the Accommodation sold, the purchase price of each Accommodation, the M.A.T. amount collected and any other information as required by the City for the purposes of administrating and enforcing the By-law.”.
3. This by-law shall come into full force and effect on October 1, 2024.

By-law passed this            day of            , 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Explore  
**OSHAWA**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## WHAT'S INSIDE

1. Economic and Tourism Overview
2. Strategic Initiatives
3. Tourism Events
4. Operator Enablement
5. Community Engagement
6. Marketing and Campaigns
7. Insights
8. A Look Ahead

Over the past year, Oshawa Tourism has made significant strides in enhancing our city's appeal as a prime destination. Through the introduction of a community-informed Strategic Community Tourism Plan and the establishment of a Tourism Advisory Committee composed of local tourism stakeholders, we have laid a strong foundation for sustainable tourism growth.

Our efforts have resulted in the successful production of three major events: Boujee Bites, Convergence, and the revision of the 76th Annual Oshawa Santa Claus Parade of Lights, all of which received overwhelming community support and participation. Additionally, we have consistently promoted Oshawa's attractions and events through over 52 blog articles and our vibrant culinary guide featuring over 60 local restaurants.

Quarterly marketing campaigns have been pivotal in encouraging visitation and fostering a sense of pride among residents. Our dedication to industry engagement is reflected in our growing network of tourism-related businesses, now boasting over 70 subscribers. Our monthly B2B newsletters have been a valuable resource, offering industry insights, marketing tips, collaboration opportunities, and funding information.

Our social media presence has seen impressive growth, with our reach expanding to 160.2K on Facebook and 52.6K on Instagram. This achievement underscores our commitment to engaging with both locals and visitors through dynamic digital content.

These milestones would not have been possible without the tireless efforts and collaboration with our local tourism stakeholders. As we look forward to Oshawa's Centennial year, we are filled with excitement and anticipation for the numerous programs and activities planned to showcase Oshawa as a premier destination.

Our accomplishments this year are a testament to the power of community and the shared vision of making Oshawa a vibrant and attractive place to live, work, and visit. We remain dedicated to building on this success and continuing to promote Oshawa's unique offerings to a broader audience.



# ECONOMIC AND TOURISM OVERVIEW

## TOURISM METRICS



### OSHAWA HOTEL OCCUPANCY RATES

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	59.4%	59.2%	49.5%	52.4%	63.5%
Feb	69.2%	61.7%	57.6%	61.6%	62.7%
Mar	68.0%	41.9%	60.6%	66.6%	69.4%
Apr	65.5%	24.9%	56.3%	71.6%	71.4%
May	71.5%	38.5%	63.0%	78.3%	76.3%
Jun	80.3%	42.0%	70.8%	85.6%	79.8%
Jul	79.5%	46.9%	75.1%	79.4%	80.4%
Aug	87.4%	55.9%	86.1%	82.9%	84.9%
Sep	81.1%	53.2%	80.7%	79.5%	81.8%
Oct	79.0%	49.1%	75.8%	77.5%	78.0%
Nov	74.3%	49.7%	68.9%	70.4%	72.5%
Dec	57.0%	47.7%	58.3%	59.2%	63.5%
Annual	72.7%	47.5%	68.1%	72.1%	73.7%

#### KEY FINDINGS:

- Annual hotel metrics indicated a 1.6% growth in occupancy from 2022
- 2023 metrics have demonstrated that they have grown to 73.7%, the highest occupancy rate since 2019 (Pre-COVID-19 pandemic).

## DOWNTOWN OSHAWA VISITATION

Envionics provided by Durham Tourism indicate the following are the origin cities of visitors to downtown Oshawa in 2023.

#### VISITORS

- 459,801 (Toronto)
- 101,433 (Port Hope)
- 79,748 (Kawartha Lakes)
- 44,683 (Brampton)
- 40,054 (Mississauga)
- 38,438 (Peterborough)
- 31,136 (Cavan Monagan)
- 27,493 (Vaughan)
- 26,329 (Cobourg)
- 23,195 (Ottawa)

#### UNIQUE VISITORS

- 39,869 (Toronto)
- 4,357 (Brampton)
- 3,573 (Mississauga)
- 3,481 (Peterborough)
- 3,427 (Port Hope)
- 2,808 (Cobourg)
- 2,465 (Vaughan)
- 2,251 (Cavan Monagan)
- 2,465 (Ottawa)
- 1,910 (Richmond Hill)

#### MARKETING INSIGHT:

These areas present opportunities for targeted marketing and partnership initiatives to draw more visitors and enhance spending in downtown Oshawa.

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## BRAND DEVELOPMENT:

As an initial step in developing the Oshawa Tourism brand, the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce worked alongside Oshawa graphic designers from Citrus Media to create a brand strategy that captured the essence of Oshawa. Concepts were crafted based on input from key partners from the City of Oshawa and the Municipal Region of Durham economic development teams and a community survey facilitated through the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce social media channels in August 2022.

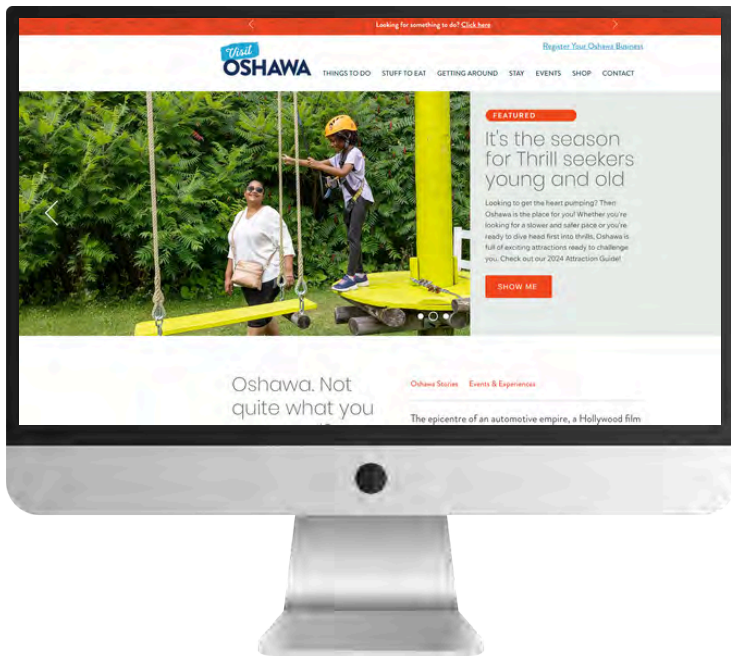
Considerations in the brand development process also included:

- Incorporation of inclusive language that speaks to both visitors and residents;
- Imagery that captures the pillars of tourism: Sport, culinary, kids and family, arts and culture, nightlife, the great outdoors, and shopping; and
- Ensuring that we "Keep it real" and embrace the most authentic aspects of Oshawa.

The primary brand image includes an "O" with interchangeable icons embedded. The icon set includes key Oshawa landmarks such as the McLaughlin Bandshell, the 'Group Portrait' sculpture from the RMG, and many more. These icons can be modified for various purposes; for example, music notes, musical instruments, paint brushes, and theatrical masks can be incorporated for events and promotions focused on arts and culture. Similar treatments can be created to reflect each pillar of tourism.



## WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT



On November 1, 2022, the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce proudly launched [www.OshawaTourism.com](http://www.OshawaTourism.com), Oshawa's first-ever dedicated website designed to serve as a comprehensive resource for discovering Oshawa's vibrant attractions, culinary delights, businesses, and events. This user-friendly platform includes dedicated landing pages for various interests, such as food and drink, arts and culture, kids and families, sport tourism, shopping, nightlife, and the great outdoors. Engaging blog content reflects these themes to captivate visitors, while a robust events calendar features external submission functionality, keeping the community informed and involved.

The website also boasts a dedicated "Stay" tab on the homepage, offering direct links to Oshawa's accommodation options through an Expedia plug-in, making booking seamless and convenient. Additionally, the "Register Your Oshawa Business" tab allows tourism-facing businesses to register for free promotion through the Oshawa Tourism website and social media channels.

A comprehensive website like this is crucial in promoting Oshawa as a premier visitor destination. It centralizes information, making it easy for tourists to plan their visit and discover everything Oshawa offers.

## SIZZLE VIDEO

Oshawa Tourism proudly unveiled the "Explore Oshawa" sizzle video, a dynamic and engaging visual showcase highlighting the city's diverse attractions, vibrant culture, and unique experiences. The primary goal of this video was to captivate and inspire both residents and visitors by presenting a vivid and compelling narrative of what makes Oshawa a must-visit destination.

VIEW THE VIDEO





## STRATEGIC COMMUNITY TOURISM PLAN

A diverse group of stakeholders from Oshawa's various tourism sectors convened between January and April 2023 for a series of interactive sessions led by Chuck Thibeault, the Executive Director of Central Counties Tourism. These collaborative sessions aimed to develop a comprehensive 3-year Strategic Community Tourism Plan for Oshawa Tourism. Stakeholders contributed valuable insights into opportunities for improvement, growth, and collaboration, which have now been compiled and drafted into actionable goals and objectives. This inclusive approach ensures that the plan reflects the needs and aspirations of Oshawa's tourism community.

[VIEW THE COMMUNITY TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

## TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To ensure that the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce (GOCC) 's tourism division fully understands the needs, barriers, and successes of the businesses and organizations it serves, the GOCC Board of Directors formed a Tourism Advisory Committee in 2023. This committee provides recommendations on actions to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the Oshawa Tourism 2023/2026 Strategic Community Tourism Plan.

The Tourism Advisory Committee meets quarterly and consists of representatives from various tourism sectors, accommodation providers, partners from Durham Tourism, the City of Oshawa, and local post-secondary institutions.



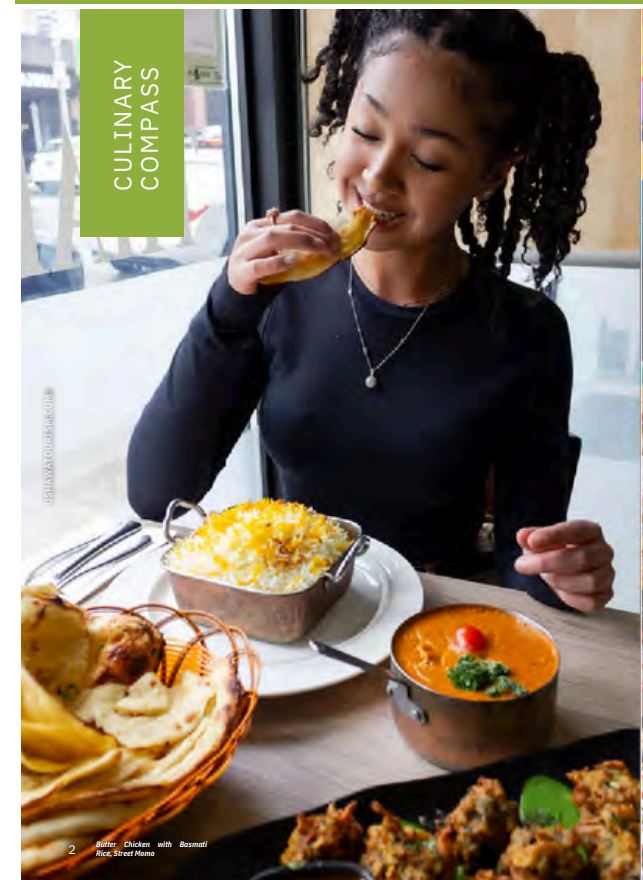
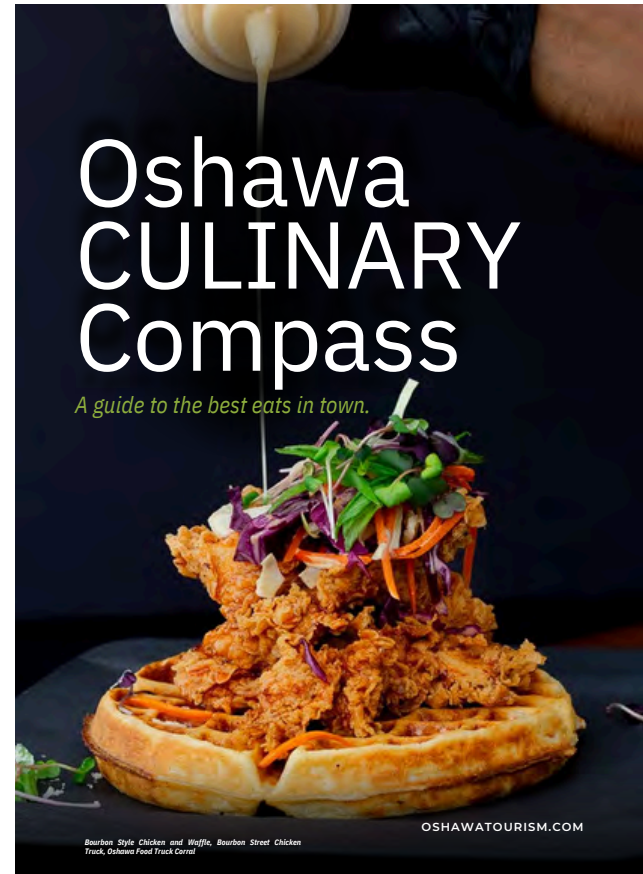
## OSHAWA CULINARY COMPASS

In 2023, we proudly launched the Oshawa Culinary Compass, a strategic initiative aimed at enhancing the city's culinary tourism. This comprehensive dining guide was developed with the objectives of promoting local gastronomy, supporting our vibrant restaurant community, and boosting the tourism economy in Oshawa.

Featuring stunning photography from over 30 restaurants, the guide highlights more than 58 dining establishments across the city, offering a diverse range of culinary experiences.

The Oshawa Culinary Compass is available at hotels and attractions citywide, ensuring that visitors can easily discover and enjoy the rich array of dining options Oshawa has to offer. By showcasing our local cuisine, this initiative not only elevates the dining experience for tourists but also drives economic growth and strengthens the city's position as a premier culinary destination.

A digital edition of the culinary guide can be found at [www.oshawaculinary.com](http://www.oshawaculinary.com).



# TOURISM EVENTS

## Delicious Bites with a Side of Community Engagement

In celebration of Oshawa's emergent culinary scene, Oshawa Tourism hosted the first annual Boujee Bites event on May 17, 2023 at the Robert McLaughlin Gallery. This event was an excellent example of the magic that can be achieved when a community collaborates. Over 80 guests were treated to unique culinary creations by some of the most talented local chefs, who came together to provide an unforgettable experience. Guests sampled cuisine from Berry Hill Food Co., Avanti Trattoria, Bollywood Tacos, CRAVE Doughnuts, Portobello Road, the Oshawa Food Truck Corral and Chronicle Brewing Company and also had the opportunity to explore the latest exhibitions at the Robert McLaughlin Gallery and enjoyed the smooth sounds of local artist Delon Om.

Proceeds from this event then supported the production of the Oshawa Culinary Guide, helping to keep costs for community economic development projects like the culinary guide at a minimum for operators.



## CONVERGENCE 2023

After months of planning, Oshawa Tourism hosted the inaugural Convergence Music and Art Festival on September 23, 2023 in downtown Oshawa. The streets of Oshawa were alive as thousands of visitors flooded King St. E. for a day full of art, music and culture.

Event highlights included a free performance by the Strumbellas, Preston Pablo, Chastity and a variety of local emerging artists; live professional wrestling; ambient aerialism; an international street food alley; the On the Road art exhibit at 70 King; and a Nerd Alley.

### CONVERGENCE BY NUMBERS

- Estimated 14,285 participants (41% visitors)
- Total visitor spending of approximately \$723,435
- Over 100 businesses and community organizations
- 40+ community volunteers



## OSHAWA SANTA CLAUS PARADE OF LIGHTS

On December 18, 2023, Oshawa Tourism facilitated the 76th Annual Oshawa Santa Claus Parade of Lights.

Major event milestones included:

- The launch of a six week social media campaign designed to attract visitors to Oshawa - resulting in event participation of over 35,000 spectators;
- Full restoration of the legacy Santa Claus float trailer to ensure the vehicle met Ontario safety standards, significant upgrades to the float decorations including safety upgrades to its electrical infrastructure, construction of wooden gift boxes that double as storage, surface painting, new Christmas trees and upgraded LED lights;
- Community participation from over 50 businesses and organizations; and
- Additional participation from four Oshawa businesses who opened their doors to provide warming stations with complimentary hot chocolate.



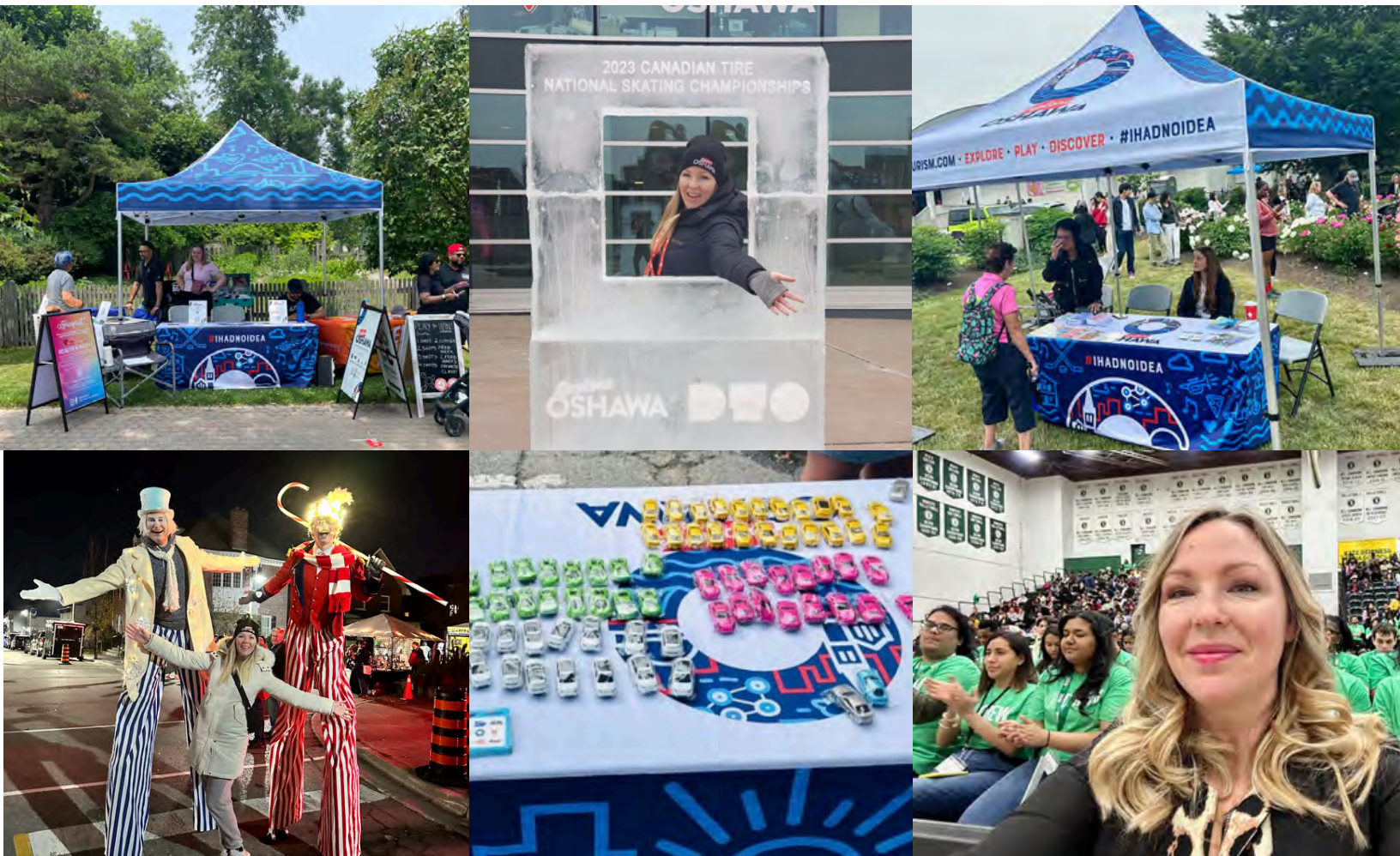
# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2023, Oshawa Tourism proactively engaged the community and visitors through a series of interactive installations at events across the city, including:

- Skate Canada National Championships
- Peony Festival
- Canada Day at Lakeview Park
- International Student Orientation at Durham College and Ontario Tech University
- Kars on King
- Bright and Merry Market

These installations have not only served as dynamic touchpoints to enhance visitor experience but have also been instrumental in promoting Oshawa's rich tourism offerings as they have been many peoples' first introduction to the Oshawa Tourism practice.

Additionally, Oshawa Tourism has actively participated in on-campus international student orientation events at Durham College and Ontario Tech University. These events offer a valuable opportunity to introduce international students—a significant and growing segment of the city's population—to the diverse businesses and attractions Oshawa has to offer, fostering a sense of community and pride in their new home.



# OPERATOR ENABLEMENT

In our commitment to bolster local tourism, Oshawa Tourism has prioritized operator enablement through various initiatives to foster collaboration and growth within the industry. A cornerstone of these efforts is our monthly B2B newsletter, which delivers valuable insights on upcoming events, opportunities for collaborative marketing, and funding sources for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) contributing to local tourism. This newsletter has become a valuable resource for over 70 subscribers, offering industry updates and practical tips to help local businesses thrive.

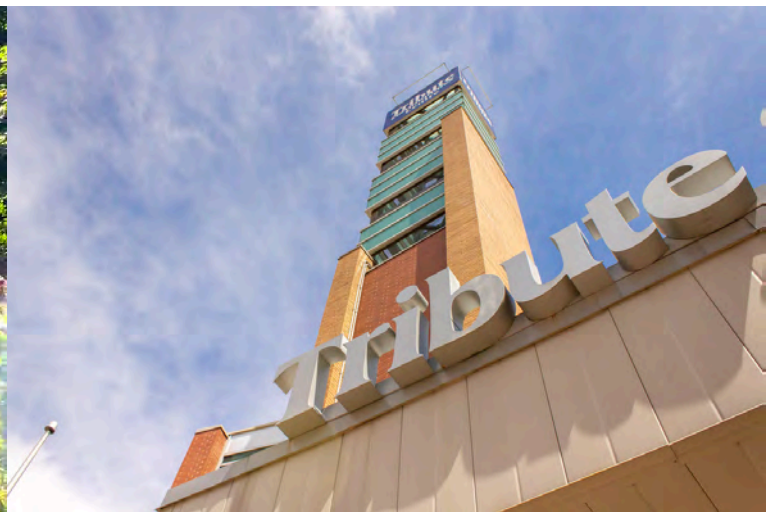


The success of this initiative is largely attributed to our proactive approach to building relationships with local operators, initiated most often via 1:1 outreach. Much of the groundwork for generating these subscribers was accomplished through site visits and in-depth conversations with business owners. These interactions were crucial in developing trust and understanding the unique needs and challenges faced by our local tourism partners.

## COMMUNITY-BUILDING INSIGHT

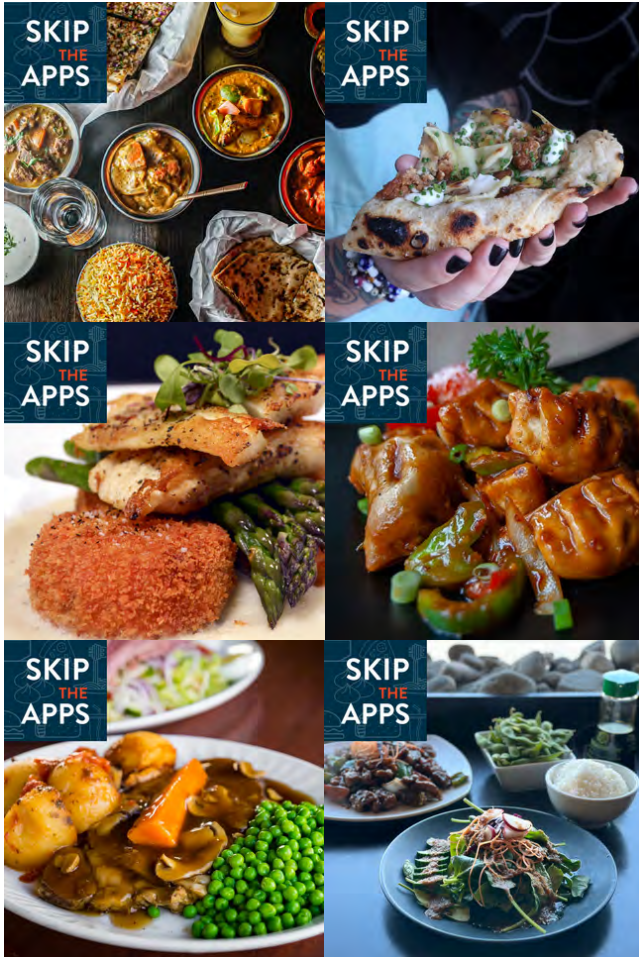
Throughout the year, we have observed a significant transformation in the engagement levels of local operators. Initially, many hesitated to participate in tourism initiatives. However, through persistent outreach and the tangible benefits of projects such as the Oshawa Culinary Compass, the Hometown Tourists Challenge, tourism events, and our many marketing campaigns, there has been a tangible and relatively fast shift in engagement. Once-cautious operators now actively reach out with innovative ideas and proposals for future collaborations.

This growing enthusiasm and involvement from local businesses are a testament to the effectiveness of our operator enablement strategies. As we move forward, we remain dedicated to nurturing these relationships and providing ongoing support to ensure that Oshawa thrives as a vibrant and attractive tourist destination.



# MARKETING AND CAMPAIGNS

## SKIP THE APPS



Throughout February and March 2023, Oshawa Tourism launched a digital 'Skip the Apps' campaign via our social media channels to encourage residents and visitors to dine in or pick up their takeout orders in service of maximizing their support of local restaurants.

The campaign aimed to promote local culinary operators by showcasing a variety of delicious dining options. It encouraged residents to explore new eateries, socialize, and enjoy themselves while supporting the community. The campaign also highlighted Oshawa's vibrant culinary scene by enhancing our reputation as a foodie destination.

### KEY MESSAGING:

Skips the Apps throughout February and March in support of local culinary operators. Dining in and picking up your order helps local businesses protect their profit margins on each order by approximately 20 to 30%

## HIDDEN GEMS

The Hidden Gems Contest was featured on Oshawa Tourism's social media channels throughout May and June, encouraging residents to tell us about their favourite places to visit in the city. This campaign provided insight into lesser-known attractions, favoured restaurants and hidden gems within the community.

Objectives included:

- Enhancing the visitor experience by providing recommendations from locals
- Increasing awareness of lesser-known attractions
- Building local pride of place





## HOMETOWN TOURIST CHALLENGE

Oshawa Tourism launched the first-ever Hometown Tourism Challenge from July 1 to August 18, 2023. Using the TurfHunt app on their smart devices, over 135 participants engaged with 45 different stops on the challenge, consisting of various attractions and businesses. The challenge encouraged Oshawa residents to rediscover the many outstanding destinations here in the city and improve their overall tourism ambassador mentality.

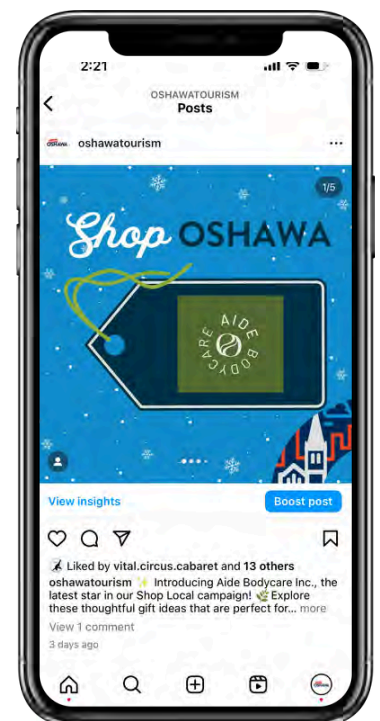
### Objectives included:

- Operator enablement
- Building resident pride of place
- Increased engagement on Oshawa Tourism social media channels
- Promotion of unique Oshawa attractions and experiences

## SHOP OSHAWA: HOLIDAY EDITION

On November 22, Oshawa Tourism launched its first Shop Oshawa Holiday Edition campaign to help encourage visitor spending at Oshawa's many outstanding small shops, restaurants and attractions. Program objectives included boosting visibility and sales for local retailers, enhancing community spirit, and attracting local visitors to Oshawa by highlighting unique shopping experiences.

Featured businesses have included Aide Body Care, All or Nothing Brewhouse, Portobello Road, 360 Eco Market, Snackrite Xotics, Collective Market Oshawa, Little Bear Treasures, Frere du Nord, Busy Bee Boutique and many more!



# DIGITAL ENGAGEMENTS

## WEBSITE

### Metrics

- 13,524 site session
- 10,035 unique website visits
- 4,123 website referrals from Facebook
- 3,968 website referrals for Google

### Top Ten Page Views by Location

- Oshawa (9,168)
- Toronto (3,512)
- Whitby (1,353)
- Ajax (720)
- Bowmanville (631)
- Brampton (497)
- Pickering (380)
- Courtice (260)
- Scarborough (253)
- Mississauga (223)

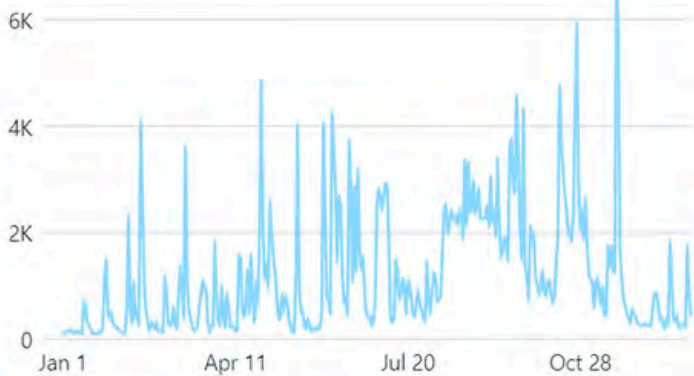
## SOCIAL MEDIA

### Followers:

### FACEBOOK 631

#### Facebook reach ⓘ

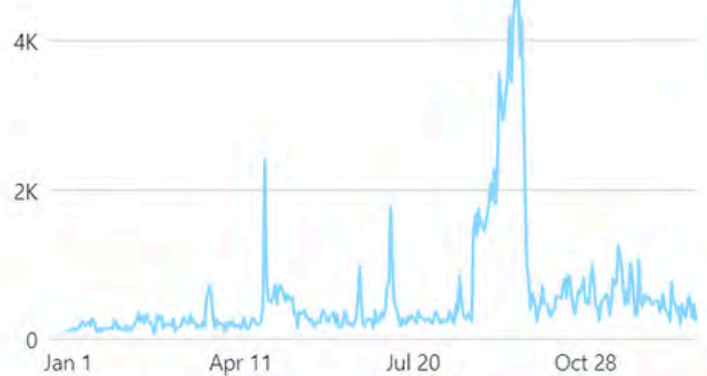
160.2K ↑ 259.5%



### INSTAGRAM 1.2K

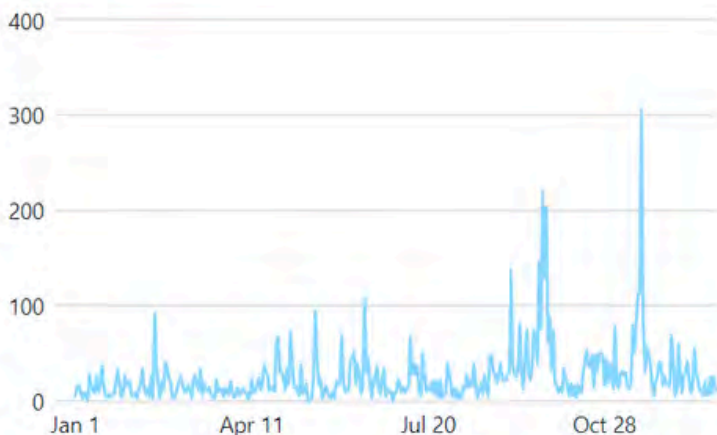
#### Instagram reach ⓘ

52.6K ↑ 3.7K%



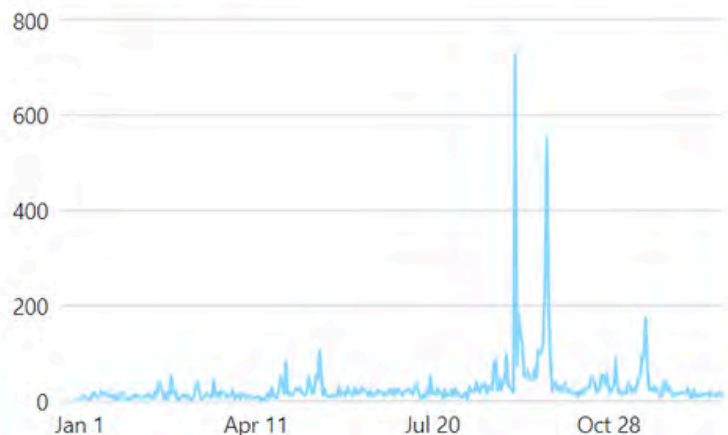
#### Facebook visits ⓘ

9.4K ↑ 158.9%



#### Instagram profile visits ⓘ

10.4K ↑ 674.6%



# A LOOK AHEAD



Looking ahead to 2024 and beyond, we have an exciting array of projects and initiatives designed to drive tourism and enhance visitor experiences in Oshawa. We will continue to host tourism-driving events such as the Convergence Music and Art Festival and the Oshawa Santa Claus Parade of Lights, with the addition of the Oshawa Halloween Parade. We will also launch an Oshawa Attractions Guide and roll out new quarterly marketing campaigns. A key initiative will be the launch of a Visitor Experience Study, with insights shared with strategic partners, including the City of Oshawa and Durham Tourism, to inform future projects.

Our commitment to supporting Oshawa tourism operators remains strong. We will introduce the Oshawa Tourism Stakeholders Meet-up, a conference-style event offering operators opportunities to network, learn, and identify collaboration possibilities. Additionally, we will continue to offer monthly customer-facing tourism newsletters and monthly B2B newsletters, expand our blog offerings, and consistently grow and improve the content on the Oshawa Tourism website. These efforts will ensure Oshawa remains a vibrant and attractive destination for visitors from near and far.

## SAVE THE DATE

- Oshawa Attractions Guide - May 2024
- 2nd Annual Boujee Bites - June 5, 2024
- Convergence Music and Art Festival - September 21
- Oshawa Halloween Parade - October 19
- 77th Oshawa Santa Claus Parade of Lights - November 16

