

Tourism Advisory Panel – Request for Funding Application (Tourism Event)



Applicant Information	
Organization	The Gananoque Downtown Business Improvement Association
Contact Name	Sharon Ansell
Title	Coordinator
Address	
Phone #	613-888-3430
Email	downtownbia@gananoque.ca
Event Website	
Event Information	
Event Name	Downtown Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival Halloween trick or treating in the downtown stores Witches Night Out Christmas Season Events
Event Dates	Downtown Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival Saturday September 26th Witches Night Out November 7th Halloween Trick or Treating October 24th Christmas Season Events End of November to end of December
Event Organizer Name	Sharon Ansell
Event Organizer Phone #	613-888-3430
Event Organizer Email	downtownbia@gananoque.ca
Funding Amount Requested	6300

Tourism Advisory Panel – Request for Funding Application (Tourism Event) Continued



Please provide a description of event (300 words).
If there is not enough space, please answer the question on a separate page.

please see attached

Additional items to be attached to the application:

- List of Board of Directors or Event Organizing Committee including emails and phone numbers
- Full Schedule of Events
- Detailed Event Budget/Financial Plan
- Please provide 2 letters of support from organizations and partners that support the project.
- The Town of Gananoque reserves the right to ask for copies of receipts validating expense claims.

Tourism Advisory Panel – Request for Funding Application (Tourism Event) Continued



If there is not enough space, please answer the questions below on a separate page.

1. Has this event been hosted before? If yes, when and where?

Downtown Kitchen Party has not been hosted before. The other events are yearly events taking place in downtown Gananoque

2. Who is your target market/audience?

see breakdown attached

Overall Audience

These events attract a mix of local residents, regional visitors, theatre patrons, families, cultural tourists, and special-interest groups, increasing visitation and supporting local businesses throughout the year.

3. Estimated # of tourists/visitors your event will attract to Gananoque (from 40+km away)

Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival — Estimated Attendance: 250— 400 visitors

Halloween Trick-or-Treating on King — Estimated Attendance: 300— 500 visitors

Witches Night Out: The Witching Hours — Estimated Attendance: 400— 700 visitors

Christmas Season Events — Estimated Attendance: 800— 1,200 cumulative visitors throughout the season

Total Estimated Attendance Across All Events: 1,750— 2,800 visitors

4. How and where will the event be advertised/marketed?

Events will be promoted through a coordinated marketing campaign targeting both local residents and regional visitors. Marketing channels will include social media advertising (Facebook and Instagram), Downtown Gananoque and Town of Gananoque websites, email newsletters, event listings, community calendars, local media, posters, and flyers distributed throughout the region.

Additional promotion will occur through partnerships with the Gananoque Playhouse, Tourism Kingston, 1000 Islands Tourism, accommodation providers, community organizations, and participating businesses. Targeted outreach will be conducted to special-interest groups, including theatre audiences, East Coast cultural organizations, and groups associated with similar events such as the Kingston Witches Walk.

Businesses will be encouraged to share event information through their own marketing channels, helping to expand reach and attract visitors from Kingston, Brookville, Ottawa, and surrounding communities.

You agree that the information provide in this application is accurate. This is an application for funding and does not guarantee funding approval. Should the TAP and Council approve funding to your event, a funding agreement outlining the details of the funding and any associated recognition will be signed by both the Town of Gananoque and the organization receiving the funding.

Date: June 03/2026 Title: Coordinator
Name: Sharon Ansell Signature: Sharon Ansell

Completed application (with all requested attachments) to be submitted to:

Attention: Tourism Advisory Panel

30 King St. East, Gananoque, ON K7G 1E9

Phone: 613-382-2149 ext. 1125

Email: businesscoordinator@gananoque.ca

Downtown Gananoque Seasonal Events Initiative

Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival

September 26, 2026

To coincide with the opening of the internationally acclaimed musical *Come From Away* at the Gananoque Playhouse, Downtown Gananoque will host a vibrant **Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival**, transforming the downtown into an authentic East Coast celebration.

Inspired by the themes of hospitality, community, and connection that define both Newfoundland culture and *Come From Away*, the festival will feature live Celtic and East Coast musical performances, including Celtic Kitchen Party and other regional entertainers. Visitors will enjoy a traditional Newfoundland "Screech-In" ceremony, community dancing in Town Park, and interactive activities designed to celebrate Canada's Atlantic heritage.

Downtown businesses will be encouraged to participate through maritime-themed window displays, while restaurants and cafés will be invited to feature East Coast-inspired menu specials. A large community map installation will allow visitors to place pins identifying where they are from, reinforcing the festival's welcoming spirit and creating opportunities for visitor engagement.

Marketing efforts will extend beyond the local region, targeting cultural tourism audiences and special interest groups including Newfoundland and Labrador associations throughout Ontario, East Coast community organizations, and groups such as the Kingston Irish Folk Club. Promotional efforts will be coordinated with the Gananoque Playhouse to encourage theatre patrons to extend their stay downtown, increasing visitor spending and enhancing the overall visitor experience.

Halloween Trick-or-Treating on King

October 31, 2026

Halloween Trick-or-Treating on King has become one of Downtown Gananoque's most popular family events, attracting hundreds of children and families from throughout the Thousand Islands region.

The event features a safe, walkable trick-or-treat experience along King Street, where participating businesses distribute treats and welcome families into their establishments. Children then gather at Town Hall and Town Park for additional entertainment, activities, and community celebrations.

Downtown businesses will be encouraged to create festive Halloween displays and decorate storefronts, contributing to an immersive seasonal atmosphere. Town Park will be transformed with Halloween décor and activities, while a children's entertainer will welcome families and provide interactive programming.

The event encourages family visitation, supports local businesses through increased foot traffic, and strengthens Downtown Gananoque's reputation as a family-friendly destination.

Witches Night Out: The Witching Hours

November 7, 2026

Building on the tremendous success of last year's inaugural event, Witches Night Out: The Witching Hours aims to become a signature shoulder-season tourism attraction for Downtown Gananoque.

The event will feature themed market vendors, mystical readers, fortune tellers, interactive experiences, and live entertainment throughout the downtown core. A highlight of the evening will be the Ghost Trolley, provided by Kingston Trolley Tours, offering themed rides throughout the community. Additional programming will include a Witches Dance, costumed activities, and a community celebration bringing together visitors, residents, and businesses.

Downtown streets and Town Park will be transformed with elaborate Halloween and mystical-themed decorations to create a unique and immersive experience.

Organizers are collaborating with the Kingston Witches Walk committee, who are already promoting the event to their established audience. The event is modeled after the highly successful Witches Walk in Coldwater, Ontario (population approximately 1,400), which attracts more than 2,000 visitors annually. With Gananoque's established tourism infrastructure and accommodation options, the event has significant potential to attract overnight visitors and generate economic benefits for local businesses during the shoulder season.

Christmas in Downtown Gananoque

November – December 2026

The Christmas season programming will consist of a series of coordinated events and promotions designed to encourage residents and visitors to shop local while experiencing the charm of Downtown Gananoque during the holiday season.

The season will begin with the Festival of Lights, which will illuminate the downtown core and create a welcoming holiday atmosphere. Seasonal decorations, including wreaths for participating businesses, will enhance the streetscape and encourage pedestrian activity.

Throughout the season, downtown businesses will participate in gift giveaways, promotional campaigns, holiday contests, and special shopping events designed to drive visitation and support local retailers. Activities will encourage residents and visitors to explore the downtown, discover unique local businesses, and support the local economy during the critical holiday shopping period.

Together, these seasonal initiatives will strengthen Downtown Gananoque's position as a year-round destination, increase visitor spending, support local businesses, and foster community pride while creating memorable experiences for residents and visitors alike.

Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival

Target Audience: Theatre patrons attending *Come From Away*, cultural tourists, East Coast expatriates, Celtic music enthusiasts, and visitors from Kingston, Ottawa, Brockville, and surrounding communities.

Halloween Trick-or-Treating on King

Target Audience: Families with children, local residents, and visitors from Gananoque, Leeds and Grenville, Kingston, Brockville, and the Thousand Islands region seeking family-friendly seasonal activities.

Witches Night Out: The Witching Hours

Target Audience: Adults interested in Halloween, paranormal and mystical experiences, market shoppers, and visitors from across Eastern Ontario seeking unique fall events and getaway experiences.

Christmas in Downtown Gananoque

Target Audience: Local residents, holiday shoppers, families, and regional visitors seeking festive experiences, seasonal events, and unique local shopping opportunities.

Overall Audience

These events attract a mix of local residents, regional visitors, theatre patrons, families, cultural tourists, and special-interest groups, increasing visitation and supporting local businesses throughout the year.

Host Organization: Downtown Gananoque Business Improvement Area (BIA)

Event Name	Event Date	Total Event Budget	BIA Contribution	TAP Funding Request
Kitchen Party & Welcome Festival	September 26, 2026	\$1,000	\$500	\$500
Halloween Trick-or-Treating on King	October 31, 2026	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Witches Night Out: The Witching Hours	November 7, 2026	\$6,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Christmas Season Events	November–December 2026	\$3,600	\$1,800	\$1,800
TOTAL		\$12,600	\$6,300	\$6,300

June 15, 2026

To the Tourism Advisory Program committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Thousand Islands Accommodation Partners (TIAP), the Destination Marketing Partner (DMP) for the 1000 Islands region. We are writing in support of the activities and promotion of the Town of Gananoque's request for funding for several important events.

The Tourism department of the Town of Gananoque both supports and delivers important events throughout the year in the Town. TIAP does and will support these events with marketing dollars and we encourage the TAP committee to assist with funding for the actual events including:

August 9th - Kids, Cops & Canadian Tire Fishing Days fifth annual event drawing families from Quebec, Ottawa, New York State as well as Kingston Brockville and Cornwall;

August 22nd – The special waterfront concert of the summer with the feature band, ODDS. This concert could prove to be the largest in a decade and requires extra funding for the more sophisticated set up;

September 19th and 20th – CSFL Bass Fishing tournament is on the MLF Canada Series which brings in all the fisherpeople and also a massive promotional component on television and online. This is excellent promotion for the region as a fishing hub in Ontario;

Fall 2026 – The BIA is critical in keeping our downtown vibrant and inviting. Ther events are proving to be very successful with attendees and lots of online outreach.

The Thousand Island Accommodation Partners are proud to support everything that the Tourism department of the Town of Gananoque does especially because their events include high and shoulder season events that create a vibrant and exciting vibe for our region. Our organization has also committed to providing financial support for marketing for their events.

Thank you for recognizing and assisting in the financial support these events require to continue the good work that helps drive tourism and our economy.

Sincerely,

K Christensen

Executive Director

1000 Islands Accommodation Partners



June 8, 2026

BIA Fall/Winter Programming

Dear members of TAP,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Downtown Gananoque Business Improvement Area's Tourism Activation Program (TAP) application and its exciting lineup of events planned for Fall and Winter 2026.

The proposed programming demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing Downtown Gananoque as a vibrant year-round destination while creating unique visitor experiences that support local businesses and strengthen our tourism economy. Through a diverse series of events, including the Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival, Halloween Trick-or-Treating on King, Witches Night Out: The Witching Hours, and Christmas in Downtown Gananoque, the BIA is creating compelling reasons for residents and visitors alike to experience our downtown during the shoulder and off-peak tourism seasons.

Particularly noteworthy is the Kitchen Party and Welcome Festival, which aligns with the opening of *Come From Away* at the Gananoque Playhouse. By leveraging one of Canada's most celebrated theatrical productions, the event creates an opportunity to extend visitor stays, encourage spending throughout the downtown core, and foster meaningful connections between cultural tourism and local businesses. The collaborative marketing efforts planned between the BIA and the Playhouse demonstrate a strategic approach to maximizing tourism impact.

The proposed Halloween and holiday programming further supports the community's goal of becoming a year-round destination. Halloween Trick-or-Treating on King has already established itself as a highly anticipated family event, drawing visitors from throughout the region while increasing foot traffic for downtown businesses. Building upon this momentum, Witches Night Out has the potential to become a signature shoulder-season attraction, attracting visitors from beyond the region and generating overnight stays during a traditionally quieter tourism period.

The Christmas programming and Festival of Lights initiatives will continue to enhance Downtown Gananoque's appeal during the holiday season, encouraging residents and visitors to shop local, explore the downtown core, and support small businesses during a critical retail period.

These events align closely with broader tourism and economic development objectives by increasing visitation, supporting local businesses, enhancing community pride, and creating memorable experiences that encourage repeat visitation. The BIA has demonstrated creativity, collaboration, and a strong understanding of destination development through this

programming, and their efforts will contribute significantly to the vitality and economic sustainability of Downtown Gananoque.

I strongly support this application and believe the proposed events will generate meaningful tourism, economic, and community benefits for Gananoque and the Thousand Islands region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Baril". The script is cursive and elegant, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jennifer Baril
Tourism & Event Development Coordinator
Town of Gananoque