



## THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

### MINUTES OF THE TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 21, 2024 AT 4:00 PM OKANAGAN LAKE ROOM (COUNCIL CHAMBER)

**PRESENT:** VOTING:

Ben Suranko, Biking  
Kris Fuller, Sport & Events  
Shawna Patenaude, Arts & Culture  
Rebecca Barton, Arts & Culture  
Dan Proulx, Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce  
Claus Larsen, Accommodation Provider, Chair  
Mike Van Horne, Golf  
Janine Collard, Attractions  
Councillor Durning, Council Appointed  
Jessica Dowswell, Accommodation Provider

GUESTS:

Josh Welter, SCSNO

**ABSENT:** Ian Jenkins, Silver Star Mountain Resort Rep.  
Clara Snedden, Accommodation Provider  
Peter Kaz, Downtown Vernon Association  
Gerran Thorhaug, Restaurant  
Mayor Cumming  
Cassandra Zerebeski, Ski

**STAFF:** Torrie Silverthorn, Manager, Tourism  
Hannah Lucich, Tourism Marketing Coordinator  
Karen Savill, Visitor Services Coordinator  
Hilary Irvine, Tourism Marketing Coordinator  
Cocine Wattie, Project Coordinator  
Jennifer Pounder, Records / Committee Clerk

**ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

**LAND  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

*As Chair of the City of Vernon's Tourism Commission, and in the spirit of this gathering, I recognize the City of Vernon is located in the traditional territory of the Syilx people of the Okanagan nation.*

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by B. Suranko, seconded by D. Proulx:

THAT the agenda of the February 21, 2024 Tourism Commission meeting be adopted.

**CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Moved by M. Van Horne, seconded by Councillor Durning:

THAT the minutes of the January 17, 2024 Tourism Commission meeting be adopted.

**CARRIED**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed Rebecca Barton and Tim Isaac to the Commission. All members took part in a brief round-table introduction for the benefit of the new incumbents.

**QUARTERLY MARKETING AND MEDIA UPDATE**

The Tourism Marketing Coordinators provided a Marketing and Media update presentation, a copy of which is attached to these minutes as "Attachment 1".

The following questions/comments were posed by the Commission:

- *How does Vernon compare to other communities regarding one night stays vs multi night stays?*
- Unfortunately, we do not have access to data on other cities, however from industry wide conversations had I can comfortably say we are above-average. The biggest challenge we have is getting visitors to stay longer.
- *How does Tourism Vernon attract visitors to Vernon during the wildfire season (July and August)?*
- We concentrate on promoting the shoulder seasons. Summer has already established itself as a busy time; hotels and attractions are full, so we focus on lengthening the busy summer months into spring and fall.

D. Proulx provided a brief update on the Short-term rental task force and the work they have been doing:

- The task force is comprised of resort representatives and various stake holders.

- They have identified a list of unintended consequences and impacts on resort destinations.
- There was not a broad enough job done of consulting with the stakeholders and we asked them to allow for a mechanism to create exemptions (we foresee problems if this does not happen by May 1, 2024).
- Recently had a meeting with the MLA, Harwinder Sandhu, and spoke with the Premier of BC, David Eby, on his recent visit to Vernon. We came up with a list of recommendations for MLA Sandhu and we will be sending a letter reiterating our request. Very grateful for the time and ability to present to them.

The following comments were received:

- Councillor Durning confirmed that Mayor and Council have made advocacy efforts regarding new short-term rental accommodations legislation.
- C. Larsen has been having weekly phone meetings with the BC Housing Ministry. He is continuing business as usual and he is confident that Predator Ridge will soon be exempted. If not – fines will be \$3,000.00 per room, per day.
- The new legislation is causing devastating affects all around us.
- Tourism Vernon had a banner year with online accommodation platform (OAP) MRDT revenue generating approximately \$217,000.00; Kelowna receives over \$1,000,000.00 annually.

**MEETING TIME  
ADJUSTMENT**

The Commission members were asked if it would be problematic if a few meetings a year were held at 4:00 p.m. instead of 8:00 a.m. and there were no objections.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting for the Tourism Commission is set for March 20, 2024 at 8:00 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Tourism Commission adjourned at 4:39 p.m. by call of the Chair.

**CERTIFIED CORRECT:**

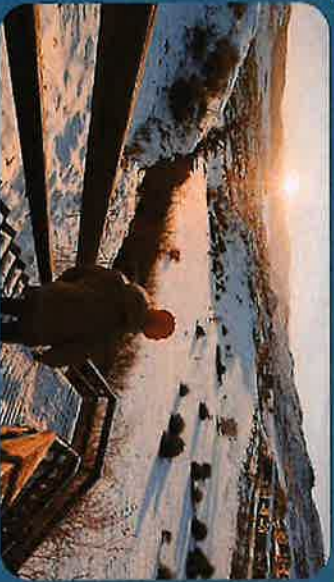
  
\_\_\_\_\_ Chair

February 2024

# Quarterly Marketing Update



# What's on Monthly Content Feature



What's on in  
February in Vernon



## Sip, Dine and Explore

- Marten Brewing Company is under new ownership and is expanding their food menu and adding new rotating taps of their craft beers.
- Enjoy one of Vernon's newest restaurants, Masiero Pizzeria Napoletana, for delicious wood-fired pizza.
- Embark on our hot sips trail and warm up with a hot drink from some of our favourite coffee shops like Bean to Cup.
- Treat your valentine to a date night out at one of our romantic and cozy restaurants like Phoenix Steakhouse and Bar, Intermzzo Restaurant and Wine Cellar or Range Lounge and Grill at Predator Ridge



Arts & Culture

## Outdoor Adventure

Sign up for a  
trip in 2025

- All lifts are open and now is the time to head up to SilverStar Mountain Resort for skiing and snowboarding.
- Cross-country for all at Sawwassen Lake Nordic Centre on top notch right now. Enjoy either cross-country skiing every week on Thursdays - Thursdays - Thursdays.
- Explore the snow covered forest by headlamp during a snowshoe out to the Black Prince Cabin for a candle dinner by Uptwood Kitchen. Check out more unique dining experiences in one of our latest blogs.
- Head out for a walk in the Trails Capital of BC and explore the scenic viewpoints of Kalamalka Lake and Okanagan Lake. Jaded Juniper Bay are beautiful this time of year with a blanket of snow at Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park. Snowshoes or ice cleats are highly recommended, for efficient descent.



# Destination BC Winter Press Trip

Destination BC, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association and Tourism Vernon hosted 4 media as a part of Winter Okanagan press trip. Media were from Whistler, Seattle, Portland and Oklahoma City



# PostMedia Campaign Results

- Audio Ads on Spotify had 142,424 listen starts and out of those 132,742 listened to 100% of the ad.
- Digital Display and On-network ads performed very well with 399 clicks at a 0.322% CTR
- Social Media amplification had an average 4% engagement rate
- Spring campaign launches March 1<sup>st</sup>



## Experience a wonderful winter getaway in Vernon with this three-day itinerary

From outdoor thrills to gourmet cuisine, explore a plethora of winter wonders at the Vernon Winter Carnival.  
Sponsored by Tourism Vernon



## Vernon Winter Carnival: A must-visit event for snow, adventure and culture enthusiasts

Western Canada's largest Winter Carnival comes alive in Vernon, British Columbia from Feb 2 to 10.  
Sponsored by Tourism Vernon



## Unlock a winter wonderland: Three days of family fun at Vernon Winter Carnival

Explore outdoor trails in the hiking capital of B.C., taste culinary delights and create lifelong memories.  
Sponsored by Tourism Vernon



# Print Ads

- BC Guide to Arts and Culture
- Explore Magazine Spring Edition
- Go Camping BC
- Okanagan Map Guides

## Welcome to Vernon

Take a stroll through the historic streets of Vernon and find yourself immersed in a vibrant arts and culture scene. The galleries, theatres, historic tours, museums, and nature centres inspire the mind and body to wander.



**Marble Lake House**  
Historic house tours, teas and live music concerts on the lawn, marketplace

**Carleton Centre**  
Heritage house tours, arts, galleries, concerts and art auction, community



**Historic O'Keefe Ranch**  
Interactive experiences through historic buildings, cowboy feed and don't maza, chef's ranches

**The Museum & Archives of Vernon**  
Museum exhibits, events and archival collection, vernonmuseum.ca



**Canadian Wildlife Museum**  
350+ mounted species of wildlife and gift shop, canadianwildlifemuseum.com



Choose a path, and the inspiration will follow.



TOURISM.VERNON.BC.COM

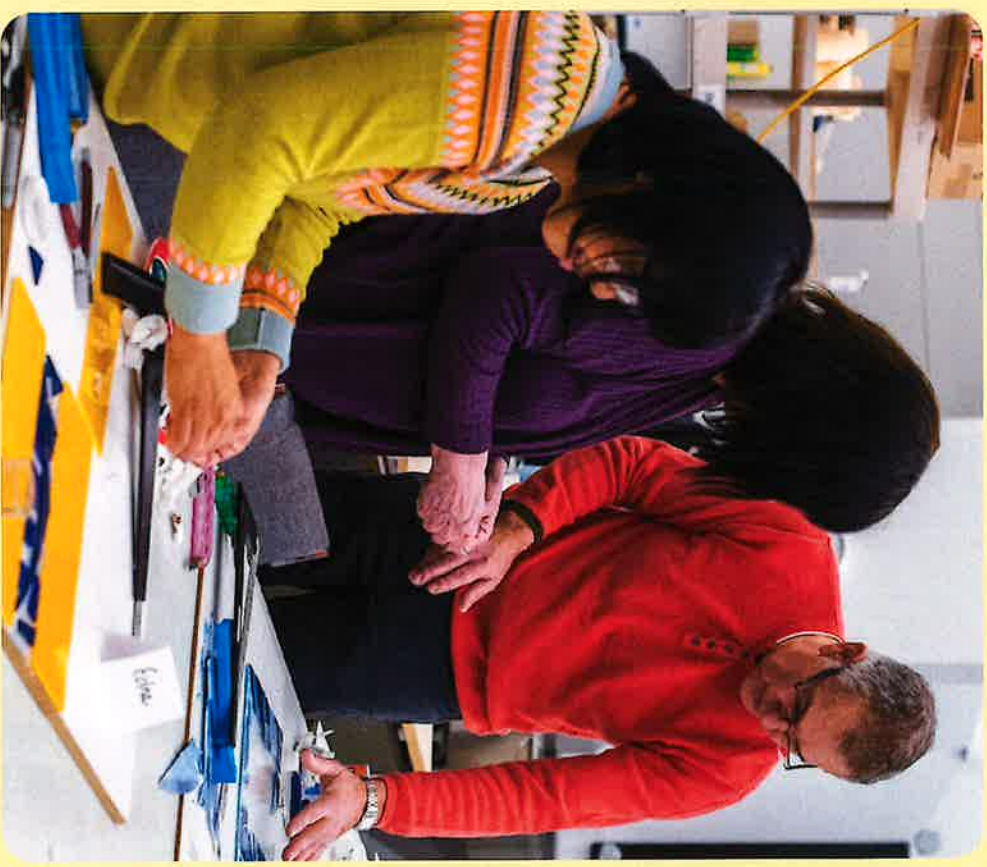
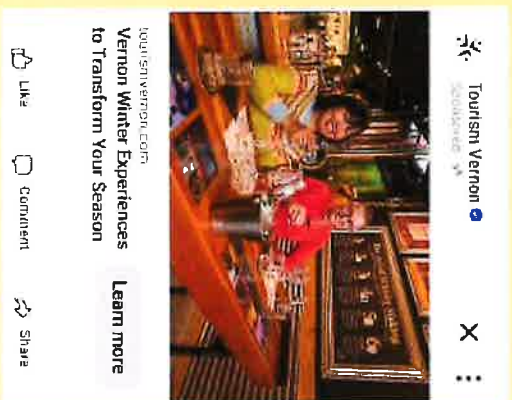
Welcome to the Trails Capital of BC  
A design nation, the Trails Capital of BC feels like a good statement for the number of trails that exist here. You'll find mountain, lake, river, and down-hill paved trails with all kinds of hiking trails. Add in the road to our arts, culture, history and farm, forest, diving and you'll find yourself connected... surely.



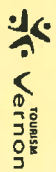


# DBC Co-Op Marketing Winter Campaign

- 2 million impressions
- 121,000 views on YouTube



# E-newsletter



January 2024  
#ExploreVernon



## Vernon Winter Carnival

Embark on a to-day journey of winter wonder at the 64th Annual Vernon Winter Carnival, running from February 2nd to 10th. Whether you're flying solo or joining in with friends and family, our guide is essential for exploring a blend of classic favourites and thrilling new additions. With daily events and activities, each day promises a unique adventure. Don't miss out on these must-experience moments - make sure they're on your winter carnival bucket list!

Keep scrolling for your guide to the Vernon Winter Carnival.



## Balloon Glow

Kick off the Vernon Winter Carnival in style with the Hot Air Balloon Glow at Polson Park, a must-see event that promises an evening of wonder and delight!

Polson Park



January 2024  
Industry Update



## NEW Tourism Vernon website

Tourism Vernon is thrilled to announce the launch of our new look and feel at [tourismvernon.com](http://tourismvernon.com). Our new site inspires future visitors with detailed itineraries, places to stay, things to do, categorized by season, and so much more.

Scroll through our new website here:

[TOURISMVERNON.COM](http://TOURISMVERNON.COM)

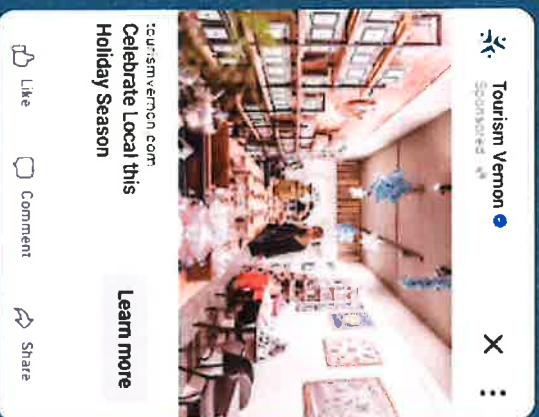


## Events

Check out the latest events and activities happening in Vernon, BC. From winter sports to family-friendly events, there's something for everyone. Visit our website for more details and to book your tickets.

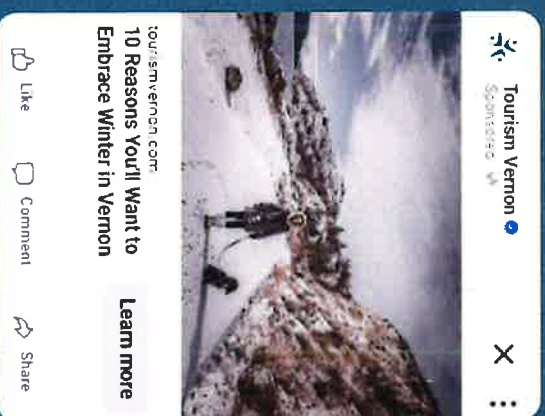


# Winter Meta Ads



## Holiday Shopping Blog

- 2200 landing page views
- \$0.23 cost per result
- 200,000 impressions



## Winter Top 10 Blog

- 6700 landing page views
- \$0.30 cost per result
- 550,000 impressions



## Vernon Winter Carnival

- 2600 clicks
- \$0.15 cost per result
- 100,000 impressions

## Website sessions

2021	150,000
2022	209,000
2023	238,000

## Total trips to Vernon in

2023  
**3,998,950**

## Total overnight trips to

Vernon in 2023

**1,353,220**

**86%** are 1-night stays

# Upcoming Projects and Campaigns

- 2024-25 Vernon Visitor Guide
- Launch spring Television ads across Canada with new brand
- Messaging and Communication Strategy Launch
- Golf Campaigns with Inside Golf & Meta Ads
- Attending the Outdoor Adventure Travel Shows in Vancouver and Calgary

\$46,000 Visitor Guide Ads

Sold

9 Co-Op Partnerships

2 spring media visits

Winter & Spring  
Marketing

# Questions

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