



**2025-2030**

# **Regional Tourism Strategy**





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# Introduction

The Prescott-Russell Development Corporation (PRDC) has mandated Schertois Agency to lead the development process of the 2025-2030 Regional Tourism Strategic plan as well as the tourism communication and marketing plan for the United Counties of Prescott & Russell.

According to the 2021 Census by Statistics Canada, the United Counties of Prescott & Russell are composed of eight municipalities. Some are towns, while others are townships. These municipalities are:

**East Hawkesbury**

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**Hawkesbury**

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**Champlain**

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**Alfred and Plantagenet**

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**The Nation**

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**Casselman**

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**Russell**

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**Clarence-Rockland**

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They are spread across a vast rural and semi-urban territory, bordered by the Ottawa River, the Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, the City of Ottawa, and the Québec border.

The predominantly Francophone population, exceeds 95,000 residents. In fact, french is the first language of almost 70% of the population , giving this part of Ontario a unique regional identity.

Prescott & Russell is represented by the Regional Tourism Organization (RTO 9) responsible for tourism development and marketing in Southern Ontario, from Kingston and extending to Eastern Ontario, which includes the communities of the United Counties.

The process confirms the need and shared interest in creating a new tourism entity that will be responsible for regional tourism development and promotion, and in prioritizing this industry that had been abandoned in 2018. The PRDC is assuming the essential leadership role to ensure cohesion and dynamism for this long-overlooked economic sector in Prescott & Russell.

# Approach and methodology

The project was carried out through a process consisting of four priority steps, identified and approved by the PRDC, and led by Schertois Agency.

## 01

### **Environmental Analysis**

*(November 2024 to January 2025)*

The report presents an analysis of the tourism environment that enables the development of an effective process leading to a diagnosis of the challenges and issues to be addressed. It also highlights the strengths on which the PRDC can build to propel itself toward achieving the objectives of the regional tourism strategy and the communication and marketing plan.

Schertois Agency focused on reviewing documents related to the subject, conducting in-depth research on several websites of the targeted and comparable municipalities, as well as multiple entities connected to regional, provincial, and national tourism.

Municipal representatives and community partners were also consulted in order to gather relevant data and information for the environmental analysis. Our findings revealed that very little data is currently available from the region's key stakeholders.

## 02

### **Community and Individual Consultations**

*(March to April 2025)*

The PRDC initiated a series of public consultations aimed at drawing a clear and realistic picture of the current state of the regional tourism industry. In addition to identifying challenges and potential opportunities, the objectives of the consultations were to foster a shared vision and to determine the priorities that could support a renewed and strategic positioning of tourism, beneficial to the economic and collective development of Prescott & Russell.

The public sessions were held in four distinct communities, with various stakeholders from the tourism industry. Each session lasted two hours, and the invitees, dates, and locations were as follows:

**Hawkesbury Chamber of Commerce and  
Tourism Stakeholders**

*Quality Inn, Hawkesbury – March 27*

**Clarence-Rockland Chamber of Commerce and  
Tourism Stakeholders**

*Brauwerk Hoffman, Rockland – April 2*

**Prescott-Russell Chamber of Commerce and  
Tourism Stakeholders from the area served by  
the PRCC**

*Casselview Golf Club – April 3*

**Eastern Ontario Agri-Food Network and the  
Prescott-Russell Recreational Trail Committee,  
Vankleek Hill BMA and its members**

*Chute-à-Blondeau Community Centre – April 10*

It should be noted that all sessions were conducted primarily in French, except for the one held on April 10, which was presented in English.





## 03

### **Strategic Plan** (May and June 2025)

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The first two steps confirm the importance of tourism development and promotion for the economic health of the municipalities. In fact, the tourism industry has long been a crucial driver of collective economic vitality. However, in Prescott & Russell, this represents a revival.

The collection of information and data made possible through the previous stages of this project actively fuels the reflection leading to the preparation of the 2025–2030 Regional Tourism Strategic Plan for the Prescott & Russell region.

## 04

### **Communication and Marketing Plan** (July to September 2025)

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Communication and marketing strategies are essential to ensuring the optimal visibility of the priorities set out in the regional tourism strategic plan.

As this involves a new administrative structure and a renewal of local and regional partnerships and collaborations, several specific elements emerged from the many interviews and avenues of reflection.

The communication and marketing plan will be dynamic and will first focus on the following general objectives:

✓ **Strengthen awareness**

✓ **Engage partners Increase**

✓ **Visitation**

# Executive Summary

The 2025–2030 Regional Tourism Strategic Plan presents the vision, priorities, and key actions of the new tourism entity dedicated to promoting and developing the Prescott & Russell region. Developed in collaboration with regional partners, industry stakeholders, and the community, this plan offers a structured roadmap to guide future initiatives and to inspire the full economic potential represented by the tourism industry in the region.

Beyond its financial impacts, tourism also generates lasting social, human, and community benefits. It helps strengthen local identity and pride, highlight the region's cultural and natural assets, and encourage collaboration and innovation within local communities.

The plan is structured around three major strategic orientations:

## ■ Organizational positioning

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## ■ Tourism development

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## ■ Collective and regional impact

Rooted in the values of sustainability, collective pride, and innovation, this regional tourism strategic plan positions tourism as a powerful lever for regional development, serving both the well-being of communities and the attractiveness of the Prescott & Russell territory.

The plan, prepared and submitted to the PRDC, outlines courses of action designed to achieve specific objectives that will support the launch and growth of a new administrative entity.

The implementation of the action plan stemming from the regional tourism strategic plan will be made possible thanks to the financial support of various partners, but above all, through the commitment of the PRDC team and key tourism stakeholders from across the United Counties.





# Situation Analysis

Following an environmental analysis, community consultations, individual interviews, and preparatory meetings, it has been confirmed that tourism development holds a crucial place within the economic landscape of the municipalities. The preparation of the 2025–2030 Regional Tourism Strategic Plan for the Prescott & Russell region makes it possible to identify the strengths, challenges, opportunities, and prospects that will contribute to the cohesion and collective success of this industry.

The absence of a tourism entity for Prescott & Russell in recent years has forced local businesses to work individually, making collaboration increasingly essential for the success of all. It is clear that the new entity must be managed by a local, neutral, and unifying organization.

The Prescott & Russell region is currently served by *Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) 9*. The proposed format for this new local entity is a *Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)*, which will oversee the development of tourism and the promotion of the destination in identified markets. It should be noted that it is recommended for the PRDC to determine the nature of the professional and collaborative relationship with RTO 9, which currently holds full administrative responsibility for the tourism region of the United Counties, in order to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the organizations in place.

Funding sources will need to be identified and secured, and an administrative and governance structure must be established to carry out the actions stemming from the regional tourism strategic plan and to ensure organizational stability and sustainability.

**The PRDC accepts the tourism mandate for the region and proposes the creation of a new entity:**  
**DESTINATION PRESCOTT & RUSSELL.**  
**This identity is bilingual, simple, and inclusive.**

## Regional Findings

As part of the community consultations and individual interviews, the following factors have influenced the directions suggested for the regional tourism strategic plan.

## TOP 10 elements ensuring the success of this initiative





## In Summary...

- ✓ Prescott & Russell must take back leadership of its tourism industry through collaboration.
- ✓ Tourism is an essential engine of regional economic growth.
- ✓ The resources are available, but regional cohesion is necessary.
- ✓ The region is rich. Prescott & Russell must leverage its authentic identity.



# Strategic Orientations



## Mission

To foster the development and visibility of sustainable and authentic tourism in Prescott & Russell by showcasing its natural, cultural, and agri-food assets.

## Vision

Prescott & Russell is a must-see tourist destination in Ontario, recognized for its immersive and authentic experiences, its warm hospitality, and its commitment to reflecting the richness and diversity of its communities in a spirit of inclusion and plurality.

## Strategic Orientation

Destination Prescott & Russell is committed to structuring an innovative tourism offer, uniting regional stakeholders, and promoting a strong identity that inspires and attracts visitors.

Through Destination Prescott & Russell, the PRDC is committed to creating dynamic governance, building strong partnerships, and developing an attractive offer that will position the region as a leader in sustainable and experiential tourism.

## Organizational values

### ■ Authenticity

Highlight the territory's unique and genuine identity, along with the richness of its communities.

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### ■ Innovation

Develop original tourism offerings tailored to visitors' expectations.

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### ■ Cohesion

Foster collaboration among regional stakeholders to ensure a coordinated and effective approach.

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### ■ Sustainability

Commit to responsible tourism that respects the environment and local cultures.

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### ■ Commitment

Mobilize citizens, businesses, and municipalities for harmonious and beneficial development.





# Implementation Plan

## Planning Strategies

*Three priority sectors to structure the future of tourism*

As part of its 2025–2030 Regional Tourism Strategic plan, Destination Prescott & Russell proposes to focus its efforts on three priority sectors in order to build a solid, coherent, and sustainable foundation for regional tourism development.

### 01 Organizational positioning

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This sector aims to clarify the role, mission, and responsibilities of the new tourism entity. It includes the establishment of effective governance structures, the mobilization of partners, and the adoption of a shared vision that reflects the territory's ambitions.

### 02 Tourism development

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This pillar focuses on enhancing the existing offer, creating distinctive experiences, supporting innovation and local entrepreneurship, while ensuring the sustainability and accessibility of initiatives. It contributes to stimulating the economy while showcasing the region's natural, cultural, and human strengths.

### 03 Collective and regional impact

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This sector focuses on the coordinated promotion of the region, the enhancement of its plural identity, and the recognition of Prescott & Russell as a destination of choice. It fosters a sense of pride, belonging, and collaboration among the territory's various stakeholders.

These three sectors are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, forming an integrated strategy that sets the region on the path toward structured, unifying, and promising tourism development.

# Strategic priorities and phased actions

## 1. Structuring and Governance

**Structuring and governance** refer to the set of mechanisms, roles, and processes established to ensure a clear, effective, and collaborative organization of the new tourism entity. This includes defining the mission, vision, and responsibilities of the organization, setting up an appropriate administrative structure, establishing transparent decision-making processes, and creating strong partnerships with key stakeholders across the territory.

Sound structuring and agile governance help build the organization's credibility, mobilize stakeholders around common objectives, and ensure coherent, responsible, and sustainable management of regional tourism development.

### Objectives

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**Short term (0–1 year):** Establish an independent, self-financed structure (non-profit organization).

**Medium term (1–3 years):** Implement a collaborative governance model integrating key stakeholders.

**Long term (3+ years):** Ensure the organization's financial sustainability through autonomous revenues.

### Actions

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- ✓ Develop a financial model including grants, membership fees, and partnerships.
- ✓ Define a clear legal and administrative framework.
- ✓ Create an inclusive and representative board of directors

### Performance measures

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- Number of engaged partners and members
- Amount of funding secured (grants and contributions)
- Level of financial autonomy achieved





## Objectives

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**Short term (0–1 year):** Identify existing attractions and develop tailored tourism offerings.

**Medium term (1–3 years):** Create packages and immersive experiences for diverse visitor profiles.

**Long term (3+ years):** Develop the necessary infrastructures (accommodation, transportation, signage).

## Actions

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- ✓ Identify and map major attractions (nature, agritourism, culture, outdoor activities).
- ✓ Establish collaborations with local producers and artisans.
- ✓ Set up thematic circuits (gourmet, heritage, ecotourism, family, adventure).

## Performance measures

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- Annual number of visitors and average length of stay
- Tourist satisfaction (evaluations and feedback)
- Development of new tourism infrastructures

## 2. Development of the Tourism Offer

**The development of the tourism offer** refers to all actions aimed at creating, improving, and diversifying the experiences offered to visitors in the Prescott & Russell region. This includes showcasing existing attractions, supporting innovation and local entrepreneurship, enhancing tourism infrastructures and services, as well as creating new products aligned with the region's identity.

This strategic pillar is based on a sustainable and inclusive approach that emphasizes quality, authenticity, and accessibility of experiences. It seeks to meet visitors' expectations while maximizing the economic, social, and cultural benefits for local communities.





## Objectives

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**Short term (0–1 year):** Establish a strong and meaningful brand image and define a positioning strategy.

**Medium term (1–3 years):** Implement a targeted promotional campaign toward priority markets (Montreal, Quebec, Ontario).

**Long term (3+ years):** Position the region as a leading tourism destination.

## Actions

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- ✓ Identify and map major attractions (nature, agritourism, culture, outdoor activities).
- ✓ Implement a multichannel communication plan (social media, tourism fairs, influencers).
- ✓ Feed mobile applications and develop an interactive website to inform and attract visitors.

## Performance measures

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- Online visibility and engagement with publications (shares, interactions)
- Number of mentions and strategic and media collaborations
- Increase in the number of visitors from targeted markets

## 3. Outreach and Attractiveness

**Outreach and attractiveness** refer to the efforts undertaken to position the Prescott & Russell region as a distinctive, welcoming, and competitive tourist destination. This includes the coordinated promotion of the regional identity, the implementation of place-marketing initiatives, the development of a strong brand image, and the mobilization of local stakeholders around a shared message.

This pillar aims to increase the region's visibility, attract a greater number of visitors, and strengthen residents' sense of pride and belonging. It is based on a collaborative approach where outreach goes beyond simple visibility, generating sustainable positive impacts for the entire territory.





## 4. Stakeholder Mobilization

**Stakeholder mobilization** consists of actively engaging key players in the tourism sector—whether the staff and board members of the PRDC and DPR, funders, businesses, municipalities, or cultural, community, political, and economic organizations—in the planning, implementation, and promotion of regional tourism initiatives.

It aims to create a climate of collaboration, foster dialogue and consensus-building, and ensure that actions truly address the needs and realities of the territory. By promoting inclusion, transparency, and shared responsibility, this mobilization strengthens adherence to the strategic plan and nurtures a collective sense of pride, trust, and commitment toward tourism development.



### Objectives

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**Short term (0–1 year):** Raise awareness among municipalities and the local tourism industry.

**Medium term (1–3 years):** Establish a network of partners and tourism ambassadors.

**Long term (3+ years):** Build collective engagement around tourism development.

### Actions

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- ✓ Organize information sessions and community forums
- ✓ Develop a training program for tourism stakeholders
- ✓ Create an official collaboration network between municipalities and tourism businesses, both local and external

### Performance measures

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- Number of stakeholders engaged in the project
- Participation in awareness events and workshops
- Economic impact generated by local collaborations





# Communication and Marketing Plan

A **communication and marketing plan** will accompany the rollout of the 2025–2030 Regional Tourism Strategic plan to support the promotion of resulting actions and to foster the engagement, mobilization, and outreach of the new tourism entity.

This plan will be designed as a **living, evolving, and adaptable** tool, reflecting the dynamic nature of the project. Rather than presenting a rigid, predetermined sequence of steps, it will offer a range of **possible actions, creative approaches, and innovative ideas** that can be deployed according to shifting priorities, opportunities, available resources, and the regional context.

Aligned with the **strategic orientations of the Regional Tourism strategic plan**, this communication framework will emphasize relevance, flexibility, and coherence in how the vision, projects, partnerships, and achievements of Destination Prescott & Russell are promoted. It will serve to support positioning efforts, stakeholder mobilization, and collective outreach at every stage of the organization’s development.



# Conclusion

This report lays the foundation for a structured and ambitious approach to tourism development in the Prescott & Russell region from 2025 to 2030. By clearly defining the vision, priorities, and key areas of intervention, it provides a coherent framework to guide the future actions of the new tourism entity.

It emphasizes the importance of strong governance, an innovative tourism offer, and collective outreach that highlights the regional identity and mobilizes all stakeholders. In addition, the proposed communication and marketing plan—flexible and adaptable—will effectively support the implementation of the regional tourism strategic plan.

Thus, this report serves as an essential tool to support the sustainable growth of tourism in Prescott & Russell, for the benefit of the local economy, community well-being, and the vitality of the territory.





# THE TREASURES OF PRESCOTT AND RUSSELL

Located between Montreal, Ottawa, and the United States, Prescott and Russell welcomes you with a diversity of experiences to discover.

There's something for everyone! Landscapes to explore, flavors to taste, and a welcoming bilingual culture that will charm you, summer and winter alike.

Take a look at the attractions of our region!

**Hello !  
Bonjour!**

64 %  
of Francophones  
in Ontario live  
in Eastern Ontario.

THE LAURENTIANS

Ottawa River

Voyageur  
Provincial Park

Hawkesbury

Alfred-  
Plantagenet

clarence-  
Rockland

Champlain

East  
Hawkesbury

MONTREAL  
65 KM

South Nation River

La Nation

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Well-known personalities are originally from the region!

Katherine Levac

Bob Hartley

Véronique Dicaire

Patrick Groulx

30 KM  
OTTAWA  
DOWNTOWN

Electric vehicle  
charging stations

**NATURE &  
OUTDOORS**

- Ottawa River
- Nation River
- Larose Forest
- 4-season trails
- Beaches
- Alfred Bog
- Bird Sanctuary Park
- Voyageur Provincial Park

**CULTURE &  
HERITAGE**

- Popsilos
- L'Original Jail
- Museums
- Farmers' markets
- Festivals

**AGROTOURISM**

- Maple groves
- Vineyards
- Cheese factories
- Agri-tourism farms

**FAMILY EXPERIENCES &  
WATER ACTIVITIES**

- Calypso Water Park
- Marinas, kayaking, canoeing
- Parks
- Motorized activities (ATV, snowmobiling)

# TRANSFORMING TOURISM IN PRESCOTT AND RUSSELL



## TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURES

To improve access to tourist attractions and guide visitors effectively.

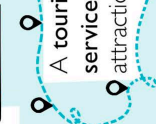


More accommodation options (hotels, campgrounds, family-friendly stays).



A dedicated tourist information office.

Clear and harmonized tourism signage.



A tourist transportation service connecting key attractions.



More electric vehicle charging stations.

## A SHARED VISION

## FOR THE REGION'S TOURISM FUTURE

Prescott and Russell aim to become a recognized tourism destination, rooted in its territory and driven by strong collaboration among local stakeholders.

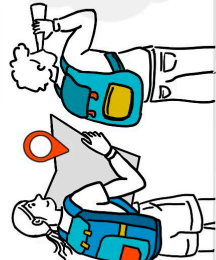


## SUPPORT FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR

To strengthen high-impact projects and stimulate regional investment.



Increased financial support for local tourism development



What the community wants to make the region a welcoming, attractive destination all year long.

Financé par l'Agence fédérale de développement économique pour le Sud de l'Ontario

Funded by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario

Canada



## VISIBILITY, INFORMATION AND DIGITAL PROMOTION

To improve the visibility of the tourism offering and ease access to information.



A centralized website + online reservations events + attractions + accommodations.

A unified events calendar to enhance regional coordination.



A variety of promotional tools.



Targeted marketing campaigns beyond the region.



## UNIQUE AND ATTRACTIVE EXPERIENCES

To deliver rich experiences anchored in local identity.

Performance halls as cultural and entertainment hubs.



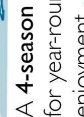
Themed routes - culture, local food, heritage, etc.



An agri-food trail highlighting local products.



A 4-season trail network for year-round outdoor enjoyment.



A variety of accessible family-friendly activities



a visual creation from  
champ & libre  
stratégies





## Reader's Notes

This report was prepared by Agence Schertois, at the request of the Prescott and Russell Development Corporation (PRDC), as part of the process of developing the 2025–2030 Regional Tourism Strategic plan, as well as the resulting communication and marketing plan. It is intended exclusively to support the strategic initiatives undertaken by the PRDC and to guide reflection on regional tourism development.

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