



VISIT  
OAKVILLE

**Request for Proposal**  
**New Strategic Plan**



## Invitation

Visit Oakville invites submissions of proposals from qualified firms/consultants for the development of a new Strategic Plan to help define the future of tourism in Oakville and positions the organization for sustainable growth, increased destination competitiveness and economic impact, while contributing meaningfully to the community.

Please express your interest in this project to [rebecca.edgar@visitoakville.com](mailto:rebecca.edgar@visitoakville.com) cc: [info@visitoakville.com](mailto:info@visitoakville.com) by Friday, May 29 (5:00 p.m.).

Proposals should be submitted by Friday, June 19 (5:00 p.m.) to [rebecca.edgar@visitoakville.com](mailto:rebecca.edgar@visitoakville.com) cc: [info@visitoakville.com](mailto:info@visitoakville.com). Please see Appendix A for the full terms and conditions for this RFP.

## Who We Are

Visit Oakville is an incorporated, not-for-profit, Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). It is governed by a volunteer board of directors who are recruited to fulfill certain skill requirements. Visit Oakville drives economic impact by promoting Oakville as a visitor destination, enhancing the visitor experience, and advocating for the local tourism industry. Visit Oakville currently has five full-time staff members, Most of Visit Oakville's funding comes from the Town's Municipal Accommodation Tax collection, with the remainder from various grants.

## Our Purpose

To ignite the love of Oakville.

## Our Vision

To become the most desired destination with small town charm.

## Our Mission

To promote the distinct charm of the Oakville experience worthy of your stay.

## Our Woven Threads - Important In All That We Do

- Welcoming to everyone
- Sustainability
- Collaboration & partnerships
- Data backed decision making
- Embracing technology
- A love for Oakville



## About Oakville

Oakville is a lakeside town in Southern Ontario, located off the busy QEW corridor between Toronto and Niagara Falls. It is bordered by Mississauga to the east, Burlington to the west, Milton to the north and Lake Ontario to the south. Its waterfront, including active harbours, destination parks, and extensive trails, is a key draw for visitors and residents alike.

Oakville's population is approximately 244,000 and while being large enough to be considered a city, it remains the Town of Oakville. Traditional neighbourhoods like Bronte Village and Old Oakville maintain a quaint, small-town feel, while the town offers all the modern amenities and conveniences of a larger city. As with most municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area, Oakville is experiencing rapid growth.

Oakville consistently ranks as one of the best places to live, raise a family, and retire, as well as the safest region in Canada, and a welcoming place for newcomers to Canada. 46% of Oakville residents are members of a visible minority, with top groups including South Asian, Chinese, and Arab populations. Oakville features above-average household incomes and a highly educated workforce.

## About Tourism in Oakville

Oakville welcomes approximately two million visitors a year. While many visitors are day-trippers and/or here to see friends and family, there are various other reasons people visit Oakville.

Oakville has a strong sporting culture with supporting facilities. The Oakville Rangers run the largest minor hockey tournament (the Winter Classic) each January, drawing thousands of people to town. Sixteen Mile Sport Complex has become a sport hosting destination, welcoming Hockey Canada's Under-17 Development and Under-18 Selection Camps, the Centennial Cup, and the upcoming U17 World Challenge. Other notable events held in Oakville include the Sportsnet Grand Slam of Curling, Curling Canada's U-18 Nationals, and the PointsBet Invitational. Oakville is home to several nationally recognized sport organizations and facilities that attract tournaments year-round.

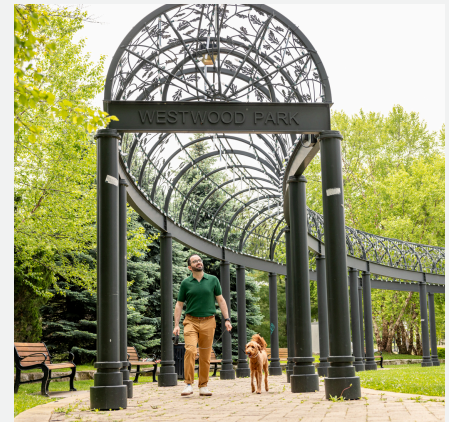
Oakville boasts a vibrant business community. It is home to three Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) that are local destinations. Oakville is home to some major corporate head offices. The Oakville Chamber of Commerce is a hub for local business and is a supporter of tourism. Educational institutions like Appleby College, ranked one of Canada's top private schools, Sheridan College, and Oakville's highly regarded public education offerings draw international interest.



Events are the top driver of traffic to the Visit Oakville website. Multi-day events have traditionally drawn people to town and are more likely to drive overnight stays. With Oakville's proximity to Toronto, easy access to highways and GO Transit and competitive hotel pricing, events in the city can also draw overnight visitors to Oakville. Visit Oakville runs Taste of Oakville, an annual culinary event featuring restaurants from across Oakville with specially curated prix-fixe lunch and dinner menus each winter.

Oakville is home to a variety of attractions. With its shops, restaurants and heritage district with the Oakville Museum, scenic parks and the Oakville lighthouse, Downtown Oakville is often the heart of the visitor experience. Oakville is also home to Glen Abbey Golf Club, iFLY Oakville, Bronte Creek Provincial Park, Oakville Galleries and the Oakville Centre for Performing Arts.

There are currently 11 hotels in Oakville, as well as a handful of registered short-term rentals. Bronte Creek Provincial Park offers seasonal campsites (May-October) and the Residences at Sheridan College provide a moderate-priced summer alternative. All short-term accommodation (STA) renting for less than 28 days requires a license and is regulated by Municipal bylaw. Oakville does not have a luxury hotel property



## Project Objective

Visit Oakville is seeking the services of a qualified firm/consultant to facilitate the development of a Strategic Plan in consultation with our Board of Directors, staff, tourism partners, and tourism stakeholders. Visit Oakville's **current strategic plan** was refreshed in 2022 and covers 2023-2026. The strategic pillars are storytelling, the visitor experience, and tourism advocacy.

The new Strategic Plan will guide our efforts from and should include clear priorities, measurable outcomes, implementation considerations and KPIs that will help guide organizational decision-making and annual work planning.



## Scope of Work

The successful firm/consultant will deliver a comprehensive five-year Strategic Plan that aligns with Visit Oakville's purpose, mission and vision, and objectives and incorporates our woven threads. Using existing available research (including a 2026 Resident Sentiment Survey, 2025 Partner Satisfaction Survey, and reports available through Destination Ontario), the consultant will facilitate the development of a robust yet focused plan.

### Tactics will include:

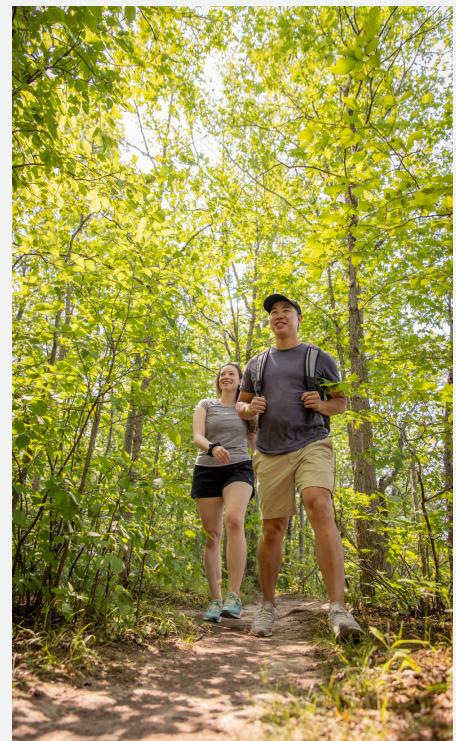
- Review of VO's current Strategic Plan and assess the organization's progress.
- Analyze existing and emerging industry trends, priorities, and risks.
- Facilitate stakeholder consultations, including one-on-one, group, and/or online engagement
- A comprehensive assessment of Oakville as a visitor destination including:
  - Reviewing and comparing Oakville with similar destinations (size, resources)
  - Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats including Oakville's unique selling proposition and a gap analysis to identify opportunities for growth and development.
  - Review the area's key tourism demand generators.
  - Analyze how VO supports local tourism stakeholders and recommend opportunities for improvement.

### Key Considerations

- How can Oakville strengthen its position as a distinctive destination in the GTA?
- What opportunities exist to increase overnight visitation and visitor spending?
- What emerging trends and visitor expectations should shape Oakville's tourism future (e.g. AI, sustainability etc.)

The consultant will incorporate this information into strategic plan, including goals, defined actions, and success metrics.

In the RFP submission, the firm should detail its approach and work-plan for the project. Any elements not identified here but which the firm considers necessary to complete the project should be identified with a rationale.





## Deliverables

- Project kick-off meeting with Visit Oakville's strategic planning task force.
- Present an overview of the current tourism landscape.
- Stakeholder engagement that may include interviews, surveys and/or focus groups.
- Present a draft plan including pillars/priorities.
- Finalize and present a five-year strategic plan including clear objectives and priorities, measurable outcomes, implementation considerations, and KPIs that will guide business planning.
- Provide all project materials (background, research, stakeholder input, etc.) in digital format.

The successful firm/consultant will be collaborative, strategic and able to translate stakeholder input into a focused and actionable roadmap for Visit Oakville.

## Visit Oakville Project Team

This project is led by a Visit Oakville task force comprised of staff and board members:

- Amrita Sidhu, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors
- Rebecca Edgar, Executive Director, Visit Oakville
- Clint Israel, Director
- Kamal Singh Oberoi, Director
- Councilor Ray Chisholm, Director

The project team will provide guidance and feedback. Other staff or board members may be consulted as required. The Executive Director will be the primary contact with the firm. The project team looks forward to open communication with the successful firm which may include meetings or updates via email, phone or online.





## Proposed Schedule

Task	Date	Lead
<b>Response Phase</b>		
Expression of Interest	Friday, June 15, 2026	Firm
Proposal Submission Date	Friday, June 19, 2026	Firm
Project Evaluation	Week of June 22, 2026	Task Force
Notification and Award	Week of June 29, 2026	Task Force
<b>Project Phase</b>		
Kick-off Meeting	By end of July 2026	Firm, Task Force
Stakeholder Consultation	August - September	Firm, Staff to provide List
Present overview tourism landscape	End of September	Firm, Task Force
Present draft plan including pillars	End of October	Firm, Full Board
Present Strategic Plan	End of November	Firm, Full Board

The draft project phase is negotiable based on the successful firm's feedback and proposed workplan.

## Proposal Requirements

All proposals must include the following:

- Your understanding of the project needs
- An outline of your approach to this project
- Proposed workplan and schedule
- Expectations of Visit Oakville – what you need from us to be successful
- Description of your project lead and team members
- Examples of similar projects including references
- Budget before HST

Shortlisted candidates may be required to make a short (20-30 minute) presentation to the project team.





## RFP Requirements

The proposal should:

1. Be submitted electronically and should not exceed 10 pages in length, not including work samples.
2. Be accompanied by a cover letter and/or an email signed by an authorized representative of your organization certifying the accuracy of all information contained in the submission and acknowledging your firm's offer of services according to the terms of this RFP.
3. Be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 19, 2026 to [rebecca.edgar@visitoakville.com](mailto:rebecca.edgar@visitoakville.com) cc: [info@visitoakville.com](mailto:info@visitoakville.com)

## Proposal Evaluation

	Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
1.	Description of the firm, project team and structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Company overview as it relates to scope of work</li><li>• Identification of project lead</li><li>• Team members and their experience in tourism</li></ul>	10
2.	Project Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate your firm's experience with strategic and action planning with three examples of projects</li><li>• Understanding of destination marketing organizations</li></ul>	20
3.	Project Approach and Work-plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarize understanding of needs</li><li>• Provide a work-plan of tasks and activities that will be undertaken to complete this project</li><li>• Describe roles and responsibilities of team</li></ul>	25
4.	Schedule of tasks and activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schedule</li><li>• Approximate timing for meetings with Visit Oakville team</li></ul>	10
5.	Project Costs and Fee Schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total fee with separate costs for disbursements, mileage, markup on sub-consultants, excluding HST</li><li>• Expect staff time and fees by staff assignment, task and activities</li></ul>	25
6.	Presentation (presentations may be required of short-listed proponents only)	10
7.	References (2)	
8.	TOTAL	100



## Appendix A

### Terms & Conditions

- Submissions in response to this RFP assume acceptance of the terms and conditions described herein.
- All costs associated with the preparation of the proposal are the sole responsibility of the bidder.
- Neither Visit Oakville's receipt of a proposal, nor the completion of any of the RFP's evaluation and selection stages constitutes an obligation on the part of Visit Oakville to award the contract.
- Visit Oakville reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, and to seek clarification from one or more bidders on the contents of the submission.
- Confidentiality of all submissions and communications will be maintained throughout the process.
- All communications with Visit Oakville related to this RFP must be directed only to the contact person above.
- Visit Oakville reserves the right to terminate the RFP process at any time after the closing date and issue a new RFP.
- Visit Oakville reserves the right to disqualify a proposal based on evidence of conflict of interest.
- Visit Oakville may interview bidders and, in cases where the proposal alone is not sufficient for a decision to be made, use information from these interviews to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the submission.
- Visit Oakville shall negotiate in good faith on such matters as it chooses with the selected bidder without obligation to communicate with other bidders.

Thank you for your time and interest in Visit Oakville.