

Q1 2025: Agency Update

Strategic Initiatives

1. Regional Economic Development Strategy & Tourism Master Plan

- Weekly social media posts marketing key initiatives within the Economic Development Strategy & Tourism Master Plan rolled in January and February.
 - Content received 3,800 Impressions and drove 110 users to view the full strategy documents online.

2. Envision Saint John Strategic Plan

- A draft was shared with staff, board of directors, municipalities, and the FRSC in Q1 2025. Feedback was received and revisions and design are underway.
- Final approval is expected in June 2025.

3. Regional Immigration Strategy

- Continued work with the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership to finalize the strategy, which will launch in Q2 2025.

Strategic Communications

1. Q1 Growth Story

- [Young Talent Shines in the Trades: Hampton Resident Sets Sights on World Skills Competition](#)

2. Media Relations

- [Job Fair to Strengthen Saint John Region's Tourism & Hospitality Workforce](#)
- [Regional Inclusivity Campaign Launches on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)
- [Pilot Program Launches to Support International PhDs & MDs in Securing Careers](#)
- [Moncton and Saint John Region to Host 2029 Canada Summer Games](#)

Tourism Promotion, Sales & Marketing

1. Destination Campaigns

- Building on the 2024 "Bay-cation campaign - 'An Uplifting Experience', targeting Ontario, the Maritimes, and Quebec will be launching Mid-April 2025.
- Entering the second year of a \$200,000 co-investment partnership with Tourism New Brunswick on a campaign targeting the US market that will launch in May 2025.

- Launched the Backyard Bay-cation campaign, working in partnership with two local content creators to share numerous experiences in the Saint John Region throughout the year. Creators share their experience, and a giveaway for the same experience is distributed to local residents.
- Social media ad campaigns for various events, including Winterfest, Taco Week, and PoutineFest.

2. Tourism Activation - Imaginenature

- Planning for a takeover of the Oasis Immersive Experience in Montreal with Tourism New Brunswick and the 12 regions in our province, which will take place in April 2025. Visitors will experience a 45-minute immersive video and then explore the various interactive exhibits that provide a taste of each specific region.

3. Welcome Centres

- Training preparation and hiring for the upcoming high season underway.

4. Meetings & Conventions Sales

- Sales Manager, Lina Ortiz attended Ottawa Meet Week in February 2025. This is the largest week of the year for sales meetings and gathering leads.
- The Meet.Connect.Explore provincial partnership has participated in two joint shows in Q1 to sell the province as a premier destination for business events.

5. Sports & Major Events

- The 2029 Canada Games Bid Evaluations Committee hosted the site evaluations in a combined familiarization tour with the Saint John Region and Moncton.
- Sales Manager, Lindsay Smith attended the Sport Event Congress with the Town of Quispamsis. This is Canada's premier marketplace for the sport tourism industry.

Population Growth & Workforce Development

1. Population Growth

- In partnership with the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership and the City of Saint John, we launched an Inclusivity Campaign that features five unique newcomer stories and supports our efforts for newcomer retention. To view the full campaign, visit [Our RegionOurHome.com](https://www.ourregionourhome.com). The launch included an activation at the Saint John Sea Dogs Game on March 24th in honour of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

- A Search Campaign to promote our [New Resident Service Portal](#) was in market from January 28th - March 26th. The campaign drove more than 2,000 users to the portal allowing new residents to receive customized results for programs and services.
- A presentation to the Liberal Caucus was delivered to inform the group of the regional newcomer ecosystem and various initiatives that are taking place.
- We executed the contract with the Government of Canada–Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada to deliver the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership program for three years, beginning in Q2 2025.

2. Workforce Development

- Hosted sector-based workforce development engagement sessions via a Healthcare sector roundtable event.
- Executed a Tourism & Hospitality Job Fair in partnership with the Tourism Association of New Brunswick, Port Saint John, and AREA 506. The event connected more than 20 employers and community partners to over 150 jobseekers.
- In partnership with PRUDE, UNB, WorkingNB, the Saint John Newcomers Centre, YMCA of Southwestern New Brunswick, ConnexionWorks and United Way Maritimes, a pilot program launched to support international PhD and MD graduates with their career goals in the region.
- Hosted the first advisory board meeting for the Saint John Region Strategic Workforce Partnership. This bi-annual engagement will inform, guide, and seek input from the partnership on workforce development initiatives in the Regional Economic Development Strategy.
- Continued support to the ecosystem via strategic partnerships and sponsorships:
 - Job Developers Network - Cannexus 2025, Fusion Saint John's Faces of Fusion, CPHR-NB Lunch & Learn Series, Skilled Trades & Manufacturing High School Summit

3. Port Saint John Workforce Partnership 2.0

- A new labour dispatch system has been selected and approved by the Workforce Partnership Committee, with financial support from the department of Post-Secondary Education, Training, and Labour, and Port of Saint John Employers Association.

Economic Intelligence, Investment Attraction & Real Estate Development

1. Economic Intelligence

- Annual internal measurement review was completed for 2024. Results will be provided via the Agency's [public Year-in-Review event on May 13, 2025](#).
- We are actively monitoring more than 100 datasets from over 20 public and proprietary data providers. This data warehouse serves as a vital tool for monitoring the economic performance of the Saint John Region by analyzing tourism activity, research, and addressing client requests. An internal data needs assessment was completed, and new proprietary data sources have been added to our inventory - focusing on tourism spending, predictive labour force needs and industrial growth trends.
- Supported three economic impact assessment reports and four data analysis requests for community and private sector partners.

2. Industrial Investment Attraction

- Completed a review and analysis of industrial investments made in Canada over the last five years to support the identification of potential industry targets for the region.
- Onboarded a new investment attraction AI software tool to guide sector attraction research.
- Planning the Energy Sector engagement workshop that will take place in Q2 and welcome employees and employers within the sector.
- Received approval for federal funding applications that will support the enhancement of regional industrial investment attraction services.

3. Real Estate Development

- Engaged with the Province of New Brunswick on underutilized and surplus housing in the region to support housing development.
- Continued to explore the viability of more than 50 sites through a site activation program.
- Leads advanced with religious institutions on surplus property to spur development for several site opportunities.
- Continued discussions with multiple out-of-market developers on the development of several sites in the region.

Entrepreneurship & Business Growth

1. Impact Loan

- Assisted 14 businesses through the Impact Loan application process including business plan developments and cash flow projections.

- 10 applications were approved by the Impact Loan Committee in Q1 for funding to start or expand businesses totaling \$413,000.

2. Entrepreneurship

- Supported multiple entrepreneurship programs through our partner ConnexionWorks including Business Essentials workshops to help entrepreneurs through their journey with hands-on skills training. Workshops were delivered to 72 people in the region.
- Navigation support and business assistance was provided to 61 potential entrepreneurs. This is an increase of 35% year-over-year.
- Launched our Business Growth Resource Tool (SJBusinessSupport.com). A marketing campaign brought 2,036 active users to the portal between February 24 - March 26, 2025.

3. Health Care Recruitment & Retention

- Co-hosted a New Year celebration event for medical students and residents in Saint John and Fredericton at the Imperial Theatre. Key dignitaries were in attendance to network and promote New Brunswick and the Saint John Region as the place to live and work for these future graduates.
- Welcomed six physicians to the region in partnership with Horizon Health Network as potential new healthcare professionals. This partnership aims to create a streamlined community onboarding experience.

Administration

1. Human Resources

- A new Employee Handbook was rolled out in January 2025.

2. Truth & Reconciliation

- Olivia DesRoches, Marketing and Communications Coordinator, attended the International Indigenous Tourism Conference, hosted by the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada. This conference provided a valuable opportunity to strengthen relationships with Indigenous leaders and support the growth of Indigenous tourism in our region and beyond.

3. Customer Relationship Management

- After an extensive evaluation, the Agency has selected a new customer relationship management and email marketing platform. Implementation is underway and expected to conclude by Q3.