TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023-24



Table of Contents

Letters of Transmittal	3
Tourism Saskatchewan Overview	4
Progress on Goal 1	5
Progress on Goal 2	8
Progress on Goal 3	. 12
Progress on Goal 4	. 14
Financial Summary	. 16

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Letters of Transmittal



The Honourable Jeremy Harrison Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

May it please Your Honour:

With respect, I submit Tourism Saskatchewan's Annual Report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024. In compliance with *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*, this document outlines the corporation's business activities and includes audited financial statements.

The information in this report demonstrates a commitment to increased accountability, to delivering on the goals and strategies identified in Tourism Saskatchewan's 2023-2024 Business Plan, and to responsibly manage expenditures.

Jeremy Harrison

Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan



Jonathan Potts CEO, Tourism Saskatchewan

The Honourable Jeremy Harrison Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Dear Minister Harrison:

It is my distinct pleasure to submit Tourism Saskatchewan's Annual Report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024.

On behalf of the corporation, I acknowledge responsibility for this report and affirm that it is an accurate, complete and reliable summary of the past year. I also take responsibility for the financial administration and management of Tourism Saskatchewan.

This report highlights key projects and activities in 2023-24. This work is guided by our mandated responsibilities in Saskatchewan's Growth Plan. The year focused on increasing economic benefit to the province and amplifying the reach of tourism operators.

Jonathan Potts

CEO, Tourism Saskatchewan

Tourism Saskatchewan Overview

Tourism Saskatchewan was established in accordance with *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*, proclaimed on July 1, 2012. A Treasury Board Crown Corporation within the meaning of *The Crown Corporations Act*, 1993, Tourism Saskatchewan is a continuation of the Saskatchewan Tourism Authority, created under *The Tourism Authority Act*, 1994.

The corporation's mandated purposes are:

- a) To market Saskatchewan as a tourism destination in domestic, national and international markets;
- b)To assist Saskatchewan's tourism industry operators to market their products;
- c) To develop and promote the quality of tourism products and services in Saskatchewan;
- d)To provide visitor information services; and
- e)To undertake any other activities or functions assigned by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Responsibility for Tourism Saskatchewan is assigned to the Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan. An appointed, skills-based Board of Directors provides policy direction to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Under the leadership of CEO Jonathan Potts, staff in Regina and Saskatoon (73 full-time equivalents) deliver on plans, projects and activities that align with the Vision and Mission. Divisions include Executive Office, Marketing and Communications, Destination and Workforce Development, and Corporate Services.

Mandate: Tourism Saskatchewan promotes the province as a tourism destination by providing in-province and out-of-province marketing and visitor services. Tourism Saskatchewan assists industry to market and develop quality tourism products through co-operative marketing, education and training, and event funding programs.

Vision: A vibrant entrepreneurial tourism industry offering year-round compelling and memorable Saskatchewan experiences

Mission: Connect people with quality Saskatchewan experiences and advance the development of successful tourism operations

Tourism Saskatchewan's Strategic Plan 2022-23 to 2025-26 identified five strategic priorities:

- Market Saskatchewan's tourism experiences and stories
- Strengthen Saskatchewan's tourism experiences
- Improve destination competitiveness
- Create a modern and agile organization
- Nurture an internal culture focused on excellence

With this solid framework in place, focus and attention are directed at key markets supported by research, and on projects and activities that will advance the province's tourism sector and grow the visitor economy.

Progress on Goal 1: Increase economic benefit to the province through compelling, branded marketing initiatives targeting high-yield, passionate markets

Tourism Saskatchewan is committed to the goal identified in Saskatchewan's Growth Plan – to increase tourism expenditures by 50 per cent by 2030. Precision marketing tactics targeting high-yield and passionate markets will broaden Saskatchewan's reach and attract more long-haul Canadian and international visitors to the province.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Strengthen the province's reputation and competitive advantage as a destination through compelling, branded marketing initiatives

- Create, curate and evaluate consumer-focused, digital-first, always-on, influence-driven content marketing
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan's Spring and Summer campaign ran from mid-May through September of 2023. The campaign introduced the refreshed brand strategy and new regional travel zones. It targeted Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, and select markets in British Columbia and North Dakota. The campaign delivered a total of 118 million impressions across all markets and drove more than 45,000 website visits.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan developed the "Where's the Wanderer" video series for the Saskatchewan Roughriders' 2023 season. The segments leveraged the Saskatchewanderer persona as a trusted influencer to create awareness of destinations across the province. During home games, attendees participated to win a prize by identifying the whereabouts of the Saskatchewanderer.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan invested in a partnership with Expedia to grow awareness and bookings for the province from domestic and international markets. The campaigns generated 2.5 million ad impressions, drove 4,800 clicks to the website and resulted in \$32.4 million in bookings. For every dollar spent on the campaign, \$27 was generated in bookings.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan ran a winter campaign featuring activities worth travelling for, cosy accommodations and culinary experiences. Travellers in Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan were targeted. The campaign concluded in March 2024 and reached more than 12 million people, generating more than 176,000 clicks to the landing page.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan partnered with the Culinary Tourism Alliance in the Great Taste of Canada campaign. The campaign achieved over 5.3 million impressions and nearly 117,200 engagements.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan is redeveloping the consumer website (TourismSaskatchewan.com) to provide an enhanced user experience and to grow brand awareness and demand for niche markets.
- Strengthen industry's alignment with target market segments through customer segmentation analysis and the development of educational resources
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan developed three new target market segments for the domestic market that reflect current demographic and travel trends for Saskatchewan visitors:
 - Sleepless in the Suburbs: Married, 25-44, with young children. This segment leads busy lives and seeks family-friendly activities when travelling.
 - Fresh Air and Free Time: Older, retired or near-retirement empty nesters. This segment enjoys outdoor relaxation and prefers revisiting familiar places.
 - Bright Lights, Big City: Young singles and couples who are likely to visit Saskatchewan's urban centres. This segment travels for personal enrichment, seeking historical, cultural and culinary experiences.

- o Tourism Saskatchewan is developing introductory online courses to educate industry on how to effectively use market segmentation and personas to target customers and increase the return on their marketing investments.
- Identify and develop passionate market segments, potential niche markets and resilient domestic and international travellers
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan is implementing research-based niche marketing strategies and is developing marketing tactics to grow awareness of astrotourism, birding, outdoor photography and snowmobiling experiences.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan invested with Matador Network, the world's largest independent travel publisher, to execute test campaigns on astrotourism and snowmobiling. Individual landing pages for each niche experience were developed to inspire visitors and link them to bookable experiences. Tourism Saskatchewan also invested in print advertising with *Bird Watchers Digest*, an American publication that is viewed as North America's premier source for birding information.
 - o In September 2023, Tourism Saskatchewan, in partnership with Destination Canada and Discover Saskatoon, hosted GoMedia Canada. In attendance were 78 media representing 10 countries, and 70 partner provinces, territories, and destinations. Attendees participated in panels on Indigenous and regenerative tourism, explored the city through local tours, visited Wanuskewin Heritage Park, and celebrated at a closing event featuring Saskatchewan's culinary scene. Tourism Saskatchewan provided media with tours showcasing a variety of travel zones and experiences.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan sponsored the opening breakfast at Rendez-vous Canada (RVC) 2023 alongside 10 industry partners. The Saskatchewan delegation held over 300 meetings with key tour operators, travel buyers, and influencers during the event, which is the nation's premier international travel trade marketplace.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan partnered with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) on a co-branded Saskatchewan resident campaign to promote provincial Indigenous attractions. Airport activations, large-scale out-of-home advertising, and a digital component were part of the media buy targeting residents and visitors.
- Develop strategies for generating positive online conversations
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan uses a digital-first approach that is always active to encourage positive conversations and to build a strong online community of followers. Growth in social media followers and engagements in paid and organic advertising are indicators of success related to this objective. Social media followers increased by over 10,000 in 2023-24.
 - o In 2023-24, 1,961 pieces of content were published (video, written and graphic) on Tourism Saskatchewan social media channels, generating 27.8 million impressions, 567,000 engagements, and 29,521 new followers.
- Develop and implement regional travel zone and accompanying storylines to differentiate the province from its competitors
 - o The 2023 spring and summer campaign used targeted videos to share unique stories of the four regional zones, achieving 118 million impressions and 45,051 website sessions across all target markets. Notably, the campaign generated high engagement in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta. British Columbia and North Dakota were new test markets for the campaign.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Create and deliver consumer-focused content that inspires and informs travellers from key markets to visit Saskatchewan

- Enhance and optimize content for consumer-facing channels
 - o In June 2023, a reimagined *Saskatchewan Travel Guide* was published. There were 30,000 copies printed and almost all were distributed in the 2023-24 fiscal year. Survey results from bulk distributors confirmed the guide was well received by visitors, who appreciated the attractive layout and quality images, usefulness of information, and organization of content.
- Support the creation and promotion of year-round travel offers
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan develops advertising campaigns that influence visitors to make purchases by showcasing inspiring activities and must-visit places, along with direct links to Tourism Saskatchewan's exclusive travel offers.

- Grow U.S. visitation through targeted marketing of hunting and angling experiences
 - o In 2023-24, Tourism Saskatchewan invested \$1.5 million on advertising in the U.S., supported by travel media activities and partnerships with travel industry professionals.
 - o The Prairie Angling Program, a marketing partnership with Travel Manitoba and Destination Canada, entered its third year. In 2023-24, Tourism Saskatchewan invested \$250,000, matched by Destination Canada. The campaign generated 14 million impressions, 60,000 clicks to the website and nearly one million video views.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan invested \$1.1 million to support the inbound marketing of WestJet's nonstop transborder services between Saskatoon and Minneapolis and between Regina and Minneapolis. American anglers and hunters in Minnesota and key one-stop states were targeted through a co-branded campaign with WestJet to encourage bookings. The investment included \$300,000 in support from Destination Canada's Air Route Support Program.
 - o From September to November 2023, a leisure market test campaign ran in Minneapolis and direct feeder markets. The campaign targeted older, mature couples without children at home that have a desire for more sophisticated, deeper travel and are interested in Indigenous culture and culinary experiences. Overall, the campaign exceeded expectations by 63 per cent in terms of how many times ads were seen and generated a total of 13,858 clicks to the booking widget.
 - o In November 2023, Tourism Saskatchewan participated in the Dakota Angler Ice Institute ice fishing show in Sioux Falls, South Dakota for the first time to promote the province's outfitted angling experiences. The show revealed strong interest in ice fishing, open water fishing in southern Saskatchewan, and northern fly-in outfitters. Many attendees, seeking new experiences beyond Ontario, showed great interest in what Saskatchewan has to offer.
- Create online and media content to support niche market experiences
 - o Content assets were developed to support the development of new niche markets, including birding, snowmobiling, wildlife photography and astrophotography.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Apply research and evaluation tools to refine and adapt marketing tactics to better target potential visitors and increase expenditures

- Evaluate and refine Tourism Saskatchewan's brand for export markets
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan's refreshed brand strategy was developed to differentiate the province from its competitors in export markets. Work to grow awareness of the refreshed brand and niche market opportunities in international markets began in 2023-24.
- Develop long-term brand and niche market strategies
 - o In January 2024, implementation of the Content Marketing Strategy began. The strategy focuses on creating versatile content, expanding diversity through collaborations and targeting growth in niche markets.

Performance Measure Results:

Measures	Baseline	Target 2023-24	Actual (2023-24)
Total annual visitor expenditure in Saskatchewan Saskatchewan (goal of \$3.6B by 2030)+	\$2.7B (2019)	\$2.1B	\$2.8B
Number of social media followers	499,642 (2022)	524,624	534,8839
Paid search advertising click through rate (CTR)	3.17% (2021-22)	4.00%	9.71%
Paid social advertising CTR	0.82% (2021-22)	0.90%	0.64%
Paid display advertising CTR	0.07% (2021-22)	0.17%	0.09%
Digital Listening Sentiment score	56 (2021-22)	58	54
Number of events and attractions participating in customer segmentation analysis	7 (2018-19)	14	14
Number of angling and hunting licences sold to U.S. visitors	27,406 (2019)	23,300	26,038
Annual provincial hotel occupancy percentage	56% (2019)	55%	59%
International air arrivals (based on ticket sales)	87,185 (2019)	74,100	_*
Consumer engagement with blog content (measured in page views)	151,358 (2019)	185,000	117,150

⁺Visitor expenditure figures are provided by the Statistics Canada Visitor Travel Survey (VTS) and National Travel Survey (NTS)

^Digital Listening Sentiment analysis is the process of analyzing digital text to determine if the emotional tone of the message is positive, negative, or neutral. A score is determined by subtracting the percentage of negative comments from the percentage of positive comments.

^{*}Tourism Saskatchewan transitioned to a new air arrivals data supplier in early 2024. As a result, new estimates are not comparable to previous years due to differing methodologies.

Progress on Goal 2: Increase the number and quality of Saskatchewan tourism experiences and products to meet traveller expectations

Tourism Saskatchewan's ten-year Destination Development Strategy guides the advancement of compelling experiences and competitively positions Saskatchewan in key markets. Tourism Saskatchewan works with the tourism industry to build capacity and elevate experiences through its funding and development programs and training.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Provide leadership to industry operators to advance their marketing strategies by leveraging Saskatchewan's tourism brand, marketing strategy, services and programs for industry competitiveness

Key Actions: What we will do to get there

- Deliver advice and programming to elevate the quality of tourism experiences and build a robust tourism workforce
 - o Thirty-three individuals participated in training webinars to support export-ready growth in February and October 2023.
 - o In 2023-24, entry and advanced level experience development training was provided to 36 businesses. Both programs include intensive one-on-one follow-up coaching, which is underway and will continue in the next fiscal year.
 - o Workforce Development offered a series of workshops and webinars to support businesses in marketing their experiences and growing their customer base. Topics included working with social media influencers, building tour packages and choosing the right advertising. Several recruitment and retention sessions were also offered.
- Provide product development funding to operators to support the development of new, high-yield experiences that focus on international markets
 - o In 2023-24, the Tourism Diversification Program approved funding for 32 applicants, with \$1,116,540 in total funding provided.
- Develop and implement an industry competitiveness program
 - o Federal funding provided by the PrairiesCan regional development agency supported the creation of resources to equip industry with the knowledge required to be more competitive and to reach new markets. Training topics include leveraging the provincial tourism brand, content and storytelling, niche markets, frontline sales and a Saskatchewan Ambassador program.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal Build a strong tourism workforce

- Review and update the Workforce Development Strategy to ensure relevant, competitive and strong support for tourism businesses in the areas of recruitment and retention
 - o Significant work was completed this year, and the five-year Workforce Development Strategy will be implemented in the 2024-25 fiscal year.
- Work with provincial and federal partners to support program and strategy development to help address labour shortages
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan delivered monthly webinars and workshops that covered topics such as: smartphone marketing; resources-limited marketing; storytelling; customer service; seasonal recruitment; and conflict de-escalation. The webinar topics are built by monitoring and identifying national and provincial labour trends (Tourism HR Canada), through individual consultations with Saskatchewan businesses and organizations (Ministry of Immigration and Career Training and Service Hospitality) and with feedback from industry participants. Recordings and related resources are accessible to industry on the Business Hub.

- o Tourism Saskatchewan is providing province-wide career awareness activities that include presentations to high school students and Think Tourism events. These events showcase industry opportunities and introduce students to tourism leaders. The delivery of these career awareness events is done through partnerships and contributions from Saskatchewan Polytechnic, the Regina and Saskatoon Industry Education Council, the Regina and Saskatoon Public and Catholic school divisions and local tourism businesses. A media campaign encouraged young people to explore tourism careers through the website workinsktourism.com.
- o Tourism Saskatchewan offers Ready to Work programming to assist underrepresented youth to obtain essential skills and training to enter the tourism workforce. Each year projects are delivered throughout the province in partnerships with local communities. Project funding was provided by Saskatchewan Ministry of Immigration and Career Training and the federal Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Program.
- Continuously evaluate training and education programs and services
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan's online courses and workshop content was reviewed to ensure training remains relevant to industry. Service Best renewal was completed and launched in September 2023 with a series of in-person training sessions throughout the province. Legislative changes resulted in updates to the Serve it Right Saskatchewan and the CannaSell SK Responsible Cannabis Sales courses.
 - o New courses and workshops are being developed based on feedback from industry through ongoing surveys.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Deliver co-operative marketing, event hosting and experience development funding programs as mechanisms to grow the economy and promote Saskatchewan communities

- Evaluate and refine co-operative marketing, event hosting and experience development programs to remove barriers to participation and ensure alignment with strategies and industry needs
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan directly supported 11 businesses in completing applications for the Tourism Diversification Program.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan hired an Industry Marketing Consultant to improve industry relations and marketing and program success.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan staff assisted industry through the Marketing and Events Partnership Program application process and provided strategic marketing advice and support to develop targeted marketing plans. In total, 117 successful applicants received \$1.3 million. The funding was largely invested in digital readiness, which includes website improvements, search engine optimization and content development.
 - o Participating businesses (27 in total) in Tourism Saskatchewan's advanced-level experience development program, The AWEshop, were grouped by business type (e.g., Indigenous, niche market, etc.) to encourage sharing of best practices and development concepts.
- Refresh and implement Tourism Saskatchewan's Event Hosting and Partnership Strategy
 - o The new event funding strategy is being implemented. It places emphasis on multi-day and business events, and projected direct business sales, provincial tax revenues and room nights.
 - o As of July 2023, Tourism Saskatchewan has been using a new event impact calculator from Destinations International to consistently analyze the true impact of sporting, cultural events and festivals.
- Increase investment to support event hosting and the business travel sector
 - o In 2023-24, Tourism Saskatchewan secured an international lead generation agency to support the identification of qualified leads for international business events in Regina and Saskatoon. A total of 32 qualified leads have been provided, with half being from the Life Science sector.

Performance Measure Results:

Measures	Baseline	Target 2023-24	Actual (2023-24)
Net Promoter Score (out-of-province visitors)	59.2 (2021-22)	60.0	N/A*
Percentage of people employed within six months after completing Ready to Work training program	79% (2017-18)	80%	79%
Number of Indigenous experiences supported through funding programs	7 (2020-21)	9	14
Number of people trained through Tourism Saskatchewan education and training programs annually	12,101 (2021-22)	14,000	17,105
Percentage of successful Marketing and Events Partnership Program (MEPP) applicants with a digital marketing and content component	82% (2020-21)	88%	93%
Number of Saskatchewan industry experiences carried by receptive tour operators	82 (2020-21)	86	88

^{*}Sample size was too small to conduct a reliable NPS analysis. A new methodology will be considered for 2024-25.

Progress on Goal 3: Engage Stakeholders

Industry engagement is critical to identifying and delivering programs and services that benefit tourism operators. Through research, partnerships and activities that support product and experience development, Tourism Saskatchewan helps stakeholders increase their competitiveness and attract domestic and international visitors.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Cultivate effective partnerships with Saskatchewan tourism industry stakeholders

Key Actions: What we will do to get there

- Develop and maintain an industry website and business hub
 - o The Business Hub migrated to a new platform. The new platform provides greater security, site performance, better content authoring experience, potential for better user experience when content teams implement personalization and marketing automation capabilities.
 - o Industry-facing social media engaged and shared information with operators and employees.

 There were 234 posts on both LinkedIn and Facebook, an increase of 65 per cent from the previous year.
- Host strategic engagement sessions with industry stakeholders to collect timely information and feedback that informs Tourism Saskatchewan's programs and services
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan assisted with the assessment of potential tourism development opportunities in 36 different communities. Industry Development consultants worked with operators and potential experience providers to evaluate interest and products.
 - o In 2023-24, the Destination Development team provided direct support to 304 tourism operators.
 - o Community engagement sessions were conducted in the Creighton/Denare Beach and Lumsden areas. In multi-day sessions, Industry Development consultants met with community leaders and tourism business operators to identify programs and services to advance tourism development in these areas.
- Identify new workshops and programs to advance industry knowledge and skills in key areas
 - o Workforce Development used past webinar survey results to develop a new training schedule for industry. Fifty-three webinars and workshops were made available, both in-person and online, from October 2023 to March 2024. The webinars, workshops and courses are available annually to the tourism workforce, including front-line employees, supervisors, and owner/operators.
 - o In October 2023, in-person training workshops were held in Gull Lake and Coronach in partnership with the Cypress Hills and Grasslands Destination Area and the South Saskatchewan Ready Tourism Region, respectively. Thirty-five participants took part in the Gull Lake workshops. Topics in these workshops included marketing, digital media, recruitment and retention, and tourism package development.
 - o New online course development was initiated in areas that were identified as gaps through industry research. These include a new micro-course on Saskatchewan's marketing strategy, how to implement a marketing strategy for your business, the fundamentals of storytelling, volunteer ambassador training and frontline sales skills.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Deliver relevant information, programs and services based on research, trends and tourism industry needs

- Provide relevant research and data analysis to support sector growth and influence future planning
 - o Market segmentation analysis and airline data were used to develop targeted marketing strategies based on Saskatchewan's visitor profiles. Key audiences were targeted in Minnesota and British Columbia to maximize advertising budget and support new air routes.
 - o In November 2023, Tourism Saskatchewan published an interactive key indicators dashboard that summarizes the health of Saskatchewan's tourism industry. Information is updated monthly to reflect the most current data available. The dashboard will expand as new data is added.

- Continually improve the industry partner portal for programs and services
 - o Regular technical updates have been implemented for the Business Hub funding portal to ensure a secure, high-performing environment
- Develop an industry-facing strategy to guide content development for the Business Hub o Internal Product Management processes were implemented to maximize resources and customer impact.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Work with stakeholders and government partners to promote growth across the visitor economy

Key Actions: What we will do to get there

- Work with provincial and federal ministries to identify opportunities for collaboration and ensure alignment with the objectives of *Saskatchewan's Growth Plan*
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan chairs the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Destination Access Working Group
 - o Saskatchewan leads the Destination Access Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group to highlight destination access issues in the province and across the country.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan has been collaborating on tourism-related priorities with the following ministries: Highways; Trade and Export Development; Parks, Culture and Sport; Environment; and Immigration and Career Training.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan participates in the Northern Labour Market Committee which has a mandate of identifying and assessing emerging labour market and economic development issues in northern Saskatchewan. The committee also recommends actions to enable residents to benefit from training, employment and economic activities in the region.
 - o Workforce development collaborates with the Saskatoon and Regina and District Industry Education Councils to promote career exploration opportunities to high school students.
- Develop partnerships with travel trade and travel media in key target markets
 - o Twelve partnership agreements with key account tour operators in the UK and Germany were secured. As post campaign results come in, five of our partners reported a combined total of 2,714 room nights in Saskatchewan in 2023.
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan participated in a nontraditional partnership with the Frankfurt Lions for the 2023-24 ice hockey season. Three players originating from Saskatchewan were on the team and took part in Saskatchewan Day events and pre-recorded videos to help tell the Saskatchewan story. Over 240,000 fans were reached during the hockey season.
 - o An exclusive virtual event was held in January with *Wanderlust*, the UK's largest travel magazine. Tourism Saskatchewan also partnered with *Wanderlust* on a 45-minute podcast episode on Saskatchewan. The podcast is expected to yield up to 4,000 downloads over the next year.
 - o In the UK market, *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* each featured full-page Saskatchewan content, reaching a combined total of 1.8 million across print and digital media.
 - o Work is underway with *Porsche Club Life*, the official magazine of the Porsche Club in Germany. In partnership with Destination Canada, Saskatchewan will be part of a Canada supplement in the magazine with a focus on fall content. The publication will reach 26,000 discerning, high-spend travellers.

Performance Measure Results:

Measures	Baseline	Target 2023-24	Actual (2023-24)
Business Hub engagement score	7M (2022)	8M	9.4M
Open rate (%) for Industry Update newsletter emails	25% (2020-21)	30%	39%
Number of industry participants in experiential development training programs	32 (2022-23)	35	57

Progress on Goal 4: Amplify the presence, reach and influence of Tourism Saskatchewan and the tourism industry through digital initiatives

The risks of technical disruptions and vulnerabilities require a firm commitment to being a digital-first, customer-focused, data-driven organization. Tourism Saskatchewan employs an integrated digital experience platform to maximize marketing reach, industry growth and consumer spending, while ensuring operational efficiencies and improvements.

improvements.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal Establish and implement an enterprise architecture plan

Key Actions: What we will do to get there

- · Identify and implement systems and processes that lead to increased operational efficiencies
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan is implementing a cloud-based budgeting, forecasting and financial management system to provide improved and more timely financial information to inform decision making.
 - o Industry database systems have been overhauled with new input forms to increase operational efficiencies.
 - o Industry listing image editing and storage processes were improved by removing redundant steps and implementing automated image resizing and publishing.
 - o Agile development processes were implemented to more efficiently prioritize and coordinate work efforts.
- Develop data, information and technology architecture roadmaps to enhance capabilities required to meet business and growth plan goals
 - o A cloud-driven data and analytics framework is being built to collate, preserve, and amalgamate data related to research, customer interactions and industry information. This framework sets the foundation for datacentric collaborations and ensures a robust and dynamic platform for providing business insights.
 - o Learning Management System (LMS) integration was completed and associated dashboard/reports were created.
 - o New Google Analytics 4 data was integrated into the software platform for consumer, Fish/Hunt and Business Hub websites. Report development is underway.
- Establish and implement real-time consumer personalization systems through artificial intelligence, machine learning and automation capabilities
 - o Planning is underway for the rollout of personalization features on the Business Hub. System configuration is in step with the consumer website development project.
 - o Technology staff have completed initial system training.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal Prioritize cyber security initiatives

- Continuously review and improve cyber security systems and processes
 - o An Information Security Incident Response Plan was developed.
- Migrate technological infrastructure to the Cloud
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan is migrating the finance system and the SharePoint system that supports the industry database onto the Cloud.
 - o Remaining platform components have been identified and mapped for migration over next two fiscal years, completing planned Cloud migration.
- Develop and update information technology policies and procedures
 - o An overarching security policy for the organization was developed.
- Conduct periodic security assessment and audits
 - o Security self-assessment was updated to identify and address vulnerabilities proactively, enhance security and reduce technological risk

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal Improve web and application development processes

Key Actions: What we will do to get there

- Monitor the success and performance measures of digital products
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan began implementation of product management processes based on a framework designed to improve alignment, increase quality and productivity, and provide enhanced transparency and communication.
- Develop and improve industry collaboration products
 - o A digital assessment tool is under development that will allow Tourism Saskatchewan staff to provide detailed search engine optimization, digital presence and maturity assessments to industry operators.
 - o The workinsktourism.ca website was migrated to Tourism Saskatchewan's environment.
- Explore customer data integration opportunities with external stakeholders
 - o Tourism Saskatchewan is working with The Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport to consider integration of consumer and park data. Direction will be determined by results of the Digital Transformation Strategy.
- Develop and enhance advanced user experience features on consumer websites
 - o Planning is underway for the tourismsaskatchewan.com consumer site re-design.

Strategy: The approach we will take to achieve our goal

Increase employees' digital capacity

Key Actions: What we will do to get there

- Provide training to increase employees' digital skills
 - o An RFP was developed to support a Digital Transformation Strategy which will guide progress in employee training and a key requirement of the strategy is a plan for increased digital literacy for all staff.
- Develop digital learning plans for employees
 - o Completed assessment of a new learning platform and will decide on implementation with the rollout of the Digital Transformation Strategy.
- Provide employees with access to digital collaboration tools and resources
 - o Continually improved the M365 Cloud Productivity Platform and have provided access to full M365 and Adobe Creative Cloud and Acrobat tools to staff as required.

Performance Measure Results:

Measures	Baseline	Target 2023-24	Actual (2023-24)
Percentage of employees participating in digital skills improvement training	83% (2021-22)	85%	97%
LastPass – Average Security Score	45% (2022-23)	55%	64%
Centre for Internet Security (CIS) CSAT Score (Security Controls Assessment)*	38 (2022-23)	50	48

^{*} A CIS CSAT score measures implementation of the CIS controls and helps to identify strengths and areas for improvement in cybersecurity practices.

Financial Summary

Tourism Saskatchewan March 31, 2024

Management's Responsibility

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan:

Management is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the accompanying financial statements, including responsibility for significant accounting judgments and estimates in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting standards and ensuring that all information in the annual report is consistent with the statements. This responsibility includes selecting appropriate accounting principles and methods, and making decisions affecting the measurement of transactions in which objective judgment is required.

In discharging its responsibilities for the integrity and fairness of the financial statements, management designs and maintains the necessary accounting systems and related internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are authorized, assets are safeguarded and financial records are properly maintained to provide reliable information for the preparation of financial statements.

The Board of Directors and Audit Committee are composed entirely of Directors who are neither management nor employees of Tourism Saskatchewan. The Board is responsible for overseeing management in the performance of its financial reporting responsibilities, and for the approval of the financial information included in the annual report. The Audit Committee has the responsibility of meeting with management and external auditors to discuss the internal controls over the financial reporting process, auditing matters and financial reporting issues. The Audit Committee is also responsible for recommending the appointment of Tourism Saskatchewan's external auditors.

Deloitte LLP, an independent firm of Chartered Professional Accountants, is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to audit the financial statements; their report follows. The external auditors have full and free access to, and meet periodically and separately with, both the Audit Committee and management to discuss their audit findings.

May 15, 2024

Chief Executive Officer

Chief Financial Officer

Kae Gallian



Deloitte LLP 2103 11th Avenue Suite 900 Regina SK S4P 3Z8

Tel: 306-565-5200 Fax: 306-757-4753 www.deloitte.ca

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan:

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Tourism Saskatchewan (the "Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2023, and the statements of operations, changes in net financial assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at March 31, 2023, and the results of its operations, changes in its net financial assets, and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards ("PSAS").

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards ("Canadian GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with PSAS, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or
error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is
sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material
misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion,
forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Chartered Professional Accountants Regina, Saskatchewan

Deloitte LLP

May 15, 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION As at March 31

	2024	2023
Financial Assets		
Cash (Note 5)	\$6,151,247	\$6,617,314
Accounts receivable (Note 11)	1,941,491	78,126
	8,092,738	6,695,440
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 6 and 11)	3,955,653	2,468,442
Unearned revenue	194,582	565,490
	4,150,235	3,033,932
Net Financial Assets	3,942,503	3,661,508
Non Financial Assets		
Tangible capital assets (Note 7)	281,865	146,579
Prepaid expenses	577,418	269,744
	859,283	416,323
Accumulated Surplus	4,801,786	4,077,831

See accompanying notes and schedule to the financial statements.

APROVED BY THE BOARD

Contractual Obligations (Note 9)

Director Director

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS For the Year Ended March 31

	Budget 2024	2024	2023
	(Note 3)		2500000
Revenue (Note 11)			
Provincial operating grant (Note 10)	\$20,223,000	\$20,223,000	\$19,673,000
Other grants and contributions	986,400	1,272,230	1,764,465
Sales of products and services	460,000	615,832	556,274
Partnership revenue	2,311,500	2,414,234	311,500
Interest and other income	196,000	433,867	299,875
	24,176,900	24,959,163	22,605,114
Expenses (Note 11 and Schedule 1) Administration Marketing and Communications Destination and Workforce Development	5,823,988 13,140,078 2,679,357	5,676,815 13,495,351 2,386,100	5,199,917 13,463,552 1,897,109
Education and Training	2,983,477	2,676,942	2,824,038
	24,626,900	24,235,208	23,384,616
Surplus (Deficit) for the Year	(450,000)	723,955	(779,502)
Accumulated Surplus - Beginning of Year	4,077,831	4,077,831	4,857,333
Accumulated Surplus - End of Year	\$3,627,831	\$4,801,786	\$4,077,831

See accompanying notes and schedule to the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET FINANCIAL ASSETS For the Year Ended March 31

	Budget 2024	2024	2023
	(Note 3)		
Deficit for the Year	(\$450,000)	\$723,955	(\$779,502)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	75,609	77,122	61,743
Write-down of tangible capital assets	-	212,408	-
Use (purchase) of prepaid expenses	10,000	(307,674)	11,286
Decrease in Net Financial Assets	(364,391)	280,995	(706,473)
Net Financial Assets - Beginning of Year	3,661,508	3,661,508	4,367,981
Net Financial Assets - End of Year	\$3,297,117	\$3,942,503	\$3,661,508

See accompanying notes and schedule to the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS For the Year Ended March 31

	2024	2023
Operating Activities		
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	\$723,955	(\$779,502)
Items not requiring cash:		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	77,122	61,743
Net change in non-cash balances relating to operations:		
Accounts receivable	(1,863,365)	5,603
Prepaid expenses	(307,674)	11,286
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,487,211	790,108
Unearned revenue	(370,908)	(262,004)
	(253,659)	(172,766)
Capital Activities		
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(212,408)	2
	(212,408)	-
Decrease in Cash	(466,067)	(172,766)
Cash - Beginning of Year	6,617,314	6,790,080
Cash - End of Year	\$6,151,247	\$6,617,314

See accompanying notes and schedule to the financial statements.

1. STATUS OF TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN

Tourism Saskatchewan was established pursuant to *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act* proclaimed on July 1, 2012. Tourism Saskatchewan is a Treasury Board Crown Corporation within the meaning of *The Crown Corporations Act, 1993*. Tourism Saskatchewan is a continuing corporation of Saskatchewan Tourism Authority, established under *The Tourism Authority Act* on October 1, 1994. Tourism Saskatchewan promotes the province as a tourism destination by providing in-province and out-of-province marketing and visitor services. Tourism Saskatchewan assists industry to market and develop quality tourism products through education and training, diversification and experience development, and marketing and event funding programs.

Tourism Saskatchewan is exempt from income taxes under the *Income Tax Act*.

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Statement of Remeasurement Gains and Losses has been omitted as there were no relevant transactions to report.

a. Basis of Accounting

These financial statements are prepared by management in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards for provincial reporting entities established by the Canadian Public Sector Accounting Board.

b. Measurement Uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian public sector accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reporting amounts of assets and liabilities, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities, at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of the revenues and expenses during the period. Items requiring the use of estimates include allowance for doubtful accounts, accrued liabilities and amortization.

Estimates are based on the best information available at the time of preparation of the financial statements and are reviewed annually to reflect new information as it becomes available. Measurement uncertainty exists in these financial statements. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

c. Cash

Cash is comprised of monies on deposit and is recognized at their fair value. Fair value is approximated by the instrument's initial cost in a transaction between unrelated parties.

d. Non Financial Assets

Non financial assets are not available to discharge existing liabilities and are held for use in the provision of services. They have useful lives extending beyond the current year and are not intended for sale in the ordinary course of operations.

e. Tangible Capital Assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost, which includes amounts that are directly related to the acquisition, design, construction, development, improvement or betterment of the assets. Cost includes overhead directly attributable to construction and development, as well as interest costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition or construction of the asset. Tangible capital assets are amortized over their estimated useful lives. Amortization expense is calculated using the straight-line method at the following annual rates:

Furniture and equipment 10% Computer equipment 20%

Leasehold improvements 10% or lease term

Signs and displays 10% Systems development 10%

When tangible capital assets no longer contribute to Tourism Saskatchewan's ability to provide goods and services, they are written down to residual value.

f. Revenue

Grants from governments are considered to be government transfers. Government transfers, grants and contributions are recognized as revenues when the government transfer, grant and contribution is authorized, any eligibility criteria are met, and reasonable estimates of the amounts can be made, unless the stipulations establish a liability, in which case revenue is recognized as the stipulations are met.

Other revenue, which includes partnership, sales of products and services and interest revenue, is recognized in the period in which the transactions or events occurred that give rise to the revenue.

g. Grants to Clients

Grants provided to clients for a variety of programs are recorded as an expense by Tourism Saskatchewan when it approves the transfer and the recipient meets the eligibility criteria.

h. Standards effective for the current fiscal year

Revenue (PS 3400):

Effective April 1, 2023, Tourism Saskatchewan adopted Revenue (PS 3400). The standard establishes standards on how to account for and report on revenue. Specifically, it differentiates between revenue arising from transactions that include performance obligations and transactions that do not have performance obligations. The implementation of the standard does not have an impact on Tourism Saskatchewan.

i. Future Accounting Standards

Effective April 1, 2026, the Conceptual Framework will replace PS 1000, Financial Statement Concepts, and PS 1100, Financial Statement Objectives, and includes characteristics of public sector entities, objective of financial reporting, role of financial statements and concepts of general measurement and presentation. Tourism Saskatchewan continues to assess the impact of the new standard on the financial statements.

3. BUDGET

The budget figures are presented for comparison purposes. The 2023-24 budget was accepted (subject to provincial government finalization of the operating grant), by Tourism Saskatchewan's Board of Directors on March 8, 2023.

4. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Tourism Saskatchewan's financial instruments include cash, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The carrying amount of these instruments approximate fair value due to their immediate or short-term maturity. In 2023-24, 93% (2022 – 0%) of the accounts receivable balance was due from the Government of Canada. These instruments do not have significant interest rate or credit risk.

5. CASH

Tourism Saskatchewan has access to a \$500,000 operating line of credit which is available by way of overdraft, repayable on demand with interest paid monthly, at the Scotiabank prime rate less 0.5%. During the year ended March 31, 2024, Tourism Saskatchewan did not draw on the operating line. In 2022-23, there were no draws on the operating line.

6. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

	2024	2023
Accounts Payable	\$3,717,536	\$2,284,041
Accrued Vacation	\$154,421	\$103,160
Other Accruals	83,696	81,241
	\$3,955,653	\$2,468,442

7. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	Furniture and equipment	Computer equipment and systems development	Leasehold improvements	Signs and displays	2024 Total	2023 Total
Cost	00000	100000000000	5-10-00-00-00-00-00-00-00-00-00-00-00-00-	700 OCTOO	Wood Production	
Opening Balance	\$283,844	\$1,218,666	\$1,388,832	\$75,596	\$2,966,938	\$2,966,938
Additions	212,408	38	20	-	212,408	
Write-downs		, -				
Closing Balance	496,252	1,218,666	1,388,832	75,596	3,179,346	2,966,938
Accumulated Amortization						
Opening Balance	221,376	1,182,308	1,357,672	59,003	2,820,359	2,758,616
Amortization	32,947	23,150	15,589	5,436	77,122	61,743
Write-downs		-	- 2		200	-
Closing Balance	254,323	1,205,458	1,373,261	64,439	2,897,481	2,820,359
Net Book Value	\$241,929	\$13,208	\$15,571	\$11,157	\$281,865	\$146,579

8. CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS

Tourism Saskatchewan has contractual agreements in place at March 31, 2024 which outline funding to be received over the next year for the delivery of training and other services.

Revenue next year to be received for the delivery of training and other services is estimated as follows:

2024-25 \$576,508

9. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Contractual obligations include:

Leases

Tourism Saskatchewan has entered into leases for office premises and storage space at various locations in the province.

Operational

Tourism Saskatchewan has operating agreements that enable day-to-day operations of the corporation.

Program

Tourism Saskatchewan has program-related obligations to assist Saskatchewan's tourism industry operators to market and develop quality tourism products through education and training, diversification and experience development, and marketing and event funding programs.

	Leases	Operational	Program	Total
2024-25	\$852,807	\$784,795	\$615,671	\$2,253,273
2025-26	291,090	532,271		823,361
2026-27	245,945	371,034	-	616,979
2027-28	245,945	2	2	245,945
	\$1,635,787	\$1,688,100	\$615,671	\$3,939,558

Contractual obligations do not include those contracts which are paid on a usage basis.

10. PROVINCIAL OPERATING GRANT

Tourism Saskatchewan receives grants from the General Revenue Fund out of monies appropriated by the legislature or authorized by Order in Council. In the year ended March 31, 2024, Tourism Saskatchewan received \$20,223,000 (2023 - \$19,673,000).

11. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Included in these financial statements are transactions with various Saskatchewan Crown corporations, ministries, agencies, boards and commissions related to Tourism Saskatchewan by virtue of common control by the Government of Saskatchewan and non-Crown corporations and enterprises subject to shared control by the Government of Saskatchewan (collectively referred to as "related parties").

Routine operating transactions with related parties are settled at prevailing market prices under normal trade terms. These transactions and amounts outstanding at year end are as follows:

	2024	2023
Accounts Receivable	\$69,915	\$44,658
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	100,379	69,711
Other Revenue	144,984	183,843
Expenses	1,380,534	1,257,023

Other related party transactions are disclosed elsewhere in these financial statements.

12. DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLAN

Tourism Saskatchewan participates in the Public Employees' Pension Plan (PEPP), a defined contribution plan. Tourism Saskatchewan's obligations are limited to matching contributions made by the employees, at a rate of 7.75%, for current services. In 2024, Tourism Saskatchewan contributed \$499,760 (2023 - \$453,465).

SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES

Schedule 1 - Expenses by Program For the Year Ended March 31

EXPENSES	Administration	Marketing and Communications	Destination and Workforce Development	Education and Training	2024	2023
Salaries	\$2,386,298	\$2,408,269	\$579,125	\$858,351	\$6,232,043	\$5,855,766
Benefits	499,901	440,022	95,774	147,545	1,183,242	1,073,555
Professional Services	829,593	2,731,247	148,455	1,008,869	4,718,164	3,994,549
Advertising		3,776,833	*	199,102	3,975,935	2,890,990
Promotion and Other Marketing	49,749	2,165,603	15,013	22,474	2,252,839	1,187,030
Print	-	129,496	927	1,209	131,632	108,025
Travel	36,388	158,629	64,606	27,390	287,013	228,889
Board and Committees	41,459	-			41,459	25,548
Rent and Equipment Purchases	841,864	6,237	*	11,075	859,176	934,469
Supplies and Services	820,075	44,225	4,707	20,927	889,934	731,260
Other Related Business Expenses	91,685	240,844	30,896	60,713	424,138	205,033
Depreciation	77,122		-		77,122	61,743
Grants	2,681	1,393,946	1,446,597	319,287	3,162,511	6,087,759
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,676,815	\$13,495,351	\$2,386,100	\$2,676,942	\$24,235,208	\$23,384,616

Additional corporate information is available on **Business.TourismSaskatchewan.com**. Contact Tourism Saskatchewan at 306-787-9600, or email **feedback@tourismsask.com**.

