

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Thursday, May 1, 2008**

**MEETING PLANNERS SHOWCASE 2008 AT THE GRAND THEATRE**

Kingston, ON: Tourism Kingston's Meeting & Conference Advisory Committee are busy planning an exciting and informative showcase event to bring meeting planners to Kingston this spring.

The Showcase takes place on Thursday, May 8, 2008 from 2:30-5:30pm and will feature local delicacies and exhibits featuring Kingston tourism partners. Over 800 planners have been invited to attend and see all that Kingston has to offer. This "one-stop shop" for planners will feature meeting locations/venues, hotels, restaurants and attractions, all the components of a successful conference.

Erin Finucan, Chair of the Meeting & Conference Advisory Committee, says "I am excited to be in the position to showcase the new Grand Theatre and the K-Rock Centre as world-class facilities to meeting planners from across Ontario. I am confident that over the next few years the economic impact of both the renovation and new build will show direct results on the growth of the Meetings and Conference market. In fact, once planners see the combined caliber of both facilities and revisit our extensive repertoire of attractions and venues, Kingston will be added to their conference agendas".

Connie Markle, Conference & Travel Trade Manager adds, "The meeting and conference market is very important to Kingston. The direct revenue from conferences in Kingston in 2007 was estimated at \$15 million and that is not including indirect economic spin-off to restaurants, stores and other businesses frequented by the delegates. We take our role and our responsibility as conference hosts seriously. Exceeding expectations and offering top-drawer customer service is paramount to the cities continued economic growth and success in these markets".

Tourism Kingston, a division of the Kingston Economic Development Corporation, will continue to target key demographic & geographic markets to build and strengthen relationships with tourism stakeholders to promote the city's value as a conference destination.

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