

# we are kingston!

Kingston's voice for Business since 1841



April 2026 • Year 2 #6



CELEBRATING

# 185

YEARS

Influence • Connect • Support

# CHANGING THE GAME:

## REFER A BUSINESS TO WIN

Know someone who should be part of The Chamber? **Invite them to join!**

Each new member strengthens our local business network and creates more opportunities for everyone, including you.

Refer a member and enjoy a **free week of advertising** on our website and in our newsletters.

**It's simple: Refer. Reward. Repeat.**



CELEBRATING

**185**  
YEARS

 [info@kingstonchamber.ca](mailto:info@kingstonchamber.ca)

 613-548-4453

# CEO's Message: More Voices. More Impact. More Momentum.



Something exciting is happening at the Chamber, and it starts with you.

Our membership is growing, and with that growth comes something even more powerful than numbers: momentum. Every new member adds a fresh perspective, a new connection, and another voice at the table. Together, that's what fuels a stronger, more resilient business community here in Kingston.

Because when we show up together, we're not just networking, we're shaping what comes next.

From workforce challenges to economic development and everything in between, our advocacy is driven by real conversations with our members. It's your experiences, your insights, and your priorities that guide the work we do every day. And when we bring those voices forward—locally, provincially, and nationally, they carry weight.

That's the power of a connected business community.

Through our partnerships with the Ontario and Canadian Chambers of Commerce, Kingston's voice doesn't just stay local, it helps inform decisions and influence change on a much broader stage.

And here's the thing: the more we grow, the stronger that voice becomes.

More members mean more ideas. More collaboration. More opportunity to support one another and build something bigger than any one business alone.

Whether it's through committees, events, or those quick but meaningful conversations, it all adds up to a community that's engaged, informed, and ready to move forward.

So as we continue to grow, one thing stays the same, our focus on connection, collaboration, and impact.

Thank you for being part of it.

Because this isn't just membership, it's momentum.

## KAREN CROSS

Editor & CEO

## STAFF



**Karen Cross**

Chief Executive Officer



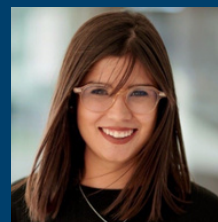
**Vitor Brumatti**

Communications, PR & Member Experience Specialist



**Zermaan Khan**

Business Development & Member Success



**Alejandra Bouza**

Membership & Events Coordinator

# a message from the Board Chair



It is my privilege to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors for the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce. Our city is home to a diverse, resilient, and engaged business community, and I'm grateful for the trust placed in me to help support the Chamber's important work during the year ahead.

My connection to the Chamber is not new. Earlier in my career, I had the opportunity to serve as the General Manager of a small business, Absolute Comedy, and it was through that role that I first became involved with the Chamber and its membership. As a small business operator, I experienced firsthand the value of belonging to an organization that provides a place where owners and leaders can learn from one another and build meaningful connections. That early experience left a lasting impression on me and helped shape my appreciation for the role the Chamber plays in our community.

Over the past decade, that appreciation has continued to grow through my work with **Diamond Hotels**, where I've had the opportunity to build a long-term career while remaining closely connected to Kingston's business community. Diamond Hotels has been an engaged Chamber member, and working within an organization that values collaboration, community involvement, and long-term investment has reinforced for me how important it is for businesses to stay connected and contribute locally.

What continues to stand out about Kingston is the strong sense of collaboration across the business landscape. From entrepreneurs and independent operators to larger employers and institutions, there is a shared commitment to making Kingston a great place to do business. The Chamber is at the centre of that collaboration - bringing people together, amplifying business voices, and creating opportunities for connection and growth.

As Chair, one of my key priorities is connection. I plan to meet with as many members as possible throughout my term, listening to their stories and learning about their challenges and successes. Whether through Chamber events, committee work, or informal conversations, these interactions matter. They help ensure the Chamber remains relevant, responsive, and aligned with the real needs of our members.

At its core, the Chamber is about people. Businesses thrive when relationships are strong - when there is trust, communication, and a shared vision for the future of our city. When businesses, institutions, and community partners work together, Kingston is stronger. My focus is on helping foster those connections while ensuring the Chamber continues to deliver practical value through advocacy and engagement.

I'm looking forward to the year ahead and to connecting with Kingstonians across the business community. If you see me at an event or around the city, I hope you'll take a moment to introduce yourself (and if you mention the Sens, Raptors, Jays, or running, we may be talking for a while!). These conversations matter, and they help guide the work we do as a Chamber. I'm excited for what lies ahead for Kingston's business community!

## **BRIAN HOPE**

2026-2027 Board Chair  
Regional Director of Sales, Diamond  
Hotels Management Inc.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Brian Hope**  
[Chair]

Regional Director of Sales, Diamond Hotels Management Inc.



**Bittu George**  
[Vice Chair]

President, Friends of the Penitentiary Museum



**Kent Williams**  
[Past Chair]

Legal Counsel, Empire Life



**Rob Adams**  
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Chief Executive Officer, YMCA of Eastern Ontario



**Andrew Creese**  
[Board Member]

Head of Real Estate and Investments, Modern Niagara



**Sunita Gupta**  
[Board Member]

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Consultant, Co-Founder, I2C Immigration Consulting



**Jeff Hewitt**  
[Board Member]

Founder, Venture Growth Co.



**Sahiza Hossenbaccus**  
[Board Member]

President & CFO, SnapCab Canada



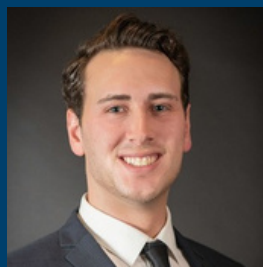
**Andy Larin**  
[Board Member]

CEO and CTO, allCare I.T.



**Katie Lockridge**  
[Board Member]

CEO, Founder and Head Planner, The Vowstead Wedding & Event Agency



**Andrew Martin**  
[Board Member]

Director of Construction & Real Estate Development, Martin Group



**Jose Ribau**  
[Board Member]

Founder & CEO, R5 Innovations



**Samantha Rogers**  
[Board Member]

Chief People Officer, EZ STAK

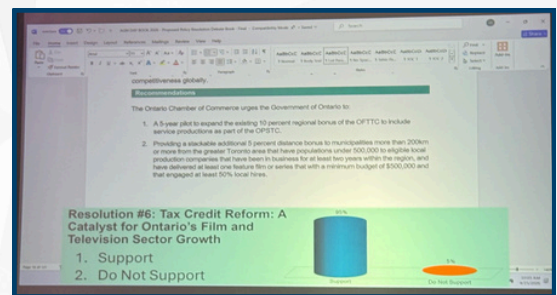
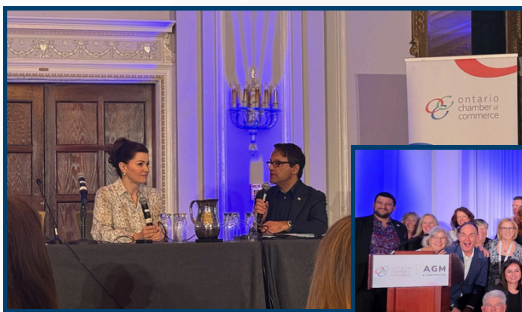
# AGM & CONVENTION

April 23 - 25, 2026

- Ontario Connected: Business Without Barriers -



The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce took Kingston's business voice to the provincial stage at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting & Convention, held April 23-25 in Ottawa. Representing the organization, CEO Karen Cross and Director of Business Development Zerman Khan engaged with chamber leaders from across Ontario, advancing the priorities and perspectives of the local business community. Through its presented resolution, the Chamber reinforced its commitment to championing policies that support business growth, strengthen key sectors, and unlock new opportunities for members. "By bringing forward the voices of our local business community, we are helping shape policies that foster long-term economic growth and resilience," said Cross. The Chamber's participation also helped strengthen connections and collaboration across the province, building relationships that will continue to benefit Kingston's business community.



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# The Case for a More Ambitious Kingston

Kingston is a city built on knowledge. Health care, education, the military, corrections — these institutions form the backbone of our economy and have given us something many cities would envy: stability. Through recessions and market swings, Kingston has held steady. But stability, left unchallenged, quietly becomes complacency. And complacency is the most dangerous threat a community can face, because it arrives dressed as comfort.

Let's be honest about who we are. Our customers are patients, prisoners, soldiers, and students. Our economy is significantly overweight on government employment relative to the private sector. That imbalance has sheltered us, but it has also shaped a culture that leans risk-averse — a city more inclined to protect what it has than to pursue what it could become. If we want a more prosperous community, we must decide to compete and win new revenue for our businesses. This is a call to action for Kingston's business leaders: we need to raise our ambition.

The world is not going to come knocking on our door. We have to go out and compete. We must sell more of our services and goods beyond our borders, beyond our province, and beyond our country. When we earn increasingly global revenue, we earn something even more valuable than profit: the privilege of choosing to buy Canadian and the opportunity to invest in Kingston, Canada's Hometown.

That is how you build a resilient community, not by relying on a couple of employers or a government funding cycle, but by creating businesses that thrive because the world wants what we offer. Kingston has the raw ingredients. We have one of the most educated populations in the country, a research corridor anchored by Queen's University, Kingston Health Sciences Centre, Royal Military College, and St. Lawrence College. We have a quality of life that can attract talented people. What we lack is not capability. It is the collective will, the burning desire, to think bigger.

Building a better future means choosing growth over comfort. It means a business owner asking not just "How do I serve my local market?" but "How do I compete internationally?" It means pursuing new markets and accepting that failure is the price of ambition. Being a Kingstonian means you just live here, and perhaps only for a short time, maybe just passing through. A Kingstonist is actively building our shared home — ambitiously, and for the long term.

It also means supporting one another in that pursuit. Organizations like the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce exist to connect us, but connection without action is just pleasant conversation. We need to hold each other accountable to bolder goals and celebrate the entrepreneur who swings for the fences and brings home new revenue to our community.

Kingston's stability is a gift. But a gift unspent is a gift wasted.

The decisions we make now to diversify, to export, to compete, to take calculated risks will determine whether this city simply endures or truly thrives. We owe it to ourselves, and to future generations, to choose ambition.

It is time to be a Kingstonist.



**A.J. Keilty**  
*President & CEO, Keilty Realty Management Inc.*

# Building Better Together:

## *Innovation, Collaboration, and Opportunity in Construction*

Innovation is often described in terms of technology, disruption, or efficiency. Yet at its core, innovation is fundamentally human.

In the construction industry innovation is often associated with new technologies, materials, or advanced project delivery methods. While these elements are important, the most meaningful innovation is ultimately about people—how teams collaborate, adapt, and work together to build better outcomes. At Modern Niagara, we do not view innovation as simply adopting the latest tools, but as a continuous effort to connect people through progress and create opportunities across projects, partners, and communities.

Construction has traditionally been a fragmented industry. Designers, engineers, trades, and owners often operate within separate silos, each contributing their expertise at different stages of a project. Increasingly, however, the industry is recognizing that better results emerge when collaboration begins earlier and continues throughout the entire lifecycle of a project.

Integrated project delivery, digital modeling, and data-driven decision making are helping to bring teams together in new ways. These tools enable more transparent communication and allow challenges to be solved collectively rather than sequentially.

Our approach to innovation reflects this shift. Rather than focusing solely on technological advancement, we place equal emphasis on operational and cultural innovation. Digital tools such as building information modeling and prefabrication techniques improve precision and efficiency, but their true value lies in how they bring people together. Engineers, tradespeople, project managers, and clients are able to visualize and coordinate complex systems before construction even begins, reducing uncertainty and strengthening collaboration.

Operational innovation also plays a key role. Modern Niagara has embraced delivery models that emphasize partnership and early engagement, allowing multidisciplinary teams to contribute ideas at the outset of a project.



When mechanical, electrical, and technology specialists work closely with designers and constructors from the beginning, the result is often more efficient buildings, reduced waste, and stronger alignment with client objectives.

Equally important is the cultural dimension of innovation. Within a complex and safety-critical industry like construction, trust and communication are essential. Encouraging teams to share ideas, question established practices, and learn from experience helps create an environment where innovation can thrive. By fostering this mindset, we believe it supports not only better project outcomes but also professional growth for the people involved.

Ultimately, innovation in construction is most powerful when it strengthens human connections. Technology and new methodologies provide the tools, but progress depends on the willingness of people to collaborate, adapt, and work toward shared goals.

By focusing on both the technical and human sides of innovation, Modern Niagara demonstrates how progress in the built environment can open new opportunities—bringing together diverse expertise to deliver projects that serve communities today while preparing them for the future.



**Andrew Creese,**  
*VP, Real Estate and Investments, Modern Niagara Group*

# More Than a Storefront:

## *How Local Retail Strengthens Communities*

I've been part of the Kingston community since our Giant Tiger store opened in August 2019, and it has been an incredible journey.

I come from more than 30 years of experience in retail, but Giant Tiger is uniquely different. The franchise model gave me an opportunity I never thought I would have the chance to own my own business.

At Giant Tiger, we're known as Canada's place to save more money, and that's something my team and I take very seriously. Our goal is to make shopping affordable for families by offering the low prices on everyday essentials. Whether it's groceries, clothing, or home decor, we want our customers to know they can count on us for value.

But for me, being a store owner is about more than retail, it's about being part of the community I serve every day.

Supporting local businesses matters because they are deeply connected to the people they serve. When customers choose to shop locally, they're not just making a purchase, they're supporting jobs, local initiatives, and organizations that make their community stronger. As a locally owned store, we can give back in ways that directly impact Kingston, and that's something I take pride in.

Retail can play a meaningful role in building community connections. A store can be more than a place to shop, it can be a place where people feel welcome, neighbours run into each other, and businesses support organizations making a difference locally. For me, that sense of connection is just as important as the products we sell.

Giving back is very important to me and my team. Each week, we donate to organizations like Partners in Mission Food Bank, Lionshearts, and Loving Hands Kingston, supporting them with financial contributions, food, and merchandise donations.

But supporting the community is about more than writing cheques. Many of the ways we give back are shaped by conversations with our customers and by listening to what matters most to them. That helps us focus our support on local organizations that are making a difference in Kingston.

We also support several community initiatives, including the Annual Kids4Kids Hockey Tournament, the Inclusion Playground, Easter Seals, and BGC Kingston. Being involved allows us to stay connected to the people and causes that matter most in our community.

One of the things I'm most passionate about is supporting young people entering the workforce. I work closely with local schools to bring in Co-op students, many of whom are getting their very first job experience.

It's amazing to watch these students grow. Many start with us at the beginning of their high school careers and stay with our Giant Tiger family through graduation and sometimes into college. Seeing their confidence build and their skills develop is incredibly rewarding.

For me, it's more than running a store. It's about creating a place where customers can save money, young people gain valuable experience, and we can give back to the community that we proudly serve.

Being able to do all of that in Kingston is something I'm proud of every day.



**Jennifer Boutilier**  
Store Owner, Giant Tiger Kingston

# Your Community Is Your Content Strategy

Local businesses have something no national brand can manufacture. Many of them have no idea how valuable it is.

There's a version of marketing where your customer is a stranger in another city who doesn't know you exist and has no reason to care. I've done that work. It requires enormous reach and significant budget. When your customer could be anyone, anywhere, you must go find them.

Local businesses don't work that way. Treating them like they do is costing people money.

I've spent years working in digital marketing. Most of my clients didn't find me online. They heard about me through a conversation or referral first, then looked me up afterward. And yet most business owners come to me convinced their problem is digital. What they actually need is for more people in their community to know they exist.

This isn't a universal argument. It doesn't apply if you're building something meant to scale beyond your region. But if your customers live and work in the same community you do, the rules are different. In local markets, trust rarely forms through algorithms. It happens when a neighbour or friend recommends a contractor, a café, or a gym, and that's when a phone is pulled out to search for you.

And when they do, they're not researching. They're confirming what they've already heard.

They do want to see a website that looks professional. Contact information that's easy to find. Social media that signals the business is active and real. But your digital presence isn't your first impression. It's your proof. The internet is where people verify your reputation. Your community is where you build it.

# CONTENT STRATEGY

National brands spend enormous budgets trying to appear local. You already own everything those brands are trying to buy. Yet many local businesses spend their budgets chasing impressions.

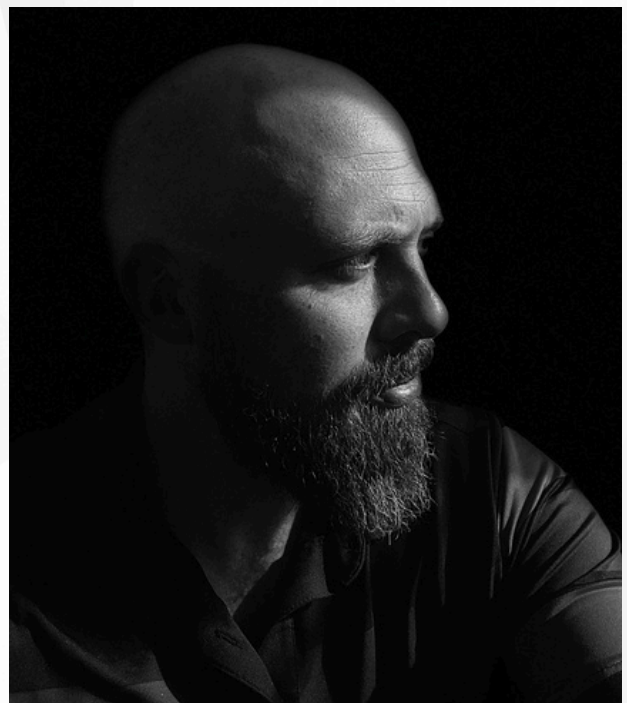
That reach feels like marketing. It isn't. It's vanity. And vanity media is where local marketing budgets go to die.

The businesses that figure this out share something in common. They stop trying to be seen and start making sure they're known. The approach is simpler than most expect. Here's where to start:

- Introduce yourself in person to the businesses nearest yours that serve the same customers.
- Sponsor or support something hyperlocal. A community team, a school event, a neighbourhood initiative.
- Host a small event and put yourself at the centre of it. Bring together people who should know one another.

When you do these things, capture them. Real moments, documented well, are worth more than any campaign you could buy. That's your content strategy.

When your community knows you, digital marketing can do what it does best. It reinforces and reassures. You live here. You work here. That's not a limitation. That's your edge.



**Jeff Hewitt**  
Founder, Venture Growth Co.

# Planning for Tomorrow:

## *Practical Perspectives on Retirement Readiness*

Ever since tax-deferred retirement strategies took off in the 1970s, the adage “tax deferred is tax preferred” has stuck with investors and advisors alike—and for good reason. Contributing to an RRSP gives you an immediate tax break, lets your money grow without annual tax drag, and defers the tax bill until retirement, when many are in a lower bracket. It’s a win: investors have more cash flow today while building for tomorrow. But it’s not one-size-fits-all. For some, too much success in tax-deferred saving can lead to higher taxes later or even OAS clawbacks.

In the 1970s and 1980s, defined benefit (DB) pension plans, which guarantee a set retirement income, were standard in Canada’s private sector. Starting in the 1980s, employers shifted toward defined contribution (DC) plans and group RRSPs, where the ultimate financial outcome depends on contributions and market returns.

Private-sector DB coverage dropped from about 86% in the mid-1990s to 73% by 2006, and around 40% by the 2010s. Today, DB remains strong in the public sector, but most private workers rely on DC plans, personal RRSPs, or TFSAs. The “tax deferred is tax preferred” idea helped motivate saving and risk-taking, especially as markets grew.

Then came the Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) in 2009. It’s the opposite of deferral: you contribute after-tax dollars, grow everything tax-free, and withdraw anytime without tax. For someone eligible (i.e. 18 or over and a Canadian resident) since 2009 who’s never contributed, room as of 2026 tops \$109,000, with tax-free growth and inheritance benefits. It’s a game-changer for retirement, emergencies, or estate planning. Even so, many clients still ask, “RRSP or TFSA?”

# RETIREMENT

The answer? It depends. Here are simple rules of thumb:

- Choose TFSA first if you're in a low/middle tax bracket now, expect similar or higher taxes in retirement, want flexibility (for home purchase or emergencies, for example), or need to protect income-tested benefits like OAS/GIS; or
- Choose RRSP first if you're in a high bracket now (get that tax deduction), expect to pay lower taxes later, have an employer match, or are focused purely on retirement.

Most Canadian investors use both for diversification. When I sit with clients, we delve into:

- What does your ideal retirement look like – lots of travel, home downsizing, helping adult kids?
- What will this vision of retirement cost?
- What do you already have in place (pension, group RRSP, personal RRSP)?
- Will your investments be enough, or is there a gap for us to close tax-efficiently?
- Have you saved so well that OAS clawback is now a risk?

Beyond maximizing the dollars, retirement planning often considers significant others in people's lives who are sharing that retirement lifestyle: blended families, for example, might find a spousal trust to be a suitable option to secure a new partner's comfort while protecting the inheritance of children from prior marriages. Whatever your vision, start planning now to avoid regrets later. Let's connect, review your situation, and build a plan that fits you perfectly.



**Sean May CFP, CIM, FCSI**  
**CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER, IG Wealth**  
**Management Inc. Mutual Fund Division**

# THIS IS US



CELEBRATING  
**185**  
YEARS

## Influence

- 1 Access to all three levels of government
- 2 Your voice in action—advocating for a thriving business community

## Connect

- 3 Offer 60+ unique engagement opportunities annually
- 4 Increase your brand visibility

## Support

- 5 Provide relevant business resources and tools
- 6 Contribute to building the unique local economy



*Working for Kingston businesses since 1841*

Has your employee benefits plan evolved?  
Is it time for a second opinion?

## Chambers Plan Employee Benefits



## Real benefits for your business

**The employee benefits of tomorrow, today.** Simple to use, but strong on features, **Chambers Plan** is trusted by more than 30,000 businesses. Every plan includes convenient access to free, world-class services that support the health of your business and the well-being of your employees.



### Stable rates

You are not alone. Chambers Plan connects over 30,000 Canadian businesses to help everyone's premiums remain manageable and predictable. **Chambers Plan's** average renewal over the last decade has been 3.9%.



### Simple and easy

Our online administration tool, *my-benefits*®, lets you manage your benefit program with quick set-up, easy-to-use forms, and simple administration. Your employees can also go online or use our mobile app to review their coverage and usage, and to submit their claims.



### 24-Hour medical support

All Chambers Plans Extended Health options include access to Teladoc® telemedicine services at no additional cost. Your employees can consult with a certified physician on non-urgent medical issues within one hour, 24/7, anywhere in Canada and the U.S.



### Business Assistance Services

You don't need to be an expert in everything. Every Plan includes free access to professional accounting, legal and human resource experts, who understand the challenges business owners face, along with an extensive library of HR materials.



### Tailored to team members

Chambers Plan Health Spending Accounts can add flexibility to your benefits program, providing your employees support with their unique health and dental costs. It meets their needs and expectations while keeping you in control of your costs.



### All the essentials, and so much more

**Chambers Plan** includes all employee benefits you expect from health to disability and dental to critical illness. But additionally, your employees gain access to Teladoc Medical Experts, and you get access to resources and telephone advice for HR, legal, and financial decisions.

For more information, or to request a quote, please visit [ChamberPlan.ca](https://ChamberPlan.ca).



# Influence

## STOP IN KINGSTON

The Chamber Advocates for Southern Alto Route with a Stop in Kingston  
The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce has been advocating for a southerly Alto high-speed rail route that includes a stop in Kingston, working alongside municipal, provincial, and federal partners to position the region within this major national infrastructure project. Reliable rail access is critical to business growth, workforce mobility, and long-term economic competitiveness, and the Chamber has encouraged engagement from the business community to help ensure the final route reflects the needs of Eastern Ontario.

**HAVE YOUR SAY:**  
ADVOCATE FOR A SOUTHERN ALTO ROUTE WITH A STOP IN KINGSTON

COMMENT ON THE INTERACTIVE MAPPING TOOL | COMPLETE THE ONLINE SURVEY | SUBMIT A WRITTEN BRIEF OR LETTER (ACCOUNT REQUIRED)

**The Chamber** Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce  
CELEBRATING 185 YEARS

## BUSINESS LEADERS ADVOCATE FOR A STOP IN KINGSTON

**A. J. Keilty**  
Kelly Realty Management Inc.

**The Chamber** Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce  
CELEBRATING 185 YEARS

**J. Joly**  
Branded to Film

**The Chamber** Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce  
CELEBRATING 185 YEARS

To support this advocacy, the Chamber has developed a social media campaign featuring testimonials from local business leaders that highlight the importance of a southern Alto route with a stop in Kingston. Through a series of videos and quotes, members have shared firsthand perspectives on how high speed rail would drive investment, support industry growth, and connect Kingston to broader markets, reinforcing the collective voice of the business community at a critical moment in the decision making process.

# MP MEETING



On March 4, 2026, Kent Williams, 2025/2026 Chair of the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce, and CEO Karen Cross met with MP Mark Gerretsen to discuss the critical importance of dedicated rail service for Kingston and the surrounding region. Dedicated rail infrastructure has the potential to be a transformative investment for our community, improving connectivity, strengthening the movement of people between major economic centers, and positioning Kingston to attract new business, talent, and investment. Reliable and enhanced rail service would play an important role in supporting continued economic growth and expanding opportunities for businesses across the region.

# 2026 ONTARIO BUDGET SUBMISSION

2026 Ontario Budget comes at a crucial time for both Ontario and Canada. As the voice of Kingston's business community in our advocacy with the provincial government, the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce is focused on ensuring local businesses can remain competitive, attract talent, and grow in an increasingly uncertain economic environment.

ontario chamber of commerce

## 2026 Ontario Budget Submission

Read our recommendations

The Chamber  
Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce

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# City Council

## Advocating for Kingston's Business Community in 2025 & 2026

### The Chamber's Statement on City Council Decisions (December 2025 – February 2026).

Between December 2025 and February 2026, Kingston City Council considered 15 discussions related to issues of importance to Kingston's business community, including housing, land use planning, infrastructure, environmental policy, and major economic development initiatives. Collectively, these discussions reflect Council's continued role in shaping the conditions for investment, workforce development, and long-term economic resilience in Kingston.

To support transparency for our members, the Chamber continues to apply a simple classification system when reviewing Council decisions. Measures that clearly support business growth and economic competitiveness are identified in **green**. Items with mixed or uncertain impacts, or those requiring further monitoring, are noted in **yellow**. Decisions that conflict with business priorities or risk undermining Kingston's economic environment are identified as **red**.

During this reporting period, the Chamber notes that all 15 Council discussions align with the green category, reflecting outcomes that support Kingston companies and the local economy. Several decisions advanced economic development and workforce growth, including investments in tourism infrastructure, rural economic programming, and the development of a new life sciences research facility.

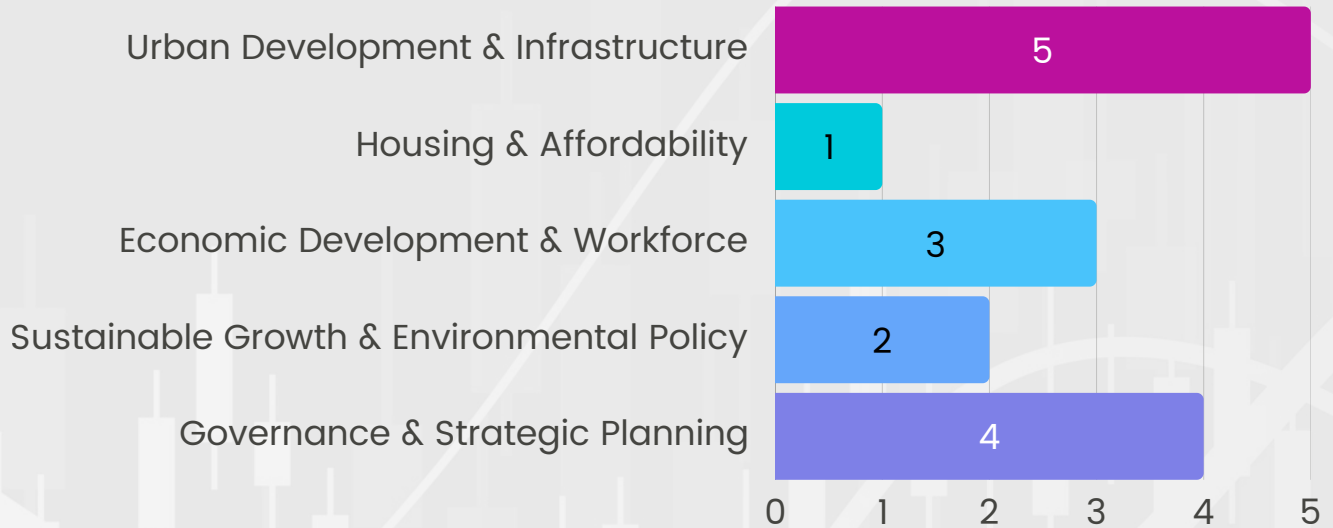
Council also addressed urban development and infrastructure priorities, such as zoning approvals to enable residential and mixed-use development, support for regional high-speed rail connectivity, and streamlined authority for infrastructure agreements. These discussions are important for facilitating growth, improving connectivity, and supporting future investment opportunities.

From a housing and community perspective, Council approved measures to expand transitional housing capacity, addressing workforce stability and affordability challenges. The Chamber also recognizes the importance of environmental and sustainability-related decisions, including improved oversight of recycling services and the integration of ecological considerations into major development frameworks.

Taken together, the December to February decisions represent a constructive period of policymaking that aligns with the interests of Kingston businesses while supporting broader community and environmental objectives. The Chamber acknowledges Council's efforts to advance policies that promote growth, certainty, and competitiveness.

As the voice of Kingston's business community, the Chamber will continue to monitor City Council discussions, engage with decision-makers, and advocate for policies that ensure Kingston remains a strong place to do business, invest, and grow.

## The business issues most discussed and voted on by the City Council from December 2025 to February 2026



## Breakdown of topics discussed by the City Council from December 2025 to February 2026

### Urban Development & Infrastructure

- **Steam Plant Property Exchange** (Dec 2, 2025) – Land exchange with Queen’s to support infrastructure coordination and planning.
- **Zoning Amendment (3039 Princess St.)** (Dec 2, 2025) – Zoning change approved to allow proposed property development.
- **Infrastructure Agreement Authority Delegation** (Feb 17, 2026) – Staff authorized to approve infrastructure agreements within approved budgets.
- **Zoning Amendment (525 & 555 Princess St.)** (Feb 17, 2026) – Approved redevelopment zoning and pedestrian bridge connection.
- **Alto High-Speed Rail Support** (Feb 17, 2026) – Council backs rail route if Kingston station is included.

## Housing & Affordability

- **Queen Mary Road Transitional Housing** (Dec 2, 2025) – Approved 35-bed transitional housing program to address homelessness.

## Economic Development & Workforce

- **MAT Renewal & Arena Scoreboard Funding** (Dec 2, 2025) – Renewed tourism tax and funded arena scoreboard upgrade.
- **Rural Community Funding (Samsung Program)** (Feb 17, 2026 ) – Funding approved for rural programs, grants, and outreach.
- **Wet Lab Project (Tri-Colour Labs)** (Feb 17, 2026 ) – Funding supports new life sciences research facility.

## Sustainable Growth & Environmental Policy

- **St. Lawrence Business Park Framework** (Feb 17, 2026 ) – Expansion plan integrates development and ecological corridor.
- **Recycling Program Oversight Motion** (Feb 17, 2026 ) – Urged improvements to recycling collection and communication.

## Governance & Strategic Planning

- **Municipal Borrowing By-Law (2026)** (Dec 16, 2025) – Authorized short-term borrowing to manage city cash flow.
- **2026 Fees and Charges By-Law** (Dec 16, 2025) – Set updated fees for permits, services, and programs.
- **Asset Management Plan Update** (Dec 16, 2025) – Updated long-term infrastructure planning and funding strategy.
- **Purchase of 60 Rigney Street** (Feb 3, 2026) – Approved property purchase for municipal use and service consolidation.

# Voting records between September and November 2025 on business issues



**MAYOR BRYAN PATERSON**  
Mayor



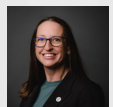
**COUNCILLOR GARY OOSTERHOF**  
District 1, Countryside



**COUNCILLOR PAUL CHAVES**  
District 2, Loyalist-Cataraqui



**COUNCILLOR LISA OSANIC**  
District 3, Collins-Bayridge



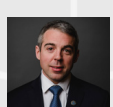
**COUNCILLOR WENDY STEPHEN**  
District 4, Lakeside



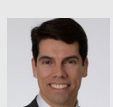
**COUNCILLOR DON AMOS**  
District 5, Portsmouth



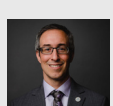
**COUNCILLOR JIMMY HASSAN**  
District 6, Trillium



**COUNCILLOR BRANDON TOZZO**  
District 7, Kingscourt-Rideau



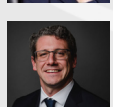
**COUNCILLOR JEFF MCLAREN**  
District 8, Meadowbrook  
-Strathcona



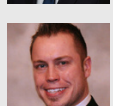
**COUNCILLOR VINCENT CINANNI**  
District 9, Williamsville



**COUNCILLOR CONNY GLENN**  
District 10, Sydenham



**COUNCILLOR GREGORY RIDGE**  
District 11, King's Town



**COUNCILLOR RYAN BOEHME**  
District 12, Pittsburgh

	In Favour	Against	Absent
MAYOR BRYAN PATERSON	15	0	0
COUNCILLOR GARY OOSTERHOF	15	0	0
COUNCILLOR PAUL CHAVES	8	0	7
COUNCILLOR LISA OSANIC	14	1	0
COUNCILLOR WENDY STEPHEN	15	0	0
COUNCILLOR DON AMOS	14	0	1
COUNCILLOR JIMMY HASSAN	7	1	7
COUNCILLOR BRANDON TOZZO	15	0	0
COUNCILLOR JEFF MCLAREN	10	2	3
COUNCILLOR VINCENT CINANNI	15	0	0
COUNCILLOR CONNY GLENN	14	1	0
COUNCILLOR GREGORY RIDGE	15	0	0
COUNCILLOR RYAN BOEHME	14	0	1

# Connect

STATE OF THE CITY | Jan. 13th, 2026



connect



Chamber  
on tap



Monthly



Monthly

COFFEE & CONNECTIONS  
*with the Chamber*

we are kingston!

The background features a large, bright green triangle on the right side, set against a black background with a bokeh effect of golden light spots. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

**K** KINGSTON  
BUSINESS  
AWARDS

# SAVE THE DATE

MAY 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026

[CLICK HERE](#)  
[AND GET](#)  
[YOUR TICKETS!](#)

# KINGSTON BUSINESS AWARDS

## MEET THE NOMINEES 2026

May 21st  
Isabel Bader Centre  
for the Performing Arts

### HOSPITALITY AWARD

- Double Tree / Home2 Suites by Hilton Kingston & Ambassador Event Centre
- Kebab 44
- Kingston Burger Company
- Qdoba Mexican Eats

### SOCIAL IMPACT AWARD

- 98.3 FLY FM
- CTS
- Empire Life
- Enabled Talent
- St. Lawrence Youth Association
- The Keep Refillery Kingston
- Tomlinson Group

### ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

- André Dénomée of ADARE Property Management
- Denise Bertrim of L'Amour Catering Kingston
- Holly Ryan of Art by Holly Ryan
- JC of LevelUp Barber Studio
- Katrina Kryza of Thrifty Girl
- Laura Campbell of Stride Academy
- Martha Williams of Pedal Works Café & Studios

### SKILLED TRADES AWARD

- AOG HELISERVICES INC
- Dion Fire Extinguishers Ltd.
- Metal Craft Marine
- Paint Beast
- Sangers Inc
- Shades of Green Landscaping

### NEW BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

- Alicia Marie Photography
- BridgePoint Law Professional Corporation
- DoorStep Dental Inc
- Loads of Fun! Laundromat
- Loyalist Concierge Co.
- Norm's Golf & Social
- Studio 88
- The Vowstead wedding & event agency

# KINGSTON BUSINESS AWARDS

May 21st  
Isabel Bader Centre  
for the Performing Arts

## MEET THE NOMINEES 2026

### BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD

- Maureen McCartney of Keller Williams (KW) Inspire Realty
- Patrick Egbunonu of Informanos
- Jonathan of JD Physiotherapy Clinics
- Catherine Ballow of GS Manufacturing

### CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AWARD

- Allegra Marketing Print Mail - Kingston
- Athletico Sports Physiotherapy
- Boarding Pass Travel
- Budget Backdrops and Décor
- Italo-Canadian Club of Kingston
- Jazzy Pet Grooming Studio
- New Day Marketing Co.
- Sean May CFP®, CIM®, FCSI®
- The Boat Warehouse

### EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

- BluMetric
- CH Cleaning Services
- Cityflats
- Hülpr Inc.
- Lakeview Dental

### NON PROFIT AWARD

- Habitat for Humanity Kingston Limestone Region
- Kingston Canadian Film Festival
- Lionhearts
- Ryandale Transitional Housing
- Well Suited Kingston

### ARTS & CULTURE AWARD

- Canadian Museum of Health Care
- Cantabile Choirs of Kingston
- SISTEMA Kingston

# PROMOTIONAL VIDEO CONTENT CREATION



## PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO PRODUCTION SERVICES

**PROMO VIDEOS**  
EVENT HIGHLIGHT VIDEOS

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT  
**EXPLAINER VIDEOS & MORE!**

# CELEBRATING THE BUSINESSES POWERING OUR 2026 PROGRAMMING!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO STRENGTHENING KINGSTON'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY.



TEMPLEMAN



Certified Repairs | Dalton Ave

# Partnership Opportunities 2026

A programming  
with unique  
opportunities to  
promote your brand!

Expand your  
network and achieve  
your business goals  
for 2026.

Highlight your  
business to the  
entire Kingston  
community

## READY TO START GROWING?

Become a Greater Kingston Chamber of  
Commerce partner today.

**Contact our team!**



613-484-3334



info@kingstonchamber.ca



www.kingstonchamber.ca



CELEBRATING  
**185**  
YEARS

# Grand Openings

## Grand Opening



📍 277 J Bath Road, Kingston, ON

🌐 <https://casawood.ca/>

☎️ (343) 302-7154

## Rebranding



CANADIAN MUSEUM OF  
**HEALTH CARE**

📍 32 George Street, Kingston, ON

🌐 <https://www.museumofhealthcare.ca/>

☎️ (613) 548-2419

# New Members

January, February & March 2026

## **Air Canada**

www.aircanada.com  
(888) 247-2262

## **AMTEX Digital**

amtexdigital.com  
(613) 776-1273

## **Applied Psychology Centre**

www.apcentre.com  
(613) 542-7246

## **Boston Pizza Gardiners Road**

bostonpizza.com/en/locations/kingston.html  
(647) 882-0896

## **Brainstim Health**

brainstim.ca  
(866) 999-7846

## **Buyer Behavior Inc.**

www.buyerbehaviorinc.com  
(343) 333-5344

## **Casa Wood Studio Inc**

casawood.ca  
(343) 302-7154

## **CH Cleaning Services**

www.chcleaningservices.ca  
(343) 344-3093

## **Columbus Cafe & Co**

columbuscafe.ca  
(416) 428-3177

## **COSTCO Wholesale**

www.costco.ca  
(613) 549-2527

## **Cresa Ottawa**

www.cresa.com/Locations/North-America/Ontario-Canada/Ottawa-ON  
(613) 688-7200

## **DoorStep Dental Inc**

www.doorstepdentalinc.com  
(226) 507-2464

## **Elite Franchising Corp.**

elitewindowcleaning.ca/kingston  
(613) 329-5306

## **Hyssop Touch Inc**

hyssoptouch.com  
(343) 580-5268

## **IG Wealth Management - Kingston Quinte Isles**

www.ig.ca/en  
(613) 888-7263

## **Informanix Technology Group Inc.**

www.informanix.com  
(343) 668-9770

## **Kanata Elite R&C Services**

www.kercsolutions.com  
(647) 451-6752

## **Kim Purcell - Kingston Real Estate Agent**

www.kimpurcell.ca  
(613) 985-9371

## **Kingston Animal Rescue**

kingstonanimalrescue.com  
(613) 484-2387

## **Limestone Media & Entertainment**

www.limestoneme.com  
(416) 528-5306

## **Mosquito.buzz**

www.mosquito.buzz  
(613) 499-9476

## **N. Greenham Construction Inc.**

kingstonhomebuilder.ca  
(613) 217-7566

## **NISARG MEDIA PRODUCTIONS LTD**

nisargmedia.com  
(437) 344-0419

## **Primerica Financial Services**

www.primerica.com/alexdruskis  
(613) 634-2208

## **Riverhead Brewing Company Ltd.**

www.riverheadbrewing.com  
(613) 384-2337

## **Sage & Cove Studio**

www.sageandcove.com  
(613) 985-1129

## **ServiceMaster Clean of Kingston, Belleville and Trenton**






yellowvan.ca  
(613) 389-9629

## **Workplace Safety & Prevention Services**

www.wsps.ca  
(416) 705-1110

# Expand Your Brand's Reach

Capture the attention of Kingston's most influential audience and expand your impact across businesses and consumers.

Digital Channel	Key Metrics
 <b>Website</b>	79K+ page views • 23k users • 223,800+ event views
 <b>LinkedIn</b>	94K+ impressions • 2,360 reactions
 <b>Facebook</b>	160,800 views • 2,100 interactions • 808 link clicks
 <b>Instagram</b>	59K views • 16K reach • 1,200 interactions • 51 link clicks
 <b>Newsletter</b>	2K+ subscribers • 41% open rate

**Contact  
our team!**



613-548-4453



info@kingstonchamber.ca



www.kingstonchamber.ca



CELEBRATING

**185**  
YEARS