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CEO's Message: Looking Ahead, Together.

As we reach the midpoint of 2026, I'm reminded that the strength of the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce has always come from one place, our members. Your resilience, innovation, and commitment to our community inspire everything we do. Thank you for your continued support and for the important role you play in making Kingston's business community stronger.

Advocacy remains at the heart of our work. Whether we're engaging with municipal, provincial, or federal leaders, our goal is simple: to create conditions that help businesses succeed.

This year, we've seen meaningful progress. One of our most significant advocacy achievements has been helping secure consideration for Kingston as a stop on the future ALTO rail network while continuing to champion an integrated rail service that strengthens connections across our region. It's a great example of what can be accomplished when business, community, and government work together toward a shared vision.

Closer to home, we've been working alongside the City of Kingston to support businesses in the Williamsville neighbourhood as they navigate the challenges of ongoing construction. By listening directly to business owners and collaborating on practical solutions to improve access, communication, parking awareness, and wayfinding, we're ensuring their concerns remain front and centre.

Whether advocating for critical infrastructure, supporting businesses through challenging times, or creating opportunities to connect and collaborate, your Chamber is committed to being a strong voice for business.

As we look ahead, we'll be focused on Kingston's municipal election, working with members to shape the Chamber's election platform and ensure the priorities of our business community are part of the conversation.

The months ahead will also bring many opportunities to connect and celebrate. From the Chamber Classic and Business Summit to councillor candidate engagement sessions, we'll continue creating opportunities that strengthen relationships and support local business. This fall, we're especially excited to host our inaugural Celebrating Women in Business event and present the very first Pinnacle Award, recognizing an outstanding leader who has made a lasting impact on our community. We'll close out the year with our annual Holiday Social, celebrating another successful year together and looking ahead to the opportunities that 2027 will bring.

While the business landscape continues to evolve, one thing remains constant, our commitment to serving you. Together, we will continue to advocate with purpose, create meaningful connections, and build a stronger, more vibrant Kingston where businesses of every size can thrive.

Thank you for being part of the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce. I look forward to all that we'll accomplish together in the months ahead.

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

Women

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a message from the Board Chair



Friends and members of the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce,

Over the past several weeks, I've had the privilege of attending (or streaming) city council meetings, connecting one on one with some council members, popping into events all over Kingston, visiting local businesses, and rolling up to Queen's Park with fellow Ontario Chambers for Advocacy Day. Every one of those experiences reinforced the same thing for me: Kingston has a business community worth fighting for, and the people making decisions about our city genuinely want to hear from us.

Advocacy Day at Queen's Park was a particular highlight. Standing shoulder to shoulder with Chamber leaders from every corner of the province, carrying the priorities of our members straight into the offices of MPPs and cabinet ministers, is a powerful reminder that our voice does not stop at the city limits. Whether the topic is housing, workforce development, transportation, the Causeway...(Remember that time we had a working bridge? Loved that) - your Chamber is at the table making sure Kingston is part of the conversation.

But, advocacy is only half the story. The part I value most is networking with the business people in our city. It is the coffees, the ribbon cuttings, the after-work club sodas, and the "have you met so and so?" introductions that turn a Chamber membership into real relationships, real referrals, and real friendships.

And that's my ask of you today. Come out. Be present. When a member cuts the ribbon on a Grand Opening, be there to cheer them on as they launch something new.

When we gather for a Coffee & Connections event, grab a seat and introduce yourself to someone you haven't met yet. You never know which conversation is the one that changes your business or your day.

Here is your first chance to do exactly that. Join us for Chamber on Tap on Thursday, July 30, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Daft Brewing, 768 Princess Street. It's a relaxed, welcoming evening built for exactly the kind of connection that makes our community stronger. Bring a colleague, drag a friend or fly solo. Either way, you'll be in great company with the people who help Kingston's business scene thrive. I'll be there (my first Thursday evening off in a loonnnnggggg time) and looking forward to it!

These moments may seem small but they are the foundation of a thriving local economy. Every handshake, every "so what do you do?" and every laugh over a drink strengthens the fabric of our community and reminds us that we're stronger together.

So mark your calendars and make your way to Daft. Word on the street is that the beer is great!

Thank you,

BRIAN HOPE

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

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[Chair]

Regional Director of
Sales, Diamond
Hotels Management
Inc.



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President, Friends of
the Penitentiary
Museum



Kent Williams
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Estate Development,
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Jose Ribau
[Board Member]

Founder & CEO, R5
Innovations



Samantha Rogers
[Board Member]

Chief People Officer,
EZ STAK

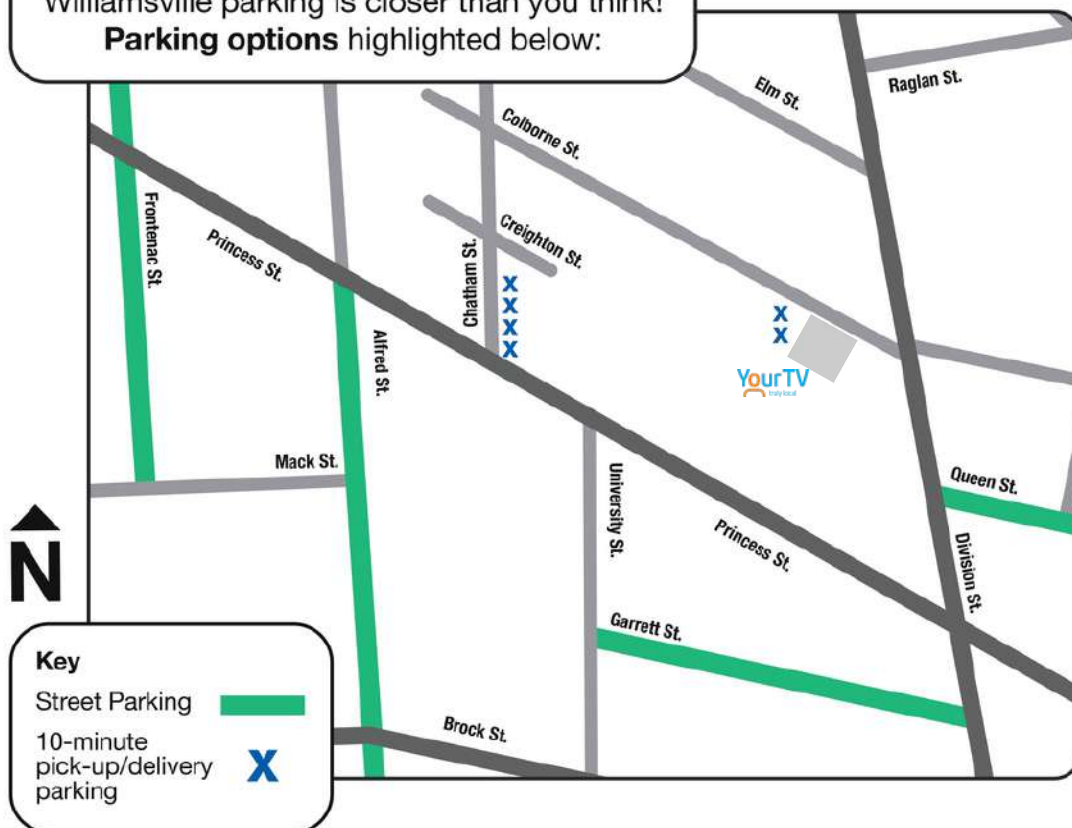
Support Local. Shop Williamsville.

Local businesses are open and ready to welcome you! With additional parking now available, it's easier than ever to visit, shop, dine, and support your favourite local businesses.

The City of Kingston has added **10-minute street parking on the east side of Chatham Street**, and thanks to the support of **Cogeco YourTV**, **two additional 10-minute parking spaces** are now available for customers. Even more parking opportunities will be announced in the coming days.

Every purchase makes a difference. By shopping, dining, and using local services, you're helping Williamsville businesses continue to thrive during construction.

Williamsville parking is closer than you think!
Parking options highlighted below:



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Building Community Through Music and Culture

Exploring how arts and culture cultivate connection, belonging, and thriving communities.

For those of us who work in the arts, the conversation has changed.

Increasingly, we're asked to demonstrate our impact in measurable ways. That's a reasonable expectation. Public investment should be accountable, and fortunately, the evidence is compelling. Research consistently shows that participation in arts and culture contributes to improved mental and physical health, stronger educational outcomes, greater social cohesion, and significant economic vitality.

These measures matter. But they also risk obscuring something more profound. The arts don't create healthy communities by improving economic indicators. They improve economic indicators by cultivating healthy human beings.

The most important things the arts cultivate - belonging, identity, purpose, courage, wonder, hope - are difficult to quantify. We measure the outcomes because they're observable, but those outcomes are ultimately the visible expression of something deeper.

To understand why arts and culture have such remarkable effects on individuals and communities, we have to examine the human needs they fulfill.

Most of us remember Abraham Maslow from first-year psychology: once our basic needs are met, we seek belonging, purpose, creativity, and self-actualization.

Perhaps it's time to turn the pyramid upside down.

Not because food, shelter, and physical safety don't matter, but because we've underestimated how fundamental meaning, belonging, creativity, and expression really are. They aren't simply rewards for a life well lived; they're part of what makes life worth living.

Across every culture and every period of human existence, people have gathered to sing, dance, tell stories, paint, and create. Long before there were schools, governments, businesses, or even language, there was music. The impulse to create isn't an accessory to being human; it's part of what makes us human.

As Artistic-Executive Director of Cantabile Choirs, and with a background in psychology, I have the privilege of witnessing this across every stage of life – babies, children, youth, adults, and seniors. Different stories. Same needs: to matter, to belong, and to contribute to something greater than ourselves.

In our rehearsal halls, music becomes the place where those needs are met. A place of emotional safety, shared purpose, and genuine belonging. For some young people, it is the first place they feel truly seen—the first place they discover that their voice isn't something to hide, but something to offer.

A choir is a powerful metaphor for community. It literally develops voice while teaching that our voices reach their fullest expression in relationship with others. No one carries the music alone. The whole is far greater than the sum of its parts.

Perhaps this is what the research is really telling us. Healthy communities emerge when people feel connected, discover purpose, develop empathy, and contribute their unique voices to something larger than themselves.

The measurable outcomes - improved health, educational success, stronger communities, and economic vitality - are not the purpose of the arts. They are the evidence of what happens when those fundamental human needs are met.

That, to me, is the enduring value of arts and culture: not because they sit at the top of some hierarchy, but because they fulfill some of our most innate human needs.



Geoffrey Sirett
Artistic-Executive Director, Cantabile Choirs

The Gap Is the Business

Nobody wakes up and thinks "what I really need is a concierge." They wake up thinking about the dentist appointment they forgot to book, the email that has been sitting in their drafts since last Thursday, and the fact that their mother needs a ride on Wednesday but they have back-to-back meetings and no obvious solution.

That is the moment. Right there. That quiet Tuesday morning spiral where the to-do list has a to-do list.

Most people just absorb it. They push through, drop a few things, apologize where necessary, and add it all to the pile. Because somewhere along the way, asking for help with the logistics of a full life started feeling like an admission of failure. Like you should be able to manage all of it, because you are capable, because you have resources, because other people seem to be doing it just fine.

They are not. They just found better systems.

There Is No App for This

Here is the thing about modern life. It is genuinely complex, and nobody talks about that honestly. You are not just managing a schedule.

You are managing a household, a career, a family, possibly aging parents, definitely a fridge that needs restocking, and at least one ongoing project that has been described as "almost done" for four months.

Every service in your life was built for one piece of that. The cleaner handles the floors. The virtual assistant handles the inbox. The meal kit company handles Tuesday dinner if you remembered to skip the pause. Nobody handles the whole picture.

Ordinary Problems Are Underrated

Entrepreneurs love a dramatic origin story. This one qualifies.

Spend nearly two decades in child protection and you will see, up close, what happens when life falls through the cracks. Not in an abstract way. In a kitchen-at-2am, nobody-showed-up, how-did-it-get-this-far way.

That work leaves a mark. It also leaves you with a very specific understanding of what consistent, reliable support actually does for people. Not the emergency response.

The steady presence before things unravel. LCC was not built from a gap in the market. It was built from a gap in people's lives that I had spent two decades watching get wider.

So when someone says "I don't even know who to call for this," I do not hear a minor inconvenience. I hear the beginning of a problem that gets harder to solve the longer it sits. Those are not glamorous problems. They are also not going away.

Trust Is Not a Feature

Anyone can make a list of services. The hard part is becoming the person someone hands their keys to.

That is not a metaphor. LCC clients hand over keys, schedules, access, and in some cases, the care of people they love. That trust is not earned by a polished website or a good intake form. It is earned by showing up when you said you would. By noticing the thing that was not on the list. By being steady when everything else is not.

That is the business. Not tasks. Not categories. The certainty that things will not fall through.

The Gap Is Not Closing

Households are more complex than they were a generation ago. Professionals are stretched thinner. The population is aging. The number of people juggling multiple major responsibilities at once, and doing it largely alone, is growing, not shrinking.

The gap between services is where people are quietly struggling.

It is also, as it turns out, where the best businesses live.



Amanda Babcock
Owner, Loyalist Concierge Co.

The Armour We Wear

Why Successful People Still Struggle

We all wear armour, and most of us don't realise we're wearing it.

At work, at home and in our relationships, we develop ways of protecting ourselves from pressure, judgment, uncertainty and failure. The irony is that the same armour that helps us cope can also hold us back.

The truth is, our armour isn't who we are. It's who we became to protect who we are.

So, how quickly do you put on your armour each morning?

I'd like to say it's when we get to work, but that's not true for most of us. For many, the armour goes on before our feet even touch the floor.

We're already thinking about the email we need to answer, the meeting we're dreading or the difficult conversation we've been putting off. Before we've even had our first coffee, our minds are racing ahead to problems that haven't happened yet and answers we're afraid we might hear.

For some of us, the armour never really comes off.

Over the years, I've met people from all walks of life, business owners, leaders, parents and young adults. On the surface, many appear successful and in control. Yet beneath the armour, I often find someone who is exhausted from trying to be everything to everyone.

Someone who hears a quiet voice saying, "I'm not good enough." "Don't let anyone down." "It has to be perfect." "What if it all goes wrong?" "Keep going." "Don't let them see you struggle."

Those voices are often driven by fear and judgment. They convince us the armour is keeping us safe when, in reality, it often keeps us disconnected from ourselves and the people around us.

I call these inner voices Saboteurs. I think of them as survival strategies. They began with good intentions, trying to protect us, but over time they can become the very thing that limits our confidence, relationships and wellbeing.



The challenge is that we listen to these voices for so long that we begin to believe they are us.

They become our identity rather than our protection. We forget who we are beneath the armour.

For forty years, I didn't recognise my own armour until life forced me to stop. A life-changing health scare challenged everything I thought I knew about success, identity and what really mattered. During my recovery, I realised I'd spent years developing skills for work and being a partner and parent, yet very little time understanding myself.

That journey eventually led me to coaching and the importance of Mental Fitness. More importantly, it led me back to the person beneath the armour.

Today, I don't believe people need fixing. I believe they need remembering.

My work isn't about helping people become someone else. It's about helping them reconnect with who they already are beneath the armour.

All great coaches ask powerful questions. I'd like to leave you with three.

What armour am I wearing today?

Is it still protecting me, or is it holding me back?

And how would it feel if I no longer needed it?



Gordon Robinson,
Founder, New Bucket Coaching

Why Caring for People Is Good for Business

A couple weeks ago, one of our drivers called dispatch because a client was anxious about getting home after a hospital discharge.

Not medically anxious. Just overwhelmed.

They had been sitting there for hours waiting to leave. Family members were calling for updates. The unit was busy. The client was tired, frustrated, hungry, and honestly probably a little embarrassed by the whole thing. Hospitals across Kingston and Eastern Ontario are under pressure right now. You can feel it the second you walk through the doors.

Our driver grabbed them a coffee and sat with them while paperwork got sorted out. Nobody told him to do that.

That interaction sums up this business better than any marketing campaign ever could.

Most people do not think about patient transportation until they really need it.

Then suddenly it matters a lot. It matters when someone needs to get to dialysis three times a week. It matters when a cancer appointment cannot be missed. It matters when a long-term care resident needs reliable transportation for a specialist visit. It matters when hospitals are trying to safely discharge patients and free up beds for the next person waiting in emergency.

When we started Hülpr in 2020 with one van, I honestly thought we were building a transportation company. Over time, I realized we were stepping into the middle of healthcare gaps that families, hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes, and community organizations are trying to navigate every single day.

Today, Hülpr helps more than 1,200 clients each month across Eastern Ontario. We work with hospitals, clinics, long-term care homes, retirement residences, Veterans Affairs, Indigenous Affairs, ODSP, the Smile Program, Ongwanada, Kingston Access Bus, and many others.

Some days are smooth and some days feel like organized chaos with weather delays, traffic, staffing shortages, last-minute discharges, and phones ringing non-stop and our team keeps showing up for people.

I think that is why the culture here has grown the way it has. A lot of our staff came from healthcare, emergency services, transportation, caregiving roles, or workplaces where they simply stopped feeling valued. They understand how stressful healthcare can feel when you are vulnerable, running late, uncomfortable, or unsure what is happening next.

So we built the kind of company we would want our own families using.

That means investing in safer vehicles, better equipment, ongoing training, fleet maintenance, and stronger communication systems. It also means building technology that helps connect dispatch, drivers, facilities, clients, and families in real time so people spend less time guessing, waiting, and chasing updates.

As we continue to grow, acquire operations, and expand services across the region, I still think the small human moments matter most. The driver who stays an extra few minutes. The dispatcher who answers calmly when someone is having a hard day. The team member who treats a client with dignity when they are at their lowest.

That is the real business we are in. The transportation just gets us there.



Tim O'Hara, RN
Founder & CEO , Hülpr Accessible Transportation & Qüinte Patient Transfer Service

People First:

The Evolving Role of Human Resources in Large Organizations

Most organizations don't fail because of strategy—they fail because execution breaks down. And execution is enabled—or limited—by people.

That's what drew me to Human Resources. I've always believed a business is made—or broken—by its people. Not in theory, but in practice. The right people, in the right roles, with clear expectations and strong leadership will move a business forward. The wrong fit, unclear accountability, or misaligned leadership will slow even the best plan down.

Over the course of my career, that belief has only been reinforced. As organizations grow, become more complex, and pursue increasingly ambitious goals, the people side of the business becomes even more critical. Yet HR is still sometimes viewed as a support function operating on the periphery of the organization. In reality, HR has evolved significantly. Today, it sits at the center of execution.

In complex organizations, it's rarely the strategy itself that fails. More often, the breakdown occurs in how the strategy is translated into action. If roles aren't clear, expectations aren't defined, or leaders aren't aligned, organizations struggle to achieve the outcomes they are pursuing, regardless of how strong the plan may be. That is why a significant part of my work focuses on bringing structure to complexity through clearly defined roles, measurable performance expectations, and accountability.

When people understand what success looks like and how they contribute to it, execution improves and results follow.

Culture plays a similar role. We spend a great deal of time talking about organizational culture, but culture is not found in posters, mission statements, or company presentations. It reveals itself in much more practical ways: what gets rewarded, what gets tolerated, and how leaders behave when faced with difficult decisions. I have seen organizations articulate excellent values and then unintentionally undermine them through inconsistent actions.

For that reason, I believe culture must be operationalized. It should be embedded into performance management processes, reinforced through recognition programs, and reflected consistently in leadership behaviour. If culture exists only as a concept, it rarely survives the realities of day-to-day business operations.

Another lesson I have learned is that organizations cannot hire their way out of every challenge. In periods of growth, there is often a temptation to solve capability gaps through recruitment alone. While external hiring certainly has its place, sustainable success comes from developing internal talent. Building leadership capability, creating structured development plans, and providing employees with clear pathways for growth are some of the most effective ways to strengthen organizational performance over the long term.

This is especially important because strong people systems are business enablers. Leadership development, performance management, and succession planning are often categorized as HR initiatives, but their true purpose is to improve execution. Organizations that fail to develop talent internally inevitably struggle to scale.

The conversation around employee well-being has also evolved. Historically, organizations focused on programs and benefits designed to support employees. While those initiatives remain important, I believe well-being starts with organizational design. Clarity of role, realistic expectations, effective leadership, and strong operational structures have a profound impact on the employee experience. In my experience, many issues that are labeled as well-being challenges are actually symptoms of organizational design challenges. When employees understand what is expected of them, have the support they need to succeed, and work within an environment characterized by fairness and consistency, engagement and retention improve naturally.

Technology is also reshaping the workplace and the HR function. Artificial intelligence, automation, and advanced analytics are creating opportunities to make better decisions and reduce administrative burden. These tools can improve efficiency and provide valuable insights, but they cannot replace judgment. They cannot build trust, navigate complex interpersonal dynamics, or understand the nuances of leadership and culture.

The greatest opportunity technology presents is not to replace the human side of HR, but to elevate it. By automating routine work, organizations can create more space for higher-value activities such as talent planning, leadership development, organizational design, and culture building.

Throughout my career, a few principles have consistently proven true. Clarity beats complexity. Consistency builds trust. Managers are the multiplier of culture and performance. And while “people first” is a phrase we hear often, making it a reality requires structure, discipline, accountability, and leadership commitment. The role of HR will continue to evolve as workforce expectations, technologies, and business realities change. But the fundamental principle remains the same: organizations succeed when they get the people side right.

For me, that is what Human Resources is all about. It is not a support function. It is what enables execution. And when organizations get that right, everything else becomes a lot easier.



Samantha Rogers
Chief People Officer, EZ STAK



GKCC PRESENTS

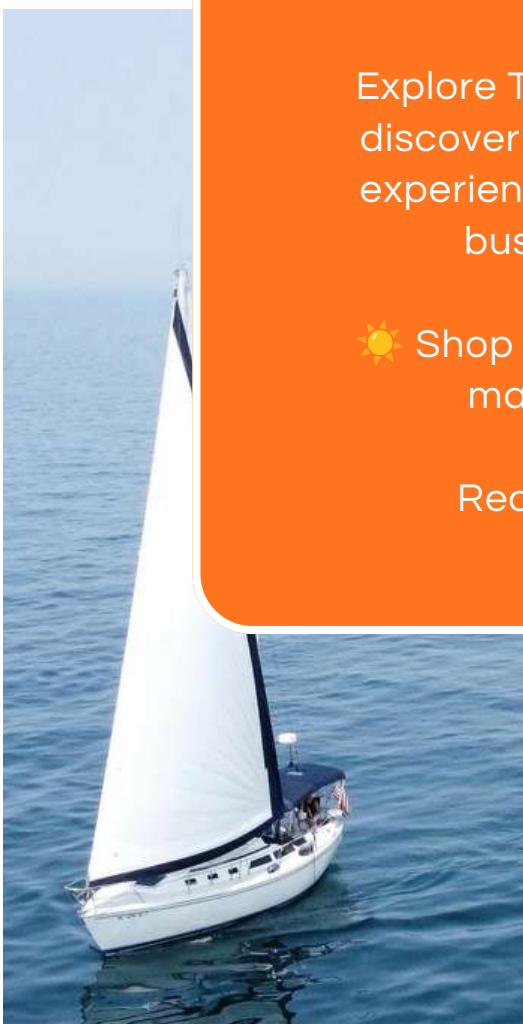
2026 SUMMER GUIDE

**Your go-to guide for summer
in Kingston is here!**

Explore The Chamber's 2026 Summer Guide and discover local businesses, restaurants, services, experiences, and events from Kingston's largest business community, all in one place.

☀ Shop local, support Kingston businesses, and make this summer one to remember.

Ready to plan your best summer yet?
Click now and start exploring!



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.



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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%.



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.



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.



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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**.



Influence

ONTARIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & CONVENTION

The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce was represented at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting & Convention, held April 23-25 in Ottawa. CEO Karen Cross and Director of Business Development Zerman Khan connected with chamber leaders from across Ontario, bringing forward the priorities and perspectives of local businesses.

Through the resolution presented, the Chamber continues to champion policies that support business growth, strengthen key sectors, and create new opportunities for our 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 Karen Cross, CEO.



11TH ANNUAL ADVOCACY DAY - OCC



The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce was proud to represent Kingston's business community at the 11th Annual Advocacy Day, hosted by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce at Queen's Park.

Our delegation, including Board Chair Brian Hope and CEO Karen Cross, joined more than 50 chambers from across Ontario to engage directly with provincial leaders on key issues impacting businesses and communities across the province.

BUILDING CANADA'S HIGH-SPEED RAIL

The announcement by Minister McKinnon is a significant win for Kingston and the business community. It reflects years of coordinated advocacy by the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce, alongside Kingston Accommodation Partners, Tourism Kingston, Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO), Downtown Kingston, the City of Kingston, and MP Mark Gerretsen.

Kingston's inclusion in the Alto project recognizes our city's strategic position within one of Canada's most important economic corridors and reinforces our role as a regional transportation hub.

For businesses, improved rail connectivity means better access to customers, talent, investment, and tourism. The potential integration with VIA Rail services will make travel more efficient throughout the region and across the country, supporting economic growth and making Kingston an even more attractive place to live, work, visit, and do business.

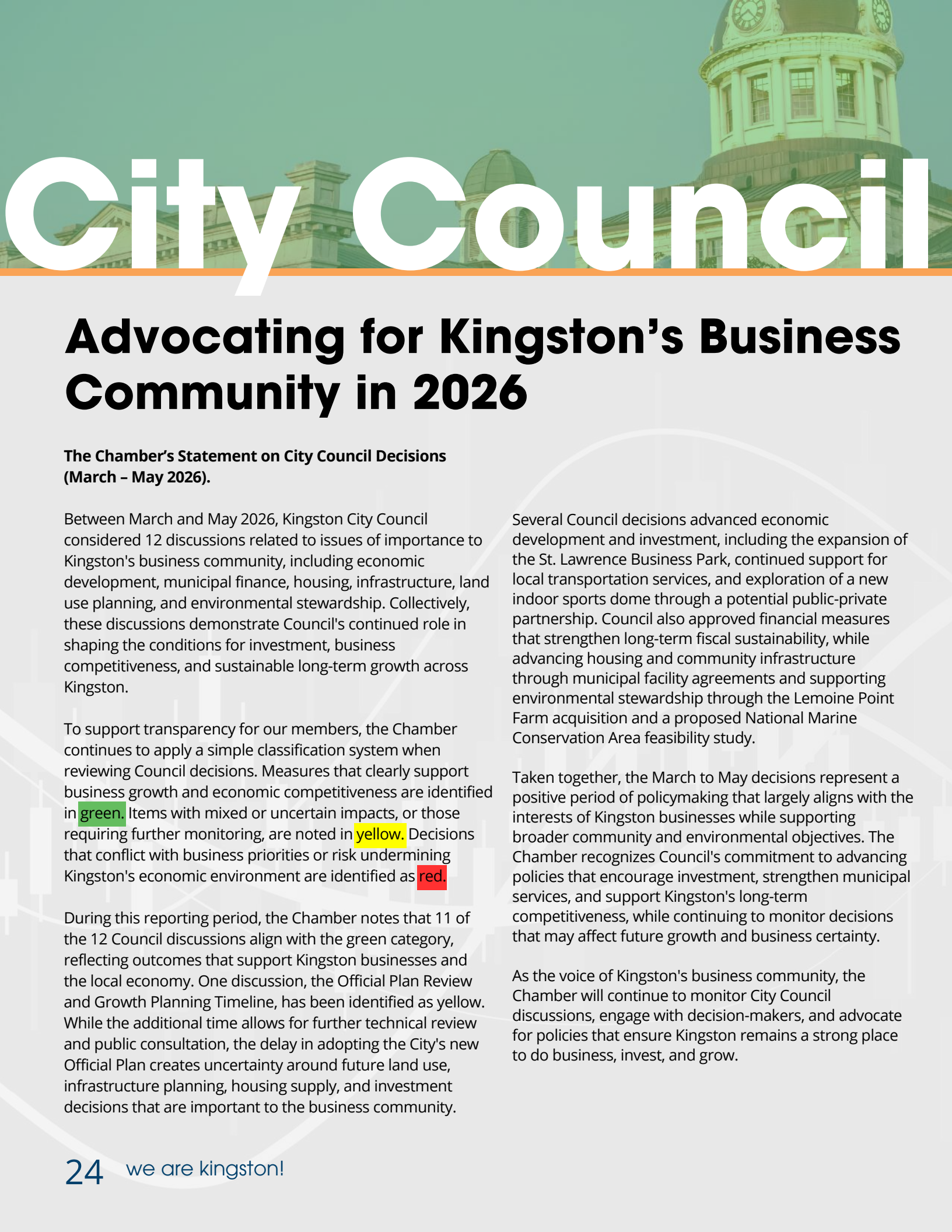


RAINBOW REGISTERED



We're proud to share that The Chamber is officially Rainbow Registered. This national accreditation recognizes organizations that are committed to creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces for 2SLGBTQI+ employees, members, visitors, and communities. Administered by Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce, the Rainbow Registered program reflects a strong commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion through policies, practices, training, and ongoing accountability.

We are especially proud to be the 11th Chamber of Commerce in Canada and the 6th in Ontario to achieve this designation. At The Chamber, we believe that inclusive communities and workplaces are stronger communities and workplaces. We remain committed to advancing EDI principles in meaningful ways and fostering an environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and welcome.



City Council

Advocating for Kingston's Business Community in 2026

The Chamber's Statement on City Council Decisions (March – May 2026).

Between March and May 2026, Kingston City Council considered 12 discussions related to issues of importance to Kingston's business community, including economic development, municipal finance, housing, infrastructure, land use planning, and environmental stewardship. Collectively, these discussions demonstrate Council's continued role in shaping the conditions for investment, business competitiveness, and sustainable long-term growth across 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**.

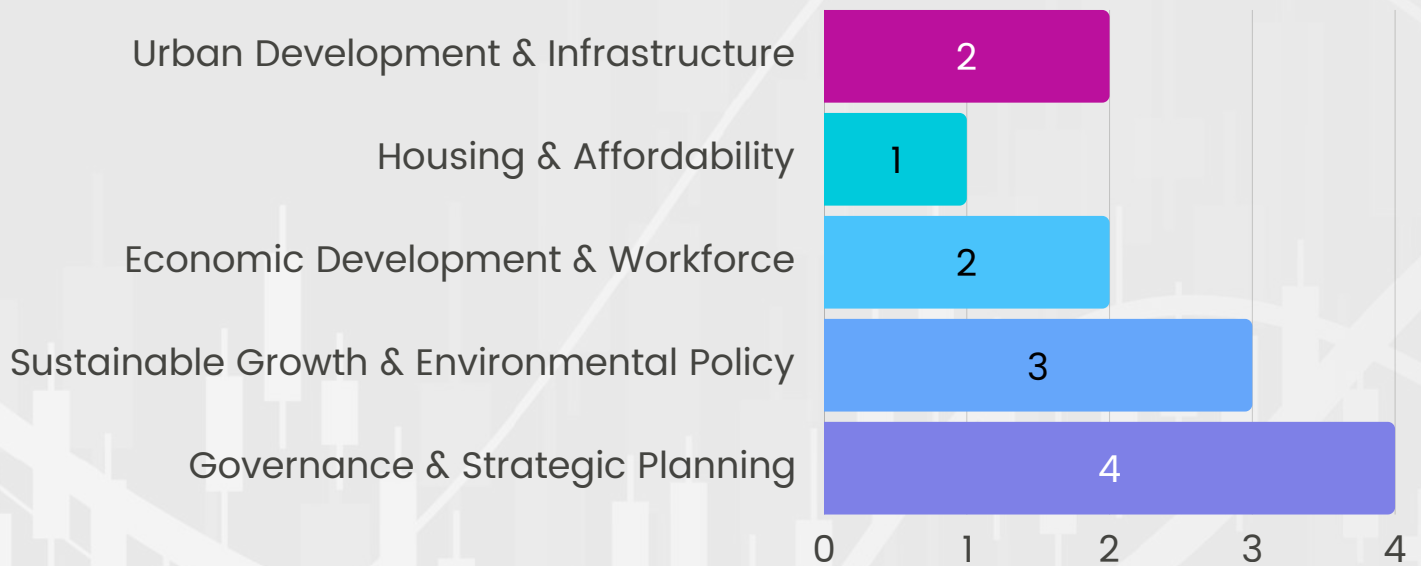
During this reporting period, the Chamber notes that 11 of the 12 Council discussions align with the green category, reflecting outcomes that support Kingston businesses and the local economy. One discussion, the Official Plan Review and Growth Planning Timeline, has been identified as yellow. While the additional time allows for further technical review and public consultation, the delay in adopting the City's new Official Plan creates uncertainty around future land use, infrastructure planning, housing supply, and investment decisions that are important to the business community.

Several Council decisions advanced economic development and investment, including the expansion of the St. Lawrence Business Park, continued support for local transportation services, and exploration of a new indoor sports dome through a potential public-private partnership. Council also approved financial measures that strengthen long-term fiscal sustainability, while advancing housing and community infrastructure through municipal facility agreements and supporting environmental stewardship through the Lemoine Point Farm acquisition and a proposed National Marine Conservation Area feasibility study.

Taken together, the March to May decisions represent a positive period of policymaking that largely aligns with the interests of Kingston businesses while supporting broader community and environmental objectives. The Chamber recognizes Council's commitment to advancing policies that encourage investment, strengthen municipal services, and support Kingston's long-term competitiveness, while continuing to monitor decisions that may affect future growth and business certainty.

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 March to May 2026



Breakdown of topics discussed by the City Council from March to May 2026

Urban Development & Infrastructure

- **Official Plan Review and Growth Planning Timeline** (May 19, 2026) – Official Plan adoption delayed to support long-term growth and infrastructure planning.
- **Soccer Dome Feasibility and Potential Public-Private Partnership** (May 19, 2026) – Council advanced plans to assess a new indoor soccer dome for Kingston.

- **Municipal Capital Facility Agreement – 315 Queen Mary Road** (May 19, 2026) – Facility agreements approved to support housing and community health services.

Economic Development & Workforce

- **St. Lawrence Business Park Expansion** (Apr 7, 2026) – Business park expansion approved to attract investment and future employment.
- **Kingston Area Taxi Licensing Commission Funding** (Apr 7, 2026) – Funding approved for rural programs, grants, and outreach.

Sustainable Growth & Environmental Policy

- **Lemoine Point Farm Acquisition** (Mar 24, 2026) – Council approved the purchase of Lemoine Point Farm for long-term stewardship.
- **Lemoine Point Farm Acquisition – Closing Costs** (May 19, 2026) – Additional funding approved to complete the Lemoine Point Farm acquisition.
- **National Marine Conservation Area Feasibility Study** (May 19, 2026) – Council endorsed exploring a National Marine Conservation Area in Lake Ontario.

Governance & Strategic Planning

- **Corporate Sponsorship, Asset Naming and Tax Policy** (Mar 10, 2026) – Council updated sponsorship policies and approved the City's 2026 tax ratios.
- **2025 Year-End Financial Report and Reserve Allocations** (Apr 21, 2026) – Year-end surpluses were allocated to reserves and future capital priorities.
- **Financial Overview and Fiscal Outlook** (May 5, 2026) – Council advanced initiatives to strengthen long-term financial sustainability.
- **2026 Final Tax Levy and Tax Rates** (May 5, 2026) – Council approved the City's final 2026 tax levy and tax rates.

Voting records between March and May 2026 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
6	0	6
11	1	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
12	0	0
10	0	2
9	0	3

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2025 AGM

Apr. 9th,
2026



**Business
Before 9**

Jun. 9th,
2026



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on tap**



Monthly



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29



Meet the Winners

Hospitality

Kebab 44

Social Impact

The Keep Refillery Kingston

New Business of the Year

DoorStep Dental Inc

New Business of the Year

Loyalist Concierge Co.



Entrepreneur

André Dénommée of ADARE
Property Management

Skilled Trades

Metal Craft Marine

Customer Experience

The Boat Warehouse

Non-Profit

Lionhearts



Arts & Culture

Cantabile Choirs of Kingston

Employer of the Year

Cityflats

Business Person of the Year

Patrick Egbunonu of
Informanos



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Grand Openings

Grand Opening



📍 101-299 Concession Street, Kingston, ON
🌐 <https://brainstim.ca/>
☎ (866) 999-7846

Announcement - New Trauma Center



📍 900 Purdys Mill Road, Kingston, ON
🌐 <https://www.jkmentalhealth.com/>
☎ (613) 384-0322

New Members

April, May & June 2026

A&K Construction

www.akcon.ca
(613) 552-4887

Benmor Family Law Group

benmor.com
(416) 489-8890

Couto Catering

www.coutocatering.ca
(613) 881-0291

EZ STAK

ezstak.com
(315) 595-3300

Freshii Gardiners

freshii.com
(613) 417-3355

Insley Nova & Associates

www.insleynovaassociates.com
(613) 876-6886

Insomnia Cookies

www.insomniacookies.ca
(613) 539-3616

John The Plumber – Kingston

johntheplumber.ca/kingston
(613) 909-8941

John the Plumber – Queens Kingston

johntheplumber.ca/kingston/queens
(613) 909-8941

Kebab 44

www.kebab44.ca
(613) 384-8222

Kivion Resources Management Ltd.

www.kivion.ca
(613) 305-9882

Kompa Law

www.kompalaw.ca
(343) 453-0010

Lean Possibilities

leanpossibilities.ca
(613) 331-5474.

Modern City Taxi

moderncitytaxi.ca
(613) 546-2222

Porter Pest Control Inc

porterpestcontrol.ca
(613) 985-7378

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savouritalytours.com
(844) 691-7474

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www.seekly.ca

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www.shawarmaculture.ca
(343) 700-4240

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superiorplumbing.ca
(866) 931-9642

Symphony Spa & Yoga

www.symphonyspa.ca
(613) 547-8711

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www.wellsuitedkingston.com
(613) 217-1194

Wings Up Kingston

www.wingsup.com
(416) 662-9007

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(613) 328-9653

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 LinkedIn	94K+ impressions • 2,360 reactions
 Facebook	160,800 views • 2,100 interactions • 808 link clicks
 Instagram	59K views • 16K reach • 1,200 interactions • 51 link clicks
 Newsletter	2K+ subscribers • 41% open rate

**Contact
our team!**



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