

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - ACTION LISTING 2025

PROJECT/ GOAL	DETAILS	ASSIGNED	BUDGET	STATUS
2025 Economic Development Programs and Projects (Listed as they appear on the Budget)				
Business Recognition Program	Coordinate and advertise the annual program and recognition event. Review of Business Directory by Economic Development Committee and Council. Priority #3 - Community Revitalization.	Marie White, Ec Dev Committee, Council	Net \$1,620 (expenses offset by revenues)	Complete. The 2025 Rideau Lakes Business Recognition Program is in development. Nominations will close on March 7, 2025. The Business Awards Breakfast was held at the Elgin Lions Community Hall from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2025. The venue and catering was booked accordingly. Award categories were reviewed and the criteria revised. Nomination Forms and webpage were updated to reflect the revised award category, "New Business Award" for businesses between 1 and 3 years old. Partnership letters were issued in December, and all three sponsors have confirmed 2025 support of the program. Save the date memos were sent to the MP, MPP, Warden, Mayor, Council and Committee. Information was published in the Tax Newsletter and in the Leeds Grenville eNews. Nominations opened Friday, February 7, 2025. The judges panel this year consisted of former Mayor Ron Holman, Cindy James from the Small Business Advisory Centre (Provincial partner) and Amber Coville from Valley Heartland (Federal partner). Previous winners in all three categories were invited to present awards to new recipients (ECD 2025-08). Thirty-one businesses were nominated. Over 90 people attended the Business Breakfast. The winners were announced at the event, and through a media release, eNews, on the website and Facebook page. Name plates for the wall plaque in the lobby are installed. Remaining certificates for nominees that were unable to attend the event are being mailed. An ad was published in the April 22 edition of the Review Mirror to congratulate the winners and thank our sponsors.
	Planning for 2026 (October)			As per February 2025 ECD meeting: Review Award Categories; Consider Long Standing Business award/recognition; Discuss the concept of a trophy to be passed on from one year to another. Suggestions for 2026 include: Add a People's Choice award to be selected as a result of online voting. Judges recommend, in order to reduce duplicate nominations, that the Business of the Year award criteria be changed to 5 years and over, to set it apart from the New Business Award, which is for businesses between 1 and 3 years old. The age and size of the business will determine which award category. In addition, scoring criteria should include one unique factor for each category.

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Publications	Rideau Lakes Heritage Road Map. MHAC and ECD to continue to work together to produce and distribute the Rideau Lakes Map including all roads, village maps and heritage landmarks/points of interest. Priority #4 - Focused Sector Development.	Marie White, Ec Dev Committee, MHAC	\$6,400 (50%, cost-shared with MHAC)	Complete. In 2025, a quantity of 5,000 Road Maps were printed for distribution in May, to align with the opening of seasonal attractions. Corrections and edits from the public can be received at any time throughout the year. Digital maps are corrected as needed, and the printed map is revised each year. Draft content was revised and approved by MHAC at the January meeting. Approx. 20 Private Road names were updated in the 2025 edition. Content was approved by ECD in February. A new section on Early History is in development. Consulting agencies were contacted. Specifically: Algonquins of Ontario - Consultation Office; Metis Nation of Ontario - Lands, Resources and Consultations Branch; Mohawk Council of Akwesasne - Acting Director of Technical Services; Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte - Land Officer; Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation, Program Manager, Lands, Estates, Membership. Responses were received from Algonquins of Ontario and Metis Nation of Ontario. A paid consultant was enlisted to develop the Early History statement. The final 2025 map went into production on April 23 and the searchable PDF has been uploaded to the website. The new 2025 map was published and distributed in May. Additional distribution will take place in June (seasonal Ontario Travel Centres requested shipments after June 1, 2025).
	Rideau Lakes Experience Guide. In partnership with MHAC, update the Rideau Lakes Business and Heritage Tour(s) for each Village. Priority #4 - Focused Sector Development.			Complete. The 2025 edition of the guide will be printed in a quantity of 3,000 for distribution in June to align with International Picnic Day. Online versions of each Village Tour are published under "Trip Ideas." have been updated. Approximately 4 copies remain in stock. Printing quotes were received. The page count was reduced to 16 + cover for cost effectiveness. Revised content was reviewed by ECD on April 7 and by MHAC on April 17th. The 2025 guide went into production on May 21. Distribution of the Guide took place between June 9 and 19th.
Marketing Plan Implementation	Continue to follow through with actions identified in Marketing Strategy and Branding Guidelines (Marketing General). Promotion, map and guide distribution fees, advertising, business visits, and partnerships that advance Economic Development Goals. Priority #5 - Business and Workforce Development.	Marie White	\$3,000	Ongoing. Content submitted to Southeastern Ontario (RTO9) for upcoming regional promotions. 1000 Islands Rideau Waterways (DMO) has been copied on submissions. Staff attend quarterly meetings of the Business Support Working Group organized by Leeds Grenville Economic Development. Together with Leeds Grenville Economic Development, businesses including the Portland Family Restaurant, Rideau Lakes Building Centre and Everline Coatings have received a consultation visit in 2025. Met with LeBoat Marketing team in April, and as a follow up our Harbourmaster met with their Operations Manager on May 13. Suggested improvements to Harbour facilities include Wi-Fi access, additional electrical outlets, water fill stations, additional docking, signs or flags to guide boats into the public dock area from the water (especially where private docks are adjacent), public washrooms with showers, improved welcome signs and wayfinding signs into village from Harbour, including local business indicators (i.e. Canoe and Kayak rentals), add interpretive panels (i.e. turtle nesting area), BBQ or fire pits, waste receptacles, and pump out services if possible.

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	Photographer/Videographer: Images and Footage to refresh content for both print and online presence.	Marie White	\$3,000	Over 1,000 images are currently in the photo databank. Requests for new images related to Doors Open (Red Brick School) and Community Halls have been noted. Consideration will be given to images needed for the Experience Rideau Lakes Campaign and the Rideau Lakes Website. A photo shoot took place on August 16 & 17, 2025. Video work was completed to edit the Investment Attraction Video and create a series of short clips isolating interviews with Fiona McKeen of The Opinicon, Mark Hales of Hales Trucking, Stefano Ferrante and Dylan Sliter of United Edge and P3 Panel, Elizabeth Okum of Ethereal Massage Therapy/Davis Cattle Co., Timmy McNamee of Project Wakesurf, Jim Summers of Rideau Lakes Building Centre, Wendy Banks of Wendy's Country Market, and Dana McCullough of Wolf Springs Resort. This will allow flexibility to use the footage should any of the businesses change ownership.
	Promotional Items: Lapel pins and canvas bags for welcome packages.	Marie White	\$1,500	Lapel Pins have been ordered to replenish stock.
Digital Content Strategy	Implement recommendations of the Digital Content Strategy by TD Graham and Associates. In particular, the Experience Rideau Lakes Campaign. This program supports workforce development, tourism attraction and business development efforts. Priority #5 - Business and Workforce Development.	Marie White, Consultant	\$9,000	Ongoing. The Digital Content Strategy was adopted by Council on December 6, 2021. The resulting Experience Rideau Lakes Campaign including a Facebook Page, Instagram Page and Online Blog (website content/newsletter articles) was launched on January 6, 2022. The 2025 Digital Content Calendar has been developed and is in implementation. Together, campaign results total 1,273,891 people reached (2022-2024). A media release was issued to share the campaign results, and a story was on Kingston Global News and printed in the Review Mirror. Daffodil Days was included in an article by Ottawa Road Trips and posted by 1000 Islands Rideau Waterways. Blog articles are posted each week, advertised on Facebook and Instagram.

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Investment Attraction Campaign	Implement recommendations outlined in the Investment Attraction Campaign strategy by TD Graham & Associates. Streamline Operations to excel at serving the business community by enhancing communications. Priority #1 - Investment Attraction.	Marie White, Consultant	\$3,750	Ongoing. The Investment Attraction Campaign strategy document was adopted by Council on December 6, 2021 and the InvestRideauLakes.ca URL was purchased and activated in 2022. In partnership with Leeds Grenville Economic Development, a total of 24 Success Stories are highlighted on the Rideau Lakes website. The Campaign was launched on Friday April 14, 2023, targeted to entrepreneurs in Ontario seeking Quality of Life in their next phase of development, expansion or start-up. To follow up with leads generated, a kit folder in both print and online is available which includes an updated Community Profile document, a Planning Application FAQ, Building Permit FAQ, and Waterfront Best Practices Information Sheet. As of November 2023, the Investment Attraction Video is being highlighted online through targeted Google ads, resulting in over 32,140 impressions and 12,647 video views. The Google ad continued from January to May 2024 and 2025, and again from September to December 2024 and 2025. A LinkedIn Profile for the Township was activated in 2024, featuring the Investment Attraction Video. The Community Profile document and video were approved and published in 2024. The community profile video was launched at the Business Breakfast and a media release was issued. A social media policy is in development. Nomination of the Investment Attraction video was successful and Rideau Lakes is the recipient of the 2024 EDAC Marketing Canada award, and recognized as a contender for the EDAC Cup. The Investment Attraction campaign project was nominated for the EDCO Awards of Excellence. Thirteen (13) success stories are in development for 2025 (Business Recognition Program Award Winners). Reports acquired from OMAFRA regarding top industries in Rideau Lakes (as reported in February). A media release announcing the 2024 EDAC Cup Contender award was released following a group photo taken at the Business Breakfast in April 2025. This announcement was shared in the eNews, on Facebook, and the Rideau Lakes website. The group photo was also shared on the Rideau Lakes Linked In Profile page, tagging partners pages such as Tom Graham and The Opinicon (89 Followers).
Investment Attraction	Increase number and diversity of businesses. Working with businesses to explore expansion in Rideau Lakes. Fill vacant and underutilized buildings. Priority #1 - Investment Attraction.	Marie White, Facilities and Parks Staff	n/a	Ongoing. Wills Transfer is looking to expand services and undergoing certification processes to warehouse food, beverage and pharma. Working with new businesses and existing businesses to explore expansion in Rideau Lakes. Surplus properties were identified and listed for sale. The Portland Grocery listing was highlighted in the Leeds Grenville eNews. Actively maintaining Business Directory. Investment Ready Properties page updated and shared with Leeds Grenville. Demolition of the Delta Maple Syrup Factory building is in progress.
Strategic Projects	Outlined in the Economic Development Action Plan 2023-2026		\$15,000	Complete. \$500 committed to the "Spring into Rideau" initiative from Strategic Projects (ECD 2024-63). Signs were ordered for Spring into Rideau on April 23, 2025.
	Continue to identify opportunities for Broadband Projects. Priority #2 - Physical Infrastructure. Improve Connectivity throughout the Township and at municipal buildings.	Marie White, UCLG staff		In progress. To identify next steps for enhanced wi-fi access and upcoming cell coverage projects, partners at the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) were contacted. The Rideau Lakes webpage, "Internet Connectivity" was updated accordingly, with information about how people can participate in a survey to identify internet service gaps. An update is included in the September 2 meeting package.

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<p>Promote the Rideau Lakes Community Improvement Plan for Villages. Priority #1 - Investment Attraction. Priority #5 - Business and Workforce Development.</p>	<p>Development Services Ec Dev Staff</p>		<p>Complete. Four approved CIP applications in 2025. CIP grants totalling approximately \$11,693 were approved. [CIP-01-2023 (Legion) for \$2,000; CIP-01-2024 (Stone Manor Studios) for \$5,298; CIP-02-2024 (Poplars Resort) for \$3,999.53; CIP-2025-01 (Sub Zero) for \$396.09]. All approved CIP projects have been completed.</p>
<p>Village Renewal Projects. Priority #2 - Physical Infrastructure (Active Transportation). Priority #3 - Community Revitalization.</p>	<p>The Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Tourism Loop project (EORTL)</p>		<p>In progress. Rideau Lakes has formally joined the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Tourism Loop Partnership (EORTL) with a contribution of \$3,000. Partners include Rideau Lakes, Frontenac, Lanark, Leeds & Grenville, Renfrew and the Town of Smiths Falls in an effort to establish a 350-kilometre loop connecting the multi-use trails: the Cataraqui Trail, the K & P Trail and the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail. Funding applications were successful in 2024 and a trail assessment was conducted in May 2024, as the first phase in a 5-year goal to launch this loop as a world class tourism attraction, aimed to bring cyclists to the area. In phase two, "Trail Towns" will be highlighted. Tourism along the Cataraqui trail will positively impact the communities of Lombardy, Portland, Forfar and Chaffeys Lock. The trail assessment report is in development. Preparations for trail resurfacing, parking areas and experience development projects along the loop should be considered as funding opportunities are announced. Information is posted at: https://ohto.ca/regional-trail-dev-partnership. An updated report Consolidated report of all Village Vision recommendations to date was provided at the October ECD meeting and was included as information on the November 4th Council Agenda. Rideau Lakes has been selected to host the EDCO Eastern Conference in Fall 2025. The application to the Tourism Growth Fund submitted by Leeds Grenville with for a joint initiative related to experience development for the 200th Anniversary of the Rideau Canal was unsuccessful. The EORTL draft Engagement Strategy (next steps) has been circulated to project partners for review and comment. Report ECD 2025-04 (Village Vision Program Summary of Recommendations) proceeded to Council on June 2, 2025 and then circulated to CECs as a status report. Report ECD 2025-06-02 Village Renewal Projects was discussed at the regular committee meeting in June. The Community Engagement Plan has been completed and included in the September 2 meeting package.</p>

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		Parks Canada Partnership		A partnership meeting with Parks Canada and NAHS took place on February 11 at Newboro Hall for a discussion with the committee about Parks Canada properties within villages. Takeaways from the meeting are as follows: The Director's Office at Parks Canada will work with their Realty team to provide the Township with a template for unsolicited proposals to guide future submissions; The Director's Office at Parks Canada will inquire with their Realty team about options to deal with the boat house in Newboro that is in disrepair, and this process if successful can guide our collective actions for similar situations in the future; The Director's Office at Parks Canada will ensure that the Royal Visit suggestion for Rideau 200th is included in the upcoming visioning exercise with the Parks Canada Stakeholder Advisory Committee; The Township has been invited to resubmit the Chaffeys trail / pedestrian pathway initiative for consideration (resurfacing of a pedestrian pathway along Marion Dunn Trail in Chaffeys Lock to increase pedestrian safety); The Township of Rideau Lakes is welcome to propose a parking lot plan or design for Newboro on Parks Canada property; The Township may propose a pedestrian pathway as illustrated on the "Newboro Cut" design as a step towards the overall vision (developed by Dudley Hill); that Parks Canada staff are open to participating in passport programs such as Spring Into Rideau by stamping/signing passports at lock stations during the regular operating season. A letter was received from the Newboro and Area Historical Society to advance the "Newboro Cut" project, seeking support in principle for a proposal to Parks Canada regarding a canal-side walking path, linking waterfront docking areas to village businesses. ECD 2025-30 was ratified by Council on July 7, 2025 and a letter of support was provided to the NAHS dated July 11, 2025.
		Event Signs		Complete. Report ECD 2025-05 was ratified by Council on June 2, 2025. Seven Event Flags were ordered and received. Correspondence to CEC chairs was issued. An event lending form has been created. A second sandwich board, portable screen, 2 event tents, blue tablecloths and event signs (event, washroom, parking with arrows) are now in stock.
2025 EDCO Conference	Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) Eastern Conference 2025	EDCO Steering Committee, Marie White, The Opinicon	\$5,000	In progress. The Opinicon has partnered with the Township of Rideau Lakes to host the EDCO conference on Thursday, October 2, 2025 in Chaffeys Lock. An agreement has been signed. EDCO has brought a steering committee together to confirm speakers and formalize agenda details. Sponsorship packages have been sent to Economic Development partners. Leeds Grenville has come on board to provide 10 speaker gift bags and lanyards for attendees. OnTrac Employment Resource Centre has joined on as a Bronze Sponsor with a contribution of \$500. KEYS Employment and Newcomer Services has joined on as a Silver Sponsor with a contribution of \$1,000. Valley Heartland Community Futures Development Corporation has joined as a Silver Sponsor with a contribution of \$1,000. LeBoat has joined on as an in-kind sponsor providing mini-tours over the lunch hour. A draft agenda has been posted.

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Capital				
Rebranding - Sign Replacement	Staff to implement the approved Sign Design and Replacement Strategy. Per 2020 Branding Guidelines approved by Council.	Marie White Leila Stafford (Corporate Services), Facilities and Parks	\$1,500	In progress. Signs to be ordered in 2026 include (1) a second sign for Shillington Park, (2) Seven amenity tag bars for park signs (3) Road Sign and arrow for Sand Lake and Shillington Park (5) a second sign for Newboro Branch. May add facility signs to Red Brick School and Chaffeys Lock Community Hall, to be determined. A sign was ordered and installed "Home of the Old Stone Mill" as a tag bar on the Delta Village signs. A review of signs was completed and some outstanding signs were ordered, totalling approximately 115 signs. Library signs were added for consideration, including Newboro Branch, South Elmsley Branch and Portland Branch. Signs installed in May 2025: (1) Portland Community Hall sign (2-sided), (2) George Morton Park Sign, (3) at Ronald E Holman Municipal Complex, tag bars for the South Elmsley Hall, the Library branch (4) Millstream Park (2-sided), (5) Beverley Centre with 3 tag bars for the Delta Branch of the Library, the Fire Station and the Addictions & Mental Health centre (6) Historic Settlement signs: Briar Hill (near Morton), Esthertown (near Jones Falls), Halladay Quarry (near Elgin) and Fosterville (on Davis Lock Road). Replacement signs for The Bush and Freeland have been installed. [Note: The last two Historic Settlement signs to be installed include Ballentine (near Golf Club Road) and the second side on Halladay Quarry (near Elgin).] Welcome at Toledo and Rideau Ferry have been installed. The gateway sign for Morton has been delivered and is ready for installation. Request for additional signs at municipal harbours will be considered as part of the 2026 budget process.
Other				
Message From the Chair	Messages on the Economic Development Section (Grow) of the Rideau Lakes website, listed under Newsletters on the Rideau Lakes website, and shared through eNews as an Economic Development update.	Marie White /Chair	n/a	