



## EASTERN WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that our office is situated on the traditional Audenosaunee Mohawk Territories with gratitude and respect, we acknowledge the significant contributions indigenous peoples have made to preserve the land around us.

### WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Words from the ED  
What is The Board up to  
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Links for organizations from Eastern Workforce Innovation Board's website

All you need to know about  
Your Local Labour Market

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 | JULY 2024

### WORDS FROM THE ED

Frank O'Hearn  
Executive  
Director



Greetings from the Eastern Workforce Innovation Board.

We continue our work in nurturing a strong workforce and providing accurate and timely labour market information to our

community. We have been reaching out to our economic development partners in our region this past month and we are pleased to advise that there are a number of good news stories to report on regarding our communities' responses to the various challenges our workforce and employer community are experiencing. This newsletter will focus on housing initiatives. A number of initiatives are underway in various communities in our catchment area. The need for housing

to accommodate workforce is a common and critical theme across our region and province. This newsletter will hopefully provide a better understanding to what initiatives are underway to address housing. This is certainly a very complex subject and it will take extensive planning and investments to address the housing needs of our population. The good news is that there are initiatives underway. It is critical that this issue be addressed and it ensures adequate housing for all members of our society, regardless of their social economic situation. Our plan is to include in our newsletter updates on how our community is reacting to the various workforce challenges within our region. Celebrate these actions with a more positive spin and hopefully this will increase the momentum in addressing our workforce challenges.

On a more general note, our labour market continues to have its challenges in respect to the

staffing needs within the hospitality and health care sector. The question of wages and life style needs of its workers continue to be the key issue. Good news is that our manufacturing sector does appear to be much more stable in respect to this sector workforce needs. They do have adequate applicants to meet their needs in most areas of their operations. There continues to be some imbalances in the recruitment of specialized occupations.

The construction sector continues to have its challenges in the recruitment of individuals within the skilled trades. There continues to be a severe lack of female representation within this key sector of our local economy.

We encourage you to utilize our website <https://www.workforcedev.ca/> and refer to various reports and links to employment.

## WHAT THE BOARD IS UP TO?

### LLMP Report:

Frank and Sandra Wright are conducting outreach to Economic Development and Chambers of Commerce. This will be followed up with discussions with the Employment Ontario Network. We have booked Erik Lockhart for half days on Tuesday November 19 and Wednesday November 20, 2024. These sessions will facilitate what the community is doing to address needs and challenges and their action plans. There will be a presentation December 11, 2024 to provide the results of the LLMP report. The final report will be submitted to the Ministry February 21, 2025.

[Local Labour Market Report Planning LLMP Reports – Eastern Workforce Innovation Board \(workforcedev.ca\)](#)

### Workforce Development:

We are producing 4 newsletters this fiscal. There will be a focus on themes from findings during LLMP report consultations.

[Newsletters – Eastern Workforce Innovation Board \(workforcedev.ca\)](#)

### Employer Engagement:

The Board will continue to offer the Labour Market Information Help Desk. Sandra Wright will respond to the requests. We will promote the Help Desk through social media, career fairs and other means our LMI Help Desk service can answer questions such as:

- What skills are in demand in my area?
- What is the demographic of workers in my area?
- What is the demand for my occupation?
- What is the breakdown of industries in my area?

We provide answers to questions about economic trends, industry and occupational breakdowns, wages demographics and more.

To ask a question, click here [LMI Help Desk - Ask a Question](#)



Videos of potential careers. Go to our website to see videos of careers in our region.

<https://www.workforcedev.ca/career-videos/>

## THE LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

During consultations for the Eastern Workforce Innovation Board Local Labour Market Report the topic of the lack of housing was a consistent topic that came up.

### Building More Homes – Faster and Affordable

The federal government is working with governments at the provincial and municipal levels, across Canada to help them cut red tape to speed up permit approvals, to lift zoning restrictions, and to build more homes, faster. Many initiatives have already been put in place and more will continue to be added. Within its first six years, the Affordable Housing Fund, has already committed funding to repair or renew nearly 129,000 homes, also while supporting the construction of more than 31,500 new homes.

The housing shortage has also been a growing issue in the area. Not only is there a lack of available housing, the costs of renting or obtaining a mortgage are not financially feasible for many people. Without suitable housing available it becomes very difficult to attract workers from outside the area.

### Infrastructure

Lack of available and affordable housing for local residents and adequate housing to attract and retain migrants to the area. Although housing prices are leveling off, increased interest rates are a deterrent in making new purchases and there is still the availability issue.

There are Initiatives to address the housing issue in our region:

### City of Kingston:

- New incentives to encourage rental housing development no available applications are open for the new Community Improvement Plan, which offers property tax incentives to encourage new rental housing development in the city.
- “Addressing the housing crisis and supporting housing affordability requires a lot of new homes but also a wider range of housing types including rental units,” said Paige Agnew, Commissioner of Growth and Development Services. “As the City we don’t build new homes but we create conditions to support its growth, this plan helps create conditions for more rental housing growth.”
- Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program provides a property tax grant equivalent to 50 per cent of the municipal portion of incremental property taxes (the difference between pre-construction and post-construction taxes) for two years following occupancy of the new rental apartment buildings.
- Vacant Land Tax Program provides tax grant equivalent to 100 per cent of the municipal portion of the property tax for the vacant property while an eligible rental apartment building is under construction, for a maximum period of two years.
- Affordable Rental Incentive; A bonus financial intended to encourage the construction of rental units that meet the CMHC definition affordable for low to moderate income households. This incentive only applies to affordable rental units, but it can double the benefits for Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program for those affordable units.
- The Home Ownership Program helps lower-income households buy affordable homes. It helps people who currently rent a place and want to buy a home in Kingston or Frontenac County by offering a forgivable loan for the down payment. You might qualify for this program if you are currently renting housing or are a first-time buyer, and would like to buy a home priced at \$500,00 or less in the City of Kingston or the County of Frontenac.
- The City provides capital funding assistance to private and non-profit housing providers who commit to including affordable housing units in a project. The funding is provided during the construction phase of the project and in exchange the housing provider commits to renting a part of the units at an affordable rate for a defined period of time.
- The City offers forgivable loans to home owners who create more affordable housing in the city by developing an additional a residential unit on their property.

Please find below links related to housing initiatives:

- \$27.6 million – Housing Accelerator Fund – Whig article: <https://www.thewhig.com/news/kingston-receives-27-million-from-federal-housing-fund>
- CMHC Overview - <https://assets.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/sites/cmhc/professional/project-funding-and-mortgage-financing/funding-programs/all-funding-programs/housing-accelerator-fund/action-plan-summaries/haf-action-plan-summaries-kingston-en.pdf?rev=538fa4fd-2d36-4791-9889-d28001dd7b60>
- Additional 3.2 million announcement - <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1004391/ontario-rewards-kingston-with-32-million-for-exceeding-2023-housing-targets>
- Update on Affordable Housing Initiatives (see item 3 re: units planned or being constructed) - <https://pub-cityofkingston.escrimemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=2139>
- Homes for Heros – Kingston - <https://homesforheroesfoundation.ca/kingston/>

#### Chamber of Greater Kingston of Commerce

- The Chamber expressed its support for the proposed amendments to Kingston's Official Plan and Zoning By-Laws as outlined under the Recommendation Report-City-initiated Housing and Administrative Amendments. The Chamber strongly believes that the proposed amendments across eight themes demonstrate a thorough consideration of Kingston's housing needs.
- Theme One: Align Documents with Bill 23 and Allow Four Units as it will streamline residential development processes and expand housing option within urban boundaries.
- Theme Two: Support Affordable Housing as it will bolster the supply of residential units thereby supporting recruitment efforts and workforce retention efforts.
- Theme Three: Support Housing and Upzone Campus Expansion Area as it will diversify the housing market, providing more housing choices for employees and residents.
- Theme Four: Streamline Development Review Process as it will simplify and expedite development approvals and reduce costs and timelines associated with new projects. This can foster a conducive environment for investment in Kingston.
- Theme Five: Allow Conversion of Existing Non-residential Buildings into Residential as it will facilitate the use of existing infrastructure to address the housing crisis saving time while enabling business owners who own underutilized commercial buildings to generate revenue.
- Theme Six: Streamline Approvals Along Express Transit Routes as it will encourage Transit-Oriented Development making it easier for employees to commute. Businesses will benefit by attracting a wider pool of talent who prefer public transportation over being dependent on cars.
- Theme Seven: Workforce and Institutional Housing as it involves the Kingston community (employers and institutions) to address pressing housing needs, thereby acknowledging the housing crisis requires a collaborative approach.
- Theme Eight: Administrative Amendments as it will shorten the existing Official Plan ensuring it is user-friendly and easily understandable.

#### City of Brockville:

##### Housing Intensification Actions:

- Establish a Housing Committee to look at how the City provides a range of housing options and tiny homes
- Waterfront Redevelopment
- Increase mixed-use and walkable development
- Increase Brockville population while maintaining affordability
  - Increase population of workers
  - Tax base benefits
  - Ability to offer more services
- Complete development of 36-46 King St. West

##### Design solutions for homelessness

- Design strategy with municipal partners on funding and assessment resulting in treatment services, shelter, housing
- Increase Organizational Capacity
- Partner with the County on Social Housing projects

#### Leeds and Grenville Affordable housing Development Lab Pilot Project Joint Services Committee Report February 6, 2024

- There was an affordable Housing Developments and Events Survey conducted in 2023. The majority of responses were from developers and community organizations. The top challenges to development were identified as:
  - Lack of funding or financing to get started
  - Lack of funding of financing to start construction
  - Land-use related (e.g. zoning, OP)
- What is the Lab? The Lab will assist non-profit groups, municipalities, and community-minded entrepreneurs without development experience to receive a feasibility assessment and development plan to move forward on an affordable housing construction project.
- The objectives of The Lab is to foster the development of long-term Affordable Housing units, move the needle forward faster by helping to get projects started, and provide a comprehensive assessment to be used for funding/financing applications. Reduce the financial risk to the organization by creating an in-depth feasibility assessment and development plan to reduce the unknowns.
- This will happen through expression of interest to obtain the services of an experienced Housing Developer, an application process for organizations to apply for The Lab's services. Applications are assessed for suitability for the program by senior staff in the Community Housing Department.
- Some Target Projects: Projects must be socially-sustainable (e.g. located in communities, proximity to community services).
- The Lab's Housing Developer will: assess organizational capacity, complete a financial assessment, determine land-use planning requirements, create a preliminary design (e.g. Lego Block concept of what can be built on the land), create a detailed action plan on how to move forward on the project.
- Why is the Lab Needed? An in-depth assessment and development plan will provide greater certainty on the feasibility of the project and what is needed to move forward, there are development projects today that have stalled due to lack of financing, lack of organizational capacity and lack of certainty in the feasibility of their projects. The Lab is intended to manage the risk to the organization and move forward with a workable plan.

#### Feedback from the EWIB outreach to the community

- Overall the feedback was positive regarding housing starts and initiatives underway. This includes the creation of housing units for workers. In the town of Gananoque there are 100 units in the planning process. The city of Kingston will have increased coordination of planning department within the city to increase available sites. University and College are active in increasing student units. In Brockville Burnberry Farms is investing in small residences on site for workers. This includes initiatives around housing for workers via Northern Cables and Leclerc Cookies for workers. Prescott has employers looking at leasing space for workers to reside. They are also looking to decrease municipal requirements for housing initiatives for example parking requirements and increased incentives by town for housing development.

#### Affordable housing in Leeds and Grenville, Caroline Rigutto, Affordable Housing Coordinator

[Affordable Housing Development - Leeds & Grenville \(leedsgrenville.com\)](https://leedsgrenville.com)

## STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW

Another institution in the eatery world in Kingston turned off its grills for the final time in March. Carmelinda's Family Restaurant, which opened in 1987 along Princess Street near Bayridge Drive. Tony and Tina Silva's family-owned diner has been in business for 37 years. Quaresma, Tony and Tina's daughter who worked at Carmelinda's as a youth and continued to help her parents, along with her brother, T.J., said "It's been a good, long run." In September Tina and Tony are going to Portugal.

**Rideau Carpentry and Construction, founded during the pandemic** was named 2023 business of the year in Rideau Lakes township in April awards ceremony in Elgin. MP Michael Barrett and MPP Steve Clark were on hand to provide congratulatory scrolls for the winners. In a press release, the township said owners Scott Brown and Matt Parkinson opened the business in late 2020, employing several local residents in the Delta and Elgin areas. The company has "ensured that they are trained and certified to assist builds for the homeless, and repair home for the local Aboriginal Housing Association," officials said. Brown, Parkinson, and all their employees "spend weeks away from their families to work on these construction projects in order to help rebuild communities."

**Brockville's movie theatre will shutter operations** this summer after 18 years in business. Galaxy Cinemas Brockville, located at the Thousand Islands Mall, closed July, 2024. "Our lease was up and we made the very difficult decision not to renew it," Jason Benway, the company's executive director of operations for Quebec West and Ontario East region, said in a statement. "Thanks to our employees and the local community for all their dedication and support over the past 18 years." But there's still hope, said Jonathan Hanna, administrative co-ordinator at the Brockville Arts Centre. In the four years in the early 2000s when Brockville did not have a movie theatre, the arts centre stepped as best it could to offer residents a place to see new films. They hope do the same this time around.

**A humble business mogul and a trailblazing volunteer** became the latest community members honoured for a life time achievement. At its annual general meeting at the Brockville Country Club, the Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce made Athens construction mogul and philanthropist George Tackaberry the latest recipient of its Lifetime Business Achievement Award, while former Brockville councillor Linda Eyre became the first-ever recipient of the Lifetime Volunteer Achievement Award. The business award, sponsored annually by the 1000 Islands Community Development Corporation, sees an independent committee of judges choose a recipient following multiple criteria, including community involvement, mentorship, economic impact, job creation, volunteerism, longevity and personal or corporate generosity. Linda Eyre is a trailblazer entering traditionally male roles. She was the first woman elected to Brockville council, serving that capacity from 1988 to 1991. On the volunteer front, Eyre has held leadership roles for dozens of organizations and initiatives, including time on the Heritage Brockville Committee, St. Lawrence Lodge Family Council, and the St. Lawrence Lodge Building Committee, as well as with the Brockville Museum, Brockville Tourism Committee, 1000 Islands Community Development Corporation, Brockville Arts Centre, Brockville Public Library, and the Brockville Railway Tunnel Committee.

**The Leeds Grenville Small Business Starter Company Plus** held its graduation in April. Thirteen graduates took the stage to receive their certificate, presented to them by a local dignitary, acknowledging their completion of the one-year entrepreneurial mentoring course. The ceremony was held in the Ruth Evanson room of Prescott Town Hall. Students were honoured with a reception and dinner out at one of Prescott's restaurants. The criteria to qualify for the course are specific. Applicants must be 18 years of age, not attending school, have started their business in the last five years and not be enrolled in any government or private program of the same type. The LG Small Business Starter Company Plus program began in 2014 as a youth initiate, but evolved to an adult program, said small business development officer and program mentor Jeanette Johnston. "This program educates the participants but even more than that, it manifests important relationships that are key to running a successful business; businesses need never operate in isolation or without support again," she said.

**Media Release: KEYS' Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Madeleine Nerenberg** is the next Executive Director of KEYS Employment and Newcomer Services. KEYS wishes a warm farewell to the founding executive director, Michael Harris. Madeleine is a 16-year veteran of KEYS, who started her journey with the organization as a Resource Centre Specialist, Youth Employment Counsellor, Immigrant Employment Specialist and has evolved into a strategic leader within the organization. As the Director of Newcomer Services, Madeleine has become known as a sector leader and helped to strengthen KEYS' stellar reputation as a dependable service provider with government and non-government funders.

**Edwardsburgh-cardinal will soon be home** to the country's biggest battery energy storage facility, the province announced in May as it works to increase its clean energy portfolio. The company developing the project, Toronto-based Potentia Renewables, confirmed it hopes to get shovels in the ground for the project in 2026, with an opening in 2027. "We see this as a very positive thing moving forward," Edwardsburgh-Cardinal Mayor Tory Deschamps said. The township council has already passed a municipal support resolution welcoming the project, said the mayor. "Our government has secured astounding new investments for the province, from electric vehicle and electric vehicle battery manufacturing to green steel, and the good quality jobs that come with them," said Energy Minister Todd Smith.

**A construction company has been named the city of Kingston's top employer** in May. Tomlinson Group of Companies also took home first place in the "skilled trades" category during the ceremony at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. The winners were determined by a volunteer committee comprised of judges from other chambers of commerce. The awards ceremony was organized staff of the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce and the volunteer Kingston Business Awards Committee. "We are thrilled to recognize exemplary models of excellence and community service by businesses and leaders in the greater Kingston area, and the invaluable contribution they make to Kingston's economic development, unique character and outstanding quality of life," Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce CEO Karen Cross stated in and news release.

## LINKS TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

For Links to our community partners click on the link below to go to our website  
<https://www.workforcedev.ca/community-partners/>



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*The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of Employment Ontario.*