

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028



A Community Economic Development Strategic Plan
for the City of Belleville

2025-2028

Adopted November 2024
by Belleville City Council



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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Belleville acknowledges we are on traditional territory. We recognize and honour the historic relationship of the Indigenous peoples to this land, and acknowledge our shared obligation to respect, honour, and sustain these lands and the natural resources contained within.

We recognize all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit who call Belleville their home, and support the need for cultivating a strong relationship with them. We look forward fostering a path towards reconciliation and show respect for the Indigenous peoples who first lived and currently live on the land where we now all reside together.



BELLEVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR VISION

Through innovation, sustainable progress and cultural vibrancy, Belleville strives to be the epicentre of the region.

Our vision provides direction for:

- Innovation through strategic forward thinking and building a community for the future,
- Sustainable progress through measured strategic response, consideration of the environment and longevity, and
- Cultural vibrancy through events, inclusivity and diversity.

OUR MISSION

To be a strategic partner by leading change, cultivating relationships and delivering innovative solutions.

This mission lays the foundation for our Economic Development Plan, guiding the strategies and initiatives detailed in the following sections to ensure Belleville continues to thrive as a vibrant, inclusive and prosperous community.

OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Belleville Investment Quotient (B-IQ)

Belleville Economic Development Strategy is driven by Belleville Investment Quotient (B-IQ) [CK1] reflecting our core values of innovation, collaboration and sustainability. . IQ represents Investment Quotient (quotient being a way to quantify production) and is relatable to an audience looking for information. B-IQ encapsulates the Belleville Economic Development team's approach to fostering economic growth and community well-being.

INNOVATION

Thinking outside the box, finding unique solutions to drive sustainable growth.

COLLABORATION

Building strong partnerships that foster a supportive, inclusive environment.

SUSTAINABILITY

Focusing on long-term growth, ensuring all initiatives are environmentally and economically sound.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: A GLIMPSE INTO OUR FUTURE

The Belleville Economic Development Strategic Plan (2024-2028) lays the foundation for the future growth and prosperity of our community. The City of Belleville is strategically positioned to build on its strengths and develop into a thriving, dynamic hub for business, tourism and community life. This Economic Development Strategic Plan addresses the critical economic challenges and opportunities facing the city, focusing on innovation, sustainability, collaboration and inclusivity to ensure long-term success.

Key Features of the Strategic Plan Belleville is a city with a diverse economy, rich cultural heritage, and a prime location along Highway 401, making it an attractive destination for investment and growth. Our strategic plan aims to leverage these advantages through a focused approach across five strategic themes:

1) DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Belleville ED will continue to enhance its community by investing in public amenities, revitalizing waterfront areas and promoting initiatives that highlight and celebrate the city's unique culture and quality of life. Projects that highlight our natural landscape, recreation and cultural assets as attractions for visitors and residents will position Belleville as a premier tourism destination.

2) BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

Supporting local businesses and fostering strong relationships within the community is a core priority. The strategic plan emphasizes the need for regular review of business support programs, strengthening partnerships and ensuring streamlined processes and red-tape reduction for business development. Key initiatives include the establishment of mentorship programs, succession planning support, workforce development and creating a welcoming business environment through initiatives like the Workplace Inclusion Charter.

3) ATTRACTION OF NEW INVESTMENT

Belleville ED aims to attract new investment by creating a favourable business environment, with an emphasis on infrastructure development, strategic land use and sector diversification. The creation of a digitized investment toolkit, industrial land development and targeted marketing efforts will be key drivers in positioning Belleville as a destination for high-value sectors such as manufacturing, film production hospitality and technology. QEDC is a key partner in this work with a dedicated regional focus on the industrial and technology sectors.

4) INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

To cultivate a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem, Belleville ED will be an active partner in providing resources/ creating awareness around services in the community that support entrepreneurs and small business. This includes partnership opportunities with services available through the Bay of Quinte Business Centre. The exploration of an incubator program in partnership with Loyalist College is being explored that could amplify existing services that already exist.

5) INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

A thriving economy requires a strong foundation of infrastructure. Belleville ED will help identify gaps and support investment plans in both physical and digital infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses and residents. This includes the expansion of public transit, the development of industrial parks and the modernization of electrical infrastructure. Housing is also a priority, with the city exploring unique and affordable housing options to meet growing demand.



The Importance of Economic Development Economic development is crucial for Belleville's continued success. It drives job creation, attracts new residents and increases the tax base, all of which contribute to improved public amenities and services. By focusing on strategic partnerships, fostering innovation and ensuring sustainable growth, Belleville can position itself as a regional leader in economic development. This plan is designed to create opportunities for businesses, strengthen community ties and promote Belleville as an attractive place to live, work and invest.

Our mission is clear: Belleville is committed to being strategic about growth, deliberate about inclusion and focused on the well-being of its residents and economy. Through collaboration, innovation and forward-thinking, we will ensure a prosperous future for all.

The Belleville Economic Development Strategic Plan is more than just a guide—it's a shared commitment to the future, and we invite the community, businesses and stakeholders to join us in making this vision a reality.



BELLEVILLE: A CITY ON THE RISE

The City of Belleville Economic Development Division is in a strong position to support the city as a thriving epicentre of the region by building upon the important work that has been completed in the past while adapting to an uncertain future. Positioned as a leader among small urban waterfront cities, the city can grow and prosper through its strong community, innovation and cultural vibrancy.

Transformation and Innovation

The City of Belleville continues to see transformation across multiple sectors. Employers in the manufacturing sector provide a space for highly skilled workers and continue to embrace technology through automation. The convergence of technology has supported Belleville as a growing and diverse economic hub, with a thriving landscape mixed with manufacturing, retail, healthcare, education and technology sectors. This diversification has helped the city to weather economic fluctuations effectively, fostering a stable and resilient local economy. Key economic drivers to our success include a robust manufacturing sector, a strategic location including Highway 401 and the CN rail line, Loyalist College providing workforce development and innovation and Belleville's scenic waterfront, recreational activities and cultural events.

Economic development is crucial for Belleville as it seeks to enhance the quality of life for its residents, attract and retain talent and ensure sustainable growth. Investing in economic development has a positive impact on job creation, will improve public amenities and support local businesses. This, in turn, drives population growth, increases the tax base and promotes overall community well-being. Our strategic approach to collaboration and innovation through an economic development lens not only aims to boost the local economy but also makes the city of Belleville a more attractive place for new investments and residents.

The City's Location

Belleville, situated on the Bay of Quinte on the northern shore of Lake Ontario, benefits from a strategic geographical position. Located 190 kilometers east of Toronto and 360 kilometers west of Montreal, Belleville sits along Highway 401, often dubbed a key economic corridor. This advantageous location places Belleville near major urban centers like Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa, as well as the US interstate highway system. Our city's blend of urban and rural landscapes and Bay of Quinte waterfront, combined with nearby vacation destinations, provides residents and businesses with big-city amenities while maintaining the charm of a small urban town.

Our Economic Foundation

Belleville's diverse economy has been the backbone of its growth and prosperity, ensuring the community retains its appeal as a great place to live, work and raise a family. Historically rooted in the industrial sector, Belleville has expanded and evolved to embrace various business sectors, promoting a balanced and resilient local economy. The City's robust industrial base includes production in food, plastics, packaging, auto parts, high-tech communications, research and development, distribution and customer contact centers. As the largest urban hub in Hastings County and the Quinte region, Belleville offers numerous regional services, reinforcing its role as an essential center for the surrounding area.

Belleville's Population

As of the 2021 census, Belleville's population stands at 55,071, with the regional population totaling approximately 220,000 people. The city's population growth rate has consistently outpaced that of other eastern Ontario communities. While the regional population has grown at a slower pace, Belleville has seen a significant rise in new households, increasing from 22,744 in 2016 to 24,582 in 2021 (an 8.1% increase). This growth is attributed to higher rates of household formation and an influx of new families migrating to the area. The 2021 Census shows approximately 33,820 working age residents (age 16-64) and just over 13,000 residents retirement age (65+).

SHAPING OUR STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

We value collaboration, innovation and sustainability.

The Economic Development Strategic Plan has been developed through the collaboration and engagement of community and business partners and City stakeholders through the Economic Development Committee. The plan is intended to guide the work of the Economic Development Division for the next four years (2024-2028). The Action Plan that accompanies the strategic plan is a living document that will be reviewed internally and with our partners, modified, reported on and updated annually.

How We Work Together

Our plan was developed through a collaborative approach involving four in-person events and a series of online engagements with primary stakeholders. Our commitment to ensuring a robust plan requires staff to encompass the perspectives, creativity and wisdom of our key stakeholders and partners.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders from public and private sectors including business owners, Council Members, local not-for profit leaders and community members provided the important guidance around priorities, local opportunities and areas of challenge. A full list of our stakeholders has been included in Appendix A.

The Economic Development Division

Our Economic Development Team was restructured in 2023, including the addition of two people and revision of roles and responsibilities. These changes have provided the division with the human resources required to implement our strategic themes and objectives in partnership with our community.

Our roles encompass:

Manager

Providing fiscal leadership and strategic direction, the manager is responsible for developing and delivering creative and innovative economic development strategies that lead to positive outcomes and impacts on local business.

Investment Attraction

Relationships and communication are important for collaboration, innovation and sustainability. This role is the city's first point of contact for new investment which includes such responsibilities as land inventory oversight, responding to investment inquiries, liaison for industrial land development and creating targeted sector kits.

Business Growth and Retention

By fostering a supportive environment conducive to business growth and retention, the city can sustain a healthy local economy, enhance the standard of living for residents and promote overall prosperity within the community, which in turn ensures long-term fiscal stability.

Destination Development

Tourism is a key driver for revenue to the city through strategies that increase visitor spending and overnight stays. This impacts the collection of Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) which provides significant discretionary funding for city initiatives. Product development and providing resource support for private sector investment is a key role of the city as it relates to tourism development.

Administrative Assistant

Administrative support is imperative for communication, quality service, workflow and logistics within the Economic Development Division. This impacts the performance of the entire department and fosters relationships with all the department's key stakeholders and partners.

Our Economic Development Team will continue to support the vision and direction of our stakeholders and partners as we undertake this important work.

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR OUR PLAN

Understanding our Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats

Belleville exists within larger geographical, socioeconomical and political realities that interact with planning. Our Economic Development Division is integral to ensuring the perspectives of our City and community are represented. As an important precursor to setting strategy, our EDC reviewed relevant Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats that could have an impact on our work through a SWOT analysis. This work bolstered our understanding of the current context for the work we undertake, as well as how things have changed in the recent past and trends to watch as we work through the plan.

Strengths:

- **Diverse Business Sector:** Belleville boasts a wide range of industries, contributing to economic stability and growth.
- **Skilled Workforce:** The Bay of Quinte Region is home to a robust workforce of over 110,000 people. Our regional labour force enjoys a high quality of life, encouraging loyal, hard working and dedicated employees.
- **Natural Attractions and Resources:** The city's natural beauty and resources and waterfront attract residents and tourists alike.
- **Strategic Location:** Proximity to major urban centers like Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa, as well as the US interstate highway system.
- **Strong Community and Economic Partnerships:** Strong community partnerships and advocacy at local and regional levels.
- **Supportive Institutions:** Loyalist College enhances our community, the workforce and economy.
- **Quality of Life:** Family-oriented community with numerous amenities like parks, trails, and recreational facilities.
- **Transportation Infrastructure:** Excellent connectivity through highways, transit systems, and proximity to the 401.
- **Welcoming Community:** Inclusive spaces and a moderate climate make Belleville a desirable place to live for newcomers and those who have lived here for generations.

Challenges:

- **Lack of Serviced Industrial Land:** Insufficient industrial land to meet current and future demands.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** Challenges in maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to support growth.
- **Identity:** Changing populations, demographics, and economy have impacted city branding and marketing strategies in a rapidly changing landscape.
- **Resistance to Change:** Community hesitance towards demographic and growth changes.
- **Labour Shortages:** Shortage of skilled and unskilled workers across sectors.
- **Limited Housing Choices and Childcare:** Insufficient housing options and childcare facilities.
- **Socioeconomic Struggle:** Poverty and addictions have changed the demands on social services and businesses alike as they deal with the needs of residents and those new to the city.

Opportunities:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Access to willing stakeholders and partners for consultations and collaboration.
- **Innovative Solutions:** Opportunities for creative approaches in residential construction and other sectors.
- **Cultural Events:** Potential for more culturally significant events and attractions as our community grows.
- **Diverse Growth:** Leveraging the increasing diversity of the population and business community.
- **Downtown Growth:** Continuing to enhance the downtown area as a vibrant hub.
- **Environmental Assets:** Utilizing natural assets like the waterfront for development and tourism.

Threats:

- **Economic Fluctuations:** Vulnerability to economic changes like taxes, inflation, and funding regulations.
- **Competition:** Competition from other municipalities for investment and residents.
- **Political Instability:** Changes in political agendas and policies impacting economic strategies.
- **Environmental Risks:** Climate impacts on tourism and waterfront development.
- **Housing Pressures:** Increasing demand for housing and related infrastructure pressures.
- **Community Perceptions:** Negative perceptions and stereotypes that may hinder growth.



OUR STRATEGIC THEMES

Belleville's Economic Development Strategy is framed around 5 Strategic Themes encompassing 19 Objectives. Each Strategic Theme and objective are supported by defined Actions.

All themes, objectives and actions align with the City of Belleville Strategic Plan (2012-2032).

Strategic Theme:

Our Strategic Themes are high-level areas of focus that align with our Mission and Vision, providing a framework for objectives and actions to support the implementation of the plan and long-term success.

Objectives:

Our objectives are specific and measurable, providing actionable targets to propel us to success through defining resources, timelines and measurable outcomes.

Action:

Our actions provide a step-by-step plan for accomplishing our objectives, through transparency with responsibility and specific timelines.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN AT A GLANCE

	Strategic Themes	Objectives
1	Destination Development Celebrating our culture and quality of life through sustainable destination and community development involves improving public amenities and services and fostering a vibrant, safe and welcoming community to enhance the lives of our citizens and attract new residents and tourism dollars. Priorities will focus on waterfront revitalization, investing in cultural events and initiatives and building relationships with key partners.	1. Revitalize and Develop Waterfront Areas 2. Foster Cultural Initiatives and Events 3. Build Partnerships to promote the city as a Destination for Tourism, Resident and Business Attraction
2	Business Retention and Expansion Ensures local businesses thrive by addressing their needs, providing business support and helping them overcome challenges while also capitalizing on opportunities.	1. Strengthen Key Partnerships/Focus on Relationship Building 2. Business Supports for Development Activities 3. Business Succession Planning 4. Business Mentorship 5. Marketing and Promotion of Business Community 6. Workforce Development
3	Investment Attraction and Business Development First point of contact in the city for new investment which includes managing land inventory, responding to investment inquiries, city liaison for industrial land development, creating targeted sector kits, etc.	1. Effectively Communicate Information about the City to Attract Potential Investors 2. Infrastructure Planning 3. Development of Industrial Lands

	Strategic Themes	Objectives
4	Innovation and Entrepreneurship Encourage entrepreneurs to develop and grow viable businesses by cultivating an entrepreneurial ecosystem through skill development, advocacy, research and development and sharing resources (data, market research).	1. Develop a Model for Incubation Services 2. Streamline/Communicate City Processes and Community Resources to Entrepreneurs 3. Support programs and initiatives that cultivate an ecosystem of entrepreneurship and innovation.
5	Infrastructure and Connectivity Infrastructure is the backbone to our community growth. Infrastructure developments power businesses and connects workers to their jobs. It creates opportunities within communities and an economy needs reliable infrastructure to connect supply chains and move goods and services.	1. Technological Advancements 2. Transportation Infrastructure 3. Electrical Infrastructure and Modernization 4. Affordable and Unique Housing Options



OUR PATH TO ACTION

Defining our strategic themes and objectives is the first step in moving forward, but to accomplish our plan requires upholding high standards to support our B-IQ values of **collaboration**, **innovation** and **sustainability**. We will do this through:

Partnerships and Collaboration

Implementing our plan will not be possible without the integral collaboration between key stakeholders, partners and city departments. A foundation of our work is cooperation, communication and collaboration with neighbouring municipalities and organizations with whom we develop strategy and work towards common goals.

We also understand the importance of contributing to the work identified in our community partner's strategic plans as several of our initiatives and objectives overlap. Some of our most important and collaborative partners include the Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board, Belleville Chamber of Commerce, Quinte Economic Development Commission, Trenval, Centre for Workforce Development and Loyalist College.

Marketing and Communication

The development of the Economic Development Strategic Plan has paralleled brand development for the Economic Development Division, contributing to the integration and focus of our work. The Strategic Plan and Brand Identity will form the foundation of communication, marketing and promotional activities of the division.

Performance Metrics and Evaluation

Within the Strategic Plan we have built in important key performance indicators (KPIs) for measuring success. As we regularly review our work, we will be transparent about progress, challenges and any need to evolve our thinking as new information becomes available.

Flexible Working Document

The Economic Development Strategic Plan has been developed as a flexible working document. Themes, objectives and actions will be reviewed year over year to hold the team accountable, assess progress and consider relevant cultural and economic changes that should be addressed.

Action

Our strategic themes and objectives are supported by clearly defining the action required to accomplish our plan. The following document outlines our **themes, objectives** and **actions** as well as responsibility and timelines. This document will both guide our work and hold us accountable to our commitments.



GLOSSARY

BCC – Belleville Chamber of Commerce
BIA – Business Improvement Association
BIQ – Belleville Economic Development Division
BOQRMB – Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board
CSD – Community Services Department
COB – City of Belleville
DD WG – Destination Development Working Group
EDC – Economic Development Committee
EDS – Engineering and Development Services
IT – Information Technology
MCEA – Municipal Class Environmental Assessment
MEDJCT – Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
MPP – Member of Provincial Parliament
MRC – Manufacturing Resource Centre
MTO – Ministry of Transportation Ontario
PRMP WG – Parks & Recreation Masterplan Working Group
QAC – Quinte Arts Council
QEDC – Quinte Economic Development Commission
SBC – Small Business Centre
SLT – Senior Leadership Team
TOS – Transportation & Operational Services
WD WG – Waterfront Development Working Group
WFD WG – Workforce Development Working Group
WIC – Workplace Inclusion Charter
YEC – Youth Engagement Committee

Q1: January – March

Q2: April – June

Q3: July – September

Q4: October - December

STRATEGIC THEMES, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS 2024-2028

Strategic Theme #1 – Destination Development

Celebrating our culture and quality of life through sustainable destination and community development involves improving public amenities and services and fostering a vibrant, safe and welcoming community to enhance the lives of our citizens and attract new residents and tourism dollars. Priorities will focus on waterfront revitalization, investing in cultural events and initiatives and building relationships with key partners.

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 1: Revitalize and Develop Waterfront Areas				
A.	Develop a Destination Development Plan that strategically supports the planning and advancement of defined areas to support the evolution of desirable destinations for travellers.	Lead: BIQ Support: BOQRMB/CSD /BCC/BIA	Plan developed that addresses how public can support private development. Addresses internal advocacy and COB risk mitigation tasks, collaborating with internal and external stakeholders. Destination Development Working group formed to support development initiatives/ create strategic alliances.	Q4 2025 – plan completed Q1 2026 – executed/ quarterly review by working group
B.	Form a Waterfront Development Working Group comprised of departmental representatives and community partners	Lead: BIQ Support: CSD/ BOQRMB	Working group meets bi-monthly with actions addressed at each meeting. Support provided for the Waterfront Development Masterplan with focus on long-term development projects for the riverfront and waterfront that assess and create a plan for public/ private partnerships.	Q2 2025

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
C.	Revitalize Meyer's Pier and surrounding areas such as Zwicks, Victoria Park and Riverfront to enhance public access and enjoyment.	Lead: CSD Support: WD WG (CSD/BIQ/EDS)	MCEA is completed with a clear roadmap/ budget. Waterfront development master plan completed/ supported by WD WG.	Q2 2025 - Q1 2027
D.	Strengthen the connection between the waterfront and downtown areas to create a cohesive and accessible community space.	Lead: BIQ Support: DD WG	Review BIA plans re: Healthy Communities Workshop (2021) and Strategic Plans (2019/ 2024) and determine priorities/ collaborative projects that will support this action over the next four years.	Q2 2025
E.	Encourage further private sector investments and strategic alliances, focusing on waterfront areas.	Lead: BIQ Support: WD WG	Review Downtown Commons Study/ identify priorities and strategies related to waterfront specifically. Ensure private investment opportunities are considered when developing the Waterfront Development Master Plan. Design an Investment Attraction strategy around private investment opportunities along city waterfront.	Q3 2025 Q3-Q4 2025 Q2 2026

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 2: Foster Cultural Initiatives and Events				
A.	Identify target areas for product development. i.e. festival/ events that drive overnight visits; and product development that enhances recreational assets and business areas.	Lead: BIQ Support: DD WG/ CSD/TOS/ BIA/BCC/ BOQRMB	Develop a Destination Development Plan that clearly identifies the city's role in product development and how the city can sustainably support private sector led events and activities. Create a process that clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of involved departments.	Q2-Q4 2025
B.	Review inventory of arts and cultural assets that can be bolstered through product development and promotion. Pursue funding for these assets to support retention and enhancement.	CSD/ TOS/ BIA/ Chamber/ BOQRMB	Identify projects in plan that would align with funding programs and have partnership potential. Include budget for product development year over year that can be leveraged to attract external funding for development. To be included in Destination Development Plan.	Q4 2025
C.	Support priorities identified in Belleville Museum Needs Feasibility Study	Lead: CSD Support: DD WG	Work with CSD to determine where economic development would be valued from a product development/ marketing perspective.	2027-2028

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
D.	Build on existing assets to activate public spaces and establish destination experiences. i.e. Art activations/ bike tours/ interactive lighting/ trail activations/ etc.	Lead: BIQ Support: DD WG/QAC/ BIA/ BOQRMB	Seek the expertise of a designer to look at this activation throughout the city centre. Plan should include locations/ type of activation/ costing to properly plan and fund. Could be combined with window activations in vacant units throughout the city including the Downtown District. Entrepreneurship within the arts community is encouraged/ experiences are established and marketed.	2025 - Planning 2026 - Execution
E.	Develop and enhance local trails and parks.	Lead: DD WG Support: TOS/CSD/ BOQRMB/ BIA	Research unique opportunities for activation of public spaces. Design a plan around this that can be used to seek project funding.	2024 (planning) 2025 (funding/ apply)
F.	Support COB destination brand development and persona including improvements to existing destination assets and service standards for new product development.	Lead: DD WG Support: TOS/CSD/ BOQRMB/ BIA	Plan outlines how support is provided by the city. Consider tiered resource support (funding and expertise) that supports sustainability and growth in private product development.	2025 – develop plan 2026 – execution

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
G.	Continue to build Discover Belleville brand to support communication and product development that attracts visitors and overnight stays in the community.	Lead: BIQ Support: BCC	Content calendar created and executed across all digital platforms. Data reviewed and presented quarterly to show growth and activity across all platforms.	Q1 2025 - Ongoing
H.	Capitalize investments made in data analytics software to inform the investment of public resources and support attraction of private sector development.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDC Partners	Data analytics reviewed quarterly with destination development working group. Data captured and reported on during year-end report to EDC and BOQRMB.	Q1 2025 – quarterly review ongoing
I.	Foster enhancement and growth of the Belleville Farmers' Market as a product of the Downtown District and community.	Lead: BIQ Support: SLT/ Farmers' Market Association / BIA/ BOQRMB	Review Downtown Commons Study/ identify priorities and strategies related to the Farmers' Market vision and capital needs. Work with stakeholders to support the development of a business plan that creates revenue opportunities and supports staffing for a sustainable product. Provide coaching and support once plan in place that fosters the market and experiences created.	2025 – Review Studies/ Identify Priorities 2026 – Business Plan Develop 2028 – Implement

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 3: Building partnerships to promote city as a destination for tourism, resident and business attraction.				
A.	Create a communication strategy to highlight positive actions and achievements in the community that celebrate Belleville as a place to live, work and play. Strategy to include communication of corporate opportunities and information.	Lead: BIQ Support: Comms staff/BCC	Communication Plan created for Belleville Economic Development Division. Brand Guide to drive Communications Plan that includes social media content calendar and web plan. Quarterly meeting to plan for content creation and delivery.	Q2 2025 (developed annually/ reviewed quarterly)
B.	Develop public/private partnerships to create experiences and promote local businesses/ prioritize sponsorship opportunities.	Lead: BIQ Support: DD WG	Identify key product support opportunities through Destination Development Plan. Prioritize sponsorship opportunities to strengthen presence/ services of department in community. Determine annual commitments/ # of opportunities supported during budget process.	Q4 (annual)

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
C.	Build on existing assets to activate public spaces and establish destination experiences.	Lead: BIQ Support: DD WG	Work with established organizations re: QAC. Example: Activation of spaces through art. Working group responsible for creating projects that are well designed/ costed/ partners secured. I.e. mural windows/ sidewalk art/ etc. Specific partnerships and projects defined through Destination Development Plan.	2025 - Planning 2026-2028 - Implement
D,	Package and market local experiences to attract tourists and residents.	Lead: BIQ Support: DD WG/ BOQRMB/ BIA/BCC	Quarterly meeting to design package based on ready-for-markets products that will target repeat visitors. Identify product gaps/ design investment package and market opportunities.	Products to be packaged (Q2) and evaluation (Q4)
E.	Evaluate the feasibility of a Tourism Operators Centre of Excellence integrated in a phased approach based on funding.	Lead: Loyalist College Support: SBC/ Trenval/ BIQ/ Municipal Partners	Step 1: Develop Operating Plan Step 2: Seek funding source to execute	2025-26 – Plan development/ funding source 2026-27 – Execution

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Strategic Theme #2 – Business Retention and Expansion Ensures local businesses thrive by addressing their needs, providing business support and helping them overcome challenges while also capitalizing on opportunities.				
ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 1: Strengthen Key Partnerships/ Focus on Relationship Building				
A.	Develop city-led working group(s) with stakeholders around identified key city priorities.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDC Partners	Priorities for each year are identified/ working groups required to execute priorities are formed. Examples of projects that require working groups have been BR&E/ Waterfront Development.	Annual Q1 – Identify Priorities Q2 – Form working group Q4 – Access progress/ plan for following year
B.	Establish a municipal 'Champion' to lead advocacy.	Lead: BCC Support: EDC Partners	Chamber identified as lead when it comes to advocacy for COB issues, especially as it relates to business. EDC and partners to ensure Chamber is aware of issues impacting economic climate and mechanism for channeling this information is identified.	Ongoing – quarterly review

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
C.	Leverage existing programs designed to support business referral and shop local focus.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDC Partners	Elevate existing programs/ tools i.e. findlocalbelleville.ca. Promote membership referral programs (QHBA/ BCC/ QAC). Incorporate shop local/ local business representatives in media campaigns.	Ongoing Incorporate
D,	Support networking events and programming (ie. workshops, trade shows) that encourage sharing of ideas/cross pollination/referrals.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDC Partners	Create annual calendar identifying events to support/ review quarterly. Host 1-2 networking events annually that are outlined in operating plan and provide for opportunities to share experiences and innovate.	2025 – Planning 2026 – Execution
Objective 2: Business Supports for Development Activities				
A.	Enhance and streamline incentive programs for businesses and align with needs? I.e. succession planning/ Community Improvement Plan (CIP)/ etc.	Lead: BIQ Support: SBC/ Trenval/ Loyalist College/ EDS	Annual survey completed with business community via programs offered. Regularly review and update incentive programs to ensure they meet current business needs through CIPs.	Q3 (aligned with budget planning annually)

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
B.	Develop a streamlined, step-by-step process (one-stop-shop) and toolkit for business interactions with the city.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDS/ Comms/ BIA/QEDC	Investment/ Development Toolkit (digital space supported by media) launched.	Q2-Q4 2025
C.	Work with partners to facilitate networking and access to information for businesses.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDC Partners	Identify resources in the community and work with stakeholders to further support business growth. Incorporate relevant information/ resources available through partners into EDC Communications to support circulation.	Communications Plan - Ongoing
D.	Promote/ create awareness about Loyalist College Research Facilities to ensure businesses understand the value of this resource in our community.	Lead: BIQ Support: BR&E WG	Working group to host bi-annual event at Loyalist College that connects these partners and businesses/ identifies strategies/ celebrates wins/ focuses on R&D opportunities for business.	2025 - Planning 2026 - Execution
E.	Create a roadmap for available resources in our community for supporting business. This would involve delineating the services in our community under different topics i.e. job availability/ investment attraction/ coaching/ etc.	Lead: BIQ Support: Employment Services/ EDC Partners	Partners access resources/ clearly define services to inform roadmap. Collective strengths and opportunities are clearly defined and communicated.	2026 – Planning 2027 – Execution

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 3: Business Succession Planning				
A.	Work with community partners to identify and implement succession planning supports and programs to ensure business continuity.	Lead: BIQ Support: SBC/ Trenval/ Loyalist College/ EDS	Research available programs and determine opportunities to enhance/ incentivize/ improve participation. Create new program if not currently in place. Access marketing and determine potential to work this promotion through Work in Quinte 15% increase in participation year-over-year	2025 – Assess 2026 – Enhance/ Deliver
Objective 4: Business Mentorship				
A.	Develop a model for coaching/ mentorship to support business growth and retention efforts.	Lead: BIQ Support: SBC/ Trenval/ Loyalist College	Model that includes delivery of resources, tools, key events and training activities is packaged, promoted and is accessible.	2025 – Planning 2026 - Delivery
B.	Utilize resources from the Small Business Centre (SBC) to provide mentorship and guidance.	Lead: BIQ Support: SBC/ Trenval/ Loyalist College	Quarterly meeting with partners to enhance existing partnership/ improve programs and share resources.	2025 - Planning 2026 - Delivery

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 5: Marketing & Promotion of Business Community				
A.	Recognize and celebrate employers, businesses and organizations for their contributions to our community through targeted communication and marketing efforts.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDC Partners	BIQ Communications Plan developed annually/ reviewed quarterly.	Complete plan Q2 2025 Quarterly review completed.
Objective 6: Workforce Development				
A.	Establish a workforce development "working group" to address specific community and economic development issues i.e. advocacy for wage subsidies.	Lead: BIQ Support: WFD WG/EDC Partners/ YEC	Determine if anything currently exists/ how BIQ can support. Determine lead organization to carry out this work if not currently a community focus.	Q3 2025- Ongoing
B.	Strengthen cooperation with local partners to align with workforce needs. Examples include a. partner with educational institutions to ensure training programs meet local industry requirements. b. foster relationships with employment agencies and community organizations (8 Wing) for career transition and post-military opportunities.	Lead: WFD WG Support: SBC/QEDC /MRC/EDC Partners/ Employ Agencies/ Loyalist College	Quarterly Meetups (themed/ strategy focused). Host annual event that brings these groups together. Event to include speaker/ panel series.	2025 - ongoing

Strategic Theme #3 – Investment Attraction and Business Development

First point of contact for new investment which includes managing land inventory, responding to investment inquiries, liaison for industrial land development, creating targeted sector kits, etc.

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
C.	Respond to labour related business needs identified through BRE programs and community engagement.	Lead: BIQ Support: WFD WG/EDC Partners/ YEC	Priorities clearly defined in BRE Manufacturing Report 2024/ future BR&E/ built into Operating Plan.	2025 - ongoing
D.	Support EDI initiatives and programming to support business and workforce retention and expansion.		WIC Operating Plan established and executed.	2025 - ongoing
E.	Support programs and initiatives that retain employees, youth and newcomers in our community.		Quarterly connection between BIQ and YEC to support strategy development and execution. Include in quarterly partner meetups.	2026 - ongoing

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 1: Effectively communicate information about the city to attract potential investors				
A.	Develop and maintain a comprehensive, digitized investment toolkit to streamline information and attract potential investors.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDS/BIA/QEDC	Determine elements/ framework for how toolkit is designed online. Reviewed quarterly for updates.	Launch by Q3 2025
Objective 2: Infrastructure Planning				
A.	Effectively plan for key infrastructure to support development in key growth areas including along Belleville's underdeveloped waterfront.	Lead: CSD Support: WD WG	Infrastructure required clearly defined through MCEA work and Waterfront Development Masterplan	Waterfront Development Plan complete Q1 2027
B.	Conduct a gaps analysis by identifying neighborhood needs i.e. grocery store/ childcare service, etc.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDS/QEDC	Step 1: Identify locations for gaps analysis to be completed i.e. Waterfront/ Downtown District. Review manufacturing BR&E results for industrial analysis. Step 2: Gaps analysis completed for each development area of focus. Step 3: Investment package/ target marketing to attract investment/ fill identified gaps. Target marketing is data driven	Q4 2025 to inform 2025 Operating Budget 2025 Operating Budget

Objective 3: Development of Industrial Lands				
C.	Identify clusters and opportunity to impact supply chain	Lead: BIQ Support: QEDC/BIA/EDC	Focus investment content on clusters that city seeks to attract. Develop content around existing clusters to support investment attraction efforts.	2026
A.	Develop industrial land based on infrastructure planning, ensuring space for new businesses to establish operations. Comprehensive development plan with clear timelines to ensure the systematic growth of the industrial park.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDS	Step 1: Comprehensive development plan created with clear timelines to ensure the systematic growth of the industrial park and informed by Employment Lands Study. Step 2: Complete feasibility study on two growth areas identified to determine cost/ timelines/ etc. to support growth strategy.	2025/ 26 - Planning 2027-2028 - Implement
Strategic Theme #4 – Innovation and Entrepreneurship Encourage entrepreneurs to develop and grow viable businesses by cultivating an entrepreneurial ecosystem through skill development, advocacy, research and development and sharing resources (data, market research).				
ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 1: Develop a model for Incubation Services				
A.	Assess/ determine what incubation services are available and identify any gaps. Consider Pop-up Program a tool within this model and how it can be elevated to support entrepreneurship.	Lead: BIQ Support: SBC/ Trenval/ Loyalist College	Model developed and used to evaluate market readiness and growth for start-ups. Includes assessment, strategic planning supports, mentorship, etc.	Q2 2025 – Planning Q3 2025 – Execution Q4 2025 – Evaluation

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 2: Streamline/ communicate city processes and community resources to entrepreneurs.				
A.	Establish a communication strategy (roadmap) that consolidates information about resources available in the community to support businesses and entrepreneurs. To include provincial/ federal funds and resources to support start-up ventures.	Lead: BIQ Support: SMC/ Trenval/ Loyalist College/ Comms Staff	Replicate Investment Development toolkit model for entrepreneurs/ start-ups. Resources are digitized/ accessible/ one stop shop	2026
B.	Enhance communication and branding efforts to promote the existing ecosystem for entrepreneurs.	Lead: BIQ Support: EDC	Strategies identified in BIQ Communications Plan (utilize digital media channels to highlight available resources and opportunities).	Q2 2025- Ongoing
Objective 3: Develop Programs to Support Entrepreneurs				
A.	Establish an incubator/ accelerator program in partnership with Loyalist College and other stakeholders to support emerging and existing entrepreneurs. This program could include mentorship, resources, investors, networking opportunities and other supports for stabilization.	Lead: Loyalist College Support: BIQ/SMC/ Trenval/ Loyalist College	Create work plan/ identify funding sources.	2025-26 – Planning 2026-27 – Implement

Strategic Theme #5 – Infrastructure and Connectivity

Infrastructure is the backbone to our community growth. Infrastructure developments power businesses and connects workers to their jobs. It creates opportunities within communities and an economy needs reliable infrastructure to connect supply chains and move goods and services. It is imperative that ED staff understand the developments and challenges with infrastructure and how it relates to development activities. Support to secure investment and funding opportunities is also critical.

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
Objective 1: Technological Advancements				
A.	Implement the use of technology and apps to streamline city processes and resource management, enhancing efficiency and accessibility.	Lead: IT Support: SLT	IT to be consulted when new processes developed/ executed to ensure efficiencies and accessibility. Staff to identify areas that impact economic/ destination development and create process to stay abreast of developments and challenges related to infrastructure. Refer to IT 10-year capital plan	Ongoing Q3-4 annual assessment to inform budget Q1-2 annual implementation
Objective 2: Transportation Infrastructure				
A.	Establish the Belleville Eastern Arterial Route to improve connectivity and access to the industrial park, facilitating economic growth.	Lead: SLT Support: MTO/ EDS/ EDC/ BCC/ MPP	BIQ staff to seek updates from stakeholders re: current/ future infrastructure plans including priority/ timelines provincially. EDC to play integral role in advocacy for provincial funding for this priority project.	2025 – Ongoing

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
			Gaps are identified/ actions to be incorporated into feasibility/ development plans. Plans will support access to funding.	
B.	Increase the availability and sustainability of Belleville Transit services, including regular review of routes and enhancing options like Uride, GoTrain, and Via Rail.	Lead: TOS Support: BIQ/ Transpo Committee	Survey industry/ residents annually to seek transit feedback followed by service recommendations based on results.	Q3 – Survey Q4 – Budget Q1-2 – Implement changes/ enhancements

Objective 3: Electrical Infrastructure and Modernization

A.	Modernize and upgrade the electrical infrastructure to meet current and future demands, ensuring reliable and efficient energy supply.	Lead: Utilities Support: Hydro One/ Enbridge/ Elexicon/ EDS/ MEDJCT	BIQ staff to seek updates from stakeholders re: current/ future infrastructure plans. Gaps are identified/ actions to be incorporated into feasibility/ development plans. Plans will support access to funding. Funding is sought to increase capacity and distribution to make our region more competitive (i.e. Western Ontario more advanced).	2025-26 – Industrial Lands Feasibility Study
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ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
A.	Modernize and upgrade the electrical infrastructure to meet current and future demands, ensuring reliable and efficient energy supply.	Lead: Utilities Support: Hydro One/ Enbridge/ Elexicon/ EDS/ MEDJCT	BIQ staff to seek updates from stakeholders re: current/ future infrastructure plans. Gaps are identified/ actions to be incorporated into feasibility/ development plans. Plans will support access to funding. Funding is sought to increase capacity and distribution to make our region more competitive (i.e. Western Ontario more advanced).	2025-26 – Industrial Lands Feasibility Study
B.	Continue efforts to increase broadband availability and access, supporting both residential and commercial needs.	Lead: Eastern ON Wardens Caucus Support: OEMC	BIQ staff to seek updates from stakeholders re: current/ future infrastructure plans. Gaps are identified/ actions to be incorporated into feasibility/ development plans. Plans will support access to funding. Funding is sought to increase capacity and distribution to make our region more competitive (i.e. Western Ontario more advanced).	Ongoing
C.	Develop a plan to build EV infrastructure throughout the city to support increasing demand.	Lead: BIQ Support: SLT/ Departmental Reps	Step 1: Identify departmental reps to be engaged in process. Step: 2 Engage EDC Partner Groups/ conduct needs analysis/seek partnership funding.	Q3-4 2025 - Engagement Q1- 2 2026 – Study

ITEM	ACTION	PARTNERS	MEASURES	TIMELINE
			Step 3: Complete needs analysis (existing infrastructure/public space/ private sector/ infrastructure gaps/ etc.) Step 4: Seek budget/ external funding and grants to implement over study determined timeframe.	Q3 – 4 – Capital/ Operating Implement
Objective 4: Affordable and Unique Housing Options				
A.	Innovate by providing more affordable, unique housing options like small houses and modular homes to meet diverse community needs.	Lead: EDS Support: BIQ/EDC/ MP/MPP/ BCC/QHBA	Working group through EDS to assess current housing stock/ short-term developments/ new opportunities. Incorporate into communications. Research unique projects happening in other communities/ housing trends that would help meet this objective.	2025 – Ongoing
B.	Improve subdivision planning to accommodate commercial use properties, optimizing land use for economic and community development.		Confirm current accommodations/ restrictions. Identify opportunities within restricted areas/ consult planning for potential changes that reflect commercial demands.	2025 – Ongoing
C.	Collaborate with residential development as a focus sector industry.	Lead: BIQ Support: QHBA/EDS	Engage QHBA and support industry through data that drives growth for the region. Determine challenges and gaps that can be filled by industry as a leading partner.	2025 – Ongoing

APPENDIX A - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 1.Brand Identity: Belleville Economic Development (2024)
- 2.City of Belleville Strategic Plan: City of Belleville (2022)
- 3.2024 BR + E Report: Prosper Belleville Manufacturing (2024)
- 4.Parks & Recreation Masterplan
- 5.Waterfront Development Masterplan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Strategic Plan is a culmination of the contributions of many and would not be possible without the participation of community members, business partners and city stakeholders.

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Ian Stock
Jill Raycroft (BCC)
Jodie Jenkins
Kalan MacRow
Mark Kirkpatrick
Maury Flunder
Murali Reddy
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Voting Members of Council

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Councillor Garnet Thompson
Councillor Sean Kelly
Councillor Tyler Allsopp
(until August 2024)

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Questions about the City of Belleville Economic Development Strategic Plan?

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