



**City of Kingston  
Information Report to Council  
Report Number 21-132**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administrative Officer  
**Resource Staff:** None  
**Date of Meeting:** May 18, 2021  
**Subject:** Quarterly Report: Kingston Economic Development Corporation  
– Q1 2021

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**Council Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Theme: Regulatory & compliance

Goal: See above

**Executive Summary:**

In accordance with the Service Level Agreement entered into between the City of Kingston and Kingston Economic Development Corporation ([Report Number 21-014](#)), the attached report (Exhibit A) provides detailed reporting on Q1 2021 for the Economic Development Organization (EDO). Section 2.0 “Transparency, Reporting and Accountability” of the Service Level Agreement indicates “The EDO will be accountable to the Council of the City of Kingston in the performance of the activities and services provided in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement and /or as determined in the approved annual operating budget.” Specific direction to EDO on reporting is included in Section 2.2 which reads in part:

*“2.2 The EDO shall communicate with the City as follows:*

- a) Annually, by way of the draft budget, annual work plan and the Integrated Economic Development Strategy as updated to reflect the priorities of City Council;*
- b) Annually, by way of the Annual Financial Report as required by Clause 4.6 of this Agreement;*

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*c) Quarterly, by way of Activity Reports to demonstrate the progress of the EDO in achieving the Integrated Economic Development Strategy and the impact of the EDO's actions and programs on the key performance measures of economic development as set out in Appendix B of this Agreement. The Quarterly Reports shall form the basis of an Annual Year in Review Report to Council. All Activity Reports shall be publicly accessible;..."*

The attached report is provided in fulfillment of the quarterly reporting requirement noted above.

**Recommendation:**

This report is for information only.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**Lanie Hurdle, Chief  
Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Community Services	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Business, Environment & Projects	Not required
Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required
Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works	Not required

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**Options/Discussion:**

Exhibit A to this report provides an activity report from Kingston Economic Development Corporation on results for Q1 2021.

The Integrated Economic Development Strategy was approved by Council on December 15, 2020 ([Report Number 21-012](#)). The key performance measures as set out in Appendix B of the Service Level Agreement, and as outlined in EDO's quarterly reports, demonstrate the progress of the EDO in achieving implementation of the Integrated Strategy.

**Existing Policy/By-Law:**

Council Report Number 21-014 dated December 15, 2020

**Notice Provisions:**

None

**Accessibility Considerations:**

None

**Financial Considerations:**

Section 4 of the Service Level Agreement relates to financial operations and provides clear parameters on funding to EDO to undertake its core activities.

**Contacts:**

Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administrative Officer 613-546-4291 extension 1231

**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

None

**Exhibits Attached:**

Exhibit A – Kingston EcDev Q1 2021 Report



April 29, 2021

Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administration Officer  
City of Kingston  
216 Ontario Street  
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3

Dear Ms. Lanie Hurdle:

RE: Q1 2021 Performance Measures

Please accept this summary report for activities undertaken by the Kingston Economic Development Corporation in Q1 2021 as required by the new Service Level Agreement with The City of Kingston. While 2021 remains a challenging year for the business community with multiple lockdowns and business closures, I am pleased with the ongoing level of activity and outputs demonstrated by the team to support response to the pandemic and support for sustaining and advancing Kingston's economy.

In the first quarter, Kingston Economic Development continued with outreach and support for local businesses responding to the impacts of COVID-19 and the second provincewide lockdown. We have also launched the Food Venture Program and started work to launch other programs to support local businesses such as the Kingston Pandemic Business Recovery Program and Starter Company Plus.

We are very excited to start off the new year working closely with the City on the goals outlined in the new Integrated Economic Development Strategic Plan which was developed over the course of 2020. This new strategy provides greater focus and alignment with City Council strategic priorities and integration with City of Kingston departments and community partners. We look forward to implementing the new strategic direction with our municipal colleagues and strengthening our business ecosystem.

If you have any questions or seek clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Donna Gillespie  
Chief Executive Officer

cc. Ms. Gillian Watters, Chair, Kingston Economic Development Board of Directors

# QUARTERLY REPORT – Q1 2021

KINGSTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



KINGSTON ECONOMIC  
Development Corporation



# Quarterly Report – Q1, 2021

## Attraction & Aftercare

### *Lead Generation*

Kingston Economic Development has seen an increase in investment interest from both domestic and foreign direct investment although challenges remain with closed international borders due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While recognizing the challenges and uncertainty presented with COVID-19 there are areas of growth and demand including interest in logistics/warehousing and specifically the 'last mile' distribution opportunities (ie. last step in the supply chain).

Kingston, as a partner with Ontario East, has implemented a strategic lead generation initiative to identify opportunities and arrange virtual FDI meetings through partnership with ResearchFDI. Kingston Economic Development is working with GIS Planning website tool Zoom Prospector provides access to in-depth information, including powerful real estate search, demographic and workforce analysis, industry reports, along with dynamic mapping tools. The technology includes sophisticated data research tools, an ecosystem of products and strategic partnerships that will drive pre-qualified business to Ontario East.

Kingston Economic Development received notice that the 2021 Invest in Canada Communities Initiative application was successful. The Corporation will receive \$22,525 towards Foreign Direct Investment activities related to lead generation in the new strategic sectors of sustainable manufacturing and health innovation.

### *Health Innovation*

The City of Kingston is the successful recipient of a \$3 million, 3-year FedDev Health Innovation fund announced on January 26, 2021. The initiative, in partnership with Queen's University, St. Lawrence College, GreenCentre Canada, Kingston Health Sciences Centre and Kingston Economic Development will establish a health innovation ecosystem in the region. Kingston Economic received 315,000 for health innovation specific investment attraction, lead generation and external marketing collateral.

### *Invest Kingston Website*

A new Invest Kingston website is under development. Aligning visual identity with the Kingston brand as developed by Tourism Kingston for external marketing. The website is being to develop to target strategic sectors and better communicate Kingston's value proposition as well as support the framework for Invest Kingston campaigns. The website will be launched in Q3 and will feature Kingston business success stories, FDI statistics, etc.

### *Airport Advisory Committee*

Working with Midas Aviation to leverage the best business development opportunities for the YGK Airport, both in carriers and airport commercialization. This process included calls with the

Midas Aviation team, the City of Kingston airport team, and the interested airline to discuss logistics to ensure a correct fit. RFP was issued on January 13 where the airlines have put forward their operating and cost proposals.

*Business Parks*

<b>City-owned Employment Lands Data</b>	
	<b>2021</b>
<b>Total Land Sales (acres)</b>	2.26
<b>Total Land Sales (\$)</b>	\$158,200
<b>Number of Sales Closed</b>	1
<b>Sales Pending Site Plan Approval (acres)</b>	22.6*
<b>Remaining Serviced Lands (acres)</b>	94**
*doesn't include the lots currently close to execution of the APS	
** this includes 12 acre Clyde Court property	

**Business Retention & Expansion**

*COVID-19 Response & Recovery*

Kingston Economic Development staff continued with active involvement in solution-based discussions on various KERT working groups to aid in framework development for economic recovery. The team focused on rapid response, educated communications, and ensuring programming of business support is accessible to businesses.

The LoveKingston consumer campaign ran from May 2020 through February 2021 and realized over 5 million impressions across a variety of social platforms. The City, Tourism Kingston and BIA are taking the lead with marketing to local consumers through an enhanced LoveKingston Marketplace. Kingston Economic Development will continue to reinforce the shop and support local messaging on social platforms.

A communications group from the City, Tourism Kingston, Kingston Accommodation Partners, Downtown Kingston! BIA, Kingston Economic Development and KFL&A Public Health meet bi-weekly to review public messaging and communications needs to inform residents and businesses.

Nour Mazloum, Communications & Events Officer provides administrative support to the Kingston Economic Recovery Team (KERT) and its 4 working groups. KERT hosted *The Competitive Advantage of Inclusion – COVID-19 and Beyond* event on February 25 with 51 attendees. The purpose of the event was to discuss the how underrepresented groups and individuals have been disproportionately affected throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

FedDev Tourism Business Support Funding Program concluded with \$1 million committed to support local eligible businesses. No administrative fee was charged to FedDev with all monies



going directly to businesses in need. 197 businesses received grants for projects adding up to \$1,502,117. Businesses reported that funding supported retention of over 2,000 jobs.

Kingston Economic Development organized a Grant Outreach Team in March targeting Kingston businesses impacted by the second provincial shutdown. The objective was to ensure those eligible made application for the Ontario Small Business Grant and identify supports businesses need in securing other government relief funding. The initiative also raised awareness of the City/EcDev grant program launching in April. Over 400 businesses were consulted with interpretation services for those with language barriers and hands on technical support provided as needed. The Grant Outreach Team also raised awareness of the City/Kingston Economic Development \$1.1million fund to support pandemic relief to open in Q2.

Kingston Economic Development supported the Eastern Workforce Development Board to issue the annual EmployerOne survey to local businesses. The survey was designed to collect information on a range of issues including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, projected vacancies, hiring intentions, recruitment strategies and challenges, as well as perspectives on candidate skills, education, and training. The final report which compiles feedback from the 1000 Islands region will be available later this year.

In partnership with the City, the two-year pilot Business Support Manager position (which was delayed in 2020 due to budgetary impacts of COVID-19) was filled in February 2021 by Heather Scrannage. This position provides enhanced support to new and existing businesses with navigating municipal processes and services, including COVID recovery support. Work is also continuing through the Kingston Economic Recovery Team as well as the Love Kingston Marketplace initiative to support businesses.

Work has begun on a project to assess and redesign the business support portal on the City's website. The City has partnered with an SLC class from the User Experience Program to conduct a review of best practices (both municipalities and private sector), user engagement (interviews with new businesses, expanding businesses and current businesses), redesign of processes (content on site, concierge-one stop contact point and possible use of chatbots) and evaluation of new designs (user testing). Work on this project will be completed in May-June 2021.

### *Kingston Canada Success Stories*

As part of our commitment to increase visibility of Kingston companies to regional markets, the Kingston Economic Development team was able to feature high growth companies in the end-of-year issue of the [Ottawa Business Journal Regional focus](#). This partnership brought greater awareness (and possible prospect clients) to Spectra Plasmonics, BGM Metal Works and Fab-Cut Systems. To read more success stories visit [KingstonEcDev.com/Success-Stories](https://KingstonEcDev.com/Success-Stories).

### *Sustainable Manufacturing*

Based on stakeholder feedback from the Manufacturing Roundtables of 2020, we launched monthly programming to provide a sounding board for Kingston Manufacturers to connect and share challenges and solutions. Based on feedback from industry to date, this is slowly building

greater connectivity and community for those that wish to participate. Feedback also included challenges in recruitment and retention of labour force and requested support to access international talent.

In line with greater support for the Kingston Manufacturing community Kingston Economic Development was pleased to enter into contract with the Toronto Board of Trade to administer and facilitate a multi-sector Trade Accelerator Program (TAP). TAP will provide 12 or more regional businesses with coaching, mentorship and guidance as they participate in a 5-week program geared to increase export development in Q2.

### *Women Entrepreneurship*

The third intake for the WE-CAN Project for Rural Mentorship with Kingston Economic Development enrolled 14 women in the third cohort of the program that represent businesses in the agriculture, accommodation, construction, education, and retail sectors. Due to the growing demand of topics Kingston Economic Development have set up biweekly roundtable discussions.

21 C-suite women or women in leadership positions were selected to participate in the second cohort of the WE-CAN Project Leadership Excellence and Development (LEAD) program. The LEAD program participants will have the opportunity to attend a total of 9 interactive online workshops led by industry experts that are tailored to early C-suite executives.

### *Smart Energy Conference – Building a Net Zero Community*

Kingston Economic Development hosted the Smart Energy Kingston Conference in partnership with Jameson Group and EventWorx Corporation. The Smart Energy Kingston Event is a well-established conference, this was its 17th year hosting hundreds of attendees. Smart Energy Kingston 2021 was the first time the Smart Energy brand is held in Ontario. The goal of the Smart Energy Kingston Conference in 2021 was to highlight the important work and projects taking place in Kingston, Ontario to a national audience. 225 delegates attended the conference nationwide, which featured local companies such as Li-Cylce and Utilities Kingston.

### *Queen's Career Apprenticeship: Kingston*

The Queen's Career Apprenticeship: Kingston program launched in March. Up to 30 partially funded apprenticeship positions are available for Kingston employers interested in hiring a new Queen's humanities graduate. The program, piloted in Kingston, is now taking place in Guelph, Hamilton, London and Okanagan, British Columbia. To date, the program matched over 35 arts graduates with local employers resulting in over \$1,225,000 in new salaries.

### *Workforce Development and In-Migration Strategy*

Kingston Economic Development supports the City's Workforce In-migration strategy with annual support of \$75,000. The Workforce Development working groups have a number of projects in progress from employment supports for underrepresented groups to the inclusion & diversity charter. Most projects have pivoted somewhat from their original goals to aid in

economic recovery with an emphasis on the rapid reskilling and redeployment of those impacted by the pandemic.

With the significant economic impacts of the pandemic, specifically unemployment, efforts of the Workforce Development Initiative have pivoted to developing, sourcing funding and delivering programs related to reskilling and redeployment of the workforce. This has included projects to help residents assess their skills to find employment faster (grant funding of \$500,000), aggregating job boards and development of job seeker tools (grant funding of \$25,000), campaigns to attract talent for high demand job (grant funding of \$40,000) and programs to support skills development in the LTC, film, food processing and farming sectors (funding pending). Work has continued on a number of existing projects including an expansion of the Workplace Inclusion Charter (grant funding of \$700,000), development of francophone talent attraction tools (grant funding of \$20,000) and the Dual Career Program Spousal Support Program. An application has been submitted (\$796,000) to the Skills Development program to support farm and food processing skills training (SLC, Corrections, Loving Spoonful and Kingston Economic Development partners).

## **Start-ups & Entrepreneurs**

### *Food Venture Program*

Kingston Economic Development launched the Food Venture Program with three bootcamps to support food and beverage entrepreneurs in all stages of their business. The 12-week Food Venture Bootcamp is aimed to help entrepreneurs who are in the idea stage to launch their food business. The 5-week Restaurant Pivot to Consumer-Packaged Goods bootcamp is designed for restaurants that have a selected assortment of recipes that want to package for their clients to take home. The 5-week Tourism Recovery Initiative is for entrepreneurs with a food and beverage business or a farm product that could be well positioned and maximize its revenues from the tourism industry both locally and regionally. 45 local food entrepreneurs participated in the bootcamps and will be able to pitch for a grant up to \$5,000 through Starter Company Plus in the spring.

### *Digital Main Street*

Digital Main Street has been extended to June with an additional \$20,000 secured from the Ontario BIA Association to provide advisory services. The Ontario Budget announcement on March 24 alluded to a third round of grants for businesses, but no details have been released. The funding provides for one-on-one consultations to help businesses throughout the city with questions related to websites, social media, operations (point of sale, cloud-based systems, etc.), digital marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), etc. 10 webinars were hosted on various topics to support the digitizing of businesses such as Instagram shopping, ecommerce basics, and SEO.

### *Bridges to Better Business*

With funding from FedDev Ontario, Kingston Economic Development hosted the Bridges to Better Business - Challenges and Opportunities for BIPOC Entrepreneurs. The goal of this year's

Bridges to Better Business event was to discuss how to support BIPOC entrepreneurs, highlight existing resources for BIPOC entrepreneurs, celebrate success stories, recognize what kind of support is needed but does not yet exist for BIPOC entrepreneurs and ultimately promote inclusivity and diversity in the Kingston community. The event took place on February 17 with 15 people in attendance featuring Yasmine Nasserline, Brian Dodo, Rajita Nandyala, Jimmy Hassan, and Rye Barberstock.

### *South East Ontario Black Entrepreneurs Ecosystem*

A three-year, \$3 million proposal was submitted to the federal National Ecosystem Fund to support a South East Ontario Black Entrepreneurs Ecosystem to strengthen and grow the entrepreneurship ecosystem for Black entrepreneurs and business owners in Eastern Ontario. Its aim is to develop business opportunities and expand access to existing services through strategic partnerships with local business organizations, government and other stakeholders.

### *Weekly Virtual Open for Business Sessions*

Every Thursday, Norman Musengimana, Business Development Manager, Small Business & Entrepreneurship hosts a learning session covering programs and services offered by Kingston EcDev to help individuals start and grow their businesses. The session includes a questions period and information on: Government Programs, Financing and Grants, Workshops & Events, Business Advisory Support, Resources for Starting & Growing your Business, Community Resources and Connections, Networking Opportunities.

### *Ontario Small Business Centre*

The Ontario Small Business Enterprise Centres worked collaboratively to develop a centralized [website of resources](#), e-learning curriculum and webinars, and a strategic marketing campaign to create lead generation and awareness about regional Small Business services.

## **Corporate Updates**

### *Board of Directors*

Kingston Economic Development was pleased to welcome three new Board of Directors in January:

- Anne Vivian-Scott, President & CEO, BKIN Technologies Ltd.
- Mary Rita Holland, City Councillor, Kingscourt-Rideau District
- Ryan DaSilva, Industrial Millwright, Cancoil Thermal Corporation

The Board of Directors requested a review of bylaws. HR & Nominations Committee and the Board of Directors met in March with proposed amendments to be brought to the AGM in April. Some key amendments include that The board of directors may appoint from among their number a HR Nominations Committee which shall consist of at least five (5) members of the board of directors one of which shall be the Mayor of the City of Kingston or one of the other three (3) representatives appointed by the City of Kingston Municipal Council to the board of directors.

The annual budget presentation to Council took place on January 26, 2021 with CEO Donna Gillespie and Chair Gillian Watters requesting a municipal investment of \$1,461,500 (55% of our total operating budget). This represents a 0% increase in municipal funding for 2021 (total operating budget is 5% greater with additional provincial and federal funding secured). In addition, a motion was passed to transfer \$600,000 from the City's Working Reserve Fund to Kingston EcDev to be added to the \$500,000 reserves we have committed to provide financial relief to small businesses most impacted by the pandemic.

#### *Kingston Pandemic Business Support Program*

The City of Kingston and Kingston Economic Development have partnered together to provide a funding program to support small to medium sized businesses in the City of Kingston that have been negatively affected by COVID-19. Kingston Economic Development Corporation will be administering the program with the overall objective to support business recovery and transformation. The City of Kingston has contributed \$600,000 and Kingston Economic Development Corporation has contributed \$500,000 for a total fund of \$1.1M. Applications will be anonymously reviewed by third-party committee, which will take place in Q2. Learn more [KingstonEcDev.com/BusinessRecoveryGrant](https://KingstonEcDev.com/BusinessRecoveryGrant)

#### *EDI Statement*

The Board of Directors adopted an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion statement in March: We believe diversity drives innovation. Kingston Economic Development employs, supports and builds an inclusive culture that encourages and celebrates the diverse voices of our businesses, entrepreneurs, and the communities we serve.

*Kingston Economic Development endorses the City's Inclusion Charter.*

#### *Integrated Economic Development Strategic Plan (IEDSP)*

The IEDSP Strategy Execution Team with Queen's and St. Lawrence College met on January 22 and February 26 to finalize Terms of Reference for the Execution Team and Sector Working Groups.

Kingston Economic Development has engaged Avenue Strategy to develop an overarching marketing framework to support the new IEDSP. As part of the framework, a marketing readiness process will be developed initially for the Health Innovation sector.

#### *Annual Audit*


In March, KPMG undertook the annual corporate audit working with staff and City of Kingston Financial Services department. The final audit is presented at the Corporation's AGM in April. The Corporations Audited Financial statements can be [found on our website](#).

#### *Staffing*

To align human resources with the Integrated Economic Development Strategy, the following changes have been implemented:

- Shelley Hirstwood promoted to Director of Business Development. Shelley will oversee two senior Investment Managers with sector specific focus on Sustainable





Manufacturing and Health Innovation. Palmer and Associates is supporting recruitment efforts. Position descriptions can be viewed [KingstonEcDev.com/careers](https://KingstonEcDev.com/careers)

- Norman Musengimana has been moved from part-time to a full-time position overseeing the Start-ups and Small Business Portfolio. He will oversee a Digital Main Street Advisor, Chris Morris and Business Advisor Claire Bouvier
- Additional funding for administrative support has been secured through the Queen's Career Apprenticeship Program. This one-year position will also oversee administration of the Kingston Pandemic Business Relief Grant.



## 2021 Measurements

<b>Attraction &amp; Aftercare</b>	<b>Q1</b>
Investment inquiries	31
Health Innovation Inquiries	2
Sustainable Manufacturing inquiries	5
Leads generated	21

<b>Business Retention &amp; Expansion</b>	<b>Q1</b>
Inquiries	46
Health Innovation Inquiries	1
Sustainable Manufacturing inquiries	3
COVID-19 Business Outreach	349
Small businesses supported with grants	6
Value of grants to businesses	\$25,307

<b>Start-ups &amp; Entrepreneurs</b>	<b>Q1</b>
Inquiries for support	162
Consultations provided	123
Events and activities hosted	29
Persons attending programs and events	353
Partnered events and activities	23

# Kingston Insights from the Conference Board of Canada

## Kingston Eyes Recovery

- Kingston's economy was cooling even before COVID-19 struck. Local GDP growth slowed to under 1 per cent in 2019, significantly below average annual gains of 2.1 per cent during the five years to 2018.
- As elsewhere, the pandemic hammered the local economy in the spring of 2020, prompting
- a 12.1 per cent contraction in real GDP in the second quarter. Rebounds of 9.8 per cent in the third quarter and 2.0 per cent in the fourth nonetheless left full-year GDP down an estimated 6.3 per cent last year.
- Our call for a 4.9 per cent GDP bounce-back in 2021 would be Kingston's fastest growth since 1988. Another good year is on tap for 2022, when we expect GDP to increase by 4.5 per cent.

## Key Economic Indicator

Economic indicator	2018	2019	2020e	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Real GDP at basic prices (2012 \$ millions)	8,943	9,017	8,445	8,863	9,263	9,390	9,500	9,665
Total employment (000s)	86	88	83	87	90	91	93	94
Unemployment rate (per cent)	5.6	5.3	8.7	6.9	5.8	5.7	5.4	5.2
Household income per capita (\$)	46,728	47,386	47,731	49,355	50,845	52,099	53,427	54,924
Population (000s)	173	176	177	179	181	183	185	188
Total housing starts	910	1,256	993	1,056	1,082	1,069	1,049	1,035
Retail sales (\$ millions)	2,633	2,647	2,473	2,666	2,863	2,956	3,033	3,113
Consumer price index (2002 = 1.000)	1.350	1.375	1.385	1.408	1.441	1.470	1.502	1.532

## Employment, Income, and Population Growth

- COVID-19 also hammered Kingston's generally healthy job market. The area had created 6,200 jobs during the previous five years, including a 16-year-high 3,700 in 2017 and about 1,000 in 2019.
- All these job gains were erased in the second quarter of 2020 as employment fell by 8,700 positions (10 per cent), with services industries such as accommodation and food services and the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector taking heavy losses.
- Services employment had recovered 96 per cent of its February level by December 2020. However, tightening restrictions in Ontario during the second wave of the pandemic are weighing heavily on the recovery of employment, especially on services jobs.
- Employment in Kingston's goods-producing sectors, meanwhile, declined by a more modest 1,500 in the second quarter and fully regained this loss with an 1,800-job bounce-back in the autumn. We expect a solid 5.7 per cent employment hike in 2021,

adding 4,700 jobs to Kingston's labour market, followed by a 3.1 per cent increase in 2022 to bring job counts back up above their pre-pandemic level.

- The 2019 employment gain had helped cut Kingston's unemployment rate to 5.3 per cent, the lowest since 2007 and down from 5.6 per cent in both 2017 and 2018. But plummeting second-quarter employment lifted Kingston's unemployment rate to 12.4 per cent, leaving the full-year rate at 8.7 per cent, the highest since 1997.
- The decent employment gains we expect this year and next will trim the unemployment rate to an average of 6.9 per cent in 2021 and 5.8 per cent in 2022.
- Kingston's decent job market and relatively affordable housing help explain its attractiveness
- to newcomers. The area's population rose by an annual average of 1.4 per cent between 2015 and 2019, more than twice the 0.6 per cent rate over the previous 15 years. The increases have been propelled by larger inflows of all types—intercity, interprovincial, and international.
- Travel restrictions and border closures resulting from COVID-19 impaired migration in 2020, limiting Kingston's population growth to an estimated 1.0 per cent. We expect steady population increases near or just above 1 per cent annually over the next several years as all three migratory components add to Kingston's population.
- Kingston's total household income growth slowed but persisted through the pandemic, ending 2020 up an estimated 1.7 per cent thanks to government transfer programs implemented to offset COVID-19's damage. The increase in disposable household income was an even stronger 4.0 per cent. Disposable household income growth will slow to 1.9 per cent in 2021 as these programs end.

### *Sector by Sector*

- Shopping restrictions designed to contain COVID-19 hammered retail sales in 2020, although these were already soft. Kingston's retail sales rose only 0.5 per cent in 2019, the slowest growth since 2012.
- Ontario's shift to mainly curbside pickup last spring contributed to a 17 per cent second-quarter drop in retail sales. While pent-up demand, persistent income growth, and the easing of restrictions boosted third-quarter sales by 26 per cent, retail sales still dropped an estimated 6.6 per cent in 2020.
- In line with a better economy in 2021, retail sales are set to grow by 7.8 per cent.
- Housing demand, solid previously, ramped up in Kingston even during the pandemic. The area's affordable homes might even be attracting residents from around Toronto, since many of that area's residents were confined to small apartments during last spring's lockdown and have since engaged in a "race for space" enabled by work-from-home policies. Low mortgage rates are another underpinning.
- Kingston's resale market is in a sellers' position, and annual price gains exceeded 20 per cent during late summer and early autumn 2020.
- Housing starts had hit a 30-year high near 1,260 units in 2019. Although the pandemic trimmed starts to just under 1,000 units in 2020, a modest increase to about 1,050 units

is our call for 2021. This volume could be even higher were local builders not preoccupied with a record number of units under construction.

- Major construction projects in Kingston start with the \$180-million, 1.2-kilometre bridge across the Cataraqui River, said to be the largest infrastructure project in Kingston's history, to connect Gore Road with John Counter Boulevard. Meanwhile, Queen's University is building a new five-storey, 334-bed student residence on Albert Street to be completed by the fall of 2022.
- And Kingston city council continues to implement its 30-year waterfront master plan, with upgrades to local parks and surrounding streetscapes.
- Overall, after contracting by 1.9 per cent in 2019, construction output is forecast to rebound by 4.1 per cent in 2021 and a further 2.8 per cent in 2022.
- Kingston's finance, insurance, and real estate sector is by far the city's largest industry, producing 20 per cent of total output in 2019. Despite a decent housing market, the industry has struggled recently, with output falling about 1 per cent in both 2018 and 2019.
- The pandemic cut output in the finance, insurance, and real estate industry by 3.7 per cent during last year's second quarter, a loss that was not fully recouped by year-end, leaving full-year output down an estimated 2.5 per cent—the largest decrease on record.
- The improving economy and continued housing market strength will lift finance, insurance, and real estate output by 2.7 per cent in 2021.
- An estimated 4.2 per cent contraction in Kingston's significant public administration sector was an important reason for Kingston's relatively large output drop in 2020. The future looks much better for the sector, with output slated to rise 4.3 per cent in 2021 and a further 2.7 per cent in 2022.
- Less happily, we estimate there were significant contractions last year in sectors affected by travel restrictions and business closures. Output declined by about 25 per cent in the accommodation and food services sector and 16 per cent in the arts and entertainment industry in 2020.
- Fortunately, both sectors will post double-digit percentage growth in 2021, assuming COVID-19-related restrictions are relaxed in the second half of this year.

# Communications

## Social Media

Kingston Economic Development manages two main social media campaigns on multiple online platforms ie. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn.

@KingstonEcDev account shares information primarily to the Kingston and business community to showcase events and activities.

@KingstonEcDev	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Google My Business	YouTube	LinkedIn Company
Followers/ Likes (End of quarter)	3,048	4,352	1,965		215	3,595
Followers/ Likes (Start of quarter)	3,000	4,276	1,835		207	3,464
% Change over previous quarter	1.6%	1.7%	7%		3.8%	3.7%
Organic Impressions	35,779	238,100				18,808
Paid Impressions	97,734	N/A				N/A
Actions (Visit website, request directions, call)				415		
Searches				5,654		
Video Views					51,254	
Demographics (Most popular)						
Age	35-44	n/a	25-34			
Gender	Women	n/a	Women			
Location	Kingston	n/a	Kingston			Toronto

Up until end of February 2021, @KingstonCanada was utilized to promote Love Kingston shop local consumer campaign and regional staycations. The intent of this platform is typically for external marketing purposes.

<b>@KingstonCanada</b>	<b>Facebook</b>	<b>Twitter</b>	<b>Instagram</b>	<b>YouTube</b>
Followers/ Likes (End of quarter)	11,552	14,102	15,868	49
Followers/ Likes (Start of quarter)	11,523	13,895	15,300	38
% Change over previous quarter	0.25%	1.4%	3.7%	28%
Organic Impressions	45,834	163,058		
Paid Impressions	0	871,542		
Actions (Visit website, request directions, call)				
Searches				
Video Views				45,802
Demographics (Most popular)				
Age	45-54	n/a	25-34	
Gender	Women	n/a	Women	
Location	Kingston	n/a	Kingston	

#### *Website - [KingstonEcDev.com](http://KingstonEcDev.com)*

Kingston Economic Development's website realized 45% increase in visits in 2021 compared to Q1 2020 and 25% increase compared to Q4 of 2020. Most visits were focused on COVID-19 recovery resources, new funding programs, and business training programs such as the Food Venture Program and Starter Company Plus.

To review detailed monthly website reports, please contact Nour Mazloun, Communications & Events Officer at [mazloun@kingstoncanada.com](mailto:mazloun@kingstoncanada.com).

#### *Media Coverage*

- [Bridges to Business event to support BIPOC entrepreneurs](#)
- [City adds extra \\$1M to the budget for small business, non-profit and artist relief](#)
- [Local nutritionist launches online course thanks to pandemic funding](#)
- [Bootcamps for food and beverage entrepreneurs offered by Kingston EcDev](#)
- [\\$3 million to establish an 'ecosystem' for healthcare business in Kingston](#)
- [Kingston shipbuilder makes waves with high-performance vessels](#)
- [Kingston condo management firm Alwington Communities buys pair of competitors](#)





Kingston Economic  
For the Three Months

Ending March 31, 2021 25% Through Year  
**Actuals      Budget      % To Date**

**Revenues:**

City Funding	\$365,37	\$1,461,500	25.00%
Provincial Funding	28,0	328,150	8.78%
Federal Funding	201,0	230,000	87.39%
Investment & Bank Interest	3	15,000	2.42%
Other	24,8	600,000	4.15%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>620,416</b>	<b>2,634,650</b>	<b>23.55%</b>

**Expenditures:**

Salaries & Wages	170,136	894,065	19.03%
Overhead			
Administration	42,5	165,0	25.77%
Boards & Committees	3,2	1,0	325.60%
Human Resources	1,1	10,00	11.19%
Marketing Communications	1,809	50,000	3.62%
Projects			
Attraction & Aftercare	17,3	250,0	6.95%
Business Retention & Expansion	59,3	260,5	22.90%
Start Ups & Youth Business	62,8	269,0	23.33%
Workforce Development		75,00	0.00%
Funding Programs	1,5	660,0	0.23%
Tourism Business Support Program	208,6		#DIV/0!
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>568,802</b>	<b>2,634,650</b>	<b>21.59%</b>

**Annual Surplus/(Deficit)**

<b>51,614</b>	<b>-</b>
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