

Belleville Economic Development

YEAR-END REVIEW

20
25

On behalf of Belleville Economic Development (BIQ), we are pleased to present the Year-End Report to the Economic Development Committee. This annual summary reflects our collective progress, key accomplishments and the strategic initiatives undertaken throughout the year to strengthen Belleville's economic landscape.

INVEST. GROW. THRIVE

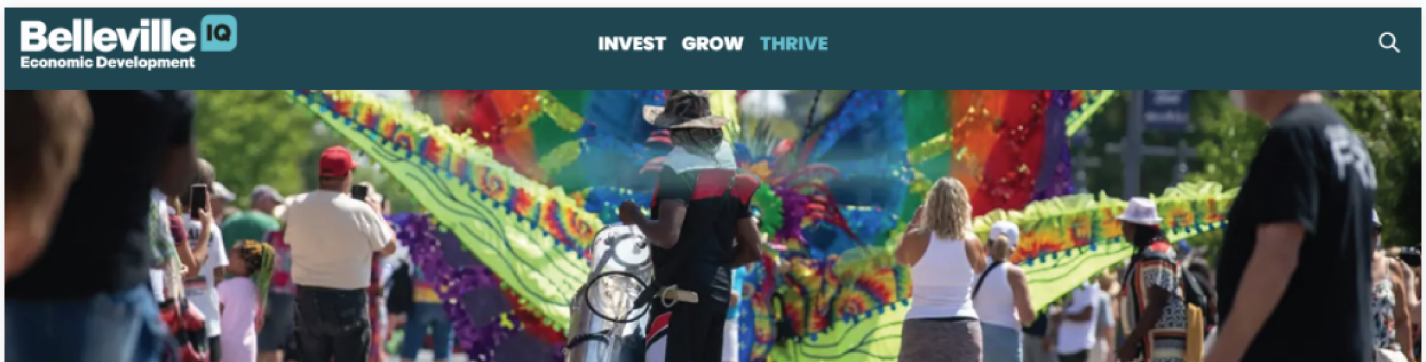
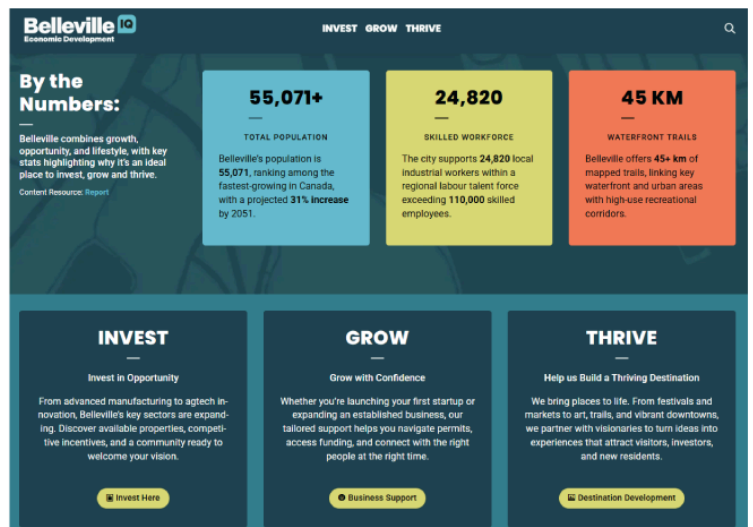


Belleville 
Economic Development

Division Highlights

BIQ Brand Branding

Development of a new BIQ website and integrated communications plan is underway, with launch scheduled for Q1 2026. This includes web, social media and blog platforms to strengthen stakeholder engagement across all portfolios.



Your Vision. Our Waterfront City.

We're connecting community, culture, and commerce to make Belleville a must-see destination – and a smart place to do business.

An early-mover advantage in a revitalized waterfront poised for growth with an early-mover advantage on a revitalized waterfront, we're building something meaningful—a vibrant place where visitors feel welcome and businesses prosper.

Investment Attraction

Highlights

Investment Attraction Officer

Appointment of Brad Roach as the City's Investment Attraction Officer to lead program development, marketing strategies and investor relations. This role serves as the primary point of contact for new investment inquiries.

Development Charges Policy Update

Council adopted a by-law amendment removing industrial exemptions from Development Charges (DCs) and introduced an incentive program to offset this change. A new DC Background Study is in progress to support a five-year by-law update. Economic Development staff have played an active role in stakeholder engagement ensuring industry is aware of the changing landscape and can forecast these fees into their business development strategy.

Industrial Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

Industrial CIP will be presented to Council Q1 2026. This program will allow the city to evaluate industrial projects individually to provide targeted support now that the industrial DC exemption is no longer active. Recommendations will include retroactive provisions to align with interim DC policy changes.

Northeast Industrial Park (NEIP)

Detailed design awarded in Q2 2025. Road and servicing design scheduled for 2026, with construction planned for 2027 and serviced development sites available by 2028.

Employment Lands Analysis

Comprehensive planning strategy for Cannifton/Corbyville area initiated, including inventory, SWOT analysis and phasing recommendations for future employment land expansion.

Investment/Development Toolkit

\$75K project launched to streamline permitting and regulatory navigation for developers. Includes a video series to enhance engagement. Completion targeted for March 2026. This project has received \$25K in Rural Economic Development (RED) funding and was another initiative recognized through the Prosper Belleville BR+E.

NEIP Gateway Signage

Preliminary design has been completed. Detailed design is underway with construction planned for Q2 2026. Once complete, this entryway to the city's primary business park will adequately reflect the importance of Belleville's manufacturing sector as an economic driver.



What's Next 2026

<input type="checkbox"/>	Launch BIQ website and communications campaign - Q1 2026
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete NEIP road and servicing design - 2026
<input type="checkbox"/>	Finalize Employment Lands Strategy - Q3 2027.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Approve Industrial CIP – Q1 2026
<input type="checkbox"/>	Investment Toolkit Roadmap and Video Series Launch – Q2 2026
<input type="checkbox"/>	NEIP Gateway Signage Completion – Q3 2026
<input type="checkbox"/>	CRM integration with BIQ website - 2026
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop dashboards for real-time reporting on investment leads and conversion metrics - 2026

Business Growth & Retention Specialist

Highlights

Prosper Belleville Manufacturing BR+E

- Over the course of 2025, staff continued progress on implementing the 26 action items outlined in the Prosper Belleville Manufacturing BR+E which was launched in November 2024.
- Current status:
 - 11 action items have been implemented under 4 project themes (Newcomer Supports; Labour Attraction & Retention; Business Supports; City Processes & Services);
 - 9 action items are currently in process;
 - 4 are being assessed for feasibility and relevance;
 - 2 are no longer relevant due to the changing landscape since the action items were first developed.
- The Prosper Belleville Manufacturing BR+E has been recognized provincially as a best in class project in Economic Development with staff speaking at key economic development conferences including the Ontario East Municipal Conference (September 2025) and the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) conference in February 2026.

Ontario Skills & Tech Truck Welcomed to our Community

- The City hosted for the first time, the Ontario Skills & Tech Truck on May 13–14, welcoming 300 students (Grades 7–12) during the day and more than 500 community members during the evening showcase.
- The event was delivered in partnership with the Centre for Workforce Development, Quinte Economic Development Commission, Trenval and local school boards.
- This initiative stemmed directly from the Prosper Belleville Manufacturing BR+E, which identified youth engagement in manufacturing and the skilled trades as a priority.
- 2026 planning is underway for programming focused on the construction trades industry.

RED funding received for Developer's Toolkit

- Economic Development was the recipient of \$25K RED funding to develop a toolkit that will guide businesses and developers through key aspects of the City's development process. The toolkit will also implement a CRM in the department. The initiative, which came out of the Prosper Belleville BR+E will be completed in Q1 2026.

Revising the Workplace Inclusion Charter (WIC)

- Staff enhanced the Workplace Inclusion Charter by adding a free assessment and reporting tool for signatories. The updated Charter will relaunch in Q1 2026 with a promotional campaign to grow participation.



Business Growth & Retention Specialist

Highlights

Work in Quinte (WinQ) Career Fair Success

- The City of Belleville, in partnership with Quinte West, continued to host two career fairs in 2025 under the Work in Quinte brand.
- More than 1,600 job seekers and over 100 organizations participated.
- An assessment of the WinQ program took place early 2025. Ongoing enhancements include a streamlined registration process for job seekers and employers, and the introduction of the Road to Career Fair programming to better support job seekers prepare for the job market.
- The Work in Quinte Career Fair and the Work in Quinte Jobs Website is a finalist for the 2025 Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) Awards of Excellence in the category of Workforce Development & Talent Attraction -Rural Award. The awards ceremony will take place in February 2026 at the 69th EDCO Annual Conference & Showcase. Thank you to all our stakeholders involved in this important initiative for our community.

Succession Success Exit Planning Program:

- Economic Development in partnership with Trenval and the Small Business Centre introduced Succession Success Exit Planning Program, a pilot program for Belleville businesses. Throughout the months of September, October and November, 16 individuals attended the workshop and 4 people are currently participating in the FREE exit planning advisory services offered. The program continues throughout 2026.

Community Development & Stakeholder Engagement

Staff continue to engage with internal and external stakeholders through the following committees and initiatives:

- Ongoing business support (coaching/advising, resource referral, navigating city processes, grant writing support, issue management)
- Quinte Compass Project (Loyalist College, BOQMB)
- QLIP (Anti-racism, Newcomers Working Group, Workplace Inclusion Charter, Canadian Labour International Film festival)
- Quinte Film Office
- Loyalist College (Centre for Healthy Communities Advisory Committee; Business Program Advisory Committee)
- City of Belleville EDI Committee (City liaison); Quinte Home Builders Association Skilled Trades Advisory Group (Construction Trades Event)
- The Bridge (City contact for business & staff)
- Belleville Downtown District, BIA (Economic Development Committee); Belleville Chamber of Commerce (Membership Committee).

What's Next 2026

<input type="checkbox"/>	Construction Skills Event
<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Business BR&E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Succession Success Planning/ Entrepreneurship initiatives
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stakeholder support during transition of The Bridge services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Workplace Inclusion Promotion

Destination Development

Highlights

Destination Development Framework

In 2025, the city advanced a comprehensive Destination Development Framework to guide strategic planning, operational decision-making and future investment attraction. This framework aligns municipal priorities with national, provincial and regional tourism strategies and establishes a clear structure across eight core areas:

1. Administration & Financial Management
2. Brand Management & Marketing Strategy
3. Product Development & Experience Design
4. Data Management & Analytics
5. Client & Community Services
6. Program Management
7. Partner & Stakeholder Engagement
8. Policy Development & Advocacy

This framework now serves as the foundation for long-term destination readiness and coordinated economic development efforts.

Waterfront Commercial Development Potential

- Belleville's waterfront continues to demonstrate strong commercial and tourism development potential. Increased activity at the George Street launch—driven by fishing tournaments, boating events and private bookings—signals growing interest in the waterfront as a recreational and event venue. Pop-Ups on the Bay attracted approximately 25,000 visitors, reinforcing demand for culinary and experiential offerings along the shoreline. Major events at West Zwick's Park, including Canada Day, Midway on the Bay and RibFest, further strengthened the area's role as a high-value community and tourism hub.
- A notable highlight was the enhanced connection between the Downtown District and the waterfront through key event activations. The Belleville Caribbean Festival expanded from one day to three, extending its footprint to Victoria Park and West Zwick's Park and contributing to seamless event flow and increased visitor movement between key tourism zones.

Brand Management & Data Analytics

Significant progress was made in brand management and digital infrastructure, particularly through enhanced support for Pop-Ups on the Bay. A modernized digital marketing backend, developed in collaboration with Loyalist College graduates, enabled real-time analytics, audience targeting and improved brand tracking. This system has strengthened visibility among core audiences, especially the 35–44 local market and the growing 25–34 segment.

Discover Belleville

Discover Belleville's digital performance was equally strong. The website generated 21,000+ visits and 9,500 unique page views, with major growth in event-related traffic and sustained interest in key visitor planning pages. Social media activity amplified this reach, with over 1 million total views and 171,000 users reached between July and September. Facebook delivered significant increases in reach, interactions, follower growth and more than 2,000 link clicks, while Instagram reinforced destination storytelling through consistent engagement. Combined, the platforms generated 10,000+ interactions and 618 new followers, positioning Discover Belleville as a high-performing, data-driven tourism marketing channel in 2025.

Product Development Support

- 24 Business Advisory sessions to discuss new and existing product ideas
- 12 Pop-Ups on the Bay vendors attended Business Development session
- 28 Tourism Grant applications received
- 4 major events expanded from one day to multi-day events



What's Next 2026

<input type="checkbox"/>	Destination Development Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Discover Belleville Brand Management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tourism Grant Coaching/ Support
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wayfinding Signage Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Downtown Patio Program

Belleville

Economic Development

2025 Inquiry Tracker – Year-End Report

In 2025, the City of Belleville’s Economic Development Division continued to experience steady and diverse levels of engagement from businesses, investors, community organizations, and regional partners. Over 138 formal inquiries were received and documented through the inquiry tracker system, reflecting the growing interest in Belleville as a destination for investment, business expansion, community partnerships, and development activity.

Overall Inquiry Trends

Inquiry volume remained consistent throughout the year, with notable peaks in January, March, October, and November. These periods reflect times when businesses and partners are actively planning for new projects, preparing for seasonal operations, or exploring funding and investment opportunities. Lower inquiry levels were observed during May and August, aligning with traditional slower business periods and summer operational cycles.

Sector Engagement

A broad range of sectors contacted the city, with the highest volume of inquiries coming from Investment Attraction and Business Growth & Retention. This demonstrates strong interest not only from new investors assessing Belleville for potential opportunities, but also from existing businesses seeking support, resources, and expansion pathways.

Types of Inquiries

The most common inquiry types included:

- Business Growth & Retention
- Investment Opportunities / Site Selection
- Business Support & Development

Stakeholder Engagement

The stakeholder landscape was diverse, including existing businesses, new businesses, investors, community organizations, and academic partners. The highest number of inquiries came from existing businesses, signifying that the city remains a critical connector and service provider for local operators navigating growth, challenges, and regulatory processes.

Insights and Opportunities

1. Strengthening Business Support – Streamlined business service pathways and communication tools may enhance response efficiency.
2. Investment Readiness – Continued site selection inquiries reinforce the value of maintaining updated land and building inventories.
3. Tourism & Destination Development – Increased inquiries validate the growing importance of Belleville’s visitor economy.
4. Stakeholder Education – Engagement levels present opportunities for workshops, guides, and orientation materials.

Conclusion

The 2025 Inquiry Tracker results reinforce Belleville’s position as a responsive, opportunity-rich municipality. Trends identified throughout the year will support stronger planning, targeted service delivery, and enhanced stakeholder engagement for 2026 and beyond.

