

## Celebrate, Learn & Prepare for the Future 2025 Economic Development Summit Friday, November 21, 2025

8:15 am **Registration | Networking**

9:00 am **Welcome / Greetings**

- Michael Barrett, MP Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands-Rideau Lakes
- Steve Clark, MPP Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes
- Corinna Smith-Gatcke, Warden, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville / Mayor, Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands

9:15 am **Celebrating 175 Years**

**Bill Thake Memorial Economic Development Leadership Award**

Recipient: Brian Purcell, Co-owner James Purcell Insurance Broker Ltd.

Presenters: Corinna Smith-Gatcke, Warden, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville  
Marlene Thake

9:30 am **The Rideau Canal: Looking Ahead**

A national treasure and a place for all to enjoy, the Rideau Canal continues to evolve as we move forward to its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Join us for a discussion on its past, present, and what lies ahead.

Presenter: Mark Brus, Operations Manager, Rideau Canal, Parks Canada

10:00 am **BREAK**

10:15 am **Envisioning Eastern Ontario's Electricity Future**

As municipalities across eastern Ontario grow, they need more electricity to support economic development, decarbonization efforts and population increase. Join the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) to learn how communities influence electricity planning and new infrastructure, which helps drive regional and provincial economic prosperity and energy security.

Presenters:

Kennan Ip, Senior Manager, Transmission Integration

Brian Gordon, Senior Manager, Regional & Community Engagement

Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO)



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- 10:45 am **KEYNOTE: Protecting Ontario's Small Businesses, Jobs, and Economy**  
How Ontario's government is supporting small businesses amid U.S. tariffs and a challenging economy.  
Presenter:  
Hon. Nina Tangri, Associate Minister of Small Business
- 11:25 am **Bottle & Barrel Adventures – Behind the Brews**  
An interactive session you don't want to miss! Hear what really goes on behind the scenes with local brewers as they create their unique craft beverages. Listen to how they are growing their small businesses through collaboration.  
Presenters:  
Sean Lucey, President Windmill Brewery  
Jocelyn Major, Co-Founder / CEO, Kemptville Brewing Company  
Matthew Shapton, Co-Owner and Head Cider Brewer, Hall's Apple Market  
Moderator:  
Carol Hardy, Small Business Development Officer,  
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
- 12:00 pm **Special Announcement**
- 12:15 pm **LUNCH | Networking**
- 1:00 pm **KEYNOTE: Steady Hands: Adapting to Economic Change**  
We just survived a global pandemic, a workforce shortage, and a round of high inflation, so what could be next? How about tariffs, trade wars, and Trump 2.0? And maybe we'll throw in a few worries about A.I. as well... Just when we think we're getting a handle on things, the world seems intent on giving us something else to worry about. Entrepreneur and economic development strategist Brock Dickinson is here to reassure us that it's not the end of the world! Through stories, humour and practical examples, he'll help us understand how communities, companies and individuals can survive and even thrive amidst the chaos.  
Presenter:  
Brock Dickinson, Stonebridge Solutions, LP
- 1:45 pm **Cross-Border Customs Update: Tariffs, De-minimis, and What It Means to You**  
Managing the border into the US is more complex than ever. Demystify shipping goods across the border and learn how to adjust to the De-minimis and tariff rule change that is impacting businesses of all sizes.  
Presenter:  
Jesse Mitchell, Director of Business Development,  
Strader-Ferris International

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- 2:15 pm **Leeds Grenville / 1000 Islands Rideau Canal Waterways**  
It's been a year of change. Get the latest regional economic update including results from the Regional Economic Development through Immigration program, Tourism Adventures and local food initiatives. Counties Economic Development will present it's new 2026-2029 Strategic Areas of Focus and the upcoming initiatives.
- Presenter:  
Ann Weir, Economic Development Manager  
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
- 2:45 pm **Closing Remarks | Networking**