



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 25-225**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administrative Officer
Resource Staff: Craig Desjardins, Director, Strategy, Innovation & Partnerships
Date of Meeting: November 18, 2025
Subject: Economic Development Organization – Service Level Agreement Renewal

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Regulatory & compliance

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

The current Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the City of Kingston and the Economic Development Organization (EDO), entered into in 2021 ([Report Number 21-014](#)), will end on December 31, 2025. The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval of the new and updated draft SLA attached as Exhibit A. The EDO Board has reviewed and approved the new SLA, pending Council's approval.

The EDO operates as the economic development arm for the City of Kingston, working collaboratively to achieve mutual goals and objectives that position Kingston as a great place to live, work and invest. Activities of EDO include, but not limited to, attracting investment to the local economy, business start-up and expansion support, job creation, assessment growth and community prosperity and GDP growth through the support of strategic economic activities in the industrial, commercial, institutional and technology sectors, and such other complementary purposes not inconsistent with these activities.

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The SLA outlines the key objectives and direction for EDO and addresses such matters as transparency, reporting and accountability, performance measurement and financial operations.

Recommendation:

That the Draft Service Level Agreement for the Kingston Economic Development Organization, attached as Exhibit A to Report Number 25-225, be approved and that the Agreement be executed on or before December 31, 2025 in order to achieve an effective date of January 1, 2026.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required
Jenna Morley, City Solicitor	
Ian Semple, Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services	Not required

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Options/Discussion:

Kingston Economic Development Organization (EDO) operates as the economic development arm for the City of Kingston, working collaboratively to achieve mutual goals and objectives that position Kingston as a great place to live, work and invest. Activities of EDO include, but not limited to, attracting investment to the local economy, business start-up and expansion, job creation, assessment growth and community prosperity and GDP growth through the support of strategic economic activities in the industrial, commercial, institutional and technology sectors, and such other complementary purposes not inconsistent with these activities.

The current five-year Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the City of Kingston and the Economic Development Organization (EDO), entered into in 2021 ([Report Number 21-014](#)), will end on December 31, 2025. The SLA outlines the key objectives and direction for EDO and addresses such matters as transparency, reporting and accountability, performance measurement and financial operations.

The new draft SLA, attached as Exhibit A, has been updated to reflect a new 5-year term from January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2030. The EDO Board has reviewed and approved the new SLA, pending Council's approval.

EDO will continue to provide quarterly and annual reports to Council as outlined in Section 2 of the SLA (Transparency, Reporting and Accountability). The quarterly activity reports will demonstrate the progress of EDO in achieving the City and EDO's joint 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 A of the SLA. The Quarterly Reports shall form the basis of an Annual Year in Review Report to Council. All Activity Reports shall be publicly accessible.

EDO will also work with the City to provide separate performance metrics included in Appendix B of the SLA. A robust performance measurement framework is essential to ensuring transparency, accountability, and strategic alignment in the delivery of economic development services by the EDO. Through the integration of clear key performance indicators (KPIs), the City can assess annually not only the volume of activity undertaken, but more critically, the short, medium, and long-term outcomes derived from those efforts.

The inclusion of outcome-based metrics in the SLA ensures that public investments in economic development are directly contributing to Council's strategic priorities, including job creation, increased tax base, inclusive prosperity, sustainability, housing advancement, and climate action. This framework also enables more precise attribution of results, distinguishing those outcomes to which the EDO has made a direct and material contribution, while also acknowledging the collective impact of partnerships across the ecosystem including work of the City.

By structuring the SLA around a balanced scorecard, tracking outputs (consultations delivered, site visits hosted), results (jobs created, leads converted), and outcomes (sectoral investment

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growth, increased workforce retention), Council gains a clear line of sight into how activities translate into economic progress.

The inclusion of both quantitative (investment dollars secured, housing starts, wage growth) and qualitative (Net Promoter Scores, business satisfaction, community perceptions) measures allows the City to evaluate performance comprehensively. This approach aligns Kingston with best practices used in leading Canadian municipalities and positions the City to benchmark results, improve programs responsively, and ensure public confidence in the stewardship of economic development resources. The measurement framework serves not just as a reporting tool, but as a strategic asset, guiding future investments, identifying gaps and opportunities, and advancing the long-term economic resilience of the community.

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 1245

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Craig Desjardins, Director, Strategy, Innovation & Partnerships

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A – Draft Kingston Economic Development Corporation Service Level Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT made in triplicate this day of 2025.

BETWEEN:

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF KINGSTON

Hereinafter referred to as the “City”

- and -

KINGSTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Hereinafter referred to as the “KED”

DRAFT SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

WHEREAS the KED operates as the economic development organization (EDO) for the City of Kingston;

THEREFORE the parties hereto agree as follows:

1.0 Economic Development Objectives and Directions:

The City and KED shall work cooperatively and collaboratively to achieve mutual goals and objectives that envision: a dynamic economy that attracts businesses and skilled talent; an innovative city where private and public enterprises thrive and individuals and entrepreneurs grow; and a quality of life that positions Kingston as a great place to live, work and invest.

The objectives and directions of the EDO will be guided by the City’s and KED’s Integrated Economic Development Strategy and other related Strategic Plans to meet the needs of the Kingston community now and into the future.

1.1 Key economic development objectives and directions include:

- i) Investment attraction and investment aftercare;
- ii) Business retention and expansion and work with local businesses;
- iii) Small business start-up, entrepreneur and youth business services including support for post-secondary education collaborations, technology transfer and incubation/innovation enablement; and
- iv) Support for workforce development, high-quality jobs, and skills-building.

The foregoing activities, as described in more detail in Appendix A to this Agreement, shall be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the Integrated Economic Development Strategy (the “Strategy”) and Council’s strategic priorities.

1.2 The focus of the KED's activities shall be as follows:

- i) Implementing the Strategy which is consistent with Council's strategic priorities and the community's vision;
- ii) Developing annual business plans to advance the Strategy and identify cluster development with performance measures to track progress towards established goals and regularly reporting results;
- iii) Regularly reviewing the Strategy in the context of available data (economic, employment and / or demographic) to assess the need for any adjustments in the Strategy in consultation with the City;
- iv) Developing a strong economic development brand and marketing program that will position the City of Kingston as a great place to live, work, invest and do business;
- v) Developing a robust approach to investment attraction and aftercare;
- vi) Facilitating the retention, growth and expansion of existing companies;
- vii) Supporting and nurturing entrepreneurship, small business, incubation and acceleration spaces;
- viii) Collaborating with the City to ensure that there is a supply of municipally owned employment land as part of the overall city-wide employment land inventory. The amount of acreage will vary depending on land availability and financial resources;
- ix) Working with and strongly encouraging private sector/private property owners to maintain and make available inventory of employment land;
- x) Liaise and work with regional and surrounding economic development offices to understand availability and suitability of employment land in neighbouring communities that can help secure and support broader regional business development goals;
- xi) Facilitating the growth of the City's tax assessment base;
- xii) Attracting and supporting the necessary talent to support the requirement of industry; and
- xiii) Working with local, regional, provincial and federal partners to identify high priority growth opportunities and markets, and to provide support and expertise for the attraction of new jobs and investment in those sectors.

2.0 Transparency, Reporting and Accountability

- 2.1** The KED and its Board of Directors will be responsible for fulfilling the mission for which it is incorporated. The KED 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.

2.2 KED shall communicate with the City as follows:

- a) Annually, by way of the draft budget, annual work plan and the 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;
- c) Quarterly, by way of Activity Reports to demonstrate the progress of KED in achieving the Strategy and the impact of the KED's actions and programs on the key performance measures of economic development as set out in the appendices 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;
- d) Once every five (5) years, by way of a new or updated five (5) year Strategy which aligns with the priorities of City Council. Updates to the Strategy shall include a full program of public consultation prior to adoption of the Strategy by KED and submission to City Council. If requested by the City, a meeting of City Council and the full Board of Directors of KED will be arranged as part of the Strategy review process. The Strategy shall be publicly accessible; and
- e) By attending meetings of City Council or providing written communication to Council as may be requested from time to time by the City.

2.3 KED shall maintain a formal Policy Manual (Policy and Practice) that reflects the eight (8) key areas espoused by Transparency International: Ethics; Public Complaints; Leadership; Performance; Human Resources; Budgeting; Procurement; and Audit Results. KED's policies will include a policy on equity, diversity and inclusion. KED shall provide a copy of its policies to the City.

2.4 KED shall hold sector and industry-specific advisory meetings to allow it to fulfill its mandate, including the implementation of the Strategy. City representation will be provided on project-specific topics as required.

3.0 Performance Measurement

3.1 Separate performance metrics shall be prepared for each of the core economic development activities outlined in Appendix A to this Agreement. The performance metrics shall be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based.

3.2 In each year of this Agreement, the proposed goals based on performance metrics included in Appendix A shall be submitted to Council with the draft budget, annual work plan and Strategy update.

3.3 KED shall work with the City to provide separate performance metrics included in Appendix B and report annually on community performance measures in order to identify and analyze trends and adjust programming and activities to respond to opportunities and challenges.

4.0 Financial Operations

- 4.1 KED has a fiscal year end of December 31st.
- 4.2 For the term of this Agreement, the City agrees to provide funding for the duration of the year, at budget time, to KED to undertake the Core Economic Development Activities as set out in Appendix A to this Agreement. KED shall submit an annual budget request to City Council or the Mayor (as applicable) for approval.
- 4.3 KED may request from the City additional funds to carry out specific programs or projects on behalf of the City. The City may also request KED to undertake specific projects or programs on behalf of the City and provide additional funding for said specific programs. Additional Funding shall not be considered part of the base funding for the purpose of calculating the minimum budget increase for the following year. The specific projects or programs and additional funding shall be the subject to Council approval.
- 4.4 KED shall actively seek private project funding to obtain grants, contributions, bequests, gifts and assets from sources other than the City in furtherance of its objectives.
- 4.5 KED finances shall be audited on an annual basis and the Auditor shall provide a Management Letter, commenting on the management of KED finances, to the KED Board. The Auditor will also provide a summary of any audit difference that may have been noted during the audit.
- 4.6 The KED Board shall prepare a detailed Annual Financial Report which shall be submitted to the City. The Financial Report shall include the Auditor's Management Letter and summary of audit differences. The Annual Financial Report shall be publicly accessible.
- 4.7 The KED Board shall ensure that senior management, the Chair and members of the Finance and Audit Committee receive skills development training in financial management if required.

5.0 Term and Termination:

- 5.1 This Agreement shall have a term of five (5) years, commencing on January 1, 2026, and being fully complete on December 31, 2030. At the end of the Agreement, if not already renewed, the current Agreement shall be renewed for a one (1) year term, unless the City or KED provides written notice to the other party that it does not wish to renew the Agreement, such notice to be given prior to ninety (90) days before the conclusion of the original term or a renewal term.
 - a) This Agreement may be terminated by either party prior to the expiration of the Agreement upon at least six (6) months written notice to the other party. Termination does not require notice of any breach of the terms and conditions of this Agreement or of any other cause.
 - b) In the event of a termination notice being given by either party in accordance with this section, during the six (6) month notice period:

- i) KED shall continue to undertake the economic development activities as approved on a yearly basis through the budget process;
- ii) The City shall continue to work with the KED in good faith and to provide funding to undertake the economic development activities to the extent that costs have been reasonably and properly incurred; and
- iii) Funding thereafter or for other activities including transition or winding up costs may not be provided by the City. The parties agree to work cooperatively during any transition or winding up process which may arise during the term of this Agreement.

Dated at the City of Kingston, this day of , 2025.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED

**THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF KINGSTON**

In the presence of:

Bryan Paterson, Mayor

Janet Jaynes, City Clerk

KINGSTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Cathy Campbell-Wilson, Chair

Donna Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer

Appendix A – KPI Framework for Economic Development Service Level Agreement

KED shall act as the primary economic development organization for the benefit of the City of Kingston. Kingston's economic development success will be defined by attracting new investments, retaining and growing existing businesses, supporting entrepreneurship and new company development, and addressing workforce needs in the community. KED will work cooperatively and collaboratively with the City, other organizations and community stakeholders to ensure that investment opportunities are effectively developed. The core economic development activities described herein shall be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the Integrated Economic Development Strategy and Council's strategic priorities.

Guiding Principles

The success of the City–KED partnership depends on transparent, outcome-oriented measurement. The KPI framework should:

- Align with municipal strategic priorities (job creation, tax base growth, inclusion, sustainability, housing, climate action).
- Balance outputs (activities delivered), results (immediate impacts on businesses and investors), and outcomes (longer-term changes in Kingston's economy) in the evaluation of economic development activities.
- Acknowledge a standard of referencing only those results and outcomes to which they have made a direct and material contribution and will acknowledge joint outcomes where results are achieved in partnership with others.
- Incorporate economic development and benchmarking best practices, where data is available, from leading Canadian municipalities.
- Include both quantitative and qualitative measures, from investment dollars secured to perception and satisfaction tracking of businesses served.

A. Investment Attraction & Aftercare

Investment attraction and aftercare are central pillars of Kingston's growth strategy. Leading mid-sized cities emphasize not only the pursuit of new investors, but also the importance of long-term relationship-building, aftercare, and reinvestment from existing firms in the community.

Outputs

- # of international trade shows, conferences, missions attended
- # of meetings hosted at tradeshows, conferences, missions attended
- # of qualified investor/company inquiries received
- # of direct outreaches_to prospective companies
- # of investment marketing campaigns executed

- Response time to investor inquiries

Results

- # of new qualified leads generated
- % conversion from qualified lead to active investment opportunity
- # of site visits/investor delegations hosted
- # of active investment opportunities supported per year
- Reach of investment marketing campaigns executed
- # of closed-won opportunities per year
- % of opportunities advancing to site selection
- # of local supplier/B2B connections facilitated
- # of ecosystem partners engaged in active investment opportunities/site visits

Outcomes

- \$ value of closed-won investment opportunities
- # of jobs created through closed-won investment opportunities
- % of inquiries/leads aligned with priority sectors
- % of active investment opportunities aligned with priority sectors
- % of projects contributing to municipal sustainability/inclusion goals as defined by City Council Strategic Priorities

B. Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)

BRE is often the most effective form of economic development. Leading cities prioritize direct engagement, fast service, and ecosystem integration to help businesses adapt, innovate, and expand locally.

Outputs

- # of inquiries received for support
- # of business consultations delivered
- # of site visits to local companies
- # of businesses supported through programs (Starter Company Plus, HELIX, etc.)
- # of programs/events hosted
- Response time to business inquiries
- # of business support marketing campaigns executed

Results

- # of expansion projects supported
- # of retention projects facilitated
- % of retention projects successfully facilitated
- # of referrals to ecosystem partners

- # of businesses supported with external funding applications
- # of grants/micro-supports disbursed by KED
- # of businesses engaged in KED support programs
- # of KED event/workshop attendees
- # of businesses connected to new markets/supply chains
- Reach of business support marketing campaigns executed
- Business Net Promoter Score (NPS) satisfaction with KED services

Outcomes

- \$ investment of expansion supported
- # of jobs created through closed-won expansion projects
- % of expansions aligned with priority clusters
- # of jobs retained through interventions
- \$ value of external funding received by businesses for growth
- \$ value of grants/micro-supports disbursed by KED
- % of surveyed businesses reporting improved business climate perception

C. Entrepreneurship & Startups

Entrepreneurship is the engine of long-term innovation and resilience. Leading cities measure not just the number of startups launched, but also their progression to scale-up, ability to secure capital, IP creation, and founder diversity.

Outputs

- # inquiries for support
- # of consultations provided
- # of coaching/mentorship/consultation hours delivered
- # of startups supported through programs (Starter Company Plus, Summer Company, etc.)
- # of KED workshops/programs delivered
- # of entrepreneurship and startup marketing campaigns executed

Results

- # of startups completing programs
- # of KED event/workshop attendees
- # of investor pitch opportunities facilitated
- # of businesses supported with external funding applications
- # of startups filing patents/IP/trademarks
- # of grants/micro-supports disbursed by KED
- # of referrals to ecosystem partners
- # of youth/student entrepreneurs engaged

- Reach of entrepreneurship and startup marketing campaigns executed
- Entrepreneur Net Promoter Score (NPS) satisfaction with EDO services

Outcomes

- Startup survival rate at 2–3 years of companies supported
- \$ investment of startup business supported
- \$ value leveraged in private funding per \$1 of KED program support
- # jobs created by startup businesses launched/supported
- # of patents/IP commercialized
- # of startups aligned with priority sectors

D. Financial Stewardship & ROI

Accountability and stewardship underpin public trust in economic development. Mid-sized leading cities regularly report on leverage ratios, ROI, and administrative efficiency to justify continued investment.

Outputs

- # of funding applications submitted to federal/provincial/private sources.
- # of successful funding applications secured.
- # of partnerships leveraged for co-funding initiatives.
- # of KPI performance scorecards published publicly (financial transparency to community).
- # of training sessions for staff/board on financial compliance and governance.

Results

- \$ leveraged from federal/provincial/private partners per \$1 municipal
- % of funding allocated to priority sectors

Outcomes

- ROI ratio: municipal funding vs. attributable jobs, investment, payroll
- Incremental GDP/GVA growth
- % of operating revenues from non-municipal contributions
- Multiplier effect: private capital generated per \$1 invested

Appendix B – KPI Framework for Community Performance Measures

In addition to the activity-based metrics, the EDO and the City will compile, track and report on community performance measures in order to identify and analyze trends and adjust programming and activities to respond to opportunities and challenges.

- Total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and by sector
- Total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) performance in the identified target sectors
- Total number of jobs created and maintained and by sector
- Total number of jobs created and maintained in the identified target sectors
- Total number of companies started and maintained and by sector
- Total number of companies started and maintained in the identified target sectors
- Total workforce year-to-year growth
- Total business counts year-to-year growth
- Total business counts year-to-year growth in the identified target sectors
- Funding investment in the identified target sectors
- Population
- Total employment
- Labour Force participation rate
- Average wages
- Year of year average wages
- Growth in percentage of working age population
- Unemployment rate
- Total housing starts
- Total value of building permits

Sector Ecosystem Infrastructure Development

Physical and digital infrastructure is the backbone of modern innovation ecosystems. High-performing cities invest in shared facilities, specialized labs, incubators, accelerators and collaborative hubs that lower barriers for startups and SMEs.

Outputs

- # and square footage of incubators/accelerators, wet labs, shared facilities
- # of new facilities opened or expanded annually
- % of funding leveraged from external partners
- # of sector-focused programs hosted in facilities

Results

- Occupancy/utilization rates
- # of firms using sector-specific infrastructure
- # of firms attracted due to infrastructure availability

- Average time for firms to access infrastructure
- # of partnerships/contracts signed with Queen's, SLC, KHSC, etc.
- % of firms reporting productivity/R&D gains from access

Outcomes

- Jobs created from firms using infrastructure
- # of patents/IP commercialized
- \$ venture/angel capital raised by facility-based firms
- Retention rate of firms post-graduation
- # of anchor firms or multinational partnerships established
- Global visibility: delegations, tours, conferences hosted

Workforce & Talent

Workforce development is at the heart of economic competitiveness. Best-in-class cities explicitly connect talent strategies to population growth, sector alignment, and retention of international students and newcomers.

Outputs

- # of placements through programs
- # of graduate and newcomer hires facilitated
- # of employers engaged in talent programs
- # of upskilling/reskilling participants
- # of students completing co-ops, internships, WIL locally

Results

- Employer satisfaction with talent programs
- % of placements leading to permanent employment
- Retention rates of participants 1 and 3 years post-placement
- % of participants hired into priority sectors
- Retention of international students after graduation

Outcomes

- Population growth linked to talent attraction
- Alignment of workforce outcomes with priority sectors
- Median wage growth of participants over 3–5 years
- # of newcomers transitioning to permanent residency
- Employer-reported productivity/innovation outcomes
- Net inflow/outflow of working-age population

Brand & Reputation

A strong city brand amplifies investment, talent, and tourism attraction. Leading cities

measure brand reach, earned media, and stakeholder adoption to ensure their reputation drives tangible results.

Outputs

- # of campaigns delivered
- # of stakeholders using Kingston's brand toolkit
- # of co-branded events or activations with partners
- # of influencer/ambassador partnerships

Results

- Earned media coverage volume and sentiment
- Digital engagement analytics (impressions, shares, conversions)
- Share of voice vs. comparator cities
- # of inbound leads attributed to marketing campaigns

Outcomes

- Resident civic pride and quality-of-life survey results
- External investor/talent perception of Kingston as a business location
- Annual ranking in national/international city perception indices
- Volume of unsolicited inquiries citing Kingston

Equity, Inclusion & Community Impact

Inclusive growth is both an economic and social imperative. Best-in-class ecosystems integrate inclusive hiring, supplier diversity, and representation metrics directly into their economic development scorecards.

Outputs

- # of equity-seeking businesses/entrepreneurs supported
- # of EDI-focused programs delivered
- # of mentorship/training sessions for equity-seeking founders
- % of program outreach materials in accessible/multilingual formats

Results

- % of participants from equity-seeking groups (baseline vs. target)
- # of equity-seeking firms accessing procurement/supply chain opportunities
- % of employers adopting inclusive HR/talent practices
- Retention rate of equity-seeking entrepreneurs after support

Outcomes

- Proportion of funding/jobs created by equity-seeking groups
- Median revenue growth of equity-seeking firms vs. average
- Community perception of inclusivity in Kingston's economy

- Representation of equity-seeking groups in governance/leadership