



Smiths Falls

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Smiths Falls
FAST FACTS

LAND & LIVING

- 9,500 residents
- 9.66 km² area
- 958.1 persons per km²
- 4,500 private households
- 45.4 - Average Age
- 47.2 - Median Age
- \$72,100 - Average Household Income
- \$57,100 - Average (Full-time Worker)
- \$165,000 median assessed value
- 2.5 minute median commute time
- Five elementary schools
- Three secondary schools
- Six child care centres
- Five seniors residences

CULTURE & COMMUNITY

- Heritage House Museum
- Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario
- The Station Theatre
- Bascule Bridge
- UNESCO World Heritage Site: The Rideau Canal
- 33.27 hectares of designated parkland
- Cataraqui Trail
- Rideau Trail
- Smiths Falls ATV Trail
- Smiths Falls Snowmobile Trail
- Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail
- Smiths Falls Walking Trail
- Memorial Community Centre Arena
- Youth Arena
- Smiths Falls Curling and Squash Club
- Smiths Falls Seniors Activity Centre



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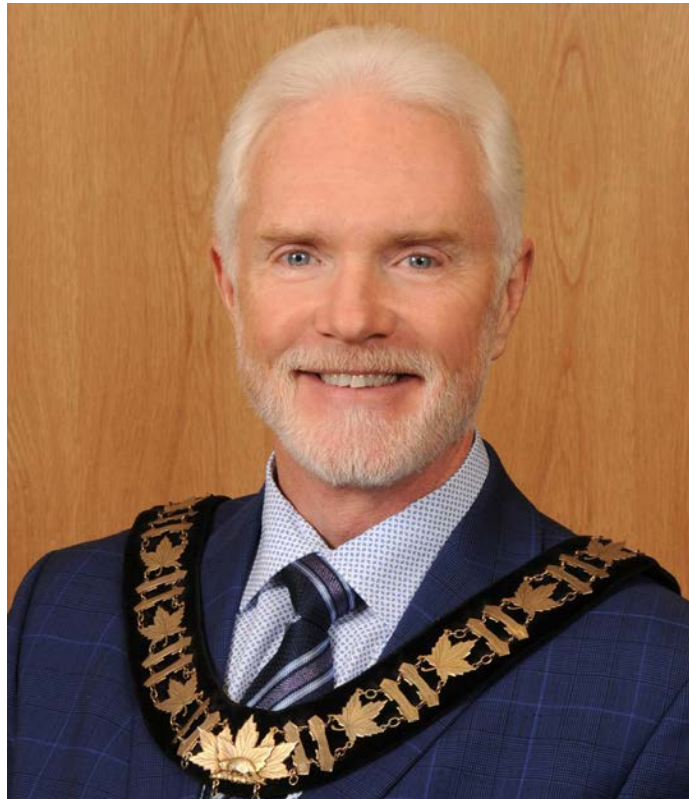
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Message from the MAYOR



As I look back on 2024, I wish to first acknowledge the contributions of the numerous volunteers who dedicate their time, wisdom and passion to the town's boards and committees. Much of the work occurring within these groups makes it way to Council and results in decisions that leave a very positive lasting impact on our community.

Dozens of volunteers support the work of eleven different boards and committees. Some, including our Planning Advisory Committee, Police Services Board and Public Library Board are guided by provincial regulations. Others, including our Climate Protection Working Group and Smiths Falls for All Committee emerged from the recognition of issues in our community that required the attention and decision of Council.

In 2021-22, the Town's Racism and Discrimination Task Force met to address growing concerns of racism, prejudice and discrimination in our community. Numerous actions occurred, including the establishment of our annual ceremony on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation.

One action item initiated by the task force was the design and construction of an Indigenous Healing Circle. Although it took over two years to get the necessary approvals, the official opening of our healing circle on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation last September was a very heartwarming event. We were blessed once again to have residential school survivor Bernard Nelson participating and sharing his experiences. It was a very moving event and feedback that touched me the most was from one of our First Nations citizens who told me he feels his best, and at peace, when he is at the Healing Circle on Duck Island. This special place provides all our citizens and visitors a place to pause and reflect, and as I am told, bring you closer to our creator.

The Smiths Falls for All Committee has carried forward the work initiated by the task force, and in 2024, confirmed the four priorities it will focus its efforts on – poverty, housing, food security and inclusivity, supporting its goals of advancing economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability. It also hosted a newcomer event that enabled numerous community organizations to connect with some of our newer citizens, many who have found Smiths Falls from other parts of the world in recent years. As our community grows in population and diversity, and as we see rising intolerance, prejudice and discrimination, the work of this group will continue to be deeply meaningful to our community.

So many of the incredible things that happen in our community are driven by volunteers. Our service clubs continue to play vital roles, both in organizing and running community events and in fundraising for important causes. Many of our churches and the Falls Food Hub prepare regular meals for our citizens and the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank regularly assists hundreds of our citizens every month.

Every year, the Town hosts Volunteer Appreciation Community Awards Night. This event provides Council with the opportunity to thank many of the countless volunteers who help make Smiths Falls great, and to recognize a few each year who have made outstanding contributions. Last May, I was very pleased to present Dorothy Hudson with our Municipal Volunteer Award for her longstanding and outstanding dedication to our Municipal Heritage Committee.

It was also a very exciting moment to provide Bud Fawcett with our Charles Gilhully Award for his decades of daily work leading our Seniors Centre and Harmony Seniors Club. This organization has provided years of fun and fellowship for our seniors and has added incredibly to the quality of life of our citizens enjoying their golden years.

Speaking of recognizing volunteers, it was a special night last June when local developer, community advocate and volunteer Chris Saumure was recognized as the 2023 Citizen of the Year. Although known for numerous construction projects in town, Chris has long been a great leader of our Chamber of Commerce and regularly, quietly, supports our community in numerous positive ways.

Smiths Falls has experienced an incredible level of residential development recently, with approximately 800 new homes and apartments constructed over the past six years. A growing population has also placed more demand on housing, leading to growing concerns with affordability. In 2019, the town formed a Housing Task Force focused on enabling more residential development, with a primary focus on affordability. This led to seventeen recommendations that were endorsed and implemented by Council, including a priority to work with not-for-profits for housing and the development of provisions within our Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to encourage and provide financial support for affordable housing.

Having an affordable place to call home is a key foundation to everyone's long-term financial security, and the new development at 44 Chambers Street, which officially opened in May, 2024, provides every resident of the 34 unit building with a deeply affordable home. This project, built by the Saumure Group and owned by Carebridge Community Support, is an outstanding example of what is possible when all levels of government and the community come together with a commitment to truly make a difference. Backed by a \$500,000 donation from St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, federal funding through the national housing co-investment fund, \$2.9 million and 40 years of rent supports from Lanark County (includes provincial support) and CIP funding, including a ten-year commitment to a refund of property taxes by the Town, made this project possible.

The confidence garnered through this project has led the town to further partner with Carebridge for a future development on town-owned property on Robinson Avenue and I am hopeful that additional commitments by a multitude of partners will lead to affordable homes for dozens of our citizens in the next couple of years.

Like all communities across our country, the Town and Lanark County have been seeing growing rates of homelessness in recent years. The rising cost of housing and contributing factors have led to this monumental issue, with more and more people couch surfing, living in cars or sheds, or even living rough in encampments.

Ending homelessness will take a concerted effort and investment from all levels of government. Mid last year, the biggest initiative we have seen locally to combat homelessness opened at the former Willowdale Retirement Centre. Bridge House, a collective effort between Lanark County and Lanark County Mental Health has provided a new home and security for over 13 people who had previously been homeless. This effort provides a home with supports and stands as a vital resource to help provide the critical foundation of long-term security these people have been lacking. As we entered 2025, funding was expanded that will enable Bridge House to grow to 21 rooms, welcoming additional people into its welcoming environment.

2024 will long be remembered as a year of significant change for the Smiths Falls Police Service. For the first time in its 137-year history, a woman was in charge. On July 4, Chief Jodi Empey swore her oath of office, becoming our first female chief, and one of only a handful of female chiefs in Ontario. It was the same month Chief Empey celebrated her 30th anniversary with the Smiths Falls Police Service, having been only the second woman to join the force when she did in 1994. In August, Chris Kettyle, who had earlier retired from a stellar career with the Ontario Provincial Police, brought his wealth of experience to his role as deputy chief. Our police service is in great hands for the foreseeable future!

Message from the MAYOR (CONT'D)

We will always remember 2024 as the year we were still standing. Yes, Jonny Harris and his Still Standing crew were in Smiths Falls in May filming some of the great stories, memorable people and great sites of our community. Watch parties gathered at numerous locations in town on October 22 as the Smiths Falls story was aired on CBC.

No year in review would be complete without mentioning Brooke and Brittany Henderson. Brooke made the cut in 22 of 24 starts and had 9 top 10 finishes in another outstanding season. The highlight locally was on August 3 when Brooke and Brittany, on their way to the airport to catch their flight to the Paris Olympics, stopped by town hall to the cheers and well wishes from hundreds of supporters gathered to send them off knowing their entire community was behind them. Representing Canada in her third Olympics, Brooke finished in 13th place in Paris. At the age of just 27, I'm sure she will have many other opportunities to represent Canada, and Smiths Falls, in future Olympics.

As we turn the page to 2025, numerous construction projects, including our new water tower and phase two of the George Street redevelopment, will be completed. Additionally, the new Confederation Bridge, a unique timber-constructed active transportation crossing, is under construction and will be installed this coming summer.

A year from now, when we look back at 2025, there is no doubt the highlight will be Old Home Week, which will run from August 2 to 9. This celebration, which had previously occurred in 1925, 1950, 1976 and 2000 will feature over a week of activities, and from the kick-off parade, to the drone show and closing concert, this is a once in a generation event you will not want to miss!

CAO Strategic Plan REPORT

A solid strategic plan is an effective way to communicate municipal priorities to citizens, stakeholders, investors, and staff and informs future decision making. Smiths Falls Town Council embraced the principle of strategic planning and got off to a strong start in their 4-year term by making the development of a new strategic plan an early priority. The key strategic priorities for this term of Council are:

Transportation Networks - To enable improved mobility by examining existing transportation networks both within Town and beyond in a way that supports employment and accessibility.

Housing - Support more diverse built housing stock to ensure all our citizens have a home they can afford.

Redevelopment of the Waterfront & Downtown - Enhance the waterfront experience for our residents and visitors by developing places that attract people.

Infrastructure Renewal - To manage our infrastructure in a proactive manner and position the Town for growth.

New Business Attraction - Create employment, expand economic activity and broaden the tax base to build a thriving local economy.

Parks, Trails & Recreation - To enhance quality of life and provide diverse recreational opportunities for residents & visitors.

There are 35 initiatives within the plan to support the 6 strategic priorities. All 6 priority areas advanced considerably in 2024.

Priority #1 – Transportation Networks
Most of the eight initiatives within this priority area are due for completion early in the plan horizon. The Active Transportation Implementation plan is underway and will guide future infrastructure investments as we continue to build a seamless active transportation network. The Confederation Bridge project has evolved considerably with an award of the tender for construction to Structure Craft based on timber structure design. Installation is slated for August, 2025. The Transportation Master Plan development has been enveloped within the scope of the Official Plan project and is well underway.

Priority #2 – Housing

The Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2024 now features programs to support attainable housing projects through planning fee rebates and other financial incentives. This represents a significant policy lever to enable the building of housing units at affordable levels. The other key policy development initiative within the Housing priority is the Official Plan (OP) update. The project launched in May with the appointment Dillon Consulting to lead the project. A World Café was hosted in September to garner public feedback. An Affordable and Inclusive Housing Plan draft will be presented to Council in early 2025 .

Priority #3 – Waterfront & Downtown

This priority area features a wide variety of plans, studies and programs to enhance the waterfront and downtown experience. The Heritage Conservation District project gained traction over the last 6 months; a draft study was presented to Committee of the Whole in December. The Canal District Revitalization Master Plan (Centre Street project) was approved by Council over the summer. The exclusivity arrangement to re-develop the former water treatment plant site expires at year end. Discussions are actively underway with the proponent to chart a course that will enable the development of this prime waterfront land. There is renewed interest in third party operations of farmers markets at two downtown and waterfront locations in 2025.

Priority #4 – Infrastructure Renewal

The infrastructure priority places emphasis on asset management planning and climate protection initiatives. The new Asset Management Plan was approved over the summer months to better inform our capital spending programs, and to meet the provincial regulatory requirements for asset management. A refreshed procurement policy is in progress and is expected to be presented to Council in the 2nd quarter of 2025. The Climate Protection Working Group have completed milestone 1 of the Partners for Climate Protection phased approach to developing a climate protection plan for the Town. Milestones 2 & 3 are actively being pursued. The Library renovation/accessibility improvement project is underway and has experienced a few delays. Completion of the construction phase is projected to occur in the 1st quarter of 2025.

Priority #5 – New Business Attraction

The BR&E (Business Retention and Expansion) plan has progressed well in 2024. A draft plan has been crafted with the 2nd stakeholder session occurred in December. A final draft is expected to be presented to COW early in 2025. Work continues to advance on making more industrial land investment ready with an environmental impact study underway for the Walker Road area of the industrial/business park. Council expressed its support for the High Frequency Rail project by passing a resolution advocating for a rail station in Smiths Falls to provide local and regional access to the proposed 1000km passenger rail system connecting Toronto to Quebec City. We are awaiting a decision by the federal government on the fate of this legacy project with potential for profound local impacts.

Priority #6 – Parks, Trails & Recreation

Significant progress was made in the suite of initiatives within this priority area all focused on enhancing quality of life offerings in the community. Council approved several important policy documents including:

1. An implementation plan for inclusive playgrounds.
2. An implementation plan to operationalize the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
3. A programming/event plan for Town Square including the bandstand.

The mini-forest project in Hyland/Corbett Park was completed in conjunction with REAL featuring 320 trees planted in a dense forest. Town staff planted 60 larger calipre trees throughout the town and gave away nearly 2000 seedling trees all with the goal of expanding our urban forest. A trailhead facility to support and encourage use of the Cataragui Trail reached the design phase. Construction is slated for 2025 once the final design and location is endorsed.

Public

WORKS + UTILITIES

	32 full-time staff
	Operated and maintained <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 69 km of roadways 58 km of sewer mains 61.9 km of watermains 6 bridges
	Prepared 25 Council reports
	Treated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,331 ML of Drinking Water 3,934 ML of Wastewater
	Produced 189.9 tonnes of fertilizer from wastewater solids
	Collected 2,893.90 tonnes of residential solid waste
	Diverted 565 tonnes of recyclable material from landfill
	Collected 438 tonnes of yard waste



Accomplishments in 2024

Catherine & Oak Street Reconstruction
 The Town administered the remaining contract work on Catherine Street and Oak Street which was carried over from 2023. The project was completed within budget.

Road and Sidewalk Improvements
 The following surface improvements were completed under the Asphalt, Concrete, Paving and Milling (ACPM) Capital Program:

- Asphalt milling, resurfacing and sidewalk/curb improvements on Bay Street from Main Street to Chambers Street and on McGill Street North from Beckwith Street to Chambers Street.
- Sidewalks installed on the following streets to accommodate safe pedestrian movement:
- North side of Old Slys Road between the Fixed Bridge and the entrance into Lower Reach Park.
 - William Street North from Abbott Street to the Railway Museum.
 - Lee Avenue from Ferrara Drive to the new Parquette.
 - North side of Lombard Street from Beckwith Street to Victoria Park entrance.

George Street Phase 1
 Town Engineering staff administered the Reconstruction of George Street Phase 1 from Strathcona Street to William Street. This major capital reconstruction project was awarded to Campbell's Trucking Ltd. with construction starting in May 2024 and finishing in November 2024. The existing sewer, water and roadway infrastructure had exceeded its service life and needed to be replaced. The completed works align with the Town's initiative for infrastructure improvements such as sewer separation, upgrading to PVC sanitary sewers and watermains, replacing lead residential water services with copper and replacing clay residential sewer services with PVC. Replacing sewers with gasketed PVC pipe ensures that there is less sewage being treated at the treatment plant which allows for capacity to be allocated to new development.

Surface features were improved to provide better drainage and comply with Ontario's current Accessibility Standards. Phase 1 of this broader project was completed within budget.

Public Works Equipment
 The Public Works Department received a new fully outfitted single axle plow truck that was ordered in 2023.

- 2024 Wastewater Systems Capital Projects**
- Cured In Place Pipe (CIPP) - 316 metres of liner was installed at combined sewer crossings under the VIA/CPR tracks as well as on Cowan Street to mitigate root intrusion, ground water infiltration concerns, and provide additional strength to existing pipes.
 - SCADA Computer/System Upgrades at the Water Pollution Control Plant.
 - The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment study commenced for Solids Handling at the Water Pollution Control Plant.
 - Bar Screen upgrade completed.
 - Blower received and onsite for installation at the Water Pollution Control Plant.
 - Primary and Secondary Tank Gates received for installation at the Water Pollution Control Plant.

- 2024 Water Systems Capital Projects**
- Overland back feed system purchased for installation of temporary overland backfeed to supply properties water during construction.
 - Chlorine system equipment purchased.
 - Free Chlorine analyzer replaced.
 - Water Treatment Plant filter media top up.
 - Fence Gate Controllers updated with new technology/mechanisms.
 - Water Tower project awarded to Landmark Structure Inc. Project is on schedule to complete at the end of 2025.



Smiths Falls FIRE DEPARTMENT

At a Glance
In 2024 Smiths Falls Fire attended 307 calls for service. Additionally, the dispatch center had an increase in calls for service, calls dispatched 2024 were 2242 compared to 2023 of 1962 calls dispatched, part of the increased call volume was a result of the new dispatching contract with Minden Hills.



Fire Services
Over 1300 hours of training was completed, this included rescue training, fire suppression training and hazmat to name a few. Our Fire Prevention activities have increased over the past year with smoke and carbon monoxide inspections increasing by 40%. Our Logistics division has also been busy with acquiring new equipment and placing it in service, to maintain all emergency vehicles and equipment.

We had the privilege to meet with the Solicitor General Michael Kerzner and MPP John Jorden as they stopped by in November, we gave them a tour of the firehall and had an opportunity to discuss a variety of issues facing the fire service.

Awarded Grants
The Ontario government issued the third and final round funding opportunity for the Next Generation 911. Our application was submitted and received, and approval was granted. The transition to NG911 was expected to be in September 2024, we have since been informed the transition has now been postponed until March 2027. The Fire Department also received a grant of \$8230 for Firefighter Cancer Prevention.

Mutual Aid

1	Beckwith
0	Carleton Place
2	Drummond/North Elmsley
1	Lanark Highlands
2	Montague
0	Perth
1	Rideau Lakes
0	South Elmsley

Additionally, the Smiths Falls Fire Department has entered into agreements to provide Automatic Aid to the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley (North Elmsley Ward) and Rideau Lakes Township (South Elmsley Ward). In 2024 Smiths Falls Fire attended 68 Automatic Aid Calls:

- Rideau Lakes – 61
- Drummond North Elmsley – 7

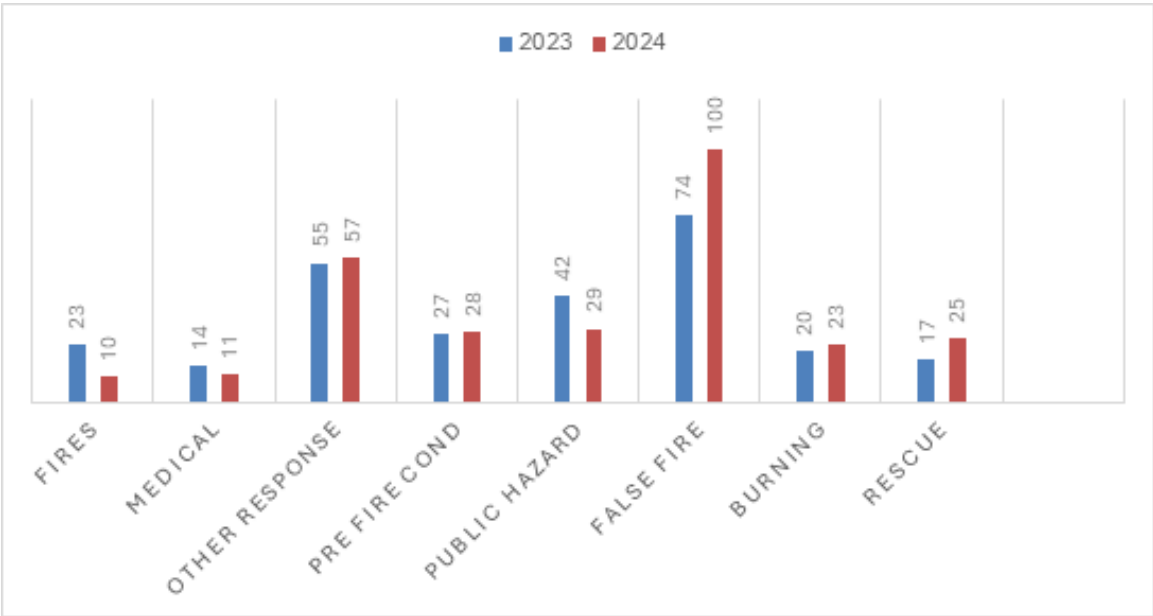


Fire Prevention Activities

313	Inspections	9	Fire safety plan review & approval
21	Re-inspection for compliance	6	File search requests
4	Complaint/request inspections	4	Court prosecution/appearance
19	Business licencing	3	Fire Marshall orders issued
200	Inspection for smoke/carbon monoxide	18	Public education activities
9	Fire investigations	3	Hoarding
4	New construction plans review		

The Ontario Fire Marshall categories are as follows:

Property Fire/Explosions	Fire, explosion, no loss outdoor fire
Medical/Resuscitator	Accident or illness related (cuts, fractures, etc.) Chest pains or suspected heart attack, CPR administration Aid not required upon arrival/no action required, other medical
Other Response	Assistance to other agencies, assistance to Police Assistance to other Fire Department (mutual aid, automatic aid, etc.) Call cancelled on route, other public service
Pre-Fire Conditions/No Fire	Other cooking/toasting/smoke/steam (no fire) Overheat (no fire), pot on stove (no fire)
Public Hazard	CO incident, gas leak – propane or natural gas, spill (gas/miscellaneous) power lines down/arcing
False Fire Calls	Alarm (accidental/malfunction/human/malicious, other false fire call
Burning (controlled)	Open air burning/unauthorized controlled burning
Rescue	Other rescue, person trapped in elevator



Economic
**DEVELOPMENT
+ TOURISM**

Programs and Initiatives

- Completed the Canal District Revitalization Plan
- Hired New FT Tourism, Arts and Culture Coordinator
- Adoption of the Public Arts Master Plan & Advisory Committee implemented
- Updated and administered the 2024 Community Grants Program
- Develop a new Filming in Smiths Falls Policy and application process
- Partnered on a multi-year, multi-regional trail loop project
- Completed a ministry BR&E Survey Project and started work on a new BR&E and Investment Attraction Plan
- New Tourism Marketing Plan completed and implemented
- New Visitor's Map completed (printed for Spring 2025)
- Approved 23 special events by local organizers
- Administered the final year of the 3-year visitor survey program
- Worked with partners to implement tourism marketing & program initiatives
- Organized & hosted 6 community events
- Hosted 3 community workshops (Strategic Planning for Volunteer Organizations, Community Economic Development 101, Grant Writing 101)
- Organized Community Awards and Citizen of the Year Award ceremonies
- New Local Eats program initiative launched
- Economic Edge eNewsletter
- Worked with partners to host the Annual Smiths Falls Job Fair
- Engaged with 100+ individual businesses throughout the year, providing information, resources and business support services



Heritage House Museum

Programs & Special Events

- March Break Camps
- March of the Museums
- March Break Puppet Show
- Spring Carnival
- Beatlemania Opening Event
- School Groups
- Old Slys Rapids – Walking Tour
- Backyard History Summer Day Camps
- Movie Nights at Centennial Park
- Wedding Rentals
- Paranormal Investigations / Workshops
- William Galbraith Book Talk
- Mysteries of the Keyhole House Talk
- Ghost Stories with Camp Quality
- Rideau Artist of the Year
- Fall Fest
- Haunted Smiths Falls Ghost Walks
- Haunted Heritage House
- Community Pumpkin Carving Contest
- Smiths Falls Letters to Santa
- Photos with Santa
- Holiday Heritage House
- Doors Open Kingston
- Weekly Trivia Nights @ Tap Room Inc.

Special Exhibitions

- Beatlemania Exhibit
- The Glorious Colours of Nature by Renee Nadi Wesley
- Recent Paintings by Craig Carty
- Rideau Artist of the Year Art Showcase
- Annual Smiths Falls Art Show
- Made in Smiths Falls
- Christmas Traditions

Cultural Partnerships & Outreach

- Community Carrot Garden
- SF&D Horticultural Society Foodbank Garden
- Kingston Area Museums
- Lanark County Arts and Heritage
- Paddlefest
- Winter Carnival
- Canada Day
- Doors Open Kingston
- Smiths Falls DBA
- The Tap Room Inc.
- The Artisan Village Market

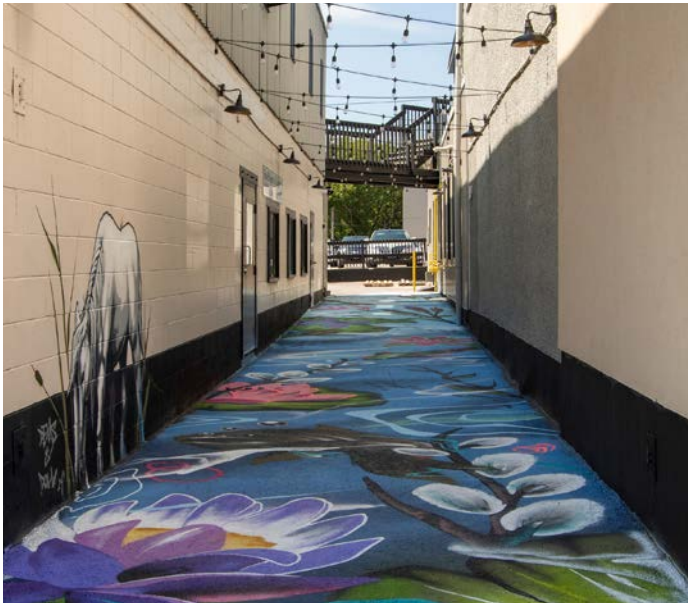
Small Business Advisory Centre

Core Services

In 2024, the Small Business Advisory Centre provided consultations in person, virtually, and by phone. They offered training sessions such as webinars via Zoom while conducting multiple How to Start a Business workshops in person at local employment centres/municipal offices. On an ongoing basis throughout 2024 they attended and spoke at events, breakfast meetings, and networking sessions hosted by various Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development offices. Additionally, they were part of the career fairs in Smiths Falls and Carleton Place. Co-hosted an International Woman's Day event in Kemptville with the Leeds and Grenville Small Business Centre, with 120+ in attendance in March 2024. Attended and had a booth display at the Carleton Place Business Summit in May 2024.

The SBAC had over 1275 business inquiries via email, in person and social media. They conducted 296 consultations with businesses and potential businesses, discussing start-up, expansion, purchasing, hiring, and funding opportunities. The Centre hosted 25 webinars and 8 in-person workshops, attracting a total of 892 attendees from January to December 2024.

As part of the Small Business Centres (SBC) Ontario network, which includes 54 Small Business Enterprise Centres (SBECS), they provided business owners with access to further e-learning opportunities.



Starter Company Plus

The Centre conducted one intake of the Starter Company Plus program in 2024, involving 11 participants. Of these, 8 successfully obtained grant funding after attending over 20 hours of in-class training, including a business plan boot camp and other relevant business training, pitching their businesses to a grant committee, and participating in weekly group coaching sessions. The total amount of grants issued was \$38000.

Summer Company Program

Throughout the year went into high schools/youth centres to talk about the Ontario Government youth program that we are the local service provider for. The Summer Company program had 3 student participants who received training, mentoring, and funding throughout the summer while running their own businesses. The total amount of grants issued were \$9000.

Community SERVICES

Community Services: A Year of Progress and Community Investment

This past year has been a significant one for Community Services, marked by key investments in recreation, accessibility, and environmental sustainability. Through expanded programming and infrastructure improvements, we have continued to enhance the quality of life for residents of Smiths Falls.

In November, the Smiths Falls Memorial Community Centre hosted the CCHL-OJHL Battle of Ontario, bringing an important high-level junior hockey event to our community. The event was a major success, and we were able to show off our beautiful arena.

The department’s commitment to environmental stewardship remained a priority. In partnership with REAL (Rideau Environmental Action League), we planted a Mini Forest at Hyland-Corbett Park, strengthening local biodiversity and urban greenspace. Additionally, more than 400 saplings were planted on Town property, and an impressive 1,500 saplings were distributed to residents to encourage community-driven greening efforts.

The Outdoor Rink season was particularly strong this year. A combination of favorable weather, dedicated staff, and support from the Fire Department ensured excellent ice conditions and widespread community enjoyment.



Accessibility and inclusion continued to guide our parks and playground upgrades. We installed new accessible play equipment at Hyland-Corbett playground and completed the playground at the Lee Avenue Parkette, which includes play elements designed for children of all abilities. A significant milestone for our community was the completion and official opening of the Healing Circle on Duck Island. This space, inaugurated on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, serves as a meaningful site for reflection, education, and cultural recognition.

At the arena, public programming expanded to meet growing demand. Parent and tot skating, public skating, and shinny sessions all saw increased participation. Additionally, the launch of our public skate sponsorship program allowed local businesses and organizations to provide regular free skating opportunities, making recreation more accessible to the community.

In childcare services, demand continued to rise, and we now have over 135 children enrolled in our programs. The continued expansion of our offerings reflects the community’s needs and our commitment to supporting families.

Across all areas—recreation, environmental initiatives, accessibility improvements, and community programs—2024 was a year of steady progress. We remain committed to investing in services and infrastructure that enhance Smiths Falls and meet the evolving needs of our residents.

Corporate SERVICES

The Town’s Corporate Services Department focuses on corporate-wide support services, based on specialized knowledge, legislation, best practices, and technology to serve both tax payers as well as internal staff.

The Corporate Services Department is made up of a variety of services:

- Clerk’s Office
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Finance
- Asset Management



Licencing

26	Business Licences Issued
165	Animal Tags (cats and dogs)
244	Death Registrations
166	Marriage Licences
8	Break-Open Ticket Licences
10	Raffle
3	Regular Bingo

Freedom of Information requests completed	24
Reports presented to Council	141
By-laws passed	83
Resolutions passed	259
Council Meetings held	22
Committee of the Whole meetings held	32

Planning SERVICES

The Planning Division assists the community in establishing and implementing its long-range development plan vision. Community planning supports economic prosperity, community vitality, and environmental responsibility, as well as enriching cultural identity in a way that reflects the community while respecting provincial policy. The Town’s Planning team is responsible for development review under the Planning Act, creating and administering land use-related policies and by-laws, administering the Community Improvement Plan, managing programs and services under the Ontario Heritage Act, and Climate Protection planning. The planning process is governed by the Province’s Planning Act, which governs the approvals processes we follow. The Town’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law are the daily tools we use to promote attractive and sustainable development while limiting negative impacts on people, neighbours and the environment.

Major projects that obtained planning approval in 2024 include:

- Draft plan approval given for Phase 3 of the Bellamy Farm Subdivision, comprising 156 townhouse units and new parkland and open space.
- Housekeeping updates to the Town’s Zoning By-law to improve usability and administration.
- Planning approvals to accommodate 8 new residential units on two lots on Elm Street.

2024 Highlights

- Began work on the Town’s new Official Plan, which will replace the current 2014 Official Plan and sets the stage for planning the next 25 years. The new Plan will identify the areas for future residential and non-residential development that we need to set aside to meet our 25 year growth projections. The Plan will be centred around five key themes: downtown revitalization, housing, sustainability, community spaces and transportation. The first interactive open house held in October 2024.
- Council approved Heritage Conservation District Study that identified the landscape, design and cultural attributes of our downtown, and will form the basis of a

Heritage Conservation District Plan that will support and direct change and development in the commercial core that is compatible with the established character of the neighbourhood. The Plan will be developed over the course of 2025.

- Completed the second year of the new Community Improvement Plan. Council funded improvements to seven properties, totaling \$111,751, which leveraged an estimated private sector investment into the downtown core of \$232,924 once the approved projects are completed. Approved projects included façade improvements, accessibility upgrades and downtown interior renovations.
- The Climate Protection Working Group completed Milestone 1 of the Partners for Climate Protection 5-Step Milestone Framework. Work is currently being undertaken to complete Milestones 2 and 3.
- Municipal Heritage Committee hosted a successful Heritage Symposium in October at the Station Theatre, with the theme “Saving the Past for the Future.”
- Approval of new Downtown Core Design Guidelines that outline in user-friendly terms best practices for building and façade design, including heritage restoration and sustainability.
- Completed baseline tree canopy assessment that found that tree canopy coverage across the entire Town is 35%, however varies considerably across neighbourhoods. This baseline will help us assess changes over time that will allow the Town to measure the performance of the Town’s Tree Canopy Policy.

Planning Applications

2	Consents
7	Minor Variances
2	Zoning Amendments
6	Site Plans & Amendments
34	Other Planning Applications
9	Community Improvement Plan

Building SERVICES

2024 Highlights:

104	17,422,423.36	130,306.95
PERMITS ISSUED	IN CONSTRUCTION VALUE	IN PERMIT FEES

Major Projects for 2024

- 60 Cornelia Street West (Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital) - Expansion of existing isolation room.
- Rabb Street (Campbell Homes) - permits were issued for single family dwellings.
- Parkview - 9 townhouse units.
- 18-20 Elm Street East - eight plex.

Building Reserve

The Building Reserve account balance ending December 31, 2024 is projected to be approximately \$1.94M.

Financial SERVICES

Financial Services is responsible for financial and account management such as budgets, financial reporting, procurement, and revenue collection.

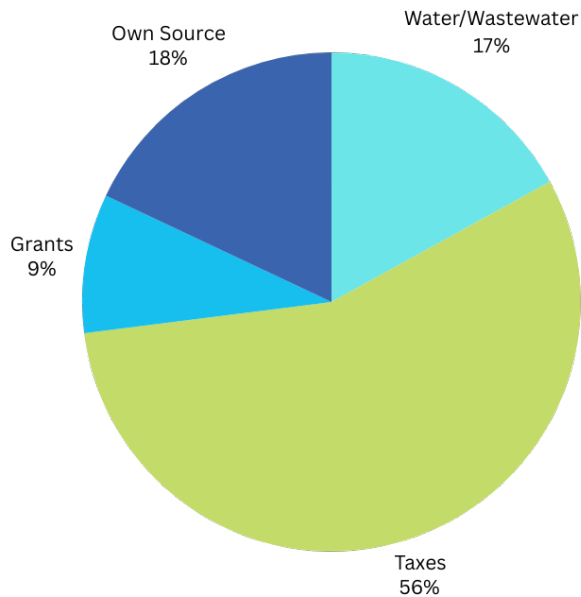
2024 Achievements

- Financial administration of \$12.5M of capital works expenses.
- Financial Administration of \$37M of operating expenses.
- Collection of \$37M of revenues to support operations.

2025 Goals

- Completion of 2025 updated Asset Management Plan.
- Long Term Capital Planning.
- Update system to provide efficiencies for processes such as payroll and accounts payable.
- Continued staff training and development
- Continue to source grant opportunities to support town projects.
- Continue to build reserves.

2024 Corporate Revenues



As a part of these activities, staff in Financial Services:

- Sent tax bills to 3891 properties.
- Added 115 new properties in the year and administered supplemental tax billings.
- 5,342 payments to vendors.
- Collected \$6.2M of water and wastewater revenues.

2024 Water/Wastewater Revenues

