



## SDG Counties Economic Development Newsletter - February 22, 2024

**My Main Street grant intake  
now open!**



### **Main Street businesses could be eligible for a grant of up to \$20,000**

Applications are now open for My Main Street, a \$15-million Government of Canada investment, through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario to continue to support main street businesses and communities across southern Ontario.

My Main Street is being delivered by the Canadian Urban Institute offering two

streams that open for applications on February 22, 2024.

**The Business Sustainability stream** provides up to \$20,000 directly to businesses for productivity enhancements. Funding will be made available to businesses that employ between 1 and 50 staff, have demonstrated revenue growth, and provide a business case on how the funding will strengthen their existing capacity and support their growth.

**The Business Sustainability stream is open for applications between February 22 and March 31, 2024.**

**The Community Activator stream** funds up to \$250,000 for high-impact community placemaking projects.

Thinking about applying? Join a My Main Street virtual information session on February 29 or March 1, 4 or 5 and find out how to apply.

Learn more or register for an info session at

[www.mymainstreet.ca](http://www.mymainstreet.ca)

**Download the Business Sustainability Applicant Guide here:**



**April 8th total solar eclipse  
to impact workers and  
visitors in SDG Counties**



*In the map above it showcases that the municipalities of South Dundas, South Stormont and South Glengarry, as well as the City of Cornwall, will be in the path of totality for the solar eclipse, meaning there will be 100% visibility of the solar event.*

## Have you prepared your workers to be safe during the eclipse?

On April 8, 2024, at approximately 3:24 p.m. SDG Counties and the surrounding region will experience a once-in-a-lifetime event, a total solar eclipse. A narrow band, known as the 'path of totality' will transit across our region, as the Moon completely blocks the Sun and turns day into night for a little more than two minutes. Municipalities in Ontario that are within this narrow band of totality are bracing for a mass migration of eclipse enthusiasts that are expected to travel to view the spectacle.

While SDG Counties always welcomes visitors, there is the potential for tens of thousands of travelers to call on our region to enjoy the eclipse, presenting challenges with respect to traffic congestion and safety, while also placing a drain on local resources.

### Eclipse safety

During an eclipse it is harmful to look directly at the Sun without specialized eye protection when the Moon begins to transit across the Sun. Viewing any part of the bright Sun through a camera lens, binoculars, or a telescope without a special-purpose solar filter secured over the front of the optics will INSTANTLY cause severe eye injury.

Use approved eclipse glasses or a handheld solar viewer during the partial eclipse phases before and after totality to safely look up. One can view the eclipse directly WITHOUT proper eye protection ONLY when the Moon completely obscures the Sun's bright face – during the brief and spectacular period known as totality.

\*As soon as even a little bit of the bright Sun reappears after totality, immediately put eclipse glasses back on.\*

The American Astrological Society has a list of approved vendors that supply glasses rated to be 100 percent safe: **Suppliers of Safe Solar Viewers & Filters | Solar Eclipse Across America (aas.org)**

## Path of totality

Every 18 months or so - somewhere in the world - a total solar eclipse takes place. The total phase of the eclipse, where the Moon completely covers the Sun, is visible along a narrow path of totality. Typically, the path is around 15,000 km (9,000 miles) long, but only about 150 km (90 miles) wide.

[Learn more at SDGCounties.ca](https://www.sdgcounties.ca)

# Seniors Community Grant Applications now open

## Community organizations can apply for funding for initiatives benefitting Ontarians aged 55+

Applications are now open for the Ontario Seniors Community Grant Program. The seniors grants support local, not-for-profit community groups and organizations to deliver programs and learning opportunities for Ontarians aged 55+.

Every year, the Ontario government provides hundreds of **Seniors Community Grants** ranging from \$1,000 to \$25,000 each. This funding allows community groups across the province to offer a wide variety of activities that help seniors to live independently, ensure their safety and security, connect them to their community, avoid isolation and help them achieve greater financial security and social connections.

“Our government is keeping our seniors safe, active and socially connected,” said Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility.

“That’s why we’re proud to provide support through the Seniors Community Grant Program, which gives so many people the opportunity to learn new skills, socialize and take part in community life.”

Activities and services supported by the program include:

- Fitness and nutrition classes to keep adults aged 55+ active, healthy, and socially connected to their communities.
- Opportunities for community engagement, such as book club gatherings and technology training seminars, to reduce social isolation and increase volunteerism.
- Increasing access to information through initiatives such as free lectures and supports for health prevention and promotion.

Applications for 2024-25 are open now until March 28, 2024. Community organizations interested in applying can visit [Ontario.ca/getfunding](https://www.ontario.ca/getfunding) for more information.

Last year, approximately \$6 million in funding was given to over 280 Seniors Community Grants. Throughout their lives, seniors have helped build and contribute to Ontario’s quality of life and these community grants provide them with new ways to engage with their local communities to promote physical, mental and social well-being.

# HALF-LOAD SEASON: Begins Feb. 21 in the region



It's still the middle of February, but thanks to some unseasonably mild conditions SDG Counties will begin its half-load season just a bit early.

Half-load season in our region will come into effect on Wednesday, Feb. 21 – a full three weeks ahead of schedule.

The reason is pretty evident when one checks the recent temperatures that we've experienced in our region. Despite some recent snow, this winter has been pretty accommodating thus far.

SDG Counties and its partners among local municipalities and the City of Cornwall will be limiting the weight of materials to five tonnes per axle on the weaker roads located throughout the region.

Roads that are subject to seasonal weight restrictions are identified with a sign. Half-loads will be enforced once signs are posted and will likely run into the early part of May – but the end date could change depending on

Trevor Baker, SDG Counties' operations manager, said half-load season is integral to the long-term sustainability of the road infrastructure – the largest municipal roads system in the entire province.

"These measures are important to the bottom line of SDG Counties, as well as the effective use of taxpayer dollars," said Baker. "We allow for the transportation of goods across SDG Counties, while at the same time putting measures in place to protect the investment taxpayers have made in our infrastructure."

Try to think of a road like a giant sandwich buried in the ground with layers that are important to the overall flavour of the road. When you add an extra ingredient – like water – your sandwich can become a mess. The base of the road begins at its deepest point with the sub-grade material, which is typically native material or imported fill. On top of this layer is aggregate material of varying sizes of crushed stone and other granulars that are packed into place. Finally, the whole thing is topped with asphalt.

The problem comes in the late winter and early spring when the heat of the sun can warm the asphalt base to several degrees above freezing, while the ambient

weather conditions this spring. Except the following locations, most roads within SDG are subject to half-load restrictions:

- South of Highway 401 on County Road Nos. 1, 14, 33 and 35.
- County Road 1 from French Settlement Road to Belmeade Road
- County Road 15 from County Road 2 to the southwest leg of County Road 36.
- County Road 44 from Highway No. 138 to 840m East of County Road 42
- County Road Nos. 31, 34, 43, 46
- County Road No. 2 from Leeds & Grenville boundary to the City of Cornwall boundary and from the City of Cornwall boundary to the Ontario/Quebec boundary.

air temperature can often be well below zero. As snow and ice melts, it can permeate the asphalt in areas. When that water refreezes, say after sunset or during an especially cold day, the ice and trapped water will weaken the strength of the road. By restricting the amount of weight a vehicle carries, the damage to weakened roads can be mitigated.

**More news at SDG  
Counties**

## Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program

### Are you a foreign worker or graduate seeking permanent residence to settle in Ontario?

The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) is the province's economic immigration program. It works in partnership with the Government of Canada through **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)**.

Foreign workers, international students and others with the right skills, experience and education apply to the OINP for a nomination.

The OINP recognizes and nominates people for permanent residence who have the skills and experience the Ontario economy needs, and the Government of Canada makes the final decision to approve applications for permanent residence.

For other ways to immigrate to Ontario, visit **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)**.

# Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program

## Are you an employer seeking to hire or retain a foreign worker?

The Government of Canada manages temporary and permanent immigration programs and provides work and study permits, permanent residence status and citizenship.

Provinces and territories can nominate (i.e., endorse) prospective immigrants for permanent residence through their unique provincial nominee programs.

### The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) :

- complements federal immigration pathways
- allows the province to select immigrants who have the skills and experience to meet our labour market needs



## The OINP has a dedicated Employer Job Offer category for workers who have received a permanent job offer from an Ontario employer.



### Benefits of the Employer Job Offer category for Ontario companies and businesses:

- Retain existing employees who may not be able to continue working due to expiring work permits.
- Ability to offer a permanent position to a foreign worker instead of being limited to offer a short-term contract.
- Express intention to assist a worker to obtain permanent residence via the OINP.

Nominees with a job offer will receive a work permit support letter from the OINP. This allows them to settle and work in Ontario while applying to the federal government for permanent residence.

## Dedicated Services for Ontario Businesses

The OINP has a **Business Immigration Services team** that can help your company to navigate the immigration system and:

- leverage temporary residence pathways and transition your employees to permanent residence
- access expedited work permit and labour market impact assessment (LMIA) processing for highly skilled workers

We are also a designated referral partner for Canada's Global Skills Strategy.

### Would you like to learn more?

Our team provides info-sessions, in-person or virtual meetings, and dedicated staff to assist you.

Contact us today at [business.immigration@ontario.ca](mailto:business.immigration@ontario.ca)

Ontario 



# Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative intake open!

Intake closes March 28, 2024 at 11 am EST

The purpose of the Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative (the Initiative) is to support growth and productivity through innovation, advanced manufacturing, improved food safety and enhanced cyber security, and energy efficiency within the agri-food sector.

The Initiative will be delivered under three streams, as follows:

- Stream 1 – Agri-Tech Innovation (total Eligible Costs per Project less than \$100,000)
- Stream 2 – Agri-Tech Innovation (total Eligible Costs per Project \$100,000 and greater)
- Stream 3 – Agri-Tech Energy Costs Savings

How to apply

- Read the Initiative Guidelines
- Applicants will apply through the AAC's Application Portal available online at [https://adaptcouncil.smartsimple.ca/s\\_Login.jsp](https://adaptcouncil.smartsimple.ca/s_Login.jsp).
- The intake will close at 11:00 a.m. EST on Thursday, March 28, 2024.
- Applications will be reviewed after the intake closes on March 28, not on a first-come, first-served basis.

Have a question?

- Please contact the AAC at [info@adaptcouncil.org](mailto:info@adaptcouncil.org) or 1 (800) 769-3272.
- Click on the date to register for one of our virtual information webinars at:
  - 12:00 p.m. EST on **Thursday, February 22, 2024** or
  - 7:00 p.m. EST on **Wednesday, March 6, 2024**.

[Learn more](#)

## On Farm Climate Action Fund - intake now open!



Under Ontario's On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF), cost-share funding supports farmers in adopting best management practices (BMPs) that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and store carbon, specifically for in-field nitrogen management, expanding cover cropping, and implementing rotational grazing systems. BMP demonstration, peer-to-peer learning, and access to expert advice play a key role in farmers' long-term adoption of new practices. The OFCAF pairs cost-share support for BMPs with participation in Knowledge Sharing Events (KSEs), which aim to increase understanding of the eligible BMPs. Farmers must attend a KSE to receive a cost-share payment for completing a project.

A KSE is a networking opportunity where producers benefit from the latest research, first-hand experience from their peers and industry experts, and

access to information networks or resources supporting long-term implementation of BMPs specific to addressing climate change challenges. A KSE can be in many different formats, including field demonstration events, webinars, workshops, or sessions at agricultural conferences. KSEs may be hosted by any agricultural association, organization, or agri-business, provided the event meets the objectives of the OFCAF. Participation in a KSE is a requirement for approved applicants to claim their cost-share funding.

A KSE must address at least one of the three eligible project categories with a focus on successful implementation of the practice (i.e., Nitrogen Management, Cover Cropping, Rotational Grazing Systems).

Application Intake opened: February 13, 2024

Application Intake closes: February 27, 2024, 5 pm ET

[Learn more on the OSCIA website](#)

## RT-09 Partnership Funding accepting applications for tourism grants

**RTO 9's Partnership Fund initiative** is designed to introduce new tourism products and build on existing tourism products that enhance the region's diversity of tourism attractions. Intake #1 Applications will be for projects beginning April 1, 2024 - September 6, 2024.

### **Important to note:**

- Indigenous operators must be 51%+ Indigenous owned and controlled and in lieu of a CRA Business Number (BN), must be able to provide a Certificate of Indian Status Registry Number or a Métis Registry Number.
- A letter of support from your **DMO/DMP** is **mandatory**. SDG Tourism is the DMO for all businesses located within the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. Contact Karina Belanger at [kbelanger@sdgcounties.ca](mailto:kbelanger@sdgcounties.ca) to learn more.
- All partner contributions must be made electronically – via either EFT or e-transfer.
- There is one general application. Applications are submitted through an online form that can be re-accessed from the **same device**.

### **There are 3 categories to apply under:**

1. New Events
2. Development of Indigenous Tourism Product
3. Signage

The opportunity to apply for partnership funding will close on March 3rd, 2024.

[Learn more about RT-09 Partnership Funds](#)

# SDG Counties Regional Incentives Program

The 2024 intake for the Regional Incentives Program officially launches on Friday, January 5th., 2024. **The intake closes on Thursday, February 29, 2024 at noon.** Only one intake is proposed for 2024. Any additional intakes will only occur if there are funds remaining following the initial intake.

## The primary goals of the program are to:

1. Stimulate investment in tourism and in the agricultural sector by funding diverse, on-farm expansions and agri-tourism.
2. Encourage redevelopment and private sector investment in existing building stock within SDG Counties to support employment, reduce the number of vacant commercial, institutional and industrial buildings, and increase the assessment base.
3. Increase the amount of permanent roofed accommodations within SDG Counties to specifically accommodate for an increase in tourism establishments that cater to short-term accommodations.

[Click to learn more:](#)



The banner features a light blue background with white clouds. At the top right, three stylized icons represent 'STAY' (a house), 'DISCOVER' (a compass), and 'GROW' (a leaf). Below these, the text 'SDG Counties Regional Incentives Program' is written in blue, followed by 'Now accepting applications'. A deadline notice states 'Deadline: Thursday, February 29th, 2024 (12 pm)' and provides the website 'www.sdgcounties.ca/stay-discover-grow'. The 'theCounties SDG' logo is also present. The bottom of the banner shows a colorful illustration of a rural and urban landscape with a tractor, barn, lighthouse, supermarket, hotel, and buildings.



Register your employment booth

# now for the April 24th 2024 Cornwall and Area Job Fair- Featuring Skills Ontario

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The Employability Network will once again be hosting the "2024 Cornwall and Area Job Fair", which will return to the Cornwall Civic Complex on Wednesday, April 24, 2024. This year the event will feature Skills Ontario. The day will roll out in two sessions, with employer setup from 8:30 am to 10:00 am, on the date of the event.

The first public session for job seekers will run from 1 pm to 3 pm and the second session will run from 6 pm to 7 pm.

**The registration deadline is March 11th**

[Register here:](#)

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# St. Lawrence College

## CORNWALL SKLZ COMPETITION INDUSTRY BREAKFAST

 **TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2024**  
9:30 AM  
SLC CORNWALL CAMPUS  
RIVER ROOM

## LIMESTONE SKILLS COMPETITION INDUSTRY LUNCHEON

 **THURSDAY FEBRUARY 29, 2024**  
12:30 PM  
SLC KINGSTON CAMPUS  
ROOM 13040 - UPPER CONCOURSE

St. Lawrence College invites you to join us for complimentary industry receptions at the Cornwall SKLZ Competition and the Limestone Skills Competition.

Learn how SLC is fostering the next generation of skilled trades talent and cheer on 300+ students participating in competitions.

Opportunities to tour SLC, Mobile Labs, set up a booth in the exhibitor hall - and more!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER TODAY](#)



SCAN TO REGISTER ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE



# INTERNATIONAL Women's Day HIGH TEA LUNCHEON



Celebrate Women in Business and the Power of Ambition with Special Guest Speaker **Isabelle Hudon, President and CEO, BDC**

**FREE!**  
Doors Open: 11:30 am  
Lunch Served: 12:00 pm  
Guest Speakers: 12:30 pm

**March 7 | Ramada | Cornwall**

Register Online: [BusinessEnterpriseCentre.ca](http://BusinessEnterpriseCentre.ca)



SDG Counties is dedicated to supporting our residents and businesses. Subscribe to our free newsletter to stay informed about grants, supports and news impacting our community.

**Subscribe to our newsletter here**



**The United Counties of  
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