

## Local achievements noted at Chamber lunch

By Mark PavilonsEditorLocal JournalismInitiative Reporter

Accomplishments in King Township last year ??almost too numerous to list ? reverberated throughout the room at last week's Mayor's Lunch, hosted by the King Chamber of Commerce. The crowd of local business representatives gathered to celebrate during the annual event. They were recognized by special guests and Chamber board members. Chamber President Michelle Frauley said events like the lunch provide an opportunity for local businesses to connect and strengthen partnerships. ?This lunch is one of our favorite traditions ??not just because we get to hear from the Mayor and learn more about what's ahead for King Township, but because it's a chance for all of us to connect. To catch up, share ideas, and strengthen the partnerships that help our community thrive. ?At the Chamber, our goal is simple: to support local businesses and help create an environment where they can grow and succeed. We're proud of the work being done by our members, and we're always excited to welcome new faces into the fold. ?Chamber Vice-President Ryan Raymond noted that last year, with the help of a long time local resident of King, Brent Morning, the Chamber created the Morning Youth Grant and along with it ? the King Proud Clothing line. This now has its own committee solely dedicated to expanding this project. For this year, there's enough funding for eight grants (\$500 each), with a large portion of this funded by our friends at the Lions Club of King and Seneca College. He pointed out that a new clothing designs are in the works, and a mentorship program is being created. An Instagram account has been made to showcase the winners of this project and follow them along with their journey. One of last year winners, James, is now a summer student working with the Chamber. Newly elected King-Vaughan MP?Anna Roberts ignited the crowd with her words of support. ?King Township is home to many dedicated, proud residents like all of you here today. And you all have many different professions. We have everything in King, farmers, entrepreneurs, innovators, small business owners, and more. The resilience you've all shown through the challenges of recent years is truly admirable,? she said. ?Our economy thrives when resilient business owners like all of you are empowered to grow, invest, and hire. As your Member of Parliament, I remain committed to being a strong voice for all of you in Ottawa. A voice for lower taxes and less bureaucracy. I want to see all of you succeed and continue to show off the best of Canada. ?As we look to the future, I look forward to continuing working together with Mayor Pellegrini, my colleagues from all levels of government and with business leaders like all of you, to build a stronger King Township for the next generation. ?The keynote address, by Mayor Steve Pellegrini, read like a massive neon billboard ? a shout out of King's milestones. And there were many. Through various initiatives and projects, the Township has worked tirelessly to create a vibrant, safe and welcoming environment for everyone in King, he said. Over the past year, the Township has made significant strides in improving our communities' economic vibrancy through facility upgrades, culture and heritage enhancements, and upgrading transportation infrastructure. These efforts reflect King's dedication to creating an attractive and welcoming environment for all those who live, work and visit the Township. The mayor pointed to the Zancor Centre, Canada's first zero carbon, combined aquatics and ice sports facility, officially opened in January with a ribbon cutting ceremony, Mayor's Pancake Breakfast, recreational swimming, skating, sports, facility tours, and a King Rebellion Ontario Junior Hockey League game. The facility features state-of-the-art amenities, including two NHL-sized rinks, a 25-metre lap pool, a leisure pool, an artificial turf field, multipurpose community rooms and a large outdoor courtyard. ?This centre will not only service our local community but will provide lasting impressions for visitors to return to King explore more of what the Township has to offer. ?The restoration of King Christian Church and King Railway Station at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre is currently under way, supported by a \$250,000 grant from the Rural Economic Development Fund. Enhancements include structural improvements, heating, electrical lighting, repainting and accessibility upgrades. These facilities will be made more user-friendly for arts, cultural programming and events. ?These improvements enhance King's cultural vibrancy and will attract more tourism and visitors into our beautiful Township. ?Enhancements to the road network (reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts) are being made to improve transportation across the Township, helping business owners, employees, commuters and visitors more easily travel through King. The total cost of the contract for this work is \$1.2 million, showcasing the Township's commitment to investments in both good and traveller movement through King, in a fiscally responsible way as the project is supported through the Canada Community-Building Fund. King's finances are in good shape, too, the mayor observed. In 2024, King collected \$12 million in development charges and collected \$1.5 million cash-in-lieu of parkland. At the end of 2024, they had a reserve fund balance of close to \$44 million and have received over \$2.5 million in provincial and federal grants to help offset tax pressures for residents and

businesses. In King Township, we continually strive to enhance the services we provide to our residents. Our focus on innovation, efficiency and accessibility has led to the implementation of several new initiatives that streamline processes and improve the overall experience for our community. From adopting cutting-edge technology to introducing new service models, we are dedicated to delivering high-quality services that meet the evolving needs of our communities, businesses and visitors alike. Some notable service improvements the past year include Kingsley/AI; an AI-powered virtual assistant available on [king.ca](#), has enhanced user experience. These new features make it easier for residents, businesses and potential visitors to find the information they need faster and more efficient, creating positive user experiences from first points of engagements. The new Ask King Zoning service provides direct access to zoning staff for personalized support through phone, online meetings, email and in-office meetings. This customized service enhances a user's experience by providing a platform to engage with staff when and how people want. King Township is committed to upholding these values, evidenced through things like bringing forward the first service-based municipal budget for 2025. Planning the future of King, and engaging with our community is at the heart of everything we do in King Township. Over the past year, the municipality has hosted numerous events, open houses and consultations to gather feedback and ensure that our plans align with the needs and aspirations of our community. Various planning exercises will establish a vision, plan and implement land use regulations to guide redevelopment for priority core areas within King City and Nobleton. Specific expansion areas and options have been assessed on criteria such as connectivity, market demand and proximity to infrastructure to make investments into King as attractive as possible. The Township has also has Official Plan and Master Plan updates well-underway, with several public engagements having taken place, with more to come, to support the forecasted growth in King. King also has several Master Plan updates under way, including the Parks, Facilities and Trails Master Plan, Water/Wastewater Master Plan, and notably the Transportation Master Plan. And engagement is the key, Pellegrini noted. To the crowd in attendance, the mayor said King Township is dedicated to supporting and nurturing our existing and prospective business community. Since the start of this term of Council, we have seen 43 new businesses in King alone, and this is a testament to the desirability of this amazing community. We understand that a thriving business community is vital for the economic growth and prosperity of our Township. He urged local businesses to take advantage of the funding available through the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Grant Program. The Village Vibrancy Grant Stream helps support local businesses within our Village Cores through beautification and property improvement projects improvements and also includes Township permit fees relating to projects. The Rural Resiliency Grant Stream helps support our Agricultural Businesses and promotes investment in a range of on-farm diversified and agricultural related uses. In 2024, eight CIP grants totaling \$64,000 of matched funding support were approved, and in 2025, we have already approved five CIP grants totaling \$25,000 of matched support for businesses. There's a budget of \$70,000 in 2025 towards the CIP Grant Program. Our Economic Development Team puts our business community first. They provide support and resources to all existing businesses and can help any business looking to expand. New businesses looking to establish in King can meet with our team who can help support you from site selection, through to development process and beyond to a grand opening. King's newly launched Economic Development Consultation service provides businesses with expedited meeting availability and tailored business support. The mayor also pointed to the importance of drawing tourists and visitors to King. King Township has made remarkable progress over the past year in enhancing the quality of life for our residents, improving services, engaging with the community and supporting local businesses. These initiatives reflect our commitment to creating a vibrant, safe and welcoming environment for everyone. As we continue to work together, we remain dedicated to addressing the needs of our community and fostering a sense of belonging and prosperity. Chamber Vice-President Ryan Raymond extended heartfelt thanks to the sponsors who made the event possible ?? Trisan Construction, Nicola Real Estate, Sibwest, King Haven & Haven Greens, Gervasi Real Estate Group, and 360 Visibility. JTF Homes was the entertainment sponsor, and Nobleton Family Dental, helped create the table centrepieces. He also extended thanks to Hard at Work, for being the beverage sponsor, and to Hospall Homecare. Raymond recognized the event's presenting sponsor, King Heights. We're proud to have your support and truly grateful for your investment in our community. Developed by Aracon Homes, King Heights is a commitment to our community, one that blends boutique design with modern amenities like a state-of-the-art fitness and Pilates studio, vibrant party lounge and a stunning rooftop terrace. It's clear that King Heights truly values the town they're helping shape. Your involvement goes beyond sponsorship ?? it shows a genuine interest in supporting the people and future of our town. We're lucky to have you as a partner in helping build a stronger, more connected community. ?