

The Rideau Roundtable Increases Vibrancy on Smiths Falls Main Streets

Rideau Paddlefest received My Main Street support to draw visitors and increase local vibrancy in Smith Falls this past summer.

November 22, 2024 – Smiths Falls, ON - The Rideau Roundtable is pleased to announce that Rideau Paddlefest was selected for the [My Main Street Community Activator](#) initiative and received support to increase the capacity of Rideau Roundtable to run and host events with Voyageur Canoe tours. The support allowed Rideau Roundtable to strengthen its social media effectiveness promoting the Rideau experience and the Canal Heritage Waterway, a World Heritage Site to a larger audience.

The Rideau Paddlefest is an annual event held the day before Father's Day in June. It celebrates and promotes the connection between downtown and the Rideau Canal at Lower Reach Park in Smiths Falls.

The festival links residents and tourists to the nature, culture, heritage and recreational assets of the area by providing a day of free family activities with Voyageur Canoe Tours, on water Tug-of Wars, racing paddling demonstration and other on-water activities. On land, the group hosts educational demonstrations, activities and engagements by organizations and agencies involved with cultural, heritage, recreational and environmental works. There is also musical and other entertainment, as well as a Photo Contest.

The annual event promotes Smiths Falls as a healthy and attractive location for residents and visitors to enjoy. It is a festival that showcases main streets with the unique natural beauty of the canal and parks; putting Smith Falls on the tourist destination map. The Rideau Paddlefest has also received support from Smiths Falls Community Grant. Learn more about the event at www.therideauroundtable.org.

My Main Street is built on the principle of supporting community economic development and creating vibrant and diverse neighbourhoods which will enhance the overall quality of life for residents while also promoting sustainable and inclusive community development. My Main Street is delivered by the [Canadian Urban Institute \(CUI\)](#), and supported by a Government of Canada investment through the [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario](#) (FedDev Ontario). Learn more about the My Main Street program at mymainstreet.ca.

Quotes

“The Town of Smiths Falls has long been proud to partner with the Rideau Roundtable to bring the unique experience of Paddlefest to our community each year. The Town views Paddlefest as a cultural opportunity for our citizens and visitors to step back in time and both learn and participate in exhibits and activities representative of life in pre-Confederation Canada. We are very grateful to My Main Street, the Canadian Urban Institute and Government of Canada for this support that will enhance the value Paddlefest brings to our community.”

- *Mayor Shawn Pankow, Town of Smiths Falls*

“A community's resilience is anchored in its main street, and investing in them fosters economic prosperity and growth. Projects like Rideau Roundtable's Paddlefest, supported through My Main Street's Community Activator initiative, use intentional and creative placemaking to revitalize their neighborhoods and public spaces. Our program's investment provides an opportunity for local change makers to build healthy, robust main street communities, and drive social cohesion and economic recovery where it's needed most.”

- *Mary W. Rowe, CEO and President, Canadian Urban Institute*

“Communities throughout southern Ontario offer a diverse range of exciting experiences and businesses, attracting both local and international visitors to their lively main streets. Our government, through the Canadian Urban Institute, is supporting organizations that bring events and festivals, such as the Rideau Roundtable's Paddlefest, to showcase their region. When we invest in programs like My Main Street, we're supporting and revitalizing our local communities.”

- *The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario*

Associated Links

- [Rideau Roundtable](#)
- [My Main Street](#)
- [Canadian Urban Institute](#)
- [FedDev Ontario](#)

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Background

About My Main Street: The My Main Street program has returned with an additional Government of Canada investment, building on an initial investment in 2021, through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) to spur local economic recovery. To date, the initial investment has supported nearly 4,500 businesses and organizations, nearly 7,500 jobs and leveraged nearly \$19 million in additional investment. The funding aims to revitalize neighbourhood main streets with a healthy retail mix while generating inclusive economic opportunities. The program now features two streams – Business Sustainability and the Community Activator. My Main Street is delivered by the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI).

About Canadian Urban Institute (CUI): The Canadian Urban Institute is a leading organization dedicated to advancing urban solutions. CUI collaborates with city builders, researchers, and community leaders to create thriving, equitable, and sustainable urban spaces across Canada.

About FedDev Ontario: For 15 years, the Government of Canada, through FedDev Ontario, has worked to advance and diversify the southern Ontario economy through funding opportunities and business services that support innovation, growth and job creation in Canada's most populous region. The Agency has delivered impressive results, which can be seen in southern Ontario businesses that are creating innovative technologies, improving productivity, growing revenues, creating jobs, and in the economic advancement of communities across the region. Learn more about the impacts the Agency is having in southern Ontario by exploring our [investment profiles](#), our [Southern Ontario Spotlight](#), and FedDev Ontario's [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).