

2026 Bill Thake Memorial Award for Economic Development Leadership

Overview:

The Bill Thake Award for Economic Development Leadership was introduced in 2011. This annual award, also called the Warden's Award, recognizes and celebrates a volunteer who has shown outstanding commitment and leadership resulting in the growth and vitality of the Leeds Grenville economy. Individual leaders, not groups or committees, can be nominated. Following the passing of Mr. Thake in 2013, this is now a Memorial Award in his honour.

Award namesake:

During his extraordinary lifetime, William (Bill) Thake was recognized as being the longest-serving mayor in Canada. Mr. Thake was elected a councillor in 1961 and was elected reeve/mayor in Westport in 1969, a position he held for the next 44 years. His municipal experience spanned more than half a century with 52 years of service within the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. He was Counties Warden four terms.

Known for his warmth and extensive knowledge of Leeds Grenville, Mr. Thake was an outstanding mentor who worked hard to improve the economic vitality in his village of Westport and in communities across the United Counties. Mr. Thake received the Long-Standing Service Award at the Ontario East Municipal Conference in 2011. That same year, he was also recognized at Queen's Park and on Parliament Hill for his unmatched half-century of leadership. Mr. Thake earned the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his outstanding contributions to his community in 2012.

Deadline for nominations: Friday, September 18, 2026, at 4pm

Scope:

The citizens of Leeds Grenville are our ambassadors throughout the world. It is important we celebrate and recognize the many achievements that build and sustain our communities through their work in economic development.

The individual you choose to nominate may be involved with local municipal Economic Development committees and boards, Community Futures Development Corporations, Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations or other economic development organizations.



Nomination process:

Individuals, organizations, business leaders, elected officials, counties and municipal staff can nominate a volunteer.

Eligibility:

- A Leeds Grenville citizen
- A person living in the Townships of Athens, Augusta, Edwardsburgh Cardinal, Elizabethtown-Kitley, Front of Yonge, Leeds and the Thousand Islands, Rideau Lakes, or the villages of Merrickville-Wolford and Westport, and the Municipality of North Grenville.
- This award is for an individual leader. The nominee may be a committee chair or a group leader but an entire committee or group cannot be nominated.
- A person who has demonstrated leadership and involvement in economic development within their respective community or area over a period of years in a volunteer capacity.
- Practicing Economic Development professionals and Philanthropy professions, along with current elected officials would be exempt from the award.

Information required:

- A detailed profile of the nominee with a list of his or her contributions to economic development (A nomination form is attached)
- Contact information for the nominee and any additional reference persons (including an email address and phone number).
- A letter of support from the municipality is required.
- Nominations are evaluated on: the candidate's positive impact on economic development; proven leadership skills; Longevity; Supporting documentation and references.

Award Presentation:

The award winner will be announced prior to the Economic Development Summit on November 20th and will be officially honoured at the event. Nominees will be recognized at a local municipal presentation by the Warden.

Submit your application to:

Shelbi McFarlane, Business Development Officer
Leeds Grenville Economic Development Office
32 Wall Street, Suite 300, Brockville, ON K6V 4R9
E-mail: shelbi.mcfarlane@uclg.on.ca
Tel: 613-342-3840 ext. 5361



Nomination Form

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Name of Nominee:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Years of Service to the community:

Insert content here (Space will expand as you type)

Profile of nominee: (2-3 paragraphs / 250 words – feel free to attach a profile if you need more space)

Insert content here

If the nominee has participated in a number of projects, and/or events, please list them in the sections below. Explain the nominee's role and how their participation with the project/event helped the community and local economy.

#1 Project/Event:

Insert content here

Nominee's role:

Insert content here

Economic Impact:

Insert content here

#2 Project / Event:

Insert content here

Nominee's role:

Insert content here

Economic Impact:

Insert content here



#3 Project/Event:

Insert content here

Nominee's Role:

Insert content here

Economic Impact:

Insert content here

Have you confirmed a letter of support from the municipality?

Insert answer here

Have you notified the nominee? Are they willing to let their name stand?

Insert answer here

Nominator:

Telephone:

Email:

References: (please include contact information – telephone/cell and email, business name if applicable):

Insert content here

**Thank you for helping us honour your community's champion.
Leeds Grenville Economic Development Office**