

Business booming in the Highlands



Brush with the North and Highlands Hot Tubs are bringing new products and curb appeal to Maynooth's downtown core.

By Sarah Vance

Business is booming in Maynooth where mayor Vivian Bloom recently announced that every storefront is occupied by small-enterprise entrepreneurs.

This up-cropping of new ventures has brought significant infrastructural enhancements to the downtown core, where up until recently, several buildings sat empty.

Across from Sun Run Cafe, a long-vacant building, once the local hardware store, has been refurbished for cottage-country recreation. Refurbishments of this nature often include installing security laminates from companies like <https://www.riotglass.com/security-laminates/>, to help keep everything safe and secure so the shop is always protected when it's closed for the night, especially as it will contain expensive equipment and products. It's important for shopowners to think carefully about the maintenance of the building they are in, as a building that has been vacant for a long time may have issues that nobody has checked, such as a leaky roof. That's why, when you move your business into a property, you should use a [commercial roof maintenance program](#) to ensure your roof is up to standard. There is nothing worse for a shopowner than to find that all of their stock has been damaged because the roof wasn't up to standard during a storm, so it's important to keep on top of building maintenance.

This business boasts an indoor hot-tub display room, complete with changing rooms for clients who want to jump in. Highlands Hot Tubs opened approximately three months ago, offering a full line of cottage accessories like wooden saunas and cottage toys, and a large stainless steel industrial, outdoor cookstove that is available for rent.

"We couldn't be more pleased with the growth," said Hastings Highlands CAO Pat Pilgrim, referring to the new business. Just down the street, beside the LCBO, Canadian visual artist Linda Lang is busy transforming a centennial brick stagecoach building into a gallery.

Brush With The North boasts a dynamic mural on the front entrance and new exterior lighting fixtures. Local artisans and artists are featured inside the gallery, as are upscale art supplies.

Since becoming a resident of Hastings Highlands Lang has struggled to purchase the materials she requires for her craft locally, which is why it has been important for her to offer a full line of professional grade paints which are priced to match Curry's Art Store.

Lang is continuing to oversee structural renovations "one day at a time," and as July gets underway she has unveiled a newly designed studio space and kitchen area, where local painting workshops are already underway.

"There have been moments when this has been very overwhelming and I have worried," said Lang. "But the reception has been wonderful in the community and beyond."

Lang's long-term goals include hosting artists-in-residence who will be given the option of living on-site while painting and hosting professional development workshops.

Lang hopes to host her colleagues in the upper-level of the building, which for a period of time, was a rooming house, before the building fell into disrepair, and sat abandoned for many years.

As the summer gets under-way Lang is hosting popular local artist and retired elementary school teacher Valorie Loney, who will be teaching lessons over the summer.

"The key to our future is in the health of our business community with the protection of meaningful employment, enhanced job creation, and prosperity shared by our businesses, employees and community," said Bloom in the Hastings Highlands Business Retention and Expansion Report.

This year has also culminated with the Maynooth and Hastings Highlands Business Association increasing its membership from 60 to 90 members.

Forty per cent of the businesses operating in Hastings Highlands, are new businesses which have been established within the last ten years.

One in five businesses in Maynooth report gross annual sales of over 1 million per annum.

There are 45 farms in Maynooth's outlying region which contribute to the ongoing success of a four seasons farmer market.