



Town of Erin Economic Development Plan (2019 - 2023)

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Town of Erin Economic Development Plan

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Town of Erin Economic Development Plan (2019-2023)

Executive Summary

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION

To be a welcoming and environmentally progressive community where forward-thinking leadership fosters balanced growth, entrepreneurship, innovation and prosperity

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MISSION

To facilitate economic growth in the community through targeted and innovative initiatives, deliver exceptional customer service, and provide support for entrepreneurship and business development by exploring new opportunities that leverage the community's strengths and planned infrastructure development

The Town of Erin Economic Development Plan (2019-2023) looks ahead through two distinct lenses – the nearer-term and the medium to longer-term. The latter addresses planning and preparation for the anticipated installation of a waste water servicing system which will bring full servicing to the Village of Erin and to Hillsburgh, eliminating dependence on septic systems. This would open the way for managed residential, commercial and industrial growth toward or beyond the end of the period covered by this Plan.

In the nearer-term, in addition to the absence of serviced land, the Town faces constraints because affordable high-speed broadband remains unavailable in many areas. As a consequence, the more immediate focus for the Plan centres on outreach to existing businesses and agricultural enterprises to support their needs, understand their preoccupations and build collaborative approaches. Agri-food and agriculture related endeavours and tourism are the prominent areas where capacity can be built and further growth can be supported. A further priority area is support for advanced manufacturing firms related to their workforce needs and means to enhance their competitiveness.

Looking to the future in anticipation of residential and business expansion, growth management strategies will be developed to provide policy direction for future growth which respects the Town's commitment to the environment and its distinctive rural character and small town charm. Economic development input will be important. The lead time before the waste water servicing system is connected also provides a welcome period to ready comprehensive plans to proactively market the Town to attract new businesses and talent.

The Town of Erin's Business Climate

The Plan considers the opportunities and challenges to sustain and enhance the local business climate. These include strategies to remedy the Town's high-speed broadband deficit; boundary changes to strengthen the Village of Erin Business Improvement Area (BIA); and the promotion of the Town's recently launched Community Improvement Program (CIP).

In anticipation of full servicing, the economic development program will be involved in providing input and perspectives about the growth management strategies to guide and support appropriate future commercial and industrial development, including the phasing of waste water servicing connections; the need for affordable and rental housing; and consideration of possible measures to ensure the timely take-up of serviced commercial and industrial land.

The Principle Economic Roles

The principle economic development roles discussed in the Economic Development Plan include:

1. **Business Retention and Expansion**, which is a fundamental dimension of any economic development program. Small businesses are a dominant feature in Erin. Understanding and being supportive of their situations is important to ensuring their health both in the near-term and during what may be a potentially disruptive waste water servicing construction period.
2. **Business Creation, Entrepreneurship and Innovation**, which drives vibrant and growing local economies. Important priorities for the Town are the establishment of a hub, shared space or incubator facility and access to a commercial kitchen for food and beverage pilots.
3. **Attracting New Investment** by building the program's readiness, especially in anticipation of the substantially increased interest that full servicing will attract.
4. **Talent and Workforce Development** to address the preoccupations of existing and new employers about the availability of needed skills and on-going initiatives to attract, retain, train and upskill the workforce.
5. **Marketing the Town of Erin** to attract talent, visitors and investors, by defining Erin's differentiators, developing robust value propositions, and creating an effective website presence and e-marketing capability – activities to be stepped up when serviced land becomes available.

Sectors of Focus

The modest resources available underline the need for the Town's economic development program to focus efforts on high priority areas and initiatives.

The two immediate and nearer-term sector priorities are (1) agri-food and agriculture related activities and ventures, and (2) tourism, both of which benefit from extensive interactions and shared interests. Though there will be some near-term prospects, the other three sectors which are identified will offer much greater potential expansion and new business attraction when high-speed broadband, serviced industrial and commercial land, and leasable office space are available. Existing firms in these sectors should be the focus of extensive business retention attention. There are also near-term opportunities to advance the introduction and adoption of environmentally-oriented technologies.

Emerging digitally-based platforms technologies – such as Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, Big Data, Augmented and Virtual Reality and robotics – are blurring lines between what were once well

defined sectors. The adoption of these technologies is central to firms in all sectors to sustain their competitiveness.

Agri-food and Agriculture Related: The equine cluster, farm gate sales, craft beverages, and diverse speciality and artisanal offerings are highlighted. Opportunities for technology adoption, including novel controlled growth environments, and interaction with post-secondary educational institutions are examined. The notable declines in the number of farms and the gross farm revenue in 2016 compared to the previous Census of Agriculture in 2011 are of concern.

Tourism: Tourism generates revenues for many businesses, agricultural enterprises, and community organizations, with significant small business involvement. The marketing of Erin's attractions is undertaken in partnership with Headwaters Tourism, the Destination Marketing Organization for Erin, Caledon and Dufferin County, which in turn is part of Central Counties Tourism, as the provincial Regional Tourism Organization for Headwaters, York and Durham. The key focus for the Town is to support the strengthening of the tourism offerings and to encourage collaborative efforts locally. Private sector investment in additional overnight accommodation is an important goal in the medium to longer-term.

Environmental and Clean Technologies: Erin's natural setting and many residents' orientation to environmentally progressive values make the Town a potentially attractive location for the application of environmental technologies, practices and approaches in many fields – whether agriculture, tourism, clean tech manufacturing or environmental services.

Advanced Manufacturing: As unserviced industrial land caters to a relatively limited range of manufacturing activities, the sector's overall development has been constrained. Once it is available, serviced industrial land will attract interest from some Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) manufacturers. The more promising new prospects may have characteristics similar to some of the leading existing manufacturers – privately held, manufacturing advanced products developed by proprietors, and having 15 to 60 employees. Erin's principal existing manufacturers can benefit from connections which assist them to remain on the leading edge of advanced manufacturing technologies and practices.

Professional Services: The Town has a moderate-sized professional services sector, most notably veterinarians and management consultants. Near-term prospects for the attraction of professional services firms face the constraints of lack of ready access to affordable high-speed broadband and leasable office space. Future opportunities – also depending on broadband availability – include attracting creative professionals whose choice of location puts personal lifestyle first.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

TOWN OF ERIN BUSINESS CLIMATE

A NEW ERA OF MANAGED GROWTH

- **Goal:** The Town of Erin offers a competitive and welcoming business climate that generates sustainable economic growth
 1. **Objective:** To contribute an economic development perspective to decisions about the growth management strategy and associated policies and guidelines
 2. **Objective:** To facilitate the provision of affordable high-speed broadband throughout the Town
 3. **Objective:** To monitor, analyse and report on factors influencing the Town’s competitiveness and whether changes to Town policies or programs are merited
 4. **Objective:** To support the extension of natural gas service in the Town

PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROLES TO DRIVE RESULTS

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

- **Goal:** Existing Town of Erin businesses and agricultural enterprises thrive and grow
 - Objective:** To proactively and systematically reach out to and support existing Erin businesses and agricultural enterprises

BUSINESS CREATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

- **Goal:** Entrepreneurship and innovation flourishes and fuels new business creation, growth and adoption of advanced technologies
 - Objective:** To encourage the establishment of a hub or focal point for early stage ventures, providing shared office space, broadband access, and meeting and seminar space

ATTRACTING NEW INVESTMENT

- **Goal:** New investment is attracted that benefits the Town of Erin
 - Objective:** To build capacity and relationships to identify and respond to investment prospects

TALENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- **Goal:** The talent and skills needs of Town of Erin businesses and agricultural enterprises are increasingly matched by qualified Erin residents
 - Objective:** To attract, retain and adapt a talent pool which aligns with the evolving requirements of the Town’s existing and new businesses and agricultural enterprises

MARKETING THE TOWN OF ERIN TO ATTRACT TALENT, VISITORS AND INVESTORS

- **Goal:** The marketing of Town of Erin differentiates the Town, heightens its profile, generates leads, and makes the Town the choice for investors, visitors and talent
 - Objective:** To establish consistent, current branding and messaging that raises awareness and differentiates the Town of Erin as a place to locate a business, live and visit

SECTORS OF FOCUS

AGRI-FOOD AND AGRICULTURE RELATED

- **Goal:** The Town of Erin’s agriculture sector is strong, environmentally committed, diversified, innovative, and involved with value-added products and offerings catering to varied markets including tourism
 1. **Objective:** Support new, diversified and added value agricultural-related offerings
 2. **Objective:** To encourage and support equine sector collaboration to strengthen the cluster and infrastructure, and enhance the reputation and promotion of the Town as a “Horse Friendly Community”
 3. **Objective:** To cultivate and build consequential relationships over the medium-term with post-secondary institutions designed to advance the Town’s agriculture related economic development

TOURISM

- **Goal:** The Town is a highly favoured visitor destination widely known for its small town charm, rural beauty, agricultural bounty, recreational and cultural offerings, and equine sector
 - Objective:** To foster the further development of the Town’s tourism capacity, experiences, collaborations, infrastructure, and the external marketing partnerships with Headwaters Tourism and Central Counties Tourism

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

- **Goal:** The growth of the Town’s manufacturing sector is sustained by innovative and entrepreneurial firms whose products incorporate advanced technologies and are nationally and internationally competitive
 - Objective:** To provide a competitive business environment and access to programs of assistance to business that will foster the retention, growth and attraction of manufacturing firms

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES

- **Goal:** Erin is viewed as an environmentally progressive community well suited to environmentally-oriented technology applications and business ventures
 - Objective:** To encourage adoption of environmental technologies, the growth and attraction of environmentally-oriented businesses and agricultural ventures

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- **Goal:** Erin is a regionally important centre for professional services firms
 - Objective:** To grow Erin’s professional services sector and attract additional firms

Town of Erin Economic Development Plan (2019-2023)

A. Introduction

1. About Economic Development

Economic development seeks improvement in the well-being of a community through policies, programs and initiatives that foster beneficial economic growth, retain and attract investment and talent, and grow and diversify the municipal tax base. Economic development does not equate simply to the achievement of economic growth; rather, it seeks to encourage an enhanced quality of life and a qualitative balance with other community goals such as sustainability.

Creating an effective and enduring economic development program requires the concerted efforts of multiple partners coming together around common goals and objectives and working together collaboratively.

Economic development is a longer-term investment to be maintained through both good and challenging economic times. It is important to build on existing assets, take incremental actions and build long-term value. Efforts are cumulative and results tend to be realized over the medium to longer-run.

Economic developers and economic development initiatives focus on so-called tradable sectors. Tradable sectors are ones where many of the goods or services produced by local firms are sold outside the region and internationally, thereby bringing external revenue into the community which generates incremental wealth locally. Tourism is among the tradable sectors, as the expenditures of non-residents flow into the community. Non-tradable sectors involve businesses whose sales of goods and services mainly meet local demand, including those in the health, education, retail and construction sectors. In non-tradable sectors, the demand is principally generated locally and therefore tends to track changes in the local population.

Survey of Erin Businesses: As part of the development of the Economic Development Plan (2019-2023), a survey of owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in Erin was undertaken. The survey asked respondents to pick the five areas where the Town of Erin should focus its efforts to support the growth of its economic base and businesses.¹ The most frequent choices were:

- Support entrepreneurship 63%
- Support business innovation 54%
- Promote/expand the tourism sector 51%
- Business expansion/growth of existing businesses 44%
- Marketing Erin’s competitive advantages as a business and residential location 37%

¹ The Town of Erin Economic Development Survey was open to the owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in the Town via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town’s website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available. A total of 43 persons responded to the survey. Given the small sample size, results need to be interpreted with caution.

2. A Welcoming Business Climate

How a community’s business climate is viewed sets an important tone for economic development. Evaluations of the nature of a jurisdiction’s business climate by the business, agriculture, and realty and development communities are influenced by the degree to which a municipality demonstrates a consistent vision, clear goals, and predictable policies that are applied transparently in a balanced and timely fashion. Municipalities which demonstrate that they want a vibrant and growing economy and are receptive to constructive dialogue tend to be viewed positively.

3. The Way Ahead – Managed Growth

The Town of Erin is moving into a promising phase of its evolution which should bring needed growth and development, based on the prospective installation of a waste water servicing system that will service commercial, industrial and residential sites and could be in place as soon as the end of 2023. The community cares deeply about retaining its small town charm, preserving its rural and natural surroundings, and adopting environmentally progressive policies. These are among the principal characteristics which differentiate Erin.

The Economic Development Plan for the Town is presented to reflect both nearer-term plans and, separately under headings, “Thinking and Planning Ahead”, the preparations that will ready the Town for the opportunities which well managed growth will offer.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION

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B. A Brief Profile of the Town of Erin

The Town of Erin borders on the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Canada’s dominant metropolis, but seems safely sheltered from its congestion and pressures. The headwaters of the Grand and Credit rivers lie in the Hills of Erin. The community prizes its small town feel, historic main streets, equine sector, agricultural abundance, and closeness to nature.

The Town is proud of its sense of community, the engagement of its citizens, the commitment of volunteers, and its residents’ embrace of nature and the outdoors.

Though set apart by its rural character and country lifestyle, the Town has ready access to metro Toronto. Only 80 kilometers from downtown Toronto, Erin is situated in the area along the GTA’s northwestern border and is within 40 minutes of Caledon, Orangeville, Halton Hills, Milton, Guelph, Fergus and Elora. Waterloo Region (Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo) is under one hour away.

As part of the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), curving around the Canadian northern, western and southern shore of Lake Ontario, Erin is situated in a population concentration of 9.4 million people² which ranks the area fifth among US and Canadian counterparts.³ The GGH contains over one-quarter of Canada’s population and attracts one in three new immigrants to Canada. As one of North America’s fastest growing regions, it is forecast to have a population of 13.5 million by 2041.⁴

Toronto Pearson International Airport is 45 minutes away, attracting airline and airport employees as Erin residents, and affording ready access for local residents to North America’s second busiest international airport. Waterloo Region International Airport is an option that is a similar distance away.

While the Town can rightly see this proximity to the GTA as a valued asset, the lack of direct access to Ontario’s 400 series highways makes Erin a somewhat more marginal choice for any businesses heavily dependent on transportation. Over time, Highway 410 is likely to be extended further north, bringing it closer. The resumption of the Environmental Assessment for a new 400 series highway, GTA West Corridor (Highway 413), from Highway 400 in the Vaughan area to the current intersection of Highways 401 and 407 ETR, was announced in late 2018. Though this is a longer-term prospect, such a route would add a welcome additional option.

Population: Erin’s population of 11,439 according to the 2016 Census was smaller than most of its neighbouring communities, especially Halton Hills (66,502) and Caledon (61,161). Population growth in Erin rebounded from 2011 to 2016 by 6.2% after registering a dip from 2006 to 2011. The 2011 to 2016 growth rate topped that of other municipalities in the region, save for Caledon’s robust 11.8% increase and those of King (23.2%) and Shelburne (39.0%).

Immigration: Immigrants to Canada represented 15.9% of the Town’s population in the 2016 Census. This compares to 42.0% for the province, though levels are invariably lower throughout rural and smaller

² Statistics Canada, Canadian Census 2016.

³ Based on a comparison with US “Combined Statistical Areas” in the 2015 US Census. New York-Newark NY-NJ-CT-PA, Los Angeles-Long Beach CA, Chicago-Naperville IL-IN-WI, and Washington-Baltimore-Arlington DC-MD-VA-WV-PA are the four ahead, while San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland CA, Boston-Worcester-Providence MA-RI-NH-CT, Dallas-Fort Worth TX-OK and Philadelphia-Reading-Camden PA-NJ-DE-MD follow.

⁴ Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs (<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=10852>). Accessed on March 17, 2019.

town Ontario. Communities with a higher proportion of immigrants included Caledon (24.6%), Puslinch (16.4%) and Halton Hills (16.2%), while lower percentages characterized Orangeville (12.4%), Guelph-Eramosa (12.7%) and Shelburne (14.0%).

Just over 80% of the Town's immigrants came to Canada before 1991. Recently arrived immigrants represent a very low proportion.

Composition of the Population by Age: Erin has a high median age (46.0 years) relative to the province (41.3) and nearby communities such as Caledon (41.0), Halton Hills (41.3), King (42.5), Orangeville (38.8) and Shelburne (36.1). In particular, the share of Erin's population that falls in the prime working years from 25 to 44 years old is below that of others. From an economic development perspective, it would be highly desirable as part of future growth management to adopt policy approaches that would help Erin attract talented people in this younger demographic.

Wealth: Erin has among the higher average annual household income levels of Ontario municipalities at \$132,527 in 2015 according to the following year's Census. By comparison, Puslinch (\$164,714) and Caledon (\$137,519) were higher, while Guelph-Eramosa's average was \$128,137. Erin also has a high average household net worth at \$1,227,807.⁵

Employment and Jobs: Erin's level of unemployment, as measured on the May 2016 Census day, was low at 4.3%, compared to the 7.4% average for Ontario. The resident labour force growth of 8.8% between the 2011 and 2016 Censuses exceeded the 6.2% increase in population. However, the increase in the number of jobs in the Town was only 3.5% over this same period. Erin has a notably high proportion of self-employment (17.9%).

Job growth was strong in Erin between 2008 and 2018 (39.3%), though most occurred between 2008 and 2013. Growth over the last five years was only 2.2%.

Erin is part of much larger regional labour market. Many Erin residents commute, with Mississauga, Brampton and Halton Hills being the dominant destinations. Erin's jobs to labour force ratio was roughly 0.6 to 1, meaning there were only 6 jobs locally for every 10 residents in the labour force. This is addressed in greater detail in the section on talent (Section D.4).

The largest number of jobs in Erin by sector in 2018 were spread over construction (495); retail (459); agriculture (389); professional, scientific and technical services (386); health care and social services (308); and manufacturing (307). As compared to 2008, all sectors registered increases in the number of jobs, except for manufacturing which had a 21.9% decline.

Housing: The Town's residential housing stock is heavily weighted toward single-detached homes which represented 92% of dwellings in 2016. The Town had only 235 multi-residential units. Rentals represented only 410 dwellings – about 10% of the total dwellings.

The average value of dwellings in Erin is among higher averages for Ontario municipalities, according to the 2016 Census. Average value stood at \$664,670, ahead of the Ontario average of \$506,409. Puslinch

⁵ Source: MoneySense, Canada's Best Places to Live 2018, based on data from Environics Analytics (<https://www.moneysense.ca/canadas-best-places-to-live-2018-full-ranking/>). Accessed on March 30, 2019.

(\$774,198) and Caledon (\$737,626) had higher average values, while Halton Hills and Guelph-Eramosa were slightly less.

As municipal sewage connections become available, construction of a greater variety of housing should be encouraged, particularly more affordable multi-residential units, including rentals. These are important housing entry options for talent that may be attracted to job opportunities but are not inclined or financially able to commit immediately to the purchase of a place to live.

Safety: Wellington County consistently ranks well in the Macleans magazine rankings of the safest Canadian municipalities.⁶ In 2019, the County ranked 13th, with Wellington ahead of Halton Region (17th) and Caledon (20th).

Exhibit 1 Town of Erin - By the Numbers 2016 Census			
Metric	Town of Erin	Ontario	Erin Compared to Ontario ¹
Land Area	297.76 km ²		
Population	11,439		
Population Growth 2011-2016	6.2%	4.5%	Higher
Average Value of Dwellings	\$664,670	\$506,409	Higher
Average Household Income (2015)	\$132,527	\$97,856	Higher
Households Spending Less than 30% of Income on Shelter Costs	75.2%	72.3%	Comparable
Prevalence of Low Income per LIM-AT ²	6.9%	14.4%	Lower
Immigrants as a Proportion of the Population	15.9%	42.0%	Lower
Share of Population with Post-Secondary Completion	63.5%	65.1%	Comparable
Comparable = < 5% difference.			
² Statistics Canada, Prevalence of low income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT)			
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census			

Additional data and analysis on the demographic, labour force, socio-economic and economic base was undertaken in the creation of the Economic Development Plan.

⁶ Macleans Magazine website: <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/canadas-safest-places-2019/>. Accessed on March 30, 2019.

C. A New Era of Managed Growth

The Town of Erin anticipates moving into a new era of growth enabled by the installation of a waste water servicing system for the Town of Erin, overcoming the longstanding dependence of residences and businesses on septic systems.

The time leading up to the initial connections to the waste water system provides an extended period in which to develop plans and actions that will help realize the opportunities which full servicing will unlock.

The Economic Development Plan presents nearer-term and longer-term plans. In each section, detailed Goals, Objectives and Actions are presented covering the period of the plan (2019-2023). In addition, the narrative in each Section ends with an outline of the thinking and planning which is required for the Town's economic development program to be fully ready to capitalize on the opportunities which the installation of the waste water servicing system will help realize.

1. Environmental Sustainability

The anticipated growth must take account of the respect that the Town holds for the environment.

The Town of Erin has an enviable natural setting. Approximately half of the Town's area is part of the Greenbelt. Parts also fall within the jurisdiction of the Credit River Conservation Authority and the Grand River Conservation Authority. Much has been done to recognize and protect this natural heritage.

As an environmentally attuned community, a reputation for sustainability is likely to be among the more significant reasons that many people choose the Town as a place to visit, live or pursue agricultural, agriculturally-oriented, or "green" and tourism-related ventures and business. Globally and nationally, environmental concerns are expected to grow and become more widespread, meaning that the importance of sustainable development will increase.

Sustainable development is "development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission), 1987

In the Resident Survey undertaken as part of the preparation of the Town's Strategic Plan (2019-2023), "environmental protection" was chosen by 33% of the respondents as being among the top five issues or challenges facing the Town, while 28% chose "pristine natural environment" as a top three reason for living in the Town.⁷

The Town's Official Plan indicates that Council policy will be "to encourage, where practical, measures that create a culture of conservation."

⁷ The Town of Erin Resident Survey about the Strategic Plan (2019-2023) was open to the public via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town's website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available for completion. A total of 452 persons responded to the survey.

The policies, guidelines and any incentives developed as part of the Growth Management and other plans governing future development should encourage approaches that will take account of and respect the environment. This could include incentives for green features in commercial and industrial buildings such as geothermal energy systems, greywater use, green roofs, naturalized landscaping, and LEED standards for construction.⁸

2. Infrastructure

Transportation

The Town of Erin benefits from its proximity to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and its location toward the western side of the metropolitan area.

Though Erin is quite centrally located, other communities in the region which could be part of a site location search by a prospective investor currently have somewhat better direct access to the Ontario's 400 series highways. In Erin's case, Highway 401 is 33 kilometers away via Trafalgar Road. The four-lane Highway 10 extension to Highway 410 is about 13 kilometers distance.

The Town should be an advocate for sound Provincial transportation investments which will favour its economic development. The Town's interests would be served by (1) the extension of Highway 410, and (2) the Greater Toronto Area West Highway Corridor, previously labeled Highway 413. In the 2018 Fall Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review, the Ontario government announced that it would resume the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the West Highway Corridor which had been suspended in 2015. Also, highly relevant to advantageous future transportation linkages for the Town is the proposed Toronto Pearson Transit Hub – dubbed "Union Station West" – which envisages the airport area as a multimodal transportation centre. Early planning has been targeting realization by 2027.⁹ Increased public transport linkages from the Town to the airport area will need to be considered as an advocacy priority.

High-Speed Broadband – Essential Infrastructure

High-speed broadband has become an essential part of community infrastructure – no different than electricity, natural gas, roads, water and waste water disposal. In December 2016, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) declared that broadband was a basic telecommunications service. In their 2019 budgets, the Federal and Ontario governments both pledged additional funding to expand the availability of high-speed broadband.

Virtually every aspect of the economy and people's lives have become digitized. As a result, the lack of generally available, affordable high-speed broadband is a major impediment to the growth of existing business and agricultural operations, and the attraction of new businesses, talent and visitors to the Town of Erin.

A broadband-deficit is a major impediment to attracting and retaining entrepreneurs, creative professionals, investors and business owners who can be attracted to the type of amenities and the

⁸ LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a certification program focused primarily on new commercial building projects. It is based upon a points system.

⁹ CTV Toronto News, Report on Presentation by Howard Eng, CEO, Greater Toronto Airport Authority, May 16, 2019 (<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1052238>). Accessed on May 25, 2019.

lifestyle that the Town of Erin offers, provided they can access reliable and affordable personal and business broadband connections.

Access to broadband is also essential for all levels of education to enable online courses and research, as well as workforce training where online instruction and virtual and augmented reality continue to grow rapidly.

Examples of situations and sectors that can be significantly impacted by a lack of high-speed broadband are cited in Exhibit 2. The Town of Erin is excluded as a possible location or at least put at a serious disadvantage when decisions are made about where to locate in these fields of endeavour.

Exhibit 2	
Examples of Situations and Sectors that are Significantly Impacted by a Lack of High-Speed Broadband	
Retail	An online e-commerce presence is now essential for all retailers, restaurants, niche and speciality stores, and for artisans producing one-off items. Indicative of this is the Digital Main Street program funded by the Ontario government in partnership with the Ontario BIA Association which seeks to help business improve their adoption of technologies to better promote themselves online, sell online and run back-office operations online. Funding for one year has been approved for Erin
Advanced Manufacturing	Manufacturers require ultra-high-speed, large capacity fibre to interact with suppliers and clients to send and receive digitized drawings, designs and specifications, including for 3D printing
Professional Services	Reliable, ultra-high-speed broadband access is a fundamental requirement for professional services providers such as engineering, architectural, design, computer systems, software, business support, and financial services firms – all rapidly growing sub-sectors
Agriculture	The digital agricultural revolution – precision farming – has brought robotic milking systems, tailored weather forecasts, online market data and sales and buying execution, satellites and drones monitoring soil moisture, GPS and computer-guided tractors and farm implements that precisely plant, fertilize and irrigate crops
Tourism	Social media and Wi-Fi are part of the visitor experience and a vital promotional dimension. Guests in overnight accommodations anticipate having access to high-speed Wi-Fi for personal devices and multi-channel TV
Digital Media and Film and Video Production	The Town of Erin’s historic small town charm, rolling natural terrain, and equestrian assets make the area an attractive location for filming. However, today’s film and digital media producers are highly dependent on access to ultra-high-speed, very high capacity optical fibre broadband
Technology-Oriented Firms	Innovative, technology-oriented firms invariably have a dependence on advanced digitally based technologies, as represented by Big Data, the Internet of Things, imaging, GPS, artificial intelligence, cyber security, robotics, 3D printing, and virtual reality
Creative Professionals and Lone Eagles	Entrepreneurially-oriented individuals are attracted to locations matching their lifestyle preferences, provided they have business and personal access to reliable high-speed broadband and, as needed, can readily access a metropolitan area and major airport
Telecommuting Options for Knowledge Workers	Where they have access to high-speed broadband, many knowledge workers can exercise or seek out options to telecommute or work from home several days per week
Attracting and Retaining Millennials	Millennials are accustomed to connectivity, and are often able to adopt flexible working arrangements if they have access to high-speed broadband
Students, Workforce Training and Lifelong Learning	Most learning requires some online access, even for classroom-based courses. Students must research online. Some courses are only available online. Live class streaming is often an option during adverse weather.

To bring additional capacity to inadequately served rural areas, the Town of Erin is participating in the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) Network, \$180 million initiative spearheaded by the Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus and supported by the Ontario and Federal governments. SWIFT will expand the reach of existing fibre networks throughout Western Ontario to about 350 internet access

points – or points of presence (PoPs) – so that it will be easier, faster and cheaper for Independent Service Providers (ISPs) to connect businesses and homes to high-speed broadband. The providers, who will be selected competitively to work with SWIFT will match public funding with their own investments and will continue to own and operate their networks and deliver services directly to customers. SWIFT will measurably strengthen the network but the “last mile” access to homes and businesses will rest with ISPs.

The SWIFT Network will take time to build out and will fall short of meeting requirements in the Town of Erin. In addition, the capacity and speed requirements of businesses are expected to continue to grow at exponential rates. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has indicated that between 2011 and 2016 Canadians’ monthly data consumption increased by an average of 40% each year. That parallels Nielsen’s Law of Internet Bandwidth which states that a high-speed user’s connection speed grows by 50% a year. This rate of growth is only slightly less than the 60% a year postulated by Moore’s Law which addresses computing speed.¹⁰

In the circumstances, the Town of Erin needs to continue to actively pursue additional options.

What are the avenues and options open to a municipality that may facilitate additional affordable high-speed broadband, short of investing in providing services itself? Often, a combination of things can come together to make a difference in encouraging others, especially in the private sector, to take important steps. Some areas of possible focus for the development of an overall Town strategy:

- Can the Town provide access – free or for a fee – to municipally owned or controlled properties or facilities that would aid in laying cable or transmitting signals? Examples are existing water towers, communication towers or poles, roof tops, road allowances, trails or paths. Standardized access agreements can speed arrangements.
- Municipalities have adopted “dig once” policies that mandate or encourage the laying of conduit for broadband fibre at the time that road work is being done or other utilities are being provided for new developments.
- The Town and other public sector entities often have access to high-speed broadband to meet their own needs. Are their ways to work together to help possible providers? Wellington County Libraries provide Wi-Fi access and have a hot-spot lending program.
- A key goal in establishing a shared space for startups, entrepreneurs and small businesses is access to high-speed broadband, not only for tenants but for other firms which may have occasional special needs.
- Municipalities can support interested Independent Service Providers by undertaking surveys that will provide information on underserved areas and more clearly identify community needs.
- The Town can support applications for Federal or Provincial funding by Independent Service Providers and advocate actively more generally for additional funding and needed policy changes.
- A Town broadband coordinator and/or a broadband working group can add impetus to efforts.

Even while addressing the broadband needs, an eye needs to be kept on the next significant technology that is emerging in communications. The mainstream launch of 5G cellular networks – the new standard – is expected in 2021.¹¹ 5G networks are needed to support autonomous vehicles and the expanded use

¹⁰ Nielsen Norman Group, “Nielsen’s Law of Internet Bandwidth,” (<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/law-of-bandwidth/>). Accessed on April 10, 2019.

¹¹ IT World Canada, “Mainstream launch of 5G expected in Canada in 2021”, May 2, 2019, quoting Bernard Bureau, Vice President of Network and Architecture Strategy, TELUS.

of the Internet of Things (IoT) in sensing and monitoring applications in manufacturing, logistics and agriculture.

Natural Gas

Expanded natural gas infrastructure is also important, as natural gas has been one of the most competitive sources of energy. This is important not only to residential consumers but to farmers who have extensive requirements for crop drying. The installation of natural gas pipeline delivery systems is capital intensive. The Ontario government has provided financing support from time to time for projects in rural and less densely populated areas.

In 2017, the Town Council supported an application by Enbridge to bring natural gas to Ballinafad. However, the total funding required to offset the capital shortfall associated with the applications exceeded the funding available under the Natural Gas Grant Program in effect at that time and the Ballinafad project was not approved.

In 2018, the recently elected Ontario government enacted legislation (Access to Natural Gas Act) and issued Ontario Regulation 24/19 under the Ontario Energy Board Act to enable natural gas connections for up to 78 communities. This should provide a renewed opportunity for Enbridge to access funding for projects such as Ballinafad after the Regulation comes into effect in July 2019.

3. Community Improvement Plan

A Community Improvement Program (CIP) is a municipal planning tool, enabled by the Ontario Planning Act, that permits municipalities to adopt programs and strategies to improve the built, economic, and social environment in designated areas of a municipality.

In October 2018, Erin Town Council adopted a CIP, “Investing in Growth”, designed to revitalize and reshape the Town and demonstrate that the Town is “Open for Business”.

The CIP offers financial and non-financial incentives intended to improve:

- The built environment and public realm;
- Views and streetscapes;
- Trails and open spaces;
- Heritage attributes and resources;
- Housing choice and affordability; and
- Infrastructure to attract visitors.

Wellington County also has an “Invest Well” program which provides a framework for the County’s participation in the Town of Erin’s CIP when projects also meet the County’s criteria for investment.

The Erin CIP is intended to stimulate private investment for physical improvements to private property. In addition, the Town has identified initiatives for which it will use municipal resources for community improvement to provide proactive and visible leadership in achieving the objectives of the CIP.

The financial incentives initially available to eligible owners/tenants of land and buildings in 2018 and 2019 include:

- A Design and Study Grant;
- A Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Grant;
- A Façade and Signage Improvement Grant;
- A Building Improvement Grant; and
- A Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG).

Grants are capped at \$10,000 annually for any project or property (excluding the TIEG).

A report on the CIP will be presented to Town Council at the end of 2019 .

The first five CIP grants, totalling about \$27,000, were awarded in early 2019 for façade, signage and building improvements (Fan/Joy and Edward Jones), building permit and planning application fees (the Weathervane and the Erin Agricultural Society), and a building improvement grant (The Devonshire Bed & Breakfast).

The Community Improvement Plan should be reviewed regularly to evaluate whether it is meeting its goals and whether there are other areas to which it should be directed.

4. Business Improvement Areas

Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) allow local business people and property owners in Ontario to join together and, with the support of the municipality, to organize, finance and carry out physical improvement and promote economic development in their district. The local municipality is responsible for approving the budget of the BIA. There are more than 230 BIAs in place across the province. They vary in size from less than 60 businesses and property owners to more than 2,000.¹²

The Village of Erin BIA includes about 40 members who are associated with businesses and properties on a portion of the Village's iconic Main Street which has been one of the Town's most significant tourism destinations. The critical mass of members is small, however, and the annual budget correspondingly modest (\$48,800 in 2018).

The Town of Erin Council approved, as part of the Community Improvement Programme Adoption report which passed in 2018, that the Town, in consultation with the Erin Village Business Improvement Area (BIA), would ensure that the boundary of the BIA includes all parcels of land and community areas that may benefit from community improvements. Council also recognized the commitment of Let's Get Hillsburgh Growing to beautifying and revitalizing the downtown area while indicating that the Town may also wish to explore the possibility of establishing a BIA in Hillsburgh. The CIP programme is dependent upon private sector participation for results, however Town resources, such as staff time and funds, are required to provide leadership in achieving the objectives of the CIP. The Programme also outlined Town led initiatives which could be implementation, recognizing budgets and resources are to be reviewed on an annual basis.

¹² Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website (<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1529.aspx>). Accessed on May 22, 2019

Downtowns are key to “placemaking” and benefit the broader community. Vibrant, attractive downtowns assist in drawing tourists to the broader market, create environments for creativity and entrepreneurship and are a contribution to the lifestyle embodied to attract talent and residents.

The East Wellington Chamber of Commerce has recently ceased operations leaving no local organization to support business. Business organizations need to be run by business, with clear mandates and value propositions for members. Consultation with the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association for assistance, along with reaching out to similar sized communities with BIAs may assist in strengthening the Erin Village BIA.

The BIA needs to establish a strategic business plan which is tailored to Erin; draws on best practices elsewhere; and which will have the support of the membership. Armed with this plan, expansion of the area covered by the BIA is recommended, as a basis for strengthening and re-energizing the organization. The expansion must show the value and opportunity to new businesses and areas and not just be seen as a cash grab. The business community has to step up.

Wellington County Economic Development arranged to have Roger Brooks International undertake a Community Assessment of communities in the County as part of the Business Retention and Expansion program. The assessment included a look at entrances, business activity, marketing materials, housing, environment, façades and downtown cores as well as various other points of interest, and therefore has been of interest to the BIA and others in terms of independent third-party feedback on opportunities and areas for attention.¹³

The Village BIA was approved in May 2019 for a grant under Ontario’s Digital Main Street program for a one year period.¹⁴ The program helps businesses with technology adoption, including online sales. Business Centre Guelph-Wellington (BCGW) co-ordinated applications for the Wellington County BIAs.

5. Industrial and Commercial Land Availability

Industrial Land

The Town of Erin is currently the most populous municipality in Ontario without a waste water servicing system. The lack of a public system that would provide full services to commercial and industrial land, as well as residential areas, has been a constraint on expansion by existing firms and the attraction of new investment. Until the planned waste water system is in place, many businesses will be hesitant to expand or build new premises.

There is land designated for future industrial development in the Town, but little is available for immediate sale and occupancy. The Growth Management Strategy being undertaken in 2019 will identify and evaluate the supply of residential and employment land for development, along with intensification opportunities within existing built up areas.

¹³ See <https://www.wellington.ca/en/business/roger-brooks-international.aspx>.

¹⁴ The Digital Main Street Program, funded by the Province of Ontario in partnership with the Ontario BIA Association, seeks to help small main-street businesses improve their adoption of technologies to better promote themselves online, sell online and even run back-office processes online (<https://digitalmainstreet.ca/digital-transformation-grant/>).

As of June 2019, the Town of Erin had two vacant and undeveloped parcels of land which were designated for industrial use and are being taken into account in the Development Charges study and the Growth Management Strategy:

- A 15.3 hectare (37.8 acre) area in the northeastern part of the Village of Erin, on the eastern edge of the existing industrial area and just south of Wellington Road 124; and
- A 7.7 hectare (19.0 acre) area at Wellington Road 22 and Eighth Line in southeastern Hillsburgh.

In total, this amounts to 23.0 hectares (56.8 acres). An industrially zoned municipal subdivision might average 1.5 hectares per lot (with a mix ranging from half a hectare up to nearly 5 hectare lots). Based on that approximation, the vacant 23.0 hectares currently designated as industrial would yield 15 lots. Additional industrial space could potentially result through infilling and redevelopment of some industrial properties to higher density uses. As indicated, the Growth Management Strategy is expected to identify the supply of employment land for development, including intensification opportunities in existing built up areas.

Based on conversations with the realty community knowledgeable about the Town, strong interest can be anticipated in fully serviced industrial property in the Town of Erin beyond the amounts indicated.

Town Council should consider policies or measures that could encourage timely sale of, and especially building on, the available industrial land by prospective new businesses once the new servicing is in place. The following are among the considerations:

- New businesses will want to have a choice of lots with all the services fully in place. How can the Town work with owners of parcels to ensure that a range of lots of various sizes have full servicing in place awaiting buyers? Might there need to be some arrangements to have the Town proceed to install the services but allow deferral of the upfront Development Charges until the individual lot is sold?
- Often new businesses prefer to lease. Are there measures within Council's powers that would encourage developers to build some industrial space for lease on spec?
- Are there steps which might be taken to ensure that buyers of lots proceed to build on them in a timely fashion?
- Some of these issues can be addressed by having municipality-owned business parks, though it would involve a considerable expenditure and introduce risk on the Town's part. If an industrial parcel were for sale, could or should the Town be interested to explore purchasing it?

Commercial Land

As of June 2019, the principal vacant lands for potential commercial use are three parcels located along Wellington Road 124 and designated as "Highway Commercial". These three total over 10 hectares (24.7 acres), with the largest being a mostly undeveloped strip of 7.8 hectares (19.3 acres) on the south side of Wellington Road 124 from Erin Park Drive to the Tenth Line road allowance. It is possible that additional opportunities exist for more commercial development in the Town through infilling and increased density. Some underutilized commercial buildings in the downtowns may be able to accommodate fuller use of upper levels which will be more financially viable once servicing is in place.

A review of commercial land is also part of the Growth Management Strategy evaluation.

A highly desirable use for commercial land which would encourage further tourism growth is the attraction of suitable overnight commercial scale accommodation, once full servicing is available. Such development could occur on the lands designated as Highway Commercial or as the Central Business Districts in the Village of Erin and in Hillsburgh. As of June 2019, the Town has only three Bed and Breakfast locations available. Bed and Breakfast establishments may also be permitted (subject to certain conditions) in the centrally located Residential Transition Areas in Hillsburgh and in the Village of Erin.¹⁵

¹⁵ Town of Erin Official Plan, contains modifications and applications to May 2012, approved by Wellington Council December 14, 2004, See Section 4.9.3.

Town of Erin Building Permits Issued

The Town of Erin’s building permit data reveals that, over the three year period from 2016 to 2018, there were between 241 and 284 permits annually with the total value each year ranging from \$24.2 million to \$40.6 million (Exhibit 3).

By value, residential building permits dominate, especially for new single detached residences. The permit values for new farm buildings and renovations, alterations and additions rank considerably lower. For the last two years, the value for farm permits were larger than new industrial construction, renovations, alteration and additions.

Exhibit 3 Selected Town of Erin Building Permits - Summary Data – 2016 – 2018							
Permit Type		2016		2017		2018	
		Number	Value \$ M	Number	Value \$ M	Number	Value \$ M
Residential	Single Detached	44	\$18.9	35	\$26.0	17	\$9.0
	Renovation, Alteration & Addition	34	\$3.6	48	\$3.0	44	\$5.5
	Accessory Building	47	\$1.6	35	\$1.5	43	\$1.9
	Pool	13	\$0.4	22	\$0.6	23	\$0.8
	Deck	21	\$0.2	10	\$0.1	13	\$0.3
Farm	New	12	\$1.9	15	\$1.6	13	\$2.3
	Renovation, Alteration & Addition	4	\$0.2	1	\$1.4	2	\$0.1
Industrial	New	5	\$1.5	3	\$0.3	0	\$0
	Renovation, Alteration & Addition	2	\$2.2	4	\$1.3	2	\$1.0
Commercial	New	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$0.4
	Renovation, Alteration & Addition	3	\$0.1	6	\$0.4	7	\$0.1
Other ¹		99	\$0.5	92	\$4.4	76	\$2.8
TOTAL		284	\$31.1	271	\$40.6	241	\$24.2

¹Includes: Demolition, Septic, Change of Use, Tents, All Assembly, and Institutional
Source: Town of Erin Corporate Report BD2019-04 re Building Permit Activity 2018 to the Mayor & Members of Council, March 5, 2019

6. Comparative Levels of Property Taxes and Development Charges

From the point of view of a lower tier municipality like the Town of Erin, an important consideration related to residential and commercial and industrial property tax comparisons is the relative shares of the property tax attributable to each of the two tiers. Differences in the Education Tax, which varies from upper tier to upper tier municipality and which goes to the province, can also be important. The shares of the total property tax attributable to the County or education are important in the Town of Erin’s case because, though it is in Wellington County, it borders on Caledon (Peel Region), Halton Hills (Halton Region), and East Garafaxa (Dufferin County). For example, Wellington County takes a larger share of the residential and commercial and industrial property taxes than in neighbouring Peel Region. In 2019 for the Town of Erin, the Town’s share of taxes collected was 27% compared with 55% for Wellington County

and 18% for education. For the Town of Caledon in Peel Region, the shares were 41% for the Town, 30% for the Region and 29% for education. There are some differences between jurisdictions, of course, which mean the situations are not entirely comparable.

Comparative Commercial and Industrial Property Taxes

The comparisons done by BMA Management Consulting in 2018¹⁶ in its annual benchmarking study show that:

- Commercial property taxes per square foot in the Town of Erin are generally in the mid-point range against comparators.¹⁷ They are lower than municipalities in the region such as Caledon, King Township, Brampton and Guelph, but higher than Orangeville and Halton Hills, and higher than 3 of 5 Wellington County municipalities reporting (excluding Guelph/Eramosa) (See Exhibit 4).
- Industrial taxes per square foot on other hand were higher than all the benchmarked regional municipalities, except for Caledon. Erin’s industrial taxes are also higher than other municipalities in Wellington County.
- Commercial neighbourhood shopping tax rates showed Erin to be lower than regional municipalities such as Caledon, Halton Hills, King Township, Orangeville and Brampton, and higher than 4 out of 6 of the other Wellington County municipalities.

Exhibit 4 Commercial & Industrial Property Tax Comparisons for Selected Municipalities Comparison of Total Annual Commercial & Industrial Property Taxes Per Square Foot 2018 Municipal Study by BMA Management Consulting Inc.			
Municipality	Commercial Taxes Per Sq. Ft.	Commercial Neighbourhood Shopping Taxes Per Sq. Ft.	Standard Industrial Taxes Per Sq. Ft.
Erin	\$3.30	\$3.08	\$2.82
Brampton	\$3.72	\$5.26	\$2.42
Caledon	\$3.41	\$4.80	\$3.03
Guelph	\$3.75	\$4.74	\$2.15
Halton Hills	\$2.45	\$3.61	\$1.87
King Township	\$4.82	\$3.12	\$2.31
Orangeville	\$2.87	\$5.11	\$1.47
Centre Wellington	\$3.47	\$2.95	\$1.85
Guelph/Eramosa	--	\$4.37	\$1.54
Mapleton	\$2.54	\$2.93	\$1.67
Minto	\$2.98	\$3.40	\$1.63
Puslinch	\$3.32	\$2.00	\$2.07
Wellington North	\$2.35	\$2.54	\$1.46

Source: 2018 Municipal Study, BMA Management Consulting Inc.

¹⁶ BMA Management Consulting, Inc., Municipal Study 2018. In order to calculate the relative tax burden of “like” properties, BMA Management Consulting Inc. indicates that every effort is made to select a sample of properties within each municipality for each property to hold constant those factors deemed to be most critical in determining a property’s assessed value. However, given the number of factors used to calculate the assessed value for each property, and inability to quantify each of these factors, the focus should be on the trends rather than exact differences. BMA points out that there are many reasons for differences in relative tax burdens. These include, but are not limited to: (1) the values of like properties vary significantly across municipalities; (2) the tax burden on the different property classes within a municipality varies based on the tax ratios; (3) non-uniform education tax rates in the non-residential classes; (4) the level of municipal services provided; and (5) access by municipalities to other sources of revenue such a hydro utility dividends, gaming and casino revenues, user fees, etc.

¹⁷ Communities selected as benchmarks general include Orangeville, Caledon, King Township, Halton Hills, Brampton, Guelph, and the other six Wellington County municipalities.

Comparative Commercial and Industrial Development Charges

Commercial Development Charges: Because Erin does not yet offer full municipal servicing, Commercial Development Charges were lower than municipalities in the region such as Caledon, Halton Hills, King Township, Brampton, Orangeville and Guelph, according to the 2018 annual survey by BMA Management Consulting.¹⁸ The Town of Erin’s Development Charges were also lower than in 2 of the 6 other Wellington County municipalities (Exhibit 5).

Industrial Development Charges: This was also the case for Erin’s Industrial Development Charges. They were lower than other municipalities in the region such as Caledon, Halton Hills, King Township, Brampton, and Guelph, and in 2 of the 6 other Wellington County municipalities. Orangeville waives development charges for industrial projects (Exhibit 5).

Comparative Residential Property Taxes

Residential Detached Bungalow: On a comparative basis, annual Erin property taxes for a residential detached bungalow were most often lower than other municipalities in the region, examples being Caledon, King Township, Orangeville and Brampton. Erin was higher than Halton Hills and Guelph, however. Compared to all the five Wellington County municipalities for which there is data (excluding Puslinch), Erin’s annual property taxes in the category were higher across the board (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 5 Comparisons of Relative Commercial & Industrial Development Charges for Selected Municipalities 2018 Total Commercial & Industrial Development Charges 2018 Municipal Study by BMA Management Consulting Inc.		
Municipality	Commercial Per Sq. Ft.	Industrial Per Sq. Ft.
Erin	\$7.15	\$7.15
Brampton	\$31.05	\$19.14
Caledon	\$24.71	\$18.11
Guelph	\$9.98	\$9.98
Halton Hills	\$41.34	\$15.72
King Township	\$62.60	\$31.94
Orangeville	\$9.11	\$0.71
Centre Wellington	\$7.41	\$7.41
Guelph/Eramosa	\$11.89	\$11.89
Mapleton	\$5.37	\$5.37
Minto	\$3.85	\$3.85
Puslinch	\$3.83	\$3.83
Wellington North	\$6.62	\$4.02
Source: 2018 Municipal Study, BMA Management Consulting Inc.		
Exhibit 6 Residential Property Tax Comparisons for Selected Municipalities Total Annual Residential Property Taxes 2018 Municipal Study by BMA Management Consulting Inc.		
Municipality	Residential Detached Bungalow	Residential Two Storey
Erin	\$3,999	\$5,141
Brampton	\$4,185	\$5,162
Caledon	\$4,012	\$4,556
Guelph	\$3,638	\$5,111
Halton Hills	\$3,619	\$4,701
King Township	\$5,384	\$4,826
Orangeville	\$4,455	\$5,580
Centre Wellington	\$3,374	\$4,711
Guelph/Eramosa	\$3,777	\$4,770
Mapleton	\$3,239	\$4,164
Minto	\$2,827	\$3,701
Puslinch	--	--
Wellington North	\$2,696	\$4,027
Source: 2018 Municipal Study, BMA Management Consulting Inc.		

¹⁸ BMA Management Consulting, Inc., Municipal Study 2018. BMA Management Consulting Inc. notes that, in comparing Development Charges, it is not always possible to directly compare the DC rates as “apples to apples”. Every municipality determines what services will be recovered from DCs. The range of services included in DC rates can have a significant impact on the amount of the charge.

Two Storey Residential Home: On the other hand, data for a two storey residential home indicated that annual Erin property taxes were higher than other municipalities in the region such as Caledon, Halton Hills, King Township and Guelph, though lower than Orangeville and Brampton. Erin’s annual property taxes in the category were all higher than for the five Wellington County municipalities for which there is data (excludes Puslinch) (Exhibit 6).

Comparative Residential Development Charges

Development Charges in Erin, which does not currently offer full municipal servicing, are lower than municipalities in the region such as Caledon, Halton Hills, King Township, Brampton, and Guelph, and in other Wellington County municipalities except Minto and Puslinch (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7 Comparisons of Relative Residential Development Charges for Selected Municipalities Total Residential Development Charges 2018 Municipal Study by BMA Management Consulting Inc.					
Municipality	Single Detached Dwelling Per Unit	Multiple Dwelling 3+ Per Unit	Multiple Dwelling 1 & 2	Apt Units >2 Per Unit	Apt Units <2 Per Units
Erin	\$21,098	\$16,890	\$16,890	\$13,191	\$11,097
Brampton	\$87,320	\$71,983	\$71,983	\$53,813	\$36,538
Caledon	\$82,622	\$68,945	\$68,945	\$54,484	\$36,273
Guelph	\$31,793	\$22,413	\$22,413	\$19,884	\$14,435
Halton Hills	\$63,861	\$52,398	\$39,997	\$34,920	\$28,157
King	\$100,527	\$84,240	\$84,240	\$61,448	\$46,195
Orangeville	\$27,966	\$20,838	\$20,838	\$15,336	\$10,483
Centre Wellington	\$28,655	\$23,190	\$23,190	\$17,761	\$13,885
Guelph/Eramosa	\$42,828	\$32,352	\$32,352	\$24,324	\$20,586
Mapleton	\$22,185	\$14,567	\$14,567	\$10,788	\$9,098
Minto	\$13,035	\$10,974	\$10,974	\$8,454	\$7,103
Puslinch	\$11,952	\$8,880	\$8,880	\$8,193	\$4,127
Wellington North	\$22,084	\$18,400	\$18,400	\$14,921	\$10,877

Source: 2018 Municipal Study, BMA Management Consulting Inc.

7. Global and Regional Trends and Influences Impacting Economic Development

Economic and technological shifts are impacting the environment for the conduct of economic development programs in Ontario.

Economic Growth: The rate of global economic growth has moved a notch lower in the decade since the global recession. The worrying rise of nativism, nationalism and protectionism is an unsettling influence on the international economic outlook. Challenges to globalization have fostered caution by business, reflected for example in generally lower annual flows of foreign direct investment (FDI),¹⁹ declines in trade in immediate goods, and a retreat in global capital flows. Protectionist tendencies elsewhere invite aggressive efforts by governments in Canada to encourage businesses to diversify their export markets.

¹⁹ See for example: OECD, “FDI in Figures”, April 2019 (<http://www.oecd.org/investment/FDI-in-Figures-April-2019.pdf>). Accessed on May 10, 2019.

Ontario’s economic and population growth is forecast to moderate over the next 20 years. The Ontario government’s projections to 2040 contained in its Long-Term Report on the Economy²⁰ anticipate that annual rates of GDP growth will decline from the 2.6% recorded from 1982 to 2015 to 2.1% from 2016 to 2040. Average annual population growth, which was 1.3% in 2016, will decline to a predicted 0.8% in 2040. Already, more people in Ontario turn 65 than turn 15. Therefore, the future growth of the typical working age population (15 to 65 years) will come exclusively from net domestic and international migration to Ontario.

Technological Change: The quickening pace of technological change is commonly cited as the most powerful global influence today. Digitally-driven change, cutting across all activities, is occurring at dramatically accelerating rates that are now commonly exponential rather than linear. Change does not just involve the application of new technologies but is evident in disruptive new business models. In the face of such widespread change, governments have recognized that giving a high policy priority to innovation and investment in transformative technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing are national competitive imperatives.

The rise of the so-called intangible economy²¹ is also changing economic development thinking and approaches. In the past, tangible capital assets such as machinery, equipment, and assembly plants fueled economic growth. Today, intangible assets such as software, data, patented and proprietary technologies, service contracts, brands, and domain names have become the foundation of emerging business models that have experienced explosive growth. Less capital investment is needed, though technology giants such as Amazon, Microsoft and Google are now making massive investments in data centres to answer the demand for cloud services. Even manufacturing enterprises often offer extensive service packages to support the products they sell.

These technologically related trends prompt a shift away from economic development centred on traditional manufacturing to businesses which are service and technology-based, or at least have a larger component of that than in times past. A consequence is that land use planning and zoning may need to be more flexible and able to adapt to different mixes of businesses. Many manufacturing facilities and businesses in the intangible economy are clean businesses that, unlike manufacturing operations of the past, do not need to have the same degree of separation from residential areas.

Rapid technological change and the growth of the intangible economy is also reverberating through today’s workplaces, threatening to automate jobs, radically alter the nature of work, and grow income disparities. The potentially disruptive socio-economic impact is a concern, both through the elimination of jobs and the rise of non-standard jobs (the gig economy)²². The educational system is challenged to adapt its offerings to be more responsive to the emerging requirements in the workplace. Rapid change makes lifelong learning an imperative. This invites Erin to consider how it can lever its proximity to post-secondary educational institutions and other organizations that are catalysts for innovation and entrepreneurship.

²⁰ Ontario Ministry of Finance, Ontario’s Long-Term Report on the Economy, 2017.

²¹ Haskel, Jonathan, and Stian Westlake, “Capitalism without Capital: The Rise of the Intangible Economy”, November 2017

²² The gig economy is a labor market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs. For further information on Canada’s gig economy, see “The gig economy” by BMO Wealth Management, July 2018 (https://www.bmo.com/assets/pdfs/wealth/bmo_gig_economy_report_en.pdf/). Accessed on May 10, 2019.

Climate Change and Energy: Though controversial and influenced by ballot box choices, government and corporate climate change and environmental policies and actions are moving inevitably – even if unevenly – towards greater sustainability, alternative energy sources, CO₂ and pollution reduction, zero emission outcomes, protection of natural and rural areas and agricultural lands, water quality initiatives, and energy efficient buildings. The competitiveness of alternative energy sources will be greatly heightened as lower-cost high-capacity energy storage technology becomes available.

Environmental risks have gained attention in recent years and are identified in the World Economic Forum’s 2019 “Global Risks Report”²³ as an area of special concern for the future to governments and businesses. In the report, extreme weather events, the failure of climate-change mitigation and adaption, and natural disasters rank as the top three global environmental risks in terms of impact. Man-made environmental disasters, the likelihood of biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse, and water crises also ranked in the top 10. Erin’s natural assets and beauty invite residents and visitors to take account of what is required to guard and preserve its environmental heritage.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – A New Era of Managed Growth

Pending the connection of the waste water servicing system to vacant commercial and industrial land parcels, there will be an adequate lead-up period to prepare, to be fully investment ready, and to execute on well-timed initiatives.

Looking beyond to the availability of fully serviced commercial, industrial and residential land, the economic development program will be involved in planning and preparation in a significant number of ways. Key aspects include:

- Bringing forward economic development considerations related to the growth management strategy, such as:
 - provision for affordable housing, including rental units;
 - encouraging commercial and industrial investment and expansion in step with or ahead of residential expansion;
 - the extent to which judiciously targeted incentives may pay off through stimulating commercial and industrial interest and getting initial new commitments to expand or to invest; and
 - possible measures to encourage industrial and commercial land to be built upon promptly;
- Publicizing externally the Town of Erin’s growth management plan and what differentiates the Town and makes it a sought after destination, especially to GTHA residents;
- Developing a distinct and significantly enriched web presence for economic development and tourism;
- Developing plans to ensure newly serviced industrial land will be “market ready” and highlighted and well-advertised;
- Preparing marketing strategies and plans targeted to prime prospects;

²³ World Economic Forum, “The Global Risks Report 2019– 14th Edition,” January 16, 2019 (http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2019.pdf). Accessed on February 13, 2019.

- Develop detailed plans to mitigate and manage the impact of the installation of the waste water servicing system on businesses, especially on the Main Streets and for tourism-related businesses;
- Preparing and being able to advertise to investors a Development Approval Flow Chart that clearly lays out requirements and anticipated timelines typically required for Town, County, Conservation Authority and Provincial approvals; and
- Evaluating future staffing levels for the Economic Development Program.

The objective will be to be fully investment ready in advance of the servicing of the new areas by the waste water system.

The growth management strategy offers the Town the opportunity to create a balanced and more complete community. The desired outcomes would be to:

- Create more employment locally so that the proportion of jobs to the resident work force would be higher, reducing the number of residents that commute;
- Grow the proportion of the property tax assessment attributable to commercial and industrial activities in order to reduce the large share currently shouldered by the residential sector;
- Create a broader mix of housing – especially rental and more affordable – that will attract and retain needed talent, youth; and downsizing seniors; and
- Attract businesses that honour and build upon the community’s unique character, for example in tourism whose growth will benefit from accommodations and compelling destinations that build on Erin’s unique features and strengths, and in agriculture where new agriculture related ventures can increase returns.

C. TOWN OF ERIN BUSINESS CLIMATE				
C.1 A NEW ERA OF MANAGED GROWTH				
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
C.1	<p>GOAL: The Town of Erin offers a competitive and welcoming business climate that generates sustainable economic growth</p> <p>1. OBJECTIVE: To contribute an economic development perspective to decisions about the growth management strategy and associated policies and guidelines</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide information on and obtain the perspectives of Erin economic development stakeholders related to the growth management strategy 2. Contribute insights and analysis relevant to the development of the growth management strategy and associated policies and guidelines, including regarding phasing of the waste water servicing connections, the need for affordable and rental housing, and steps to ensure the timely take-up of serviced commercial and industrial land 3. Contribute to the development of a comprehensive strategy to mitigate and manage the impact on businesses of the construction period of the waste water servicing system 	A	On-Going	EED WCPD EFin EInf
		A	On-Going	EED WCPD EFin EInf
		A	2021-2023	EED WCPD EFin EInf
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Budget 				
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of actions indicated • Earned media coverage about the climate for business and prospects for growth in the Town based on the realization of the growth management strategy 				
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
C.1	<p>2. OBJECTIVE: To facilitate the provision of affordable high-speed broadband throughout the Town</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in the development of a Town broadband strategy to bring together information and identify non-financial contributions which the Town and other partners can offer 	A	On-Going	EED EIT EInf EFin

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
C.1	<p>Actions (Continued):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Encourage and support Independent Service Providers (ISPs) interested to offer high-speed broadband service in Erin 3. Ensure Erin benefits as fully as possible from the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology Network (SWIFT) project 	A	On-Going	EED EIT
		A	On-Going	EED EFin EIT
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The broadband strategy would focus on non-financial contributions. 				
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Town of Erin Broadband Strategy • Affordable, high-speed broadband is available throughout the Town 				
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
C.1	<p>3. OBJECTIVE: To monitor, analyse and report on factors influencing the Town’s competitiveness and whether changes to Town policies or programs are merited</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the vacant employment land directory 2. Review Business Improvement Area (BIA) boundaries, as indicated in the Community Improvement By-Law Adoption report 3. Monitor Community Improvement Programs (CIPs) in neighbouring municipalities 4. Regularly review the effectiveness of the Town’s Community Improvement Program and whether modifications may be appropriate 5. Monitor property tax rates and Development Charges in neighbouring communities 	A-	2020	EED WCPD
		A	2019-2020	EED EBIA LGHG
		C	On-Going	EED
		B	On-Going	EED EFin
		C	On-Going	EED
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for the existing CIP was approved by Council but must be reviewed annually • Re-evaluation may lead to savings or a requirement for increased funding 				
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of readily accessible information on commercial and industrial land and buildings • Establishment of a viable BIA structure for the Town • Whether the CIP is effective in incenting desired decisions which would not have been taken or not taken as early • Awareness of factors and changes occurring elsewhere which influence the Town’s competitive position 				

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²								
C.1	<p>4. OBJECTIVE: To support the extension of natural gas service in the Town</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor Ontario government funding programs to support extension on natural gas service 2. Support funding applications by natural gas providers to extend service 	C	On-Going	EED								
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No funding requirement from the Town is envisaged 												
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications by natural gas providers for Ontario government funding are supported and successful 												
<p>NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS</p> <p>¹ Priorities: A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive</p> <p>² Abbreviations</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">EBIA = Village of Erin Business Improvement Area</td> <td style="width: 50%;">EInf = Town of Erin Infrastructure</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EED = Town of Erin Economic Development</td> <td>LGHG = Let’s Get Hillsburgh Growing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EFin = Town of Erin Finance</td> <td>WCPD = Wellington County Planning Department (for Erin)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EIT = Town of Erin Information Technology</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>					EBIA = Village of Erin Business Improvement Area	EInf = Town of Erin Infrastructure	EED = Town of Erin Economic Development	LGHG = Let’s Get Hillsburgh Growing	EFin = Town of Erin Finance	WCPD = Wellington County Planning Department (for Erin)	EIT = Town of Erin Information Technology	
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D. Principal Town of Erin Economic Development Roles to Drive Results

1. Business Retention and Expansion

Initiatives to reach out to support the retention and expansion of existing local businesses are a fundamental priority for a community’s economic development program. The accepted wisdom is that local business expansions may generate as much as 70% to 80% of new jobs. This aligns with the sales maxim that it is easier and less expensive to keep and grow relations with existing clients, as compared to identifying and attracting new ones.

In two-tier municipal structures, the lead for business retention and expansion activity rests with the lower-tier municipalities as they are closest to local firms and have a front line role in serving their taxpayers’ needs. Key roles for the Town’s economic development program are to ensure regular contact with existing firms to be well informed about local businesses, while also being a connector who helps firms access programs and services available from the Town and its partners.

The survey of owners, operators and staff of Erin businesses undertaken in conjunction with the Economic Development Plan preparation asked respondents to pick the top five areas in which the Town should focus its economic development efforts. Business expansion and the growth of existing businesses ranked fourth in terms of the number of mentions (44% of respondents), while business retention was sixth (33%).²⁴

The vast majority of the 390 enterprises in the Town of Erin in 2018 had relatively few employees (Exhibit 8).²⁵ In addition, there were 913 Indeterminate enterprises with no employees or only contract employees. Indeterminate enterprises tend to be concentrated in the real estate, construction, professional and technical services and agriculture sectors.

Exhibit 8 Erin Enterprise Locations by Number of Employees Increase in Numbers from 2014 to 2018 & Proportion by Number of Employees in 2018				
Number of Employees	2014	2018	Change 2014 to 2018	Percentage Share 2018
1-4	194	245	51	62.8%
5-9	60	63	3	16.2%
10-19	47	46	-1	11.8%
20-49	22	25	3	6.4%
50-99	8	9	1	2.3%
100-199	0	2	2	0.5%
200+	0	0	0	0.0%
Total, Excluding Indeterminate¹	331	390	59	100.0%
¹ Note: “Indeterminate” enterprises have no employees or only contracted workers. Source: EMSI 2018.3 Dataset				

²⁴ The Town of Erin Economic Development Survey was open to the owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in the Town via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town’s website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available. A total of 43 persons responded to the survey. Given the small sample size, results need to be interpreted with caution.

²⁵ The information is from the Canada Business Counts database which includes Canadian businesses that meet at least one of the following three criteria: (1) have an employee workforce for which they submit payroll remittances; (2) have a minimum of \$30,000 in annual revenue; or (3) are incorporated under a federal or provincial act and have filed a federal income tax form within the past three years. “Indeterminate” enterprises have no employees or only contracted workers.

No enterprise location in the Town had more than 200 employees. Two had between 100 to 199 staff, while 9 fell in the category of 50 to 99 employees, with an additional 25 firms in the 20 to 49 employee band.

The transition period until the installation of the waste water servicing system makes the intensification of business retention and expansion calls especially important during the earlier years of this Plan. Until the new waste water servicing system is in place, businesses will require information about plans, timelines and how installation will be managed. They will benefit from full information and whatever assistance the Town can provide in order to understand how to address uncertainties and potential disruptions. Local firms considering expansions, may wonder whether to wait, pending the installation of a sewage system or may hope that their service could be expedited.

The firms which are growing or have the potential to grow and therefore be a source of additional jobs should be accorded a degree of priority in BR+E calls. A watch should also be kept for firms facing pressures which they might be helped to address.

The owners and operators of enterprises with small staff complements tend to be immersed in day-to-day details of their businesses. They can benefit immensely from the types of connections with resources, information and supportive programs which economic developers can facilitate.

A new hub or shared office facility in the Town, which is addressed in more detail in the following Section (D.2), could build on the existing arrangement for a Business Centre Guelph-Wellington (BCGW) staff member to meet at least once on a specific date each month with Town of Erin clients at the Hillsburgh Library about business startup or growth. A key aspect of a BR+E program is to develop and support such programming to address the needs of local businesses and agricultural enterprises, including in areas such as export assistance, business financing, government funding programs, workforce development, and post-secondary research partnerships. The hub or shared space could also be the venue for seminars and workshops. As the convener of these programs and advisory services, the Town's Economic Development Officer is the key "go-to" person for the local businesses and enterprises.

Key BR+E partners for the Economic Development Officer are:

- Wellington County Economic Development;
- The Business Centre Guelph-Wellington (BCGW), one of over 50 community-based small business and enterprise centres which the Ontario government supports financially and with programs, to offer existing small businesses and entrepreneurs with a range of customizable services which provide ongoing mentorship, education and resources through the many phases and challenges of business ownership;
- Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures, a not-for-profit organization, supported by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario), that offers support, financing and training for rural businesses;
- Innovation Guelph;
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; and
- Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

The Erin Village BIA and other business and agricultural organizations are helpful outreach partners and sources for feedback.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD -- Business Retention and Expansion

It will be extremely important to sustain regular contact with existing businesses in the lead-up and during the installation of the waste water servicing system to:

- Keep local businesses abreast of the construction plans and timelines;
- Understand how the installation will impact their businesses and ensure that their concerns are considered, for example about the public’s access to their businesses, availability of parking, transportation access, extra signage, temporary structures, and special advertising; and
- Find ways to meet businesses’ expansion plans during the period of uncertainty.

Extra effort and support will be needed to help local firms navigate the potentially disruptive construction and transition period, as it could be a threat to profitability and survival.

D. PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROLES TO DRIVE RESULTS

D.1 BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
D.1	<p>GOAL: Existing Town of Erin businesses and agricultural enterprises thrive and grow</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: To proactively and systematically reach out to and support existing Erin businesses and agricultural enterprises</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect small businesses and agricultural enterprises in the Town to sources of assistance, including through seminars and regular visits of partner representatives 2. Facilitate access for manufacturers and other firms to peer-to-peer groups and workforce initiatives 3. Profile leading Erin enterprises on the economic development portion of the Town website 	B	On-Going	EED BCGW CF OMAFRA MEDJCT
		B	On-Going	EED EMC WCED WPBWWD
		C	2020 on	EED ECom

Funding:

- OMAFRA assists in organizing structured BR+E calling programs which in the past have been coordinated on a County-wide basis with the actual calls being undertaken by the municipalities
- The need for additional funding for events can be avoided or mitigated if local events for Erin companies hosted by the economic development program are conducted on a cost recovery basis

Performance Metrics:

- The basic metrics are numbers of BR+E calls and meetings; businesses retained; expansion projects undertaken; value of investment retained or invested in expansions; and jobs retained and created (in situations where the Town’s economic development program has assisted or influenced outcomes)

NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

¹ **Priorities:** A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others' Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others' Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive

² **Abbreviations**

BCGW = Business Centre Guelph-Wellington
CF = Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures
ECom = Town of Erin Communications Officer
EED = Town of Erin Economic Development
EMC = Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium

MEDJCT = Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade
OMAFRA = Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
WCED = Wellington County Economic Development
WPBWWD = Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo, Wellington & Dufferin

2. Business Creation, Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Business creation and entrepreneurship are central factors in growing vibrant local economies. Innovation and calculated entrepreneurial risk by established companies and agricultural enterprises are also essential if they are to grow, earn acceptable returns and survive in business segments that are subject to rapid change and disruption.

Statistical evidence suggests a significant presence of entrepreneurs living in Erin. Data from the 2016 Census indicates that the Town has a notably higher proportion of self-employed in the labour force – 17.9% or 1,245 self-employed – as compared to 11.8% for Ontario and 12.5% for Wellington County and Guelph. The data includes farmers who are of course a paramount example of entrepreneurship.

This focus is also supported by the survey which was undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the Economic Development Plan (2019-2023). The survey of Erin business owners, operators and staff put support for entrepreneurship and for business innovation as the top two areas where the Town should focus economic development efforts. Respondents were asked to pick the five areas on which the Town should focus. Entrepreneurship got 63% of selections, followed by innovation at 54%.²⁶

Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Scaling: Despite the links among entrepreneurship, the growth of young ventures, and innovation, each has distinct characteristics.

Entrepreneurship involves a willingness to accept risk. Entrepreneurs put jobs, careers and financial security on the line to pursue an idea or uncertain venture. Although age is no barrier, the peak ages for entrepreneurship are people in their 30s and 40s.²⁷ Within existing businesses, entrepreneurship takes the form of intrapreneurship – referring to individuals within the corporate structure who risk the business's resources to solve a problem, develop and introduce different products or services, or set new directions for the business.

In the case of innovation, a widely accepted definition is that “an innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new

²⁶ The Town of Erin Economic Development Survey was open to the owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in the Town via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town's website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available. A total of 43 persons responded to the survey. Given the small sample size, results need to be interpreted with caution.

²⁷ Stangler, Dane, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, “The Age of the Entrepreneur: Demographics and Entrepreneurship,” Presentation to the Innovation for Jobs Summit, March 2013 (<http://i4j.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/i4jDaneStanglerDemographicsandEntrepreneurship-1.pdf>). Accessed on April 21, 2019.

organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations.”²⁸ Innovation therefore extends beyond just novel products or processes.

Given the challenges which emerging firms face in successfully scaling their operations rapidly, economic development initiatives have increasingly placed special emphasis on fostering innovation ecosystems that enable companies to scale up. Analysis indicates that young companies across all sectors – generally those in existence for fewer than five years – drive job creation. The critical and most challenging growth phase tends to be from a few employees, through 20, 50 or 100 staff members. The disciplines of greatest need to scale successfully are not technical but rather sales, marketing, organization design, product management and internationalization – all difficult skillsets to find.

Key partners for the Town in the support of entrepreneurship, innovation and scaling are:

- The Business Centre Guelph-Wellington (BCGW);
- Innovation Guelph, one of the 17 Ontario government supported Regional Innovation Centres (RICs) which provide mentorship and business support programs and services to help innovative enterprises start, grow and thrive;
- The Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) of the National Research Council, whose field staff provide advice, post-secondary research and other connections, and funding to help SMEs increase their innovation capacity and take ideas to market;
- Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc., the Ontario government funded agency with a 40-person team of Business Development Managers who work directly with businesses and academia to bring prospective partners together to turn ideas into income; and
- Wellington-Waterloo Community Future.

Of note is Innovation Guelph’s focus on raising the number of women-owned businesses in Guelph and Wellington County to 30% by 2025. A movement led by Innovation Guelph – *Rhyze* – promotes equality and prosperity by providing support and resources to female entrepreneurs and business owners. Erin is proud of two local award winners – Chef Pam Fanjoy and Debra Keeble of Edible Promotions. Several Erin based companies have participated in Innovation Guelph programs, from startups to well established medium sized companies.

Shared Spaces: Incubators and shared office spaces can become hubs where the right ingredients come together to provide the resources needed to successfully create and grow early-stage enterprises, including ready access to high-speed broadband and cellular networks. They need to be tailored to local requirements, resources and circumstances.

If sufficient space is available, “hot desk” or “touch down” space could be provided for individuals who are either employed outside the Town but have the ability to work remotely or those already working remotely from home. This format can assist in attracting creative professionals or lone eagles, as noted in Section E.5 and in identifying future opportunities for business attraction and expansion to the Town.

²⁸ Oslo Manual: Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Innovation Data, 3rd edition (OECD, 2005)

Some models which would provide insights and learnings to share are:

- Innovation Guelph, the Ontario government Regional Innovation Centre (RIC) for Guelph and Wellington County, which has provided services to Erin’s agriculture related businesses and marketing services to manufacturers;
- Launchit Minto, the community business centre created by the Town of Minto and the Minto Chamber of Commerce;
- Spark Niagara;
- Quinte Business Development Centre; and
- Elgin Innovation Centre.

Several area organizations which support local business creation, entrepreneurship and innovation are interested to be part of a hub or shared office model that would give them a location in the Town which they could use for meetings with firms as part of regular visits:

- Business Centre Guelph-Wellington (BCGW): A staff member meets monthly with Erin clients at the Hillsburgh Library, and BCGW would be very interested to replicate the program which they have with Launchit Minto;
- Innovation Guelph would welcome the possibility of a physical presence in Erin that would support entrepreneurship and innovation;
- Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures would be interested in supporting an innovation centre through the Social Impact Bond Program; and
- Everdale would support incubation space.

Innovation Guelph sees opportunities to encourage a culture of entrepreneurship; support solopreneurs, SMEs and farm-based businesses; and provide more services related to agricultural innovation, environmental and clean technologies, and information and digital media technologies.

In Erin’s case, there is potential to have a hub or shared office model as identified earlier to be the initial “go-to” location for growth-oriented enterprises with under 10 employees who account for nearly 80% of all the firms (with employees) in the Town of Erin, to obtain counselling, attend seminars, access programs, and explore funding support.

The evident interest in having a hub in Erin requires further discussion, identification of possible locations, consideration of the most appropriate models, exploration of funding sources, and preparation of a viable proposal. The economic development program would be expected to play a lead or coordinating role in the proposal’s development.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – Business Creation, Entrepreneurship and Innovation

With new commercial and industrial properties opening up with the arrival of full servicing, opportunities may be available to consider expanded or new hub or shared office facilities that will further evolve the model, respond to changing demands, or meet the requirements in a specific target area, for example, environmental and clean technologies or foods and beverages.

D. PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROLES TO DRIVE RESULTS				
D.2 BUSINESS CREATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION				
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
D.2	<p>GOAL: Entrepreneurship and innovation flourishes and fuels new business creation, growth and adoption of advanced technologies</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: To encourage the establishment of a hub or focal point for early stage ventures, providing shared office space, broadband access, and meeting and seminar space</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study and learn from other shared space, incubator and business service models, and explore the scope for linkages with nearby post-secondary educational institutions 2. Support the integration of innovation and support services and programs at a hub to drive business creation, growth and scaling 3. Seek to establish the hub as the “go-to” location for small businesses and agricultural enterprises to access entrepreneurial and innovation assistance 4. Capitalize on the commercial kitchens at the Hillsburgh Library or Centre 2000 and explore certification for one to be used as a pilot production space for speciality foods 	B	2019-2020 and Beyond	EED WCED UofG ConC OMAFRA MEDJCT
		A-	2019-2020	EED BCGW IG CF IRAP OCE OMAFRA UofG ConC
		A-	2020 and Beyond	EED
		B	2020	EED EPR HLib
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding models will need to be part of any consideration of a hub, shared space or incubator • Waterloo Wellington Community Futures Social Impact Bond Program • The revised OMAFRA Rural Economic Development (RED) program will need to be reviewed to determine its applicability • The Federal/Provincial Canadian Agricultural Partnership programs for Economic Development Programming, Market Development, and Incubators and Commercialization 				
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics will need to be established for a hub, incubator or shared space, depending on its functions and model • In addition to tracking referrals to specific partner organizations, the performance metrics will largely be gathered by the organization(s) with which the Town’s economic development program is partnering. In addition to tracking its own referrals, the Town should closely monitor the metrics of organizations with which it partners or to which it contributes financially – especially outcomes rather than just activities – and ensure that the metrics influence the organization’s strategy and operations 				

NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

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² **Abbreviations**

BCGW = Business Centre Guelph-Wellington
CF = Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures
ConC = Conestoga College
EED = Town of Erin Economic Development
EPR = Town of Erin Parks & Recreation
HLib = Hillsburgh Library (County of Wellington)
IG = Innovation Guelph

IRAP = Industrial Research Assistance Program – NRC
MEDJCT = Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade
OCE = Ontario Centres of Excellence Inc.
OMAFRA = Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
UofG = University of Guelph
WCED = Wellington County Economic Development

3. Attracting New Investment

External direct investment attraction is exceptionally competitive.

Success depends on:

- Well-researched value propositions for a few selected sub-sectors and niches where the location can clearly differentiate its offering from other competitive suitors in the region; and
- Carefully prepared and highly targeted outreach to companies that are prospects to establish new ventures in North America or Ontario in those sub-sectors and niches.

The current lack of serviced commercial and industrial land and the limited availability of leased space limits the Town’s ability to attract new investment especially in many areas of manufacturing. The Town of Erin does not currently have any foreign direct investment.

A Collaborative Approach: In two-tier municipalities such as Wellington County, the standard division of prime responsibilities is to have the County level economic development team take the lead role in coordinating and spearheading external investment attraction, while the front line municipalities take on prime responsibility for business retention and expansion.

The County investment attraction strategy is developed in consultation with the local municipalities and opportunities are provided for economic development officers to be involved in initiatives in sectors and geographies which they see as high priorities. The County has also developed a productive cooperative relationship with the City of Guelph Economic Development which adds to the collaborative possibilities.

The County will involve and work with the lower-tier municipalities in the pursuit of individual investment leads where the municipality meets the stated requirements of a prospective investor. The Town will receive and benefit from leads and direct involvement by being investment ready and ensuring its value propositions, sites and buildings, workforce availability, and other assets are known.

Targeting the GTHA: The prime geographic target area for the Town will be the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA), especially growing firms looking to expand but which are constrained by lack of land, congestion, and rising costs. Companies in the GTHA considering locations just outside the metropolitan area are most likely to contact the County rather than the more numerous lower-tier municipalities.

Earlier stage ventures which have been founded in incubators and shared spaces in the GTHA may be interested to establish operations in a location such as Erin provided suitable serviced leasable space and high-speed broadband are readily available. Some graduates from Innovation Guelph or Accelerator Guelph (University of Guelph) may be candidates. As addressed in the Sectors of Focus (Section E), relationships with GTHA food and beverage incubators and environmentally-related innovation programs such as the MaRS Discovery District may offer the greatest promise once serviced land and broadband are available.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Attraction: Wellington County Economic Development interfaces with the Ontario and Federal Governments in the pursuit of foreign investment.

Wellington County and Guelph are among the municipalities that are part of a wider Southern Ontario collaboration, the Ontario Food Cluster, a cost-sharing FDI attraction and export partnership which leverages matching Federal and Ontario funding and support. Europe has been an important area of focus since the conclusion of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union.

Ontario Government Lead Generation: Ontario government entities involved in investment attraction will normally initially contact upper-tier and regional economic development entities to engage the municipal level in responding to the opportunities which they generate or receive. The most important Provincial government departments engaged in investment attraction are:

- The Ontario Investment Office, which is allied with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT), and which has lead generation contracts and Ontario government representatives outside Canada who are located in selected Canadian Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates General;
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA); and
- The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (for Tourism-related investment).

At the Federal level, Invest in Canada, Global Affairs Canada and Canadian Trade Commissioners located in Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates General outside of Canada work as a team to provide single-window service. Leads will tend to be referred initially to appropriate provincial ministries.

In order to be sure that it gets all the referrals whose requirements the Town of Erin can meet, it is vital that the Town engage, build awareness and establish trusting relationships with the key investment attraction partners. The partners need to be fully briefed on the Town's priorities, capacities, value propositions, and the availability of sites and buildings. Robust value propositions that deliver in-depth information on the high priority Town of Erin sub-sectors and niches are an important tool toward ensuring that the Town is identified as a prime location on the part of County colleagues and Federal and Ontario government officials.

Commercial and Industrial Realtors: Other especially important partners and potential sources of leads are Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) realtors dealing with and knowledgeable about commercial and industrial properties in the Town of Erin and nearby. As they are the key private sector facilitators with direct experience in the area, relationships with them should be given the high priority. At a later stage, the wider ICI realty community in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) and Southern Ontario can be engaged through the Central Canada Chapter of the Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR) starting with Wellington County Economic Development Familiarization Tours.

Investment Prospect Profile: What is the probable profile of a business that would choose to locate and invest in Erin? Based on the characteristics of existing firms that have located in Erin, the characteristics of a typical prospect would include:

- A privately held firm, most likely by an entrepreneurial founder or owner who lives or wants to live in the area to be close to, but not in, the GTA;
- Producing or offering technologically advanced niche products or services developed by the owner;
- Probable staffing levels in the range of, or growing to, 15 to 60 employees;
- Selling in export markets, notably the United States;
- Availability of road transportation to get the products to market is important, but not a dominant consideration;
- Attracted to the lower costs for commercial or industrial land found outside the GTA; and
- The Erin location permits key existing staff to commute if a relocation (or even the expansion) of an existing GTHA business is involved.

Though Erin does not currently have foreign-owned investment, this prospect profile is similar to that of German Mittelstand²⁹ companies. These German companies are the hidden champions of German manufacturing prowess. They are in diverse sub-sectors but utilize research, development and commercialization to provide innovative products and services. Existing Erin manufacturers display some of these characteristics and could be a guide to target prospects within the GTHA or more widely.

The survey of owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in Erin underlined that proximity to the GTHA, the quaint small town charm, lifestyle opportunities, agricultural land and farms, and growth prospects afforded by the expected waste water treatment system were most frequently selected as being among the Town's top five economic development strengths.³⁰

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System: An effective investment attraction program is dependent, at a minimum, on having a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and high quality marketing collateral, a full range of site location data, value propositions, and information on suitable sites. This is also addressed in Section D.5.

Relationship Building: Prospective investors and site selectors interested in Erin will want to meet privately with the heads of local companies to benefit from their perspectives and experiences. This should be anticipated and planned for by developing trusting relationships with the management of local companies. It is important to have an understanding of their perspectives. They will be sought out by prospects directly, if introductions are not or cannot be facilitated.

²⁹ Though there is no single accepted definition, the traits of German Mittelstand companies encompass family ownership, family-like corporate culture, independent, small and medium sized, long-term focus, specialized, nimble, lean, innovative and socially responsible. See <https://www.handelsblatt.com/today/companies/mittelstand-secrets-of-german-sme-success-revealed/23580982.html?ticket=ST-43247-WMbPFR53UcZUHT0sE65x-ap2>.

³⁰ The Town of Erin Economic Development Survey was open to the owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in the Town via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town's website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available. A total of 43 persons responded to the survey. Given the small sample size, results need to be interpreted with caution.

Equine events and venues in the Town of Erin draw many prominent and influential Canadian and international individuals of considerable financial substance to the Town from all over the world. A number of the visitors may happen to be among business people who are more than casually keeping their eyes open for new opportunities or who speak to others in their circles about their travels in terms of business and lifestyle potential. This represents an opportunity to engage in "soft" investment attraction initiatives to profile wider Town of Erin business and investment opportunities. In particular, local hosts should be encouraged to have information on the Town available and know that the Town is ready to connect with visitors to provide a broader introduction relevant to their potential interest. Selected advertising in event calendars or at key locations could also be considered.

Focused but Flexible: While it is important to establish priorities and be selective, given the wide-range of possibilities, it is also vital to retain the flexibility to respond to worthwhile opportunities that may arise and to be able to react to changing circumstances. On short notice, partners, such as Ontario and Canadian government officials, may present unforeseen opportunities to be part of well-targeted and timely initiatives that align with the Town's interests. Specific promising enquiries and leads may require immediate reallocation of resources or deferral of planned activities.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – Attracting New Investment

The availability of fully serviced land will remove an important barrier to a full throttle investment attraction effort on the Town's part. The Town has a runway of several years over which to ready itself to seize full advantage of the opportunity. Hopefully, the limitations on high-speed broadband availability will also have been fully addressed.

The principal areas that stand to attract new investment interest are:

- Advanced manufacturing;
- Visitor accommodations;
- Tourism-related businesses, such as restaurants, spas, and meeting and conference space;
- Professional services businesses, such as consulting firms in fields including the environment; engineering, architecture, planning, design, marketing, accounting, financial services and information technology; and
- Environmental and clean technologies across all sectors.

Advanced manufacturing and visitor accommodations are the two main areas which merit priority in terms of in-depth preparation, though the lead time available is adequate to prepare for the others too.

Comprehensive site location and investment attraction information and data will need to be available which:

- Provides value propositions for the principal areas of opportunity;
- Showcases success stories;
- Documents workforce availability;
- Supplies information on available properties; and
- Presents comprehensive economic, sector, and demographic information.

Marketing campaigns need to be researched, tailored to the main areas of opportunity, and readied to be launched.

Outreach to the Town’s investment attraction partners – especially Wellington County Economic Development, the Ontario Investment Office, OMAFRA and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport – needs to be a central part of readiness plans to ensure that they will share leads appropriate to the Town’s enhanced offering. Collaborative approaches should be capitalized upon in new investment attraction, as they are most likely to open doors and can be cost effective.

D. PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROLES TO DRIVE RESULTS

D.3 ATTRACTING NEW INVESTMENT

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
D.3	<p>GOAL: New investment is attracted that benefits the Town of Erin</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: To build capacity and relationships to identify and respond to investment prospects</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update community profile information and site selection investment attraction databases 2. Refresh/Establish protocol for response to leads 3. Sustain close relations with leading commercial and industrial realtors and developers 4. Liaise closely and, where appropriate, participate in events with external investment attraction partners including Wellington County Economic Development; Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; the Ontario Investment Office/Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport 	B	2019-2020	EED WCED
		B	2020	EED WCED
		B	On-Going	EED WCED
		B	On-Going	EED WCED OMAFRA OIO MEDJCT MTCS

Funding:

- Federal and Ontario government financial support provided for investment attraction generally favours applications made by upper-tier municipalities. The Town should participate with Wellington County Economic Development in any application for funding under Global Affairs Canada’s Invest Canada Community initiatives (ICCI) program
- OMAFRA Regional Economic Development (RED) program available to develop content and refine strategies

<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Metrics should concentrate on outcomes (the number of new investments, the amount of the investment, the jobs generated, and their continued annual growth), supplemented by measures of activities likely to lead to the outcomes (investment-related events; contacts established by category; and categorization of leads in terms of demonstrated degree of interest) (in situations where the Town’s economic development program has assisted or influenced outcomes) 							
<p>NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS</p> <p>¹ Priorities: A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive</p> <p>² Abbreviations</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>EED = Town of Erin Economic Development</td> <td>OIO = Ontario Investment Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MEDJCT = Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade</td> <td>OMAFRA = Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MTCS = Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport</td> <td>WCED = Wellington County Economic Development</td> </tr> </table>		EED = Town of Erin Economic Development	OIO = Ontario Investment Office	MEDJCT = Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade	OMAFRA = Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs	MTCS = Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport	WCED = Wellington County Economic Development
EED = Town of Erin Economic Development	OIO = Ontario Investment Office						
MEDJCT = Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade	OMAFRA = Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs						
MTCS = Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport	WCED = Wellington County Economic Development						

4. Talent and Workforce Development

Finding, retaining and ensuring the continued adaptation of employees is the dominant preoccupation for most employers. Decisions about where to site new projects and where to expand will most often be driven by talent availability. Workforce availability in Erin and the ability to draw talent from neighbouring communities is therefore a vital consideration in evaluating the sectors in which Erin can make a credible case for new investment and expansions.

The Changing Nature of Work: The nature of the work place is under dramatic and growing pressures. Telling shifts in skills and education requirements have been occurring at an unprecedented pace in nearly all sectors as increasingly advanced technology and connectivity is being introduced to the workplace. In the process, a hollowing out has been occurring among good paying middle-class jobs. In addition, digitalization is cutting across all skill sets, occupations and sectors. This serves to blur the traditional boundaries for skills and sectors and to require adaptation and the acquisition of new knowledge.

It is less and less possible to accurately forecast what the jobs of tomorrow will look like. The availability of highly adaptable people has therefore become an important criterion for employers, both in terms of individuals’ abilities to change and in the capacity of the local educational institutions and their programs to support change and provide life-long learning opportunities. Cognitive skills – such as critical thinking and analytical abilities – are in high demand.

The challenges in attracting the right talent are significant. Already if it were not for immigrants, Canada’s workforce would be declining. Immigration is therefore a major key to sustaining and growing the talent pool. In addition, labour force participation rates need to grow by drawing in more underrepresented groups. Proactive steps that communities can take are to offer daycare that will allow women to work and to encourage businesses to invest in physical access in new workplaces that will attract capable people with disabilities.

Nationally, there were more than half-a-million vacant jobs in late 2018, according to Statistics Canada. There were just three unemployed Canadians for each vacant job, compared to six per vacant job in 2016.

Meanwhile, over a quarter of a million Canadians retired in 2018, leaving their jobs to be filled in addition to over 230,000 jobs which were added to payrolls.³¹

Educational Attainment of Erin Residents: The Erin residents who possessed a post-secondary credential in 2016 represented 63.5% of the total population aged 25 to 64 years, a share close to the Ontario average of 65.1%. Canada ranks highest among OECD countries in this regard, and Ontario led all Canadian provinces. In Erin’s case, the proportion having apprenticeship, trades and college completion was higher than the Ontario average (37.9% versus 30.8%). However, those having a university credential at the bachelor’s level or above constituted a smaller share than the province-wide average (23.3% versus 31.9%) (Exhibit 9).

Exhibit 9 Highest Educational Attainment, Population Aged 25 to 64 in 2016				
Highest certificate, diploma or degree	Erin Population	Percent	Wellington & Guelph Percent	Ontario Percent
Population aged 25 – 64 years	6,405			
• No certificate, diploma or degree	570	8.9%	11.3%	10.4%
• Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	1,765	27.6%	25.7%	24.5%
• Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	4,070	63.5%	63.0%	65.1%
• Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	640	10.0%	6.9%	6.2%
▪ Trades certificate or diploma other than Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification	245	3.8%	3.1%	3.0%
▪ Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification	395	6.2%	3.8%	3.1%
• College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	1,790	27.9%	24.6%	24.7%
• University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	145	2.3%	2.0%	2.4%
• University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	1,490	23.3%	29.5%	31.9%
▪ Bachelor's degree	1,075	16.8%	19.1%	21.0%
▪ University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	80	1.2%	1.7%	2.1%
▪ Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry	40	0.6%	0.8%	0.9%
▪ Master's degree	265	4.1%	6.2%	6.9%
▪ Earned doctorate	30	0.5%	1.8%	1.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

On a comparative basis, Erin had a high proportion of its population aged 25 to 64 years with apprenticeship and trades certification, while placing in the middle of the benchmark communities for college and university completion (Exhibit 10).

³¹ Pedro Antunes, Chief Economist, Conference Board of Canada, “With boomers retiring and investment uncertain, where will Canada’s workers come from?” Globe and Mail, April 17, 2019 (<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/commentary/article-with-boomers-retiring-and-investment-uncertain-where-will-the-workers/>). Accessed on April 24, 2019.

Exhibit 10 Highest Educational Attainment in Benchmark Communities Population Aged 25 to 64 Years			
Community	Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate/ Diploma	College, CEGEP, or Non-university Certificate or Diploma	University Certificate, Diploma or Degree at Bachelor Level or Above
Erin	10.0%	27.9%	23.3%
Centre Wellington	8.6%	29.2%	22.9%
Guelph/Eramosa	8.5%	27.4%	25.9%
Orangeville	6.7%	30.0%	18.7%
Caledon	7.0%	27.0%	27.1%
Halton Hills	6.8%	28.4%	27.8%
King Township	7.2%	24.3%	34.8%
Shelburne	6.6%	32.0%	12.5%
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census			

Fields of Study and Occupations: The 2016 Census provided information on the fields of post-secondary study pursued by Town of Erin residents (Exhibit 11). Architecture, Engineering and Related Technologies; and Business Management and Public Administration ranked well ahead of others as the top two fields of study.

Another snapshot of the Town of Erin talent pool is by the occupational categories in which they work (Exhibit 12). Relative to the provincial averages, the Town has a high proportion of residents whose occupations are in:

- Management;
- Business, finance and administration;
- Trades, transportation and equipment operators; and
- Natural resource, agriculture and other production.

Exhibit 11 Fields of Study Leading to a Post-Secondary Certificate, Diploma or Degree for Residents of the Town of Erin 25 to 64 Years Old	
Field of Study	Number of Residents
Architecture, Engineering & Related Technologies	970
Business Management & Public Administration	770
Health & Related Fields	455
Social & Behavioral Sciences & Law	440
Personal, Protective & Transportation Services	275
Education	255
Physical & Life Sciences & Technologies	225
Humanities	225
Visual & Performing Arts & Communications Technologies	185
Agriculture, National Resources & Conservation	155
Mathematics, Computer & Informatics Sciences	105
Other	10
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census	

Exhibit 12 Resident Labour Force by Occupation					
Occupation Category	Erin Labour Force	Percent	Wellington & Guelph Labour Force	Percent	Ontario Percent
Management occupations	1,115	16.0%	14,665	11.8%	11.3%
Business, finance and administration occupations	1,150	16.5%	16,725	13.4%	16.1%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	350	5.0%	7,850	6.3%	7.4%
Health occupations	340	4.9%	7,010	5.6%	6.4%
Occupations in education; law and social; community and government services	685	9.8%	15,255	12.3%	11.9%
Occupations in art; culture; recreation and sport	185	2.7%	3,465	2.8%	3.2%
Sales and service occupations	1,270	18.2%	25,210	20.3%	23.4%
Trades; transport and equipment operators and related occupations	1,280	18.4%	18,580	14.9%	13.3%
Natural resources; agriculture and related production occupations	300	4.3%	3,545	2.9%	1.6%
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	295	4.2%	12,065	9.7%	5.2%
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census					

Support for Erin Employers: Existing Erin employers see the attraction and retention of qualified people as a major challenge, even those who are fortunate to have a loyal workforce. Some firms are resorting to arranging daily transportation to bring workers from the GTA to meet employment needs. This is not just an Erin issue, but one which is widely felt and which led Wellington County to develop a series of high priority initiatives.

The Town’s Economic Development Officer is able to connect Erin firms to helpful resources and programs in which the Town is involved, including with Wellington County and the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington and Dufferin. The workforce challenges in Wellington County have spurred joint efforts, including:

- Job Fairs;
- Sessions for employers about the changing characteristics of today’s workforce and the availability of immigration programs;
- Roundtables, forums and consultations to identify challenges, solutions, and collaborative approaches;
- Worker recruitment initiatives; and
- A 2019 Immigration Summit.

Commuting – A Net Exodus: The most obvious potential source of talent for new and expanding Erin businesses is the resident workforce that is commuting to jobs elsewhere. Based on 2016 Census data,³² 3,860 people in Erin’s resident labour force that worked at a usual place of business commuted out of Erin for work. This represents 57% of the employed resident workforce in Erin that year. The main destinations for work were Mississauga (915 persons), Brampton (595), Halton Hills (455), Toronto (355) and Guelph (340). One-way commuting time for over 60% of these Erin residents is 30 minutes or more (Exhibit 13). Employers can be attracted to invest or expand in Erin where there is a pool of commuters that could be attracted to work closer to home.

Exhibit 13 Length of Commute for Erin Residents	
Time of Commute	Proportion
Less than 15 minutes	18.9%
15 to 29 minutes	18.3%
30 to 44 minutes	24.6%
45 to 59 minutes	19.3%
60 minutes or more	18.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

For example, the 2016 Census indicated that there were 825 Town of Erin residents employed in manufacturing but only 245 jobs in the sector in the Town according to a second source, indicating a significant net outflow of Erin residents working in the sector. In two other sectors, there were about 10 employed Erin residents for every six local jobs. Those were professional, scientific and technical services; and accommodation and food services.³³ Further detailed analysis of commuting patterns using custom Census data by occupational categories will provide valuable insights on talent availability that can be used in attracting investment and catering to expansions.

Talent and Workforce Attraction: Avenues which are employed by economic development programs to proactively attract talent include:

- Reaching out to parents with young families, often through social media campaigns, to attract skilled and talented people looking for an alternative to the cost, housing and congestion pressures of the GTA, especially if they have Erin and area family connections;
- Welcome back previous residents who may have left for education, entry-level jobs or other horizons and experience, possibly by mounting a Homecoming Festival or capitalizing on high school reunions;
- Attract entrepreneurially-oriented knowledge workers, creative professionals and lone eagles who are attracted to locations matching their lifestyle preferences, provided they also have access to high-speed broadband, a major airport, and a large urban centre; and
- Retaining youth by involving the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Committee and exposing secondary students to leading Erin businesses.

In the case of youth-oriented initiatives, Wellington County Economic Development has expressed an interest in supporting municipal initiatives to involve youth and benefit from their input.³⁴

³² The 2016 Canadian Census commuting data needs to be interpreted with caution as estimates are based on a 25% sample. Additionally, no data is reported for labour which does not work at a usual place but may work at various locations within a service area which may extend beyond the Town of Erin.

³³ This data needs to be interpreted with caution given it is based on the two different data sources (the Census and EMSI) which used different methodologies and assumptions. However the data provides an indication of the likely trends.

³⁴ Wellington County Economic Development Three Year Plan (2019-2021). See 5.4.5 “Engaging Youth”.

Seniors also represent an opportunity if they wish to remain engaged and start, invest in or mentor local businesses.

The School of Environmental Design and Rural Development (EDRD) at the University of Guelph has undertaken helpful case studies and provides useful resources about attracting newcomers including immigrants to rural and small town areas.³⁵ Leaders from the EDRD are resources that Wellington County and others have called upon to help develop programs of workforce and immigrant attraction. The Rural Ontario Institute has also developed resource materials.³⁶ Other communities' experiences can be informative.

The availability of serviced commercial and industrial land will heighten the need for the Town to become involved in well targeted workforce attraction and retention initiatives.

Availability of Affordable Housing, Rental Units and Public Transportation: Currently, an impediment to workforce attraction is the lack of affordable housing, including rental units. This is an issue whose impact is widely felt. The principal mandate for affordable housing programs rests with the County whose strategies and programs are more likely to benefit the Town once waste water servicing is available.

Rental of second floor accommodations in the stores on Main Street are currently inhibited by the further additional burden that occupancy can place on costly septic tank pumping. A waste water servicing system stands to help.

The availability of public transportation is also a vital enabler. Wellington County announced the launch of a county-wide demand based public transit service in October 2019 as a five-year pilot, supported by Ontario Ministry of Transport funding. Although the new ride-sharing service can be used to get to work, the County is working with employers to create transportation service options dedicated to their needs.³⁷

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – Talent and Workforce Development

As workforce availability for an operation in the Town will be the most prominent question on the mind of most prospective investors, it will be vital to develop comprehensive workforce data, including analysis which addresses:

- Sector and sub-sector workforce numbers and trends;
- Workforce availability by occupation;
- Commuting patterns, particularly inflows and outflows, the occupational categories of Town residents who are commuting to work elsewhere, and data about the workforce that lives within commuting distance of the Town;
- Estimated population growth in the Town which will be triggered by residential expansion associated with the waste water servicing system; and

³⁵ School of Environmental Design and Rural Development at the University of Guelph, "Attracting and Retaining Newcomers in Rural Communities and Small Towns", 2017 (http://waynecaldwell.ca/Projects/workingwithimmigrants/primer_4_press.pdf). Accessed on March 20, 2019.

³⁶ Rural Ontario Institute, "Newcomer Engagement and Social Capital in Rural Communities", April 30, 2017 (<http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/uploads/userfiles/files/Newcomer%20Engagement%20and%20Social%20Capital%20in%20Rural%20Communities%20-Summary%20Report.pdf>). Accessed on March 22, 2019.

³⁷ County of Wellington website (<https://www.wellington.ca/en/business/edridewell.aspx>). Accessed on June 2, 2019.

- Numbers of graduating students, co-op programs, and training and skills upgrading at nearby post-secondary institutions.

The Town has access to excellent data sources, such as EMSI Analyst, Environics Analytics and Townfolio, which are available to all municipalities.

Plans should also be laid for job fairs, tours of key employers for workers living in the GTA open to consider job opportunities in Erin, and additional immigrant attraction initiatives.

Additional talent-oriented initiatives that the Town should evaluate for implementation when serviced land becomes a nearer-term prospect are:

- Providing opportunities for co-op students to gain direct exposure to Erin by fulfilling their experiential learning ambitions through placements and assignments in Erin with the municipality, public institutions, businesses, agricultural enterprises, and pilot projects;³⁸
- (Computer) Coding classes for high school students;
- Adopting the Ontario government’s Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO);
- Establish a mentoring program to welcome and help newcomers adapt and acclimatize; and
- In-depth work on commuting patterns to reveal pools of commuters whose skills might be harnessed locally by new investors or expanding businesses.

Existing and new employers will also be receptive to information about:

- Growth in the availability of affordable and rental housing;
- The availability of public transportation; and
- Access to post-secondary institutions offering training and skills upgrading.

The development of labour force data should also bear in mind the shift towards cross-cutting rather than the traditional sector specific skills. Increasingly, employers demand digitally literate workers who can function at a high level in work environments which have embraced robotics, Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, 3D Printing and other advanced technologies. With the accelerating pace of change, employers also put stress on hiring people who are adaptable, demonstrate soft skills, and are team players. The ability to point to potential pools of talent of this type which have the potential to be trained to perform well in emerging skills categories will attract the interest of employers.

³⁸ Examples: University of Guelph + Tourism, University of Guelph + Everdale, and Guelph, Waterloo and Laurier + Environmental Sustainability

5. Marketing the Town of Erin to Attract Talent, Visitors and Investors

The branding and marketing of a community to attract businesses and people is founded on defining discernable and meaningful advantages. An authentic identity that differentiates the community will invite attention from companies, talent and tourists whose interests are aligned with the community's character and strengths. On-going storytelling which reinforces differentiators and paints a fuller picture of the community makes the messaging more compelling.

The Town has some basic decisions to take, based on the resources available, on the extent to which it invests in its own economic development and tourism marketing efforts, or should depend on its Wellington County Economic Development and Headwaters Tourism partners.

The Town of Erin should define and promote its own unique corporate brand which would also serve its economic development and tourism interests with minimal or no adaptation. To this end, the Town should place a high priority on engaging a well-qualified firm to shape a brand that can be used generally, as part of the managed growth that is ahead, and for economic development and tourism. It would feature in the broader promotion of the attraction of new residents.

In the survey of owners, operators and staff of Erin businesses undertaken as the Economic Development Plan was being prepared, respondents ranked the marketing of Erin's competitive advantages as a business and residential location highly, gaining the fifth largest number of mentions among the areas where the Town should be focusing its economic development efforts.³⁹ Interestingly, a larger proportion of people associated with younger companies (in operation for less than five years) chose this than among longer established enterprises (in operation for more than 15 years).

Survey respondents were also asked to choose the top three features that differentiate Erin from other communities in Wellington County and the neighbouring communities. The most frequently chosen answers were:

- Natural environment 56%
- High quality of life/lifestyle opportunities 42%
- Strong agricultural base 30%
- Entrepreneurship 30%
- Equine industry 28%

Websites: Websites are the marketing centrepieces in the competitive worlds of economic development and tourism. Searches for information on sites and destinations are almost inevitably going to start and extensively involve the internet.

The Town faces the question of how extensive the economic development and tourism presence can be on the Town's website in the near-term. In the medium-term with the anticipated growth which will accompany waste water servicing, distinct or stand-alone websites should be envisaged. Similar considerations apply to the Town's involvement in social media and electronic marketing initiatives.

³⁹ The Town of Erin Economic Development Survey was open to the owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in the Town via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town's website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available. A total of 43 persons responded to the survey. Given the small sample size, results need to be interpreted with caution.

Extensive information for businesses and for prospective investors is available on the Economic Development part of the Wellington County website, while Headwaters Tourism’s website, its flagship marketing device, has comprehensive information, including the Town of Erin’s attractions.

During 2019, the Town of Erin website is being redone and will contain additional economic development and tourism information. Given the reality of modest resources, the Town should look to increase the amount and prominence of information available on economic development and tourism, but still count on its partners websites and provide suitable links.

On the economic development portion of the Town website, the following would be the minimum that should be provided in the nearer-term:

- Local, provincial and North American maps, showing major transportation infrastructure and concentric circles showing distances from major cities;
- A fact sheet and more detailed community profile;
- In-depth socio, economic, and demographic information;
- Comprehensive information on the agriculture sector, including the equine cluster;
- Detailed information on workforce availability;
- Information on the Community Improvement Program (CIP);
- Applicable municipal, Regional, Ontario and Federal tax rates and incentives;
- Information on water and utilities, including charges, and plans for the waste water servicing system;
- Value propositions for the most promising sub-sectors and niches;
- A real estate data base, with profiles of available industrial and commercial sites and buildings;
- Information on neighbouring post-secondary institutions;
- A Business Directory and list of major employers;
- Success stories;
- Media releases and featured media articles;
- Links to websites of key partners; and
- Contact information for the Economic Development team.

When the availability of serviced commercial and industrial land is in the offing and stepped-up marketing plans are being undertaken, consideration should be given to upgrading the on-line presence, making it more appealing and interactive, and adding further information. A principal objective of any marketing campaign is to drive website traffic.

For Tourism, an appropriate level of content would comprise:

- Area, Town, Erin Village and Hillsburgh maps with the top visitor attractions, destinations and amenities;
- An overview and brief narrative introduction for visitors;
- Spotlight information on major destinations, such as the Main Streets, Trail Networks, Farmers’ Markets, Angelstone, and historic sites;
- List of tourism-related businesses, accommodations, groups, organizations and destinations (with links);
- Events list, associated with information on major annual events, such as the Fall Fair;

- Media releases and featured media articles; and
- Links to websites of key partners and promotions such as Taste Real.

Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) System: All the economic development marketing, outreach and relationship building needs to be inventoried into a comprehensive CRM system (as noted in D.3). The system must also be designed to be the principal source of key performance metrics, including the nature and status of qualified leads.

Value Propositions: The Town requires a few robust value propositions focused on the principal areas and situations where it can differentiate its offering and make a compelling fact-based case to prospective investors. Erin’s strengths should be positioned in the Canadian, Ontario and Greater Golden Horseshoe context. Factual information lends credibility. The value propositions can be tailored to respond to individual enquiries and prospects. They must be kept up-to-date.

The need to be able to differentiate Erin and make a world-class case means the number of sub-sectors or niches selected for the development of in-depth value propositions will be very limited. A rigorous process is needed to narrow down and select the sub-sectors and niches. For each, target firms need to be identified, along with the strategies to reach them. The sectors of focus are outlined and addressed in Section E.

Testimonials about the Town – Shared Messaging: As part of its on-going outreach to the local community, the Town should sustain a dialogue with the local stakeholders that ensures they are kept abreast of important developments, policies, opportunities and successes. Over time, this serves to build a common base of information so that the community increasingly speaks with a similar voice about opportunities and challenges. Word of mouth, especially testimonials from the business, post-secondary and institutional leadership, is the most credible and therefore persuasive messaging for Erin. Their observations carry weight as they come from an independent and authentic source. Communities that develop a shared understanding of their strengths and a clear vision of where they are headed impress visitors – not least journalists and prospective investors – in building a community’s reputation.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – Marketing the Town of Erin to Attract Talent, Visitors and Investors

Looking ahead, the key objective is to be fully ready to launch progressively intensive marketing programs beginning two years in advance of the assured availability of vacant serviced commercial and industrial land.

At that time, this should comprise:

- A full – ideally stand-alone – economic development website where prospective investors can access comprehensive in-depth information and site location data relevant to doing business in the Town;
- A marketing campaign in advance that heralds the new era of growth in Erin, enabled by the waste water servicing system, inviting expressions of interest in being kept informed;
- Generating GTA media coverage of the Town’s story about the pending economic transformation with the arrival of a waste water servicing system;

- Briefing and cultivation of investment attraction partners in Wellington County Economic Development, the Ontario Investment Office, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport;
- Outreach to the principal office, commercial and industrial realtors involved locally and subsequently to major Greater Toronto Area office and industrial realtors to introduce them to the coming availability of fully serviced commercial and industrial lots and the Town’s pitch for new investment;
- The development of in-depth value propositions for the priority sectors, sub-sectors and situations where the Town can differentiate itself and present a compelling case;
- A comprehensive case for the Town as a location for environmentally-oriented businesses, projects and initiatives which will align with and benefit from the Town’s commitment to environmental sustainability; and
- A multi-phase marketing automation investment attraction campaign, to commence when availability of serviced land or buildings for lease are reasonably assured, which will target priority sectors, sub-sectors and situations and seek to generate actionable leads.

Though the techniques will continue to evolve at an ever more rapid pace, there are a number of marketing strategies which the Town’s economic development program may consider adopting:

Marketing Automation: The use of marketing automation in business-to-business situations is growing and offers economic development organizations the potential to better prequalify the prospects on which to focus. Data analytics bring a level of sophistication that enables CRM, email, social media and web-based marketing initiatives to identify and appropriately nurture the more receptive and sales-ready prospects who signal a degree of interest. These software platforms capitalize on interactive website material, value propositions, downloadable white papers and special reports or other marketing collateral to entice interest, gain feedback and qualify and narrow the prospect pool. Performance metrics can be established to measure the effectiveness of programs, materials and campaigns.

Social Media: In addition to email, the selective use of social media is a critical means to disseminate information and drive traffic to a website, potentially involving platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube. Regularly updated blogs remain an option. Care needs to be exercised to avoid utilizing too many tools and spreading efforts too thin. Disciplined, consistent and regular use is required.

Advertising: Mirroring overall trends, economic development marketing has rapidly moved to deliver its messages electronically and online. Across the board, digital media advertising spending in the US is the fastest growing segment, surpassing TV in 2016 to represent 38% of all ad spending. Digital will reach half of the total in 2021. Digital has proven to be a cost effective vehicle, including for lead generation, but it is a rapidly changing environment that requires constant adaptation.

E. Sectors of Focus

The Need for Focus: The resources available to the Town of Erin’s economic development program are modest. This underlines the need for the Town to judiciously focus its efforts on areas and initiatives which are most relevant for furthering economic development, have the highest probability of success, and which can be expected to have a high return for the resources and time invested.

Focus begins by limiting and carefully targeting the sectors or areas to those where the Town of Erin has demonstrable strengths, can truly differentiate its offering, and where it can support local expansions and/or mount highly focused, well-researched and sustained initiatives that can reach and will be of significant interest to prospects considering new business locations. Several of the sectors will only be candidates once the waste water servicing systems is in place and high-speed broadband is widely available.

Cross-Cutting Technology Platforms and Convergence Among Sectors: In the past, sector priorities were a central consideration in the development of economic development plans. This is no longer the case today. A fundamental driver of this shift has been the digitization of nearly everything, thereby making digitally-based technologies and skills common requirements across almost all sectors and jobs. Digitization has also fed the ever more rapid pace of technology change, making swift technological adoption essential for a business’s survival. Digitally-based platform technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, cybersecurity, 3-D Printing, Augmented and Virtual Reality, and robotics are converging and being applied across many once distinct sectors.

Application of Emerging Technologies: Many areas of this Plan note the important role for the economic development program to promote an environment in which local, entrepreneurs, businesses and agricultural enterprises can connect to applications of these powerful emerging technologies. This includes technology adoption in agriculture (Section E.1), advanced manufacturing (Section E.3), and environmental and clean technologies (Section E.4). For example, precision agriculture and controlled growing environments integrate platform technologies such as AI, GPS, IoT, sensing, Big Data, drones, imaging, auto steer, robotics, biotechnology, and LED lighting.

Thematic Policy Initiatives: A further aspect of the blurring of boundaries has been the emergence of thematic and policy-driven sectors which are defined broadly and include business lines that fall into many different traditional sectors. Examples include climate change, environmental or clean or “green” technologies, and health care. Many divergent products and services come together under these broader umbrellas. Environmental and clean technologies are addressed on this basis in Section E.4.

Services Sector: Spurred in part by the growing pervasiveness of digital technologies, the pronounced shift toward greater services employment continues, representing a host of areas for future job growth. This includes a broad range of finance, insurance, professional, scientific and technical services occupations such as engineers, architects, designers, bankers, accountants and technicians.

A survey of owners, operators and staff of Erin businesses and enterprises was undertaken in conjunction with the development of the Economic Development Plan. Respondents were asked to select the top three sectors that will drive economic growth in Erin. The top selections were:

- Other Tourism-Related - 35%
- Agriculture and Agri-Businesses – 30%
- Restaurants and Catering – 30%
- Retail – 28%
- Clean, “Green” and Environmental Industries – 28%
- Equine-Related Businesses/Support Services – 26%
- Accommodations – 23%
- Construction – 23%
- Manufacturing – 21%
- Professional Services – 19%

Note: The Town of Erin Economic Development Survey was open to the owners, operators and staff members of businesses and enterprises in the Town via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town’s website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available. A total of 43 persons responded to the survey. Given the small sample size, results need to be interpreted with caution.

About Ontario Government Funding: Ontario elected a new government in June 2018. Nearly all areas of spending have been subject to review, including programs of financial support for business, economic development, research and innovation, agriculture, and workforce development. The April 2019 Ontario Budget indicated that the government would be modernizing business support programs as part of an Open for Jobs Blueprint. Details will be announced in the Fall of 2019. The Blueprint will be built on four key principles:

- Accessible: programs will be user-friendly and more readily available to make applying for them easier;
- Fiscally Responsible: programs will use competitive rounds and fiscally sustainable tools, with only projects that demonstrate the most value to taxpayers receiving support;
- Coordinated and Scalable: programs will reduce duplication across ministries and ensure that they respond to the needs of business; and
- Effective: programs will be measured on impact and if they are delivering on their objectives.

The Programs will be focussed on four economic priorities:

- Talent;
- Research and commercialization;
- Entrepreneurship and growth; and
- Investment Attraction.

Financial Support from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA): The most significant economic development funding program for rural communities has been OMAFRA’s Rural Economic Development (RED) Program. Following a review in early 2019, a revamped program will open for applications on July 29, 2019 for an expected two month period. Two streams of funding will be involved: (1) Economic Diversification and Competitiveness, and (2) Strategic Economic Infrastructure. The fundamental objectives of the RED program will continue to be removing economic barriers, attracting business investment, and diversifying economic interests. The \$5 million in funding allocated for the 2019-2020 fiscal year is less than was previously available. The Town of Erin has accessed RED funding in the past, notably in the equine area, and participated in Wellington County funding applications.

Digital and Cultural Media Tax Credits: The 2019 Ontario Budget also indicated that the government proposed to cut “red tape” so smaller video game developers can apply for the Ontario interactive Digital Media Tax Credit annually and obtain tax credits faster. In addition, the government is reviewing how cultural media tax credits are administered to reduce the application backlog and help companies get tax credits faster.

The applicability of these credits is mentioned in the Film and Video part of Section E.2 (Tourism) and the Interactive Digital Media part of Section E.5 (Professional Services).

Once revealed, the new and amended Ontario funding programs will need to be reviewed and possibilities assessed carefully, including situations where joint applications by Wellington County Economic Development are most appropriate.

1. Agri-Food and Agriculture Related

The Town of Erin’s agriculture sector is diverse, both in terms of what it produces, who its growers are, and its operating approaches.

Generally, the hilly terrain in Erin does not readily lend itself to larger scale operations. The sandy loam soil that predominates is good but sometimes relatively shallow before encountering a rocky layer. The majority of the rural land is classified as Prime Agricultural land (Class 1 to 3 soils), but a significant portion is Secondary Agricultural (Class 4 to 7).⁴⁰

The Town of Erin had 187 farms in 2016 according to the Census of Agriculture. Equine operations accounted for the largest number, though a variety of farm types are evident. The principal categories were horse and other equine production (40 farms), cattle ranching and farming (33), oilseed and grain farming (27), hay farming (26), nursery and tree production (8), and vegetables and melons (7).

The range of production extends well beyond a farm’s principal activity to involve other specialty pursuits and products. Examples include deer, elk, water buffalo meat (along with water buffalo milk soap), eggs, honey, maple syrup, flowers, nut trees and cider. Erin also attracts investment from individuals who are interested to purchase land in an inviting area accessible to the GTA. This may be driven by a desire to have a country home where they have land to pursue passions such as horses.

⁴⁰ Town of Erin Official Plan, contains modifications and applications to May 2012, approved by Wellington Council December 14, 2004, See Modified Schedule A-1, August 26, 2011..

Data in the 2016 Census of Agriculture showed that 45 Erin farms were selling directly to consumers, typically unprocessed agricultural produce via the farm gate, kiosks and u-pick operations. This was roughly comparable to Guelph-Eramosa (49), Centre Wellington (54) and Caledon (50). Erin's level was around double that of Dufferin County municipalities, Halton Hills and King Township.

Taste Real, the program led by Guelph and Wellington County in which the Town partners, has 155 farms, farmers' markets, retailers, restaurants, caterers and supporters participating.

All of this points to the prominent role that agriculture has and can play related to tourism. Farms and their related activities provide important and often intriguing destinations and experiences for visitors. Additional farm offerings have come into increasing favour with prospective visitors. These include farm weddings and farm stays. The additional revenues that tourism brings farmers can be an important incremental revenue source in ensuring the viability of the agriculture sector.

The Erin Fall Fair – the 170th will be held in 2020 – is a major draw on which the community should further capitalize to raise the profile of the varied offerings of the local agriculture sector and to encourage visitors to check out Erin's rural attractions too.

Recent trends in Erin's Agricultural Sector: Notable declines in the Town of Erin's agriculture sector, indicated by Statistics Canada's comprehensive 2016 Census of Agriculture, are of concern. For 2016, the Census reports significant contraction – including in the equine sector – as compared to the previous Census undertaken in 2011. The total number of farms in Erin declined from 243 to 187 over the five year span from 2011 to 2016 – a decrease of 23%. The land being farmed declined 29%. The number of horse farms dropped by 30 from 70 to 40 – a 43% reduction. The only categories of farming to grow in Erin – both relatively small – were “animal combination farming” (possibly including horses) which increased from 7 to 15 farms, and vegetables and melons which increased from 4 to 7.

In 2015, gross farm receipts from Erin farms were down by 35% to \$19.1 million from 2010, according to the 2016 Census. Erin's decline runs counter to the general upward trend in gross farm receipts for Ontario as a whole and for most other municipalities in the area over the same period. For example, only one other Wellington County jurisdiction – Puslinch – registered a reduction for the period and it was relatively marginal. Caledon, Halton Hills and King Township all registered gains, as did four of the six rural municipalities in Dufferin county.

Of note is that the trends in Erin contrast sharply with those in neighbouring Guelph/Eramosa. Guelph/Eramosa showed particularly notable increases from the 2011 to 2016 Censuses in gross farm receipts which reportedly grew by 289%, while the area devoted to farming increased by a third. Horse farms in Guelph-Eramosa also increased by 24% over the five year period, moving Guelph-Eramosa ahead of Erin in equine sector benchmarks.

Erin is in the heart of “horse country” and traditionally has led other municipalities such as Caledon, King Township, Puslinch and Mono which are also noted as equine centres. In 2011 Erin's equine sector ranked first in number of horse farms among all municipalities in Wellington County, Dufferin County, Caledon, King Township and Halton Hills. In the 2016 Census, Erin slipped to fourth, after Caledon, King Township and Guelph-Eramosa – all of whom showed increases in the number of horse farms. Erin also led in the

estimated number of horses in 2011, but fell to fourth in 2016, after King Township, Caledon and Guelph-Eramosa.⁴¹

Agri-Food and Agriculture Related Opportunities: A goal for Erin’s evolving agriculture sector should be to encourage diverse opportunities which add value and increase farm revenue. These are related mainly to further processing, diversification, application of technologies, and more sales direct to the consumer.

Many of the offerings from agricultural enterprises in the Town at the farm gate and in farmers’ markets already emphasize natural, organic, heritage and specialty crops. Given Erin’s environmental-oriented offerings, there is scope to further brand and promote these aspects and thereby strengthen and differentiate Erin’s offering to attract additional interest and build Erin’s cachet. As part of its Food Policy, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada launched five-year \$50 million Local Food Infrastructure Fund in May 2019 designed to support community-led projects that improve access to safe, health and culturally diverse food.⁴²

Equine Cluster: Erin’s equine sector is a major asset, especially as a major tourism draw. The growth of the cluster and enhancement of collaboration and partnership among the many varied players and within the community should be an economic development priority. The cluster in Erin benefits from being part of joint efforts that span the Headwaters region, including Caledon, Dufferin County and King Township.

The equine world involves a host of supporting occupations and businesses, with the boarding and feeding of horses taking a significant share of expenditures. Other related areas are breeding, training, grooming, farrier services, tack supply, coaching, veterinarian services, chiropractic therapy, specialized vehicles and trailers, insurance, and riders' outfitting. On-farm capital expenditures for barns, fencing, enclosures, security and competition venues also present consequential economic development opportunities.

There are extensive Canada-US cross-border ties among those involved in the respective horse owner groups, and the associated supporting businesses. In addition to Kentucky, ties are growing with Ocala and Wellington in Florida.

The Town’s economic development program has accorded priority to the Erin Equine Experience initiative. This has included:

- Annual publication in 2018 and 2019 of the magazine, “Erin Horse and Country”, and its distribution at shows and events;
- Creation of an equine business directory online and in print;
- Three education workshops in 2018 in partnership with Equine Guelph, Barefoot Horse Canada, and Credit Valley Conservation; and
- An Erin promotional presence at shows and events, including the CanAm Expo in Markham, Headwaters Stable Tours and the Erin Fair Equine Tent.

⁴¹ As the Census of Agriculture is undertaken only every five years, data is not available for the years between 2011 and 2016 that might show what impact changes in policies and funding for the horse racing sector in Ontario in 2012 and 2013 might have had. However, comparing the data for 2011 and 2016, there was no generalized trend across all the municipalities examined.

⁴² Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada media release, “‘Everyone at the Table!’ Government of Canada announces the first-ever Food Policy for Canada”, June 17, 2019 (<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/-everyone-at-the-table-government-of-canada-announces-the-first-ever-food-policy-for-canada-844234038.html>). Accessed on June 18, 2019.

For the economic development program, a key focus is to support collaborative equine cluster leadership locally and from the Headwaters Equine Leadership Group, especially where it will draw increased tourism and grow the varied aspects of the Erin equine cluster. Key means are regular strategic stakeholder sessions to pursue a multi-year development and marketing plan. Critical areas for focus are:

- To create and communicate a horse-centred Erin brand;
- To support cooperative effort which will build the cluster’s strength and visitor appeal; and
- To attract additional equine-related ventures.

Food and Beverage Processing: The attraction or development of food processing operations are currently hampered by the lack of a waste water system. Frequently, food processing facilities require considerable water and waste water capacity. In the nearer-term, pending availability of municipal waste water servicing and assurances of water supply, some smaller scale and artisanal ventures might be piloted by local producers aided by a shared commercial kitchen with health certification. Two possibilities merit evaluations. One is in the Centre 2000. The other is the well-equipped kitchen included in the new Wellington County Hillsburgh Library building. A food incubator with suitable shared spaces for new ventures should be associated with the kitchen.

Looking ahead to the availability of waste water servicing, a more ambitious plan would be to envisage a larger shared facility that would not only provide an incubator for local ventures, but could be an accelerator and scale-up facility for food-related startups founded in Toronto which require more space and direct access to inputs that can be sourced in Erin and nearby communities.

Craft Beverages: The continued growth of the popular craft beverage industry in Ontario offers potential for the Town of Erin. Craft beer, cider, wine and spirits producers have been a boon to tourism, heightening a community’s offerings and appeal to visitors. There is scope to facilitate additional ventures in addition to the Heartwood cidery. Because of the extensive regulatory requirements for a craft beverage operation, municipalities can be critical partners for entrepreneurs who want to get to market quickly. With many levels of government and their agencies involved, obtaining regulatory approvals is frequently viewed as a lengthy, uncertain and exhausting steeplechase. Local governments willing to handhold prospective craft beverage entrepreneurs by working to coordinate and expedite the multiple processes can be the differentiator that lands the new venture for their communities. A pilot project undertaken in Peterborough with the sponsorship of the Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) provides an example of how a coordinated effort cut the time and reduced the hassle and positioned the community as an especially attractive location.⁴³

Technology Adoption in Agriculture: The adoption of technology in agricultural, food and agricultural-related ventures may face issues in the near-term if affordable high-speed broadband is not available. In the longer-term, access to 5G networks may be what will be required to remain on the leading edge. Therefore high-speed broadband access is very important to the rural economy.

On farms, the application of robotic and digital technologies has grown. The University of Guelph is a leader in what has come to be labelled as precision agriculture. Integrated farm management systems which are driven by software, GPS, satellite imagery, drones, sensing technologies, weather data and the Internet of Things (IoT) are in widespread use. In the Town of Erin, 113 of 187 farms reported using

⁴³ Association of Municipalities Ontario, “Reducing Business Burdens: Great Ideas from Five Innovative Ontario Municipalities”, Report by Michael Fenn, May 31, 2017.

computers or laptops for farm management in 2015, according to the 2016 Census of Agriculture. Seventy-four adopted smart phones or tablets. In addition, 29 had introduced GPS technology, seven GIS mapping (e.g. soil mapping), 16 automated steering, 9 automated environmental controls for animal housing, and 8 automated animal feeding.

Investments in novel controlled environment farming systems have grown notably. State-of-the-art vertical gardens – typically focused on lettuces, sprouts, herbs and other items with short shelf lives – are being established in urban environments or on the fringes of major metropolitan areas such as the GTA. Controlled environment farming facilities have automated watering, LED lighting, and nutritional, planting and harvesting systems. A vital competitive advantage is the ability to offer quick and frequent delivery to ensure absolute freshness for high quality demanded by top-of-the-line restaurants and grocery outlets. Gardens set in large shipping containers are a similar approach where growing is undertaken in lower cost, less congested locations and then delivered one at a time and left at the grocery or restaurant for as-needed harvesting. Insect farms are another type of novel controlled environment farming.

Interaction with Post-Secondary Institutions: Erin’s proximity to the University of Guelph constitutes an immense resource which Erin’s agricultural, food and agriculturally related ventures can tap into and partner with. Areas of recognized excellence at the University include equine health and well-being, veterinary medicine, plant and crop breeding, the DNA Barcoding of Life, controlled environmental growth chambers, microbiome, bio-products and biomaterials, food safety and traceability, precision agriculture for crops and animals, rural economic development, and human health and nutrition.

The University of Guelph’s research and innovation activities, many in partnership with the private sector and producer groups, are benefiting from:

- The “Food from Thought” research program supported by a \$76.6 million grant over seven years from the Canada First Research Excellence Fund designed to position Canada as a global leader in the development of innovative solutions that improve both the sustainability and productivity of agricultural production at the global, landscape, and micro scales;
- The Arrell Food Institute, supported by a \$20 million private donation; and
- The Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance, a \$60 million annual research partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

The University is also scaling up Accelerator Guelph, a commercialization initiative for agri-food businesses which it launched in 2018 to amplify the economic impact of University of Guelph research and to foster an entrepreneurship culture.

Conestoga College is home to the Institute of Food Processing Technology which addresses the needs of the food and beverage manufacturing industry by providing education, training, research and technical expertise.

Other prominent research, technology and talent development organizations are slightly more distant, though readily accessible. These include the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre (VRIC) in the Town of Lincoln, Niagara College whose relevant facilities are mainly located in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Brock University, whose focus tends to be toward wine, craft beverages (including cider) and viticulture.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – Agri-Food and Agriculture Related

Opportunities for farms and rural enterprises will arise from the growth which the new waste water servicing system in Hillsburgh and the Village of Erin will bring. Tourism can be expected to increase. A particular boost would come if additional visitor accommodations can be attracted.

Once the waste water system is realized and adequate sources of Town water secured, there will be potential to attract food processing facilities. The best prospects would be expansions or relocations by privately-held speciality foods firms currently located in the GTHA. They would be attracted by the availability of lower cost serviced land relatively close to the principal markets and current facilities. Erin would be in competition with areas which also ring the GTA and which may have more ready access to 400-series highways. The availability of talent or, in the case of relocation, attractive and affordable housing could be a particularly important consideration.

With the prospect of further growth, consideration should be given to whether there are relationships to build upon to establish centres or facilities jointly with post-secondary institutions or innovation hubs that will advance and grow Erin’s agriculture and agriculture related sector.

E. SECTORS OF FOCUS

E.1 AGRI-FOOD AND AGRICULTURE RELATED

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
E.1	<p>GOAL: The Town of Erin’s agriculture sector is strong, environmentally committed, diversified, innovative, and involved with value-added products and offerings catering to varied markets including tourism</p> <p>1. OBJECTIVE: Support new, diversified and added value agricultural-related offerings</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support farm-gate sales and farmers’ markets and the rural sector’s involvement in tourism initiatives and programs, such as Taste Real and Headwaters Tourism promotions 2. Stimulate growth of craft beverage and speciality and artisanal foods ventures, including through use of the commercial kitchen facilities at the Hillsburgh Library or Centre 2000 3. Ensure Town of Erin producers and organizations are informed and connected to OMAFRA’s suite of funding programs from which they may benefit 	B	On-Going	EED WCED HT OMAFRA
		B	2020 and Beyond	EED HLib EPR
		B	On-going	EED OMAFRA

<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding could be required for feasibility studies and/or the establishment of an agri-food incubator or farmers’ market or food hub. Projects may be eligible under OMAFRA’s Rural Economic Development (RED) program • A five-year \$50 million Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Local Food Infrastructure Fund will accept applications for non-repayable funding of up to \$25,000 beginning August 15, 2019 • The five-year Federal-Provincial Canadian Agriculture Partnership launched April 2018 may have programs from which organizations or producers and growers may benefit and may provide support for the establishment of a Food Hub under the Agra-Innovate program 				
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related to activities to facilitate connections, metrics should focus on number of meetings, connections, funding received by businesses and enterprises • For existing and new businesses and enterprises, performance Metrics should concentrate on outcomes (the number of businesses retained; expansion projects; new investments and the jobs and amounts involved), supplemented by measures of the activities likely to lead to the outcomes (BR&E calls and meetings; investment-related events; contacts established by category; and categorization of leads in terms of demonstrated degree of interest) (in situations where the Town’s economic development program has assisted or influenced outcomes) • Metrics will need to be established for a food hub, incubator or shared space, depending on its functions 				
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
E.1	<p>2. OBJECTIVE: To encourage and support equine sector collaboration to strengthen the cluster and infrastructure, and enhance the reputation and promotion of the Town as a “Horse Friendly Community”</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support equine sector collaboration, research, strategies and initiatives among the Erin cluster and by Headwaters Equine Leadership Group (HELG) 2. Ensure equine cluster involvement with tourism initiatives and programs, capitalizing on creative product development, anchor attractions and branding of Erin as a hub of equine activity 3. Attract equine-related service and product providers to the Town, including through interaction with other equine centres 	B	On-Going	EED HT HELG OMAFRA
		B	On-Going	EED HT CCT HELG OMAFRA ECom
		C	2020 and Beyond	EED HT HELF WCED OMAFRA
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit from tourism related funding and initiatives by Headwaters Tourism and Central Counties Tourism 				

<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related to activities to facilitate connections, metrics should focus on number of meetings, connections, funding received by the local equine cluster and individual enterprises • For specific equine cluster initiatives and programs, the development and reporting of metrics should be an integral part of the project • For existing and new businesses, enterprises and service providers, performance metrics should concentrate on outcomes (the number of businesses retained; expansion projects; new investments and the jobs and amounts involved), supplemented by measures of the activities likely to lead to the outcomes (BR&E calls and meetings; investment-related events; contacts established by category; and categorization of leads in terms of demonstrated degree of interest) (in situations where the Town’s economic development program has assisted or influenced outcomes) 																		
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²														
E.1	<p>3. OBJECTIVE: To cultivate and build consequential relationships over the medium-term with post-secondary institutions designed to advance the Town’s agriculture related economic development</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the potential for the development of productive relationships with the University of Guelph and others, including Precision Agriculture initiatives, Equine Guelph, the Centre for Business and Student Enterprise, Accelerator Guelph and Research Innovation Office 2. Explore possible synergies with Conestoga College’s Institute of Food Processing Technology and the Centre for Entrepreneurship 	B	2020 and Growing in Intensity	EED IG UofG NCC Brock VRIC														
		C	2020 and Beyond	EED ConC														
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General funding, though over time the process might lead to specific Erin-based initiatives which would require funding • The Economic Development Program should have a modest budget for one-time matching contributions to collaborative promotions and initiatives 																		
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of connections and on-going relationships established with post-secondary institutions • Extent of post-secondary outreach/visits to the Town • Potential for more substantive partnerships focused on or located in Erin 																		
<p>NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS</p> <p>¹ Priorities: A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive</p> <p>² Abbreviations</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Brock = Brock University</td> <td>HLib = Hillsburgh Library (County of Wellington)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CCT = Central Counties Tourism</td> <td>HT = Headwaters Tourism</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ConC = Conestoga College</td> <td>NCC = Niagara College</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ECom = Town of Erin Communications Officer</td> <td>OMAFRA = Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EED = Town of Erin Economic Development</td> <td>UofG = University of Guelph</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EPR = Town of Erin Parks & Recreation</td> <td>VRIC = Vineland Research and Innovation Centre</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HELG = Headwaters Equine Leadership Group</td> <td>WCED = Wellington County Economic Development</td> </tr> </table>					Brock = Brock University	HLib = Hillsburgh Library (County of Wellington)	CCT = Central Counties Tourism	HT = Headwaters Tourism	ConC = Conestoga College	NCC = Niagara College	ECom = Town of Erin Communications Officer	OMAFRA = Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs	EED = Town of Erin Economic Development	UofG = University of Guelph	EPR = Town of Erin Parks & Recreation	VRIC = Vineland Research and Innovation Centre	HELG = Headwaters Equine Leadership Group	WCED = Wellington County Economic Development
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2. Tourism

Tourism continues to be a growth opportunity in Canada. In 2018, tourism revenues in Canada were up over 5% year-over-year to exceed \$100 billion and capture a 2.1% share of total Canadian GDP. The delivery of services to support tourism activities involved an average of 739,100 jobs throughout 2018, 32% of which were in food and beverages, 20% in accommodations and 12% in transportation.⁴⁴

Economic Impact of Tourism: Tourism engages, draws upon and involves many people in the community and segments of the local economy. Agricultural related, culinary, retail, personal care, recreational, cultural, creative and accommodation attractions are among the wide-range of places patronized by visitors who bring incremental spending into the community.

There is widespread involvement in tourism by smaller firms. Patronage by tourists can be important to community groups and not-for-profits. For many, it represents additional revenue beyond their core customer base. Tourism revenues can be a critical contributor to the profitability and survivability of many community business ventures and organizations. The outside support that visitors bring to not-for-profit cultural, recreational, charitable and community activities, festivals and events may be the difference between success or failure. The existence of significant number of retail and culinary businesses are dependent on visitors.

According to estimates from Headwaters Tourism, Erin’s destination marketing partner, nearly 75,000 people visit Erin annually, spending some \$5.6 million dollars. Tourism contributes nearly \$150,000 in municipal tax revenue.⁴⁵

Tourism touches many businesses, agricultural enterprises and sectors, so it is difficult to develop comprehensive employment indicators. Employment in accommodation and food services in the Town grew by 16% from 2008 to 2018 to 177 people. In the arts, entertainment and recreation sector, jobs more than doubled from 87 to 196. Important components are amusement and recreation industries (73 jobs); independent artists, writers and performers (70); and spectator sports (49). The Location Quotients (LQs) for spectator sports (11.7) and independent artists, writers and performers (4.4) are notably high.⁴⁶

The Village of Erin has a long history as a favoured tourism destination for Torontonians, harking back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. In those days, privately-owned Stanley Park, located directly opposite the railway station, was in constant competition with Niagara Falls and with Elora and the Gorge, for day-trip excursions from Toronto. Stanley Park’s competitive advantages were that it was closer to Toronto (more time at the Park) and a more compact site with fewer external attractions (easier for excursion organizers to keep track of their party, compared to the challenge in Elora of losing track of party members who wandered off through Elora’s village and gorge area).

⁴⁴ Destination Canada, “National Tourism Indicators: 2018 Highlights”, using data released by Statistics Canada on March 28, 2019 (<https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/851-National%20Tourism%20Indicators%20-%20Q4%202018/National%20Tourism%20Indicators%20-%20Highlights%202018.pdf>). Accessed on May 13, 2019.

⁴⁵ Headwaters Tourism Presentation, “Investing in regional tourism”, made to the Town of Erin Council meeting on December 6, 2016.

⁴⁶ Location quotient analysis compares the relative concentration of each sector in a community to a reference area (in this case Ontario). The comparison uses a simple ratio of sector employment to total employment. The provincial average for each sector has a location quotient of 1. A location quotient higher than 1 indicates a higher employment concentration in that sector than the provincial average, while less than 1 indicates the concentration is lower than the provincial average. Greater location

Tourism very often constitutes a community's principal branding and marketing vehicle. Erin's attractiveness as a place to visit is an important factor that leads people and businesses to contemplate putting down roots in the Town.

The Town's reputation is dependent to a great extent on visitors' experiences. The community's realization of how important this is to the Town as a whole should galvanize people to come together to put their best foot forward as a matter of self-interest.

Tourism Promotion and Development: Tourism development draws the involvement of all levels of government. Tourism promotion is characterized by significant collaborative and shared cost activities involving the private and public sectors.

Federal Government: Destination Canada, at the Federal level, markets Canada internationally and engages in research, strategy development and storytelling to drive the visitor economy.

In the new Federal Tourism Growth Strategy released in May 2019, a major pillar is to support diversification of destinations for tourists away from the current concentration on a relatively few major cities.⁴⁷ The Canadian Experiences Fund has allocated over \$11 million to FedDev Ontario for projects in Southern Ontario. Priorities include investments to:

- Attract tourists to rural destinations, through destination development planning, adventure trails, improving public tourism facilities and community beautification;
- Encourage winter and shoulder season tourism, such as festivals, tours, excursions and facility improvements; and
- Grow farm-to-table and culinary tourism, through culinary trails, food festivals, farmers' markets and new culinary products and services.⁴⁸

Ontario Government: The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport leads at the provincial level. In 2009, the Ministry established 13 Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs), each an independent, industry-led not-for-profit mandated to provide leadership, coordination and support. Regional Tourism Organization 6 (RTO 6), Central Counties Tourism, covers Durham Region, York Region and the Headwaters area (Dufferin County, Caledon and Erin). RTOs focus on integration of regional tourism into provincial strategies, research and data support, funding and partnering opportunities, and workforce development. (Though RTO 6 includes Headwaters and therefore Erin, Wellington County is part of a different Regional Tourism Organization – RTO 4 – which means Wellington County – and therefore Erin to some extent – is supported by that RTO as well.)

Headwaters Region: Headwaters Tourism, a regional not-for-profit organization, is a destination marketing organization (DMO), whose role is to brand, package and market externally the visitor-ready tourism businesses, offerings and assets in Dufferin County, Caledon and Erin.

quotient variances mean higher or lower employment concentrations than provincial averages. In essence, location quotients allow us to identify which sectors are over- or under-represented relative to the province as a whole. High location quotients are indicative of a community's sector specialization. Sectors with high location quotients are usually 'traded' or export sectors that bring new money into a community rather than just a recirculation of money already in a local economy.

⁴⁷ Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, "Creating Middle Class Jobs: A Federal Tourism Growth Strategy", May 21, 2019 (<https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/134.nsf/eng/00003.html>). Accessed on June 2, 2019.

⁴⁸ FedDev Ontario, Canadian Experiences Fund (<https://www.feddevontario.gc.ca/eic/site/723.nsf/eng/02498.html?OpenDocument>). Accessed on June 2, 2019.

Competition for travel and leisure spending is intense. The Headwaters region faces growing competition particularly from Prince Edward County to the GTA's east and from the Niagara Region to the west and south, both of which have notched up the quantity and quality of their wine and beverage, culinary, recreational, and culture-centred offerings. Georgian Bay and Muskoka to the north are also attractive destinations. An opportunity vis-à-vis communities to the north is how to attract people headed there to include time in Erin as a part of their trip.

Headwaters Tourism's award-winning campaign, "Where Ontario Gets Real," distinguishes the area with its focus on people and their connection to the land. The "Where Ontario Gets Real" initiative has been focused on five segments: horse country, fresh and local, arts and heritage, fun and festivals, and nature. As part of its special equine focus, Headwaters Tourism has encouraged and supported the development of Headwaters Horse Country, emphasizing the area's distinctive equine character. The Headwaters Horse Country component also includes King Township.

Municipal financial support for Headwaters Tourism has been governed by four-year (2016-2019) municipal services agreements calculated on a per capita basis (\$1.58 per capital in 2019). The Town's 2019 contribution was \$17,017. Headwaters Tourism also gets program revenue from market-ready partners under its "Leading with the Best" marketing partnership program. The Headwaters Tourism marketing programs, such as the annual Visitor Guide, are essentially funded on a breakeven, cost-recovery basis. Later in 2019, Headwaters Tourism will be presenting municipal councils with its strategy and proposals for 2020 and beyond.

As a purpose-driven arm's length organization, an entity such as Headwaters Tourism offers advantages. A shared public and private sector governance model enhances on-going cooperation and makes a powerful statement about the strength of industry-government collaboration. As a stand-alone entity governed by a Board, the organization has a degree of freedom to be creative and business-oriented in developing innovative initiatives, while being held accountable to stakeholders for results, including a demonstrable return on investment. The organization can identify with a geographic area that shares common characteristics, rather than one that is defined by sometimes arbitrary political boundaries. With the broader base, it can marshal greater funding and have a greater impact. As a non-governmental body, it can adopt sound but more flexible financial procedures that facilitate common tourism sector practices such as in-kind contributions and matching and shared funding with private sector partners. Flexibility to carry forward financial surpluses and losses over year ends can also be important. Pay scales, part-time work, and hours can be more readily aligned with industry standards. Importantly as well, industry participants are also likely to favour a private-public partnership model as it is less dependent on election cycles.

Exhibit 14
TOURISM
CONVERGING AND REINFORCING ASSETS AND ACTIVITIES



Town of Erin Tourism Priorities: The Town of Erin’s prime immediate tasks, as part of its economic development program, are to support the strengthening of Erin’s tourism offerings and to encourage and facilitate collaborative efforts locally. With support from members of the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC), an Erin Community Tourism Alliance has been formed to develop strategies and plans. Key roles for this Alliance are:

- Increase the capacity of the community and all those associated with the Tourism sector to deliver fulfilling experiences that will attract visitors, lead them to spread the word over the many channels now available, and choose to return for more;
- Support, grow and assist the visitor readiness of the Town’s tourism operators, destinations, local attractions, recreation and sporting areas, and supporting infrastructure, such as signage and public facilities;
- Ensure local attractions and tourism businesses are connected with Headwaters Tourism and the Wellington County tourism initiatives;
- Service visitor enquiries locally; and
- Attract tourism-oriented businesses and investment, especially overnight accommodations.

The development and analysis of data on visitors to the Town is being pursued by tourism operators and the Economic Development Officer based on postal code information which can be processed with the help of Central Counties Tourism.

The Town’s Community Improvement Program (CIP) can directly benefit the tourism sector through façade upgrades and beautification. In addition, the Town can facilitate and selectively support the development and distribution of maps, brochures and other collateral to promote festivals, farm-gate sales, farm and craft markets and tours.

A comprehensive program of wayfinding signage is being rolled out by Wellington County Economic Development, including at 11 primary gateways, other gateways, and communities. Wayfinding signage for individual destinations, for which businesses will pay a discounted annual fee, should be ramped up in 2019.

Film and Video: An area allied to some extent with tourism is the attraction of film and video productions. Erin has many features that would appeal to film and video producers – among them, iconic and picturesque main streets, historic sites and buildings, beautiful rural scenery, and trail ways. Toronto has, of course, become a major North American filming location and has the needed supporting talent and infrastructure.

The absence of very high-speed fibre-optic broadband in Erin can be a significant drawback (at least in the case of major productions), but there should be scope to attract film crews to the Town to capitalize on its evident assets. Municipalities aid film crews by providing information and advising on the availability of sites that meet particular scenic requirements, arrange permits and policing arrangements that provide parking for film trucks, reroute traffic, and keep the public at a distance. The effort involved is not inconsequential, but if an experienced industry person can be found, a part-time arrangement may meet initial requirements.

Ontario offers a Film and Television Tax Credit (OFTTC), a refundable tax credit generally calculated as 35% based upon eligible Ontario labour expenditures incurred by a qualifying production company with

respect to an eligible Ontario production. Of special interest in the case of Erin is that productions which are shot entirely outside of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), or that have at least five location days in Ontario (or in the case of a television series, the number of location days is at least equal to the number of episodes), and at least 85% of the location days in Ontario are outside the GTA, receive a 10% bonus on all Ontario labour expenditures incurred for the production. Also, wholly animated productions which create at least 85% of key animation in Ontario outside of the GTA qualify for the regional bonus.⁴⁹

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD -- Tourism

The availability of serviced commercial lots will heighten the prospects of interest in the development of tourism-related facilities in the Village of Erin and in Hillsburgh, leading potential investors to take a fresh look at the prospects.

Visitor accommodations are fundamental if tourism traffic, stays and revenues are to increase and reach levels which will sustain the sector. Entrepreneurial operators will also see expanded opportunities for tourism-related ventures such as craft beverages, restaurants, bars, meeting and conference facilities, spas, and arts, culture and entertainment venues. Accommodations are also integral to capturing greater benefit locally from equine, recreational and sports tourism.

A study to make a business case for investment in overnight accommodation and other tourism-related facilities should be developed well in advance of the arrival of servicing, as seriously interested parties would want to secure a site in advance of servicing to permit adequate time for project development. Central Counties Tourism and the Investment Development Office of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, can assist in developing data. Equine destinations in the Town, such as Angelstone, and local businesses will be important visitor generators. In addition, the Ministry's Investment Development Office positions itself to work with municipalities and their economic development staff to develop investment attraction strategies and businesses cases and to identify prospects.

In terms of attracting film and video productions, the Town should consider the level of involvement it can justify and best means to deploy what will inevitably be limited resources.

⁴⁹ Ontario Creates website (http://www.omdc.on.ca/film_and_tv/tax_credits/OFTTC.htm). Accessed on May 23, 2019.

E. SECTORS OF FOCUS				
E.2 TOURISM				
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
E.2	<p>GOAL: The Town is a highly favoured visitor destination widely known for its small town charm, rural beauty, agricultural bounty, recreational and cultural offerings, and equine sector</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: To foster the further development of the Town’s tourism capacity, experiences, collaborations, infrastructure, and the external marketing partnerships with Headwaters Tourism and Central Counties Tourism</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foster collaboration, strategy development, cooperative initiatives, branding and signature events among the Town’s tourism-related establishments and assist them in creating awareness of tourism’s benefits to the local community 2. Facilitate the Town’s tourism-related establishments, destinations, recreation and sports facilities to leverage Headwaters Tourism’s and Central Counties Tourism’s marketing initiatives, cooperative programs, resources, and research 3. Participate in the development of a new multi-year Headwaters Tourism destination marketing contract which can be recommended to Council for consideration 4. Encourage the upgrading of the Town’s tourism-related assets and infrastructure, including through façade improvements (assisted by the Town’s Community Improvement Plan), the County wayfinding signage program, and enhanced cultural and recreational offerings 5. Support a program to attract sporting events and tournaments 6. Encourage and support investment in visitor accommodations in the Town 	A	On-Going	EED EBIA LGHG HT CTT WCED
		A	On-Going	EED EBIA EPR LGHG HT CTT WCED HELG
		A-	2019 for 2020 and Beyond	EED HT
		B	On-Going	EED EBIA LGHG WCED
		B-	2019 and Beyond	EPR EED
		C	On-Going	EED MTCS WCED

<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the 2020 budget cycle, a new multi-year services agreement will be proposed by Headwaters Tourism to begin in 2020 • The Economic Development Program should have a modest budget for one-time matching contributions to collaborative initiatives • The Canadian Experiences Fund offered through FedDev Ontario covers areas such as rural, winter and off-season, and farm-to-table and culinary tourism 										
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With collaboration from local tourism business and event organizers, gather and analyze local visitor traffic data and process it with assistance from Central Counties Tourism • New investment in overnight accommodations in the Town 										
<p>NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS</p> <p>¹ Priorities: A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive</p> <p>² Abbreviations</p> <table> <tr> <td>CCT = Central Counties Tourism</td> <td>HT = Headwaters Tourism</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EBIA = Village of Erin Business Improvement Area</td> <td>LGHG = Let’s Get Hillsburgh Growing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EED = Town of Erin Economic Development</td> <td>MTCS = Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EPR = Town of Erin Parks & Recreation</td> <td>WCED = Wellington County Economic Development</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HELG = Headwaters Equine Leadership Group</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	CCT = Central Counties Tourism	HT = Headwaters Tourism	EBIA = Village of Erin Business Improvement Area	LGHG = Let’s Get Hillsburgh Growing	EED = Town of Erin Economic Development	MTCS = Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport	EPR = Town of Erin Parks & Recreation	WCED = Wellington County Economic Development	HELG = Headwaters Equine Leadership Group	
CCT = Central Counties Tourism	HT = Headwaters Tourism									
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EPR = Town of Erin Parks & Recreation	WCED = Wellington County Economic Development									
HELG = Headwaters Equine Leadership Group										

3. Advanced Manufacturing

The Town of Erin had 26 manufacturing enterprises in June 2018, excluding firms with no employees or only contracted employees. These are in widely diversified sub-sectors. One Erin manufacturing firm had between 100 and 199 employees, six had between 10 and 49 staff and another six from 5 to 9 staff. The Location Quotient (LQ)⁵⁰ for manufacturing in the Town is 0.8 indicating a concentration of employment that is lower than the province-wide average (represented by an LQ of 1.0).

The principal Erin manufacturers tend, as profiled in Section D.3, to be:

- Privately Canadian owned;
- Owner managed;
- Adopters of advanced technology developed by the owner; and
- Exporters, notably to the US.

The continued competitiveness and technological evolution of these companies depends on their remaining at the leading edge of advanced manufacturing technologies and practices. Some firms have benefited from connections, facilitated by the Town, to Innovation Guelph’s Fast Lane program which provides up to 15 hours of business coaching at the place of business and matching funding for

⁵⁰ Location quotient analysis compares the relative concentration of each sector in a community to a reference area (in this case Ontario). The comparison uses a simple ratio of sector employment to total employment. The provincial average for each sector has a location quotient of 1. A location quotient higher than 1 indicates a higher employment concentration in that sector than the provincial average, while less than 1 indicates the concentration is lower than the provincial average. Greater location quotient variances mean higher or lower employment concentrations than provincial averages. In essence, location quotients allow us to identify which sectors are over- or under-represented relative to the province as a whole. High location quotients are indicative of a community’s sector specialization. Sectors with high location quotients are usually ‘traded’ or export sectors that bring new money into a community rather than just a recirculation of money already in a local economy.

implementation of suggested strategies, typically to do with efficiencies, revenue growth and hiring. In terms of technology, there may also be opportunities to make post-secondary connections, such as with Sheridan College's Centre for Advanced Manufacturing and Design Technologies (CAMDT) in Brampton. Alignment of the potential needs of Erin manufacturers with areas of University of Guelph research excellence should also be explored. Ensuring the Erin manufacturers have contact with OCE Inc representatives will assist the firms to make connections with applicable university and college research and technical resources. The Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) provides peer-to-peer activities which expose firms to best manufacturing practices. This connection should continue to be pursued.

Unserviced or dry industrial land is suited to restricted types of use such as light assembly, basic metal fabricating, welding, body shops, woodworking, printing and servicing. Until serviced land is offered in the Town, interest by new manufacturers to set up in Erin will continue to be limited. Existing manufacturers with expansion possibilities may choose to defer plans. The decline in employment in manufacturing in Erin from 394 jobs in 2008 to 307 in 2018 (or over 20% over this ten year span) may partially reflect this.

There is a notable net outflow of Town residents commuting to manufacturing jobs elsewhere. According to the 2016 Census, the number of Erin residents who were employed in manufacturing was 825, though based on another source there were only 245 manufacturing jobs in Erin. Therefore, it is likely that there has been a large net outflow of manufacturing workers from Erin.⁵¹ New or expanding Erin-based manufacturers attracted to serviced industrial land may be able to tap into this pool of talent.

Realty contacts interviewed as part of the stakeholder consultation for the development of the Economic Development Plan indicated that the future availability of fully-serviced industrial land in the Town will attract interest on the part of manufacturers looking for relatively affordable sites with adequate access to major North American and international markets. The prime prospects will be growing firms in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) facing the pressures of higher costs, congestion and a lack of space for expansion. As discussed in Section D.3, the profile of the prime candidate companies may match those of some of the leading existing manufacturers. Considerations favouring Erin include the residential lifestyle choices of the business's owner and the ability to retain key existing employees in a relocation to Erin and to remain close to the company's established suppliers. Workforce availability will be a prime requirement and may often represent the principal challenge in making the case for the Town. Where direct access to 400 series highways is critical, the Town may be at a disadvantage compared to some other possible locations.

The prospects for food processing plants in Erin – an area of manufacturing for which adequate water and waste water servicing is a necessity – will open up, as described in Section E.1.

⁵¹ This data needs to be interpreted with caution given it is based on the two different data sources (the Census and EMSI) which used different methodologies and assumptions. However the data provides an indication of the likely trends.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – Advanced Manufacturing

In the nearer-term, it will be important to be aware of and work with any of the existing firms in the Town who are considering an expansion. The objective is to retain their presence in the community, despite the period of transition to full servicing. It would seem desirable, where possible, to attempt to cater to the servicing needs of such firms, by according priority to the installation of servicing in their area or to making other accommodations. Working with the existing firms will also be very informative in terms of understanding what needs to be done prior to commencing wider outreach to new prospects attracted by serviced land. For instance, initiatives to address the workforce needs of current manufacturers will provide insights, experience and background which can be called upon as the number of companies grows.

In anticipation of the arrival of full servicing, advanced manufacturing will be among the highest priority areas in which to develop comprehensive investment attraction plans. As discussed, the previous patterns of investment and the relatively modest amount of industrially designated land to be opened to servicing, the most promising targets among manufacturers are likely to be smaller and mid-sized GTA firms looking to expand or relocate to an area proximate to the GTA.

E. SECTORS OF FOCUS

E.3 ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
E.3	<p>GOAL: The growth of the Town’s manufacturing sector is sustained by innovative and entrepreneurial firms whose products incorporate advanced technologies and are nationally and internationally competitive</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: To provide a competitive business environment and access to programs of assistance to business that will foster the retention, growth and attraction of manufacturing firms</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess needs and connect the Town’s manufacturing firms with Wellington County Economic Development, Workforce Planning Board, Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium and other resources and programs to address pressing talent and workforce needs 2. Link the Town’s manufacturing firms with needed support, including peer-to-peer, innovation, export and funding sources 3. Profile and promote the Town’s successful and innovative manufacturers 4. Promote the Town’s Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG) 	B	On-Going	EED WCED WPBWWD EMC
		B	On-Going	EED GCGW EMC IG IRAP OCE CF
		C	2020 and Beyond	EED ECom
		B	On-Going	EED

Funding:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Budget 	
Performance Metrics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Metrics should concentrate on outcomes (the number of businesses retained; expansion projects; new investments and the jobs and amounts involved), supplemented by measures of the activities likely to lead to the outcomes (BR&E calls and meetings; investment-related events; contacts established by category; and categorization of leads in terms of demonstrated degree of interest) (in situations where the Town’s economic development program has assisted or influenced outcomes) 	
NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS	
<p>¹ Priorities: A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive</p>	
<p>² Abbreviations</p>	
CF = Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures	IRAP = Industrial Research Assistance Program – NRC
ECom = Town of Erin Communications Officer	OCE = Ontario Centres of Excellence Inc.
EED = Town of Erin Economic Development	WCED = Wellington County Economic Development
EMC = Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium	WPBWWD = Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo, Wellington & Dufferin
IG = Innovation Guelph	

4. Environmental and Clean Technologies

There are numerous definitions for “clean”, “green”, and environmental technologies and economic development. The common denominator is that they touch upon a broad cross-section of economic activity.

The report of Canada’s Clean Technology Economic Strategy Tables⁵² stated “Clean technology refers to any process, product or service that reduces environmental impacts”. In a report on “Innovation in Cleantech”, MaRS Discovery District surveyed companies “focused on the creation of intellectual property, new products and services that protect and/or increase efficient utilization of land, energy, water or natural resources.”⁵³ The Federation of Canadian Municipalities defines green economy as one “where income and employment growth are driven by public and private investments that reduce carbon emissions and pollution, enhance energy and resource efficiency, and prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystems”.

Exhibit 15 presents a breakout which also demonstrates the breath of environmental and clean technology industry categories and segments in the economy.

⁵² Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, “Report of Canada’s Economic Strategy Tables: Clean Technology”, September 2018 ([https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/098.nsf/vwapj/ISED_CleanTechnologies.pdf/\\$file/ISED_CleanTechnologies.pdf](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/098.nsf/vwapj/ISED_CleanTechnologies.pdf/$file/ISED_CleanTechnologies.pdf)). Accessed on May 4, 2019.

⁵³ Greenwood, Joe, and Farooq Qaiser, MaRS Data Catalyst, “Innovation in Cleantech: How Canada can become a global leader”, March 2017 (<https://www.marsdd.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Innovation-in-Cleantech-MaRS-Report-2017-1.pdf>). Accessed on May 2, 2019.

Exhibit 15 Clean Economy Industry Categories and Segments		
Category	Detailed Segments	
Agricultural & Natural Resources Conservation	Conservation Organic Food & Farming	Sustainable Forestry Products
Energy & Resource Efficiency	Appliances Battery Technologies Electric Vehicle Technologies Energy-saving Building Materials Energy-saving Consumer Products Fuel Cells Green Architecture & Construction Services	HVAC & Building Control Systems Lighting Professional Energy Services Public Mass Transit Smart Grid Water Efficient Products
Greenhouse Gas Reduction, Environmental Management, & Recycling	Air & Water Purification Technologies Carbon Storage & Management Green Building Materials Green Chemical Products Green Consumer Products Nuclear Energy	Pollution Reduction Professional Environmental Services Recycled-Content Products Recycling & Reuse Remediation Waste Management & Treatment
Renewable Energy	Biofuels/Biomass Geothermal Hydropower Renewable Energy Services Solar Photovoltaic	Solar Thermal Waste-to-Energy Wave/Ocean Power Wind

Source: Metropolitan Policy Program, The Brookings Institution, “Sizing the Green Economy”, 2011

The Ontario government puts the number of cleantech companies at more than 5,000, employing approximately 130,000 individuals and generating nearly \$20 billion in annual revenues.⁵⁴ Among the areas of leadership for Ontario are water and waste water, nuclear, smart grid, hydrogen, bio-products, biomass, and energy storage. With policy shifts in the province, the prospects for new wind and solar generation have dimmed, pending generation cost reductions.

In its 2017 budget, the Canadian government committed to significant new funding – \$1.4 billion over three years – for equity financing, growth capital and project financing for promising clean technology firms through the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Export Development Canada (EDC). An additional \$400 million over five years was provided to Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC).

Erin’s Environmental Credentials: Erin’s natural setting and many residents’ orientation to environmentally progressive values makes the Town a location which is receptive to sustainable practices and businesses. In the Resident Survey associated with the development of the Town’s Strategic Plan (2019-2023), 57% of respondents selected “clean and environmentally sustainable” as one of their top five answer choices for their vision for Erin for the next ten years, while 43% selected “protecting the environment” as among the top five priority areas for efforts by the Town over the next ten years.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Ontario Government website (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-cleantech-strategy>). Accessed on May 10, 2019.

⁵⁵ The Town of Erin Resident Survey about the Strategic Plan (2019-2023) was open to the public via a link to Survey Monkey on the Town’s website between February 18 and April 5, 2019. Hard copies were also available for completion. A total of 452 persons responded to the survey.

An economic development objective in the Town’s Official Plan is “to ensure that new economic development is compatible with the existing form of development in the Town by encouraging ‘clean, green’ types of industry”.

The Town partnered with Guelph Solar, to install solar roof panels on the roof of the Erin Community Centre. The Town receives annual rental revenue while saving CO² emissions. LED street lighting has been installed. Additional investments and partnerships by the Town related to the environment would signal the community’s commitment to prospective investors and new residents.

Varied Areas of Opportunity: For Erin, a wide range of environmentally-driven situations and possibilities exist.

Agriculture: The Erin agricultural community has embraced many land stewardship practices and production techniques which honour the environment and attract consumer interest and preference. For example, the Everdale Organic Farm and Environmental Learning Centre is a teaching farm which provides hands-on food and farming training and education with an emphasis on building healthy and sustainable communities and fostering connections among farmers, consumers and the environment. In another venture, born out of a concern over the impact of climate change and vulnerability to changing weather patterns, a group of 28 Erin and area farmers came together to launch a Soil Health Coalition in 2018 to adopt practices to take carbon and water out of the atmosphere and store them in the soil.⁵⁶

Circular Food Economy: In May 2019, Guelph-Wellington was selected as the winner of \$10 million Federal funding under the Smart Cities Challenge for its “Our Food Future: Canada’s First Food Smart Community”. The plan involves three goals:

- Increasing access to affordable and nutritious food by 50%;
- Creating 50 new circular food business and collaboration opportunities; and
- Increasing economic revenues by 50% by reducing or transforming food waste.

The plan reinforces the area’s commitment as a major food producing area to sustainable practices.

Tourism: Tourism-related businesses and organizations will affirm the positive perceptions that visitors hold of Erin’s natural assets by explicitly adopting and publicizing initiatives and programs which affirm environmental principles and goals or earn certification. Whether on the part of tourism business or elsewhere, the adoption of B (Beneficial) Corporation status, which puts social and environmental impact alongside long-term profitability, has been growing in Canada.⁵⁷ Installation of electric vehicle charging stations could boost tourism while sending a signal.

Professional Services: A target for business attraction in the future, when commercial office space and high-speed broadband is available, should be additional professional services firms specializing in various environment and environmentally-oriented pursuits, including testing.

⁵⁶ Soil Health Coalition website (<https://www.soilhealthcoalition.ca/>). Accessed March 8, 2019.

⁵⁷ For more information see Business Development Bank of Canada website (<https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/business-strategy-planning/manage-business/pages/3-steps-to-becoming-certified-b-corp.aspx>). Accessed on May 15, 2019.

Innovation: The Town should consider the future possibility of having an innovation hub or incubation space focus on entrepreneurs and ventures in the clean and environment technology space. Linkages might be explored with the MaRS Discovery District which has a focus on Clean Tech, including:

- Agri-tech – Technologies enabling sustainable farming and increased food production;
- Advanced manufacturing – Technologies helping designers build better products;
- Advanced materials – New material engineered to improve existing products;
- Water – Solutions for water purification and waste water management;

An aspect to explore with the MaRS Discovery District would be whether there are situations where growing early-stage companies at MaRS are looking for locations in which they can expand or opportunities to test or pilot technologies.

Further possibilities to apply novel practices and technologies that favour the environment could be explored by developing linkages with the University of Guelph and the University of Waterloo, beyond the Southern Ontario Water Consortium (SOWC) connection. Both have broadly-based, well recognized environmental programs.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD – Environmental and Clean Technologies

Erin’s business case for environmentally-oriented ventures and technology applications will grow as the Town articulates its growth management strategy. In-depth value propositions and carefully targeted business attraction initiatives will be merited closer to the arrival of full-servicing. The feasibility of an innovation hub focussed on clean tech and services should also be considered and evaluated.

E. SECTORS OF FOCUS

E.4 ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
E.4	<p>GOAL: Erin is viewed as an environmentally progressive community well suited to environmentally-oriented technology applications and business ventures</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: To encourage adoption of environmental and clean technologies, the growth and attraction of environmentally-oriented businesses and agricultural ventures</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate and support environmentally-friendly initiatives in agriculture and tourism 2. Consider the merits of Town initiatives to encourage, support or incent desirable environmentally-oriented outcomes 	C	On-Going	EED EBIA LGHG HT CTT
		C	2020 and Beyond	EED EFin

Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
E.4	Actions (Continued): 3. Explore post-secondary and other innovation linkages for technology, and develop a value proposition for environmentally-oriented business attraction	C	2021 and Beyond	EED UofG UofW WTAP MaRS
Funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Budget Initiatives to incent desirable environmentally-oriented outcome might be part of the Community Improvement Program with associated budgetary considerations 				
Performance Metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Metrics should concentrate on outcomes (new technologies applied or programs initiated, the number of businesses retained; expansion projects; new investments and the jobs and amounts involved), supplemented by measures of the activities likely to lead to the outcomes (BR&E calls and meetings; investment-related events; contacts established by category; and categorization of leads in terms of demonstrated degree of interest) (in situations where the Town’s economic development program has assisted or influenced outcomes) 				
NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS ¹ Priorities: A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive ² Abbreviations CCT = Central Counties Tourism EBIA = Village of Erin Business Improvement Area EED = Town of Erin Economic Development HT = Headwaters Tourism LGHG = Let’s Get Hillsburgh Growing MaRS = MaRS Discovery District (Toronto) UofG = University of Guelph UofW = University of Waterloo (including SOWC) WTAP = WaterTAP				

5. Professional Services

The Town of Erin has a moderate-sized professional services sector. Employment in the Town in the professional, scientific and technical services sector was 386 in 2018, up by 25% since 2008, though lower than the 405 jobs reached in 2013. The Location Quotient (LQ)⁵⁸ was 1.2, putting Erin slightly above the provincial average. The most prominent category is veterinary services followed by management consulting.

Near-term prospects for the attraction of professional services firms are constrained by the lack of ready access to affordable high-speed broadband and buildings with leasable office space. The appeal of the Town as a location for small to mid-sized professional services firms will increase notably when these are available. While an activist posture may not be merited for some time because of the constraints in both areas, the Town should welcome and do anything it can in the near-term to encourage interest from the

⁵⁸ Location quotient analysis compares the relative concentration of each sector in a community to a reference area (in this case Ontario). The comparison uses a simple ratio of sector employment to total employment. The provincial average for each sector has a location quotient of 1. A location quotient higher than 1 indicates a higher employment concentration in that sector than the provincial average, while less than 1 indicates the concentration is lower than the provincial average. Greater location quotient variances mean higher or lower employment concentrations than provincial averages. In essence, location quotients allow us to identify which sectors are over- or under-represented relative to the province as a whole. High location quotients are indicative of a community’s sector specialization. Sectors with high location quotients are usually ‘traded’ or export sectors that bring new money into a community rather than just a recirculation of money already in a local economy.

professional services sector. The typical fields for professional services firms which might locate in the Town include engineering, environmental, architecture, design, advertising, digital media, accounting and finance.

Lone Eagles and Creative Professionals: A related opportunity is the attraction of creative professionals or lone eagles – entrepreneurially inclined individuals who put a priority on living in a location that provides a desirable lifestyle and who will depend on the computer to connect to the world. Access to high-speed broadband is a baseline requirement which may be met in some areas of the Town. Erin’s proximity to Toronto Pearson International Airport and access when needed to the metropolitan area is a strength for this category. Many of these individuals will operate from home offices. Their attraction might be assisted if “hot desk” or “touch down” locations are available in a shared space facility in the Town, as noted in Section D.2.

Interactive Digital Media: The Interactive Digital Media sector, in which Ontario is a significant player, might be an area which, subject to further evaluation, could offer some opportunities over time given the suitability of the sector to remote work.

Interactive Digital Media covers a range of digital content and experiences that are available via PCs, mobile devices and game consoles. The category includes video games, cross-platform entertainment, virtual and augmented reality, web series, and e-learning and training products. All tend to require access to ultra-high-speed broadband, which of course presents nearer-term challenges in Erin.

The digital media sector is associated with a younger demographic which tends to prefer trendy urban digital media clusters where there are also opportunities for interaction among firms. The Ontario Interactive Digital Media industry is composed of young adults with an average age of 32 years who are highly educated (97% with post-secondary completion)⁵⁹ working primarily in Toronto, Ottawa, Waterloo Region, Hamilton-Niagara and London.⁶⁰ If a shared space hub or incubator with access to high-speed broadband can be established, this could be a petrie dish to test whether and to what extent Erin may be a fit for some younger aspirants in the field.

The Interactive Digital Media industry in Ontario can access the Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit (OIDMTC) which is calculated at 40% of eligible expenditures related to the creation of Interactive Digital Media products. It is similar to the film and television tax credits (mentioned in Section E.2), but does not have a preference for activities conducted outside the GTA.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD -- Professional Services

Looking to the future, the Town should further assess its attractiveness to specific sub-sectors among professional services such as engineering, environmental, planning, surveying, architectural, design, accounting, advertising and electronic media, and financial services, and should develop value propositions and target firms in segments offering the best fit. Erin should be an attractive location for a larger firm’s regional presence. The Town’s lifestyle could be a positive influence.

⁵⁹ Interactive Ontario, “Measuring Success: The Impact of the Interactive Digital Media Sector in Ontario, February 2017.

⁶⁰ Media Planet, Ontario’s Interactive Digital Media Industry Offers A Wealth of Diverse Opportunities (<http://www.careersandeducation.ca/career-opportunities/ontarios-interactive-digital-media-industry-offers-a-wealth-of-diverse-opportunities>). Accessed on June 6, 2019.

E. SECTORS OF FOCUS				
E.5 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES				
Plan Section	Goals, Objectives & Actions	Priority ¹	Timing	Lead & Partners ²
E.5	<p>GOAL: Erin is a regionally important centre for professional services firms</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: To grow Erin’s professional services sector and attract additional firms</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop initiatives to encourage lone eagles to locate in Erin 2. Encourage professional services firms to establish an Erin presence 3. Gather information and lay groundwork for future proactive attraction of professional services firms 4. Encourage developer interest in construction of commercial office space 	C	2022	EED
		C	On-Going	EED
		C	2022-2023	EED
		C	2022-2023	EED
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Budget 				
<p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Metrics should concentrate on outcomes (the number of businesses retained; expansion projects; new investments and the jobs and amounts involved), supplemented by measures of the activities likely to lead to the outcomes (BR&E calls and meetings; investment-related events; contacts established by category; and categorization of leads in terms of demonstrated degree of interest) (in situations where the Town’s economic development program has assisted or influenced outcomes) 				
<p>NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS</p> <p>¹ Priorities: A = Highest Priority & Very Time-Sensitive; A- = Highest Priority, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; B = Important & Time-Sensitive; B- = Important & Time-Sensitive, But Partially Responsive to Others’ Initiatives; and C = Desirable & Less Time-Sensitive</p> <p>² Abbreviations</p> <p>EED = Town of Erin Economic Development</p>				