

# TOWN OF ERIN

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www.erin.ca



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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Erin Town Council Adopts Economic Development Resolutions**

ERIN, Ontario - On Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup> the Erin Equine Task Force presented to the Town Council a report demonstrating sustainable and innovative economic development in Erin, leveraging the existing local equine community as a starting point. The report is the result of a two-year volunteer initiative that studied business retention and expansion in Erin's equine community.

The Task Force proposed an approach to economic development that supports capital investment in properties and businesses with the goal of increasing commercial and industrial property tax revenue and redistributing the residential tax burden. The report recommends investing in infrastructure beginning with equine trail development, investing in marketing based on the equine theme, and a targeted effort to attract complementary manufacturing. The report also recommends investigating business climate factors that will lead to long-term economic development sustainability.

"Certainly the most interesting discussions around the table were those focussed on differentiating between actions that would contribute to the Town's overall economic development versus actions that are more appropriately led and funded by the industry," said Mary Venneman, Co-Chair of the Task Force. "We are not suggesting that equine be the only economic driver but since there has been no economic development to date, we believe that this is a good place to start in creating a model on which future business for Erin can be analysed, measured, and moved forward through community consultation."

"We've laid out the road map but that's about as far as our little group can go. Going forward, we believe it is more appropriate for a committee of people representing the cross section of interests in the Town to take up the baton," added Venneman.

Subsequent to the presentation, Council passed the following resolutions:

**Be it resolved that** Council receives the Town of Erin Equine Economic Development Report prepared by the Erin Equine Task Force dated December 17, 2013;

**And that** Council recognizes that actively pursuing economic development is critical to ensuring a sustainable and equitable tax revenue base for the future;

**And that** Council acknowledges that equine is a major economic contributor in the Town of Erin;

**And that** Council adopts the equine industry as one of the first economic engines for the Town;

**And further that** Council will consider the recommendations and actions within the 2014 Budget considerations to implement the actions identified.

“It makes sense for Erin to capitalize on our natural assets, especially heading into the 2015 Pan Am Games where international equine competition will be held in neighbouring Caledon,” said Erin Councillor, John Brennan.

The Erin Equine Task Force is a committee of the Town Council established in 2011 to conduct a business retention and expansion study in Erin. The study was supported by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and a team of volunteers, who developed survey questions around specific parameters, coordinated and conducted in-depth surveys, interpreted the data and formed the final presentation. We would like to acknowledge the hard work of our fellow Erin Equine Task Force members and associates who recognized this opportunity and helped us build a strong case based on solid research.

The Erin Equine Task Force presentation and report to Council, as well as the survey results can be found on the Town of Erin’s website at [www.erin.ca](http://www.erin.ca).

**Erin Equine Task Force:**

Mary Venneman, Co-Chair

Brian Gentles, Co-Chair

Dr. Kimberlee Hall, PHD, Applied Statistics

Sue Powell, OMAFRA representative

John Brennan, Erin Councillor

Gayle Ecker, Equine Guelph

Margie Godson , Industry Representative

Alf Budweth, Industry Representative

Kelly Counsell, Industry Representative (ex-officio)

Bridget Ryan, Industry Representative (ex-officio)

Anthea Larke, Industry Representative (ex-officio)

- 30 -

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