



Town of Erin

2015-2018

Economic Development Action Plan



Presented by:

Town of Erin Economic Development Department

November 3, 2015

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"MOMENTUM: Town of Erin 2015-2018 Economic Development Action Plan" is a four year economic development action plan that was developed by the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) with input from the public, the Village of Erin Business Improvement Association (BIA) and the East Wellington Chamber of Commerce (EWCC) to provide a roadmap to a prosperous future.

MOMENTUM: The impetus and driving force gained by the development of a process or course of events



1.1 PRIMARY GOALS

Based on the overall input received, the EEDC has established seven (7) primary goals that together will position the Town of Erin with a momentum and a sound footing for economic renewal in the coming years. The goals are:

- Support the Retention, Growth and Expansion of existing businesses.
- Balanced growth in industrial, commercial and residential development.
- Build a positive business climate.
- Work cooperatively and strengthen links with all partners at all levels.
- Establish the Town of Erin as a Premier location for Equine Enthusiasts.
- Promote and market the Town of Erin as a Four Seasons Tourism Destination.
- Develop a Sustainable Economy.

The document is an Action Plan for Economic Development to be approved by Town of Erin Council for implementation for the years of 2015 to 2018.



2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Process: The Town of Erin engaged the services of a qualified economic development coordinator in November 2014 for one year to establish the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) and facilitate the development of a four-year economic development action plan. The EEDC was established in February 2015 and mandated to provide advice to the office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) on economic development in the community.

The EEDC conducted four (4) focus groups in July 2015 to get a clear understanding of sector priorities and suggested initiatives that could be explored by the community over the next four years. The four sector focus areas were:

- Agriculture and Equine Industry
- Tourism
- Downtown Revitalization
- Business Investment Attraction

The Economic Development Coordinator authored the DRAFT “Momentum” Action Plan for Council and public review and presented the draft plan to Council on August 3, 2015 for review by the public until August 25, 2015. In total, fifteen (15) submissions were received from the general public with many concerns about time constraints and summer vacation impediments. At its September 2nd meeting of Council, permission was sought and approved to extend the deadline for public comment until October 1st, 2015. All eighteen submissions were forwarded to EEDC members as they were received. Submissions were also received from the East Wellington Chamber of Commerce (EWCC) and the Village of Erin BIA.

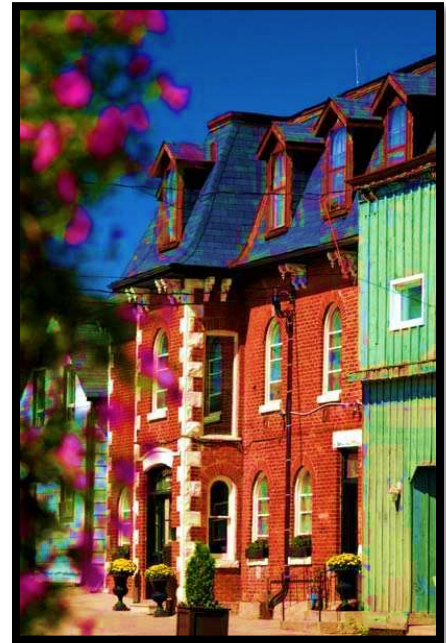
The Town of Erin engaged the services of *Meeting Facilitators International* to facilitate a day long planning session in mid-October 2015 where members of the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC), the Mayor and CAO /Town Manager reviewed over 230 comments and suggestions and provided advice on the content and final direction for the Momentum Action Plan.



2.2 Town of Erin: It is an exciting time for economic development in the Town of Erin. The community is on the threshold of experiencing growth in housing and is considering key investments for improving municipal infrastructure and services to enhance the quality of life experience and aid appropriate development. The Town is strategically located a short distance from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and a population in excess of 6.5 million people generating year-round visitors exploring small time rural living and taking advantage of riding, golfing, hiking, cycling, festivals, fairs, events and an array of other leisure activities. The Town of Erin is committed towards strengthening and diversifying the economic base, and building a resilient local business economy. Erin was rated 76th out of the top 100 places to Live

in Canada by Money Sense Magazine in 2015. (See Town of Erin Demographics – Appendix #6 Page 55)

3.0 VISION and MISSION: To achieve the mission and vision statements, a series of goals and action objectives have been established, all of which aim to provide direction to inform decision making over the term of Council. Although the Town presently works with a total of three suggested vision and mission statements, the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) wishes to present the following for Council’s consideration during its update of the Town’s Official Plan (OP):



VISION

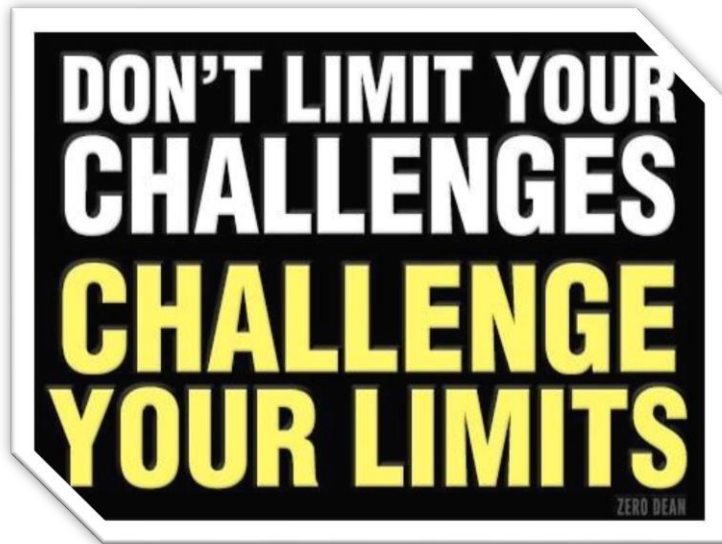
“A Town of innovation and sustainability where nature, community, and business thrive”

MISSION

“Erin will foster sustainable growth through infrastructure and public service development to enhance quality of life”

4.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The strategic goals in the action plan represent key areas that are intended to build upon the unique strengths in order to foster economic development in the Town of Erin and across the region. The community has many strengths and opportunities that, if managed effectively, will result in future economic prosperity for the Town and its residents. The goals set out in this plan establish a strong framework for success and with strong leadership and a desire to seize opportunity as it presents itself, the future offers great promise.



Goal #4.1: Support the Retention, Growth and Expansion of Existing Businesses

In today's competitive environment, providing good business climate is crucial. Promotion of business friendly regulations, flexibility, as well as a quick response to business needs is vital. Business is driven by the bottom line, but other factors such as availability of labour, housing costs, quality of life, accessibility to markets, and many others do play important roles. Building a more positive business climate, while streamlining policy and regulatory processes is important to retaining and encouraging business growth and expansion in the Town of Erin. The Economic Development Officer will work with the Village of Erin BIA and the East Wellington Chamber of Commerce and colleagues at Wellington County Economic Development to strengthen the Town's capacity to support the business community.

Goal #4.2: *Balanced Growth in Industrial, Commercial and Residential Development*

As the Town of Erin moves forward with development of services in the community, it must maintain a balance in the growth of its industrial, commercial and residential development to ensure appropriate services are in place, land availability meets demand and residential growth meets the needs of families considering the Town of Erin as a great place to live, work and retire. The Town is presently undergoing the wastewater environmental assessments needed to determine where the future development should be located. Ultimately, decisions will need to be made during the amendments to the Town's Official Plan (OP) and further public consultation will be undertaken during that process.

Goal #4.3: *Build a Positive Business Climate*

The Town of Erin maintains three distinctive business areas; Village of Erin, Village of Hillsburgh and those businesses that exist within the rural areas throughout the community. These areas include home based businesses, agricultural businesses, village core business including retail, service and commercial/industrial operations. It will be imperative for the Town's new Economic Development Officer (EDO) to maintain open dialogue with all facets of the business community and their representative organizations (BIA and Chamber of Commerce). The Town of Erin entered into a collaborative relationship with both the Village of Erin BIA and the East Wellington Chamber of Commerce (EWCC) in January 2015 to work towards building a more positive business climate in the community. As the Town moves forward with many of the action items outlined in this Action Plan, there will be many opportunities for collaboration between the Town and the business community.

**Goal #4.4: *Work Cooperatively and Strengthen
Links with Partners at all Levels***



Inevitably, local economic development is about partnerships and cooperation, this includes partnerships with all levels of government, professional associations, social groups, and of course the business community. Communication and interaction can open doors to funding opportunities for community economic

development as well as provide ideas and partnership opportunities for more effective and efficient delivery of programs in the community.

Communication assures a degree of community buy-in and participation. Often the best chance of creating new jobs in the community comes from existing businesses within the community. Communication provides for a better understanding of local employment history, expansion needs, barriers to growth and a comprehensive approach for addressing issues. The Town of Erin will work towards enhancing future region wide partnerships and maximize every opportunity for cooperation.

**Goal #4.5: *Establish the Town of Erin as a Premier
Location for Equine Enthusiasts***



The Town of Erin Equine Economic Development Report outlines in great detail why the equine industry is and can be, a dominant player in the local economy. Projections indicate that there are over 400 horse farms located within the Town of Erin and over 250 equine-related businesses and services – 57% equine operations and 43% equine support services. It is estimated that there are approximately 140

equine hobby farms in the community. The Equine Project was a result of an economic development proposal developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) to the then Economic Development Committee of Erin (EDCoE) in the fall of 2010 as a Business Retention and Expansion project.

EDCoE presented a proposal to the sitting Council which would focus specifically on the equine market sector. Erin Town Council supported the project and budget and gave approval to proceed (Resolution #10-185) in July 2011, with a mandate to:

1. Develop a list of equine related businesses and riders in the Town of Erin for potential interview selection
2. Develop a survey to determine the needs of equine businesses and riders as well as to develop a knowledgeable understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the Equine industry in the Town of Erin
3. Conduct the survey and analyze the results
4. Develop recommendations for Council which would improve the economic outlook for the Town of Erin.

The Survey Committee compiled a listing of over 1000 names with approximately 60% being legitimate potential contacts. In all 90 person interviews were conducted, each an average of 1 ½ hours in duration. The breakdown of the group that was randomly selected included: 30 equine businesses, 30 business operators and 20 identified riders.

Gross revenues from equine in the Town of Erin are approximately \$18 million per year. The study found that 50% of equine operations derive 100% of their income from equine and that businesses average about \$72,000 per year with 66% of their gross revenue being generated within the Town of Erin. In addition the study revealed that equine operations operate an average of 2.6 enterprises.

From an employment and job creation perspective, it is estimated that the equine industry supports 750 full-time equivalent jobs in the Town of Erin; 90 full-time jobs; 235 part-time jobs employing skilled and semi-skilled workers.

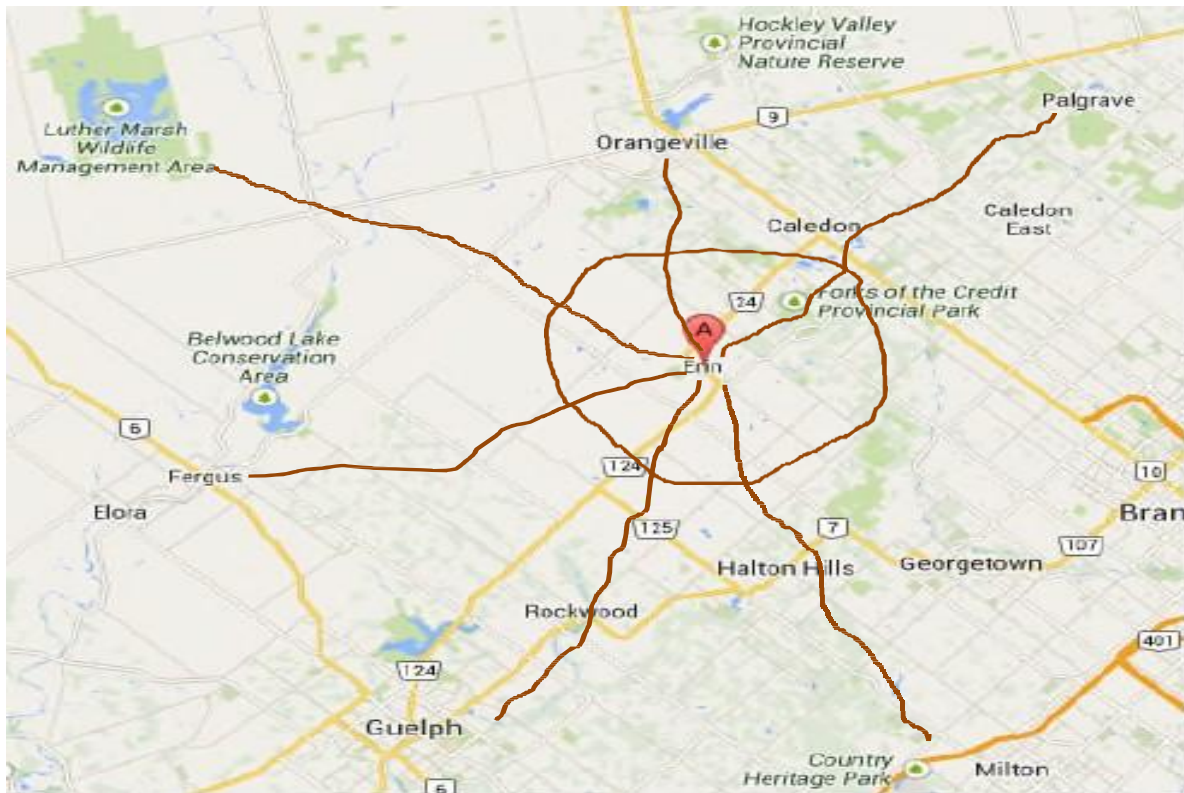


Figure 14

opportunities to the south, notably Halton, Mississauga and Brampton, are being edged out of business.

The Erin Equine Economic Development Report was completed in December 2013 and specific recommendations included:

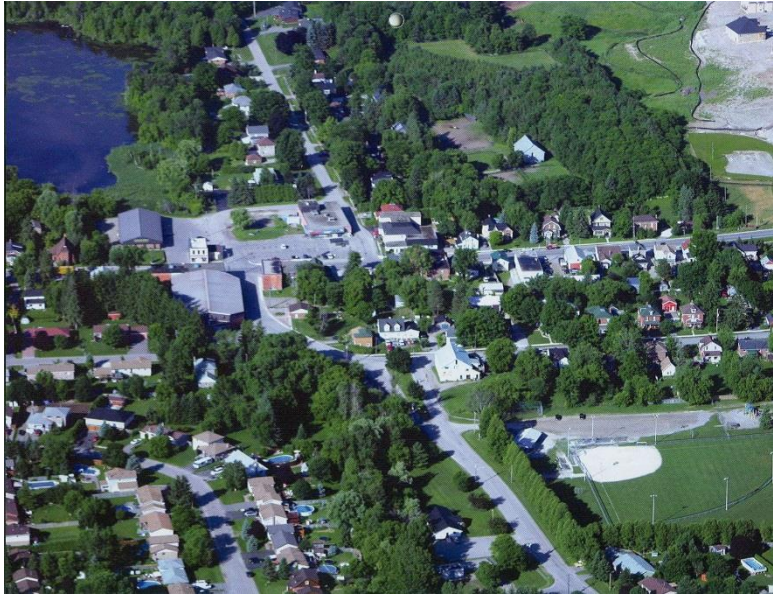
- Adopt equine as the initial economic development engine
- Focus on marketing Erin as the GTA's equine playground
- Expand trail infrastructure to attract riders and leverage nearby event facilities
- Approach neighbouring jurisdictions to form a regional trail committee
- Attract equine manufacturing for maximum tax revenue growth
- Use equine to establish an economic development framework



Proposed Erin Equine Trails "Hub"

The Erin Equine Economic Development Report (2013) recommended that the Town of Erin adopt equine as a major economic development engine, focusing on recreation and leveraging neighbouring facilities for competition. For maximum effectiveness, it further recommended that the Town pursue a strategy built on four components: marketing, infrastructure, equine manufacturing, and sustainability. It was suggested that together these four components would knit together a cohesive and mutually supportive industry.

The Report also supported the engagement of an economic development coordinator and a budget to pursue trail development and marketing efforts. An application was submitted to OMAFRA under the Ministry's Rural Economic Development (RED) Program for 50% funding, however, the project as proposed, was not supported. A new more comprehensive application for funding will be submitted to the Ministry's Rural Economic Development (RED) Program in November 2015.

Goal #4.6:***Promote and Market the Town of Erin as a Four Seasons Tourism Destination***

In today's economy it is important to have a positive brand, a brand that is differentiated, trusted and recognized. The Town of Erin needs a clear brand that will establish the community as a great place for investment, work, and leisure. Developing a central brand theme and working to develop tailored marketing and promotional materials for specific

audiences will help to promote the community and all the opportunities within Erin. Presently, Erin is identified for its rolling hills, quaint small town charm and rural lifestyle. The Village of Erin is a destination for many seeking a day outing and shopping opportunities. The Village of Hillsburgh is long known as a community of vibrant artists and quality home décor. Both communities are linked by the Elora Cataract Trail and visitors are often surprised by the number of active trails within the Town of Erin. Future opportunities abound for development of a "Riverwalk" trail that runs along the shoreline of the Lower West Credit River from Charles Street in the Village of Erin north to the Elora Cataract Trail and then northwest to the Village of Hillsburgh.

Additional opportunities may exist for continuing the "Riverwalk" Trail around the Mill Pond in Hillsburgh and then continuing northwest on the Elora Cataract trail to Elora. Development of a "Riverwalk" Trails network within the community has the potential to draw additional visitors to the community, expand opportunities for commerce and reinvigorate locals interested in walking or riding the trail. Such a development would

complement the Town of Erin's desire to become a "Hub" for equine enthusiasts.



The Erin Fall Fair is the Town's single greatest economic contributor to the local economy. Other opportunities may be pursued that enhance the potential for developing four season tourism activities in the Town which may include, but not be limited to; St. Patrick's Day Festival,

Summer Rodeo, Ribfest Celebration, Christmas Parade, Winter Carnival, Equine Events, etc.)

Success will depend greatly upon the collaborative efforts of all parties concerned and a willingness to approach new opportunities with enthusiasm and commitment. The Town should act as the principal facilitator for these events and work with local groups to ensure an active community and regional participation.

Goal #4.7: Develop a Sustainable Economy

Striving to support a high quality of life for residents, workforce, and visitors through sustainable development that carefully integrates economic, environmental as well as social and cultural interests is vital to the long term success of the community. The long term objective for the community should be to establish a local economy that would meet the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. However, in the short term, environmental conservation and green energy alternatives present economic opportunities for the Town and great positive brand potential.

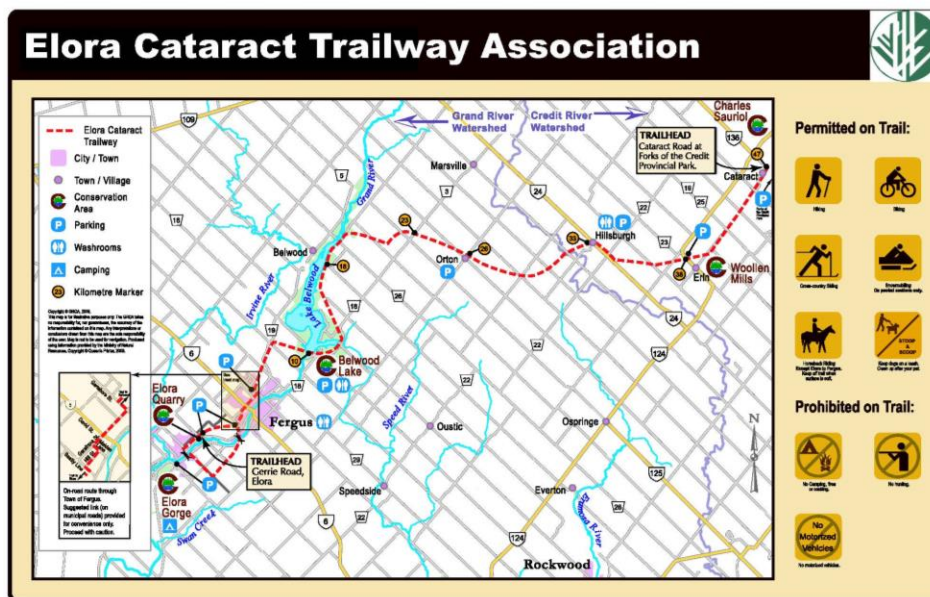
"Resilience" and "sustainability" are words used in a variety of ways. In

some interpretations, with a focus on the environmental dimension of sustainability, these ideas are seen as being at odds with economic growth. Growth certainly can have negative impacts, in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of environmental impact, consumption of resources (including land), and increased ecological footprint. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that for the foreseeable future the County of Wellington will continue to absorb growth in population and employment and a significant share of this growth will occur in the Town of Erin.

Even the communities (and there are many in North America) that explicitly strive to be “the greenest City” are also seeking to strengthen and expand their employment base and are trying to accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial expansion in ways that are greener than in the past. The key is to manage this growth so as to optimize the benefits and minimize the impacts or costs. The Town of Erin aims to retain a strong, diverse local economy. It also aims to achieve this economic strength in a responsible fashion.

This Action Plan aims to increase the resilience of Erin’s local economy, by:

- Retaining existing employers, including commercial and industrial tax base and jobs, because these support the Town’s ability to provide its residents with services and facilities.
- Maintaining the ability to accommodate a steady share of regional employment growth in the sectors in which Erin has a competitive advantage.
- Diversifying the economy, so that it is more robust in the face of major economic or environmental change



Source: Elora Cataract Trailways Association Website

Other municipal policies and initiatives, in community planning and sustainability, should be coordinated with this Action Plan, to ensure that the land use, development, and transportation changes that are associated with employment growth are managed to: reduce energy consumption, GHG emissions, and waste; increase reuse of inputs and recycling; produce healthier environments for living and working; and address the impacts of climate change on the Town of Erin.

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

The action items identified in the following sections of the Momentum Action Plan have been broken down into five distinctive areas; Downtown Core, Centerpiece, EDO, Funding and Planning. Each of these action areas are directly aligned with the seven core goals established by the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) following input from the public, the Village of Erin BIA and East Wellington Chamber of Commerce.

5.1 Downtown Core

a) **Action#5.1(i) Make Application to Ontario Trillium to Undertake a Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study**

The proposed Erin Rotary Riverwalk Project involves determining the feasibility of constructing a Riverwalk Trail along the Lower West Credit River from Charles Street north to the Elora Cataract Trail and north-west to the Village of Hillsburgh and surrounding the Hillsburgh "Millpond". The Erin Rotary Club has agreed to support the development of the proposed project as a "Rotary Legacy" project. The feasibility study will involve extensive public consultation and discussions with both the County of Wellington and Credit Valley Conservation.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: County of Wellington, Credit Valley Conservation, Erin Rotary Club, Community Stakeholder Groups, Private Landowners

Project Timing: January –July 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Riverwalk Feasibility	2016	\$67,000	Nil (100% Grant)	EDO

b) **Action # 5.1(ii) Establish a Town of Erin Wide Community Improvement Plan (CIP)**

The Town of Erin presently has two defined Community Improvement Plans, both established in the early 1990's. The CIP's covered the Villages of Erin and Hillsburgh, but have not been for the most part, ever used to their full potential. The Town needs to re-visit its existing Community Improvement Plans and roll both into one CIP for the entire Town of Erin. This will enable Council to plan and respond accordingly to community improvement and economic development opportunities.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington Planning

Project Timing: September 2015-May 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Community Improvement Plan (CIP)	2015-2016	TBD	2015/2016	CAO

c) Action #5.1(iii): *Conduct a First Impressions Community Exchange with the Town of Mount Forest*

The "First Impressions Community Exchange" Project is supported by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and will be held in collaboration with North Wellington Economic Development, the Village of Erin BIA and Let's get Hillsburgh Growing (LGHG) Committee and East Wellington Chamber of Commerce (EWCC). The initiative will see teams of representatives from each community visiting and assessing each other's communities from a variety of perspectives and responding by written report.

Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, OMAFRA, North Wellington EDC, EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG

Project Timing: Summer 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
First Impressions Exchange	Summer 2016	\$1,000.00	2016	EDO/EEDC

d) Action #5.1(iv): *Initiate Steps for Development of a Crosswalk in the Village of Erin*

For a number of years the Village of Erin BIA and others have called for a pedestrian activated light crossing on Main Street in the Village in front of the existing Canada Post office. Main Street in Erin is also WCR 124 and is a County of Wellington jurisdiction. Conduit for wiring of the crosswalk was installed, but the project has never been advanced. Discussion needs to take place with the County to further advance completion of the proposed crosswalk. The EEDC supports the need for the crosswalk in the Village of Erin.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/CAO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington

Project Timing: Fall 2015

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Village of Erin Crosswalk	2015-2016	TBD	2016	EDO/CAO

e) Action #5.1(v): *Establish Public Washroom Facilities in the Village of Erin*

The Town needs to investigate the cost of providing public washroom facilities in the downtown core area of the Village of Erin, either on a permanent or seasonal basis with appropriate rental facilities.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/EDO

Liaison: EEDC, Village of Erin BIA

Project Timing: Spring 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Public Washrooms	2016	TBD	2016-2017	CAO/EDO

f) Action #5.1(vi): *Investigate Options for Creating a Winter Skating Environment on the Lower West Credit River between Charles and Church Street in the Village of Erin*

The Town of Erin needs to explore opportunities for potentially using the Lower West Credit River as a skating atmosphere between Charles and Church Street in the Village of Erin. This activity could also complement the potential development of the proposed "Erin Rotary Riverwalk" trail.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/Manager of Recreation

Liaison: EEDC, Erin BIA,

Project Timing: Winter 2017

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Winter Skating	2017	TBD	2017	EDO

g) Action #5.1(vii) *Develop an Erin Community Ambassador Program*

Work with the Village of Erin BIA, East Wellington Chamber of Commerce and Let's Get Hillsburgh Growing to initiate a Community Ambassador Program that invigorates all participants and stakeholders towards promotion of the Town of Erin as an excellent place to live, work, play and do business.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: Erin BIA, EW CC, LGHG and Public Stakeholders

Timing: Winter 2016 – Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Ambassador Program	2016	\$2,500.00	2016	EDO

h) Action #5.1(viii): *Investigate the Potential of Extending Business Store Hours in the Community*

The present store hours in the communities do not seem to correspond to the needs of many residents who commute in and out of Erin to work or do their business. Discussions need to take place with the Village of Erin BIA and East Wellington Chamber of Commerce to determine if the business owner's would consider having their businesses open later in the evenings to accommodate greater local support and buy local interest.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: Erin BIA, East Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Local Stakeholders

Timing: Winter 2016

5.2 Four Seasons Attraction

Action #5.2(i): Develop a Four Seasons Attractions Strategy and Destinations Experience for the Town of Erin

Sector Focus Group discussions identified numerous opportunities for developing a four season attractions strategy. The discussions also fostered the need for well-developed destination experiences. This initiative will require input and support from community groups, businesses and organizations that regularly initiate activities in the Town of Erin. (Fall Fair, Equine Hub, St. Patrick's Day Festival, Erin Rotary Riverwalk)

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, Community Groups, LGHG, Credit Valley Conservation, Erin BIA

Project Timing: 2016-Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Four Seasons Attractions Strategy	2016/Ongoing	TBD	TBD	EDO

5.3 Wastewater

a) Action #5.3(i): *Wastewater Environmental Assessment*

The Town of Erin is presently undergoing environmental assessment of its water and wastewater servicing in the community. Although not directly responsible for the Wastewater EA Process, the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) feels it will be extremely important to ensure that the terms of reference, for completion of the assessment review process, be comprehensive and take into consideration all avenues of potential impact on the overall assimilative capacity. The EEDC believes that waste water treatment is critical for the future development of industrial and commercial land and supports the Environmental Review Process underway by the Town of Erin.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/Triton Engineering

Liaison: Triton, MOE, Credit Valley Conservation, County of Wellington

Project Timing: 2015-2017

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Wastewater Assessment	2015-2018	\$600,000.00	2015-2018	CAO

5.4 **Economic Development Officer (EDO) Actions**

The Town of Erin is a dynamic, growing and well planned municipality that provides an outstanding environment for business growth and expansion. The Economic Development Officer (EDO) is integral in working with the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC), Town Departments, Town Council and other agencies and groups working towards the Town of Erin realizing its potential. The EDO will work in a collaborative way with the East Wellington Chamber of Commerce and Village of Erin Business Improvement Association (BIA) to increase exposure to local business and a "Support Local" philosophy.

The Economic Development Officer (EDO) reports directly to the Town's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)/Town Manager. The EDO will be the face of the department and work closely with Council and Council Committees, external agencies and groups, the planning and development community (locally, nationally and internationally), as well as other divisions/departments within the organization. The EDO is the primary promoter and sales representative for the community where a significant amount of her time will be focused on liaising with, and ultimately attracting new businesses, and retaining and helping grow existing businesses to and in the Town of Erin.

The EDO's key responsibilities are as follows:

- Promote the clear message that the Town of Erin continues to be "open for business";
- Develop and foster strategic relationships or partnerships with the development industry and other key local, regional and national partners;
- Aggressively promote and represent the community in presentations to industry, government, media, and the public, communicating the Town's attractiveness for all types of investment;
- Identify innovative and creative means to produce and market the Town of Erin, particularly to attract tourism and desired light industrial and commercial development;

-
- Work collaboratively with the County of Wellington Planning and Development and Engineering Departments to align all process and communications to synergistically support development;
 - Develop a consolidated and consistent economic development/marketing plan and process for the entire corporation, in alignment with Council's goals;
 - Prepare and act upon analytical reports on local activities and trends, including competitive analyses;
 - Provide broad leadership and direction to the employees and consultants within the Economic Development Department;
 - Serve as a strategic member on the Town's Senior Leadership Team, including directing issues of corporate importance and providing professional advice within the organization, to elected officials, and to others;
 - Directly and indirectly support the Town of Erin's improved economic sustainability and quality of life, through active business attraction;
 - Proactively consult, facilitate and support the growth, development, and retention of existing business in the Town of Erin.

5.4.1. Centerpiece Priorities

a) Four Seasons Attraction:

Action #5.4.1(i): Develop a Four Seasons Attractions Strategy and Destinations Experience for the Town of Erin

Sector Focus Group discussions identified numerous opportunities for developing a four season attractions strategy. The discussions also fostered the need for well-developed destination experiences. This initiative will require input and support from community groups, businesses and organizations that regularly initiate activities in the Town of Erin.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, Community Groups, LGHG, Credit Valley Conservation, Erin BIA
Project Timing: 2016-Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Four Seasons Attractions Strategy	2016/Ongoing	TBD	TBD	EDO

b) Wastewater:***Action #5.4.1(ii): Wastewater Environmental Assessment***

The Town of Erin is presently undergoing environmental assessment of its water and wastewater servicing in the community. Although not directly responsible for the Wastewater EA Process, the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) feels it will be extremely important to ensure that the terms of reference, for completion of the assessment review process, be comprehensive and take into consideration all avenues of potential impact on the overall assimilative capacity. The EEDC believes that waste water treatment is critical for the future development of industrial and commercial land and supports the Environmental Review Process underway by the Town of Erin.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/Triton Engineering

Liaison: Triton, MOE, Credit Valley Conservation, County of Wellington
Project Timing: 2015-2017

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Wastewater Assessment	2015-2018	\$600,000.00	2015-2018	CAO

c) **Business Retention and Expansion:**

Action #5.4.1 (iii): *Undertake a Follow-Up Review of BR&E Contributing Businesses*

The Town of Erin participated in an extensive Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) review initiated by the County of Wellington (2014) and a number of the businesses that were interviewed requested future follow-up meetings. The economic development department will conduct follow-up sessions in the fall of 2015.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington, EWCC

Project Timing: Fall 2015

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
BR&E Review	Fall 2015	\$1,500.00	2015	EDO

d) **Equine Hub:**

Action #5.4.1(iv): *Submit New Application to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to Develop the Equine Industry within the Town of Erin as an Equine "Hub" of Trail Infrastructure*

The Town of Erin needs to make application under the OMAFRA's Rural Economic Development Program (RED Program) for project funding to support the feasibility and future development of the community as a "Hub" for Equine Trail infrastructure development. This application is funded on a matching funds basis (50%).

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: OMAFRA, EEDC, County of Wellington EcDev, Headwaters, Equine Guelph Trails Network

Project Timing:

Fall 2015- March 2017

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Equine Hub OMAFRA	2016-2018	TBD (50%)	2016-2017	EDO

5.4.2 EDO - Core Functions

a) Action # 5.4.2(i) *Develop External Business Attraction Marketing and Promotion Campaign*

External business attraction is expensive but necessary if a community intends to grow its business potential. Action is required to plan and develop new marketing and promotional materials that address and influence potential business owners considering a location for their venture.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, EWCC

Project Timing: January 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
External Business Attraction	2016	\$15,000.00	2015-2016	EDO

b) Action #5.4.2(ii): *Develop a Town of Erin Community Profile (Print and Web Based)*

Work has already been started on drafting a Town of Erin Community Profile and this task needs to be completed so that all pertinent information is available to anyone looking to relocate to the community and for site selectors searching out potential locations for commercial or

industrial development. The community profile once completed will be both printed and available on the Town's website for easy access.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, Village of Erin BIA, LGHG

Project Timing: December 2015- February 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Community Profile	Dec.2015 - Feb.2016	\$5,000.00	2015	EDO

d) **Action #5.4.2(iii): *Support Commercial/Industrial Enquiries and Provide Coordination Role***

The Town of Erin economic development department regularly responds to a variety of commercial and industrial enquiries. There is an ongoing responsibility to ensure that response is expedient and that the information provided is timely and complete.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, County of Wellington

Project Timing: Ongoing

e) **Action #5.4.2(iv) *Development of Industrial and Commercial Lands***

The Town of Erin needs to investigate options for acquisition of lands in other quadrants of the community that may offer opportunities for future serviced industrial commercial development (i.e. Crewsons Corners, etc.)

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: County of Wellington Planning, Commercial Realtors, Private Land Developers

Timing: Ongoing

5.4.3 EDO - Priorities

a) Action #5.4.3(i): *Establish a Business Visitation Plan*

The Mayor and EDO will establish a regular weekly schedule to meet with one business per week, to become better informed about the needs of the business community and help address any questions concerning municipal services and economic development support that may exist.

Lead Responsibility: **EDO/Mayor**

Liaison: EWCC, Erin BIA

Project Timing: Fall 2015

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Business Visitation	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	EDO/Mayor

b) Action #5.4.3(ii): *Undertake an "Open for Business" Marketing and Promotional Campaign*

The Town of Erin has publically declared it is "Open for Business." Words alone are never enough to bring about results. The Town needs to develop a marketing and promotional campaign to back up its declaration and market the community's assets and rural quality of life experience.

Lead Responsibility: **EDO**

Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG, Erin Radio 88.1, Erin Advocate

Project Timing: Fall 2015

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Open for Business Campaign	2015 and Ongoing	\$3,000.00	2015 Ongoing	EDO

c) Action #5.4.3(iii): *Promotion of "Live and Work Erin" Web Portal*

The Live and Work Erin (www.liveandworkerin.com) web portal went live on the Town of Erin website in May 2015. The web portal requires proper marketing and promotion to ensure its utilization and success. The Town and three other partnering economic development departments across Wellington County will collectively share the cost of a three month advertising blitz to acquaint the public with the availability of the web portal and its access.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: County of Wellington, Minto, Centre Wellington, North Wellington

Project Timing: Fall 2015

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Live and Work Erin Portal	2015	\$3,500.00	2015	EDO

d) Action #5.4.3(iv): *Attract Equine Manufacturing and Equine Service Business to the Town of Erin*

The Town of Erin is estimated to be home to over 400 horse farms and approximately 250 horse related business enterprises. The Town needs initiate measures to attract equine manufacturing and service related businesses to the community. The appropriate marketing and promotional initiatives need to be identified and implemented in the future.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington OMAFRA

Project Timing: 2016/Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Attract Equine Manufacturing /Service	2016	\$5,000.00	2016	EDO

e) Action #5.4.3(v): *Produce a Trails Network Plan and Promotional Brochure*

Work in conjunction with the Town of Erin Trails Network Committee to further develop an Erin Trails Network and appropriate promotional materials.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/CAO
Liaison: EEDC, Trail Committee
Project Timing: March 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Trails Brochure	2016	\$1,000.00	2016	EDO

f) Action #5.4.3(vi): *Explore the Potential for Attracting a Post-Secondary Educational Facility*

The Town of Erin presently has excellent elementary and secondary educational facilities. Opportunities may exist for use of the upper floor area of the Erin Public School. The Town needs to explore potential options with the Upper Grand District School Board for influencing the interest of a college to locate a satellite facility in the Town of Erin.



Lead Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Sheridan College, County of Wellington, Upper Grand District School Board
Project Timing: 2015

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Attract Post-Secondary	2015	\$1,000.00	2015	EDO

g) Action #5.4.3(vii): *Initiate Photometric Analysis of Village of Erin Downtown Core Lighting Upgrades*

Lighting standards within the Village of Erin are old and in need of replacement. The Town needs to conduct a photometric analysis of the downtown core area and determine its options for replacement of more energy efficient lighting.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/Roads Superintendent

Liaison: Erin BIA, Town Public Works

Project Timing: Spring 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Photometric Analysis	2016	\$1,500.00	2016	EDO/Roads Superintendent

h) Action #5.4.3(viii) *Semi-Annual Mayor's Business Breakfast*

Undertake a Semi-Annual Mayor's Business Breakfast to update the business community on the activities of the Town of Erin and engage the business community and other stakeholder groups in a discussion about community priorities.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/Mayor

Liaison: Erin BIA, East Wellington Chamber of
Commerce, County of Wellington

Timing: May 2016-October 2016 (Ongoing)

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Mayor's Breakfasts	2016	\$1,500.00	Ongoing	EDO/Mayor

i) Action #5.4.3(ix): *Establish an Erin Equine Marketing Alliance*

Discussions with members of the equine industry indicate that there is no coordinated voice within the equine sector in the Town of Erin. Further research shows that the industry lacks a coordinated voice when it relates to marketing initiatives and that an alliance of industry representatives is warranted.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, OMAFRA, Equine Canada, Local Equine Operators, Headwaters Equine Leadership Group (HELG)

Project Timing: 2016/Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Equine Marketing Alliance	2016 Ongoing	\$2,500.00	2016	EDO

j) Action #5.4.3(x): *Create a Web Based Erin Equine Business Directory*

The Town of Erin is a well-known host to over 400 horse farms and a variety of equine related service operators. The availability of a well administered Erin Equine Business Directory would further accentuate the community as the centre of horse country.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/Equine Representation

Liaison: EEDC, Equine Canada, OMAFRA, Erin Ag Society, Guelph Equine Network

Project Timing: Winter 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Equine Business Directory	2016	\$2,500.00	2016	EDO

k) Action #5.4.3(xi): *Investigate Ways to Leverage Headwaters "Horse Country" Marketing*

The Town is presently a member of Headwaters Tourism and it needs to investigate how it can further, better leverage the Headwaters "Horse Country" branding and promotion to its advantage.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, Headwaters, Headwaters Equine Leadership Group (HELG)

Project Timing: January 2016

l) Action#5.4.3(xii): *Develop a Corporate Sponsorship and Advertising Policy*

The Town needs to develop a formal policy for how it sponsors public initiatives and how it administers publically advertised services.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/CAO

Liaison

EEDC, Headwaters, EWCC

Project Timing:

May 2016

m) Action #5.4.3(xiii): *Investigate Opportunities for an Additional Transfer Station, Recycling Program and Composting Facility*

Enter into a dialogue with the County of Wellington to determine available options for an additional waste transfer station, recycling program and composting facilities within the Town of Erin to mitigate existing travel distance and eco-sensitivity interests in the community.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison:

County of Wellington,

Project Timing:

January 2015

5.4.4 Funding

a) Action #5.4.4(i): *Apply for County of Wellington 2015 Economic Development Funding*

The County of Wellington economic development department Business Retention and Expansion Municipal Support Program offers \$25,000 in financial grant funding to County wide municipalities pursuing business and retention efforts in their community. The Town of Erin received funding in 2014 and will apply for like funding in 2015.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/EDO

Liaison:

EEDC, County of Wellington

Project Timing: Completed and Approved- October 2015

b) Action #5.4.4(ii): *Apply to County of Wellington Planning for 50% Funding to Undertake a Trail Development*

The County of Wellington Planning Department offers a grant to undertake trail development within Wellington County. The Town will submit an application for funding in the amount of \$20,000 and the 2016 budget for trail development allocates \$10,000 towards matching funds. The community is eligible for up to \$50,000 in matching funding for walking trail development.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington, Erin Trails Committee, Public Land Owners

Project Timing: Spring 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Walking Trails Development	2016	\$10,000.00	2015/2016	EDO

c) Action #5.4.4 (iii) *Apply to OMAFRA "RED Program" for funding to develop an Equine Trail Hub in the Town of Erin and seek out other opportunities for expanding the Equine industry within the Town. This application is for matching funding (50%).*

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: Equine Guelph, OMAFRA, Headwaters Tourism Village of Erin BIA, Erin Ag Society, Private Landowners

Timing: 2015-2018

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Equine Trails Hub	2015-2018	TBD	TBD	EDO

5.4.5 Collaboration

a) Action #5.4.5(i): *Host a Business Showcase Networking Event/Economic Development Forum*

The Economic Development Department in collaboration with the East Wellington Chamber of Commerce (EWCC) and the Village of Erin BIA will be hosting a Business Showcase of an estimated 70 businesses in the community in conjunction with the annual Home and Lifestyle Show to better inform the general public of what business brings to a community and what it has to offer. The Showcase will be held at Centre 2000 in April 2016 and admittance for the public is free.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG

Project Timing: April 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Business Showcase	April 2016	\$5,000.00 (Breakeven)	2016	EDO/BIA/Chamber

b) Action #5.4.5(ii): *Explore the Potential for Developing a "Business Development Centre" in the Town of Erin*

At present there are a number of facilities available in the community to meet the needs of new business enterprises in their infancy stages of growth. There are a variety of support programs available through the County of Wellington, the Guelph-Wellington Business Enterprise

Centre, the local Business Improvement Association (BIA) and East Wellington Chamber of Commerce (EWCC) to assist the needs of business in the community. The development of an “incubation” type business development centre in the community in collaboration with the private sector should be explored.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, County of Wellington, Village of Erin BIA

Project Timing: Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Business Development Centre	2015-2016	TBD	nil	EDO

c) Action #5.4.5(iii): *Support Regional Collaboration and Association Events Related to Economic Development*

The Town of Erin commits to working collaboratively, locally and across the region with community groups and organizations in support of efforts that make the community a better place to live, work, play and do business.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/CAO

Liaison: EEDC, EDCO, County of Wellington EcDev, Headwaters Tourism, Regional Tourism RTO#4

Project Timing: Ongoing

d) Action #5.4.5(iv): *Enhance Working Relationships with Adjoining Community Economic Development Departments*

The Town of Erin meets monthly with representatives of all economic development departments within the County of Wellington. Additional relationships need to exist between the Town and neighbouring communities to the east, west, north and south.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: County of Wellington, Centre Wellington,
Guelph Eramosa, Caledon, Halton Hills

Project Timing: Ongoing

e) Action #5.4.5(v): *Collaborative Promotion with Erin BIA in the "In the Hills" Publication*

The Town of Erin participates with the Village of Erin BIA to promote and market the downtown core businesses in a quarterly publication of "In the Hills."

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: Village of Erin BIA, In the Hills

Project Timing: Fall 2015

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
"In the Hills" Promotion	2015	\$1,200.00	2015	CAO

f) Action #5.4.5(vi): *Develop and Maintain Relationships with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)*

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) play a significant part in the lives of local residents and it also is the lead Ministry for rural economic development in Ontario. As the Town of Erin moves forward with its economic development objectives, consistent liaison with representatives of OMAFRA will be very important.

Lead Responsibility: EDO/CAO

Liaison: Guelph Office of OMAFRA, EEDC, County of Wellington

Project Timing: Ongoing

g) Action #5.4.(vii): *Support Regional Collaboration and Association Events Related to Economic Development*

The Town of Erin commits to working collaboratively, locally and across the region with community groups and organizations in support of efforts that make the community a better place to live, work, play and do business.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, EDCO, County of Wellington EcDev, Headwaters Tourism

Project Timing: Ongoing

5.4.6 Planning Related Activities

a) Action #5.4.6(i): *Proceed with the Town of Erin Official Plan Amendment Process and Identify Growth Areas*

The Town's Official Plan (OP) requires updating every five years and the Town of Erin's OP is scheduled for updating commencing in the fall of 2015. The town's planning is now undertaken by the County of Wellington Planning Department.

Lead Responsibility: CAO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington Planning

Project Timing: September 2015-June 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Official Plan Amendment	2015-2016	TBD	2015-2016	CA

b) Action #5.4.6(ii) *Develop a Four Seasons Attractions Strategy and Destinations Experience for the Town of Erin*

Sector Focus Group discussions identified numerous opportunities for developing a four season attractions strategy. The discussions also fostered the need for well-developed destination experiences. This initiative will require input and support from community groups, businesses and organizations that regularly initiate activities in the Town of Erin.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, Community Groups, LGHG, Credit Valley Conservation, Erin BIA

Project Timing: 2016-Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Four Seasons Attractions Strategy	2016/Ongoing	TBD	TBD	EDO

c) Action #5.4.6(iii): *Work with the County of Wellington EcDev Department to Upgrade Regional Road Signage*

The County of Wellington has initiated a review and study of signage throughout the County. The Town of Erin will work collaboratively with the County to complete the study and provide recommendations for enhancing signage in the community and across the region.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington, EWCC

Project Timing: August 2015-December 2016

d) Action# 5.4.6(iv): *Develop System Upgrades to the Town's Social Media Platform*

The Town of Erin website presently offers a variety of information about the Town and Council activities. At present, aside from Twitter feeds the Town has no additional social media platforms. The Town needs to investigate and develop new avenues via social media for keeping its residents posted on activities in a timely manner.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/EDO

Liaison: EEDC,

Project Timing: Ongoing

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Social Media Upgrades	2016/Ongoing	\$1,000.00	2016	EDO/CAO

e) Action #5.4.6(v): *Investigate Opportunities for Expanding the Trail Infrastructure within the Town of Erin and Opportunities for Leveraging nearby Event Facilities*

Efforts must be undertaken to expand the existing trail infrastructure within the Town of Erin and discussions need to be held with owners of horse event facilities to potentially develop opportunities for mutual leverage.

Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, Halton, Angelstone Farms, Palgrave, Orangeville, Caledon, Inglewood, Cheltenham, Fergus, Elora and Local Arena establishments

Project Timing: Spring 2016

f) Action #5.4.6(vi): *Undertake a Town of Erin Recreation Masterplan*

The Town of Erin has no Recreation Department and facilities within the community are independently supervised. There is a need for undertaking a Recreation Master Plan to better facilitate recreation in the community. The completion of a Master plan was a recommendation by Strategy Corp, the consulting service undertaking the Town of Erin Operational Review.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/Recreation Manager

Liaison: EEDC, Erin Staff, Community

Project Timing: January 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Recreation Masterplan	2016	T BD	2016	CAO/Rec Manager

g) Action #5.4.6(vii): *Undertake a Transportation and Parking Plan for the Urban Centres of Hillsburgh and Village of Erin.*

The Town should undertake transportation and parking study to determine the needs of both Hillsburgh and the Village of Erin.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/ Roads Department

Liaison: Erin BIA, EWCC, County of Wellington

Project Timeline: June 2016

h) Action #5.4.6 (viii): *Explore Green Energy Opportunities within the Town of Erin*

The Town needs to further explore opportunities for using green energy systems to reduce its existing demand on the environment.

Lead Responsibility: CAO

Liaison: Industry, Recreation Department, Public Works

Project Timing: Ongoing

i) Action #5.4.6(ix): *Establish a Town of Erin Wide Community Improvement Plan (CIP)*

The Town of Erin presently has two defined Community Improvement Plans, both established in the early 1980's-1990's. The CIP's relate to the Villages of Erin and Hillsburgh, but have not been utilized to their full potential. The Town needs to re-visit its existing Community Improvement Plans and roll both into one CIP for the entire Town of Erin. This will enable Council to plan and respond accordingly to community improvement and economic development opportunities.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington Planning

Project Timing: September 2015-May 2016

Action	Year	Est. Cost	Budget Impact	Lead
Community Improvement Plan (CIP)	2015-2016	TBD	2015/2016	CAO

j) Action #5.4.6(x): *Undertake a Review of Available Land for Industrial/Commercial Development*

The Town economic development department needs to undertake a review of present conditions and create a database of available industrial and commercial facilities and lands available for occupation and or development in the community. This will require collaboration between the Town and area realtors and developers to ensure the data is kept current and information is updated on regular intervals.

Lead Responsibility: EDO

Liaison: EEDC, EWCC

Project Timing: December 2015

6.0 MONITORING AND UPDATING

The Town of Erin Economic Development Department and the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) will monitor the Town of Erin's economic trends and evaluate progress in achieving the goals and objectives of this Action Plan. Performance measurements should be based on annual inputs and outputs and the effectiveness of the Economic Development Officer in formulating and sustaining

collaborative relationships at all levels.

The Economic Development office will produce an annual report summarizing:

- Key statistical indicators that track progress in achieving the aim of this Action Plan, particularly data on land availability, employment, commercial and industrial space, and business enquiries.
- Annual measurement of economic development activity based on inputs and outputs
- Actions that have been initiated or completed in the year.
- Plans for the coming year.

The Action Plan should be reviewed by Council in 2018 and updated in 2019.

7.0 NEXT STEPS

Next steps will include, but not be limited to:

- Receipt of the Momentum: Action Plan by Town of Erin Council (November 3, 2015);
- Commencement of the fulltime Economic Development Officer (November 9, 2015);
- Meeting of new Economic Development Officer and Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) – November 11, 2015;
- Mentorship between existing contract Economic Development Coordinator and new Economic Development Officer (November 9-27, 2015);

-
- Economic Development Officer to begin work in collaboration with community partners (Village of Erin BIA, East Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Headwaters Tourism, Erin Agriculture Society, County of Wellington and neighbouring economic development departments);
 - Economic Development Officer to initiate funding application to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Rural Economic Development (RED) Program for Equine Hub Development (November 2015)
 - Ongoing activities of the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) to oversee implementation of the action plan and provide advice to the EDO and Town's CAO/Town Manager where appropriate.
 - Development of the 2016 Economic Development Annual Budget

NOTE: Advancing with proposed projects may be conditional upon the Town of Erin receiving funding from other senior levels of government.

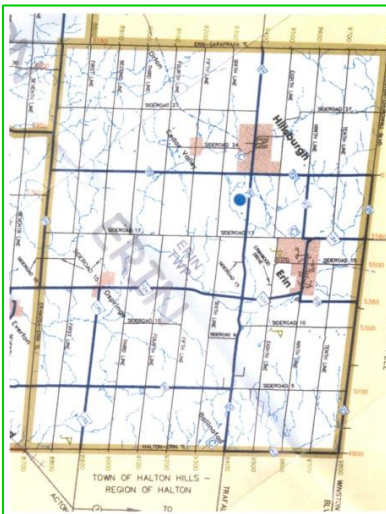
8.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS and DEFINITIONS

The following glossary is provided recognizing that not all citizens are as familiar with terms and acronyms used in the fields of economic development and municipal government:

- 1) **“RED Program”** – The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs , Rural Economic Development Program
- 2) **EEDC** – Erin Economic Development Committee
- 3) **CAO** – Chief Administrative Officer
- 4) **HELG** – Headwaters Equine Leadership Group
- 5) **BIA** – Business Improvement Association
- 6) **EWCC** – East Wellington Chamber of Commerce
- 7) **OMAFRA** - Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
- 8) **HEADWEATERS** – Headwaters Tourism Association
- 9) **RTO 4** – Regional Tourism Organization Region #4
- 10) **CVC** – Credit Valley Conservation
- 11) **LGHG** – Let’s Get Hillsburgh Growing Committee
- 12) **EDO** – Economic Development Officer
- 13) **EDCO** – Economic Development Council of Ontario
- 14) **EDAC** – Economic Developers Association of Canada
- 15) **EDCoE** – Economic Development Committee of Erin
- 16) **GTA** – Greater Toronto Area
- 17) **Trillium** – Ontario Trillium Foundation
- 18) **WCR** – Wellington County Road

9.0 APPENDICES

1) BACKGROUND: The Town of Erin was incorporated following amalgamation in 1998 and is governed by an elected Council made up of four Councillors and a Mayor. The municipal administration is headed by a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The Town's previously elected Council engaged the services of an independent economic development practitioner just prior to ending its elected term in November 2014. Prior to this, economic development initiatives were undertaken and administered on a project specific basis by the office of the Chief Administrative Officer. The Economic Development Coordinator was engaged under contract for a period of twelve months commencing November 18, 2014.



In previous years, Council looked to the advice of an appointed Economic Development Advisory Committee, however, over time membership on the Committee dissipated until the Committee no longer remained active. With the creation of the new economic development function in November 2014, the Town of Erin called for expressions of interest from members of the public interested in sitting on a newly established Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC). In early February 2015, Council appointed the new fourteen member EEDC to work with the Economic Development Coordinator and provide guidance and advice through the office of the CAO to Council. Part of the new Coordinator's responsibilities was to work with the EEDC membership to

formulate and economic development action plan that would form the framework and a roadmap for economic development within the Town of Erin over the next four years.

MOMENTUM: The impetus and driving force gained by the development of a process or course of events



"MOMENTUM: Town of Erin 2015-2018 Economic Development Action Plan" will set the vision and direction for the economic development function during the existing Council's four year mandate. A total of fifty-one (51) action initiatives have been identified within the action plan of which eighteen (18) have either been completed or are presently underway.

The Economic Development Action Plan is not to be confused with the Town's previously undertaken Corporate Strategic Plan. The Town of Erin completed its draft Corporate Strategic Plan in 2013 and in doing so it identified objectives that it prescribed to for *Building, Branding*

and Maintaining Strong Local Economies. The plan stated that the viability of the Town of Erin was dependent upon a strong local economy and that it considered the following:

- Services and businesses are located throughout the Town of Erin and all require supports and services to sustain local economies
- Strong local economies sustain strong property values and in turn enable our neighbourhoods to prosper and thrive with a variety of local services and amenities.
- We are committed to working in partnership with local business groups, e.g. LGHG, Erin BIA, East Wellington Chamber of Commerce to ensure supports are available to enable ongoing business success and a diversity of services.
- We are committed to supporting industries that are mutually beneficial to our local economy and reflect our heritage and values including agriculture, ranching and the equine industry.
- We will support economic development activities to sustain our local economy and thereby our investments and infrastructure.
- The Town of Erin has recently approved the hiring of an Economic Development Officer. The individual will work with local businesses, tourism officials and Town staff to develop support and market strategic activities as part of the Town's Strategic Plan to enhance Economic Development and Tourism. This individual will support the Town's Economic Development Committee to develop a framework for funding and training support.

2) The Erin Equine Economic Development Report

(<http://www.erin.ca/uploads/userfiles/files/1%20equine%20task%20force%20report%20-%20report%20finalx.pdf>)

3) The Town of Erin Official Plan (<http://www.erin.ca/file.ashx?id=53624332-4f09-45be-9d0b-a9298cc446d7>)

As in any municipality in the Province of Ontario, it is the Town's Official Plan (OP) which establishes the parameters for development within a community. The Town of Erin's Official Plan is scheduled for review commencing in September 2015, however the following statements make up part of the existing OP concerning economic development in the community (Official Plan, Section 2.2.4 Economic Development).

- a) That the Town will be "open for business" by encouraging additional commercial and industrial opportunities to provide greater employment opportunities to complement the Town's residential development. In particular clean, technologically smart industry and business is encouraged
- b) That the Town encourage rural tourism as an economic development opportunity.
- c) That the Town continue to support home based businesses and cottage industries, enabled through technology, as an alternative form of economic development.

Section 2.3 of the OP addresses the Town of Erin's Growth Strategy and outlines the County of Wellington's forecasts for growth to the year 2031.

1.2 Relationship to the Growth Strategy (OP Section 2.3.1)

The County of Wellington Official Plan sets out an overall growth strategy for Wellington County based on the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in a manner that is in keeping with appropriate and sustainable growth in small towns and rural areas. The decisions of the Town will conform to the overall growth strategy.

Growth in the Town of Erin and urban communities of Erin and Hillsburgh is forecasted as follows:

Town of Erin

Years	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Total Population	11,680	11,930	12,490	13,510	14,530	15,530
Households	3810	3960	4160	4510	4850	5180
Total Employment	3550	3590	3780	4600	5020	5460

Urban Centres

Years	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Erin Village						
Total Population	3020	3000	3100	3540	3980	4400
Households	1030	1050	1090	1240	1390	1530
Hillsburgh						
Total Population	1240	1280	1380	1610	1850	2080
Households	410	430	460	540	610	690

The Official Plan also outlines Community Improvement Policies in Section 3.4 which provide a variety of tools for Council's consideration and enactment to assist in the economic development function. Section 3.15 of the Official Plan specifically addresses Economic Development. The section reads as follows:

3.15.1 Overview

The Town's economy is mostly dependent on agriculture, aggregate operations, existing industry and commerce, home based business, tourism and recreation.

The Official Plan will address economic sustainability for the Town of Erin through creation of fiscal and economic policies. Economic development policies are intended to provide a cohesive platform to provide support services for the existing businesses in the Town of Erin as well as create new mechanisms to encourage new businesses to establish themselves in the Town.

3.15.2 Objectives

- a) To encourage industrial, commercial and other assessable non-residential growth in the Town, in particular, through economic development in areas of competitive advantage.
- b) To protect the economic viability of the Town, while providing adequate levels of municipal services.
- c) To ensure that new economic development is compatible with the existing form of development in the Town by encouraging "clean, green" types of industry.
- d) To create additional jobs in the community to enable a greater proportion of the population to live and work in the Town of Erin.

3.15.3 Economic Development Policies

- a) Recognizing the potential financial benefits of additional industrial/commercial development, the Town shall endeavour to:
 - i) commit an effective level of financial resources and staff effort to providing information and developing promotional strategies that will attract such development;
 - ii) streamline any necessary approval process associated with industrial or commercial development proposals;
 - iii) ensure all times, the availability of adequate supply of appropriately located designated and serviced land for industrial or commercial purposes;
 - iv) review its parking standards, building setback, landscaping and site plan standards, from time to time, considering market trends, to ensure that appropriate standards for industrial or commercial uses are maintained;

-
- vi) consider the use of available financial mechanisms, such as the provisions of the Development Charges Act to encourage economic development and ensure that growth related capital costs are met by development.
 - b) In order to generate additional industrial and commercial growth, the Town shall develop policies to facilitate economic development in key areas of competitive advantage such as:
 - i) tourism and recreation opportunities;
 - ii) home based occupations, small business, and agricultural related business;
 - iii) knowledge based business;
 - iv) storage and transportation opportunities.
 - c) Encourage the retention and expansion of the existing base of industry, identifying and meeting the needs of existing businesses and exemplifying a proactive and anticipatory attitude towards business investment and development;
 - d) New commercial and industrial development may be required to complete fiscal impact analysis in accordance with Section 15.15.5 of this Plan to ensure that the proposal will not have an adverse financial impact on the municipality.

Section 3.15.4 of the Town's Official Plan goes on to guide the Town with the establishment of and Economic Development Committee (EEDC) which was established and commenced its responsibilities in February 2015. These areas of the existing Official Plan are important as they highlight Council's mandate for economic development and reinforce the Town of Erin's existing policy concerning the delivery of economic development services in the community.

4) METHODOLOGY

"MOMENTUM: Town of Erin 2015-2018 Economic Development Action Plan" was developed with significant input from EEDC members and strategic sector focus groups in addition to the observations and experience of the Town's existing Economic Development Coordinator over the past eight months. The Action Plan will be available for written public comment until August 25th, 2015. Four focus group sessions were held in order to get a clear understanding of sector priorities and suggested initiatives that could be explored over the next four years.

The four sector focus groups discussed matters relating to:

- Equine and Agricultural Industry
- Tourism
- Downtown Revitalization
- Business Attraction

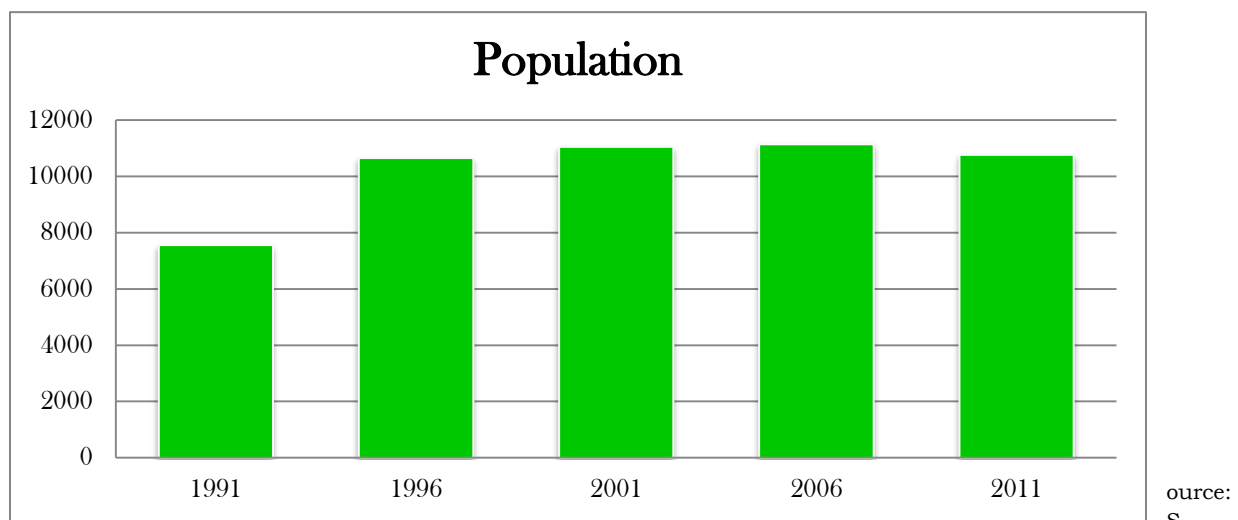
5) PURPOSE OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

This Economic Development Action Plan is a comprehensive but practical strategic document that outlines and prioritizes the community economic development policy tools. The purpose of the plan is to provide the guiding principles for positive community development, and direct actionable items to assist the newly formed Economic Development Committee (EEDC) and the Town of Erin's staff in attracting and retaining businesses and labour force that will secure a strong municipal economic future. This document is a strategic action plan for building capacity to foster the local economy.

6) DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Erin has grown continuously until 2006. Since 2007 the population has dropped minimally, a trend the town looks to reverse into its previous sustained growth. The Town's 2006 population was 11,148 compared to 10,770 in 2011, a decrease of 378 net citizens since the latest census. This represents a 3.4% decrease in population since 2006. Growth is affected by factors such as migration levels, housing costs, work opportunities and the economy in other parts of the country.

Figure 1 shows that Erin's population has been increasing at an even pace from 1996 - 2011. The population rose quickly from 1991 to 1996 due to an adjusted boundary line. Since then, the population increased steadily until the first population decrease was reported in 2011. The growth witnessed from 1991 until 2011 saw the population increase by 3,209 individuals from 7,561 in 1991, to 10,770 in 2011. In spite of the recent decrease in population of only 378 individuals, Erin is in prime position to continue the steady growth it has experienced over the last two decades.

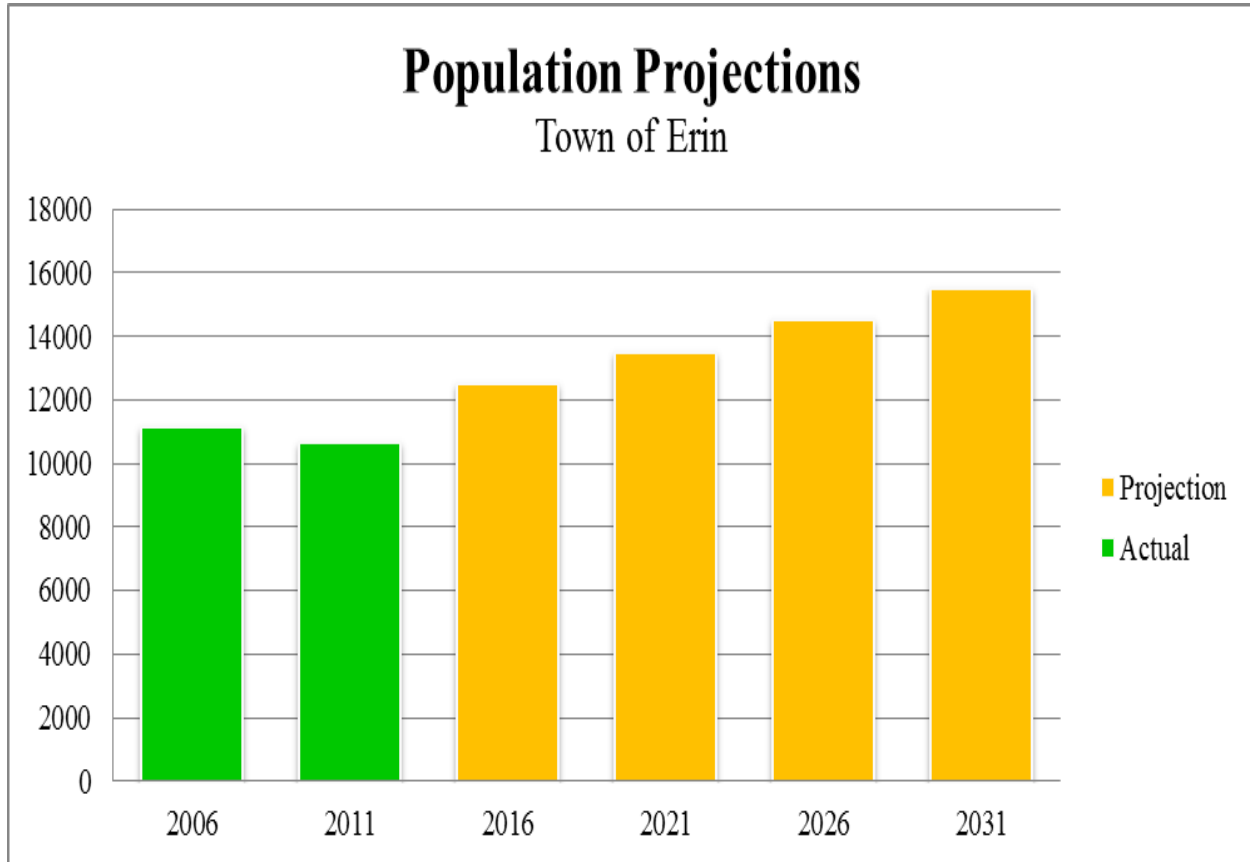


Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population, 2006 Census of Population, 2001 Census of Population, 1996 Census of Population. Source: Stats Canada, 2011 Census of Population.

Figure 2 shows that the population of the Town of Erin is projected to grow steadily from 2011 onwards. From the 2011 total of 10,657, the population is projected to grow to 13,510 a decade later in 2021, and 15,530 another decade later in 2031. These statistics highlight the fact that despite the continued small

town charm Erin will always possess there is room for growth and statistics project a steadily growing population in Erin. This sustained growth bodes well for sustainable development in the town.

Figure 2



Population and Employment Estimates

Wellington County 2014 Population & Employment Estimates

Location	2011						2014					
	Population (excluding undercount)	Population (including undercount)	Households	PPU	Employment (including No Fixed Place of Work)	Activity Rate (including No Fixed Place of Work)	Population (excluding undercount)	Population (including undercount)	Households	PPU	Employment (including No Fixed Place of Work)	Activity Rate (including No Fixed Place of Work)
Centre Wellington	26,893	27,785	9,945	2.79	10,970	0.41	27,760	28,900	10,408	2.78	11,480	0.41
Fergus	13,260	13,805	5,115	2.70			13,650	14,210	5,330	2.67		
Elora/Salem	6,415	6,680	2,425	2.75			7,050	7,340	2,656	2.76		
Centre Wellington Rural	7,018	7,305	2,405	3.04			7,050	7,340	2,422	3.03		
Erin	11,420	11,890	3,955	3.01	3,340	0.29	11,740	12,220	4,046	3.02	3,550	0.30
Erin Village	4,190	4,360	1,105	3.95			4,220	4,390	1,115	3.94		
Hillsburgh	1,325	1,380	400	3.45			1,330	1,380	402	3.43		
Erin Rural	5,905	6,145	2,450	2.51			6,190	6,440	2,529	2.55		
Guelph/Eramosa	12,380	12,890	4,220	3.05	4,500	0.36	12,520	13,030	4,280	3.04	4,740	0.38
Rockwood	4,355	4,535	1,595	2.84			4,460	4,640	1,636	2.84		
Guelph/Eramosa Rural	8,025	8,355	2,625	3.18			8,060	8,390	2,644	3.17		
Mapleton	9,989	10,400	2,930	3.55	4,090	0.41	10,280	10,700	3,028	3.53	4,250	0.41
Drayton	1,880	1,955	675	2.90			2,120	2,210	754	2.93		
Moorefield	415	430	155	2.77			420	440	156	2.82		
Mapleton Rural	7,694	8,010	2,100	3.81			7,740	8,060	2,118	3.81		
Minto	8,334	8,675	3,140	2.76	3,730	0.45	8,530	8,880	3,221	2.76	3,790	0.44
Clifford	790	820	335	2.45			800	830	341	2.43		
Harriston	1,960	2,040	775	2.63			1,980	2,060	785	2.62		
Palmerston	2,610	2,715	1,025	2.65			2,670	2,780	1,055	2.64		
Minto Rural	2,974	3,095	1,005	3.08			3,070	3,200	1,040	3.08		
Puslinch	7,029	7,315	2,535	2.89	3,550	0.51	7,320	7,620	2,622	2.91	3,850	0.53
Aberfoyle	310	325	120	2.71			310	320	120	2.67		
Morrison	445	465	180	2.58			450	470	182	2.58		
Puslinch Rural	6,274	6,530	2,235	2.92			6,560	6,830	2,320	2.94		
Wellington North	11,447	11,915	4,450	2.68	6,020	0.53	11,780	12,260	4,575	2.68	6,620	0.56
Arthur	2,450	2,550	940	2.71			2,570	2,680	982	2.73		
Mount Forest	4,755	4,950	2,075	2.39			4,870	5,070	2,121	2.39		
Wellington North Rural	4,242	4,415	1,435	3.08			4,340	4,520	1,472	3.07		
Wellington County	87,292	90,870	31,175	2.91	36,200	0.41	89,930	93,620	32,180	2.91	38,280	0.43

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

Note: Figures have been rounded.

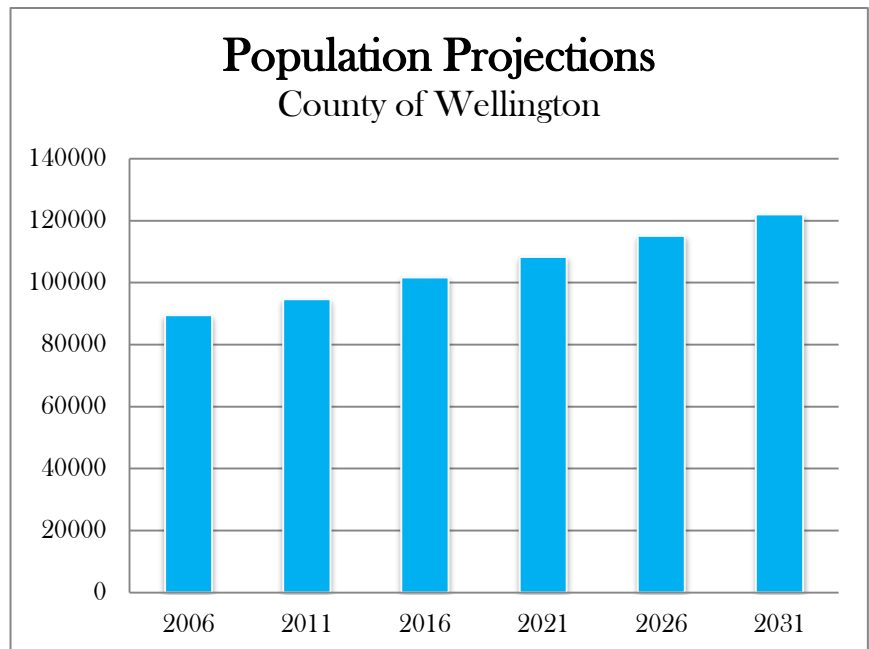
Undercount estimated at 4.1%

H:\Wellington County\Growth Tracking 2015\2014 Base

Growth Rate

Figure 4 expresses the population projections for the County of Wellington. The County of Wellington's population is expected to grow from 94,660 in 2011 to 108,300 in 2021, and finally 122,000 in 2031. The projections for the County of Wellington as stated in their Official Plan last updated in February 2012. Despite this growth, it will be quite sustainable as no runaway population explosions are expected and as such development can meet the infrastructure needs required.

Source: County of Wellington Official Plan

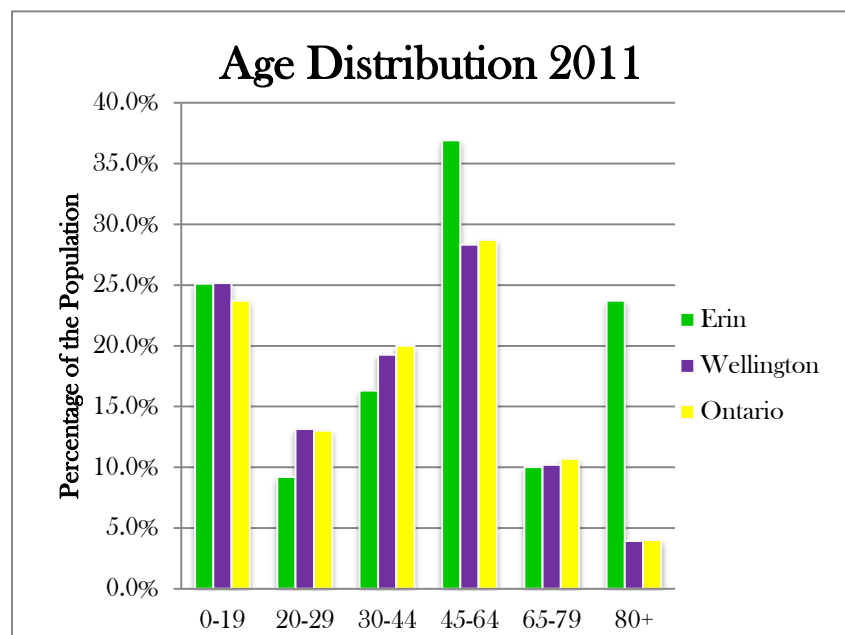


Age Distribution

Figure 5

The median age for the Town of Erin is 44.6 years old. As depicted in Figure 4, the mature population indicates a level of stability. The population age range has progressed steadily as could be projected by an aging population. The impact of the high percentage of the 80+ age range supplies the need for Erin's well developed health care system. This figure also indicates a strong retirement age based community and one that boasts both a strong source of tax revenue and a great wealth of experience. These are all obvious indicators of the town's charming family culture and tight knit community feel.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population



Family Structure

Table 1 shows a table comparing the Town of Erin, the County of Wellington, the Province of Ontario, and Canada's family structures. The evidence shows what one comes to expect and identify with the charm of Erin, a close-knit community thriving on the wonderful families which call it home. In comparison to the averages of the County of Wellington, Ontario, and Canada, the Town of Erin has the highest amount of married individuals at 76.9%. The town also has the highest amount of families with no children at home at 33.5%, as well as families with children at home at 43.4%. The town has a higher percentage of families with 3 or more children than Ontario and Canada but not within Wellington. However, the Town also ranks highest in families with 2 children at home at 20.3%. Lone parent families make up only 10.3% of the town which ranked the lowest of all 4 comparative areas.

Table 1

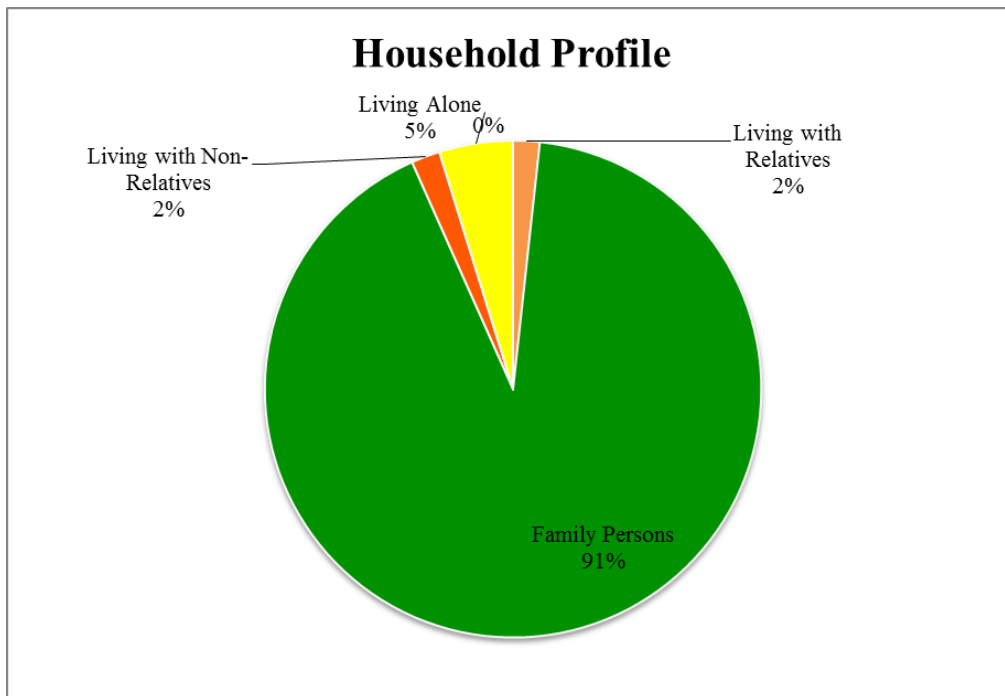
	Town of Erin		County of Wellington		Ontario		Canada	
	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	#	% of Total
Total Families	3295	-	59135	-	3612205	-	9389700	-
Married Couples	2535	76.9%	43900	74.2%	2612895	72.3%	6293950	67.0%
No children at home	1105	33.5%	19220	32.5%	1090740	30.2%	2891215	30.8%
With children at home	1425	43.4%	24680	41.7%	1522150	42.1%	3402735	36.2%
1 child at home	480	14.5%	8500	14.4%	559155	15.5%	1288775	13.7%
2 children at home	670	20.3%	10975	18.6%	676880	18.7%	1475220	15.7%
3+ children at home	285	8.6%	5205	8.8%	286110	7.9%	638740	6.8%
Common-Law Couples	420	12.7%	7270	12.3%	394670	10.9%	1567910	16.7%
No children at home	250	7.6%	4370	7.4%	236010	6.5%	861350	9.2%
With children at home	170	5.1%	2905	4.9%	158660	4.4%	706555	7.5%
1 child at home	80	2.4%	1380	2.3%	77160	2.1%	321865	3.4%
2 children at home	60	1.8%	1055	1.8%	55605	1.6%	273620	2.9%
3+ children at home	30	0.9%	465	0.8%	25890	0.7%	111075	1.2%
Lone Parent Families	340	10.3%	7965	13.4%	604645	16.7%	1527845	16.3%
Male Parent	105	3.1%	1750	2.9%	118175	3.3%	327545	3.5%
1 child at home	70	2.1%	1160	2.0%	77820	2.1%	216910	2.3%
2 children at home	25	0.8%	455	0.7%	31265	0.8%	85770	0.9%
3+ children at home	5	0.2%	140	0.2%	9085	0.3%	24860	0.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

Household Profile

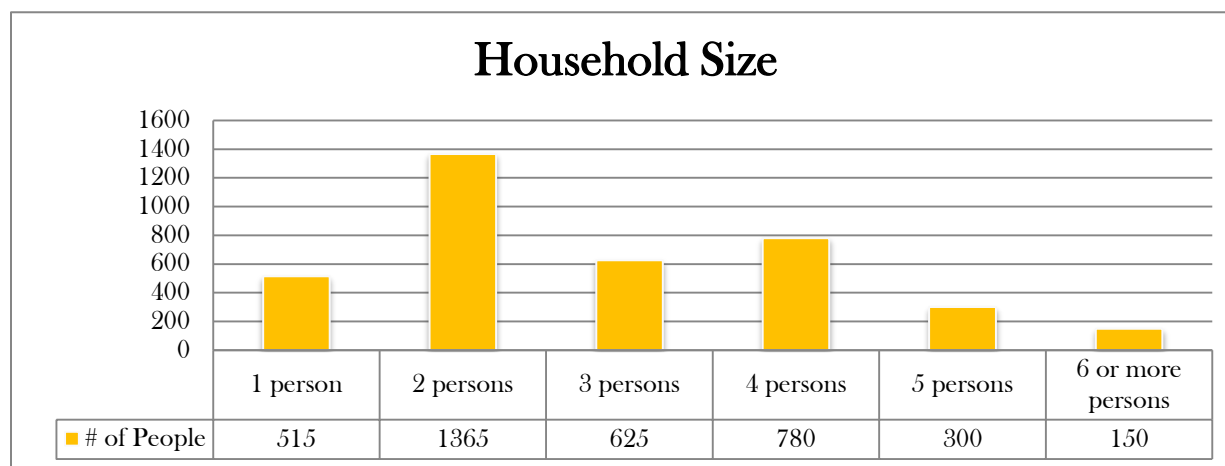
As seen in Figure 6 representing Erin's household profiles and household sizes, Erin has an extremely high percentage of its population in family households. The close-knit community nature cannot be overlooked as a desirable destination for weekend get-a-ways from the city as well as a great place to settle and raise a family.

Figure 6



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

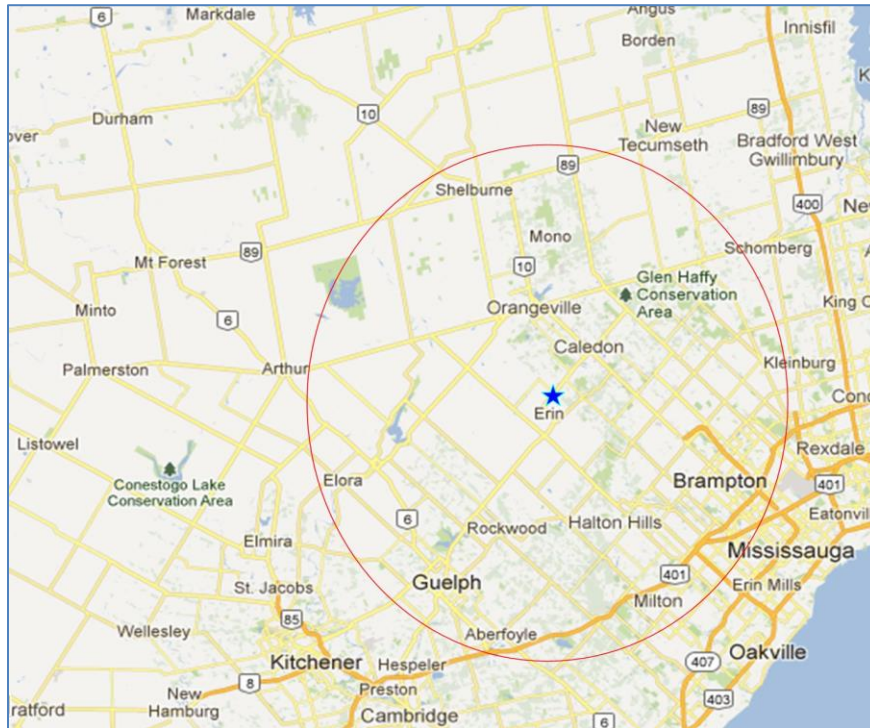
Figure 7



Canada, 2011 Census of Population

Business

Figure 8 illustrates how the Town of Erin is within a prime location in terms of attracting business and industry. The figure exposes Erin's immediate trade area and helps depict where most of Erin's visitors come from. The town's close proximity to Canada's largest market, Toronto (6.5 million people), the



transportation infrastructure in South Central Ontario, as well as the region's easy access to major American markets such as New York City, Chicago, and Detroit via major highways such as the 401 makes the town a desirable destination for any business or industry seeking competitive development costs and lower priced development sites.

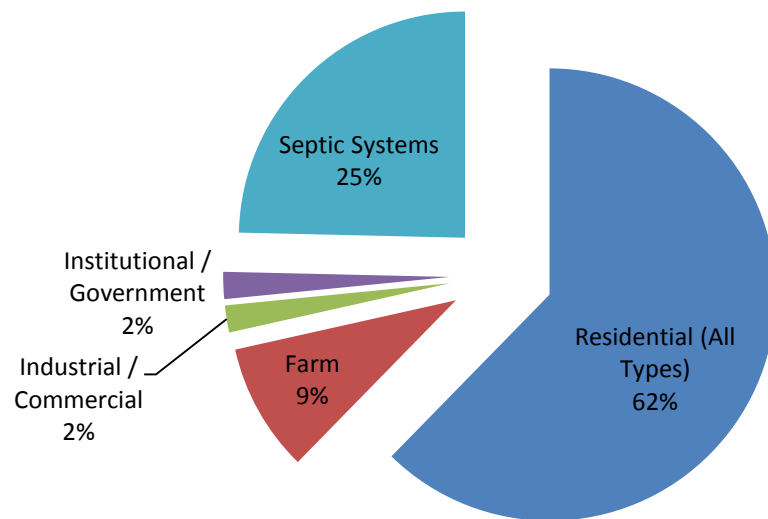
7) Town of Erin Building Department Data

Overall 2014 building permits numbers in the Town of Erin were up when compared to 2013. Some interesting points from 2014 are as follows:

- 1119 inspections were conducted.
- A total of 231 permits were processed, compared to 204 in 2013.
- 26 permits were new housing starts, up from 24 in 2013.
- 51 permits were septic related.
- Total construction value was \$21,648,231, down from \$22,079,231 in 2013.

The pie chart in Figure 8 illustrates the full breakdown by major types (%) of permits that were issued within the Town in 2014.

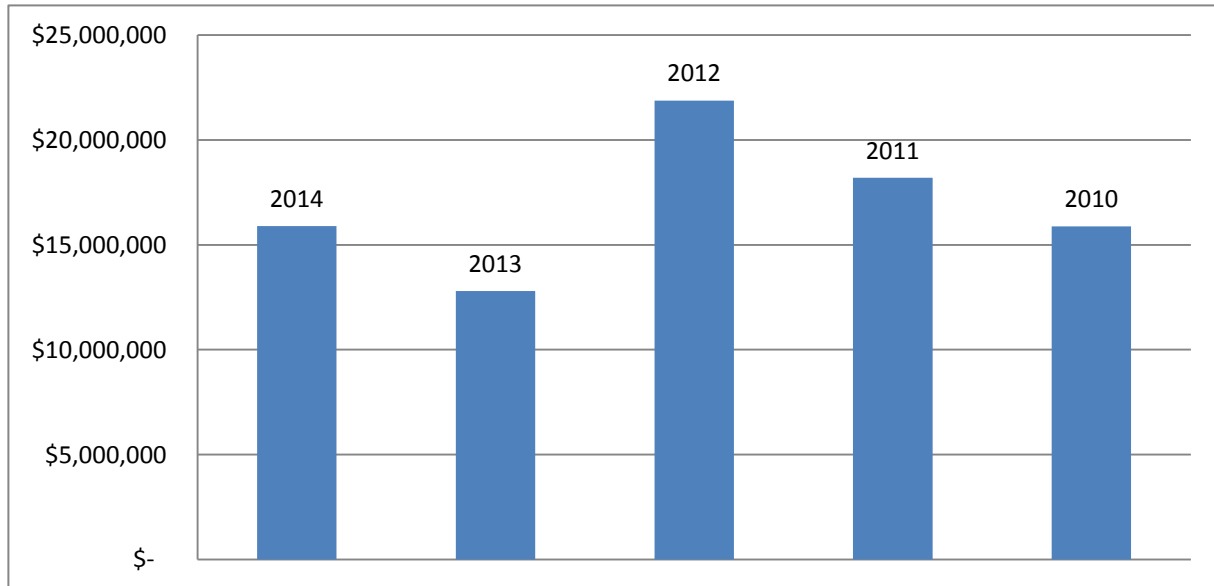
Figure 8



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 9

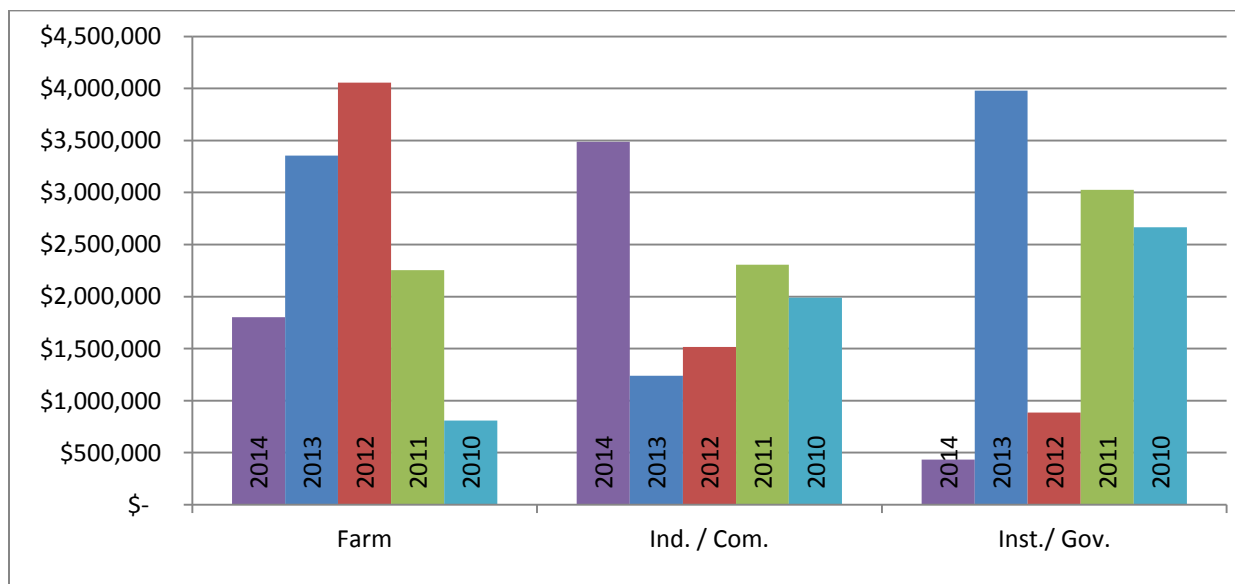
Year-End Construction Value Comparison: 2010-2014 Residential only



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 10

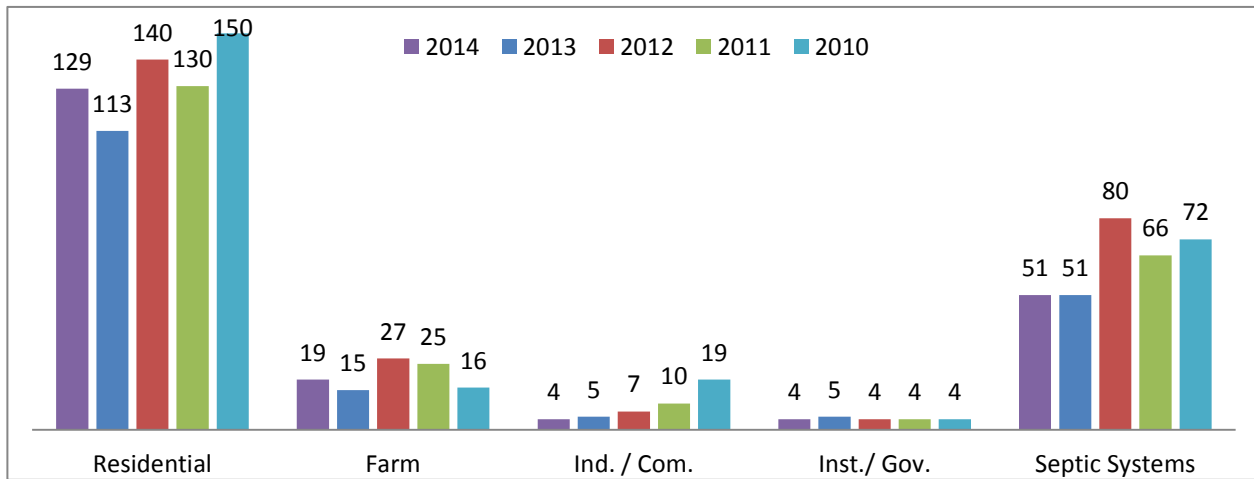
Year-End Construction Value Comparison: 2010-2014 Other permits



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 11

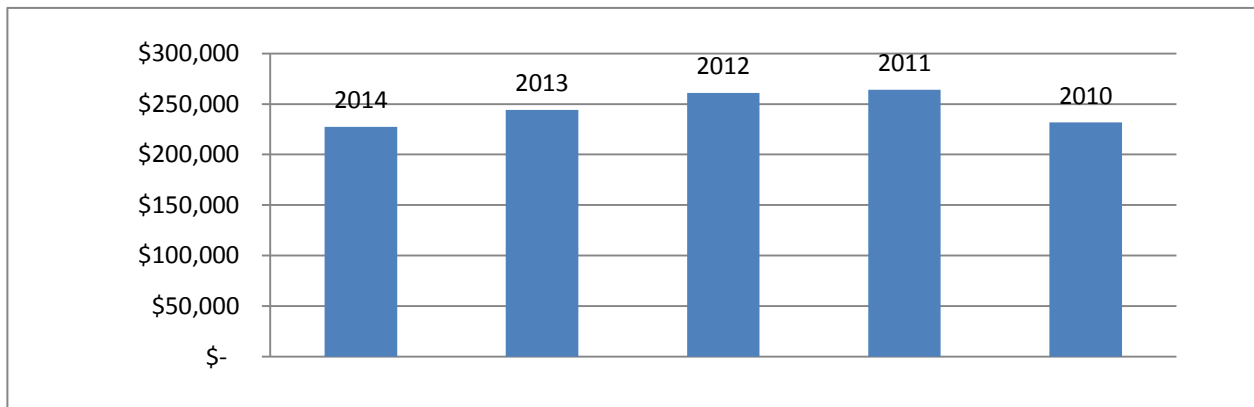
Number of Permit By Building Type: 2010-2014



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 12

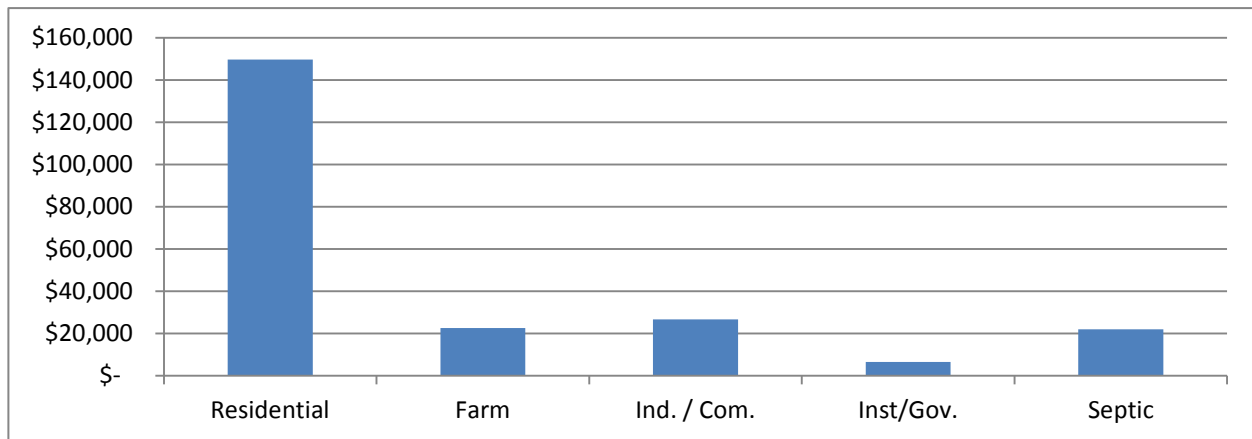
Permit Fee Revenue Comparison: 2010-2014



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 13

2014 Permit Fee Revenue By Type



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

1.9 Concluding Remarks

The Town of Erin is strategically located close to Canada's largest population center and with careful planning and with much foresight the community is well positioned to take advantage of the significant economic potential that the market could offer. Community Economic Development (CED) can be challenging for small rural municipalities. There is a considerable body of work on rural development, much of the most recent of which has been done out of the University of Guelph by and under Professor David Douglas.

In the March 2003 report titled "Towards More Effective Rural Economic Development in Ontario- A Report on "Best Practice" in Local Economic Development in Rural Ontario," the Douglas team zeroed in on five common characteristics of exemplary practice: ¹

Those ingredients most recognized for success and the three general strategic directions are summarized as follows:

1. **Political Commitment.** Which includes providing both adequate resources and 'operating freedom.
2. **Investment in CED.** Which includes a) having an Economic Development Officer or equivalent, b) multiple funding sources and c) a dedication to research and analysis
3. **Plan or Strategy.** CED is not random exercise. A vision for the future is needed for community commitment.
4. **Participation.** Broad participation is recommended from Council, business, community groups and the general public.
5. **Collaboration.** Partnering with community groups, business groups, institutions, service clubs, other municipalities and other levels of government has proven to be efficient and effective

Capacity Building requires improvement to community infrastructure and is characterized by:

- Expanding citizenship participation
- Expanding leadership base
- Strengthened individual skills
- Widely shared vision
- Strategic community agenda
- Progress toward goals
- Effective community organizations and institutions
- Efficient resource utilization.

Building on Strengths: Business Retention and Expansion

- A close working relationship allows local government to respond to industry needs more effectively;
- Strong business relations create the reputation of a good place to do business, (a community's best advertisement);
- Working closely with business adds significantly to the municipality's knowledge base;
- Such relationships offer early warning of problems and/or reduce the potential for conflict.

Skills Development – Local Entrepreneurship

The literature in Canada shows that programs to help business startups have been most effective. The job looking forward may be twofold:

- 1) Continue to facilitate business start-ups and
- 2) Focus on the retention and possible expansion of small business enterprises.

The Municipal Challenge

Various initiatives are underway within the Town of Erin that fit within these three strategic approaches. Evidence suggests that by applying the five ingredients for success and by focusing on community economic development strategies that the work for rural areas, municipalities like the Town of Erin can take a stronger role, and elevate their current level of effort and success.

¹ David J. A. Douglas, Towards More Effective Rural Economic Development in Ontario – A Report on 'Best Practice' in Local Economic Development in Rural Ontario, March 2003

8) PROJECT PARTICIPATION

This Town of Erin Economic Development Action Plan incorporates input from many participants.

The **Town of Erin's Economic Development Department** initiated and managed the project, coordinated the participation of the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC), and directed the work of the four sector focus groups.

Bob Cheetham, Economic Development Coordinator

The **Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC)** is appointed by the Town of Erin Council with a mandate to provide feedback and advice on strategic economic development initiatives through the Town's Chief Administrative Officer to Council. The Committee participated by providing insight into the structure and trajectory of the Town of Erin's economy, commenting on draft materials, and helping select priorities for municipal action. The members are:

Maria Britto	Chairperson
Susan Powell	
Chris Bailey	Erin Business Improvement Association (BIA)
Mary Shields	East Wellington Chamber of Commerce
Keith McKinnon	
Mary Venneman	
Jo Fillery	
Wayne Stickley	
Chris Naraysingh	
Jamie Cheney	
John Gainor	
Vanessa Parker	
David Spencer	
Rob Smith	Councillor, Town of Erin Council
Bruce Withrow	Meeting Facilitators International

The following **sector focus groups** were conducted between July 13th and 16th, 2015 and attendees provided valued input on matters relating to the future potential of the following sectors and their economic prospects and challenges:

- Equine/Agriculture
- Tourism
- Downtown Revitalization
- Business Attraction

The County of Wellington provided financial support to the Town of Erin through its Business Retention and Expansion Municipal Support Program

9) Public Consultation:

During the public consultation period August 8-October 1st, 2015 the Town received a total of nineteen submissions from interested citizens and the Village of Erin BIA and East Wellington Chamber of Commerce. The Town wishes to thank all citizens and the business organizations for taking the time to add value to our economic development process in the Town of Erin. All submissions received were reviewed by all members of the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) and your suggestions and/or concerns were taken into account as the EEDC worked through the final content of the Momentum Action Report.