

Table of Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1.1 Town of Erin Official Plan	4
1.2 Relationship to Growth Strategy	5
1.3 Methodology	7
1.4 Erin Quick Facts	8
1.5 Purpose of the Economic Development Action Plan.....	9
1.6 Process of the Economic Development Action Plan.....	9
1.7 Top Priority Action Items	10
1.8 Demographics	18
1.9 Concluding Remarks	28
1.10 Project Participation	31
2. ERIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	32
2.1 Policy Tools	32
2.2 Economic Development Guiding Principles	34
2.3 Economic Development Goals and Action	35
2.4 Goal 1: Build A More Positive Business Climate	35
2.5 Goal 2: Work Cooperatively and Strengthen Links with Partners at all Levels	44
2.6 Goal 3: Establish the Town of Erin as a Premier Location for Equine Enthusiasts	45
2.7. Goal 4: Promote and Market the Town of Erin as a Tourism Destination	50
2.8 Goal 5: Develop a Sustainable Economy	54
3. MONITORING AND UPDATING	58
4. APPENDIX	59
4.1 EEDC SWOT ASSESSMENT RESULTS	59
4.2 Equine/Agriculture Sector Focus Group	61
4.3 Tourism Focus Group	64
4.4 Downtown Revitalization Focus Group	66
4.5 Business Attraction Focus Group	68

1. EXECUTVE SUMMARY

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 head 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 Consultant/Advisor. 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.

1.1 The Town of Erin Official Plan

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.

1.3 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

1.4 TOWN OF ERIN - QUICK FACTS:

Money Sense Overall Rank of Top 100 Best Places To Live In Canada (2015)	76 th
Low Unemployment:	✓
High Incomes:	✓
Low Crime:	✓
Strong Arts & Sports Community	✓
Population:	11,282
Population Change (2010 To 2015):	1.3%
Estimated Unemployment Rate:	2.98%
Median Household Income:	\$105,809
Average Household Discretionary Income:	\$58,112.31
Average Household Net Worth:	\$784,001
Average Value Of Primary Real Estate:	\$576,460
Average Time To Buy A Home:	4.8 years
Property Tax:	2.85%
Average Property Tax:	\$3,306
Average Property Tax As A Percentage Of Average Income:	2.7%
Average Income Tax for Individual Earning \$50,000:	\$8,571
Owned Homes:	94.8%
Rented Homes:	5.3%

Source: Money Sense: Best 100 Places to Live In Canada 2015

The draft Action Plan is available for public written comment until August 25th at which time all submissions will be reviewed prior to final completion and presentation of the completed Economic Development Action Plan to Town Council on Tuesday September 15, 2015. The draft Action Plan will be posted on the Town of Erin website at www.erin.ca.

Additional sources utilized to ensure that the identified goals and objectives would meet the evolving needs of the community, included a review of community statistical data, a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) Assessment undertaken by the Erin Economic Development Committee and also Village of Erin BIA, and the findings of the Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) interviews that were completed in 2014. Matters relating to Equine recommendations were outlined in the Erin Equine Economic Development Report (2013).

The MOMENTUM Action Plan provides a framework to coordinate the economic development strategies to be pursued during 2015-2018. This document serves to focus the Town of Erin’s economic development activities during the term of the existing Council. The Action Plan builds upon other municipal and regional initiatives including the Town’s Official Plan (OP), the County of Wellington and Town of Erin BR&E Study, the Town of Erin Equine Economic Development Report and the results of the Erin Economic Development Committee (EEDC) sector focus group sessions. This plan outlines five economic development goals:

- Build a More Positive Business Climate
- Work Collaboratively and Strengthen Links with 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 Tourism Destination
- Develop a Sustainable Community

1.5 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.

1.6 PROCESS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

“MOMENTUM” consists of guiding principles, goals, and actions. The guiding principles outline the vision and the desired community economic development outcomes. The goals provide the desirable list of achievements. Each action item will be monitored and tracked through stages of completion.



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 golfing, hiking, cycling, festivals and 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. The Town of Erin was rated 76th out of the top 100 places to Live in Canada by Money Sense in 2015.

Here are the top reasons for investing in the Town of Erin:

- open, accessible, transparent, responsive, and friendly local government
- well established municipal infrastructure to accommodate business and residential needs
- affordability of land, labour, energy, and the business costs
- easy transportation access to markets and customers
- array of recreational and cultural opportunities with a well-established tourism base
- vibrant and strong downtown Village core
- availability of development opportunities
- wonderful lifestyle and community quality of life

1.7 TOP PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS

Although MOMENTUM identifies forty-six recommendations for action over the next four years, there are six (6) major priority items which require Council’s consideration and action. These specific action items create the momentum for moving forward with many of the other recommended action items in this Action Plan. The Top priority action items are:

- ***Engage a Fulltime Economic Development Officer (EDO)***
- ***Establish a Town of Erin Wide Community Improvement Plan (CIP)***
- ***Make Application to Ontario Trillium to Undertake a Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study***
- ***Submit a 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 (RED Program is presently pending review)***
- ***Develop Terms of Reference for Wastewater EA and Move Forward***
- ***Complete the Water and Wastewater Environmental Assessment Process and Provide Direction on Servicing in the Urban Areas of Erin and Hillsburgh***

This plan creates the roadmap for moving forward within the community, but it will take the leadership of municipal Council to foster a proactive, collaborative presence and respond to the desire for change and managed growth within the Town of Erin. The Plan recognizes that additional projects will evolve over the next several years and the Town of Erin will act accordingly depending on the benefits of each initiative.

The following chart outlines all of the action items proposed, responsibility, timing and level of priority. Where able, estimated costs associated with each action item is outlined.

Objective	Priority	Year	Projected Cost	Impacted Other	Projected Completion	Budget Impact	Responsibility
1. Establish a Town of Erin Wide Community Improvement Plan (CIP)	High	Sept 2015 – May 2016	TBD	CAO, EEDC, County of Wellington Planning	June 2016	TBD	CAO/ County Planning, Council
2. Undertake a Review of Available Land for Industrial/Commercial Development	High	Oct 2015	N/A	EEDC/EWCC	October 2015	N/A	EDO
3. Develop a Town of Erin Community Profile (Print and Web Based)	Med	October 2015	\$5,000	CAO/EDO/ EEDC/EWCC, Erin BIA /LGHG	November 2015	\$5,000 2015 Budget	CAO/EDO
4. Develop External Business Attraction Marketing and Promotion Campaign	Med	November 2015	\$7,500	EEDC/EWCC	November 2015	\$7,500 2015 Budget	EDO/CAO
5. Apply for County of Wellington 2015 Economic Development Funding	High	September 2015	N/A	CAO, EEDC, Cty of Wellington Ec. Dev.	December 2015	\$25,000 Grant 2015 Budget	EDO/CAO Council
6. Proceed with Town of Erin Official Plan Amendment Process and Identify Growth Areas	High	Sept 2015	TBD	CAO/Cty of Wellington Planning	June 2016	TBD	CAO/Cty of Wellington Planning, MMAH, Council
7. Apply to County of Wellington Planning for 50%	High		\$10,000	EEDC/CAO EDO/ CVC	March 2016	\$10,000	EDO, CAO, Trails Committee

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Funding to Undertake a Trails Master Plan		October 2015		Trails Committee		2015 Budget	
8. Undertake a Follow-Up Review of BR&E Contributing Businesses	Med	October 2015	N/A	EEDC/EDO CAO, Cty of Wellington, EWCC	Ongoing	N/A	EDO/EEDC
9. Create a “Buy Local” Promotional Campaign	Med	October 2015	\$2,500	EEDC/CAO, EDO, EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG, Ag Society	Ongoing	\$2,500 2015 Budget	CAO/EDO
10. Promote the Erin Farmers’ Market	Low	August-Sept 2015	\$600.00	EDO/Erin BIA , Erin Ag Society	Fall 2015	\$600.00 2015 Budget	EDO
11. Develop Terms of Reference for Wastewater EA and Move Forward	High	September 2015	\$600,000	CAO/Council Triton Eng., CVC/MOE	2017	\$600,000 Approved 2015	CAO, Council
12. Explore the Potential for Attracting a Post-Secondary Educational Facility	Med	Fall 2015	N/A	EEDC/EDO CAO	Ongoing	N/A	EEDC/EDO/CAO
13. Explore the Potential for Developing a “Business Development Centre” in the Town of Erin	Med	Ongoing	TBD	EEDC/EDO, CAO/ Cty of Wellington , EWCC	Ongoing	TBD	EEDC/EDO/CAO
14. Support Commercial/Industrial Enquiries and Provide Coordination Role	High	Ongoing	N/A	EDO/EEDC, EWCC, Erin BIA	Ongoing	N/A	EDO/CAO
15. Develop Sector Specific Business Attraction Strategies (Equine, Tourism, Marketing & Promotion)	High	October 2015	N/A	CAO/ EEDC, EDO, EWCC, OMAFRA, Headwaters, Ern Ag Society	December 2015	N/A	EDO/CAO

16. Engage a Fulltime Economic Development Officer (EDO) and ½ Time Support Person	High	October 2015	\$25,000 2015	CAO/ EDO, EEDC	Ongoing	\$25,000 2015 Budget	CAO/EDO, Council
17. Host a Business Showcase Networking Event/Economic Development Forum	Low	September 26, 2015	\$5,000	EDO, EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG	September 26, 2015	2015 Budge on Cost Recovery Basis	EDO/EWCC/BIA
18. Conduct a First Impressions Community Exchange with the Town of Mount	Med	Fall 2015	\$1,000	EDO/BIA, EWCC, NWEDC, LGHG, OMAFRA	Fall 2015	\$1,000 2015 Budget	EDO/EEDC
19. Undertake a "Open for Business" Marketing and Promotional Campaign	High	Fall 2015 Winter 2016	\$3,000	EEDC/EDO/ BIA , EWCC	Ongoing	\$3,000 2015 Budget	EDO/EWCC
20. Establish a Business Visitation Plan	High	September 2015	N/A	CAO/ EDO, Mayor, EWCC, Erin BIA	Ongoing	N/A	EDO and Mayor
21. Promotion of "Live and Work Erin" Web Portal	Med	Fall 2015	\$3,000	EDO/ EWCC, Minto, North Wellington, Center Wellington, Cty of Wellington	December 2015	\$3,000 2015 Budget	CAO/EDO Municipalities and County
22. Initiate Steps for Development of a Crosswalk in the Village of Erin	Med	Fall 2015	TBD	CAO/EDO Cty of Wellington Roads, Erin BIA	Ongoing	TBD	CAO/EDO Erin BIA, Cty of Wellington

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23. Initiate Photometric Analysis of Village of Erin Downtown Core Lighting Upgrades	Low	Spring 2016	TBD	CAO, EDO/Cty of Wellington, Public Works./Erin BIA	Ongoing	TBD	CAO/ EDO, Cty of Wellington Roads Dept.
24. Develop a System for Tracking and Responding to Business Enquiries	Med	August/ September 2015	N/A	CAO/EDO	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/ EDO
25. Conduct a “How to Run a Bed & Breakfast” Adult Learning Workshop	Med	October 2015	\$750.00	EEDC/EDO Adult Learning	October 2015	\$750.00 2015 Budget	EDO
26. Work with the County of Wellington EcDev Department to Upgrade Regional Road Signage	Low	August 2015	N/A	CAO/ EDO/ Cty of Wellington Ec. Dev and Roads	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/EDO and Cty of Wellington Ec.Dev.
27. Support Regional Collaboration and Association Events Related to Economic Development	Med	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/ EDO, Headwaters, Cty of Wellington, EWCC, CVC, LGHG, Erin BIA	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/EDO and Council
28. Develop System Upgrades to the Town’s Social Media	Med	Ongoing	TBD	CAO/EDO, EEDC	Ongoing	TBD	CAO/EDO
29. Develop and Maintain Relationships with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (Guelph Reps)	High	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/EDO/ Council, Cty of Wellington Ec. Dev.	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/EDO and Council
30. Maintain a Collaborative Relationship with East Wellington	High	Ongoing	N/A	EEDC/ CAO/ EDO/Erin BIA, EWCC, LGHG	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/ EDO/ Council

Chamber of Commerce and Village of Erin BIA and Let's Get Hillsburgh Growing							
31. Enhance Working Relationships with Adjoining Community Economic Development Departments	Med	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/ EDO/ Adjoining Community EDO's	Ongoing	N/A	CAO/EDO
32. 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	High	Fall 2015 Pending Program Renewal	TBD (50% Funding)	CAO/EDO, OMAFRA, CVC, Erin Ag Society, Equine Canada	March 31, 2017	TBD	CAO/EDO and Council
33. Attract Equine Manufacturing and Equine Service Business to the Town of Erin	Med	November 2015 Ongoing	\$2,500	CAO/ EDO EEDC, Ag Society. EWCC, Cty of Wellington	Ongoing	\$2,500 2015 Budget	CAO/EDO
34. Establish an Erin Equine Marketing Alliance	Med	January 2016	TBD	CAO/ E DO Ag Society, Equine Canada	Ongoing	TBD	CAO/EDO
35. Investigate Options for Expanding the Trail Infrastructure Network in the Town of Erin and Opportunities for Leveraging nearby Event facilities	Med	Fall 2015	TBD	EEDC, Halton, Angelstone, Palgrave, Orangeville, Caledon, Inglewood, Cheltenham, Fergus, Elora and Local Arena establishments	Ongoing	TBD	CAO/EDO and Council

36. Create a Web Based Erin Equine Business Directory	Med	February 2016	TBD	EEDC, Equine Canada, OMAFRA, Erin Ag Society, Guelph Equine Network	July 2016	TBD	EDO/CAO
37. Investigate Ways to Leverage Headwaters ``Horse Country`` Marketing	Med	January 2016	N/A	EEDC/EDO, Headwaters Tourism	Ongoing	N/A	CAO, EDO, Headwaters
38. Develop a Four Seasons Attractions Strategy and Destinations Experience for the Town of Erin	Med	Fall 2015	TBD	EEDC/CAO, EDO, Headwaters Tourism, Erin BIA, LGHG	Ongoing	TBD	CAO, EDO, Headwaters Tourism
39. Make Application to Ontario Trillium to Undertake a Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study	High	Sept 2015	\$45,000?	EEDC, Erin Rotary Club, LGHG, Credit Valley Conservation, Erin BIA	June 2016	100% Grant	CAO/EDO Council
40. Establish Public Washroom Facilities in the Village of Erin	Low	Spring 2016	TBD	EEDC, CAO, EDO, Erin BIA, EWCC	Ongoing	TBD	CAO, EDO, Bldg. Dept.
41. Collaborative Promotion with Erin BIA in "In the Hills"	Med	Fall 2015	\$1,250/yr	EDO, Erin BIA, In the Hills Publication	Ongoing	\$1,250/yr. 2015 Budget	CAO/EDO
42. Undertake a Town of Erin Recreation Masterplan	Med	January 2016	TBD	EDO/CAO/ Parks and Recreation	May 2016	TBD	EDO, CAO, Parks & Recreation
43. Work with the Erin Ag Society to help Promote the Erin Fall Fair and Erin Farmers' Market	Med	Summer 2015	TBD	EEDC, CAO, EDO, Erin Ag Society, Farmers' Market Committee	Ongoing	TBD	EDO
44. Develop a Corporate	Med	May 2016	N/A	CAO/ EDO, Headwaters	September 2017	N/A	EDO, CAO, Clerk

Sponsorship and Advertising Policy							
45. Explore Options for Holding a St. Patrick’s Day Festival in March 2016	Med	March 2016	TBD	EEDC/CAO, EDO, Erin BIA, LGHG	Ongoing	TBD	CAO, EDO, Parks and Recreation
46. Investigate Options for Creating a Winter Skating Environment on the Lower West Credit River between Charles and Church Street in the Village of Erin	Med	Fall 2015 – Winter 2016	TBD	EEDC, CAO, EDO, Parks and Recreation, Fire Dept., Rotary Club Erin BIA	April 2016	TBD	CAO, EDO, Parks & Recreation
47. Renew the Headwaters Tourism Promotion Agreement	High	December 2015	\$16,800 /yr.	CAO, EDO, Headwaters	Ongoing	\$16,800 2015 Budget	CAO, EDO, Clerk
48. Undertake a Transportation and Parking Plan for the Urban centers of Hillsburgh and the Village of Erin	Low	June 2016	N/A	CAO/ EDO, Roads Dept., Erin BIA, EWCC, LGHG	Sept 2016	N/A	CAO, EDFO, Roads Dept.,
49. Produce a Trails Network Plan and Promotional Brochure	Med	December 2015	\$2,000	EEDC/CAO, EDO, Trails Committee, Recreation Manager	May 2016	\$2,000 2015 Budget	CAO, EDO, Recreation Dept.
50. Explore Green Energy Opportunities Within the Town of Erin	Med	Fall 2015	TBD	Industry, Recreation Department, Public Works	Ongoing	TBD	CAO/EDO Director of Finance
51. Conduct a One-Day Heritage Symposium	Low	May 2016	\$1,000	CAO/EDO Heritage Committee	May 2016	\$1,000 2015 Budget	CAO/ EDO

Priorities: Sixteen – 16 (High) Twenty-Nine -29 (Medium) Seven – 7 (Low)

NOTE: The level of priority in no way diminishes the importance of any particular action task. Action tasks are prioritized based on degree of immediacy and any efforts undertaken thus far to advance the

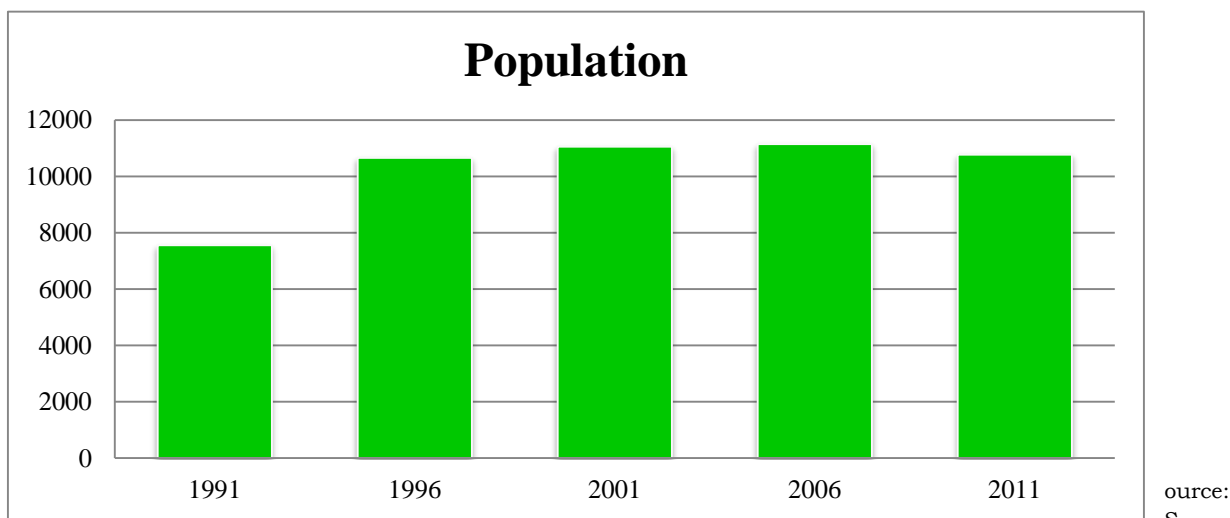
task. Many of the action items slated for 2015 have been budgeted in the 2015 economic development budget.

This following section of the Action Plan outlines current and future demographic, economic, and market conditions in the Town of Erin. These trends provide a perspective on the Town’s economic strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. It also provides context to the Goals and Action items outlined later in the document.

1.8 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.

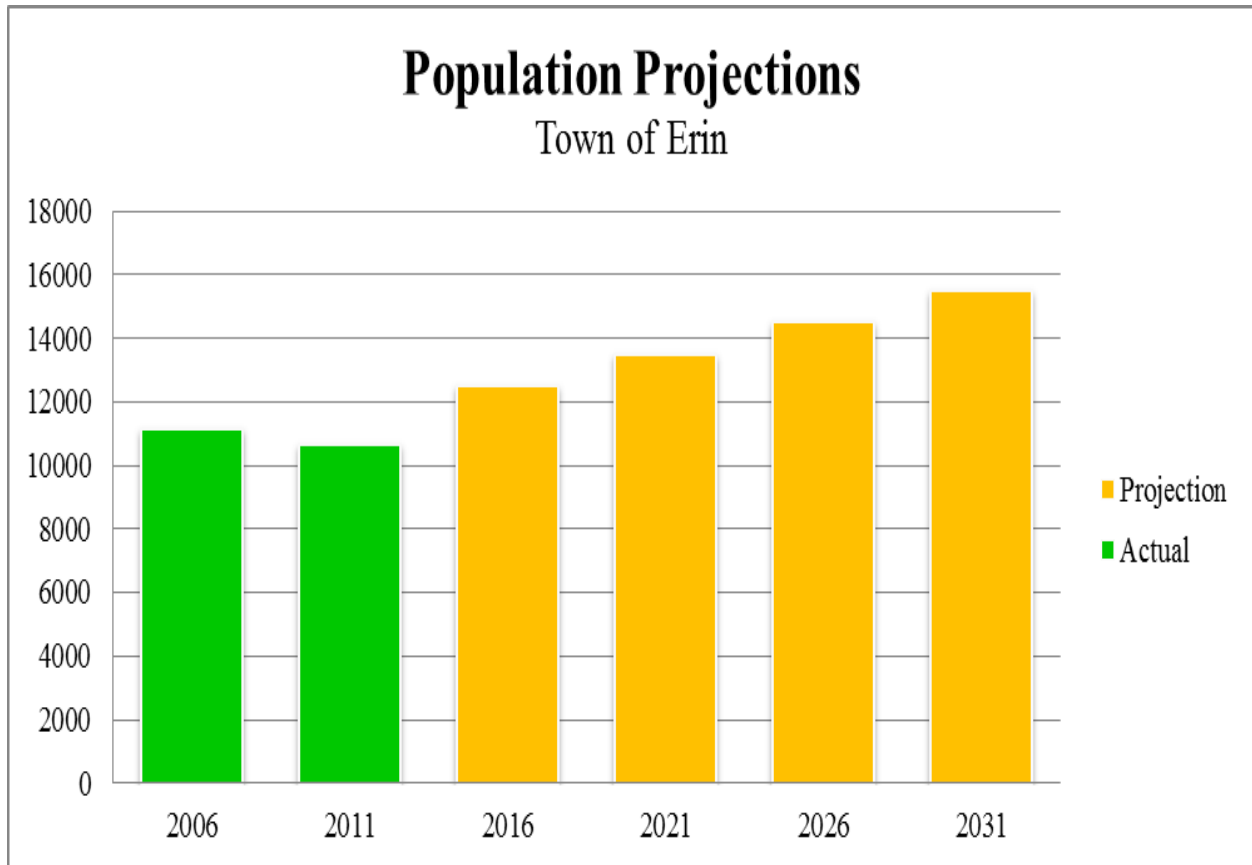
Figure 1 shows that Erin's population has been increasing at an even pace from 1996 - 2011. The population rose quickly from 1991 to 1996 due to an adjusted boundary line. Since then, the population increased steadily until the first population decrease was reported in 2011. The growth witnessed from 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 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 project 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.

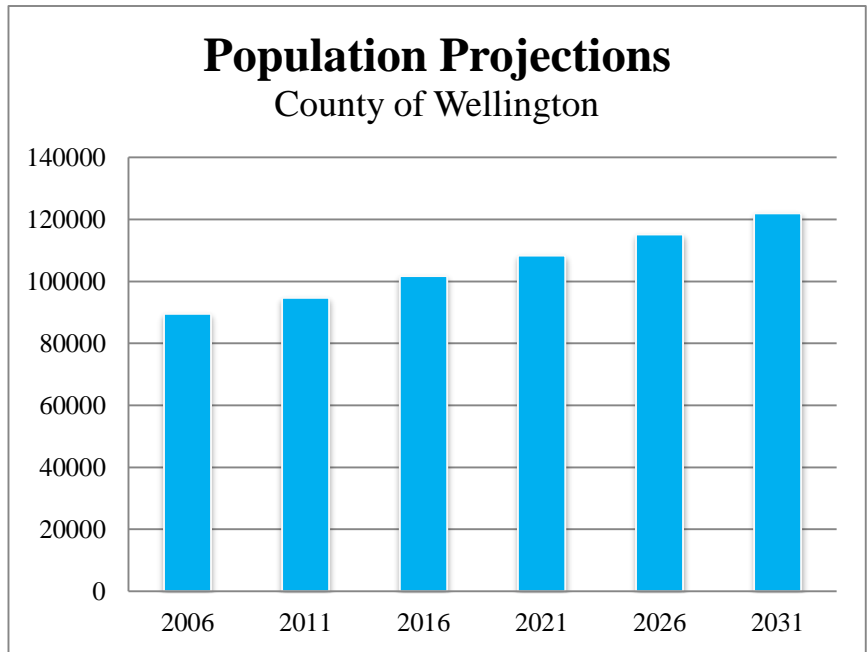
Note: Figures have been rounded.

Undercount estimated at 4.1%

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

Growth Rate

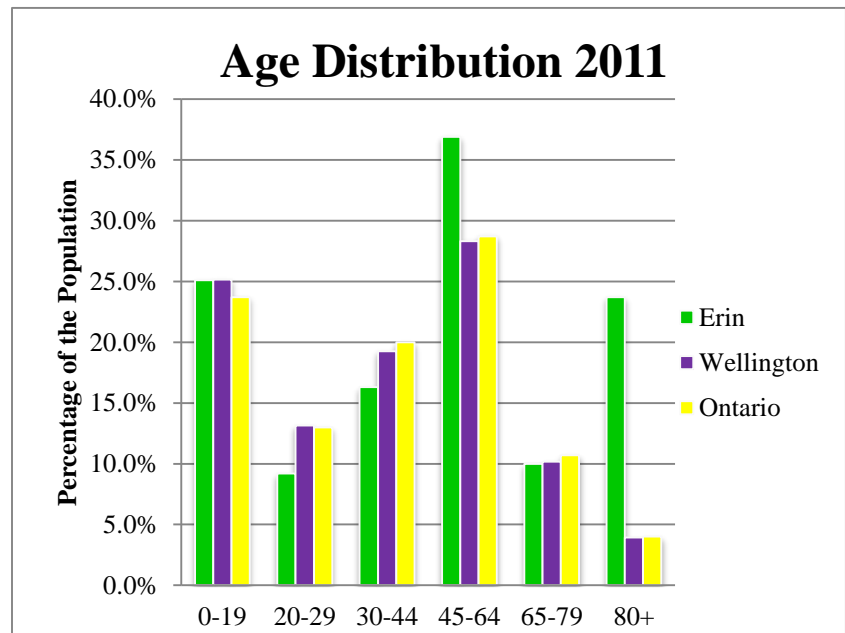
Figure 4 expresses the population projections for the County of Wellington. The County of Wellington’s population is expected to grow from 94,660 in 2011 to 108,300 in 2021, and finally 122,000 in 2031. The projections for the County of Wellington as stated in their Official Plan last updated in February 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%

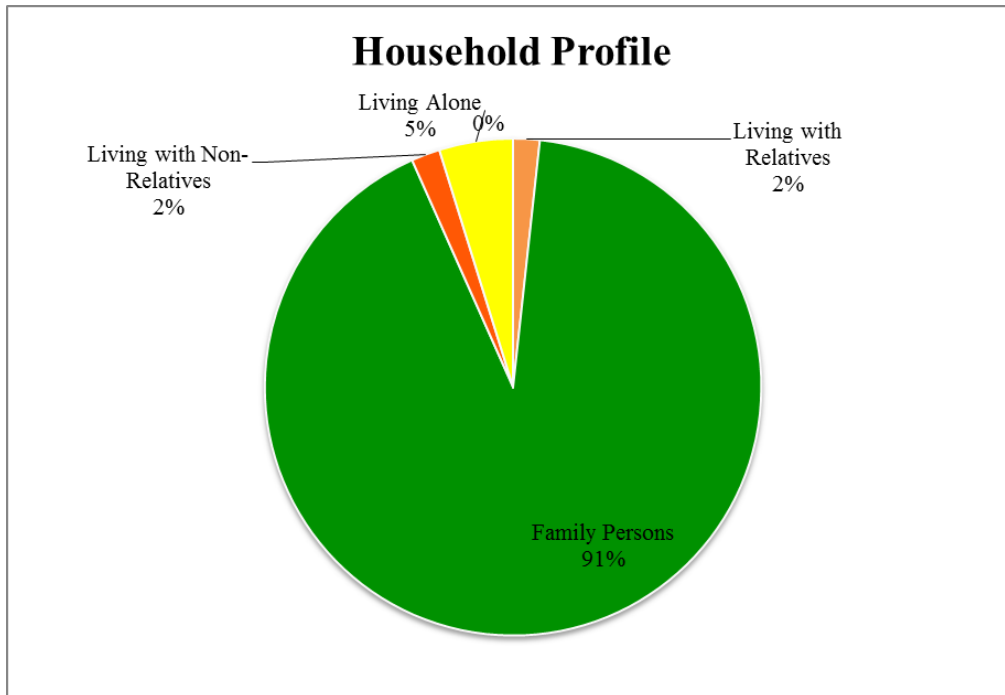
Lone Parent Families	340	10.3%	7965	13.4%	604645	16.7%	1527845	16.3%
Male Parent	105	3.1%	1750	2.9%	118175	3.3%	327545	3.5%
1 child at home	70	2.1%	1160	2.0%	77820	2.1%	216910	2.3%
2 children at home	25	0.8%	455	0.7%	31265	0.8%	85770	0.9%
3+ children at home	5	0.2%	140	0.2%	9085	0.3%	24860	0.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

Household Profile

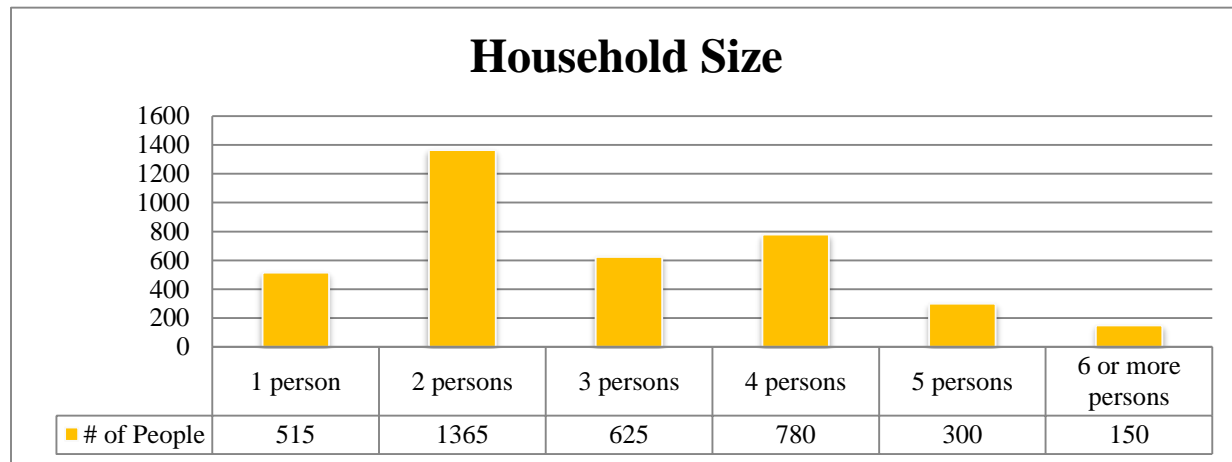
As seen in Figure 6 representing Erin’s household profiles and household sizes, Erin has an extremely high percentage of its population in family households. The close-knit community nature cannot be overlooked as a desirable destination for weekend get-a-ways from the city as well as a great place to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

Figure 6



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

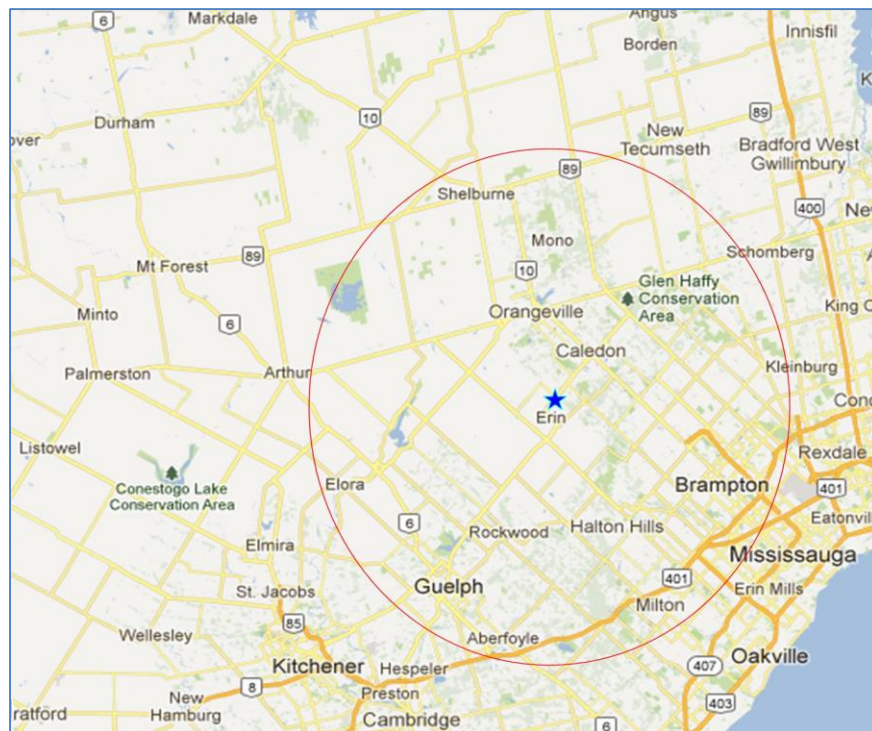
Figure 7



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.

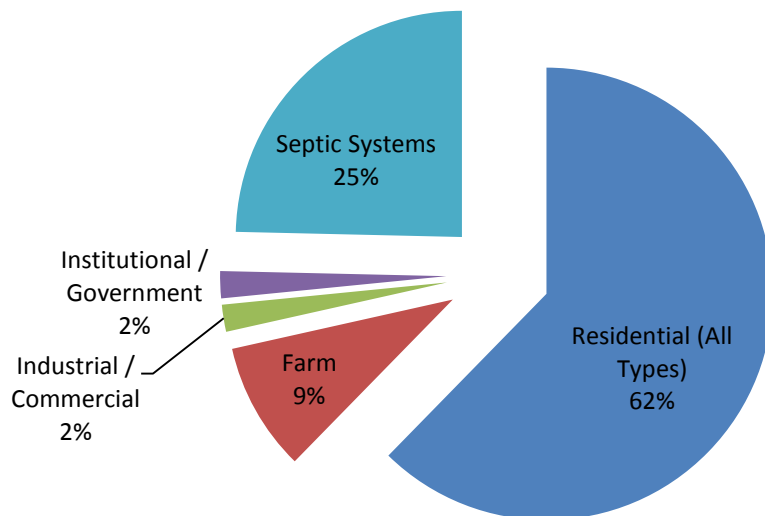
Town of Erin Building Department Data

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.

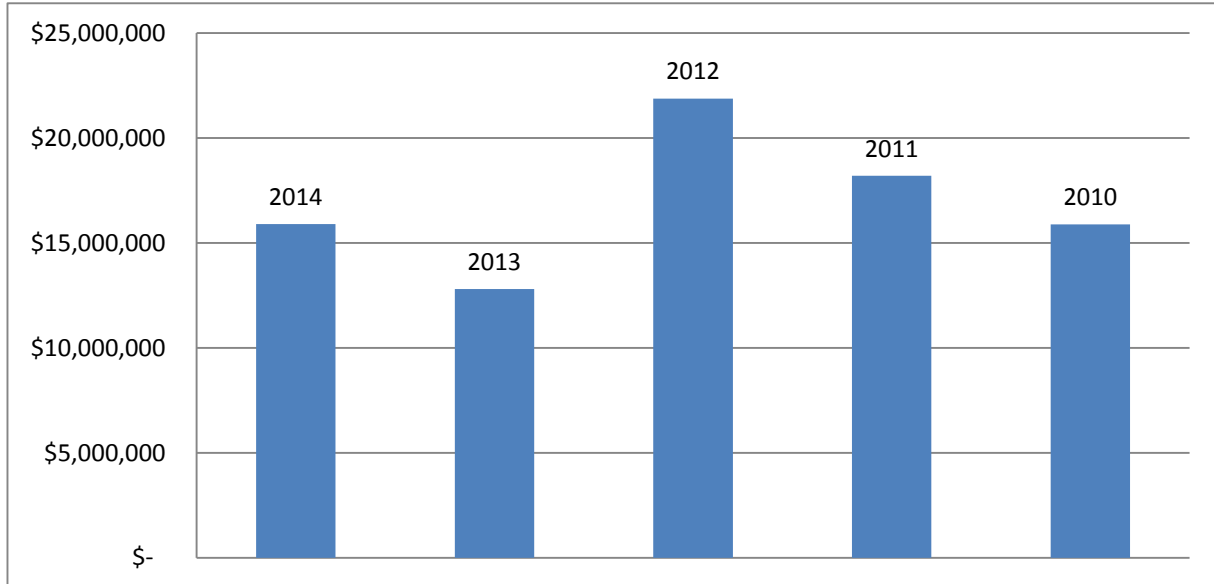
Figure 8



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 9

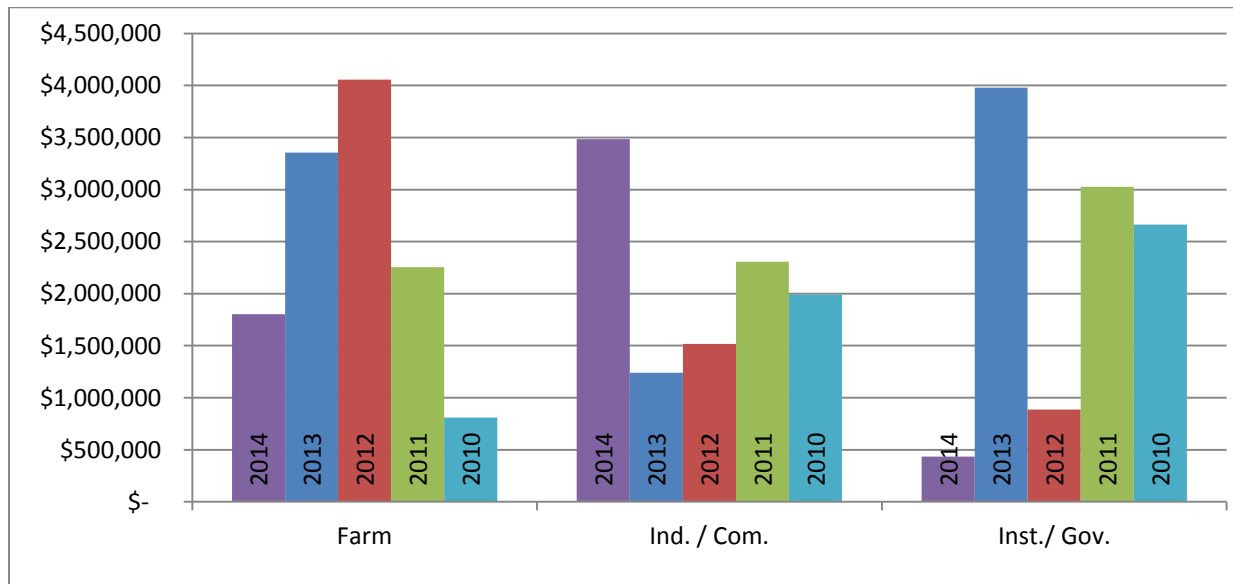
Year-End Construction Value Comparison: 2010-2014 Residential only



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 10

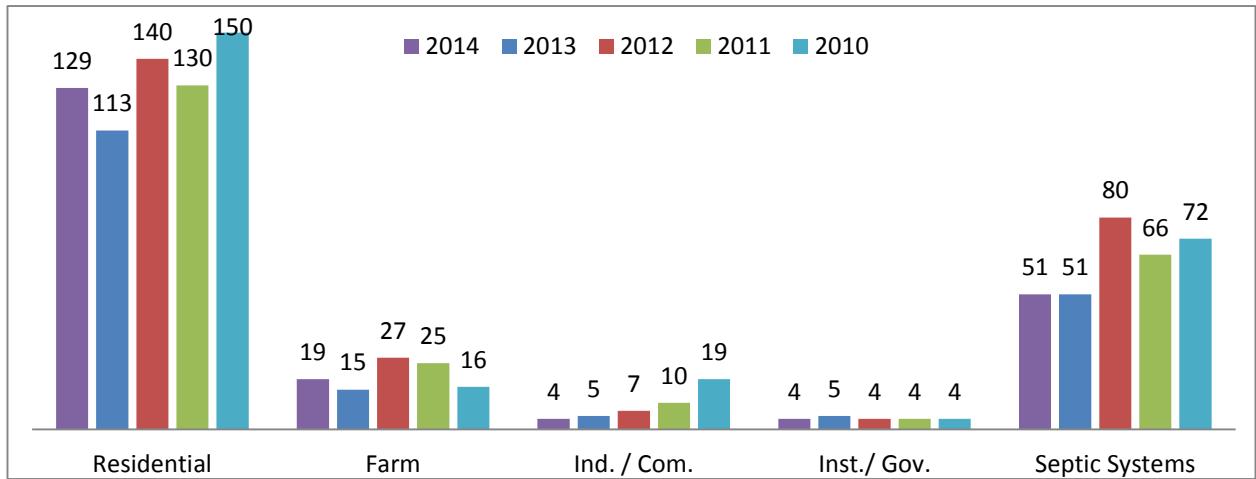
Year-End Construction Value Comparison: 2010-2014 Other permits



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 11

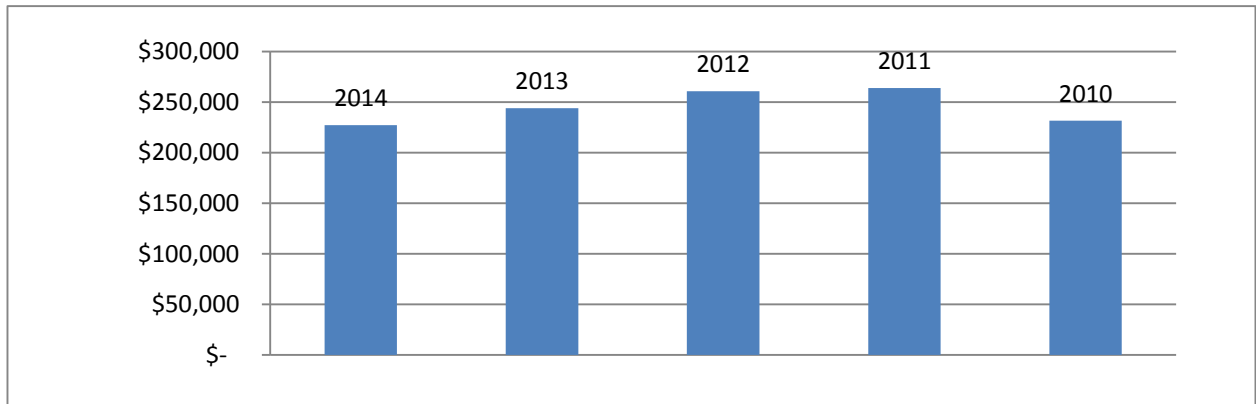
Number of Permit By Building Type: 2010-2014



Source: Town of Erin Building Department

Figure 12

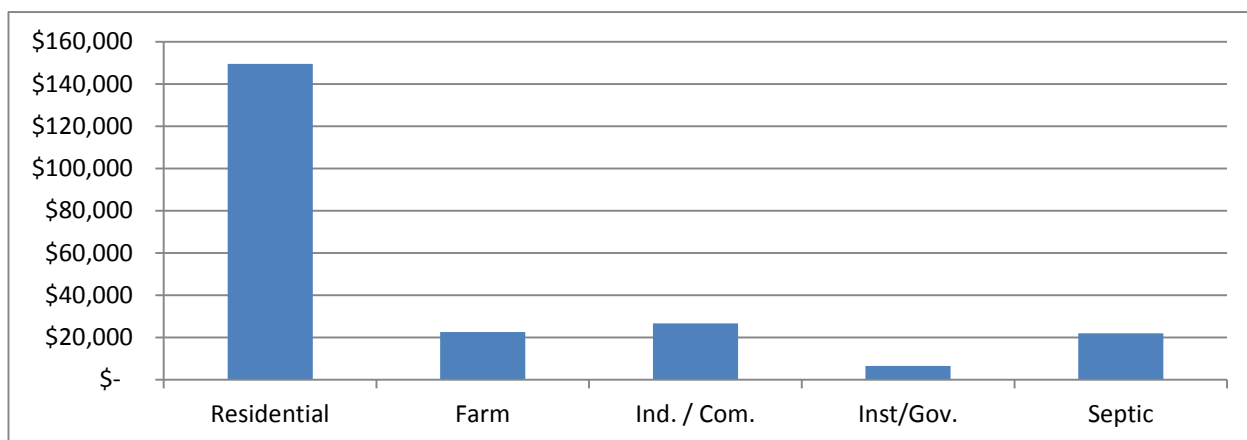
Permit Fee Revenue Comparison: 2010-2014



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 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

1.10 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 Stickle	
Chris Naraysingh	
Jamie Cheney	
John Gainor	
Vanessa Parker	
David Spencer	
Rob Smith	Councillor, Town of Erin Council

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

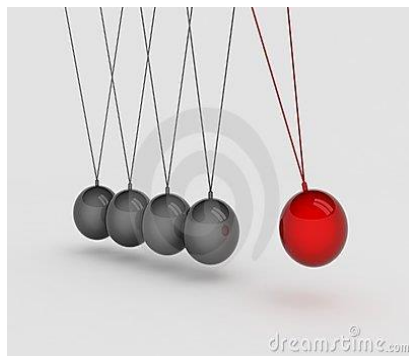
The County of Wellington provided financial support to the Town of Erin through its Business Retention and Expansion Municipal Support Program

2. ERIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Municipal Context

Global factors such as globalization and shifting markets are often the main factors pointed to when explaining why some local economies are doing better than others. However, local economies are also affected by local factors such as local identities and cultural and natural environments, as well as population dynamics. Naturally, how a community responds to global and local changes and whether that response is effective is conditioned by a number of internal variables. A community’s local leadership, history, institutions, and internal and external networks can all affect its capacity to respond to change. The Town of Erin is no exception.

Historically, some local governments have participated in economic development planning and related activities. Municipal government can play a role in nurturing and sustaining a vibrant local economy by providing high quality, cost effective local government services that are focused on meeting the needs of businesses and residents throughout the jurisdiction. Most communities throughout the County of Wellington have an economic development officer on their municipal staff.



The Town of Erin’s Economic Development Action Plan focuses on the areas where the municipality can make the greatest impact and create tangible benefits in the local economy. To achieve this the Town has a number of tools and instruments that can be used to support local economic development. The policy tools are listed in four categories and are briefly outlined below. The first two categories of policy tools (regulations and voluntary instruments) do not necessarily require extensive monetary support. However, the latter two (expenditure and financial incentive) can be costly. All of

these instruments can be used in conjunction with one another. Use of these tools requires a vision, creativity, outside-the-box thinking, determination and perseverance.

2.1 POLICY TOOLS

Regulations:

- Local governments can regulate certain activities in order to discourage negative activities and encourage positive activities.
- Governments issue licenses and permits and create standards that address everything from zoning to property standards.
- Too much regulation can burden and create inefficiencies. Lack of regulation can produce similar results.

- Some regulatory arrangements are flexible and allow for alternative arrangements. For example, with density issues, developers are sometimes allowed to increase density in exchange for the development of public green spaces.

Voluntary Instruments:

- Voluntary instruments aim for cooperation from residents, With voluntary instruments, governments often lead by example,
- Informational and educational campaigns are examples of voluntary instruments geared towards shifting public behaviors.
- Community buy-in can be achieved by working with existing networks.
- Marketing and promotional materials can aid and promote cooperation.

Expenditures:

- Local governments spend money on a number of goods and services.
- Local governments can influence local economy through the money they spend.
- Local governments have the ability to influence local businesses through local procurement strategies.
- Local governments can establish their own community businesses and public corporations (these may or may not be monopolies).
- Local government can enter into Public-Private Partnerships.
- Local government can establish amenities and services that support the local economy.

Financial Incentives:

- Pricing and monetary incentives can shift consumption, investment, and development patterns and influence behaviour.
- Local governments can offer financial incentives through pricing, taxes, grants, and rebates under a Community Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Local government can establish revitalization tax incentives under a Community Improvement Plan (CIP).

The MOMENTUM Action Plan comprehensively utilizes all of the above policy tools to achieve its economic development goals. Still, goals require an economic vision and guiding principles for success. The Town of Erin presently has two separate Community Improvement Plans in place, one for the Village of Erin and the second for the Village of Hillsburgh. Neither of the two CIP's have been used in recent years and a review of their application in the community is warranted.

2.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

For most communities the local economic development processes are not ends in themselves, but rather a means to a better community for all. Thinking about the economy within the Town of Erin at the local level means focusing on how goods and services are produced, consumed, exchanged, and distributed within the Town and how these systems might be improved for the benefit of the community at large. As such, the guiding principles for economic development within the Town of Erin must consider proactive actions, participation, collaboration, local capacity building and long-term sustainability of the community.

The following is the outline of those guiding principles for community economic development within the Town of Erin. These principles outline desirable economic development outcomes within the community. These principles also complement the goals outlined within the Town of Erin’s Official Plan (OP). These guiding principles assist in answering the following questions:

1. *What type of local economy should the Town of Erin have?*
2. *What does community economic development mean for the Town?*
3. *How is the Town going to achieve economic development?*

The Town of Erin’s proposed Community Economic Development Principles are:

Local Participation

- Support local control over the local economy and participation of all of the community in the economy and decision making process
- Build on local strengths that further increase skill development and creativity
- Accept the notion of interdependence among communities at the regional, national and international levels
- Support economic diversification, minimization of local economic leakages and maximization of local production and consumption

Asset-Base Development

- Stress the importance of an economic strategy that focuses on and highlights the strengths and resources, rather than weaknesses, of community assets
- Support local business, skill development, local organizations, local institutions, local culture and the local environment.

Community Capacity Building

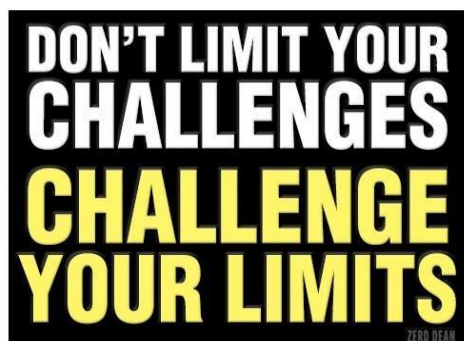
- Focus on communal idea sharing and understanding of local needs and barriers
- Encourage active local citizen involvement in all stages of development initiatives

- Work to establish local capacity for communities to understand and resolve local issues via local relationship building

High Quality of Life

- Encourage sufficient community resources and support services
- Support a healthy economy with well-paying jobs
- Provide equity in treatment and access opportunities
- Support reduction of both relative and absolute poverty measures
- Encourage a socially, culturally, and physically active community.

2.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND ACTIONS



The strategic goals in the action plan represent priority 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.

2.4 Goal 1: *Build A More Positive Business Climate*

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.

Action #1: *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 cover the Villages of Erin and Hillsburgh, but have not been for the most part, never 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: Economic Development Officer (EDO)
Liaison: CAO, EEDC, County of Wellington Planning
Project Timing: September 2015-May 2016
Degree of Priority: High

Action #2: 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 to ensure the data is kept current and information is updated on regular intervals.

Lead Responsibility: **CAO/EDO**
Liaison: EEDC, EWCC
Project Timing: October 2015
Degree of Priority: High

Action #3: 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: **CAO/EDO**
Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, Village of Erin BIA, LGHG
Project Timing: October 2015- November 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #4: 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: **CAO/EDO**
Liaison: EEDC, EWCC
Project Timing: Fall 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #5: *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: September 2015

Degree of Priority: High

Action #6: *Proceed with 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/EDO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington Planning

Project Timing: September 2015-June 2016

Degree of Priority: High

Action #7: *Apply to County of Wellington Planning for 50% Funding to Undertake a Trails Master Plan*

The County of Wellington Planning Department offers a grant to undertake trail planning and development within Wellington County. The grant is funded on a 50% matching basis. The Town will submit application for funding in the amount of \$20,000 and the 2015 budget for trail development allocates \$10,000 towards matching funds.

Lead Responsibility: CAO/EDO

Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington

Project Timing: October 2015

Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #8: 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: October 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #9: Create a "Buy Local" Promotional Campaign

Both the villages of Erin and Hillsburgh have a variety of businesses that offer a diverse array of products and service. The "Buy Local" promotional campaign will accentuate the importance of supporting local business establishments and reinforce the benefit that businesses bring to a community. The campaign will consider both print and radio promotion. The campaign will engage dialogue from a variety of community groups.

Lead Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Erin BIA, Erin Ag Society
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #10: Promote the Erin Farmers' Market

The Erin Farmers' Market is an important alternative for fresh grown and locally produced food sources in the community. The economic development department has and will continue to assist with promotion of the Farmers' Market on an ongoing basis.

Lead Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Erin BIA, Erin Ag Society
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Low

Action #11: *Develop Terms of Reference for Wastewater EA and Move Forward*

The Town of Erin is presently undergoing environmental assessment of its water and wastewater servicing in the community. In moving forward with the wastewater component of the EA process, 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.

Lead Responsibility: *CAO/Triton Engineering*

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

Project Timing: 2015-2017

Degree of Priority: High

Action #12: *Explore the Potential for Attracting a Post-Secondary Educational Facility*

The Town of Erin presently has excellent elementary and secondary educational facilities, however there is no local campus setting of post-secondary education in the community. The Town needs to explore potential options for influencing the interest of a college to locate a satellite office in the Town of the interest of a college to locate a satellite facility in the Town of Erin.

Lead Responsibility: *EDO/CAO*

Liaison: EEDC, Sheridan College, County of Wellington

Project Timing: Ongoing

Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #13: *Explore the Potential for Developing a “Business Development Centre” in the Town of Erin*

At present there are very few facilities available in the community to meet the needs of new business enterprises in their infancy stages of growth. The development of a “incubation” type business development centre in the community in collaboration with the private sector, needs to be explored.

Lead Responsibility: *EDO/CAO*

Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, County of Wellington

Project Timing: Ongoing

Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #14: *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/CAO**
Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, County of Wellington
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: High

Action #15: *Develop Sector Specific Business Attraction Strategies (Equine, Tourism, Marketing & Promotion)*

The Town is on the cusp of pursuing several important initiatives that require well thought out strategies for implementation and follow-up marketing and promotion. To ensure the success of these sector initiatives, the Town needs to develop well-conceived attraction strategies that draw the attention of both local residents and external interests.

Lead Responsibility: **EDO**
Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, Erin BIA, OMAFRA
Project Timing: September 2015-December 2015
Degree of Priority: High

Action #16: *Engage a Fulltime Economic Development Officer (EDO) and ½ Time Support Person*

The Town of Erin presently services economic development under a one-year professional services agreement with the present economic development coordinator, which ends in November 2015. The Town needs to hire the services of a fulltime, seasoned economic development officer (EDO) and post a call for expressions of interest in September 2015 to allow for a period of mentorship once a new EDO has been engaged. Part-time support for the EDO role will be required to ensure that the EDO's time is focused on completion of the Action Plan and that response to enquiries from the public and business community are managed in a timely manner.

Lead Responsibility: **CAO/Council**
Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington EDO, Council
Project Timing: September 2015-October 2015
Degree of Priority: High

Action #17: *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 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 the Erin Ag Society on September 26, 2015 and admittance to the public is free.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG
Project Timing: September 26, 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #18: *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 in a written report.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, OMAFRA, North Wellington EDC, EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG
Project Timing: Fall 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #19: *Undertake a “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.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, EWCC, Erin BIA, LGHG
Project Timing: Fall 2015
Degree of Priority: High

Action #20: *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.

Responsibility: EDO/Mayor
Liaison: EWCC, Erin BIA
Project Timing: September 2015
Degree of Priority: High

Action #21: *Promotion of "Live and Work Erin" Web Portal*

The Live and Wok Erin (www.liveandworkerin.ca) web portal went live on the Town of 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 department 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.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: County of Wellington, Minto, Centre Wellington, North Wellington
Project Timing: Fall 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #22: *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 Highway 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.

Responsibility: EDO/CAO
Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington
Project Timing: Fall 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #23: *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.

Responsibility: EDO/Roads Superintendent
Liaison: Erin BIA, Town Public Works
Project Timing: Spring 2016
Degree of Priority: Low

Action #24: *Develop a System for Tracking and Responding to Business Enquiries*

The economic development department is searching out new and more innovative ways for tracking public and business interest enquiries.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EDCO, EEDC, CAO
Project Timing: Immediate
Degree of Priority: High

Action #25: *Conduct a "How to Run a Bed & Breakfast" Adult Learning Workshop*

The Town of Erin is lacking a major accommodation provider and there are many options available in the communities for starting "Bed & Breakfast" establishments. The Town will be hosting a one session workshop on "How to Start a Bed and Breakfast" at Centre 2000 in October 2015 to better acquaint residents with the fundamentals of running a bed and breakfast business from their home.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, EDCO, Board of Education
Project Timing: October 2015 (Scheduled)
Degree of Priority: High

2.5 Goal #2: 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.

Action #26: Work with the County of Wellington EcDev Department to Upgrade Regional Road Signage

The County of Wellington have 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
Degree of Priority: Low

Action #27: 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.

Responsibility: EDO/CAO
Liaison: EEDC, EDCO, County of Wellington EcDev, Headwaters

Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action#28: 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.

Responsibility: CAO
Liaison: EEDC
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #29: 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) plays 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.

Responsibility: EDO/CAO
Liaison: Guelph Office of OMAFRA, EEDC, County of Wellington
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: High

Action #30: Maintain a Collaborative Relationship with East Wellington Chamber of Commerce and Village of Erin BIA and Let's Get Hillsburgh Growing

The Town of Erin has an established relationship with the Village of Erin BIA, East Wellington Chamber of Commerce (EWCC) and the Lets Get Hillsburgh Growing Committee (LGHG) and this relationship must be maintained and supported in the future.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: ERWECC, Erin BIA, LGHG
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: High

Action #31: 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.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: County of Wellington, Centre Wellington, Guelph Eramosa, Caledon, Halton Hills
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

2.6 Goal 3: 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.

EDCoC 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 fulltime jobs; 235 part-time jobs employing skilled and semi-skilled workers.

The equine report revealed that the almost 6.5 million population of the GTA, provides for a huge marketing potential for the Town of Erin. Erin’s proximity, appealing landscape, the resident equine infrastructure and expertise, nearby event facilities and high population of horse enthusiasts and horses provides Erin with a ready-made advantage. At the same time, riding opportunities to the south, notably Halton, Mississauga and Brampton, are being edged out of business.

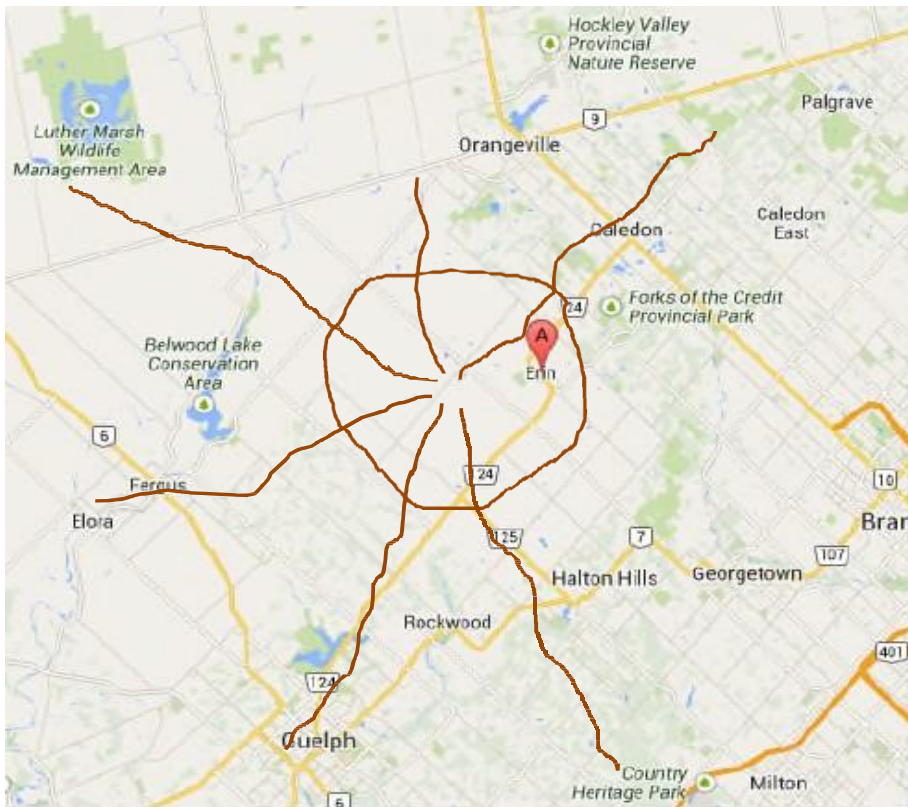
Figure 14



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 for a regional trail committee
- Attract equine manufacturing for maximum tax revenue growth
- Use equine to establish an economic development framework.

Figure 15: Long term Vision for Equine Trail Network



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 once the Ministry has completed its review of the "RED" Program.

Action #32: ***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 (RED Program is presently pending review)***

The OMAFRA Rural Economic Development Program is presently under review. Once the program has been renewed the Town of Erin needs to make application under the "RED" Program for development of the community as a "Hub" for Equine Trail infrastructure development.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: OMAFRA, EEDC, County of Wellington EcDev, Headwaters
Project Timing: Fall 2015- March 2017
Degree of Priority: High

Action #33: ***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: **CAO/EDO**
Liaison: EEDC, County of Wellington OMAFRA
Project Timing: November 2015/Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #34: *Establish an Erin Equine Marketing Alliance*

Discussions with members of the equine industry indicates 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.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, OMAFRA, Equine Canada, Local Equine Operators
Project Timing: November 2015/Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #35: *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, Palgrave, Orangeville, Caledon, Inglewood, Cheltenham, Fergus, Elora and Local Arena establishments
Project Timing: Spring 2016
Degree of Priority: High

Action # 36: *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.

Responsibility: EDO/Equine Representation
Liaison: EEDC, Equine Canada, OMAFRA, Erin Ag Society, Guelph Equine Network
Project Timing: Winter 2016
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #37: *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 and better leverage the Headwaters “Horse Country” branding and promotion.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Headwaters, Headwaters Equine Leadership Group (HELG)
Project Timing: January 2016
Degree of Priority: Medium

2.7 *Goal #4: Promote and Market the Town of Erin as a 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 it.



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.

Action #38: *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 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.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Community Groups, LGHG, Credit Valley Conservation, Erin BIA
Project Timing: Fall 2015-Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #39: *Make Application to Ontario Trillium to Undertake a Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study*

The 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. The Erin Rotary Club have agreed to support the development of the proposed project as a "Rotary Legacy" project. The Ontario Trillium Foundation provides grant funding to communities under 20,000 in population.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Erin Rotary Club, LGHG, Credit Valley Conservation, Erin BIA
Project Timing: September 2015-June 2016
Degree of Priority: High

Action #40: *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.

Responsibility: CAO/EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Village of Erin BIA
Project Timing: Spring 2016
Degree of Priority: Low

Action #41: 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."

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: Village of Erin BIA
Project Timing: Fall 2015
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #42: 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
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #43: Work with the Erin Ag Society to Help Promote the Erin Fall Fair and Erin Farmers' Market

The Erin Fall Fair is one of the largest fall fairs in Ontario and it is the lead up to the Royal each year. The Town recognizes the economic impact of the Erin Fall Fair and should investigate opportunities for collaborative marketing and promotion of the event in October each year. The Town also appreciates the importance of supporting the Erin Farmers' Market.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Erin Ag Society, Erin BIA, Erin Farmers' Market
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #44: *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.

Responsibility: EDO/CAO
Liaison EEDC, Headwaters, EWCC
Project Timing: May 2016
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #45: *Explore Options for Holding a St. Patrick's Day Festival in March 2016*

The Town of Erin has adopted a distinctively "Irish" appearance in all of its promotional materials. The Town uses the green shamrock in all public material and yet March 17th "St. Patrick's Day" goes by annually without much fanfare. The Town needs to explore interest in the community for making St. Patrick's Day an annual festival, which could generate huge interest from those living in the GTA and surrounding communities.

Lead Responsibility: **CAO/EDO**
Liaison: EEDC, Erin BIA, LGHG
Project Timing: December 2015-January 2016
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #46: *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: Fall 2015- Spring 2016
Degree of Priority: Medium

Action #47: *Renew the Headwaters Tourism Promotion Agreement*

The existing Headwaters Tourism Agreement expires in December 2015. Staff recommend renewal of the agreement.

Responsibility: CAO
Liaison: EEDC, EDO
Project Timing: December 2015
Degree of Priority: High

2.8 *Goal #5: Develop a Sustainable Economy*

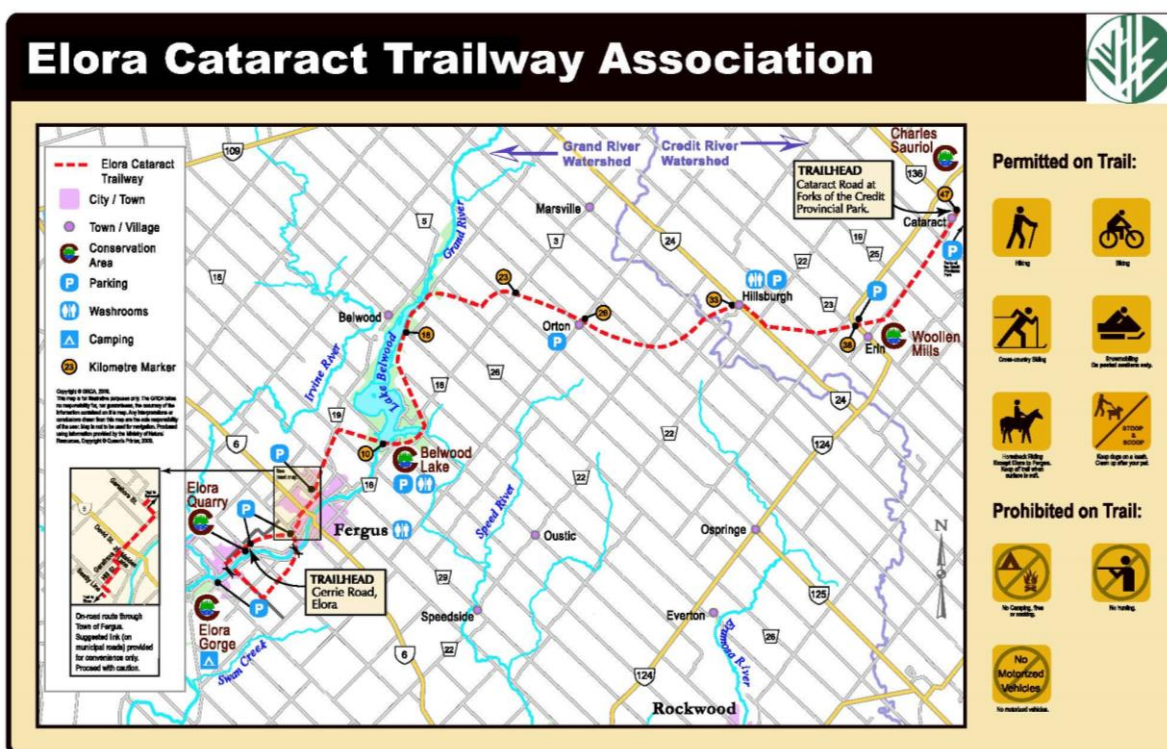
Striving to support a high quality of life for residents, workforce, and visitors through sustainable development that carefully integrates economic, environmental as well as social and cultural interests is vital to the long term success of the community. The long term objective for the community should 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 they present 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.

Action#48: *Undertake a Transportation and Parking Plan for the Urban Centres of Hillsburgh and Village of Erin.*

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

Responsibility: CAO/ Road Superintendent
Liaison: Erin BIA, EWCC, County of Wellington
Project Timeline: June 2016
Degree of Priority: Low

Action #49: *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.

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

Action # 50: *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.

Responsibility: CAO
Liaison: Industry, Recreation Department, Public Works
Project Timing: Ongoing
Degree of Priority: Med

Action #51: *Conduct a One-Day Heritage Symposium*

The Town will work with its Heritage Committee to promote and host a one-day heritage symposium in May 2016. Invitations will be extended to regional heritage groups and members of the public interested in learning more about heritage and the Town of Erin initiatives.

Responsibility: EDO
Liaison: EEDC, Heritage Committee
Project Timing: May 2016
Degree of Priority: Low

3. 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.

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 in 2018 and updated in 2019.

4. APPENDIX 1

4.1 EEDC SWOT ASSESSMENT RESULTS (March 18, 2015)

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
-History -Longevity -Location -Knowledge and Skills of Citizens -Green Space -Local Radio -Trailways -Volunteers -2 Banks (RBC/TD) -Cleanliness -Fall Fair -EWCC/Home & Lifestyle Show -Quality of Life/Great Place to Live -Equine/Agricultural Community -Friendliness/Inviting -Bakery -Proximity to - Oakville/Guelph/Georgetown/Brampton -New Mayor -EDO Officer -New Municipal Government/Access to Members -Centre 2000 – Mun. Erin Cinema -Schools -Dual language Schooling -Ecclectic Mix of Shops -Credit River/Waterways -“One Of” Town Toy Store -Partnerships with Borders -3 Gas Stations -Heritage Bldgs./Maintenance is Good -Local Celebrities -Good Transportation (Hwy 124) -Artistic community -Everdale -Angelstone Equestrian Facility -Organic Meats	-Lack of Accommodation -Waste Water (lack of Services) -High taxes (Res./Industrial balance) -Store Hours -Availability of Labour Force -No Business Welcome Package -Lack Youth/Young Adult Activities -Business Turnover -High Retail Store Vacancies -Truck Traffic -Signage – Needs Updating -Inconsistent Hydro (Dirty Power) -Lack of High Response Internet -Cellular Issues -Youth Leaving Community -No Crosswalk -No Public Transit -EERIN or ERIN? -Slow Response Time from Town -No Crosswalk in Hillsburgh -Lack of Post - Secondary Edu.	-Want to Shop Local -Open for Business -Bldg’s provide Opportunity -Business Incubator -Servicing Potential -Green Belt/Green Space -Equine Development -Bed & Bales -Tourism Development -Higher Profile Events -Developers Calling -Boardwalk/Trail Development -Pan Am Games -Soccer Opportunities -Use of Downtown Park for Events -Downtown Erin/Hillsburgh -Organic Hub -Equine Hub -Slogan Branding/DNA -Snowmobile Traffic	-Servicing /Lack of Response -Franchise Sprawl -Lack of Funding -Look Outside Downtown /Town a Whole -Lack of Industrial Plan -Climate Change -Infrastructure (water, sewer, Septic, Internet, Phone) -Emergency Action Plan - Communication Plan -CIP of Bordering Towns -Threat of Ecological Accidents -Apathy -Burnout -Demographics -Lack of Healthcare Facilities -Tagging -Connectivity B2B

<p>-Tourism Destination Day Trip – Scenic Area</p>	<p>-Lack of Support for Business By -Local community -Industrial – Tough Compete \$ -Business vs Municipal – Expectations -Pricey Groceries/Commuter -Population -No Clear Vision/Foresight -Hours of Operation -Lack of Collaboration /Sectors -Old Erin Public School Site Guardian Building? -Need More Fine Dining -Lack of Affordable Housing Disconnect between Agri and Community -Lack Economic Development -- Attraction Package -Lack of Industrial Space -No Inventory List</p>	<p>-Car Hobbyist -Winter Carnival -St.Patrick’s Day – WE ARE REAL -Proximity to the GTA -Seasonal Attraction Destination -Upside Down Sale -E-Promotion/Social venues -Marketing Strategy -Ramp Up Communications -Contract Buses (Denny’s) -Engaging Youth/Mentoring -Connect Industry with Students -Job Fair -Business Attraction Efforts -Micro Distillery – Seed to Save -Fine Dining/Culinary Specialty -Country Experience -Succession Planning -Sustainability -Tourism Symposium (March 23rd.)</p>	<p>-Collaboration R2R -Provincial Funding Sources (RED?/Sewage Treatment?) -Proximity to Neighbours – Business -Land Investment -Accessibility to Businesses -Crime rate/Risk -Master Plan-Identity? - No Service Plan Budget Availability</p>
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EEDC FOCUS GROUP SESSION RESULTS (July 13-16th, 2015)

4.2 EQUINE & AGRICULTURE FOCUS GROUP - July 13th, 2015

What would success look like?

Local Food/Farmers' Market?

- Measures / indicators
- More people, bigger markets For CSA's (5 in Town of Erin)
- Town could help with identifying the 5 CSA's
- Partner with the County – resources/sources/matchmaking
- Need a point person at Town: Economic Development/Town
- Help with how to apply/ hosting workshops/ how to work applications etc.
- Town could bring together agriculture producers/ value added
- Erin Farmers' Market – local growers/producers – offer additional opportunities – 3 year commitment – could it be an indoor market?
- Does the Town have space for an indoor Farmers' market?
- Should be a local mechanism for training new farmers?
- Support Local food?
- Town could be a catalyst for facilitation and establishing a farm buying group?
- Could be a Local Food info section on website greater awareness – source?
- Local support local business and build awareness of locals as to what's out there
- Town should set example by using local food producers and products for all Town driven dinners/events.
- There should be a local Foods section on the Town's website.

TEN YEARS FROM NOW:

- Great indoor Farmers' Market
- Preference criteria for who sells
- Marketing needed June through September
- Town incentives
- Investigate the entire food system within the Town of Erin.

Introduction of Concept by Chair Mary Venneman:

Concept ----50,000 foot elevation looking down

Feasibility - 10,000 foot vantage

Design Concept at 5,000 foot level

Operational ground level at 100 foot level

ERIN EQUINE MARKETING ALLIANCE

- Social Media Website
- Equine Listing – success, every single equine business listed that is active
- Need the human resources to go out and knock on every equine door
- Conduct a forum with the goal of building one cohesive equine community
- Organize a committee
- Education component
- Community neighbor impacts
- Alliance with other businesses
- Experience should be 4-6 hour duration
- Develop the draw/experience
- Need to occupy parents should be included while children are taking lessons
- Marketing materials need to be developed and printed
- **THE GOAL: DESTINATION EXPERIENCES!**

EQUINE HUB:

- Middle of residential?
- Start with the E-C Trail
- Think regionally?

- Two definitions of “HUB”
 - Hub of equine activity, and
 - Hub for trail riding/recreational riding
- Multi-purpose for joint development and funding
- Capitalize on what is here (existing assets)
- Model on snowmobile permitting and rules

ALLIANCE WITH ERIN AG SOCIETY:

- Farmers’ Market
- Site is land locked/
- Existing issues around vandalism
- Private property (self -supporting / charitable non-profit status)
- 23 acres in size
- Under the Ag Society Act
- Fall Fair – major revenue generator
- Mandate: To promote Ag use
- Food processing/ rent the building/ cold storage
- Community commercial kitchen
- Located on a flood plain area
- Has a black out period for Fall fair Thanksgiving weekend
- 3 weeks centered on Fair activities
- Strength overall is Fall fair
- HEADS Soccer rents the Indoor Rec Centre mid -October to May each year
- Building are available from June until early October
- Grounds are available all except for three week Fair period
- Site has masonic Hall, Cattle Barn
- Show Barn
- 5 lean tow’s

4.3 TOURISM FOCUS GROUP – Tuesday July 14, 2015

Co-Chairs - David Spencer and Mario Britto:

ERIN ROTARY RIVERWALK CONCEPT:

- Surface could be paved (east side) or crushed stone
- Solar or gas lighting along from Charles to Church Street
- East side with crushed stone to accommodate horses , dogs, joggers
- Encourage restaurants to have patio's on backside
- Trail should be useable four seasons of the year
- River between Charles and Church should have winter skating
- Needs to be rescue rings, benches and signage all along the trail
- Safety is a risk factor that must be mitigated?
- Could sponsor annual walkathons (Shelters, Rotary, cancer, colour runs?)
- Investigate downtown Wi-Fi access
- Artists and Entertainment options

Headwaters Tourism Association:

- Memberships
- Board Membership
- Great Destination
- Collaborative effect
- Radio Station 88.1
- Promotion surrounding Radio Station
- Youth participation

RECREATION MASTER PLAN:

- Ball , Soccer, Tennis Courts
- Buildings and Facilities
- Parkland areas and regular maintenance
- Recreation inventory / No Parks and Recreation Dept.
- Trails/bike trails
- Mountain bike trail system (private Association open to increased membership)
- Arena facilities need programming
- Theatre – Erin Cinema has 300 seats (International films?)
- Film Festival – draw from all over the region
- Movie Festival organized (sponsors)?
- Promotion on radio

SEASONAL ATTRACTION:

- **FALL** - Fall Fair (largest in Province) – Town has a booth
 - CANADA DAY (Fireworks)
 - Equine
 - Octoberfest
- **WINTER –**
 - XMAS Wonderland
 - Street Tree Lighting
 - Santa on the Street - hot chocolate/cider/donuts/beaver tails?
 - Skating on the River
 - March St .Patrick’s Day event?
- **SPRING –**
 - EQUINE
 - Strawberry Fest (Hillsburgh)
 - Home & Living SHOW
- **SUMMER -**
 - EQUINE
 - Beer Fest (Feast of Hops Sept 15th)
 - River Run (Food fest)
 - Local market/vendors
 - Bring your horse to Town Event?
 - Let’s get Hillsburgh Going Day (August 15th)
 - CELEBRATE ERIN – FOOD AND FUN/ ART etc.

4.4 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION FOCUS GROUP:

Co-Chairs Susan Powell/Mary Venneman –Wednesday July 15th, 2015

Erin Rotary Riverwalk Project:

- Charles Street to Dundas / Dundas to Church/ Church to Cataract Trail/ Downtown Hillsburgh
- Find a way of funding and signing the whole trail
- Be careful not to show priority on any one community but ensure the plan is part of a bigger picture
- Investigate geocaching opportunities
- Google Tour of Erin Features
- Link CVC with the Mill, Trails and Rec activities
- Lower West Credit
- Barbour Fields
- Multi-use trail system
- Trails and Open Spaces lead to active living both Horse and Human
- Full family activity year round
- Do an extensive MASTER PLAN covering the whole of Town of Erin
- Present it as future Large Plan for Town of Erin
- Important to communicate this
- Need to know the impact of the Fall Fair on Erin?
- Ag Society property? Moving site would open future opportunities?

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

- Clear message from “Town of Erin”
- Villages – Open when?
- Locals are not aware of what’s in Town?
- Issues – need to have retail/hospitality and restaurants open all weekend
- EWCC is in disarray
- Erin Ag Society is also in disarray
- Get all the issues out of the way and let’s create partnerships with the Chamber
- Need to understand how many businesses and types of businesses there are.
- Need a policy from Town that speaks to home based business and creates awareness of what all the costs are?
- Erin BIA has 48 properties
- Challenges within BIA and it’s Governance

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

- Business climate must be “open” and welcoming: How can we help you?
- Needs to start with the municipality (starting to get better)
- Need a spokesperson – need an Ambassador – question is who?
- Systemic problem at Town office – no leadership?
- Stores at Christmas were closed at 6pm? – WHY?
- Need to have a reason to come down town!
- Key services are available – post office, library
- Need to keep the “Village Centre” intact
- Retain what’s there
- Erin called the one off town
- Need available information to determine who the tourists are?
- Foodland – Hillsburgh is open till midnight
- Investigate the SHELL Radio Spots on radio
- Focus on specific region like Erin
- Need to get Town of Erin on those ads
- Missing out on corporate promo opportunities like Shell and Mazda
- ASSET: Trail way – Ride our local Elora cataract and SHOP in Erin
- Trails are a core attraction and advantage and all unfolds from our natural area and trails along the Elora Cataract
- High level plan with an overarching vision
- Phased : Riverwalk/Downtown Erin/Hillsburgh
- Build out B&B accommodation
- Town of Erin Branding should be around trails
- Need a streetscape plan
- Façade improvements – 50’50 incentives through CIP
- Signage
- Needs to be an info session on CIP opportunities.

4.5 BUSINESS ATTRACTION FOCUS GROUP – July 16, 2015

Co-Chairs Chris Naraysingh and Maria Britto

Priority #1: Hire a Fulltime Economic Development Officer

- Need someone who can push the envelope and make things happen
- Need to help business happen not make the experience intolerable
- Need to keep the momentum going
- Long term investment Need to develop the job description
- May be missing lots of opportunities
- Needs to be measurement put in place to define results
- Need to be someone that can find funding and has a strong network with Feds, Province, County and Region
- Needs to have the right background and experience
- Retention will be critical

Priority #2: Inventory of Commercial and Industrial Lands

- Need servicing put in place
- About 100 acres within the Solmar development Plan designated to Industrial/commercial zoning
- Need to do inventory including ownership and use of lands
- Servicing is complicated by what Town can put into the River. Maximum 500 homes at the moment as per MOE numbers. Could be more upwards to 7,500 people. Presently 4,300 people and MOE max of 6,000

EXTERIOR BUSINESS ATTRACTION:

- BIA/ EWCC
- Need development data
- Masterplan for overall servicing issues required
- What type of companies do we want in the Town of Erin?
- Need to know just how important servicing is to the business community? Perhaps septic service is okay?
- Water is important to industry
- Need to upgrade the back side of businesses
- Town needs to review development like Niagara-on-the Lake
- There needs to be a well -developed Terms of Reference for the EA Process!
- Impacts assimilative capacity
- There is question as to what the community really wants

Roundtable:

- Need a fulltime Ec. Dev person
- Needs to have significant knowledge and experience
- People want to be here, engagement of a fulltime Ec. Dev person is critical
- Infrastructure is key!
- Need to build on each other's strengths
- Need to get behind swift initiatives need to provide the right tools like fibre optics in the community
- Decisions must be made on sewage services
- Need for affordable housing for younger people
- Need younger people in our community
- Need better internet services
- The life of the community is in its parks and recreation assets
- Need to know what the real timeframe is?
- Need public washrooms in our downtown area
- Growth is important
- We need to be using our educational facilities and programming as an economic development tool (asset). French immersion and Centre 2000 as valuable assets in our community.
- All tasks should be measurable!