



# Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Update of Economic Development  
Strategic Plan

September 13, 2023



# Today's Agenda

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



Strategy Overview



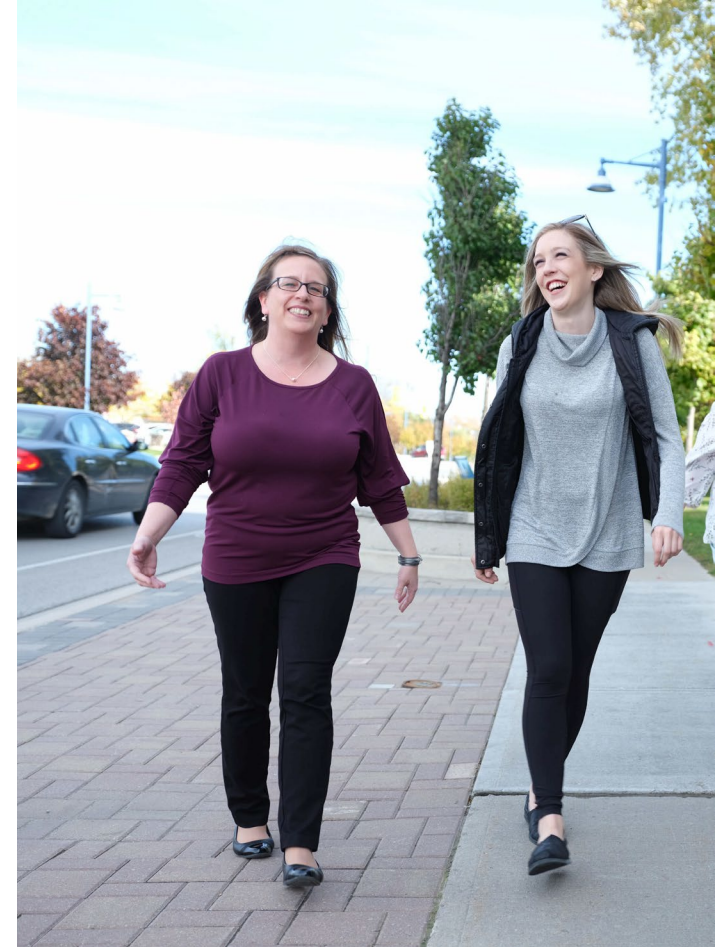
What Did the Data and Consultation Tell Us?



Guiding Principles and Draft Strategic Goals



Next Steps



# Feedback – Question 1

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Audience composition:

Which of the following groups would describe you best:

- a) Student
- b) Non-profit organization, government or economic development partner
- c) Business owner/manager: sole proprietor
- d) Business owner/manager: 1 to 9 employees
- e) Business owner/manager: more than 10 employees
- f) Other member of the Innisfil/County of Simcoe community

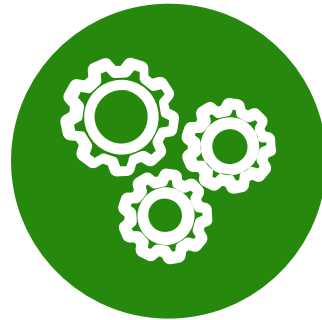
# Strategy Overview

# Purpose of the Presentation

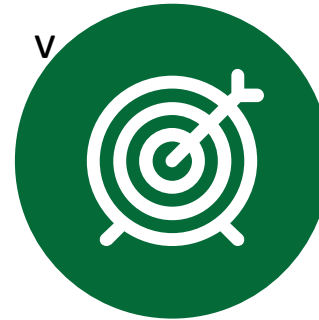
Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



Progress to date



Describe the 2023-2026 Draft Strategic Goals and Objectives



Receive feedback on proposed Draft Strategic Goals and Objectives



Overview of the next steps and Strategy finalization

# Objectives of the Strategy

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



- ❖ Collect and analyze relevant data to identify key trends and growth sectors
- ❖ Listen and learn from local stakeholders and the community
- ❖ Identify opportunities for the Town to support the growth of the economy
- ❖ Provide recommendations and action items to pursue key opportunities including support for business attraction, retention and expansion

# Developing the Strategy

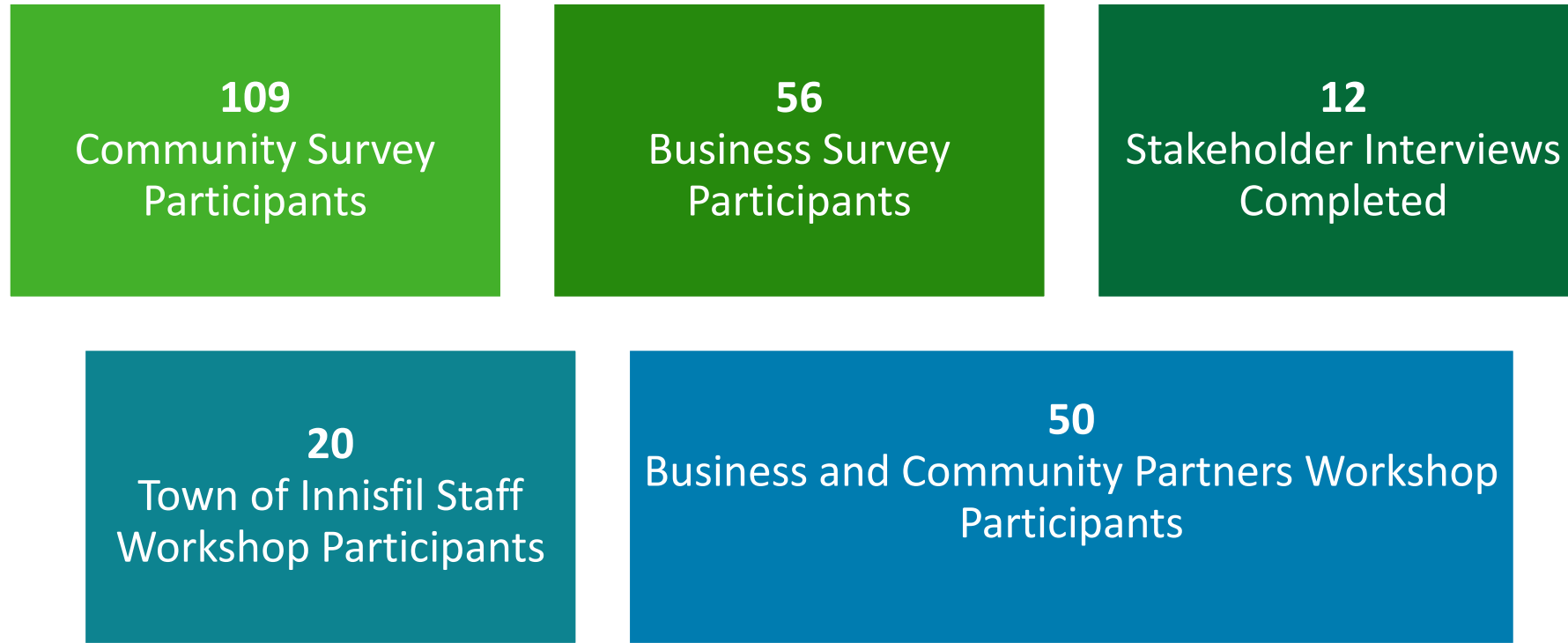
Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



# Engagement Activities Summary

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

*247 stakeholders provided insights and feedback*





# What Did the Data and Consultation Tell Us?

# What Have We Learned?

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



## Population

Innisfil has experienced significant growth during the last decade (32% increase).

The growth rate has surpassed Simcoe County and Ontario as a whole. Growth has been led by intraprovincial migration from people leaving larger urban centres.



## Housing

Most of the housing stock in Innisfil is single-detached and single-family housing and the most recent housing starts have been single-detached housing.



## Income

Innisfil recorded a larger median household income compared to Simcoe County and Ontario as a whole. There is also a larger share of upper-middle-class and high-income households compared to the broader geographies.

# What Have We Learned?

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



## Employment

Employment declined by 8% as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, numbers have been recovering and are projected to reach pre-pandemic levels by 2026, then continue to grow at 0.6% per year.



## Labour Force Commuting

Innisfil is a net exporter of workers. 45% of Innisfil's employed labour force leave the town for work (mostly in manufacturing and health care and social assistance). Compared to 2016, the number of people leaving Innisfil for work has fallen 25%.



## Business Structure

As of June 2022, ~4,130 businesses were recorded in Innisfil. Most of these were businesses without employees and small businesses employing 1 to 9 employees.

# What Have We Heard? – Community Aspirations

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



## **A Direction for Economic Development**

Innisfil Economic Development will continue to be known as a leader in municipal government innovation while creating an environment for businesses to connect and innovate.



## **Economic Development Programming with a Demonstrated ROI**

There is need for all economic development programming to demonstrate a ROI that is clearly understood and effectively communicated to the community and its leadership.



## **Supported and Growing Business Community**

Establishing strong and ongoing collaboration with local businesses is important in ensuring programming, strategies and decisions will align with local business needs.

# What Have We Heard? – Community Aspirations

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



## **A Stronger, Diversified Economy**

Focusing on economic diversification will broaden the availability of jobs and drive higher economic growth potential and more investment.



## **An Investment-ready Community**

Addressing land development barriers and infrastructure servicing to increase land availability for industrial, commercial and residential development.



## **A Value-added Tourism Destination**

Cultivating thriving tourism (including agri-tourism), value-added agriculture, facilitated by supportive and innovative land policies and regulations.

# What Have We Heard? – Community Aspirations

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



## Health Care Cluster

Supporting investment attraction to the RVH South Campus Development and adjacent Town Campus, which includes investment attraction of associated health care businesses and educational programs and partnerships.



## Destination of Choice

Attracting and retaining newcomers and youth who are interested in living and working in Innisfil.

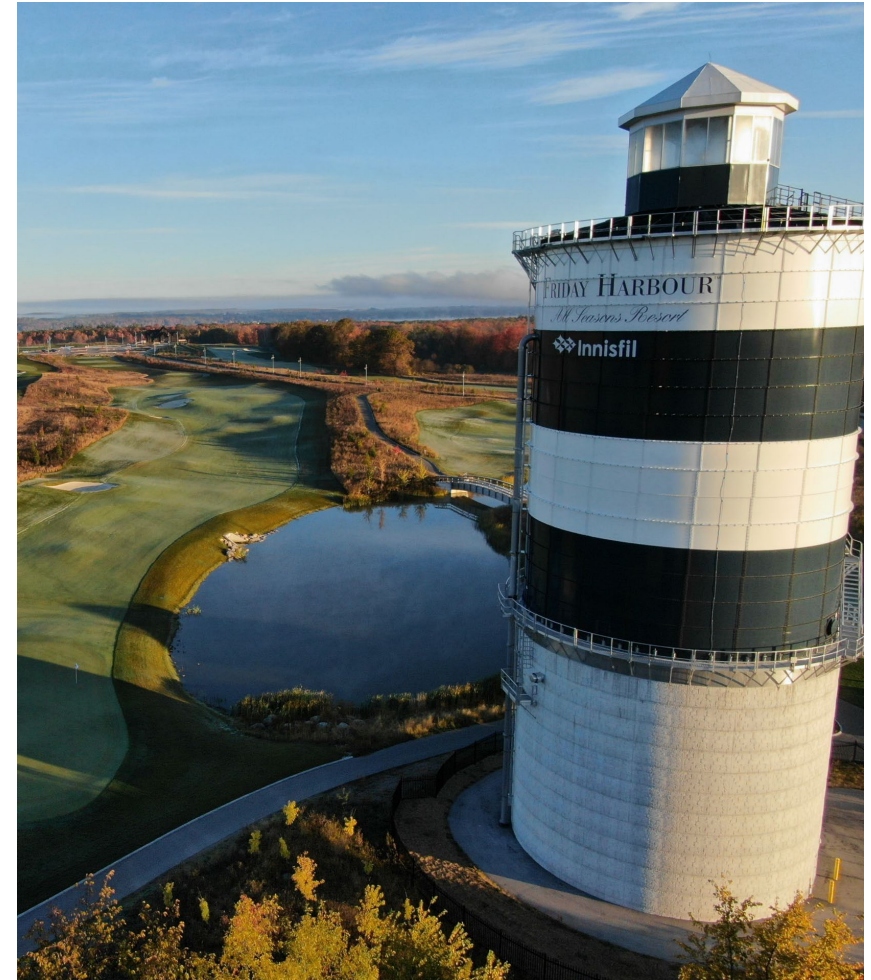
# Guiding Principles and Draft Strategic Goals

# Draft Strategy Guiding Principles

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

## Guiding principles that frame the Town of Innisfil 2023-2026 Economic Development Strategic Plan:

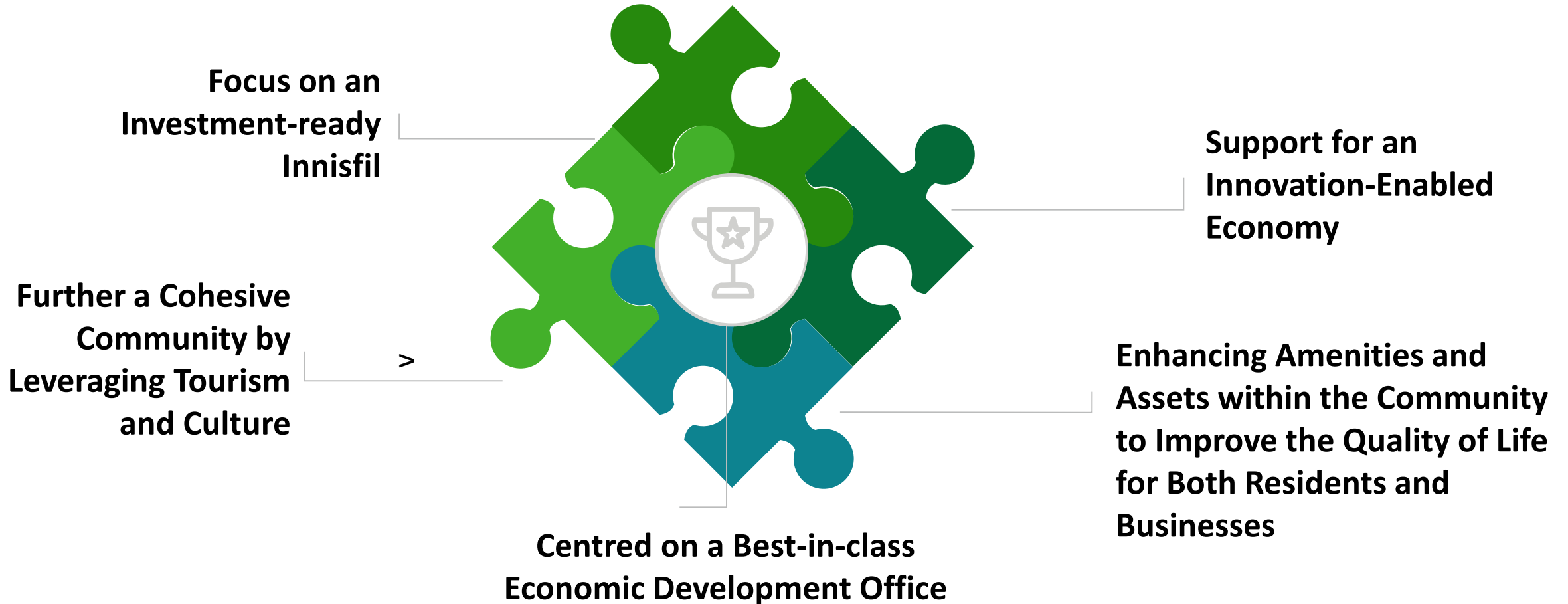
- ❖ Infrastructure improvement
- ❖ Customer-centric culture
- ❖ Anchor partners and collaborators
- ❖ Innovation ecosystem
- ❖ Workforce development
- ❖ Unified story telling
- ❖ Demonstrated return on investment
- ❖ Equitable development
- ❖ Environmental responsibility





# Draft Strategic Goals

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026



# Feedback – Question 2

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Ranking the Draft Goals:

After this section I will ask that you mark on your feedback paper, the ranking of the goals in order of importance (with 1 being the most important):

- Goal #1 – Focus on an Investment-ready Innisfil
- Goal #2 – Support for an Innovation-Enabled Economy
- Goal #3 – Further a Cohesive Community by Leveraging Tourism and Culture
- Goal #4 – Enhancing Amenities and Assets within the Community to Improve the Quality of Life for Both Residents and Businesses

# Goal #1 – Focus on an Investment-ready Innisfil

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## Key findings

- Innisfil Heights does not have the servicing needed; improving readiness is essential for economic growth. Lack of servicing is impacting private sector investment prospects.
- Areas of focus could include expedited processes to facilitate growth and opportunities for the municipality to take the lead in preparing lands for future development.
- The workforce in Innisfil is aging. As a significant number of employees approach retirement age, it will be necessary to develop a robust talent attraction strategy.

## Why it is important

- Investors are more likely to invest in communities that have a clear vision and plan for how they will use the investment funds to achieve their goals – investors usually have choices on where to locate.
- Understanding limitations in infrastructure, services and resources can be addressed through strategic investments.
- A strong workforce is a critical site selection criteria, and sustainable workforce is the number one site selection factor and critical to enabling the growth of prospective and existing businesses.

# Goal 1 – Focus on an Investment-ready Innisfil

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## Objectives:

- Invest in efforts to improve the investment readiness of Innisfil Heights to support and attract technology-based and manufacturing investments.
- Foster a long-term planning vision to ensure an adequate supply of market-ready land, office and commercial spaces.
- Support and advance the talent needs of Innisfil businesses.
- Increase investment attraction activities and programming.



# Goal #2 – Support for an Innovation-Enabled Economy

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## Key findings

- Stakeholders expressed need to focus on innovation, SMEs, start-ups business support, including more collaborative connections with businesses and customer service.
- Facilitating networking opportunities among businesses in all communities can foster camaraderie and encourage collaboration.
- Promote local businesses, entrepreneurship and support for sole-proprietorship and micro-business.
- It is important to enhance relationships and formalize partnerships with Georgian College and Lakehead University (integrate businesses and post-secondary).

## Why it is important

- A focus on innovation and entrepreneurship will attract and nurture start-ups and scale-ups, fostering their growth and expansion.
- Sector-based support will enable an improved understanding of existing value chains for future investment attraction efforts.
- An innovation-enabled economy will support the attraction and growth of tech-based manufacturing, food production, creative industries and health care sectors.

# Goal #2 – Support for an Innovation-Enabled Economy

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## Objectives:

- Position DMZ Innisfil as a regional innovation space to ensure continued support for small and medium sized enterprise growth, innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Provide entrepreneurs and start-ups with supports to move a product from an idea to prototype to commercialization.
- Position a ‘health-cluster’ Innisfil brand.
- Invest in business development and support programs and services for Innisfil’s major employers and target sectors.



# Goal #3 – Further a Cohesive Community by Leveraging Tourism and Culture

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## Key findings

- Gaps are observed in community connectivity partially due to Innisfil being comprised of distinct neighbourhoods with distance between limiting transportation options.
- Leveraging Innisfil's tourism sector, can act as a bridge to connect settlement areas, residents and visitors.
- The integration of rural cultural tourism with urban experiences represents a unique opportunity.

## Why it is important

- Rural revitalization thrives through tourism development and agri-tourism, as it showcases the distinct character of individual settlement areas.
- Exploring new economic development opportunities through tourism (including agri-tourism, creative and cultural industries) can support the diversification of the local economy.
- Leveraging the creative industries and cultural and tourism assets (e.g., beach park, marina, access to Lake Simcoe), can help Innisfil's communities and main streets to become vibrant hubs of economic growth and cultural enrichment.

# Goal #3 – Further a Cohesive Community by Leveraging Tourism and Culture

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

## Objectives:

- Leverage the creative and cultural industries to drive economic growth and tourism and community unity.
- Work with County partners to expand and improve agri-tourism products and experiences.
- Ensure capacity in place for existing programs and newer efforts in tourism and culture.





# Feedback – Question 3

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Please rate the following statement:

Culture and Tourism directly and/or indirectly impacts my business and/or industry.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Somewhat agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Somewhat disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

# Goal #4 – Enhancing Amenities and Assets within the Community to Improve the Quality of Life for Both Residents and Businesses

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

## Key findings

- There is poor transit connectivity within Innisfil and the surrounding region.
- There is a gap in existing housing inventory to meet current demand. This includes affordable housing and rental units.
- Developing placemaking infrastructure will be critical to attracting and retaining youth and newcomers.
- Additional wrap around supports are required to support further economic growth in Innisfil.

## Why it is important

- Developing inter-municipal transit options between employment and residential zones can create fluidity within Innisfil.
- Strong supports for newcomers and youth can support Innisfil being a community of choice and supports the building of the workforce and economy.
- Improving connection between local neighbourhoods can support the movement of goods and people which subsequently improves the productivity of the local economy.

# Goal #4 – Enhancing Amenities and Assets within the Community to Improve the Quality of Life for Both Residents and Businesses

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

## Objectives

- Invest in diversity of housing options.
- Support the development of placemaking initiatives to create a vibrant environment for all age segments (immigrant, newcomer, remote worker, seniors).
- Enhance the networks that enable people to move within and between Innisfil's neighbourhoods.
- Advocate for and seek solutions to address the identified needs and gaps that cannot be resolved solely at the municipal level.



# Feedback – Revisit Question 2

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Ranking the Draft Goals:

Please rank the draft goals in order of importance (with 1 being the most important):

- Goal #1 – Focus on an Investment-ready Innisfil
- Goal #2 – Support for an Innovation-Enabled Economy
- Goal #3 – Further a Cohesive Community by Leveraging Tourism and Culture
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# Feedback – Question 4

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Was there anything that surprised you today? Do you see any gaps not yet addressed in the proposed goals?

# Next Step

# Next Steps

## Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

- Development of action plan
- Prioritization of objectives and actions
- Present report to Council
- Implementation



# Economic Development Ecosystem

Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2026

***While the Town is leading these efforts economic development success requires the collaboration of many partners across the ecosystem.***



Thank you!

Paul Blais

Managing Director, Economic Advisory

[pablais@deloitte.ca](mailto:pablais@deloitte.ca)

Laura Thompson

Manager of Economic Development

[lthompson@innisfil.ca](mailto:lthompson@innisfil.ca)

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