

The Town of Innisfil

Economic Development Strategic Plan

2024-2026



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 **Innisfil**
Economic Development

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This extensive engagement was critical to ensuring that this strategy was made in Innisfil, for Innisfil. We look forward to working towards this vision alongside you.

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The Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2024- 2026

A visionary plan aimed at fostering sustainable growth and prosperity within our community, the Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan 2024-2026 outlines five economic goals and objectives, as well as the strategies and actions that need to be taken over the next three years to achieve them.

From the start of the process, Town staff emphasized the importance of creating a practical and actionable plan. The objective was to identify feasible actions that the community could undertake to facilitate sustained economic growth.

The research identified that the community must focus on several critical areas. These include investment readiness, an innovation-enabled economy, a cohesive community, community amenities and assets, and a best-in-class economic development team.

A defining moment

The world's economy has been continually disrupted over the last few years and Canadian communities have had to

reset their plans to contend with the change that has ensued. Fortunately for Innisfil, its economy is diversified – not propped up by one or two major industries, which makes it inherently more resilient against economic downturns. Innisfil's economy is driven by the service industries, with the trades, construction, and accommodation and food services being the main drivers. Manufacturing remains a leading employer, while Innisfil's rich agricultural heritage, farms and agricultural businesses offer continued opportunities in agri-technology and food processing. Innisfil's location on the shores of Lake Simcoe, marinas and tourism-related activities, including fishing and boating, are of economic significance.

Economic change is not necessarily new to Innisfil. There are few municipalities in Canada that have a faster growing population base over the last decade and, better yet, forecasts show population will continue to surge – a 32% increase over the next decade, which will add approximately 14,044 people compared to the 2021 Census figures. This is good news as the times of increasing economic uncertainty around the globe are going to continue for the near future and the performance of the Canadian and Ontario economies will be negatively affected.

Further emphasizing the importance of this moment in time is that the Town has had a fundamental change in leadership at both the elected official and senior staff levels. This is an important opportunity to shape corporate and community direction for the rest of the 2020s, and this economic development strategy is a bold step in that direction.

Seizing the opportunities

Even with the known and foreseen headwinds, Innisfil is anticipated to continue to see job growth, in tandem with

The strategy reflects Innisfil's voice.

Over 300 stakeholders, including residents, the business community and key internal and external economic development partners provided input to the strategy development.

the population growth. As of 2023, Innisfil accounts for more than 10,000 jobs¹, and this number is expected reach 15,520 by 2031, and 22,090 jobs by 2041.² Innisfil is fortunate to have multiple projects that are poised to set the community up for long-term economic success.

In many ways, the biggest challenge moving forward is not to identify opportunities for economic growth, but to prioritize them. Among the many opportunities identified by stakeholders, top of mind is the readiness of Innisfil Heights, The Orbit and new GO station, continued build-out of Friday Harbour Resort, construction of a new hospital and campus for health care, and the growth of the gaming industry. These all have the potential to drive significant economic growth. Ongoing investments in commercial development resulting from a growth in population will also help retain local dollars within Innisfil, further supporting economic development within the Town.

While the Town will not necessarily be the primary lead for all the above-noted projects, there is no question that the Town can play a critical role in supporting and even accelerating these. The Town has limited resources so it will be important to prioritize those projects through which the community can see the greatest impact and/or influence.

A community-based approach

Innisfil's Economic Development Strategic Plan offers innovative, realistic, and actionable tactics that are built on the community's strengths and aspirations. The strategy was developed in four phases to gain an understanding of Innisfil's competitive position and identify economic development opportunities that would ensure growth.

¹ Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3

² Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment, Hemson for The County of Simcoe, 2022

76% of consulted stakeholders agree that Innisfil should focus on tourism and culture as an economic development goal.

- results of the Mayor's Business Breakfast

Stakeholder engagement played a critical role in the planning process. This strategy has been created with the voice of the broader community. Through community and business surveys, one-on-one interviews and targeted workshops, residents, businesses, community partners and stakeholders provided input on the current economic climate and recommendations that enable support for business attraction, retention, and expansion. The consultation process culminated in the Mayor’s Business Breakfast, through which business and community leaders provided input to strategic goals and the role of tourism and culture as an economic development driver. Consultation results are provided in Appendix B - Technical Report.

Overview of Strategic Process



A strategic plan like this is only as effective as the likelihood it will be implemented. To ensure success, the identified strategic actions were prioritized through a structured process that assessed the potential impact of each action, the resources required to complete it and any dependencies or potential roadblocks that may impact the Town and partners’ ability to execute on tasks. Through prioritization, focus is placed on actions that will have the greatest impact on success.

This is an Economic Development Strategy for Innisfil. It is intended as a working, living document for the community as it looks to shape the local economy in the years ahead. The strategy builds on the aspirations of the Town of Innisfil Strategic Plan 2030 and the County of Simcoe Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025.

The successful implementation of the strategy requires collaborative partnerships and commitment from community stakeholders, business leaders, and economic development organizations. By aligning economic development efforts with broader community goals and priorities, such as sustainability, social equity, and quality of life, the plan can help ensure that economic growth is sustainable, collaborative, and beneficial to the community.

Summary of Engagement Activities



Guiding Principles

Customer centric culture

Build trust, ensure ongoing communications, and demonstrate a commitment to serving the needs of local businesses through offering an environment that supports business growth and investment.



Open for business

Develop and maintain critical infrastructure such as investment ready land, transportation connections, utilities, and digital connectivity to support business growth and job creation.



Sector-based investment

Focus and strategically prioritize capital, resources, and funding support for sectors that are expected to have growth potential or align with broader economic goals.



Innovation ecosystem

Continue to follow an innovation-led approach to economic development that will encourage investment in research and development, support industries to innovate new products and services, and foster a competitive edge in the global marketplace.



Unified storytelling

Embrace and celebrate the overall sense of place that is Innisfil, crafting compelling narratives that build on the uniqueness of each neighbourhood and connects them through common experiences, cultural heritage, and shared visioning.



Environmental responsibility

Lake Simcoe plays a significant role in Innisfil's quality of life, tourism and the environment. Focus on promoting resource efficiency, long-term environmental well-being, and the value of cyclical economy. The Town will incorporate sustainable practices into economic development decision-making.



Workforce development



Support investments in education, training and skills development programs to enable a qualified workforce with the skills and capabilities that meets the needs of evolving industries.

Anchor partners and collaborators



Engage and encourage collaboration among various stakeholders, including anchor firms, employers, educational institutions, government, and community organizations to advance the Town's economic development goals.

Equitable development



Innisfil will ensure that economic growth benefits all members of the community, in particular, historically disadvantaged groups. Community consultation and participation will be prioritized to focus newcomer integration and understand the needs and aspirations of diverse groups and promote social equity and sustainable development.

Demonstrated ROI (Return on Investment)



Ensure that economic development initiatives are designed with clear, measurable objectives, and actions. Key performance indicators will be established and tracked regularly to ensure that impact is driving innovation and continued improvement. Opportunities will be prioritized, resources allocated, and results reported, showcasing the tangible benefits and value generated from the investments made. Successes will be communicated to the community and Council.

Strategic Goals

- 1 Focus on an investment-ready Innisfil
- 2 Support for an innovation-enabled economy
- 3 Further a cohesive community by leveraging tourism and culture
- 4 Enhance community amenities and assets
- 5 Foster a best-in-class economic development office



Goal #1: Focus on an investment-ready Innisfil

Strategic planning, infrastructure development and collaboration will enable diverse economic opportunities and an investment-ready community that offers choice to entrepreneurs and investors.

Objectives

- ❖ Objective 1:1: Invest in efforts to improve the investment readiness of Innisfil Heights to support and attract technology-based and manufacturing investments
- ❖ Objective 1:2: Position the Innisfil investment attraction brand through ‘target sectors’ that serve as a catalyst for a strong and diversified economy
- ❖ Objective 1:3: Foster a long-term planning vision to ensure an adequate supply of market-ready land, office and commercial spaces
- ❖ Objective 1:4: Support and advance workforce development priorities to address both labour force and business needs



Goal #2: Support for an innovation-enabled economy

Enhanced programs, initiatives and policies will encourage the development and adoption of new and innovative technologies, products, and services, leading to increased productivity, economic growth, and job creation.

Objectives

- ❖ Objective 2:1: Be a leader in local and regional business retention and expansion by increasing regional collaboration and driving the participation of regional businesses
- ❖ Objective 2:2: Provide entrepreneurs and start-ups with supports to move a product from an idea to prototype to commercialization
- ❖ Objective 2:3: Increase Innisfil's ability to leverage the Town's location with Central Ontario's health hub to attract practitioners, create health care related employment, and improve access to health care



Goal #3: Further a cohesive community by leveraging tourism and culture

Celebrating Innisfil’s rich cultural heritage and harnessing the tourism sector will promote economic prosperity, a shared sense of identity, and create a welcoming community that fosters a strong sense of belonging and supports local businesses.

Objectives

- ❖ Objective 3:1: Ensure capacity is in place for existing programs and newer efforts in tourism and culture
- ❖ Objective 3:2: Enhance marketing and data collection efforts to support tourism and culture assets
- ❖ Objective 3:3: Work with County partners to expand and improve tourism products and experiences



Goal #4: Enhance community amenities and assets

Through investing in diverse housing options, creative placemaking activities, and sustainable development, Innisfil will become a complete community that offers a high quality of life, fosters neighbourhood connections, and supports economic vitality.

Objectives

- ❖ Objective 4:1: Facilitate opportunities to increase diversity of housing options to ensure community sustainability
- ❖ Objective 4:2: Launch and support initiatives to create a vibrant environment for all age segments (including immigrant, newcomers, students and remote workers)
- ❖ Objective 4:3: Enhance the networks that enable people to move within and between Innisfil's neighbourhoods



Goal #5 Foster a best-in-class economic development office

Innisfil's Economic Development Office will offer a customer-centric approach that supports business growth and innovation and continues to build trust with community stakeholders.

Objectives

- ❖ Objective 5:1: Refine the expertise and capacity for innovation of the Economic Development team
- ❖ Objective 5:2: Continue to improve relationships and build trust with community stakeholders

Priority Actions

The Town of Innisfil's Economic Development Strategic Plan 2024-2026 is a comprehensive plan that includes 60 actions aimed at positioning Innisfil for economic development success. These actions are based on evidence-based economic and market research, as well as input from surveys and workshops with business and community stakeholders.

The plan prioritizes the top 10 actions to ensure that Innisfil can focus on the most important tasks and allocate resources accordingly. The prioritization process involved considering the community's priority rankings, staff and financial resources, and the anticipated impact of each action.

An internal implementation matrix was developed to prioritize all of the actions captured in this strategy. Any actions that were not considered to be feasible within the 3-year strategic timeframe have been captured in the Future Considerations list in Appendix A - Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan so that these may be considered in future planning exercises.

It is important to note that the Economic Development Strategic Plan is not an exhaustive or comprehensive list of all potential actions. New actions will emerge and need to be assessed against the strategy's goals and objectives. The plan is subject to change as new information becomes available, and the economic development office, its partners, and stakeholders continue to monitor progress and adjust strategies accordingly.

- 01 Undertake an Economic Impact Study for Innisfil Heights to determine the potential for direct and indirect economic impact upon build-out of this industrial area.
- 02 Support the Town’s Planning & Growth Team in implementing the recommendations brought forward through the Planning and Engineering Fees and Review Process.
- 03 Through development and implementation of the 2023 Transportation Master Plan and 2024 Transit Master Plan Study explore opportunities to enhance the Town’s existing transportation program (Uber) and introduce new and innovative rural solutions to address workforce transportation needs within and between communities, including connections to and from the City of Barrie.
- 04 Position a site selection response team for ongoing Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion efforts in key sectors.
- 05 Implement the recommendations of the Simcoe County workforce development strategy to mitigate labour force challenges and needs.
- 06 Develop a marketing plan to promote the DMZ Innisfil program and build awareness.
- 07 Undertake an entrepreneurial ecosystem mapping exercise and develop an online database of information for start-ups, entrepreneurs, and small business operators.
- 08 Develop and implement targeted Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) to attract higher value investments in the key target sectors identified through this strategy, and which supports the creation of mixed-use and accessory residential development in new commercial buildings and developments in Alcona, Cookstown and Stroud.

09

Employ customer relationship management (CRM) tools to track business engagement activities and leads in a dashboard which would allow staff to better manage and follow up with leads.

10

Investigate the feasibility of expanding the Economic Development Department to include a tourism and culture division for the Town of Innisfil.



Evidence That Supports Strategic Goals

Innisfil's current economic context is described below and includes key insights from the baseline and consultation provided in Appendix B - Technical Report.

A favourable growth climate

Located on Highway 400 between Toronto and Barrie, Innisfil has direct access to one of the most accessible transportation corridors in the province and the country. This offers excellent transportation choices to and from the town, enabling businesses to tap into a substantial labour pool. The impending development of the Innisfil GO Station will further ease traffic and commuting demands, making living and working in the town more appealing. These strong transportation links have the potential to attract new residents and businesses to the area. However, there is a risk that Innisfil could become a "bedroom" community if steps are not taken to ensure viable and well-paying jobs within the town.

Innisfil has witnessed a strong rate of population growth, outpacing the regional average. Between 2011 and 2021, Innisfil's population increased by more than 10,599 people, representing a 32% increase. This growth has been primarily driven by intraprovincial migration as people move from larger urban centers in search of more affordable living options. Innisfil exhibits a greater degree of population diversity, with 12% of its residents identifying as visible minorities, as compared to Simcoe County. Population diversity is often linked with positive outcomes such as increased innovation, heightened creativity, and economic

Population 2021



43,326 people
+32% since 2010

Population 2031



57,370 people
+32% since 2021

Jobs 2023



10,419 jobs
+3% growth by 2028

Out-Commuting 2021



9,200 people
-3,045 since 2016

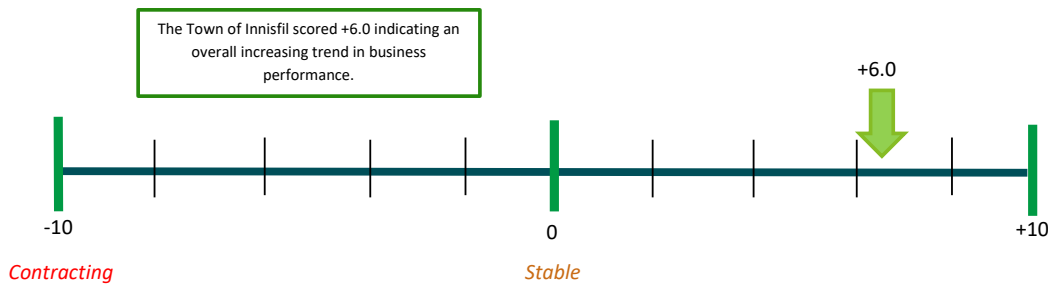
Working from Home 2023



4,380 people
+3,195 since 2016

growth. It may be beneficial for businesses operating in Innisfil to leverage this strength in order to drive innovation and foster economic growth.

With an overall score of +6.0 points, Innisfil shows an overall favorable climate for continued business growth. The Business Performance Forecast metric³ considers the changes in staff, revenue, and attitudes among businesses in the region for an overall directional picture of the business climate in the area.



Innisfil’s businesses operate across a diverse range of sectors

Over 4,000 businesses are located in Innisfil⁴. 73% of these are sole proprietorships with at least \$30,000 in annual sales. When considering businesses with employees, approximately 21% employ fewer than ten employees while 5% employ between 10-49 employees. Innisfil is also home to 9 large businesses in sectors including public administration, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, construction, and manufacturing.

Innisfil’s businesses spend over \$573 million to produce goods or provide services, creating a multiplier effect that can stimulate economic growth. However, a considerable proportion of these purchases, around 71%, are imported purchases, which amounts to more than \$400 million dollars

³ Calculated by Deloitte LLP as part of the business survey analysis. Results based on participating business survey responses.

⁴ Canadian Business Counts, June 2022.

leaving the community. This may indicate that Innisfil is heavily reliant on external suppliers for its goods and services. One way to retain some of the dollars' leaving Innisfil is to focus on growing sectors that already have some in-region relevance, including manufacturing, transportation and warehousing trade, agriculture, and construction.

Manufacturing is the top exporter for the community, representing 25% of all exports at \$345 million. Other major exporters for the town include wholesale trade and construction, each accounting for 9% of total exports. Although the agriculture sector accounts for only 1% of total jobs, Innisfil's farms reported revenues of 70 million, generated from its primary business activities in 2021⁵.

A diverse economy led by population and industrial-related employment sectors

Similar to the provincial economy, Innisfil's employment continues to shift from goods-producing to the services-producing sectors. The service sectors⁶, represent 77% of Innisfil's economy (8,011 jobs), led by retail trade, accommodation and food services, wholesale trade, educational services, health care and social assistance, and professional, scientific, and technical services (PSTS). The goods-producing sectors represent 23% of Innisfil's jobs (2,409 jobs). Of these, construction demonstrated strong

Largest Industry by Jobs 2023



⁵ Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0240-01 Operating revenues, Census of Agriculture, 2021

⁶ Service sectors include wholesale trade; retail trade; transportation and warehousing; information and cultural industries; finance and insurance; real estate and rental and leasing; professional, scientific, and technical services; management of companies and enterprises; administrative and support, waste management and remediation services; educational services; health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment and recreation; accommodation and food services; other services (except public administration); public administration.

employment growth while manufacturing and utilities exhibited more moderate growth.

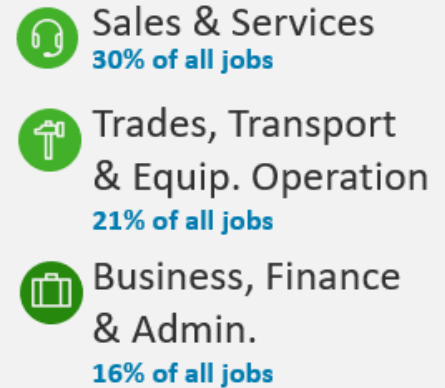
When considering employment growth, Innisfil is expected to reach approximately 12,870 jobs by 2026, and 15,520 jobs by 2031⁷. Most of this employment growth will be population-related employment, in industries such as retail, health care, education, social services, and government. Beyond population-related employment, Innisfil's economy will continue to be driven by industrial-related employment, related to manufacturing and production of goods and office-based employment in sectors including PSTS and finance sectors.

Employment growth needs to be accommodated within the Innisfil Heights Employment Area

With over 47% (4,978 jobs) of the town's future employment to be accommodated as industrial and commercial related employment, the availability and quality of employment lands is crucial to Innisfil's economic development success.

Innisfil Heights remains a significant employment area in Innisfil, accommodating a wide range of industrial, commercial, and tourism-based land uses on a range of lot sizes. The area spans over 1,600 acres of land and is bisected by Highway 400, making it an attractive location for transportation and warehousing uses. When fully built out, Innisfil Heights has the potential to accommodate more than 16,000 jobs within its 1,600 acres⁸. As such, the town has an opportunity to focus the investment readiness of Innisfil Heights to support and attract technology-based and manufacturing investments. Currently the majority of Innisfil's industrial land is privately owned, and there is a lack of water, wastewater and electrical servicing, all of which

Largest Occupations by Jobs 2023



⁷ Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment, Hemson for The County of Simcoe, 2022

⁸ A calculation of an average of 25 jobs per hectare was used.

poses challenges and prolonged development timelines for businesses and developers. Consequently, they are contemplating alternative locations for growth and expansion. Investments in finding solutions to these challenges have the potential to impact the town's economic growth and diversification, as well as facilitate new employment opportunities for its residents. As per market trends, Innisfil Heights is expected to see demand for single tenant uses, integrated with multi-purpose facilities and lands that have been planned for employment use are often highly desirable.

RVH South Campus, DMZ Innisfil, and The Orbit are integral to growth

In addition to Innisfil Heights, the development of Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre's (RVH) 83-acre site at the south-west corner of Yonge Street and Innisfil Beach Road are expected to support the demand for health-related businesses and amenities, as well as commercial and population-related employment growth in the town. This is a positive development for the community, as it will create employment opportunities and contribute to the overall economic growth of the area.

Since its inception in 2020, DMZ Innisfil, a community-driven business incubator and accelerator, has accepted 110 applications and onboarded 56 start-ups. These active start-ups have collectively secured more than \$14 million in growth capital and created 285 jobs. As per the proposed 2023 & 2024 DMZ Innisfil program, DMZ aims to create an average of 40 jobs annually. This is a promising initiative that will further support the growth of the local economy.

The proposed innovative community, The Orbit, is of particular significance to the long-term economic sustainability and growth of Innisfil. As per The Orbit Draft Secondary Plan, the project is expected to accommodate

2028 Projected growth by job type



Population-related jobs

5,476 jobs



Industrial jobs

3,808 jobs



Office jobs

1,170 jobs

approximately 1,800 jobs between 2023 and 2033, which could have a significant economic impact on the region. This development will create additional employment opportunities, further supporting the growth of the local economy and contributing to the overall economic sustainability of Innisfil.

Innisfil's labour market is trending towards remote working

Innisfil has experienced a shift in its workforce dynamics. According to the 2016 Census, more than 12,000 individuals commuted out of town for work. In 2021, this number decreased by 25% (approximately 3,000 people). This decrease can be attributed to an increase in people working from home during the same period, which increased by 3,195 people. Decreases in out-commuting were more notable in manufacturing, retail trade, PSTS, educational services and finance and insurance.

PSTS, finance and insurance are among the industries that offer the most remote work opportunities. The increase in people working from home is expected to positively impact the local economy as more dollars will be retained within the community through the purchase of goods and services locally. These dynamics will require investments in local services and infrastructure such as roads, internet, and local amenities. A target destination marketing plan can further support the attraction and retention of remote workers.

Workforce strengths in the trades and the knowledge economy

According to the 2021 Census, Innisfil showed a higher labour participation rate of 65.2% compared to the provincial average. This, combined with a young population⁹

⁹ Innisfil's population is slightly younger than in the rest of Simcoe County, with a median age of 42 years in 2021, approximately 1.2 years younger than Simcoe County.

and a higher proportion of apprenticeship or trades certificates, positions the town well for economic success in the goods-producing sectors, including construction and manufacturing.

Innisfil's education and occupational profile suggest a favourable environment for knowledge-based sectors. The labour force has postsecondary degrees in creative economy disciplines including architecture, engineering and related trades, business, management and public administration, and health and related fields. Approximately 41% of Innisfil's total workforce are employed in occupations considered knowledge-based¹⁰.

Housing market gaps will impact growth

As per Simcoe County's Growth Forecast and Land Assessment report¹¹, Innisfil's population will continue to expand in the coming years. Specifically, a 32% increase in population is anticipated over the next decade, resulting in an additional 14,044 residents by 2031. To accommodate this substantial growth, the town will need to add 6,300 units to its current housing inventory. This number surpasses the total number of dwelling completions that were constructed in Innisfil during the previous decade by two thousand units¹². These insights highlight the pressing need for new housing development in Innisfil to accommodate the town's anticipated population growth.

Housing Needs 2031



5,480 units

+1,100 above average



41% of workforce is knowledge based

¹⁰ Includes NOC 0 to 5. Innisfil's share of the total workforce employed in occupations considered knowledge-based (41%) is lower than Simcoe County (43%) and the provincial share at 50%.

¹¹ Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, HEMSON, March 2022

¹² Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Starts and Completions Survey

Currently, the majority of the housing stock in Innisfil is single-detached and single-family housing. This style of development has broader impacts on other services. For example, this decreases the ability to provide efficient public transportation options, while also increasing the costs of municipal servicing. A wide variety of housing options are also needed to attract more residents to the area with high-density housing and rental options being particularly important for the young workforce.

Business and community priorities need to be addressed to support growth

Innisfil's businesses have identified a number of priorities, including the availability of funding programs for businesses and property improvement. Businesses also stressed the need for improved road networks and road connectivity, and the affordability of industrial space as being central to business satisfaction. Similarly, community stakeholders believe that investing in infrastructure to accommodate growth is the most significant economic issue that demands attention from the Town Council, both in the short and long term. This includes improving road networks, expanding public transportation, and investing in utilities such as water and electricity.

The survey also identified that the business community is in an expansionary state, with increases in revenues and hiring expected over the next year. By addressing these issues, the town can foster an environment that is conducive to substantial business growth and attract new businesses to the area. It is crucial for the town to prioritize the needs of small businesses to ensure their sustainability and growth, which will contribute to the overall economic growth of Innisfil.

The top five priority goals – business ratings

- 1 Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement
- 2 Existing road network
- 3 Affordability of industrial space for rent or lease
- 4 Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease
- 5 Availability of property for purchase or lease

Target Sectors

A key goal of the economic development strategic plan was to determine Innisfil's emerging and potential economic drivers. A focus on target sectors was essential to ensure that resources are focused on areas that provide the highest return on investment while attracting and growing investments that can act as differentiators for the town including sector expertise, specialization and new products and approaches.

To determine Innisfil's emerging and potential economic drivers, a preliminary sectoral scan was conducted. Four research measures were examined, including employment growth sectors, job change by industry sector, industry clusters, and export opportunities. The scan concluded that Innisfil's target sectors include advanced manufacturing, agri-technology/food processing, creative industries, tourism, life sciences, and the clean-tech supply chain. Innisfil's target sectors align with and build on Simcoe County's economic sectors, including manufacturing, tourism, PSTS and agriculture. This preliminary sectoral scan provides valuable insights into the town's economic potential and will guide future economic development efforts. By focusing on these target sectors, Innisfil can attract and grow investments that act as differentiators and provide a high return on investment.

The figure below presents the sectors identified for each research method, with color codes used to illustrate the connections between the first four columns and the fifth column. For example, the target sectors of construction and manufacturing are highlighted in blue in the first four columns as they are linked to advanced manufacturing as a target sector.

Key Sector Matrix

Employment growth	Job change by industry	Industry clusters	Export opportunities	Suggested Sectors
Accommodations and food services	Construction	Construction	Manufacturing	Advanced manufacturing
Construction	Accommodation and food services	Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	Construction Wholesale trade	Agri-tech/food processing
Arts, entertainment and recreation	Health care and social assistance			Tourism
Professional, scientific and technical services; Finance and insurance; Educational services; Real estate and rental and leasing	Educational services	Retail trade		Creative industries
	Professional, scientific and technical services	Transportation and warehousing		Life sciences
	Arts, entertainment and recreation	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting		Clean-tech supply chain
Manufacturing	Manufacturing			



Advanced Manufacturing

Manufacturing is a significant export sector for Innisfil, accounting for over 25% of total exports. The sector is a major employer with specializations in plastics and rubber products manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing, and machinery manufacturing. Innisfil has potential for continued growth in lean or light manufacturing, involving smaller facilities, lighter equipment, and lower capital than heavy industry. To remain competitive, Innisfil needs to invest in digital technologies, increase supply network visibility, and promote diverse environments that support a knowledge-based workforce.



Agri-Technology / Food Processing

Innisfil's agricultural roots offer opportunities for economic diversification through agri-technology and food processing. With 170 farms, mainly cattle ranching and oilseed and grain farming, modern farming practices like vertical farming, precision agriculture, robotics, automation, and sustainable food production can be adopted. Investing in food processing facilities, positioning Innisfil as a supplier of value-added agricultural products and supporting local farms with succession planning will strengthen the town's identity in the sector.



Creative Industries

Innisfil is uniquely positioned to harness the potential of the creative industries, given its arts and cultural heritage, recreational assets, and proximity to urban centers. Growing the creative economy requires a focus on working with small businesses and providing specialized entrepreneurship and business development support. Investing and supporting initiatives like digital media and design can enable a vibrant, culturally rich, and creative ecosystem.



Tourism

Innisfil offers a number of tourism and recreational activities, drawing both visitors and residents to the community. Tourism anchors such as Gateway Casinos Innisfil, Georgian Downs, and Friday Harbour Resort are large economic contributors to this sector. Lake Simcoe's beaches, marinas, boating and fishing, parks and trails, cultural attractions and winter activities appeal to a variety of interests and activities. Given Innisfil's agricultural heritage and scenic rural landscapes, agri-tourism, food-tourism and farm-related activities can support the town to diversify revenue streams and offer unique experiences to residents and tourists.



Life Sciences

Ontario has a strong life sciences industry, with significant expertise in research and development, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices. Innisfil is well-positioned to explore opportunities within this sector, especially with the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre's South Campus investment, which is expected to double its workforce with 3,000 additional full-time staff. The development also has the potential to attract additional health care-related companies and facilities to Innisfil.



Clean-Tech Supply Chain

The presence of InnServices and businesses in waste management, and remediation services will continue to improve services to Innisfil's existing residents, businesses and institutions. The manufacturing sector, particularly plastic product manufacturing sectors and architectural, engineering, and related services, indicate supply chain opportunities. In response to broader provincial market trends, Innisfil has a strong opportunity to embrace renewable energy, green buildings and energy efficiency industries.

The Path Forward

This Strategic Plan offers prioritization for economic development activities within Innisfil. Short-term and stretch goals are highlighted that will build upon Innisfil's economic strengths and deepen its competitiveness within the identified target sectors. Future actions to consider have been compiled that can continue efforts in investment readiness, an innovation-enable economy, community cohesiveness, community amenities and assets, and a best-in-class economic development office. These strategic goals, objectives, and actions will position Innisfil for economic growth and sustainability and will connect businesses and serve its residents.



Appendix A - Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

Goal #1: Focus on an investment-ready Innisfil

Goal Statement: Strategic planning, infrastructure development and collaboration will enable diverse economic opportunities and an investment-ready community that offers choice to entrepreneurs and investors.

Supporting Evidence

Central Ontario's economy is incredibly strong and the corridor between Toronto and Barrie shows evidence that Innisfil is in a great geographic location and well-positioned within Southern Ontario's economic corridor. Innisfil has direct access to the most assessable transportation corridors in the province and the country, including cross national rail access. Access to a strong pipeline of labour through a young population and proximity to a strong post-secondary sector provides workforce opportunities for the town's vacant land. These are advantages that can be leveraged to prioritize investment-readiness.

Building on the innovative and forward-looking reputation of the existing economic development function, the town can create a more business-friendly environment and foster economic growth. This requires that the Town work closely with local businesses and stakeholders to identify specific solutions and implement them in a timely manner. Areas of

focus include investing in infrastructure improvements, enhancing the investment readiness of Innisfil Heights Employment Area and ensuring a long-term vision for market-ready land, office and commercial spaces.

Why it is important?

Consultation with business and industry partners identified that the Innisfil Heights Employment Area does not meet the servicing requirements of investors and that there is a desire for expedited processes that facilitate growth. Opportunities exist to revise zoning bylaws and improve the overall business climate in Innisfil along with those specific to technology-based and manufacturing sectors. By taking a proactive approach to addressing these priority areas, the community will improve its competitive position within target sectors.

Research conducted as part of this strategy identified Innisfil's target sectors to include advanced manufacturing, agri-technology/food processing, creative industries, tourism, life sciences, and the clean-tech supply chain. Innisfil needs to undertake targeted efforts to further clarify its sector opportunities to be effectively positioned for investment attraction. This could include key sector research that identifies growth clusters, alignment with provincial and federal targets, supply chain links, research and innovation support and the availability of post-secondary programming and work-ready labour force. Incorporating tools like Community Improvement Plans can encourage new investment and re-development in employment lands, as well as for office development. Innisfil can position itself as a leader in enabling the development of a local and regional labour force to address the talent needs of businesses. Through partnerships with Georgian College, Lakehead University, County of Simcoe, Simcoe Muskoka Skills Force and other partners, Innisfil can support the alignment of

local demand and supply and ensure responsive solutions that support existing employers and target industries.

Objectives, Actions, Timing and Resourcing

Objectives	Number	Action
Objective 1:1: Invest in efforts to improve the investment readiness of Innisfil Heights to support and attract technology-based and manufacturing investments	1	Undertake an Economic Impact Study for Innisfil Heights to determine the potential for direct and indirect economic impact upon build-out of this industrial area. This study would inform other actions identified in this plan to assist the Town in understanding the potential return on investment for initiatives such as CIP programs, investments in infrastructure, etc.
	2	Complete a Master Drainage Study for Innisfil Heights in order to proactively address stormwater drainage issues across the strategic employment area.
	3	Establish a lead generation pipeline for Innisfil Heights through the BR+E program and partnerships with broader investment attraction networks, including Invest in Simcoe County and Invest Ontario. Sites that are prime for pre-servicing and pre-zoning to support upcoming development projects are identified.
	4	Develop a comprehensive Innisfil Heights Investment Attraction package or pitch decks with data on available sites, existing tenants, success stories and target markets. The pitch deck will also present Innisfil’s value proposition for investment attraction, including assets, infrastructure, target sectors and workforce strengths.
	5	Develop and implement targeted Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) to attract higher value investments in the key target sectors identified through this strategy.
	6	Position a site selection response team for ongoing Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion efforts in key sectors. The team would include staff in

		<p>planning, economic development, building, engineering, InnServices and InnPower and would work to improve the investment-readiness of lands, reduce development barriers and support inquiries as they evolve from concept to operational.</p>
	7	<p>Strengthen existing partnerships and explore new relationship building activities with key audiences. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Collaborating with the City of Barrie and County of Simcoe to participate in investment attraction initiatives, publications, tradeshow and events, including the Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR) Toronto Chapter, the Collision Conference, Elevate Conference, the Ontario Economic Summit, Advanced Design & Manufacturing Toronto, SIAL Canada, Global Petroleum, the Canadian Manufacturing Technology Show (CMTS), Site Selectors Guild and MIPIM Awards, etc. b. Connecting with land developers, site selectors and real estate executives and other decision makers to market Innisfil Heights and support investment attraction in sectors including light-industrial and equipment and machinery manufacturing. Associations to target include the Site Selectors Guild, Regional Manufacturers' Roundtable, Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) etc.
	8	<p>Offer customized support to private landowners to prepare lands for development, based on their specific development plans and needs, facilitating connections with key staff, raising awareness of incentives that may exist and streamlining processes and demonstrating a willingness to assist them through the process.</p>
<p>Timing</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
<p>Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County of Simcoe • City of Barrie • Landowners and land developers • Business community • Local realtors • Provincial Ministries • Invest Ontario 		
<p>Case Study Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cornwall Business Park</u> immediately adjacent to Highway 401, is home to some of Canada’s largest distribution centres, award-winning manufacturers and some great transportation companies. • <u>Parkland County’s Acheson Industrial Area</u> home to over 300 businesses and a 20,000 square-foot fire station and accessible to full city servicing. • <u>Vaughan Enterprise Zone (VEZ)</u> has a powerful value proposition for head offices, national logistics and distribution centres, manufacturing operations and other users needing large, new spaces. 		
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of investment inquiries • # of acres in progress (measured by hectares of land subject to a development approval application) • # of number of jobs created within Innisfil Heights • The growth in the non-residential tax assessment • A decrease in industrial land vacancy rates 		
<p>Objective 1:2: Position the Innisfil investment attraction brand through ‘target sectors’ that serve as a catalyst for a</p>	9	Apply for the CanExport Community Investments to increase capacity to support innovation, increase exports, and expand foreign direct investment activities. The funding could be used to enhance industry and market research for the Town (refer to Action 10).
	10	Building on the key sectors identified through this strategy, undertake an in-depth sector analysis to identify subsectors to target for future investment

strong and diversified economy		promotion/attraction efforts, including geographic targets and markets. The sector analysis will ensure a clear definition and scope of the sector and position Innisfil’s value proposition and market positioning.
	11	Once target sectors are positioned, develop profiles and investment-related marketing. Focus on highlighting the key industries, supply chain businesses, development opportunities and industry partners that are local and in the region. These decks can also be used to support business attraction and connections with corporate real estate executives and other decision makers (refer to Action 7).
	12	Continue to pursue strategies to support the future of gaming in Innisfil, in consultation with the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County of Simcoe • Business community • Georgian College • Lakehead University 		
Case Study Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Investbarrie key sectors</u> profiles highlight Barrie’s sectors including manufacturing, information technology and cultural industries. • <u>County of Simcoe sector profiles</u> feature sector descriptions and detailed analysis for manufacturing, aerospace, life sciences, entrepreneurship, and tourism. • <u>Communities and groups that won CanExport Community Investments funding in 2023</u>, to attract, expand or retain Foreign Direct Investment. 		
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of number of jobs created by sector • # of marketing publications and/or sector resources available • # of investment contacts (leads) established 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual growth of private capital investment by sector • The growth in the non-residential tax assessment by sector 		
Objective 1:3: Foster a long-term planning vision to ensure an adequate supply of market-ready land, office and commercial spaces	13	Ensure the Official Plan and zoning policies incorporate flexible and responsive zoning that support diverse uses including higher-density industrial and commercial office uses.
	14	Leverage Invest in Simcoe County’s site selection and online land inventory to market and promote the database of available land and sites within Innisfil Heights and other employment lands and buildings. Position the tool within Innisfil’s economic development website.
	15	Building upon the CIP identified in Action 5, develop a CIP focused on incentivizing the creation and expansion of commercial development in Alcona, Stroud and Cookstown. This may include ancillary housing above and behind commercial uses.
	16	Support the Town’s Planning & Growth Team in implementing the recommendations brought forward through the Planning and Engineering Fees and Review Process.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simcoe County • InnServices, InnPower and Broadband utility providers • Landowners • Business community • Local and regional realtors 		
Case Study Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>City of Quinte West industrial CIP</u> stimulates private sector investment in targeted industrial areas in the city • <u>City of Toronto - Imagination, Manufacturing, Innovation and Technology (IMIT) Program</u> helps to reduce business costs and support new building 		

<p>construction and/or building expansion in targeted sectors and areas across the city.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The North Glengarry Commercial Gap Analysis</u> created a current retail inventory and determine the opportunities needed to bolster the region’s retail market. 		
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of and uptake of CIP incentives • # of new leads gained through CIP Program • # of new businesses established through assistance of CIP’s • # of jobs created through assistance of CIP’s • # of existing businesses supported • # of properties featured in the Invest Ontario and Simcoe County real estate inventories 		
<p>Objective 1:4: Support and advance workforce development priorities to address both labour force and business needs</p>	17	<p>Implement the recommendations of the Simcoe County Labour Market Research Study to mitigate labour force challenges and needs. Actions and outcomes could include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continued engagement with Simcoe Muskoka Skills Force and post-secondary institutions, including Georgian College and Lakehead University to ensure a better understanding of labour market issues and support the development of relevant skills training programs (including micro credentials, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and internships) to address industry labour force needs. Promote Innisfil careers through the Work in Simcoe County/Innisfil website and employment portal
	18	<p>Gather, use and provide real-time Labour Market Information and build an inventory of the most in-demand careers required by major employers to target workforce development efforts. The Vicinity Jobs Platform and/or Work in Simcoe County Job Demand Reports could be used to provide this critical information.</p>

	19	<p>Support existing business-support led initiatives as well as industry-led workforce initiatives. This may include facilitating partnerships between local job fair organizers, post-secondary institutions and local businesses or industries, to encourage participation and enable a pipeline of talent for the community. This may also include support and raising awareness of industry-led workforce development initiatives such as the "Be our Guest" initiatives championed by Friday Harbour Resort.</p>
<p>Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
<p>Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgian College • Simcoe Muskoka Skills Force • Lakehead University • Ontario Centre of Innovation • Business community • Employment Ontario • Agilec 		
<p>Case Study Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Municipality of Chatham-Kent Economic Development Department offers a variety of workforce development programs and services, including a job board, skills training programs, and support for employers looking to hire and retain workers. • The choosecornwall.ca campaign targeted towards remote workers and provides information on choosing Cornwall as a place to live. • The Sarnia-Lambton Apprentice Job Match is a tool to help match apprentices and employers. 		
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of job seekers supported • # of companies assisted through workforce attraction efforts • # of workforce ecosystem partnerships and initiatives 		

Anticipated Outcomes for Goal 1

Outcomes Based on Overcoming Challenges	Outcomes Based on Capitalizing on Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands within Innisfil Heights will have the servicing needed to meet the minimum criteria of requests for information from investors and their agents. • Community stakeholders will see their most consistently significant issue, infrastructure to accommodate growth, is a core priority. An increase in investor confidence will follow. • Market choice in property may improve affordability of industrial space for rent or lease. • Holding back the trend of an increasingly older population base. • Increasing population diversity through a wider range of housing options and community-building efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved overall investment readiness of Innisfil Heights. • More market choice and investment readiness will allow the Town to establish processes that facilitate the most desirable types of growth. • A Community Improvement Plan that offsets the costs of development in strategic areas or industries and in turn, increase Innisfil’s competitiveness. • Attracting more youth and immigrants to support the skilled and unskilled labour pool that Innisfil’s employers require. • Central Ontario’s booming economy and Innisfil’s location on Highway 400 means strategic investments in readiness will not take long to pay for itself.

Goal #2: Support for an innovation-enabled economy

Goal Statement: Enhanced programs, initiatives and policies will encourage the development and adoption of new and innovative technologies, products, and services, leading to increased productivity, economic growth, and job creation.

Supporting Evidence

Innisfil holds a compelling reputation for innovation and has drawn both innovative residents and businesses to the community. The town's economic development function has made considerable progress in improving its innovation ecosystem through its partnerships with DMZ and Innisfil ideaLAB & Library.

Innisfil is well-positioned to foster an innovation economy, building on the health care sector. Ongoing investments associated with the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre South Campus provide an opportunity for Innisfil to explore Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with key partners in the sector. DMZ Innisfil programming and an investment readiness action plan can be utilized to attract health care-related uses such as a long-term care facility, research, education and training facilities, and medical office space.

Why it is important?

DMZ Innisfil supports Innisfil entrepreneurs in starting and growing their businesses however, the partnership with Toronto Metropolitan University for delivery of this program ends by 2025. Although the program has successfully established Innisfil as an innovator in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, as the term of this partnership agreement comes to an end this presents an opportunity to undertake a comprehensive analysis and establish a vision for the years ahead. Currently the incubator offers several programs and

support, including the Startup Program, Local Business Accelerator and the All-Access program. Opportunities exist to foster continued support for DMZ Innisfil and position it as a regional anchor innovation space. This includes sector-focused programming in the identified for the identified target sectors to support business start-up and scale-up opportunities. A focus on demographic cohorts, such as supporting newcomer entrepreneurs and minority-owned businesses, would also support overall economic and community development goals.

An innovation-enabled economy requires Innisfil to further leverage the innovation network present across Simcoe County and York Region. Partnership opportunities with Georgian College can be explored to support business ideation, encourage technology transfer, and foster collaborative research and development projects. Innisfil can also continue to work with Innisfil ideaLAB & Library and further new and existing partnerships with the Cookstown and District Chamber of Commerce and Barrie Chamber of Commerce. Innovation supports such as Sandbox, Georgian Angel Network, Simcoe County Economic Development, Toronto Metropolitan University, Georgian College, Lakehead University, Nottawasaga Futures, the Small Business Centre for Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia, and the Ontario Centre for Innovation can facilitate business programming support and nurture a culture of entrepreneurship. With the closure of The Greater Innisfil Chamber of Commerce and the increasing need for entrepreneurship support, Innisfil can focus efforts to foster co-working spaces and makerspaces to support the scale-up and innovation for small businesses.

Objectives, Actions, Timing and Resourcing

Objectives	Actions	
<p>Objective 2:1: Be a leader in local and regional business retention and expansion by increasing regional collaboration and driving the participation of regional businesses</p>	20	<p>Upon renewal of the DMZ Innisfil Partnership Agreement, undertake a review of the program, program facilities, and staffing and develop a 5-year strategic approach for Innisfil’s incubator and accelerator programming.</p>
	21	<p>Develop a marketing plan to promote the DMZ Innisfil program and build awareness. This would include refining DMZ Innisfil’s pitch (who we are, who we serve, our goals and aspirations) in order to promote the incubator on a local and regional level and may also include exploration of new tools which may include, but is not limited to, a business ambassador program.</p>
	22	<p>Increase engagement with minority business leaders, entrepreneurs and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) industry experts to help shape DMZ Innisfil and economic development programming to foster an inclusive and welcoming entrepreneurial ecosystem.</p>
	23	<p>Explore opportunities to diversify revenue generation for DMZ Innisfil. This may include grants, development of a sponsorship partnership prospectus, equity-based programming fees, etc.</p>
	24	<p>Explore new programming which provides greater support to target sectors.</p>
	25	<p>Explore funding opportunities for start-up and scale-up businesses, including community improvement programs, technology adoption, connection with other available organizations and funding.</p>
	26	<p>Continue to position the Innisfil IdeaLAB & Library as a community-hub for entrepreneurship and innovation. Actions and outcomes could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Partnering with Georgian College to expand the annual Maker Event to add additional programming for home-based and small-scale entrepreneurial endeavours.

		<p>b. Leveraging programs such as the Digital Media Lab, the Hacker Lab and technology training classes and workshops.</p>
	27	<p>Continue to promote the services of the Small Business Centre for Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia, Cookstown Chamber of Commerce, Futurpreneur Canada, Nottawasaga Futures and other partners by supporting opportunities to host business events in Innisfil’s key locations (DMZ Innisfil and Innisfil ideaLAB & Library).</p>
<p>Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Priority: High ● Feasibility: High 		
<p>Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DMZ Innisfil ● Innisfil ideaLAB & Library ● Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre ● Georgian College ● Toronto Metropolitan University ● Lakehead University ● Nottawasaga Futures ● Sandbox ● Georgian Angel Network ● The Greater Innisfil Chamber of Commerce ● Simcoe County Economic Development ● Small Business Centre for Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia ● Futurpreneur Canada 		
<p>Case Study Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Venture13 Cobourg</u>: to advance entrepreneurial development and help build the industries of the future. Venture13 is owned by the Town of Cobourg. With the support of FedDev Ontario and the Government of Canada. ● <u>BEDC’s TechPlace Burlington</u>’s innovation centre is an initiative led by Burlington Economic Development, an agency of the City of Burlington that delivers economic development services on behalf of the City of Burlington. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission in partnership with PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise work with the <u>Thunder Bay Library</u> to provide support for business start-ups. 	
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of clients served Proportion of minorities served through DMZ Innisfil # of participants in DMZ Innisfil activities/events # of referrals received by and/or given to regional partners Amount of capital raised by DMZ Innisfil participants 	
<p>Objective 2:2: Provide entrepreneurs and start-ups with supports to move a product from an idea to prototype to commercialization</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Map the existing ‘high-growth’ Innisfil businesses within each target sector to better understand the support they require to grow and provide more effective support for these companies</p>
	<p>29</p> <p>Develop programming to educate intrapreneurs within the Town of Innisfil on innovative approaches and best practices for achieving continuous improvement. Explore opportunities to work with local entrepreneurs to pilot new programs, services and technologies through the Town of Innisfil, municipal partners and regional businesses and institutions.</p>
	<p>30</p> <p>Undertake an entrepreneurial ecosystem mapping exercise and develop an online database of information for start-ups, entrepreneurs and small business operators. The database will provide information on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> government programs, grants, or other funding sources, mentors or other support networks, consumer needs and preferences, as well as identify areas where there may be unmet demand, programs and services offered regionally, business success stories and profiles
<p>Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority: High Feasibility: Medium 	
<p>Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DMZ Innisfil 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innisfil ideaLAB & Library • Georgian College • Toronto Metropolitan University • Lakehead University • Nottawasaga Futures • Cookstown Chamber of Commerce • Simcoe County Economic Development • Entrepreneurial ecosystem partners 	
<p>Case Study Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Vaughan Smart City Task Force</u> has an overall mandate to make recommendations to ensure the City is advancing a culture of knowledge and continuous improvement. • <u>Localintel</u> provides communities with a platform to display your community to investors, businesses, and future residents. 	
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of new programs, services and technologies • # of new start-up and scale-up companies per capita 	
<p>Objective 2:3: Increase Innisfil’s ability to leverage the Town’s location with Central Ontario’s health hub to attract practitioners, create health care related employment and improve access to health care</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Position and market Innisfil as a partner within the ‘regional health cluster’ through development of health care focused webpages and resources. Opportunities exist to continue to attract a range of health care related uses that could include a long-term care facility, supportive community housing, research, education and training facilities, community health uses and related medical office space.</p>
	<p>32</p> <p>Explore new partnerships with key partners in the health and wellness sector to take a collaborative and cohesive approach to investment attraction and innovation in health care.</p>
<p>Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: Medium • Feasibility: Medium 	
<p>Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMZ Innisfil • Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) • Georgian College • Lakehead University • Local medical outreach services and health care start-ups and businesses • Simcoe County Economic Development • Provincial Ministries
<p>Case Study Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Vaughan VMC and Hospital Prescient</u> lands to transform the lands surrounding Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital into an epicentre of health care excellence. • <u>City of Grande Prairie Life Science Strategy</u>: the city saw an opportunity to position itself as a hub for health services in the region. Because of this expansion, other health care spin-off opportunities continue to grow including medical device manufacturing, research and innovation, and training opportunities.
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of new life sciences related businesses (health care, medical device manufacturing, research facilities and laboratories) • # of MOU and agreements signed between health care stakeholders

Anticipated Outcomes for Goal 2

Outcomes Based on Overcoming Challenges	Outcomes Based on Capitalizing on Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners/managers who are more aware of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An even better innovation ecosystem. With the programming that is currently in

Outcomes Based on Overcoming Challenges	Outcomes Based on Capitalizing on Opportunities
<p>programming and supports that exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stronger profile in the region for DMZ Innisfil. • A consistent pipeline of talent to meet the evolving requirements of businesses. Gaps in post-secondary partnerships and training will be minimized and skills will be more aligned with business needs. • Support for a knowledge-based and innovation-first workforce including enhanced transit infrastructure, eco-industrial design principles for new construction and expansions, and employee-supportive facilities. • A unified approach to investment attraction and visitor engagement across Innisfil’s settlement areas. Facilitating networking opportunities among businesses in all communities can foster camaraderie, encourage innovation and improve brand recognition of the Town of Innisfil. 	<p>place, Innisfil is far ahead of most rural communities in Ontario when it comes to fostering an innovation ecosystem and supporting retention and attraction of a knowledge-based workforce. There is an excellent base to build on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for business succession planning and to create avenues for fostering innovation and adopting technologies. • Pursuit of The Orbit and RVH Health Campus, which are two major projects that fit perfectly with this strategic goal. Fulfillment of those projects is not within the three-year timeline of this strategy, but the opportunity to build momentum is. • Enhanced relationships and formalized partnerships with post-secondary institutions, enabling the development, refinement and/or utilization of programming.

Goal #3: Further a cohesive community by leveraging tourism and culture

Goal Statement: Celebrating Innisfil’s rich cultural heritage and harnessing the tourism sector will promote economic prosperity, a shared sense of identity and create a welcoming community that fosters a strong sense of belonging and supports local businesses.

Supporting Evidence

In 2019, the economic impact of tourism in Ontario was over \$27 billion, making it a significant contributor to the provincial economy¹³. However, the pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism industry, resulting in a decline in tourism-related revenue. In 2021, the economic impact of tourism in Ontario dropped to just over \$13 billion, indicating the severity of the pandemic's impact on the industry¹⁴. However, Ontario Tourism's most recent Industry Health Check suggests that tourism in Ontario is in an overall upward trend, indicating a potential for recovery¹⁵. While border crossing has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels, American consumers are Ontario’s main source of tourism expenditures, outside of its own residents.¹⁶ Innisfil can capitalize on pent-up travel demand and the rising profile Ontario is gaining as a tourism destination by establishing a cohesive brand, promoting tourism opportunities, and supporting further product development.

Why it is important?

There is an opportunity to work with local producers interested in value-added agricultural products and experiences, as well as an opportunity to leverage Innisfil’s extensive shoreline and beaches along Lake Simcoe. Collaborating with and leveraging Simcoe County’s efforts can aid growth in tourism and active transportation.

¹³ Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport. Economic Impact.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Tourism Industry Association of Ontario and Ontario Chamber of Commerce. 2022 State of the Ontario Tourism Industry Report.

¹⁶ Destination Ontario, Ontario Tourism Industry Health Check. June 9, 2023.

As part of the knowledge economy, the creative and cultural industries sector is forecasted to grow quickly across Ontario and has the potential generate new investment and economic growth for Innisfil. A place-based approach that links the cultural and economic priorities will foster community cohesion. The Town and community should highlight neighbourhood assets, cultural and heritage spaces and places, recreation facilities, as well as its festivals and events. A cultural asset inventory and the Cultural Master Plan can continue to guide the development of arts and culture in Innisfil and position them as drivers of the economy; foster community pride which enhances opportunities for cultural production and consumption.

Innisfil falls under the umbrella of Tourism Simcoe, whose newly released 2023 – 2026 Destination Stewardship Plan provides a vision for tourism in Simcoe County. “By 2023 Simcoe County will flourish as a destination because its stewards are co-creating social, environmental, and economic benefits for all”¹⁷. As one of these stewards, Innisfil can work towards connecting communities and capitalizing on partnership opportunities to further enhance Innisfil’s tourism sector, which directly aligns with an enhanced quality of place.

¹⁷ Tourism Simcoe County

Objectives, Actions, Timing and Resourcing

Objectives	Actions	
Objective 3:1: Ensure capacity is in place for existing programs and newer efforts in tourism and culture	33	Investigate the feasibility of expanding the Economic Development Department to include a tourism and culture division for the Town of Innisfil.
	34	Hire an additional economic development staff person to support the development and implementation of the Township’s economic development agenda.
	35	Undertake a hotel or accommodation feasibility study to evaluate the success of a hotel and related businesses (bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, recreational vehicle parks, and vacation rentals) in Innisfil. The study can also explore the viability of Innisfil as a destination for alternative accommodations through unique experiences such as farm stays, bed and breakfasts, glamping and cycle pods.
	36	Make tourism, culture, and economic development integral to all key decisions made by Town Council and Staff Administration by adding a new section to staff reports to address “Economic Development Considerations”.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simcoe County Economic Development • RTO7 • Tourism Barrie 		
Case Study Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Northern Ontario Accommodations Gap Analysis Study</u> is an initiative to identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities within the Northern Ontario region. 		
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff resources and connections to arts and culture and tourism initiated and maintained 		

Objective 3:2: Enhance marketing and data collection efforts to support tourism and culture assets	37	Develop a tourism and culture logo and branding guidelines to establish a cohesive marketing approach.
	38	In alignment with the Tourism Simcoe County's 2023-2026 Destination Stewardship Plan, undertake an asset mapping exercise to identify Innisfil's cultural, tourism and heritage assets. This should include consideration of festivals and events which attract visitation and tourism spend to Innisfil.
	39	Engage with the artists, creative entrepreneurs, and artisans to understand their business needs in order to support business, retention, expansion and attraction within creative and cultural industries.
	40	Use market segmentation data to enhance marketing and promotion of Innisfil's tourism and culture assets.
	41	Leverage technology to engage visitors in self-guided exploration and activities along with visitor service activities.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farms, Businesses • Community groups • Tourism Simcoe County • Nottawasaga Futures • Simcoe County Economic Development • RTO 7 		
Case Study Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Travel Manitoba's Explore Quotient Journey</u> – Destination Canada's Explorer Quotient is research that provides destinations with directions on marketing decisions. Travel Manitoba used this research and disseminated to municipal and business partners to increase marketing efficiency and focus. • <u>Discover Saskatoon's rebrand</u> included a new name, logo, colours, symbols, and font that was created to unify, differential, and inspire. 		
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of tourism operators • # of tourism, culture and heritage events • # of creative and cultural businesses supported • Economic impact of tourism, arts and events 		
Objective 3:3: Work with County partners to expand and improve tourism products and experiences	42	Establish an Innisfil Tourism Network and develop destination development tools and marketing materials to attract the desired target market segments.
	43	Leverage Innisfil Beach Park and private agricultural lands to provide tourism and value-add agri-tourism experiences such as Farm to Table dining experiences, rural event venues, farmers market snack boxes.
	44	In partnership with the County, leverage Rural Economic Development (RED) programs to explore funding and programs that can support downtown revitalization efforts and the upgrading of tourism wayfinding infrastructure. Signage should showcase the unique identity of Innisfil’s neighbourhoods while providing a cohesive brand for the Town of Innisfil.
	45	Work with Tourism Simcoe County to market unique attractions within Innisfil, speak with existing tourism providers in Innisfil to understand the value proposition and what is needed to further support tourism.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTO7 • Farms, Businesses • Community groups • Tourism Simcoe County • Nottawasaga Futures • Simcoe County Economic Development • Federation of Agriculture 		
Case Study Examples		

- The Bay of Quinte, received provincial funding through to support three projects through the Rural Economic Development (RED) program, namely, downtown revitalization, collaborative marketing and outreach and an industrial sector business retention and expansion study.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- # of tourism operators
- # of tourism related jobs
- Economic impact of tourism, arts and events

Anticipated Outcomes for Goal 3

Outcomes Based on Overcoming Challenges	Outcomes Based on Capitalizing on Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contributions that the tourism sector make to the local economy is better understood and the industry, in general, has a higher profile in Innisfil. • Local cultural festivals and events that are not only limited to attracting local populations but attracting visitors, help to expand economic impact. • Innisfil has a cohesive brand that residents identify with that is no longer segmented by former settlement areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of the tourism economy related to major destinations such as Georgian Downs, Gateway Casinos, Friday Harbour Resort and Innisfil Beach Park. • Friday Harbour Resort is offering a four-season tourism experience including Innisfil’s first major hotel and accommodation project. • Capitalizing on a unique tourism opportunity through the integration of agri-tourism and rural cultural tourism with more urban experiences. This approach will help to maximize agri-food and agri-tourism initiatives including brewery and cider production, farmer markets, alternative accommodations, and niche and speciality crop development.

Goal #4: Enhance community amenities and assets

Goal Statement: Through investing in diverse housing options, creative placemaking activities and sustainable development, Innisfil will become a complete community that offers a high quality of life, fosters neighbourhood connections and supports economic vitality.

Supporting Evidence

While Innisfil provides a high quality of life and is far ahead of most rural communities in Ontario when it comes to fostering an innovative ecosystem, there are limitations in access to services, infrastructure, and transportation for members of the workforce. These limitations will continue to have an impact on community sustainability, particularly as the town is projected to see continued population growth, accounting for 20% of total County growth by 2051.

Attracting residents is a complex and challenging proposition, interconnected with the community's economic viability and factors outside the ability of local government to control. Investing in community infrastructure can help create a more livable and sustainable community, attract new businesses and residents, and improve the overall quality of life for everyone in the community.

Why it is important?

The Orbit and Go Station will support the desired community infrastructure Innisfil needs to be posed for economic growth. Efficient placemaking initiatives will ensure that Innisfil evolves as a sustainable 15-minute community with a well-placed transit station that connects residential areas to major employment centres. Opportunities exist for the Town to be engaged in conversations surrounding the

development of the Orbit and Go Station and ensure that residential land use is intensified in lands around the planned GO Station. The Go Station will be instrumental in spurring high-density development and enabling a transit-supportive town centre that is vibrant, amenity-rich and will attract residents, businesses and visitors.

Innisfil is home to a diverse range of elements that contribute to its quality of place, driven by natural heritage features, recreation and cultural amenities and retail outlets. These include Friday Harbour Resort, Innisfil Beach Park, Centennial Park Pavilion, Morgan Russel Memorial Arena and Community Centre, Cookstown Antique Market, and the Tanger Outlets in Cookstown. It is important for Innisfil to continue improving its quality of place, vibrancy, and aesthetic appeal in a way that attracts residents and businesses to the community. This will enable the attraction of diverse talent and highly skilled individuals, who can generate new employment and wealth through entrepreneurial ventures or the attraction of businesses that can use their talents.

The sustainability of a community is closely linked to the availability of diverse housing options. Exploring the feasibility of a CIP program to support the creation of mixed-use and accessory residential developments in new commercial buildings and developments in Alcona, Cookstown, and Stroud would help to attract and retain a diverse population and support the development of new commercial buildings, which would bring economic benefits to the area.

Objectives, Actions, Timing and Resourcing

Objectives		Actions
Objective 4:1: Facilitate opportunities to increase diversity of housing options to ensure community sustainability	46	Continue to advocate with developers and landowners to secure new, diverse residential housing projects with a focus on the identified lands around the planned GO Station by showcasing investment opportunities.
	47	Streamline planning processes and approvals and prioritize rental, high density, mixed use, 1-bedroom, and young family housing options.
	48	As part of the CIP program (refer to Action 15), support the creation of mixed-use and accessory residential development in new commercial buildings and developments in Alcona, Cookstown and Stroud.
	49	Advocate for ongoing provincial and/or federal funding to support a local response to areas of challenge including housing and transit.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: Medium 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) – Grants available for affordable housing development • Landowners • County of Simcoe • Simcoe County Home Builders’ Association • The Orbit • The Association of Municipalities Ontario 		
Case Study Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <u>City of Peterborough – Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (CIP)</u> is a tool that is intended to stimulate the development of affordable housing opportunities in the City of Peterborough.(CIP) is a tool that is intended to stimulate the development of affordable housing opportunities in the City of Peterborough. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <u>County of Simcoe – Affordable Homeownership Program</u> assists with low-moderate income renter households by providing 10% down payment assistance in the form of a 20-year forgivable loan. • <u>The 2022 Municipal Benchmarking Study</u> released by the Canadian Homebuilders Association provides data to use for KPI's. • The Association of Municipalities Ontario has <u>an Affordable Housing and Homelessness Task Force</u> that works towards encouraging the provincial government to find ways to address Ontario's housing crisis. 		
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of dwelling starts • # of dwelling completions • # of high-density units starts (row houses, apartments) 		
<p>Objective 4:2: Launch and support initiatives to create a vibrant environment for all age segments (including immigrant, newcomers, students, and remote workers)</p>	50	Work with media partners and post-secondary to create a pipeline of success stories to showcase local business and entrepreneurial achievements to maintain Innisfil's reputation as a business and innovation friendly community. A diverse range of mediums should be considered including press releases, blogs, photos, videos, interactive maps, and speaking opportunities.
	51	Through collaboration with the County of Simcoe Local Immigration Partnership support implementation of the County of Simcoe newcomer strategy in order to provide support, resources, and guidance to new members to help them feel welcomed, valued, and productive in their new environment. As part of the program, highlight the success stories of individuals who have moved to the town and tapped into local resources in order to start or grow new businesses.
	52	Support local retail businesses participation in online 'shop local' efforts such as Digital Mainstreet.
<p>Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: Medium • Feasibility: Medium 		
<p>Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simcoe County Local Immigration Partnership • Nottawasaga Futures • Immigrant Services Simcoe/Muskoka • Innisfil IdeaLAB & Library • YMCA Newcomer Services • Agilec • EarlyON Child and Family Centres 		
<p>Case Study Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Chatham-Kent BaCK2CK</u>: Chatham-Kent identified retaining existing residents and attracting residents, notably residents who previously lived in the community, as key determinants of the region's growth. The campaign highlighted the comparative analysis of the career opportunities in Chatham-Kent and the lifestyle to be had while residing in the municipality compared to other places. • <u>Robson Valley Region</u>: Robson Valley in Births Columbia has created an interactive webpage with information for key resident attraction targets including retirees, professionals and entrepreneurs. • <u>Newmarket's There's a Place for you Here! Campaign</u>: Attraction and marketing is a strategy within Newmarket's Economic Development Strategy 2021 – 2024. 		
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Success Stories published 		
<p>Objective 4:3: Enhance the networks that enable people to move within and between Innisfil's neighbourhoods</p>	53	Through implementation of the 2023 Transportation Master Plan support the further development of active transportation infrastructure to provide quicker links for individuals to access Innisfil's popular destinations. Further explore the e-scooter programs that can be utilized on the proposed cycling route around Lake Simcoe Through the 2024 Transit Master Plan Study.
	54	Through development and implementation of the 2023 Transportation Master Plan and 2024 Transit Master Plan Study explore opportunities to enhance the Town's existing transportation program (Uber) and introduce new and innovative rural solutions to address workforce transportation needs within and between communities, including connections to and from the City of Barrie. This

	may include investments in infrastructure to support further cycle route expansions and advocacy and support for Simcoe County Transportation Master Plan for expansions of the LINX Program.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: Medium • Feasibility: Medium 	
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simcoe County Economic Development 	
Case Study Examples <u>Canmore, Alberta – Cyclist Amenities:</u> Canmore has been recognizing nationally for its cycling infrastructure.	
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased # of residents leaving the community for work 	

Anticipated Outcomes for Goal 4

Outcomes Based on Overcoming Challenges	Outcomes Based on Capitalizing on Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Canadians, immigrants and younger workers will have access to affordable and diverse housing and public transportation options. • There will be an increase in housing options, aging in place opportunities for residents should they choose to downsize from their current homes. • Water/wastewater services and broadband infrastructure will not impact the ability of businesses to expand their operations or implement technology-based business solutions. • The transportation and road network will effectively connect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community will be better connected, and community members will develop a shared identity for Innisfil as a whole. This in turn will present a stronger and more efficient attraction of residents, jobs and investment. • Innisfil will cultivate a diverse environment that supports a knowledge-based workforce. This entails enhancing transit infrastructure, integrating eco-industrial design principles, and incorporating employment-supportive facilities. • Diversifying the housing market with multi-unit options that

Outcomes Based on Overcoming Challenges	Outcomes Based on Capitalizing on Opportunities
<p>Innisfil to surrounding communities. As a result, residents will rely less on personal vehicles to move through the region. This will assist in encouraging full workforce participation and workforce connectivity between municipalities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innisfil will decrease the number of workers leaving the community for work. 	<p>provide flexibility, as proposed in The Orbit Development, will help in addressing the need for accessible housing in Innisfil.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The further development of active transportation infrastructure will provide quicker links for individuals to access Innisfil’s popular destinations. Increase support for remote work and home-based businesses will occur through broadband and other digital economy/infrastructure availability.

Goal #5: Foster a best-in-class economic development office

Goal Statement: Innisfil’s Economic Development Office will offer a customer-centric approach that supports business growth and innovation and continues to build trust with community stakeholders.

Supporting Evidence

The Town of Innisfil’s experienced economic development team have the skills and reputation for delivering best-in-class services. Projects such as DMZ Innisfil, the Uber municipal partnership and The Orbit have given the Town a reputation as a leader in municipal innovation. ‘Community First’ is a guiding value within Innisfil’s Community Strategic Plan: Innovate Innisfil 2023 that highlights how the Town wishes to conduct its work. This customer-centric approach creates effective policy and programs that directly align with businesses and resident’s needs, increasing satisfaction and

community buy-in. A number of growth-enabling infrastructure and projects such as Innisfil Heights Employment Area, Royal Victoria Health Centre South Campus Development and Friday Harbour Resort, provide opportunities for Innisfil's Economic Development office to continue to build upon these innovative program offerings.

Why it is important?

Having multiple projects posed for growth also creates a risk for the team. Without prioritized actions and an increased capacity to support these projects, opportunities may be missed. While Innisfil's net promoter score is positive, and business owners report a high satisfaction with the Town as a place to do business, there are recommended priority goals to focus on within economic development. These include: the availability of funding programs for businesses, affordability and availability of property to lease or purchase and the ability of the region to attract and retain employees.

To achieve the targets within this goal, Innisfil will need to create an enabling environment so businesses can thrive in Innisfil. This can be made possible by continuously improving economic development tools, capacity, service offerings, and relationship building efforts.

Professional development opportunities can be leveraged to encourage staff to find innovative solutions that can be tailored to Innisfil's unique challenges and opportunities. It will also be important to connect with organizations like the Economic Developers Association of Canada and provide support for staff to connect with other professional economic development professionals, learning more about the leading-edge economic development activities happening across the county.

Community partnerships will be an important focus for the Innisfil Economic Development team to achieve the goals

laid out in this plan. Expanding existing partnerships with organizations and agencies such as the Simcoe County, Nottawasaga Futures, The Greater Innisfil Chamber of Commerce, and provincial ministries will help build buy-in and provide an integrated approach to economic development. Leveraging current partnerships like Tourism Simcoe County can help showcase Innisfil’s innovation and increase awareness of the growth opportunities within Innisfil’s major development projects.

Objectives, Actions, Timing and Resourcing

Objectives		Actions
Objective 5:1: Refine the expertise and capacity for innovation of the Economic Development team	55	Develop professional development plans which focus on building capacity for innovation, supporting intrapreneurs and creating opportunities for employees to be informed on leading edge practices, through attending conferences, taking courses, and/or participating in workshops.
	56	Solidify Innisfil’s reputation as a leader in innovative collaboration by exploring opportunities to increase knowledge sharing with other economic development and business support professionals (including roundtables, masterminds, conference speaking/guest lecture opportunities).
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Developers Association of Canada • Economic Developers Council of Ontario • World Economic Forum 		
Case Study Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>EDAC’s annual conference</u> is a great opportunity for economic development staff to learn best practices, make new partnerships, and gain new ideas to bring back to Innisfil. • <u>EDAC’s Marketing Canada Awards</u> provide recognition of best-in-class community marketing campaigns. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Intelligent Community Forum – Durham Region, Ontario</u> is listed as on the Top 7 of 2023. Projects that were highlighted included bringing a regional broadband network and developing clean and efficient energy and transportation to the region. 		
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of staff with economic development related training and certification • # of economic development networking events attended 		
Objective 5:2: Continue to improve relationships and build trust with community stakeholders	57	Employ customer relationship management (CRM) tools to track business engagement activities and leads in a dashboard which would allow staff to better manage and follow up with leads.
	58	Deploy annual statistically valid survey tools to measure the health of businesses and determine which businesses need assistance based on priorities. Questions can focus on understanding business growth and expansion challenges; their labour force needs, and programming supports.
	59	Position quarterly networking and/or Council tours to allow Town leadership to build relationships with local stakeholders and encourage networking and collaboration between stakeholders.
	60	Explore new marketing tools and platforms to share economic development progress, successes, and KPIS.
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: High • Feasibility: High 		
Resources: Seek support from these Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMZ Innisfil • Nottawasaga Futures • Simcoe County Economic Development 		
Case Study Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The County of Grande Prairie’s annual Business Retention and Expansion survey</u> has been in place since 2018 to provide benchmarks for their economic development team and better understand business needs to inform policy and programming. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>EmployerOne Survey</u>: The EmployerOne Survey is a survey of local businesses to better understand labour market demand in our region. The Survey is administered by workforce development boards across Ontario
<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business satisfaction rates • # of CRM profiles and inputs tracked • # of professional and business engagement activities • Decrease in follow-up time • Uptake and # of social media hits

Anticipated Outcomes for Goal 5

Outcomes Based on Overcoming Challenges	Outcomes Based on Capitalizing on Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepening partnerships, communication, and networking opportunities with businesses and service organizations will unify Innisfil’s brand and its value proposal to potential investors and residents. • Tracking the ROI for DMZ Innisfil programming will create an understanding of its impact in the Town and create demand for new partnership opportunities. • The economic development team will work closely with developers and service providers to reduce the length of time it takes to bring available land online for investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innisfil’s economic development team will leverage its reputation to implement innovative tools such as CRM systems to enable better business supports and communication. • Participation in economic development professional development opportunities will keep staff up to date on latest trends and best practices, translating into best-in-class services.

Future Actions for Consideration

1. Over the mid-to-long term, launch a phased office incentive program to support and incentivize new office development and re-development in commercial corridors including Downtown Alcona and areas surrounding the proposed GO station.
2. Explore the feasibility of 'step-up' spaces where start-ups can work collaboratively, share ideas and develop prototypes of their products. Step-up spaces are small commercial areas with a front-end office and manufacturing facility at the back.
3. In partnership with DMZ Innisfil and Innisfil ideaLAB & Library, explore private sector based co-working spaces to support home-based businesses, entrepreneurs and start-ups to collaborate, share knowledge and use shared workspaces.
4. Partner with Nottawasaga Futures, Georgian College and regional organizations to connect local entrepreneurs with regional innovators, with the long-term vision to be the regional hub for the delivery of business incubation and accelerator services.
5. Market creative and cultural industries to attract skilled workers to Innisfil.
6. In partnership with Tourism Simcoe County, develop a Tourism Development Fund to support tourism product and experience development.

7. Partner with the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance to create initiatives to bolster culinary and agri-tourism in Innisfil. Initiatives like Open Farm Days can build capacity for the town and tourism agri-food events.
8. Collaborate with Simcoe County to focus efforts in supporting local farms, including addressing needs like enhanced pedestrian and cycling pathways, visitor-friendly navigation choices, collaborations with key regional attractions and transportation connectivity that links different communities.
9. Explore partnerships with satellite companies to improve internet availability such as fibre and satellite in supporting the attraction of e-commerce, tech-based businesses, and remote workers.
10. Apply to participate in the Municipal Nominee Program; to directly support immigrants with Permanent Residency in their communities. This will require wrap around services such as housing, transportation and workplace transition supports.
11. Update the 2011 Retail Demand Study to understand Innisfil's current retail service offerings and commercial land requirements and identify offerings that are missing in each neighbourhood that would be beneficial and realistic to attract.
12. Building on existing efforts (industrial and commercial land inventory and Innisfil Heights investment readiness and attraction action plan), formalize an employment lands strategy to maximize available employment lands as well as potential strategic land acquisition by the Town as a lever for economic growth.
13. Building on existing research, commission an economic impact analysis and business case that demonstrates the Return on Investment in remote

worker attraction and retention. The analysis will provide an estimate of remote worker job creation rates and clarify the potential economic, social and cultural benefits for Innisfil.

14. Explore opportunities to better leverage the BizLink program offered by local Community Futures organizations to connect buyers with businesses for sale. Advocate to FedDev and the County of Simcoe for ongoing financial and resource support of this program beyond the current term limit.
15. Explore partnership opportunities with local manufacturers, Georgian College and the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network's (OVIN) Regional Future Workforce Program, to support labour force development in the automotive electrification industry.

Appendix B - Technical Report

About This Report

This Technical Report supports the Town of Innisfil Economic Development Strategic Plan. It provides content to support strategic planning for the town and the target sectors and market trends that will inform the action plan and is organized into the following sections.

- **SOARR Assessment:** This section provides an overview of economic development related strengths, opportunities, aspirations, risks and results (SOARR) for Innisfil. The assessment forms the basis of strategic planning, leading to the development of goals, objectives and action items to pursue key opportunities such as business attraction, retention and expansion.
- **Document Review** introduces the broader policy context as it relates to economic development in Innisfil.
- **Economic Base Analysis** presents an overview of Innisfil's demographic, labour force and industry composition compared to the Simcoe County and the province along with population and growth projections.
- **Emerging/Potential Target Sectors** builds on the economic base analysis to inform the emerging/potential target sectors for Innisfil.

- **Target Sector Local Impacts of Market Trends** builds on the document review and economic baseline analysis insights and presents a brief description of each of the emerging target sectors for the town.
- **Consultation Summaries:** Details of feedback provided during one-on-one interviews, workshop with the Town’s leadership, workshop with business leaders, survey of the public and a survey of business owners.

Please note that the data presented in this report corresponds to the latest set of information available as of July 2023. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, it is important to note that sources may not correspond to any recent update.

SOARR Assessment

The SOARR assessment serves as the pivot from *'what has been learned'* to *'what needs to happen'* to address and support economic development priorities for Innisfil.

The SOARR model of “appreciative inquiry” (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Risks, Results) represents an emerging best practice in strategic planning. As a forward-looking model, the SOARR takes elements of what would traditionally be affiliated with a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis and focuses on the Risks and Results. Bringing risk and results into the conversation ensures that contingency planning receives due attention and that outcomes are reflected in an action-oriented, measurable manner. Further, an analysis of the strengths and aspirations can support the development of an asset-based community development model, in which identified opportunities can be leveraged, while

understanding risks, subsequent, objectives and specific action steps are designed to respond to the desired results.

For the SOARR Assessment, the SOARR leverages insights gained through all of the phases of data collection. The concepts underpinning the SOARR analysis model are illustrated below.

S	Strengths What are we doing well? What key achievements are we most proud of? What can we build on?	
O	Opportunities What are our best possible future opportunities? What changes in demand can we expect in the future? What broader trends and policies may affect development and impact our aspirations?	
A	Aspirations What are we deeply passionate about and want to achieve? What difference do we hope to make for all?	
R	Risks What challenges do we need to be aware of? How will we recognize and mitigate or eliminate potential risks?	
R	Results How do we know we are succeeding? What are the key goals we would like to accomplish to achieve these results?	

S

Strengths

What are we doing well? What key achievements are we most proud of? What can we build on?

- ❖ **Favourable Location and access:** Located on Highway 400 between Toronto and Barrie, Innisfil has direct access to one of the most accessible transportation corridors in the province and the country. Additionally, it lies on a significant route leading to lake country. Innisfil is accessible via road and rail, offering excellent transportation choices to and from the town, which enables businesses to tap into a substantial labour pool. The impending development of the Innisfil GO Station and reconstruction at Innisfil Beach Road and Highway 400 will further ease traffic and commuting demands, making living and working in the town more appealing.
- ❖ **Strong population growth and younger population:** Innisfil is growing at a higher rate than both Simcoe County and Ontario. Between 2011 and 2021, Innisfil increased its population by more than 10,599 people; a 32% increase. This is occurring at a 12% higher rate than in Simcoe County (20% growth) and Ontario (11% growth). Additionally, Innisfil's population is slightly younger than in the rest of Simcoe County, with a median age of 42 years in 2021, approximately 1.2 years younger than Simcoe County.
- ❖ **Availability of skilled trades labour force:** Innisfil has a higher proportion of its population with an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, compared to Simcoe County and Ontario. These credentials are essential for supporting construction and goods-producing businesses, including manufacturing. In addition, it is noted that Innisfil shows a high concentration of construction businesses, and the sector is growing at a higher rate locally than in the broader provincial economy.

- ❖ **Manufacturing is a top exporter:** Accounting for over 25% of total exports, manufacturing remains a leading employing sector in Innisfil with sub-sectors including plastics and rubber products manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing and machinery manufacturing. The town is home to major employers including Tempo Flexible Packaging, Tarpin Lumber and Roadwarrior Inc.
- ❖ **Tourism is a driving sector:** Arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food services are driving sectors for Innisfil. This is a specialized sector¹⁸ and is experiencing provincial growth and an even higher local growth rate. Community stakeholders recognize this potential, ranking tourism as Innisfil’s greatest economic strength¹⁹. However, within the business survey, a low proportion of businesses indicated support for enhancing tourism offerings. This discrepancy could be related to a lack of recognition of what industries fall within the tourism sector. Tourism Simcoe County recently released the 2023-2026 Destination Stewardship Plan, a document that can be used by Innisfil as a guiding document to further develop this sector.
- ❖ **Growth-enabling infrastructure and developments:** Innisfil boasts numerous projects that will contribute to growth-enabling infrastructure within the town. This aspect holds significant importance for community stakeholders, who believe that providing infrastructure to support growth should be a top priority for Innisfil Council. Some of these developments include:

¹⁸ As defined through Carvalho classification system

¹⁹ Community Stakeholder Survey Results. General Questions. Q3. What is the greatest economic strength of

the Town of Innisfil? Tourism: 27%don

- **Innisfil Heights Employment Area:** With 1,600 acres of land within this provincially designated settlement area, Innisfil Heights offers an abundance of commercial, industrial and tourism-based land, positioning Innisfil for growth. Innisfil Heights is bisected by Highway 400 – providing high visibility and ideal access to a high volume of users.
- **The Orbit and Innisfil GO Station:** This cutting-edge community is currently in the planning stages, with the proposed Innisfil GO Station being one of the first major projects. The vision for The Orbit blends rural living with urban housing and amenities. When completed, it is expected to triple the population size of Innisfil and create over 20,000 jobs.²⁰ The Town has already taken steps to guide the implementation of The Orbit, through The Orbit Potential and Innovation Plan. This Plan, once created, will include provisions that support growth while preserving Innisfil’s agricultural and natural landscapes.
- **Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) South Campus Development:** The proposed expansion of RVH will set the stage for the creation of a cluster of health-related businesses and amenities and establish Innisfil’s reputation in this sector. Implementation of the Town Campus Master Plan will further support infrastructure and complementary businesses and non-profit/government services to support the health-care sector.
- **Gateway Casinos Innisfil and Georgian Downs:** Located at Georgian Downs, near highway 400, Gateway Casinos Innisfil is a major employer and

²⁰ [Innisfil, Ont. holds public meeting to show off the Orbit development | CTV News](#) [Innisfil, Ont. holds public meeting to show off the Orbit development | CTV News](#)

tourism draw for Innisfil and the surrounding region. Being located by a high traffic area is central to their success and brings tourism dollars into the community.

- **Friday Harbour Resort:** This growing 600-acre resort stands as a significant tourist destination situated in Big Bay Point, attracting new residents and offering diverse tourism experiences. Friday Harbour Resort is a major employer, is an innovator in workforce development initiatives and is anticipated to play a role in one of Innisfil's first major hotel and accommodation projects. Their vision is to "To establish Friday Harbour as an exceptional all seasons waterside resort, providing unapparelled service and amenities"²¹. Currently, events and seasonal tourism experiences help to drive visitation and spend within Innisfil.

❖ **Municipal leadership in innovation:** The Town itself is seen a leader in government innovation. Examples of this include: the delivery and support of innovative initiatives such as the DMZ Innisfil program and the Uber transportation partnership. DMZ Innisfil is a community-driven business incubator that supports Innisfil entrepreneurs in starting and growing their businesses. The organization offers several programs and support, including the Startup Program, Local Business Accelerator and the All-Access program. Innisfil's economic development team is recognized as a leader in supporting economic growth and business investment with Innisfil winning the 2020 Economic Developers Council of Ontario Award of Excellence for Investment Attraction.

❖ **Local and regional innovation supports:** In addition to DMZ Innisfil, the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library is a significant asset, offering programing and resources that contribute

²¹ [About | Friday Harbour Resort](#)

to start-up growth, innovation and entrepreneurship. Other regional economic development ecosystem relationships throughout Innisfil and the region such as innovation agencies, educational institutions and government organizations, serve as valuable assets. These include Sandbox Centre, Georgian Angel Network, Georgian College, Simcoe County Economic Development, Lakehead University, DMZ Innisfil, Toronto Metropolitan University, Nottawasaga Futures and the Small Business Centre for Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia.

- ❖ **Innovative and entrepreneurial reputation:** There is evidence that the reputation mentioned above has drawn likeminded residents and businesses to the community. The Orbit development is an example of an innovative project, with a plan to create a Smart City of up to 150,000 people.

Opportunities

O

What are our best possible future opportunities? What changes in demand can we expect in the future? What broader trends and policies may affect development and impact our aspirations?

- ❖ **Focus efforts for residential attraction and retention:** The ability of the region to retain employees and the availability of adequate and/or affordable housing are listed as priority 6 and 7 respectively in the business survey, falling just shy of the top 5 priorities, but remains an important opportunity for future growth.
 - **Local infrastructure investments to support growth:** In 2021, Innisfil had a total of 10,419 jobs, with a 25% reduction in commuting. The sectors that experienced the largest decline include manufacturing (-415 jobs), retail trade (-395), professional, scientific and technical services (-330), educational services (-300) and finance and insurance (-300). Although it is important to note

that flexible work arrangements cannot be solely attributed to these reductions, it is worth mentioning that PSTS and finance and insurance are among the industries that offer the most remote work opportunities. Innisfil should continue to develop local infrastructure to accommodate this growth and to enable and support new businesses that cater to new residents.

- **Leverage demographic strengths to pursue diversity in services:** Innisfil has seen an influx of younger residents, but currently its services don't reflect offerings matched to this demographic. Innisfil can capitalize on this to provide a holistic approach to diversity by supporting educational institutions, increasing demand for health and medical services and investing in revitalizing the housing market.
- **Housing diversity:** Given Innisfil's young population, a variety of housing options and investment in placemaking infrastructure will be essential to retain this segment. High-density housing and rental choices are particularly important for younger workers. Efforts are also required to provide much-needed housing for seniors. Collaborating with local and regional housing developers/builders and exploring the feasibility of new multi-unit mixed-market housing will aid in achieving population growth projections and, when it comes to the senior sector, will support growth of a local health care cluster.
- **Shared identify:** The town is an amalgamation of several communities, each with their own local identity, promotion and needs. This has resulted in a fragmented approach to investment attraction and marketing and is somewhat confusing to

visitors, new residents and potential investors who do not truly understand where Innisfil is and/or what communities the town encompasses. There is an opportunity to better connect these communities and develop a shared identity and sense of pride in order to build a more cohesive "sense of place" for Innisfil as a whole. This, in turn, presents an opportunity for stronger and more efficient attraction of residents, jobs and investment.

- **Creative industries:** Innisfil could focus on attracting professionals in the creative industries, as they often seek locations that provide a high quality of life and environment. This trend is expected to expand further due to the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in those sectors. Innisfil has the opportunity to leverage this group of professionals. The community boasts a charming rural environment while remaining within close proximity to urban centres like Barrie and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

❖ **Support innovation and entrepreneurship and enable a knowledge-based ecosystem:** Innisfil has the opportunity to further cultivate a diverse environment that supports a knowledge-based workforce. This entails enhancing transit infrastructure, integrating eco-industrial design principles and incorporating employment-supportive facilities. These trends could potentially place pressure on rural industrial areas and specifically on the Innisfil Heights Employment Area to enhance both municipal services and infrastructure in order to attract future investments.

- **Succession planning in the agricultural sector:** With the number of farms increasing (farms have increased in number from 157 in 2016 to 170 in

2021) and the changing farming landscape to an increasingly technology-reliant sector, an opportunity exists to create avenues for fostering innovation and adopting technologies in farming practices. This includes precision farming, variable rate technology in crops, biotech-enhanced crops, robotics and automation.

- **Workforce development partnerships with post-secondary institutions:** Enhancing relationships and formalizing partnerships with Georgian College and Lakehead University will facilitate the integration and introduction of local businesses to post-secondary opportunities, enabling the development, refinement and/or utilization of programming. One example, specific to the manufacturing sector, is the partnership between Georgian College and the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network's (OVIN) through the Regional Future Workforce Program. This program aims to support labour force development in the automotive electrification industry.
- **Improve skills to face Artificial Intelligence (AI) disruptions:** Among different sectors, the creative industries will be also impacted by advancements in AI. The impact on the digital economy is significant and far-reaching. A report by the World Economic Forum suggests that AI could displace 85 million jobs worldwide but could also create 97 million new jobs. The report notes that the nature of work will change because of AI, with a greater emphasis on skills such as creativity, problem-solving and critical thinking²². Consultation insights from the business survey indicated the need for small business support as the most important

²² World Economic Forum, Recession and Automation Changes Our Future of Work, But There are Jobs Coming. October 2020

factor for the future growth of Innisfil. The survey also indicated an opportunity for increased promotion and awareness of local and regional resources available to local businesses, including opportunities for grants, loans and resources for succession planning.

- **Retail study:** Undertaking a commercial gap analysis would offer Innisfil insights into any gaps in retail and services while also providing a more in-depth understanding of commercial land requirements. The resulting insights would enable a focused strategy for attracting this type of investment which helps to keep monetary spending in the town. According to consultation feedback, the local business community presently does not claim to substantially benefit from the region's tourism and events. Discovering creative ways to draw visitors to areas such as downtown Alcona, Friday Harbour and Cookstown presents an opportunity to leverage existing tourism assets to the economic benefit of local businesses.
- **Funding programs:** The highest ranked priority within the business survey is the availability of funding programs for businesses and property improvements. Consideration of the development and implementation of a Community Improvement Plan to offset the costs of development in strategic areas or industries presents an opportunity for Innisfil to stimulate new commercial and industrial growth and development.
- **Internet availability:** The majority of Innisfil is considered a rural area, making improving internet availability essential in attracting e-commerce, tech-based businesses and remote workers.

❖ **Target efforts to support economic growth**

opportunities: The Town's economic development office wants to build stronger relationships with major employers and businesses to fully understand their current needs, future goals and opportunities and to proactively support their growth. In addition to overall support, targeted efforts are needed to enhance competitiveness and community sustainability. This includes opportunities related to the development of Innisfil Heights, The Orbit and GO Station, the RVH South Campus and lands, DMZ Innisfil and downtown Alcona revitalization.

- **Innisfil Heights:** Improving the investment readiness of Innisfil Heights will be essential to attract more manufacturing and export-oriented businesses. Currently, lands within Innisfil Heights do not have the servicing needed to meet the minimum criteria of most investors. Community stakeholders believe the most significant economic issue demanding attention from Town Council both in the short-term (1-3 years) and long-term (10-25 years) is investing in infrastructure to accommodate growth. Businesses also expressed a dissatisfaction with the affordability of industrial space for rent or lease. Areas of focus could include expedited processes to facilitate growth and the municipality taking the lead in preparing lands for future development or even land ownership. To compete with neighbouring communities, the Town should explore targeted community improvement plans, incentives and enhancing its Red-Carpet Program.
- **The Orbit:** This development is being planned as a forward-thinking community that includes integrated placemaking and cultural spaces with

sustainability principles built into its planning process. The proposed GO Station is within the development plan, creating a transit-oriented community with hopes of providing alternative mobility choices for people of all ages. This development has the potential to address housing concerns within Innisfil. With the majority of new housing starts and completions being single detached housing units, diversifying the housing market with multi-unit options that provide flexibility, as proposed in The Orbit development, will address the need for accessible housing in Innisfil.

- **RVH Centre South Campus:** Innisfil is well-positioned to explore opportunity areas within the life sciences and health care sectors, particularly with anticipated construction of RVH's South Campus. The long-term vision of the hospital is to be a Health Hub focused on outpatient clinics with day procedures and an Urgent Care Centre. The Town Campus Master Plan further supports the development of this campus with a vision to support complementary uses on municipal lands adjacent to the RVH South Campus site. Opportunities exist to continue to attract a range of health care related uses that could include a long-term care facility, supportive community housing, research, education and training facilities, community health uses and related medical office space. With the hospital expansion and focus on health care industries comes the opportunity to put policies and incentives in place to be a choice location for health care professionals. Further consideration may be given to the opportunity to prepare municipally owned lands for development through pre-zoning, site preparation and advanced

servicing, all of which would reduce barriers to development, increase investment readiness and accelerate development timelines.

- **DMZ Innisfil:** Stakeholder input has identified that the DMZ Innisfil program has room to improve its return on investment and impact for the town. Focusing on sector specific programming, such as advanced manufacturing and health care start-ups presents an opportunity to focus the Town's business support on key growth sectors and make a greater impact. DMZ Innisfil's facility on Yonge Street is currently underutilized but presents an opportunity to address a need for collision space for entrepreneurs to connect, exchange ideas and forge new partnerships. Through new partnerships, like the one created with Nottawasaga Futures in 2023, this space has the potential to become a regional hub for the delivery of business support services.
- **Downtown Alcona:** Opportunities exist to realize the development potential of Alcona centre, including business support and attraction and creating new job opportunities, in a wide variety of industries, from retail and hospitality to professional services and technology. Alcona also offers a great placemaking opportunity, through the creation of vibrant public spaces, mixed-use development and 15-minute communities.

❖ **Support tourism experience development and marketing:** Innisfil has distinct rural roots and is comprised of unique community settlement areas. Visitors are increasingly seeking authentic tourism experiences based on a unified, community-wide brand. As such, destination development and marketing are crucial to attract the desired target market segments. There is an opportunity to work with producers who are

interested in value-added agricultural products and experiences. Marketing this sector could involve promoting core community assets, unique rural markets, restaurants, entertainment and destination retail, thereby establishing a cohesive brand for Innisfil. The business survey results indicate the highest priority should be the availability of funding programs for business and property improvement. Connecting funding opportunities and exploring the potential for value-added businesses will not only benefit local farms but also generate businesses for the local community. Collaborating with and leveraging Tourism Simcoe County's 2023-2026 Destination Stewardship Plan can aid growth in the following areas:

- **Growing the tourism and agri-tourism sector:** The agri-tourism sector is comprised of agri-business, food processing and culinary experiences. To foster growth in Innisfil's agricultural sector, which is comprised primarily of small farms, emphasis should be placed on supporting value added activities on agricultural and rural properties.
- **Increased active transportation:** The further development of active transportation infrastructure can provide quicker links for individuals to access Innisfil's popular destinations. The business survey indicated existing road networks and connectivity as the second highest priority among respondents. The e-scooter programs that can be utilized on the proposed cycling route around Lake Simcoe is one example to explore.
- **Leveraging Friday Harbour Resort and Innisfil Beach Park as tourism assets:** Future development goals for Friday Harbour Resort include the addition of a hotel, providing more opportunities for visitors to extend their stays at the resort for

multiple days. While there are numerous activities to enjoy at Friday Harbour, there is a chance to foster the creation of distinctive tourism experiences that differentiate Friday Harbour and Innisfil Beach Park from other tourist attractions such as, farm to table dining experiences, events and unique water-based experiences.

❖ **Enable a cohesive community and business**

environment: Despite many years passing since the Town of Innisfil was created, stakeholder feedback identified that Innisfil is somewhat defined by its settlement areas with many residents and businesses still identifying with these communities. Creating unified supports for businesses can help streamline services and build upon community cohesiveness.

- **Unified approach to investment attraction:** Currently, there is no unified approach to investment attraction and visitor engagement across the various settlement areas in Innisfil. Facilitating networking opportunities among businesses in all communities can foster camaraderie and encourage innovation.
- **Unified brand recognition:** Innisfil's tourism sector, can be a bridge among settlement areas, residents and visitors, establishing a unified vision that enhances brand recognition. Organizing events throughout Innisfil can contribute to building brand awareness while bringing businesses from different communities together. An integrated marketing message and tools that represent all Innisfil communities will ensure economic competitiveness and a strong community brand.

❖ **Service planning for growth:** InnServices provides water and wastewater utilities for the Town of Innisfil. Currently, InnServices, is undertaking a town-wide Water

and Wastewater Master Servicing Plan Update. The aim is to identify sustainable water and wastewater servicing solutions that can accommodate Innisfil’s growth up to 2051, while simultaneously continuing to improve services to Innisfil’s existing residents, businesses and institutions.

Opportunities - Priority Matrix

Using businesses ratings of Innisfil’s economic development goals as well as their overall agreement that the Town is moving in the right direction to meet them, a priority matrix was created using Deloitte’s proprietary derived importance methodology. 56 businesses provided responses. The Priority Matrix consists of three metrics:

- ❖ **Performance:** The percentage of respondents who were ‘somewhat satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the Town of Innisfil as a place to own and operate a business
- ❖ **Importance:** Statistical correlations were used to determine the strength of the relationship between the goal and overall agreement
- ❖ **Priority rank:** Determined for each attribute based on levels of importance and performance.

Table 1: Priority Matrix

Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	23%	8.2	1
Existing road network that improves road connectivity throughout the town	33%	9.4	2
Affordability of industrial space for rent or lease	14%	6.2	3
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	23%	6.4	4
Availability of property for purchase or lease	24%	6.4	5

Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Ability of the region to retain employees	37%	7.4	6
Availability of adequate and/or affordable housing	19%	5.7	7
Development/building permit process	33%	6.7	8

A Aspirations
 What are we deeply passionate about and want to achieve? What difference do we hope to make for all?

- ❖ **A new direction in economic development:** The Town of Innisfil's recent shift in leadership, both among staff and elected officials, presents an opportunity to chart a new course for growth and economic development, a realm that enjoys strong support from elected officials. Innisfil Economic Development can emerge as a frontrunner in municipal government innovation, while also creating an environment that fosters business connections and innovation.
- ❖ **Economic development programming with a demonstrated return on investment (ROI):** There is a need for all economic development programming to demonstrate an 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 align with local business needs.

Further economic benefit could be realized from increasing support services to stimulate business start-ups and entrepreneurship.

- ❖ **A stronger, diversified economy:** Focusing on economic diversification is an important factor for the Town as it will provide an increase in job opportunities, higher economic growth potential and ultimately attract more investments. Innisfil can focus on exploring new economic development activities and sector-specific strengths, including manufacturing, professional, scientific and technical services and tourism in order to diversify their current economy.
- ❖ **An investment-ready community:** Addressing land development and infrastructure servicing will increase land availability for housing and will support the development of industrial and commercial businesses. The commitment to investment readiness is evident across all levels of government, with ongoing communication between Economic Development and relevant partners to ensure that servicing the Innisfil Heights Employment Area remains a top priority.
- ❖ **A value-added and cultural tourism destination:** Supporting agri-tourism and arts and culture sectors through innovative land policies and regulations will be an important factor that encourages growth. Value-added agriculture and agri-business growth can also be encouraged through targeted programming and infrastructure support. This approach will maximize agri-tourism initiatives including brewery and cider production, on-farm tourist activities and niche and speciality crop development. The integration of agritourism and rural cultural tourism with more urban experiences represents a unique tourism opportunity.
- ❖ **A health care cluster:** Supporting investment attraction to the RVH South Campus Development, which includes attracting health care businesses, educational labs and

- ❖ **Lack of prioritization:** With many development opportunities on Innisfil’s horizon, Innisfil’s economic development team is challenged with prioritizing projects and tasks associated with each opportunity. Without a strategic document that includes prioritized actions the economic development team and partners risk having diluted impacts.
- ❖ **Aging demographics:** A trend with potential to impact the local economy is the notable increase of residents in late career/early retirement and young senior groups, which grew by 30% and 31%, respectively. This aging population will present new challenges as Innisfil's labour force approaches retirement age, necessitating the replacement of these workers and plan for business succession. While Canada announced their 2023 – 2025 Immigration Levels Plan in November 2022, which provides a path to overall immigration increases in the short-term, Innisfil will still be challenged to be poised as a destination of choice for this segment.
- ❖ **Lack of diversity in population:** Innisfil is not attracting a substantial number of immigrants. The town's immigrant population comprises only 20% of the total, with a majority having arrived before 1980. Moreover, the town exhibits less diversity compared to Ontario. These trends could pose challenges in the future as immigrants seek places with diverse populations for community-building. Attracting immigrants is crucial for sourcing both skilled and unskilled labour, which is necessary to replace workers entering retirement.
- ❖ **Lack of housing diversity:** The majority of housing in Innisfil consists of single-detached and single-family dwellings, with the most recent housing starts also being single-detached. This type of development has wider repercussions on other services. For instance, it reduces the town's capacity to offer effective public transportation choices while driving up municipal

servicing expenses. Additionally, it affects the availability of accessible and affordable housing options for the younger population, new Canadians and individuals without families. This has been identified as a barrier to attracting the workforce to Innisfil.

- ❖ **Net exporter of workers:** As of 2021, Innisfil still remains a net exporter of workers. Consequently, local jobs have specialized in serving the commuting population. The service economy accounts for 77% of local jobs, with nearly a quarter of them being in retail trade and wholesale trade.
- ❖ **Land servicing limitations:** The majority of Innisfil's industrial land is privately owned, thereby giving the Town limited control over investment attraction and servicing in these areas. Due to geographical dispersion, cost, timing and delayed provincial processes and approvals, land servicing has been lagging and poses challenges for certain businesses. Currently, land is not provided with electricity service until a site plan is in place, causing significant delays in development. Some groups aspire to preserve agricultural lands and safeguard natural resources in the area, introducing an additional layer of approvals and delays to development projects. Businesses are frustrated by servicing limitations and the prolonged duration for development approvals. Consequently, they are contemplating alternative locations for growth and expansion.
- ❖ **Lack of community connectivity:** Due to Innisfil being comprised of a collection of geographically dispersed settlement areas, public transportation presents an issue. Of note is the lack of transit options to/from Barrie, which is where a substantial amount of Innisfil's workforce resides. This makes full workforce engagement a challenge. Improvements in closing the gap of connectivity between industrial lands and settlement areas need to be addressed to resolve the difficulties

some companies face with hiring local employees for lower waged occupations that are difficult to fill.

- ❖ **Lack of business community cohesiveness:** Currently, there is no true opportunity for businesses and entrepreneurs to work together, network and innovate. There is only one active chamber in Cookstown that is specific to that region and doesn't encompass Innisfil as a whole.
- ❖ **Talent gaps:** A consistent pipeline of talent is essential to meet the evolving requirements of businesses. Gaps in post-secondary partnerships and training have the potential to impact the cultivation of skills aligned with business needs.

R

Results

How we know we are succeeding

What are the key goals we would like to accomplish to achieve these results

- ❖ Innisfil's population is growing, and the housing stock is improved with more affordable, diverse housing options. More multi-unit housing and rental housing options are available supporting talent attraction specific to youth and New Canadians, in particular.
- ❖ Talent attraction and retention programs are in place that benefit local employers.
- ❖ By focusing on identified opportunities, Innisfil will enable a community where residents and visitors identify with being in Innisfil and have a pride of place.
- ❖ DMZ Innisfil operates regionally and is cost shared by other municipalities, providing enough critical mass to offer sector-specific supports that align with prioritized clusters.
- ❖ Local businesses are supported, and business satisfaction is high through the support of DMZ Innisfil, business mentors, networking events, marketing, etc.
- ❖ The town is prepared for industrial and commercial

investment, with significantly reduced land servicing times and higher business retention rates. There are serviced, shovel-ready residential and industrial development lands available.

- ❖ Innisfil Heights has ideal leads for every property and commitment targets to sell vacant and underutilized property.
- ❖ Clusters are established around Innisfil Heights Employment Lands, Friday Harbour Resort and the RVH South Campus.
- ❖ Downtown revitalization of communities within Innisfil fosters a strong sense of place.
- ❖ Economic development reporting is formalized and communicated with Council and the public.

Document Review

Documents and policies have been analyzed comparatively to uncover areas of thematic overlap. The policies have been catalogued according to common themes to observe patterns – in essence, to find the “common threads” among them.

The following observations are important, as they highlight themes that are strongly represented in the current policy framework internally and where there is alignment with important external policies. Further, the review offered the opportunity to identify gaps where key themes and areas of importance do not currently have prominence in the municipal policy framework. If these gaps represent key objectives or priorities that are identified through the research and community engagement process, they heighten awareness for further examination to ensure effective alignment with future priorities.

The common threads identified among the policies and documents examined include:

- Quality of place, tourism and culture
- Business and community growth
- Community sustainability and support
- Land-use and development of community amenities
- Diversity, equity and inclusion

The figure below presents a common threads matrix, showing the association between each theme relative to the documents it has been identified in via a series of check marks. A single check mark (✓) indicates the document has some content relating to the theme, but it is not a primary focus of the document, while a double check mark (✓✓) indicates there is a primary focus on the theme. While these documents were reviewed for the Document Background Review, only documents with relevant content for the development of the Strategy were included in further analysis.

Table 2: Common Threads Analysis

Document	Quality of Place, Tourism and Culture	Business and Community Growth	Community Sustainability and Support	Land-use and Development of Community Amenities	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Regional Reports					
County of Simcoe Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment 2022		✓✓		✓✓	

County of Simcoe Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2020		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	
Innisfil Reports					
Innisfil Building Permit Reports 2018-2023		✓✓		✓✓	
Town of Innisfil Community Needs Assessment Update 2022	✓✓		✓✓		✓✓
Town of Innisfil Draft Civic Campus Master Plan 2022	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
ideaLAB & Library Strategic Plan 2021-2026	✓	✓			✓✓
Innisfil Culture	✓✓	✓	✓✓		✓✓

Master Plan 2020-2025					
Innovate Innisfil 2030 Community Strategic Plan 2020-2030	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓		✓
Town of Innisfil The Future is Youth: Youth Engagement Strategy 2020	✓✓	✓✓		✓✓	✓
Innisfil Investor Service Excellence 2019		✓✓		✓✓	
Our Place – Innisfil Official Plan 2018	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	
Town of Innisfil Tourism Destination Management Plan 2017	✓✓	✓✓	✓		
Retail Sector Discussion Paper 2015	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	
Town of Innisfil Business		✓✓		✓✓	

Retention and Expansion Survey 2015					
Inspiring Innisfil 2020: A Strategy for the Future – Economy Community Tourism & Culture 2011	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	
Retail Demand Study Alcona Settlement Area 2011	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	
Orbit Secondary Plan	✓✓	✓✓		✓✓	
Other Reports					
York Region Economic Development Action Plan 2020–2023		✓✓		✓✓	
City of Orillia Economic Development Strategy (2008)	✓✓	✓✓		✓	

✓ indicates the document has some content relating to the theme, but it is not a primary focus of the document

✓✓ Indicates there is a primary focus on the theme

Town of Innisfil Community Strategic Plan

The Town of Innisfil has established a strategic plan to the year 2030, with the vision of “*Community First. Future Next. Balance Always*”.²³ The plan establishes four strategic priorities: Grow, Sustain, Connect and Serve. Support for the Economic Development Strategy is provided through the strategic plan under the priority of Grow. The plan identifies the need to develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy to attract investment, grow local businesses, and build a more diverse economy, including thriving main streets.

Our Place – Town of Innisfil Official Plan

Innisfil’s Official Plan was fully adopted in 2018 and is intended to enhance place making, community character and social connections while guiding municipal actions and other master planning processes. The Official Plan reiterates the *County of Simcoe Official Plan’s* population and employment target for Innisfil for 2031 – 56,000 and 13,000, respectively. The Official Plan aims to achieve Community Strategic Plan’s goals:

- **Connect** – The Official Plan intends to strengthen attachment to the town by providing gathering places, strengthen social connections, improve mobility for all residents, celebrate arts, culture and heritage and improve digital connectivity of the community.
- **Grow** – The Official Plan intends to enable economic opportunities for residents through support of local businesses, create opportunity for value-add agriculture and manage the town in a way that promotes appropriate intensification for housing, commercial services and employment opportunities. The Official Plan sets the directions that the majority of employment land jobs will be in the Innisfil Heights Strategic Settlement Employment Area and that 33% of all new residential

²³ Town of Innisfil, *Innovate Innisfil 2030 Community Strategic Plan 2020-2030*, 2020.

units occurring annually will be within Innisfil's delineated built-up areas.

- **Sustain** – The Official Plan intends to enhance the vitality of the downtown, protect the natural heritage of the town, enhance and create new parks and open spaces, protect the health of Lake Simcoe, preserve community character and promote the efficient use of existing municipal infrastructure.

Inspiring Innisfil 2020: A Strategy for the Future – Economy Community Tourism & Culture

Inspiring Innisfil 2020 is Innisfil's previous economic development strategy completed in 2011. Its key findings highlight Innisfil's biggest challenge as managing growth. Recommendations to prepare Innisfil for growth include investing wisely in infrastructure, engaging in stronger medium and long-term planning, protecting quality of life, focusing on economic development, investing in arts, culture and tourism, leveraging Lake Simcoe as a community and tourism asset and promoting Innisfil's heritage. Specific actions related to community development, economic development, tourism and culture provide a roadmap for Innisfil to work towards these goals and priorities.

Other Existing Strategies of Neighbouring Municipalities and the Surrounding Region

A Place to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The regional strategy for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was developed by the Province of Ontario and provides a framework that implements its vision to build stronger and more prosperous communities. The plan outlines where and how the region will grow that recognizes the realities of communities and determines what all levels of government can and cannot influence. The growth plan prioritizes intensification in strategic growth areas, supporting a wide

range of housing options and protecting and enhancing natural and heritage areas.

The County of Simcoe Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment outlines that the Town of Innisfil is expected to receive a significant portion of Simcoe County's projected growth. To meet employment forecasts, employment may be directed to either the Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil Heights strategic settlement employment areas.

Simcoe County Economic Development Strategy

The strategy identifies five goals: to be recognized as a premier destination for investment in Ontario, to attract and retain talent to support the business community, to have a strong business retention and a strong innovative business development environment, to be a leader in building collaborative relationships for a strong ecosystem and to advocate and support the delivery of infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses.

Three sectors were selected for further focus. Manufacturing was identified as an existing strength of the region, but the strategy notes further diversification is required. Tourism was identified as a strong area of opportunity and specifically identified agri-tourism to align the region's agricultural tradition with the growing demand for local food and experiences. Agriculture was identified as another opportunity as there is an existing base of workers and businesses, but the sector has seen recent declines across the county.

Playing a collaborative role with economic development offices, this strategy offers insights into opportunities for partnerships. Of particular relevance to Innisfil is the mention of Innisfil Heights Strategic Industrial Employment Area in the context of provincial growth planning. This

strategy offers recognition of Innisfil's efforts to attract entrepreneurs from the technology sector.

City of Orillia Economic Development Strategy

The City of Orillia last developed an economic development strategy in 2008. This strategy identifies five goals that aim to capitalize on local educational institutions, place an emphasis on lifestyle, target strategic growth, strengthen the business community and focus on effective marketing and promotion. More recently, the City of Orillia completed a Retail Mix Study which identified restaurants, specialty food stores and arts, culture and entertainment as target sectors.

York Region Economic Development Action Plan

The plan focuses on three key themes: business, innovation and talent. The principal component of these themes is marketing and awareness building as the region builds off its success from its previous strategy. This action plan has a focus on attracting additional foreign direct investment into the region through a partnership with Toronto Global and increasing awareness of its York Link brand for key international markets. There are also key considerations for an innovation investment fund which will allow York Region Council to support regionally significant projects such as new post-secondary training and research facilities. The York Small Business Enterprise Centre continues to be a focus, providing business support services in the region's northern municipalities.

Common Threads Analysis

Quality of Place

The 2016 *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* identifies using existing facilities and services in support of place making initiatives. The 2020 *Innisfil Beach Park Master Plan* provides a vision and 20-year plan where creating a sense of place is reinforced. The *Youth Engagement Strategy* builds upon these and identifies how the youth in the community would

like to be engaged in designing and planning for quality of place amenities within the town and the surrounding region.

The *Civic Campus Master Plan* is under development by the Town of Innisfil and will identify and guide the vision for how residents interact with this hub of recreation, health municipal and police services. Development of this land is centred around the Civic Campus, located at Innisfil Beach Road and Yonge Street, to be Innisfil's next employment district with a focus on the announced hospital, ancillary medical, office, retail and services-supportive employment alongside an increased focus on community services. The development of this land will have a pedestrian focus and become the cultural hub of the town, enforce sustainability principles, be welcoming for all and preserve and enhance the natural areas surrounding the campus.²⁴ The district is estimated to support 2,500 to 4,500 new jobs including the hospital.

The *Tourism Destination Management Plan* is primarily concerned with growing the tourism sector in Innisfil but also makes recommendations on developing lakefront land and promoting entertainment, retail and arts. Potential investment opportunities for waterfront property adjacent to Friday Harbour included a self-contained wakeboard park, offices of watersports organizations, training facilities for watersports and a retail component for watersports.²⁵ Other retail opportunities identified were for motorsports, harness racing, gaming, agri-tourism, antiques, artists and galleries.²⁶ While both recommendations will support tourism in the town, they will also provide tangible benefits to the local community and provide additional community amenities for the residents.

²⁴ Town of Innisfil, *Civic Campus Master Plan Direction Report*, 2022.

²⁵ Town of Innisfil, *Tourism Destination Management Plan*, 2017

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Both the 2015 *Retail Sector Discussion Paper* and 2011 *Retail Demand Study Alcona Settlement Area Report* offer further insights into Innisfil's broader retail sector. Findings indicate Innisfil is underserved in terms of shopping amenities and major retail chains and that many residents are primarily shopping outside of Innisfil. Also noted was the limited commercial land availability, particularly in the Alcona Primary Market, with a recommendation to bring more commercial land online. This report recommends a review of findings every 5 years to consider demand and opportunities beyond 2021.

Business and Community Growth

It is projected that between 2021 and 2051, Innisfil's population will grow by 39,740 individuals (a 2.1% annual growth rate).²⁷ During this same period, employment in the town is expected to grow by 20,290 (a 3.8% annual growth rate).²⁸ The majority of this employment growth is expected to be within population service industries and to support this growth in employment, all land within the strategic settlement employment area of Innisfil Heights will be required.²⁹

Nottawasaga Futures conducted a business support program in 2015 for the manufacturing sector for the five South Simcoe municipalities including Innisfil. The businesses surveyed identified opportunities to address issues such as improvements in water and wastewater capacity, curbside garbage and recycling pick up and broadband infrastructure in the business park. At the time, four businesses indicated that they were looking to expand with taxes, development

²⁷ Hemson, *Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment for the County of Simcoe, 2022*.

²⁸ *Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment for the County of Simcoe, 2022*.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

charges and other related costs remaining as barriers for them.³⁰

In response to a proposed Innisfil GO Station and a provincial direction for transit-oriented communities, Innisfil created a vision and conceptual design for The Orbit. The vision for The Orbit is to be a dynamic community that allows small town and rural lifestyles to co-exist with the benefits and attributes of urban living. This Plan, once created, will include provisions that support growth while preserving Innisfil's agricultural and natural landscapes.

Innisfil's *Invest Service Excellence* report identifies a goal for the Town to make investing in Innisfil as easy as possible to support job creation and to build a stronger tax base. This goal will be achieved by marketing and investor outreach, creating a seamless investor experience with a high standard of service delivery and tracking investor satisfaction prior to and after the investment decision.³¹

Community Sustainability

Innisfil's Official Plan identifies several objectives related to community sustainability such as enhancing community well-being and social cohesion, ensuring access to community health services for all, improving access to local food and improving access to affordable housing. These objectives guide actions identified in the Official Plan and set the groundwork for other Town plans to expand and grow from.

In 2022, the Town of Innisfil provided an update to its *COVID-19 Community Needs Assessment*. Engagement with the community showed that many of the same issues persisted from the COVID-19 period, such as mental health and access to food and essential items, while other areas emerged as other high need areas, such as physical health

³⁰ Nottawasaga Futures, *Town of Innisfil Business Retention & Expansion Survey: Manufacturing Sector*, 2015.

³¹ MobileLIVE, *Innisfil Investor Service Excellence*, 2021.

and access to town services. Programming provided through this project include micro-grants for families, developing community fridges, the 'CMHA Peer Support Program,' the 'Essential Trips Assistance Program,' the 'What's for Dinner Today Partnership,' supporting entrepreneurs through DMZ Innisfil, HackLAB Craft Kits for Seniors and Community Events.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) has been highlighted in several reports for Innisfil but is an area where additional awareness can be shared. The *Youth Strategy* identifies DEI as a barrier to future engagement which was particularly highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The *Community Needs Assessment* identified that equity and inclusion was a predominant topic with residents when discussing the COVID-19 recovery. This highlights that DEI is important to the community and that strategies and tactics may need to be developed to help ensure that Innisfil is welcoming to all.

DEI is a key component of the *Innisfil Culture Master Plan* as it relates back directly to three of five strategic goals. These goals are 'Build a Resilient Community', 'Foster Inclusivity' and 'Honour Local Indigenous Heritage and History'.³² These goals show that the community understands the importance and impact that diverse culture has on economic development and place making efforts.

Land-use and Infrastructure Investment

In 2022, Innisfil saw a decrease of permits issued for new residential units and new area constructed for industrial, commercial and institutional organizations from 2021. It should be noted, 2021 was the highest year on record since 2018 across these statistics.³³

³² Town of Innisfil, *Culture Master Plan 2020-2025*, 2019

³³ Town of Innisfil, *Building Permit Reports*, 2023.

The intensification targets set out initially for Innisfil from the provincial plan, *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, have been slightly adjusted from the County of Simcoe’s *Growth Forecasts and Needs Assessment to the County’s 2022 Official Plan Amendment*. The updated *Office Consolidation February 2023 County of Simcoe Official Plan* maintains the 33% intensification target for the Innisfil. This means that 33% of all new residential units occurring annually will be developed within the built boundaries of the settlement area in Innisfil.

Table 3: Building Permits, Innisfil

YTD Totals	2023 (Jan-April)	2022	2021	2020
Construction Value	\$99,118,328	\$292,320,823	\$307,383,300	\$155,059,237
Building Permits Issued	205	741	1270	722
Residential Units Created	128	490	690	438
ICI New Area Constructed	455 m ²	10,079 m ²	14,680 m ²	9,988 m ²

Source: Town of Innisfil, Building Permit Reports, 2023

The Official Plan for Innisfil sets several objectives that impact the town’s transportation systems, particularly as it relates to creating complete streets that function as place making destinations that can accommodate the needs of all transportation modes. The Official Plan also directs new growth and development of the town to the primary settlement area and urban settlement areas that have existing and planned water and wastewater systems.

Economic Base Analysis

The economic base analysis examines the current socio-economic, labour force and business conditions for Innisfil. The indicators were studied in comparison to Simcoe County and Ontario. The following data sources were used:

- Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, June 2022
- Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2021, 2016 and National Household Survey 2011
- Lightcast Economic Modeling (formerly EMSI Analyst) Datarun 2022.3

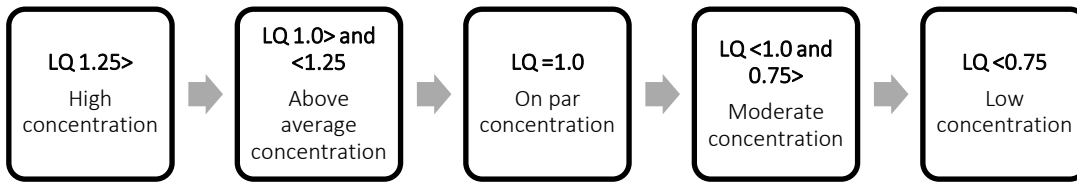
Notes on Data

- The June 2022 Canadian Business Counts were used to determine the total number of registered businesses in Innisfil. Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Counts Data provides a record of business establishments by industry and size. This data is collected from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The business data collected for Innisfil includes all local businesses that met at least one of the three following criteria: Have an employee workforce for which they submit payroll remittances to CRA, or have a minimum of \$30,000 in annual sales revenue, or are incorporated under a federal or provincial act and have filed a federal corporate income tax form within the past three years.
- The 2021 Census of Population is the latest and most widely available data product offered by Statistics Canada.

Definitions

As part of this economic baseline analysis, a Location Quotient (LQ) Analysis was completed to determine the concentration of industries (businesses) in Innisfil relative to the Simcoe County and Ontario. It reveals what makes a

region unique. The LQ's Classifications are as follows:



Summary of Key Findings

Demographics

Innisfil is home to a rapidly growing population, surpassing the growth rate of Simcoe County and Ontario. During the last decade, the town has added more than 10,500 people, 32% growth. Currently, Innisfil's population is comparatively similar in age to those in the County and slightly older than in the rest of the province. Innisfil has a lower share of immigrants compared to Ontario and a significantly smaller share of visible minorities. In addition, the relatively high cost of housing compared to the Simcoe County and Ontario and the lack of purpose build rental housing, may discourage immigrants to locate in the town; immigrants are important for communities as they are a source for skilled and unskilled labour and could supplement the labour market.

Employment

According to the 2021 Census, Innisfil is a net exporter of workers. Approximately 15% of the town's employed labour force lived and worked in Innisfil. Meanwhile, 48% commuted out (mostly to Barrie and Toronto). The Census also estimated that 4,380 people worked from home during the Census period, most (59%) were women. Compared to 2016, the number of people leaving Innisfil to work fell by 3,045 people (25%) (12,245 people commuted out of Innisfil

in 2016). Nationwide, the largest drop in car commuting among Canadians occurred among workers in public administration (-28%); finance and insurance (-48%); and professional, scientific and technical services (-32%). This observation may indicate a rise in remote work among individuals in these industries, as most job functions could be performed from home, at least to some extent.

The employment composition in Innisfil suggests that the local economy has specialized in the service industries, mostly around industries that provide services to the commuting population (e.g., restaurants, schools, construction, grocery stores). Service industries accounted for 77% of Innisfil's jobs. The retail trade sector is by far the largest employer in Innisfil (18% of employment). The construction sector is projected to have the largest growth over the next five years.



Business Characteristics

Across Innisfil, there are 1,109 business establishments with employees and another 3,021 non-employer businesses with at least \$30,000 in annual sales. Most businesses are small – 78% of businesses with employees have fewer than 10 employees and 89% have less than 20 employees. The largest businesses by business counts include real estate and rental and leasing, construction and professional, scientific and technical services. Innisfil also showed a high concentration of businesses in construction and administrative and support, waste management and remediation services compared to Ontario. Exports from Innisfil totaled \$902.6 million in 2020, mostly from residential building construction and purchases from all industries in Innisfil totaled more than \$573.3 million. Most

of these purchases were imported purchases (bought outside of Innisfil).

Demographic Characteristics

Population Growth

In 2021, Innisfil had a population of 43,326, showing an increase of 18% since 2016; this translates into 6,760 additional residents in the town. The 10-year outlook shows 32% growth (10,599 new residents) since 2011. The town's population has continued to grow at a faster rate than the broader Simcoe County and Ontario. This growth is the result of the influx of new residents to the town leaving larger urban areas due to affordability and flexibility of remote work. In fact, the mobility status one year prior to the Census 2021 shows that movers represented 13% of the town's population. Intraprovincial migrants (moved from within Ontario) accounted for 3,800 people; interprovincial migrants (moved from other provinces) accounted for 100 people and external migrants (moved from other countries) accounted for 150 people.

When it comes to the components of population change, data available for the Barrie Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) shows that between 2021 and 2022 population growth in the CMA was driven by net intraprovincial migration (3,800 individuals), followed by net non-permanent residents³⁴ (2,766 individuals). During the same time, the CMA saw an outflux of people due to net interprovincial migration (-1,512 individuals).³⁵

According to demographic data for the CMA, the net population growth between 2021 and 2022 was largely driven by young adults and young working prime individuals, who accounted for 66% of the total increase. Specifically, 40% of the growth came from young adults, while 20% came

³⁴ Non-permanent residents include people holding work or study permit.

³⁵ Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0136-01 Components of population change by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration, 2016 boundaries

from young working prime individuals. This demographic trend is encouraging for the CMA, as it suggests a growing pool of younger workers who can potentially address the area's long-term labour needs.

Table 4 – Population Growth, 2011-2021

Census Year	Innisfil	Simcoe County	Ontario
2011 NHS	32,727	446,063	12,851,821
2016 Census	36,566	479,635	13,448,494
2021 Census	43,326	533,169	14,223,942
5-year change	6,760	53,534	775,448
% change	18%	11%	6%
10-year change	10,599	87,106	1,372,121
% change	32%	20%	11%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS, 2016 Census, 2021 Census

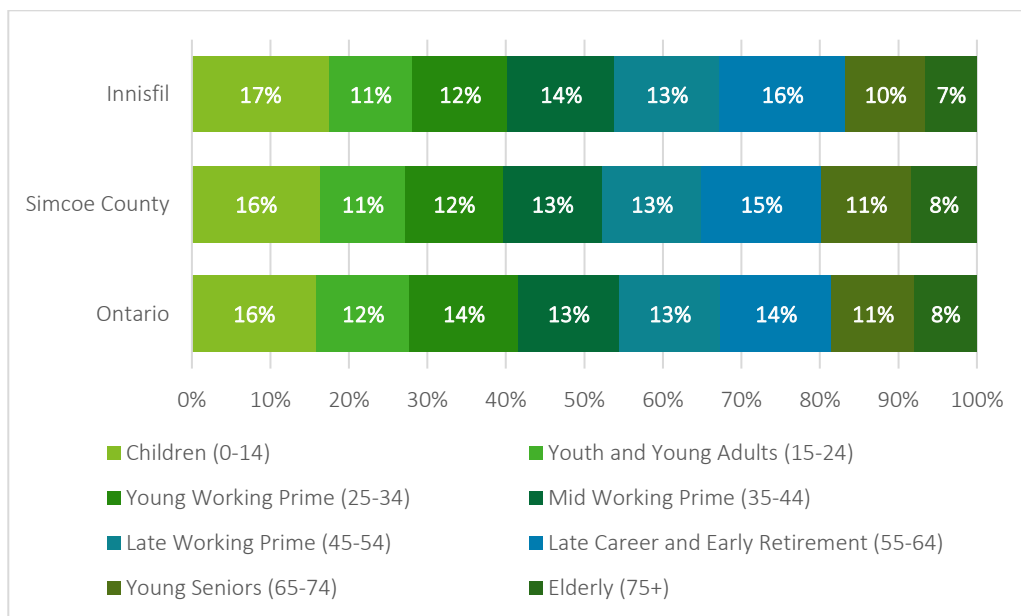
Population Age

The largest age group in Innisfil are people between the ages of 0 to 14 years, the youngest age cohort. The median age in the town was estimated at 42 years in 2021, this is 1.2 years younger than the median age in the broader Simcoe County and slightly older than Ontario at 41.6 years. The large share of children, in addition to the significant share of young professionals (young and mid working primes), suggest that Innisfil is attracting young families to the community.

In addition to analyzing the growth rate of the region’s population, it is important to examine the population's age by broad age groups. This will provide insights into current and future talent needs, housing needs and support programming. This analysis includes a breakdown of broader age cohorts that include the “prime working-age”

categories³⁶. Considering this classification, approximately 39% of the population in Innisfil is within the “working prime” age cohorts (people between the ages of 25 and 54), a share like Simcoe County, and 1% lower than Ontario. Innisfil also recorded a lower share of young seniors and elderly (65 years and over), with 17% of the town’s population in this age cohort (compared to 20% in Simcoe County, and 19% in Ontario).

Figure 1 – Population Share by Age Group, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

Comparing the growth of population by age provides key trends that may affect economic and labour growth in the community. Looking at the age cohorts in 2016, and comparing them with the most recent Census figures, Innisfil shows more growth in the groups that related to young families (children, young and mid working primes). These groups grew by 3,470 people.

³⁶ The US Bureau of Labor Statistics define the prime working-ages as individuals between 25 to 54 years of age

Other trends that will impact the local economy include the notable growth of people in the late career and early retirement group and young senior, which increased by 1,580 people and 1,050 people, respectively. The rapid aging of the population will pose challenges as Innisfil’s labour force hit retirement age, creating the need to replace workers.

Table 2 – Population Growth by Age Group, 2016-2021

Age Groups	Innisfil 2021	Innisfil 2016	Net Change	% Change
Children (0-14)	7,550	6,330	1,220	19%
Youth and Young Adults (15-24)	4,615	4,370	245	6%
Young Working Prime (25-34)	5,265	4,195	1,070	26%
Mid Working Prime (35-44)	5,870	4,690	1,180	25%
Late Working Prime (45-54)	5,825	6,005	-180	-3%
Late Career and Early Retirement (55-64)	6,910	5,330	1,580	30%
Young Seniors (65-74)	4,445	3,395	1,050	31%
Elderly (75+)	2,835	2,255	580	26%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census, 2021 Census

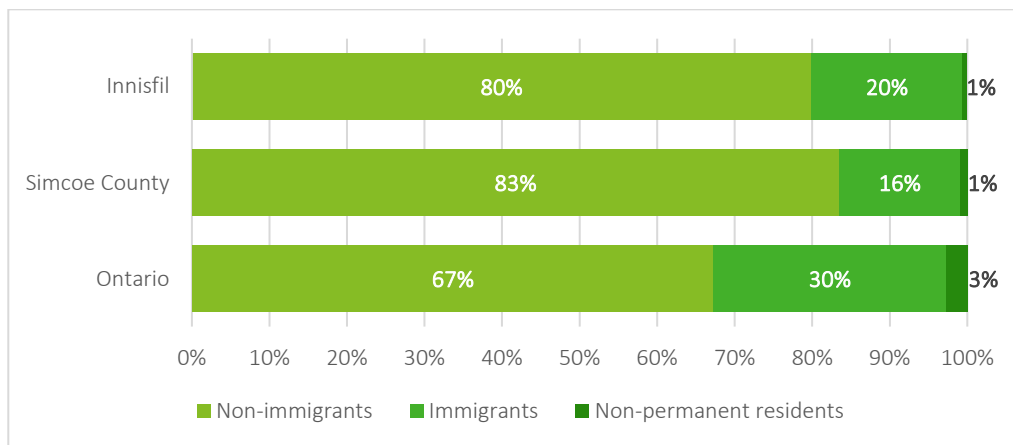
Immigration and Diversity

In 2021, Innisfil had a larger share of non-immigrants³⁷ in its population, compared to the overall province. Neither Innisfil nor Simcoe County had significant levels of non-permanent resident populations, each with less than 1% of the population. Innisfil maintains a larger proportion of immigrants at 20% compared to Simcoe County at 16%. This

³⁷ Non-immigrants: refer to persons who are Canadian citizens by birth.

may suggest that Innisfil has difficulty attracting international migrants. In fact, most of the immigrants to Innisfil (32%) landed in Canada before 1980. Meanwhile, only 15% arrived between 2011 to 2021. This trend may present a future challenge for the town as immigrants are a good source of both skilled and unskilled labour and would be able to support the replacement of worker entering retirement age.

Figure 2 – Immigration Status, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

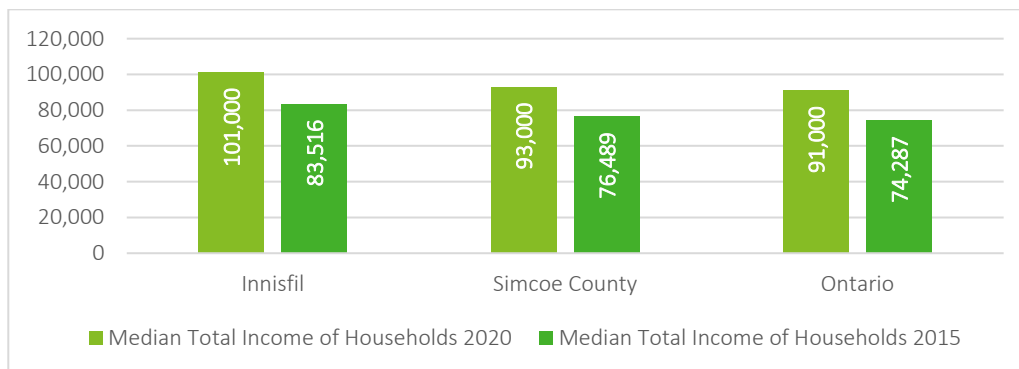
When it comes to diversity in Innisfil, approximately 1,115 individuals reported indigenous identity; this represented 3% of the town’s population. The share of indigenous people in Innisfil is lower than in Simcoe County at 5%, but like Ontario also at 3%. Most of the people reporting Indigenous identity are First Nations (64%), followed by Métis (35%).

Visible minorities represented 15% of Innisfil’s population; most of these were Black (23%) followed by South Asian (19%) and Latin American (18%). Overall, Innisfil is more ethnically diverse compared to Simcoe County at 12%, but significantly less diverse than Ontario with a share of 34% of the province’s population identifying as a visible minority.

Income

According to the 2021 Census, in 2015 and 2020, Innisfil had a higher median household income compared to Simcoe County and Ontario. The median household income growth experience by the town between 2015 and 2020 surpassed both comparators at \$17,484 (compared to Simcoe County at \$16,511, and Ontario at \$16,713).

Figure 3 – Median Household Income (\$), 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census, 2021 Census

Definitions for income groups diverge from source to source, for this analysis, estimates have been calculated using definitions from various sources including Statistics Canada³⁸ and Money Genius³⁹. From this data the following income groups are identified:

- Low-Income Households – below \$50,000
- Medium-Low Income Households – \$50,000 to \$69,999
- Middle Class Households – \$70,000 to \$99,999
- Upper Middle Class – \$100,000 to \$199,999
- High Income Households – \$200,000 and over

³⁸ Statistics Canada, Table 11-10-0241-01 Low-income cut-offs (LICOs) before and after tax by community size and family size, in current dollars

³⁹ Money Genius, What Is Middle Class Income in Canada? Looking At the Numbers and Beyond

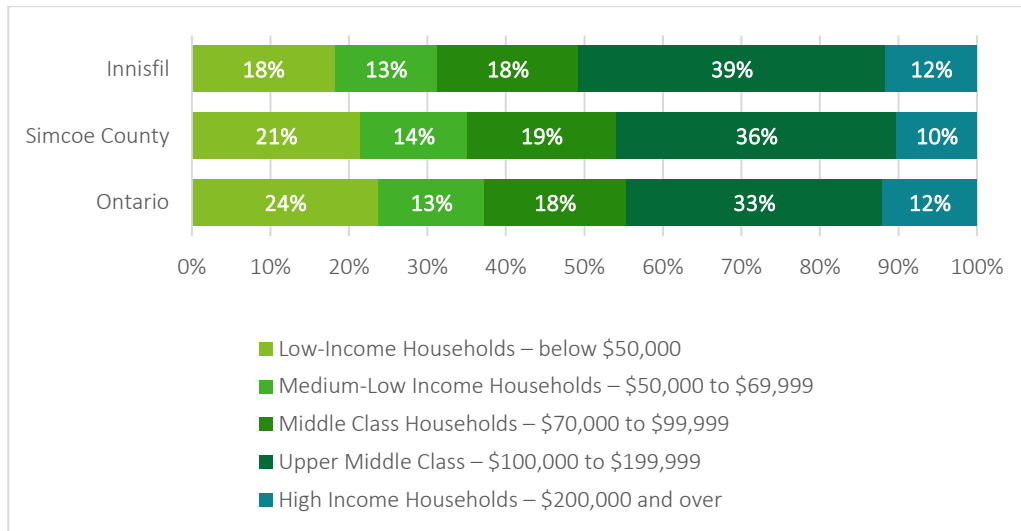
According to this definition, approximately 12% of households in Innisfil were high-income earners, the same as the province at 12%, and higher than Simcoe County at 10%. It is understood that higher levels of income translate into more disposable income. When people and households have more money to save or spend, this can increase local goods and services consumption and boost consumer buying power.

On the other hand, 18% of households in Innisfil received incomes below \$50,000, making them low-income households under this definition. While this may not be below the Federal Low-Income Cut-Off⁴⁰, it nevertheless has implications for the ability of these households to access services and resources.

Specifically, low-income households may face greater challenges in accessing services and resources compared to higher-income households.

⁴⁰ The Low Income Cut-Off ((LICOs) for a family of four in a community with a population 30,000 to 99,999 was estimated at \$36,005 in 2021. Statistics Canada, Table 11-10-0241-01

Figure 4 – Household Total Income Groups in 2020 for Private Households (%), 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

Educational Attainment

The educational profile of a community reveals its ability to adequately staff existing and new businesses. According to 2021 Census estimates, Innisfil had a lower proportion of the labour force with some form of university education compared to that of Simcoe County, and Ontario. Innisfil has a higher proportion of its population with an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma and college, CEFEP or other non-university certificate compared to the broader geographies. These education credentials are essential for attracting companies in goods-producing areas, including manufacturing and construction.

Table 6 – Educational Attainment (Population Aged 15 Years and Over), 2021

Educational Attainment	Innisfil	Simcoe County	Ontario
No certificate, diploma or degree	18%	17%	15%
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	32%	32%	27%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	8%	7%	5%
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	24%	25%	20%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	2%	2%	2%
Bachelor's degree or higher	16%	19%	30%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

In 2021, Innisfil had a higher proportion of its workforce with a post-secondary degree in areas such as architecture, engineering and related technologies (12%), business, management and public administration (10%) and health and related services (7%). These were also the major fields of study among all comparators.

Table 7 – Major Field of Study, 2021

CIP	Innisfil	Simcoe County	Ontario
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	50%	48%	42%
Architecture, engineering and related trades	12%	11%	11%
Business, management and public administration	10%	10%	12%
Health and related fields	7%	9%	8%
Social and behavioural sciences and law	6%	7%	8%
Personal, protective and transportation services	4%	4%	3%
Education	2%	3%	3%
Humanities	2%	2%	3%
Visual and performing arts and communications technologies	2%	2%	2%
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	2%	2%	3%
Physical and life sciences and technologies	1%	1%	3%
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	1%	1%	1%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

Dwellings

As per the 2021 Census, Innisfil had approximately 15,715 occupied private dwellings. As shown in the figure below, the town’s existing housing stock is comprised 90% of single-detached dwelling (i.e., low-density units). Innisfil’s high-density buildings (apartments, row houses, movable

dwellings) represented 9% of the town’s dwellings. It is understood that a wide variety of housing types is needed to support a younger cohort, newcomers, single households and seniors. This will, in turn, attract and encourage residents to live, work and retire in the town.

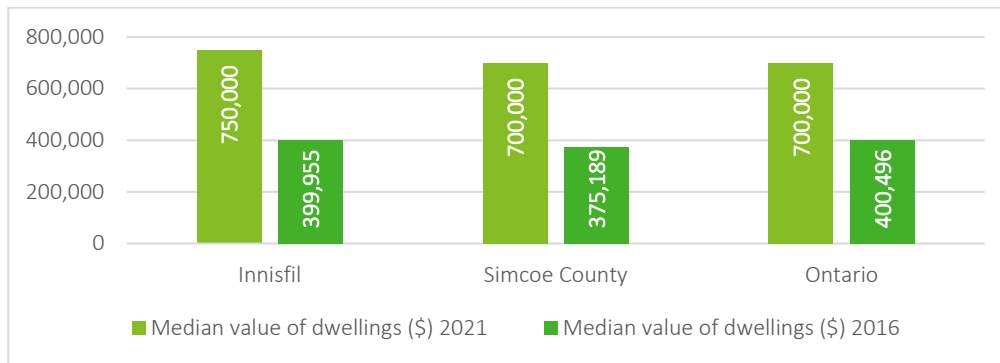
Table 8 – Occupied Private Dwelling by Type, 2021

Type of Dwelling	Innisfil	Simcoe County	Ontario
Single-detached house	90%	73%	54%
Semi-detached house	1%	4%	6%
Row house	4%	7%	9%
Apartment or flat in a duplex	2%	4%	3%
Apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys	1%	8%	10%
Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys	1%	3%	18%
Other single-attached house	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Movable dwelling	0.03%	0.4%	0.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

In terms of housing cost, the median value of dwellings in Innisfil was estimated at \$750,000 in 2021; \$350,000 higher than in 2016, representing an 88% increase. This increase was higher than those experienced by Simcoe County (+\$324,811 or 87% increase) and the province (+\$299,504 or 75% increase).

Figure 5 – Median Value of Dwellings (\$), 2016-2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census, 2021 Census

According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Innisfil saw 2,185 dwelling starts between 2018 and 2022. Most of the housing starts were single-detached units (1,378 starts), followed by apartments (486 starts). Innisfil saw a decrease in new starts in 2019. Construction of new housing increased 126% between 2019 and 2020, and 140% between 2020 and 2021. By 2022, new starts decreased by 7%. Overall, 75 starts corresponded to rental housing purposes; representing only 3% the housing starts during the last 5 years.

Table 9 – Historical Starts by Dwelling Type, 2018 to 2022

Year	Single	Semi-detached	Row	Apartment	All
2018	353	2	156	249	760
2019	100	0	0	4	104
2020	213	2	18	2	235
2021	263	2	76	223	564
2022	449	0	65	8	522

Source: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Key Takeaways

- Innisfil has experienced significant growth during the last decade with over 10,000 new residents since 2011, a 32% increase. The growth rate has surpassed those of the broader Simcoe County and Ontario. Innisfil's growth has been led by intraprovincial migration from people leaving larger urban centres. Innisfil has an important share of young families including children and young and mid working prime ages.
- The majority of the housing stock in Innisfil is single-detached and single-family housing and the most recent housing starts have been single-detached housing. This style of development has broader impacts on other services. For example, this decreases the ability to provide efficient public transportation options, while also increasing the costs of municipal servicing. A wide variety of housing options are also needed to attract more residents to the area with high-density housing and rental options being particularly important for the young workforce.
- Innisfil has a larger share of its population reporting an apprenticeship certificate. These types of skills are essential for goods-producing industries including manufacturing and construction.
- Innisfil recorded a larger median household income compared to Simcoe County and Ontario, the town also recorded a larger share of upper-middle-class and high-income households compared to the broader geographies. High incomes traditionally translate into a higher disposable income and more spending in local businesses.

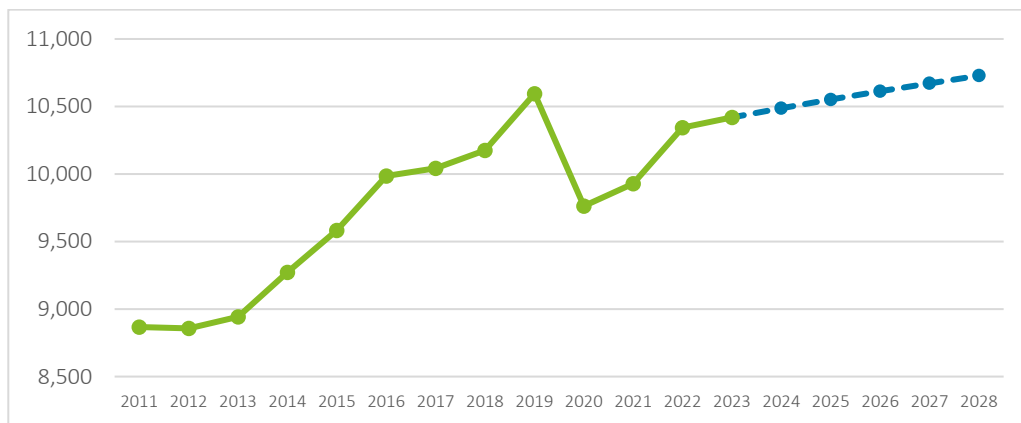
Employment Characteristics

Historical and Projected Growth

By 2019, the number of jobs in the area reached 10,594, with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, local jobs suffered a decline of 8%, which was slightly higher than in Simcoe County and Ontario, both at -7%. In subsequent years, employment in Innisfil showed signs of recovery, adding 166 jobs by 2021 and 414 additional jobs by 2022 (compared to 2020).

In 2023, employment in Innisfil was estimated at 10,419 jobs, an additional 656 jobs from 2020. This trend is expected to continue over the upcoming years. According to Lightcast projections, employment in Innisfil will add 309 jobs by 2028, representing a 3% growth, or an average annual growing rate of 0.6%. This growing rate will be slightly lower than in Simcoe County, which is expected to grow by 4% during the same period.

Figure 63 – Employment in Innisfil, 2011-2028



Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3 | blue line represents projected job growth

Employment by Industry Sector

The service industries represent 77% of Innisfil’s economy (8,011 jobs). The goods-producing sectors, which tend to be export based industries, represent 23% of Innisfil’s jobs (2,409 jobs). In 2023, the largest industry sectors by employment in Innisfil were retail trade (1,840 jobs, 18% of jobs), construction (1,672/16%), accommodation and food services (876/8%) and wholesale trade (792/8%). Innisfil has a significantly larger share of jobs in retail trade and construction compared to Simcoe County and Ontario.

The 2021 Census estimated that 4,380 people worked from home during the Census period, most of these were women (2,580 people or 59% of all people working from home in Innisfil). Residents who work remotely continue to make a big impact on Innisfil’s economy. This group is typically high-skilled, earn high wages and spend a lot of time and money in the community.

Table 10 – Employment by Industry Sector (2-Digit NAICS), 2023

NAICS	Description	Innisfil	Simcoe County	Ontario
	Total	10,419	226,201	7,938,460
44-45	Retail trade	1,840	28,511	800,492
23	Construction*	1,672	19,150	540,771
72	Accommodation and food services	876	17,697	470,983
41	Wholesale trade	792	9,677	383,714
61	Educational services	751	13,904	561,797
62	Health care and social assistance	581	29,299	918,174

NAICS	Description	Innisfil	Simcoe County	Ontario
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	547	12,554	682,879
31-33	Manufacturing*	468	22,336	702,899
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	438	6,739	381,799
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	413	5,084	139,575
56	Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	412	14,911	452,389
91	Public administration	409	15,385	481,306
81	Other services (except public administration)	333	10,520	314,765
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	214	4,105	184,857
X0	Unclassified	152	3,547	123,712
51	Information and cultural industries	148	2,726	174,575
22	Utilities*	131	1,376	51,104
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting*	122	2,521	80,578

NAICS	Description	Innisfil	Simcoe County	Ontario
52	Finance and insurance	105	5,179	413,983
21	Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction*	16	535	29,264
55	Management of companies and enterprises	0	445	48,848

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3 | *Goods-producing industries

Looking forward to 2028, and compared to 2023, the industries that are projected to add more jobs to the Innisfil’s economy are construction (+56 jobs), accommodation and food services (+51) and health care and social assistance (+47). During this time, some industries will experience some declines, this will be the case of workers in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; public administration; administrative and support, waste management and remediation services; and mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction.

Table 11 – Employment Change by Industry Sector (2-Digit NAICS), 2023-2028

NAICS	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023-2028 Change	2023-2028 % Change
	Total	10,419	10,728	309	3%
44-45	Retail trade	1,840	1,856	16	1%
23	Construction	1,672	1,728	56	3%
72	Accommodation and food services	876	927	51	6%
41	Wholesale trade	792	805	13	2%
61	Educational services	751	785	34	5%
62	Health care and social assistance	581	628	47	8%
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	547	575	28	5%
31-33	Manufacturing	468	494	26	6%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	438	444	6	1%
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	413	446	33	8%

NAICS	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023- 2028 Change	2023- 2028 % Change
56	Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	412	403	-9	-2%
91	Public administration	409	398	-11	-3%
81	Other services (except public administration)	333	335	2	1%
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	214	224	10	5%
X0	Unclassified	152	159	7	5%
51	Information and cultural industries	148	159	11	7%
22	Utilities	131	135	4	3%
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	122	101	-21	-17%
52	Finance and insurance	105	111	6	6%
21	Mining, quarrying	16	15	-1	-6%

NAICS	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023- 2028 Change	2023- 2028 % Change
	and oil and gas extraction				
55	Management of companies and enterprises	0	0	0	0%

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3

A deeper analysis shows that the largest industry subsectors (4-digit NAICS) in Innisfil are full and limited-service eating places (796 jobs). This subsector is also expected to add the largest number of jobs in Innisfil by 2028 (+55 jobs). Other subsectors expected to add the largest number of jobs in the next five years include other amusement and recreation industries (+31 jobs) and residential building construction (+23). Sectors of Innisfil’s economy that are projected to experience job declines include clothing stores (-15), local, municipal and regional public administration (-11) and foundation, structure and building exterior contractors (-5).

Table 12 – Top Industry Subsectors (4-Digit NAICS) by Employment, Innisfil, 2021-2028

NAICS	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023- 2028 Change	2023- 2028 % Change
7225	Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places	796	851	55	7%
6111	Elementary and secondary schools	533	551	18	3%
2361	Residential building construction	483	509	26	5%
2381	Foundation, structure and building exterior contractors	441	436	-5	-1%
9130	Local, municipal and regional public administration	379	368	-11	-3%
4451	Grocery stores	375	401	26	7%
2383	Building finishing contractors	328	348	20	6%
4481	Clothing stores	283	268	-15	-5%

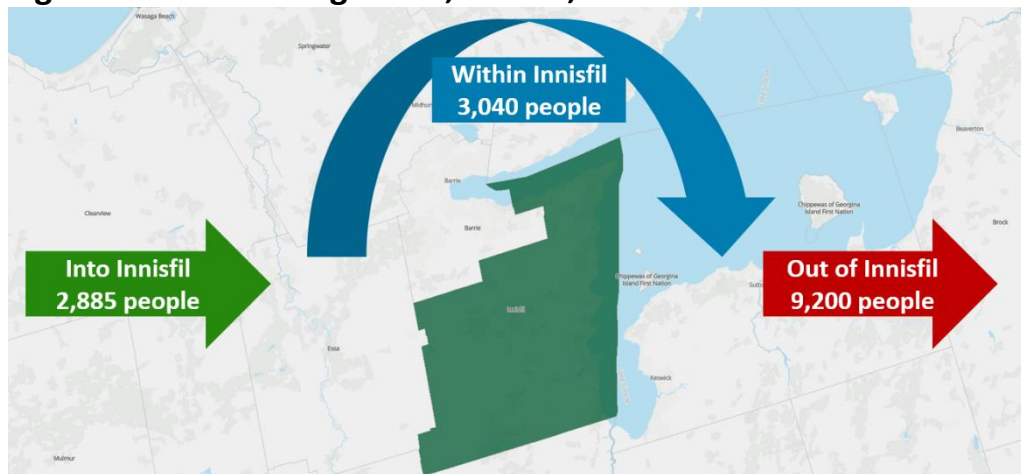
NAICS	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023-2028 Change	2023-2028 % Change
7139	Other amusement and recreation industries	246	277	31	13%
2382	Building equipment contractors	232	243	11	5%
6116	Other schools and instruction	150	165	15	10%

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3

Commuting Patterns in Innisfil

Innisfil is a net exporter of workers, 9,200 people (45%) of Innisfil’s employed labour force leave the town for work on a daily basis and approximately 3,040 people live and work in the town. Another 2,885 people come from other communities to work in Innisfil. This means a total net outflow of 6,315 workers. Most of these out-commuters leave the town to work in manufacturing and health care and social assistance.

Figure 7 – Commuting Flows, Innisfil, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

Flexible Work Arrangements are Changing the Commuting Landscape in Innisfil

Compared to 2016, the number of people leaving Innisfil to work fell by 3,045 people (12,245 people commuted out of Innisfil in 2016), which represents a 25% reduction in people leaving the town for work. The largest drop in car commuting was in May 2021, compared with five years earlier, occurred amongst Canadians working in public administration (-235,000 people, or -28.2%); finance and insurance (-224,000/-47.8%); professional, scientific and technical services (-224,000/-32.1%); and educational services (-216,000/-22.0%). This mirrors an increase in working at home among people in these industries, as it was possible to do at least some work from home in most cases.

Most of the people commuting out of Innisfil travel to Barrie as a main destination (2,745 people or 30% of outbound commuters), followed by Toronto (1,135/12%). In contrast, most of the workers coming to Innisfil for work have Barrie as their place of residence (1,230/43% of inbound commuters) followed by Essa (325/11%). For Innisfil, from

2016 to 2021, there was a decrease in the number of people commuting out to work in every industry sector except for health care and social assistance. The most significant changes were seen in manufacturing (-415 people), retail trade (-395), professional, scientific and technical services (-330), educational services (-300) and finance and insurance (-300). This observation may indicate a rise in remote work among individuals in these industries, as most job functions could be performed from home, at least to some extent. While flexible work arrangements cannot be solely credited for these reductions, it's worth noting that PSTS and finance and insurance are among the industries that offer the most remote work opportunities.⁴¹

Table 13: Out Commuting by Industry Sector (2-Digit NAICS), Innisfil, 2016-2021

Industry Sector	Out commuting 2021	Out Commuting 2016	Net (+/-)	% Change
Total - Industry	9,200	12,245	-3,045	-25%
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	75	80	-5	-6%
21 Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	0	30	-30	-100%
22 Utilities	40	120	-80	-67%
23 Construction	725	905	-180	-20%
31-33 Manufacturing	1,680	2,095	-415	-20%
41 Wholesale trade	450	600	-150	-25%
44-45 Retail trade	1,225	1,620	-395	-24%

⁴¹ <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/remote-work-statistics/>

Industry Sector	Out commuting 2021	Out Commuting 2016	Net (+/-)	% Change
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	560	660	-100	-15%
51 Information and cultural industries	70	245	-175	-71%
52 Finance and insurance	150	450	-300	-67%
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	85	200	-115	-58%
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	220	550	-330	-60%
55 Management of companies and enterprises	0	30	-30	-100%
56 Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	320	590	-270	-46%
61 Educational services	460	760	-300	-39%
62 Health care and social assistance	1,395	1,345	50	4%
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	35	230	-195	-85%
72 Accommodation and food services	345	440	-95	-22%

Industry Sector	Out commuting 2021	Out Commuting 2016	Net (+/-)	% Change
81 Other services (except public administration)	410	600	-190	-32%
91 Public administration	485	730	-245	-34%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census | 2016 Census

Key Takeaways

- In 2023, Innisfil’s employment was estimated at 10,419 jobs; this represents 5% of Simcoe County’s jobs.
- Employment in the town experienced declines (-8%) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The decline was slightly higher than Simcoe and Ontario (both at -7%). Employment levels, however, have been recovering and are projected to reach pre-pandemic levels by 2026, with continued growth projections of an annual average rate of 0.6%.
- Innisfil is a net exporter of workers. As a result, local jobs have specialized in providing services to the commuting population. The service economy represents 77% of the local jobs and almost a quarter of local jobs are in retail trade and wholesale trade.
- The largest industry sub-sectors by employment in Innisfil are full-service and limited service eating places (796 jobs), elementary and secondary schools (533) and residential building construction (483). The first sector is also projected to experience the largest employment growth, adding 55 jobs by 2028.

Business Environment and Structure

A business characteristics assessment was completed to understand the number and type of businesses in Innisfil using Canadian Business Counts. Specifically, businesses in the town were profiled by total employee number, size of business establishments by employees and businesses by industry.

Business Characteristics in Innisfil

As of June 2022, 4,130 businesses were recorded in Innisfil. The figure below shows the total businesses in the town, the majority of which were 3,021 businesses without employees (i.e., sole proprietorships). 1,109 businesses with employees were recorded and 78% of these businesses employed 1-9 people. As shown in the figure below, the following sectors had the highest proportion of business establishments by June 2022. These include business without employees and businesses with employees.

- Real estate and rental and leasing – 788 businesses (19% of total businesses)
- Construction – 734 businesses (18% of total businesses)
- Professional, scientific and technical services – 354 businesses (9% of total businesses)

Industry sectors with the highest number of businesses without employees in 2022 differ slightly from the highest total business establishment proportions. However, the largest industry sectors were similar to the overall total businesses business counts. The highest sole proprietorships by June 2022 were in:

- Real estate and rental and leasing – 750 businesses (25% of total businesses without employees)
- Construction – 478 businesses (16% of total businesses without employees)

- Professional, scientific and technical services – 267 businesses (9% of total businesses without employees)

The top industry sectors with employees by June 2022 were:

- Construction – 256 businesses (23% of total businesses with employees)
- Retail trade – 151 businesses (14% of total businesses with employees)
- Professional, scientific and technical services – 87 businesses (8% of total businesses with employees)

Most business establishments with employees in Innisfil are small businesses between 1-9 employees (78% of businesses with employees) and 11% employed 10-19 people. It is important to note the low number of medium and large-size firms in the town's economy. Small firms are the major source of new products and ideas, while mid-size and large business are typically more export-oriented and generate higher operating surpluses. A healthy mix of small, medium and large firms ensures that a community can capitalize on innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities and at the same time attract and grow investment. Small businesses are also more susceptible to fluctuations in the economy.

At the provincial and national level, most employment opportunities are created by companies with more than 500 employees, accounting for 48% and 46% respectively. However, in smaller communities like Innisfil, the trend is different. Only 1% of businesses with employees in Innisfil employ more than 100 people, which amounts to only 9 businesses. This underscores the need to attract large employers to the town, as they can serve as a significant source of job creation, tax revenue and improved work benefits.

Table 14 – Canadian Business Counts, Innisfil, June 2022

Description	1 to 9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100	W/O*	Total
Total	869	123	84	24	9	3,021	4,130
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	20	4	1	0	0	112	137
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Utilities	0	0	0	1	0	7	8
Construction	221	22	9	3	1	478	734
Wholesale trade	25	6	8	1	0	52	92
Information and cultural industries	5	0	1	0	0	21	27
Finance and insurance	15	3	3	0	0	141	162
Real estate and rental and leasing	37	0	0	0	1	750	788
Professional, scientific and technical services	83	3	1	0	0	267	354
Management of companies and enterprises	1	2	0	0	0	21	24
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	57	7	6	1	0	141	212
Educational services	6	2	2	0	0	24	34
Health care and social assistance	50	2	6	1	0	95	154

Description	1 to 9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100	W/O*	Total
Arts, entertainment and recreation	15	5	3	3	0	31	57
Accommodation and food services	32	14	13	1	0	33	93
Other services (except public administration)	74	5	2	0	0	152	233
Public administration	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Manufacturing	15	6	2	3	1	50	77
Retail trade	76	40	23	10	2	128	279
Transportation and warehousing	77	0	4	0	2	214	297
Unclassified	60	2	0	0	0	301	363

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3 Using Canadian Business Counts

*W/O: Businesses Without Employees

Business Clusters in Innisfil

Innisfil’s industries were benchmarked against the Simcoe County and Ontario at the 2-digit industry sector levels to determine the business concentration. Key insights are described below:

- As a factor of Simcoe County, Innisfil has a high concentration of businesses in the construction sector (LQ 1.31), transportation and warehousing (LQ 1.53) and public administration (LQ 1.26).
- As a factor of the province, Innisfil has a high concentration of businesses in the construction sector (LQ 2.09) and administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (LQ 1.51).

Table 15 – Concentration of Businesses in Innisfil (LQ), June 2022

NAICS	Description	Total	LQ Simcoe	LQ Ontario
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	788	0.94	0.94
23	Construction	734	1.31	2.09
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	354	0.91	0.69
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	297	1.53	1.13
44-45	Retail trade	279	1.01	1.17
81	Other services (except public administration)	233	0.91	1.02
56	Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	212	1.19	1.51
52	Finance and insurance	162	0.91	0.73
62	Health care and social assistance	154	0.58	0.59
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	137	1.05	1.12
72	Accommodation and food services	93	0.78	0.84
41	Wholesale trade	92	0.96	0.96
31-33	Manufacturing	77	0.79	0.86

NAICS	Description	Total	LQ Simcoe	LQ Ontario
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	57	0.97	1.05
61	Educational services	34	0.84	0.81
51	Information and cultural industries	27	0.72	0.50
55	Management of companies and enterprises	24	0.97	0.67
22	Utilities	8	0.87	1.06
91	Public administration	3	1.26	0.90
21	Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	2	0.48	0.54

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3 Using Canadian Business Counts – Adapted by Deloitte LLP

In terms of subsectors, industries with significant numbers of businesses in Innisfil recording higher concentration in these sectors, include:

- **As a factor of Simcoe County:** building finishing contractors; residential building construction; general freight trucking; building equipment contractors; services to buildings and dwellings; and other specialty trade contractors.
- **As a factor of Ontario:** building finishing contractors; residential building construction; building equipment contractors; services to buildings and dwellings; other specialty trade contractors; foundation, structure and building exterior contractors; and automotive repair and maintenance.

Table 16 – Top 20 Business Sectors (4-Digit NAICS) and Concentration (LQ), Innisfil, June 2022

NAICS Code	Description	Total	LQ Simcoe	LQ Ontario
5311	Lessors of real estate	571	0.92	0.89
2383	Building finishing contractors	187	1.35	2.43
2361	Residential building construction	170	1.27	1.73
5312	Offices of real estate agents and brokers	151	1.02	1.14
4841	General freight trucking	147	1.68	1.16
2382	Building equipment contractors	134	1.36	2.31
5617	Services to buildings and dwellings	129	1.34	2.11
1110	Farms	121	1.07	1.12
5239	Other financial investment activities	106	0.97	0.74
5416	Management, scientific and technical consulting services	103	1.03	0.82
2389	Other specialty trade contractors	99	1.43	2.74
2381	Foundation, structure and building exterior contractors	81	1.19	2.33
7225	Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places	75	0.86	0.90
5415	Computer systems design and related services	66	1.10	0.48
6213	Offices of other health practitioners	58	0.65	0.78

NAICS Code	Description	Total	LQ Simcoe	LQ Ontario
8111	Automotive repair and maintenance	54	0.97	1.30

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3 Using Canadian Business Counts – Adapted by Deloitte LLP

Export Industries in Innisfil

Lightcast’s Input-Output Model estimated that by 2020, the exports from Innisfil will total more than \$902.6 million. The largest industries by exports in the town included residential building construction (\$85.8 million or 10% of all exports), followed by local, municipal and regional public administration (\$63.6 million or 7% of all exports) and plastic product manufacturing (\$63.6 million or 7% of all exports)⁴².

Table 17 – Top Export by Industries, Innisfil, 2020

NAICS	Industry	Exports	%
N/A	Total Exports	\$902,610,884	100%
2361	Residential building construction	\$85,852,940	10%
9130	Local, municipal and regional public administration	\$65,676,387	7%
3261	Plastic product manufacturing	\$63,637,631	7%
6111	Elementary and secondary schools	\$56,951,126	6%
4163	Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies merchant wholesalers	\$31,622,934	4%
1110	Farms	\$28,466,798	3%
4151	Motor vehicle merchant wholesalers	\$23,602,337	3%
2381	Foundation, structure and building exterior contractors	\$23,530,885	3%
2211	Electric power generation, transmission and distribution	\$23,177,062	3%

⁴² These values have not been independently verified by Deloitte. Values should be use with caution.

NAICS	Industry	Exports	%
3251	Basic chemical manufacturing	\$19,602,751	2%

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3

Industry Supply Chain in Innisfil

Lightcast’s Input-Output Model estimated that by 2020, the purchases from all industries in Innisfil will total more than \$573.3 million. Most of these purchases, around 71%, were imported purchases (out of Innisfil), which represents more than \$404.8 million dollars leaving the community in terms of the supply chain. Although it is not possible to attract all these industries to Innisfil, there are opportunities to grow sectors that already have some in-region relevance, thus retaining some of the dollars leaving Innisfil. Sectors such as architectural and structural metals manufacturing (50% of in-region purchases) and general freight trucking (38% of in-region purchases) are among the largest in terms of potential in-community purchases retention⁴³.

Table 18 – Top Industry Purchases, All Industries, Innisfil, 2020

NAICS	Purchases from	In-region	% In-region	Imported	% Imported	Total
	Total	\$168,469,078	29%	\$404,852,272	71%	\$573,321,348
5311	Lessors of real estate	\$4,871,964	26%	\$13,897,161	74%	\$18,769,125
5413	Architectural, engineering	\$2,514,735	16%	\$13,750,488	85%	\$16,265,223
3261	Plastic product mfg.	\$15,333,330	98%	\$284,208	2%	\$15,617,537

⁴³ These values have not been independently verified by Deloitte. Values should be use with caution.

NAICS	Purchases from	In-region	% In-region	Imported	% Imported	Total
3241	Petroleum and coal product mfg.	\$1,439,982	9%	\$13,823,888	91%	\$15,263,870
1110	Farms	\$12,745,382	87%	\$1,868,146	13%	\$14,613,527
5221	Depository credit intermediation	\$2,059,868	14%	\$12,460,349	86%	\$14,520,218
3252	Resin, synthetic rubber and artificial and synthetic fibres and filaments mfg.	\$0	0%	\$13,467,095	100%	\$13,467,095
5241	Insurance carriers	\$678,190	6%	\$10,665,600	94%	\$11,343,790
3323	Architectural and structural metals mfg.	\$5,508,109	50%	\$5,506,403	50%	\$11,014,512
4841	General freight trucking	\$4,074,635	38%	\$6,788,718	63%	\$10,863,353

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3

Key Takeaways

- As of June 2022, 4,130 businesses were recorded in Innisfil. Most of these were businesses without employees and small businesses employing 1-9 employees.
- The largest sectors by business counts include real estate and rental and leasing, construction and professional, scientific and technical services. Innisfil also showed a high concentration of businesses, compared to Ontario in construction and administrative and support, waste management and remediation services.
- Exports from Innisfil totalled \$902.6 million in 2020, mostly from residential building construction. Purchases from all industries in Innisfil totalled more than \$573.3 million, most of these purchases were imported (purchased outside of Innisfil).

Emerging Target Sectors

Building on the economic base analysis, this section of the report informs the reader on the emerging and potential target sectors for Innisfil. The analysis takes into consideration the following factors:

- Alignment with provincial and regional markets
- Potential sectors to be attracted to the broader region
- Existing economic drivers, top employers and core businesses
- Current and future growth potential of sectors and sub-sectors
- Differentiators including sector expertise, specialization and new products and approaches

The analysis provided below is the first line of research into Innisfil's target sectors and need to be further tested and refined through sector-based analysis and market positioning. The analysis will also need to be informed by the opinions and thoughts of key businesses and stakeholders within each of the sectors. This will ensure an understanding of where Innisfil sits relative to its surrounding markets and

what differentiates the town from these communities. Once the target sectors are determined, the town can more effectively position itself for investment attraction.

A targeted sector-based approach will ensure a high ROI, alignment with provincial and federal targets, links to research and development/innovations and value-chain growth and economic diversity. A sector-based growth approach would also need to consider supply chain links and similar businesses, the availability of post-secondary programming, talented labour force, well-developed infrastructure including transit and broadband, a favourable business climate and quality of life considerations.

Alignment with Regional Markets and Target Sectors

Over the past several decades, the provincial economic base, as measured by Gross Domestic Product output, has been transitioning from goods-producing sectors (i.e., manufacturing and primary resources) to services-producing sectors. This has been led by strong growth in sectors such as finance and insurance, professional, scientific and technical services and educational services, more commonly described as the knowledge-based and creative economy sectors. This shift is reflected in the province's top sectors for FDI attraction, including software and information technology services, business services, communications, industrial equipment and financial services.

Target sectors are a focus for all communities across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and Ontario. Also, several of these communities also focus on FDI attraction as part of their economic development efforts. The presence of Toronto Global, as an arm's length organization, adds an additional layer of sector-based investment attraction efforts, representing the GTA municipalities internationally.

Simcoe County identified its economic sectors through its 2021-2025 Economic Development Strategy through a location quotient and growth analysis, as well as considering feedback from stakeholder interviews

- **Manufacturing** – This was one of the region’s largest employers in 2018, with 23,259 employees. The strategy identified a need to support the sector in planning for future competitiveness, which includes becoming more equipped to implement innovative processes and technologies and succession planning. Several areas of interest within the manufacturing sector were identified by Simcoe County stakeholders. These included aerospace, automotive, health and wellness, food and beverage and cleantech.
- **Tourism** – Simcoe County defines its tourism sector to include arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food service. As per the strategy, employment in the arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food services sectors totaled 24,980 or 11% of the workforce being employed in a classified industry sector in 2018. Although not all these jobs may have a direct link to tourism, it positions tourism as a significant regional employer. Sub-sectors of interest, identified in the strategy include amusement, gambling and recreation and accommodation services.
- **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services** – While this sector is not currently a top employer, it is highlighted as a potential area of diversification, particularly when it comes to attracting entrepreneurs to the region. With over 10,000 jobs and a location quotient of 0.70, the sector experienced a moderate 11% job growth over the last 5 years. Sub-sectors of interest, identified in the strategy include specialized design services, engineering services and architectural services.
- **Agriculture** – The agricultural sector has a rich history in Simcoe County and remains a sector of focus for several

of the County’s smaller, more rural municipalities. In the past 5 years, the farms sub-sector has lost approximately 23% of its workforce and has a 0.93 location quotient. Stakeholder interviews indicated the biggest opportunity for the growth of the sector linked to value-added production and agri-tourism. Key stakeholders also identified access to internet, agricultural processing and storage facilities as areas hindering growth in the County. Additional concerns included a need for more advocacy and public education regarding conventional agriculture, as well as local food.

Innisfil’s Employment Growth Sectors

Innisfil’s employment growth sectors were determined using the Carvalho classification system. The system is a model for expressing relative growth. There are 12 classifications in the Carvalho classification system, as illustrated below. The classification is based on three indicators: employment specialization ("location quotient"), the "industrial effect" and "regional/local effect" from shift share analysis.

Table 19 – Carvalho Classification System Description

Classification Term	Definition
Driving	Community is highly specialized in this sector, which is growing provincially and growing at an even higher rate locally
Accelerating	Community is neither highly specialized nor under-specialized in this sector, which is growing provincially and growing at an even higher rate locally
Rising	Relatively low proportion of local employment, but will likely increase due to growth in this sector, which is growing provincially and growing at an even higher rate locally
Evolving	High local specialization in a sector which grew provincially at a slower rate than overall growth; local growth exceeded provincial growth in this sector

Classification Term	Definition
Transitional	Average specialization in a sector which grew provincially at a slower rate than overall growth; local growth exceeded provincial growth in this sector
Moderate	Relatively underrepresented in a sector which grew provincially at a slower rate than overall growth; local growth exceeded provincial growth in this sector
Promising	High local specialization in a sector which grew provincially; local growth was slower than provincial growth in this sector
Yielding	Average specialization in a sector which grew provincially; local growth was slower than provincial growth in this sector
Modest	Relatively low specialization in a sector which grew provincially; local growth was slower than provincial growth in this sector
Challenging	Industries have a relatively high concentration of employment in the community, which suggests that they play a prominent role in overall employment in the community and should be monitored carefully
Vulnerable	Industries have an average concentration of employment
Marginal	Industries are under-represented in the community

Source: Emanuel Carvalho

The Carvalho classification system results are illustrated below:

- Arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food services are driving sectors for Innisfil, meaning that the community is highly specialized in this sector. This sector is growing provincially and growing at an even higher rate locally.

- Rising sectors for the town include PSTS and finance and insurance. PSTS is an enabling sector and forms part of the creative economy. The sector supports growth in finance and insurance and information and cultural industries and are central to integrating digital transformation and technology adoption in traditional sectors, including manufacturing and wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing. Similarly, finance and insurance are a key part of the knowledge-based and creative-class economies and can enable core office-based employment and development for the town.
- Construction and utilities are evolving sectors, indicating high local sector specialization. These sectors grew provincially at a slower rate than overall growth and local growth exceeded provincial growth in this sector.

Table 20 – Employment Growth Sectors, Carvalho Classification System

Description	2023 Employment Concentration	Ind. Mix Effect	Competitive Effect	Category
Arts, entertainment and recreation	2.25	0.2	5.3	Driving
Accommodation and food services	1.42	2.3	4.5	Driving
Professional, scientific and technical services	0.61	1.6	0.2	Rising
Finance and insurance	0.19	0.4	0.5	Rising
Construction	2.36	-12.0	12.5	Evolving
Utilities	1.95	-0.4	0.4	Evolving
Educational services	1.02	-0.3	2.8	Transitional
Real estate and rental and leasing	0.88	-0.6	1.9	Transitional
Information and cultural industries	0.65	0.0	2.3	Moderate

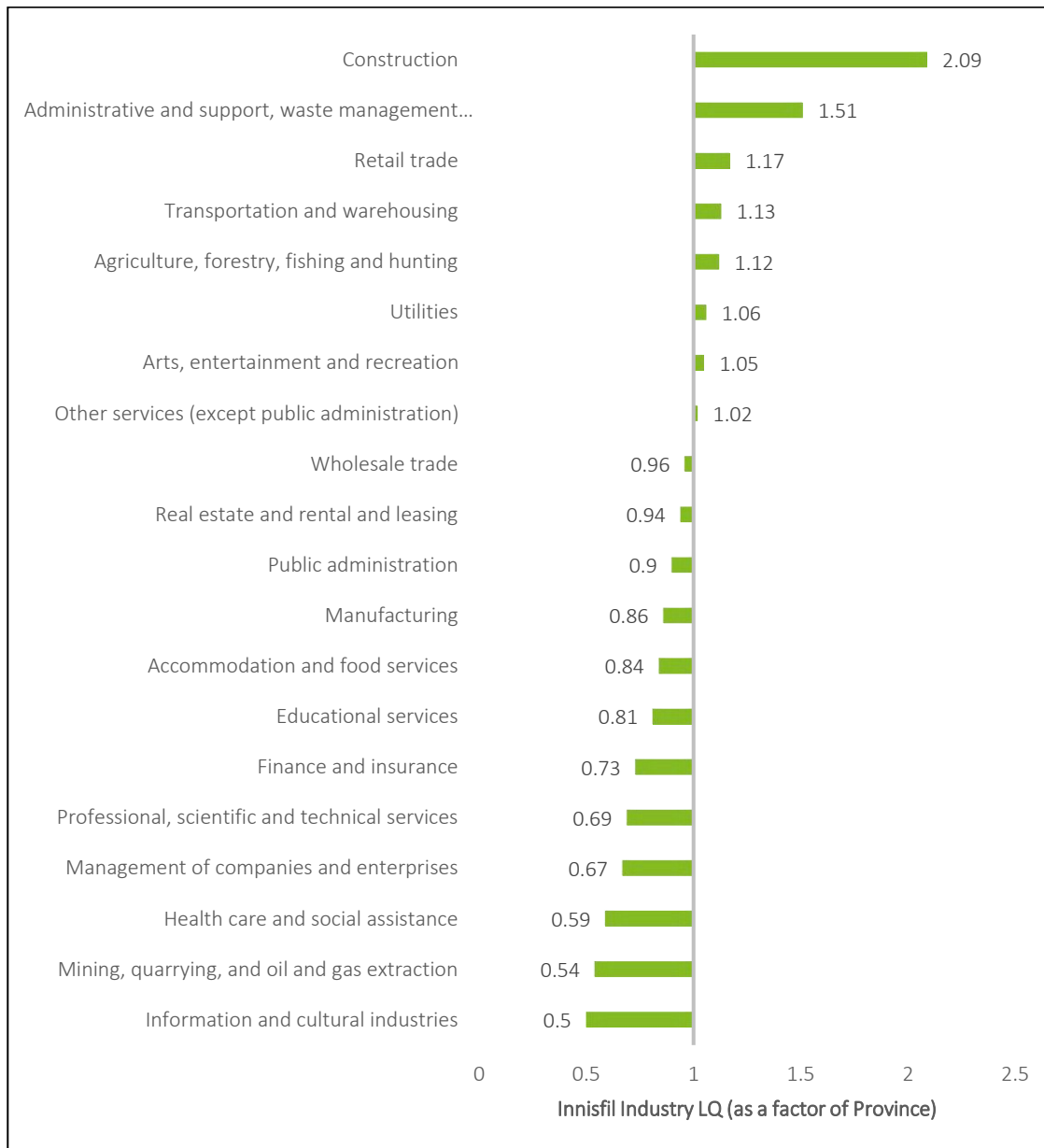
Description	2023 Employment Concentration	Ind. Mix Effect	Competitive Effect	Category
Manufacturing	0.51	-1.3	4.8	Moderate
Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	0.42	0.0	0.1	Moderate
Transportation and warehousing	0.87	0.8	-1.6	Yielding
Health care and social assistance	0.48	6.3	-0.4	Modest
Retail trade	1.75	-6.7	-2.8	Challenging
Wholesale trade	1.57	-1.5	-1.7	Challenging
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1.15	-2.0	-5.0	Vulnerable
Other services (except public administration)	0.81	-1.4	-1.1	Vulnerable
Administrative, waste mgmt. and remediation	0.69	-0.4	-10.0	Marginal
Public administration	0.65	-1.8	-4.8	Marginal

Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3 Using Canadian Business Counts – Adapted by Deloitte LLP

Innisfil’s Industry Clusters

LQs were used to identify and assess the relative strength of industry sectors in Innisfil relative to the Province of Ontario. As illustrated in figures below, Innisfil’s economy is comprised of a diverse mix of concentrated clusters including construction, administrative and support, waste management and remediation services, retail trade, transportation and warehousing and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting.

Figure 84 – Innisfil Industry Clusters, June 2022



Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3 Using Canadian Business Counts – Adapted by Deloitte LLP

Export Sectors

A further consideration in assessing Innisfil's economy is the role and impact of its export-based industries. The latest data (2020) indicated that Innisfil's industries exported \$1.4 billion in goods and services while spending \$1.8 billion on importing goods and services. This suggests that Innisfil is a net importer, indicating that there is a need to build out local and regional supply chains to support existing business offerings.

Manufacturing is the top exporter for the community, representing 25% of all exports at \$345 million. Other major exporters for the town include wholesale trade and construction, each accounting for 9% of total exports.

Figure 9– Innisfil Exports (2020, \$Millions)



Source: Lightcast, Datarun 2022.3

Emerging Economic Drivers for Innisfil

Based on the employment growth trends, industry clusters and export opportunities, Innisfil’s emerging and potential economic drivers include:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Agri-technology/food processing

- Creative industries
- Tourism
- Life sciences
- Clean-tech supply chain

The drivers related to agriculture extend beyond the core activities of farming and ranching. While these businesses are crucial inputs to the sector, the focus of this area as an economic driver lies in value-added agricultural operations. This includes activities such as agri-tourism (e.g., pick-your-own crops, farm experiences) and agri-tech developments, which add significant value to the sector.

The figure below illustrates Innisfil's economic base and sector strengths using four measures: (a): employment growth sectors identified through the Carvalho classification system, (b): anticipated job changes by industry sector, (c): industry clusters based on Provincial L.Q.s and (d): export-based industries.

Accommodation and food services and arts, entertainment and recreation rank high in all measures, as does PSTS. The unique characteristics of Innisfil present opportunities for agriculture-based tourism, rural revitalization and cultural economy. Remote working is an ongoing trend witnessed on a national scale as people move into small towns from urban cores, particularly because of new hybrid work arrangements after the COVID-19 pandemic. For Innisfil to capitalize on each of these opportunities requires targeted investment in infrastructure, services and amenities. It also requires a strong understanding of international, national and local policies and market trends that impact any given sector and its relation to the local context.

Advanced manufacturing is a key opportunity sector for the town based on export capabilities. More specific opportunities areas include automation and high-value

components and consumer products, including agri-businesses and food processing and supply chain. There are also connections to the construction sector, which is an evolving sector for the town. Sub-sector opportunities could include logistics, light-manufacturing, construction, prefabricated building elements and connections to the real estate sector.

Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services are a concentrated industry cluster for the town and along with utilities, manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, PSTS and education form key inputs to clean technology and related supply chain opportunities. Clean technologies are identified as a 'stretch target' for the community and require specific and targeted efforts to define, support and grow the sector.

While not currently evidenced by data, the life science sector is emerging to be a key strategic differentiator for the town given the planned hospital investment and related spin-off opportunities. The sector is also identified as a current 'stretch target.'

Figure 10 – Determining Innisfil’s Target Sectors

Employment Growth Sectors	Job Change by Industry Sector	Industry Clusters	Export opportunities	Suggested Target Sectors
Accommodation and food services Construction Arts, entertainment and recreation Professional, scientific and technical services Finance and insurance Educational services Real estate and rental and leasing Manufacturing	Construction Accommodation and food services Health care and social assistance Educational services Arts, entertainment and recreation Professional, scientific and technical services Manufacturing	Construction Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services Retail trade Transportation and warehousing Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	Manufacturing Construction Wholesale trade	Advanced manufacturing Agri-technology/food processing Tourism Creative industries Life sciences Clean-tech supply chain

The color codes used above are intended to illustrate the connections between the first four columns and the fifth column. For instance, construction and manufacturing are highlighted in green in the first four columns, as they are linked to advanced manufacturing as a target sector.

Local Impacts of Market Trends on Target Sectors

Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing will continue to be a focus sector for Ontario. The province is positioning itself as a leader in auto manufacturing, specifically, electric vehicle manufacturing.⁴⁴ The manufacturing sector across the GTHA is continuing to evolve with a focus on being more capital and technology-intensive and automated. Furthermore, the highly competitive nature of the sector requires production to be increasingly cost-effective and value-added.

Manufacturing is a significant export sector for Innisfil, accounting for over 25% of total exports. The sector remains a top employer with top employing sub-sectors including plastics and rubber products manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing and machinery manufacturing. The town is home to major employers including Tempo Flexible Packaging, Tarpin Lumber and Road Warrior.

Opportunity areas for Innisfil within advanced manufacturing include a focus on lean or light manufacturing. Light industrial is described as any production that can be fulfilled in smaller facilities/factories or smaller land parcels; uses lighter equipment and has lower capital intensity than heavy industry processes. They are often integrated operations and on-site manufacturing in a 'campus-style' setting. Light industrial spaces are used for assembly, disassembly, fabricating, finishing, manufacturing, packaging and repairing of several types of materials. Enabling connections within the construction sector also presents an opportunity for Innisfil through the manufacturing of prefabricated building elements including homes. As construction costs continue to

⁴⁴ Conference Board of Canada. December 2022. Turbulence Ahead. Provincial Three-Year Outlook.

increase, manufacturers are exploring modern technologies and processes to allow for ‘built-to specification’ designs. These cost-efficient processes further lead to opportunities for just-in-time delivery of building components to construction sites, furthering the position of the transportation and warehousing sector as a critical enabler.⁴⁵

To ensure continued economic competitiveness of the sector, Innisfil needs an ecosystem that encourages investing in digital technologies, increasing supply network visibility and greater workforce agility. Any investment in technology-based manufacturing should also account for its impact on the workforce. Automation has decreased the demand for highly skilled labour, with small communities at risk of not reabsorbing the displaced labour force.⁴⁶ Also, businesses need to be aware of their current digital maturity level, particularly related to current and future competitiveness. The prevalence of smaller firms in the sector and lack of funding sources has prevented substantial investment requirements for advanced processes or even significant pivoting within standard processes. Another consideration is the creation of diverse environments that support a knowledge-based work force. This includes transit infrastructure, eco-industrial design principles and employment-supportive uses. These trends may put pressure on more rural industrial parks and the Innisfil Heights Employment Area to improve service offerings to attract future investment.

Agri-technology/food processing

The industries used to define the sector include farms; forestry and logging, fishing, hunting and trapping; support activities for agriculture and forestry; food manufacturing; and beverage manufacturing. As of 2023, the sector’s

⁴⁵ https://www.investopedia.com/terms/h/heavy_industry.asp

⁴⁶ Ambrogio, G., Filice, L., Longo, F., & Padovano, A. (2022). Workforce and supply chain disruption as a digital and technological innovation opportunity for resilient manufacturing systems in the COVID-19 pandemic. *Computers & industrial engineering*, 169, 108158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cie.2022.108158>

employment in Innisfil is estimated at 161 jobs, with small employment growth expected in food manufacturing.

The development of the agri-business and food processing sectors is linked to the agri-tourism sector, as farms that provide experiences directly to customers would participate in areas such as farming, tourism and if any by-product is sold, food production. According to the 2021 Census of Agriculture, Innisfil had 170 farms with most being 10 to 130 acres in size (87 farms).

In terms of farm capital, most of the farms (103) recorded capital of more than \$2 million. 35 farms offered direct sales of agricultural products to consumers including unprocessed agricultural products (34 farms), value-added products (5 farms) and on-site farm stores, stands, kiosks, u-pick or farm gate sales (26 farms).

For the development of this sector, priority should be given to supporting local farms with succession planning, as per the Census of Agriculture, 102 farms have no succession plan established and only 25 have a written succession plan. Strengths in primary agriculture and agribusiness sectors present opportunities to enable innovations and to adopt technologies in farming practices including precision farming, variable rate technology in crops, biotech enhanced crops, robotics and automation.

Tourism

Innisfil's location along Lake Simcoe makes the town an important destination of GTA residents. Innisfil's webpage highlights a number of environmental assets including 258 km of trails, 47 km of shoreline, 399 acres of parks and 7 marinas. Innisfil also benefits from a regional agriculture landscape that include more than 270 u-pick farms. In addition, Innisfil tourism infrastructure includes Georgian

Downs, Gateway Casino, the 400 Market, Sunset Speedway, Cookstown Heritage District and Friday Harbour Resort.

According to the Experience Simcoe County Domestic Tourism Snapshot, in 2019 the region received 9 million visitors, generating \$1 billion in local spending. Among the many activities people engaged in while visiting, the most popular included outdoor activities, visiting a beach, shopping, hiking, fishing and cultural performances.⁴⁷

The demand for value-added agricultural products such as artisan food, craft brewery and wineries, organic produce and other organic products is growing. However, niche markets such as these face challenges that include lack of funding, policy regulations and food safety guidelines and support programs that enable farmers to develop and market products.⁴⁸

Exploring the possibility for value-added businesses will promote local farms and create businesses for the local community. Visitors are increasingly seeking authentic tourism experiences. Therefore, destination marketing is critical in this regard, as it will attract the desired target market segments. These could include the promotion of core community assets, unique rural markets, restaurants, entertainment and destination retail. There is also a need for improved pedestrian and cycle-way linkages and visitor-friendly navigation options, partnerships with key regional attractions as well as transportation that connects the different communities.⁴⁹

Tourism is also an important tool for attracting potential new residents. Investments in rural businesses, main street retail and a diversity of housing options contribute to the

⁴⁷ Experience Simcoe County. Domestic Tourism Snapshot, 2019

⁴⁸ Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance (2015), Analysis of Food and Farming Assets in the Golden Horseshoe

⁴⁹ Thompson, M, (2020), Farmers' markets and tourism: Identifying tensions that arise from balancing dual roles as community events and tourist attractions, Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management,

strengthening of the rural value proposition. Encouraging these investments would support the development of rural employment opportunities, alternatives to single detached housing and enhanced tourism assets. An innovative Community Improvement Plan (CIP) could stimulate investment activity in the rural areas by enabling investments and improvements to a specific program area. Improvements made under a CIP are primarily to the physical and built environment and result in rehabilitation of existing buildings or redevelopment of run-down and underutilized properties. In addition to main street commercial and residential developments, CIPs can also be utilized to encourage market farming, value-added agriculture and agri-tourism investments. The implementation of an agri-business or tourism CIP could encourage the redevelopment of underutilized farm outbuildings into small scale production, farm markets or tourism spaces such as event venues or on-farm recreation.

Creative Industries

The creative industries refer to a range of industry and economic activities related to the generation or development of knowledge and information. The creative industries are a sub-sector of the broader knowledge-based economy and often focus on culture and social development as tactics to foster job growth in a community. Most of these businesses and professionals fall under two industry categories: information and cultural industries and professional, scientific and professional services.

Sub-sectors of the creative industries include digital industries (ex. film, media, gaming), design industries (ex. graphics, fashion, interior, architecture), heritage-focused industries (ex. museums, galleries), arts-based industries (ex. visual arts, performing arts) and music industries (ex. sound production, broadcasting).

Globally, there is a growing trend towards the emergence of the creative industries, as the next large contributor to economic growth and wealth. This is driven by digital technologies. Digital media plays a significant role in the creative industries, promoting the mutual combination of communications; broadcasting; computer information systems; and digital interactive media consolidation and industry convergence.⁵⁰ The digital economy is accelerating and driven by five technologies, virtual and augmented reality, artificial intelligence, 5G mobile, 3D printing and blockchain. As identified in the 2021 Information and Communications Technology Council Outlook, virtual and augmented reality will be one of the five key technologies driving innovation in Canada. Currently there are limited assets in these areas outside DMZ Innisfil and this may impact the capacity of Innisfil to capitalize in this area.

As per the Measuring Success Report, Ontario's Interactive Digital Media companies are expected to see substantial growth over the coming years due to the advancements in businesses in this space. In 2017, the sector generated \$1.66 billion of revenue 2017 with an implied profit margin of 31%.⁵¹

Currently, the size of these sectors in Innisfil is relatively small. Nonetheless, these sectors are projected to grow in the next five years, which will open opportunities for a continued focus. Workers in this sector can typically take their trade with them to a community of their choice. The research shows that among the countless reasons this talent might locate somewhere, these professionals seek places that offer high quality of life and quality of place. This trend will grow due to the changes that the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed on those sectors. Thus, understanding how to

⁵⁰ Deloitte. The Future of the Creative Economy. June 2021

⁵¹ Interactive Ontario, Measuring Success; the Impact of the Interactive Digital Media Sector in Ontario. May 2019

grow professional, scientific and technical services and information and cultural industries in any community is best started through the lens of talent attraction best practices.

Innisfil could capitalize on this group of professionals. The area enjoys a charming rural environment within a short distance from an urban centre like Barrie and the GTA. Nonetheless, Innisfil faces the challenge of a small housing stock. Rental vacancy rates in the Barrie CMA area are as low as 3.2% and new housing starts in the town are showing little diversity, most being single detached units.

Growing the creative economy also requires a focus on nurturing and building creative capacity and capability through support programs and initiatives. This could include working with small business partners and providing specialized entrepreneurship support and business skill development for the creative industries. Creative industries entrepreneurs require programming and support on sales development, business-to-business networking and business matching and addressing skill and business literacy needs.

Creative industry workers, often have the flexibility to work online or remotely. This is because much of their work can be done digitally, using software and tools that are accessible from anywhere with an internet connection. In recent years, there has been a trend towards remote work, especially in the creative sector. This has been driven by advances in technology, which have made it easier than ever for workers to collaborate and communicate from different locations. However, it's important to note that not all creative industry jobs can be done entirely online or remotely. For example, actors, musicians and dancers typically need to be physically present for rehearsals and performances. Similarly, some creative roles, such as set

designers and prop makers, may require working on-site to create physical objects and installations.⁵²

Among different sectors, the creative industries will be also impacted by Artificial Intelligence (AI) advancements. The impact of AI on the digital economy is significant and far-reaching. While it may lead to the displacement of certain jobs, it also has the potential to create new sources of employment. A report by the World Economic Forum suggests that AI could displace 85 million jobs worldwide by 2022 but could also create 97 million new jobs. The report notes that the nature of work will change because of AI, with a greater emphasis on skills such as creativity, problem-solving and critical thinking.⁵³

Life Sciences

Canada is home to North America's second largest life sciences corridor and boasts significant strengths in research and development, pharmaceuticals and medical devices. As per the Trade Commissioner Service, Canada is the 10th largest market for pharmaceutical sales and 8th for medical technology devices. The sector covers several large industries including pharmaceuticals and biotech, medical technologies and digital health, natural health products, medical cannabis, health care services and animal health.⁵⁴ These areas have a large private investment potential with significant opportunities to access provincial and federal support.

The nature of the sector and Ontario's role as the public provider of health care requires that services meet the quality-of-life amenities that the workforce and residents require. As per the Canadian Institute for Health

⁵² Business News Daily, Communication Technology and Inclusion Will Shape the Future of Remote Work.

⁵³ World Economic Forum, Recession and Automation Changes Our Future of Work, But There are Jobs Coming. October 2020

⁵⁴ <https://www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/sectors-secteurs/life-sciences-sciences-de-la-vie.aspx?lang=eng>

Information, Canada spent \$305 billion on health care in 2020, which equates to \$8,021 per person.⁵⁵ Expenditure on health care in Canada is expected to reach \$331 billion in total or \$8,563 per person in 2022.⁵⁶ This requires a need for hospitals, physicians and drugs, which make up the largest share of health care spending in Canada.⁵⁷

Innisfil is well-positioned to explore opportunity areas within this sector, particularly with the RVH South Campus investment. This 83-acre site at Yonge Street and Innisfil Beach Road, is slated to accommodate three phases of expansion. The long-term vision of the hospital is to be a Health Hub focused on outpatient clinics, with day procedures and an Urgent Care Centre. In 20 years, at maturity, it will be a full-service, acute care hospital with a 24/7 Emergency Department and operating rooms. The hospital is expected to double its workforce with 3,000 additional full-time staff once the South and North Campuses open.

The new hospital is slated to be built just west of the Town's Campus lands, which are already home to the Rizzardo Health & Wellness Centre. Opportunities exist to continue to attract a range of health care related uses that could include a long-term care facility, supportive community housing, research, education and training facilities, community health uses and related medical office space.

Clean Technologies supply chain

While there are no set definitions to accurately describe the clean technologies, Export Development Canada (EDC) defines 'cleantech' as any process, product, or service that reduces environmental impacts. The definition aligns with the definitions used by Statistics Canada. The sector permeates all sectors of the economy where process and

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ <https://www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/sectors-secteurs/life-sciences-sciences-de-la-vie.aspx?lang=eng>.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

product efficiencies can be found, and adverse environmental impacts can be reduced. This applies to sectors as diverse as agriculture, resource extraction, light manufacturing, chemicals and transportation services. As per EDC, clean technologies include environmental protection activities and sustainable resource activities, such as, energy, water, agriculture, forestry and biodiversity, minerals and adapted goods.⁵⁸

Invest Ontario has identified that the province is a leader in cleantech growth, led by expertise in water technology. Other areas of development include solar, hydrogen, biofuels, electric vehicles and smart energy technologies. The world's first all-electric, battery-powered underground mine is in Borden Lake in Northern Ontario and the establishment of the EaRTH District in 2021 are significant strides in clean tech innovation.⁵⁹

The presence of InnPower and over 200 businesses in administrative and support, waste management and remediation services points to opportunities to support clean tech and related supply chains. Like many communities across the province, any investments in the sector need to start with a clear definition of clean technology as many firms in the region who use or support clean technologies may not see themselves in the definition. Strengths in manufacturing, particularly plastic product manufacturing sectors and architectural, engineering and related services, indicate opportunities to growth the clean tech supply chain. There are also opportunities in response to broader provincial market trends to focus on wastewater management, green buildings and energy efficiency. Sustainable resource activities focused on minerals could be

⁵⁸ EDC Economics. Exploring Canada's Cleantech Sector. October 2022

⁵⁹ Invest in Ontario. Cleantech. Retrieved from <<https://www.investontario.ca/cleantech#intro>>

another opportunity area, given Ontario's focus to grow the semiconductor sector.

Findings from Engagement

Engagement Process – Opportunities for Community Input

The internal and external engagement process garnered input from elected officials, Town staff, project Steering Group and Leadership Team, industrial and commercial employers, developers and independent entrepreneurs, regional economic development partners and educational institutions.

Various engagement methods were utilized, including online and telephone surveys for community stakeholders and local businesses, which gained broad-based input from community residents and business owners. Targeted workshops involving Town of Innisfil staff, business representatives and community partners, along with one-on-one interviews, enabled stakeholders to share their ideas and identify what they believe are key priorities for the community.

317 participants offered input through the different engagement activities held during the engagement phase.

Figure 51 – Stakeholder Engagement for the Innisfil Economic Development Strategy



- Two in-person workshops were held with Town of Innisfil staff and business and community partners (respectively) in June 2023. These sessions provided insights into Innisfil’s economic strengths, opportunities, aspirations, risks and desired results. Current priority initiatives were discussed, which helped to frame further engagement conversations.
- A community survey was carried out online and via telephone, running June 7 to July 27. The aim was to validate Innisfil’s economic strengths and gain a deeper understanding of stakeholder perceptions regarding the issues that act as barriers to economic development. The survey received 109 completed responses.
- A business survey was conducted online and via telephone and was launched June 7 and ran until July 31. The purpose of this survey was to confirm Innisfil’s economic strengths and better understand business perceptions of the ongoing issues posing as barriers towards the growth of local businesses. The survey received 56 completed responses.

- 12 stakeholders were interviewed, including Innisfil's leadership, economic development partners and priority businesses and employers. These discussions provided input into key stakeholders' perceptions of economic strengths, opportunities, aspirations, risks and desired results.
- Approximately 100 people participated in the Mayors Breakfast Validation Session. The purpose of this session was to present and receive feedback on the proposed the draft strategic goals and objectives and to overview next steps in the project, including strategy finalization.

One-on-One Interviews Summary

1. What are Innisfil’s advantages for attracting and enabling business growth and investment?

Mayor, CAO, Council, Steering Group, Leadership Team, Project Team	Industrial and Commercial Businesses/Employers, Developers and Entrepreneurs	Regional Institutions, Agencies and Economic Development Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Many stakeholders noted the proximity to key locations including to Lake Simcoe, the GTA, Barrie and the Barrie Collingwood Airport as a significant strength for attracting business investment to the Town of Innisfil. ❖ Stakeholders mentioned that Innisfil has a formidable reputation for innovation. The expansion of DMZ into Innisfil was indicative of this history of Innovation as well as transformative for further developing the innovative ecosystem within Innisfil. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders identified the proximity to both the GTA, and the US Market are significant contributing factors to business growth and development. Further the intricate road networks enable accessible movement of exported goods. ❖ The business community has confidence in elected officials to provide the best environment for continued business activity. i.e., lower tax rates and cheaper services. ❖ Stakeholders mentioned the affordability of Innisfil is a key factor for a skilled talent to migrate to the Town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Innisfil has a welcoming investment culture. ❖ There are several nearby colleges that Innisfil residents have access to via public transit and GO Service. Additionally, the existing transportation network allows for Innisfil to connect with a workforce who may not reside within Town borders, furthering economic activity. ❖ The RVH expansion has the potential to attract other health-related businesses and act as a health-hub.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ The supportive nature of Council and the mayor have positioned the Town to think innovatively on matters of municipal interest.❖ The Town of Innisfil provides a high quality of life for its residents. Innisfil is proactively promoting development while simultaneously preserving its agricultural lands. This trend of development will continue with the development of projects including The Orbit, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre, Friday Harbour and Alcona centre. The success of these projects will be measured through job creation and their multiplier effects.	<p>of Innisfil. With a larger labour market, Innisfil is well positioned to continue to grow economically.</p>	
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**2. What do you see as the most relevant challenges or barriers to business growth and investment in Innisfil?
(From both your business perspective and sector)**

Mayor, CAO, Council, Steering Group, Leadership Team, Project Team	Industrial and Commercial Businesses/Employers, Developers and Entrepreneurs	Regional Institutions, Agencies and Economic Development Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders expressed concern over the lack of investment-ready land and limiting zoning bylaws that prevent certain industry types from operating in the Town. ❖ Stakeholders identified the lack of an anchor industrial organization, negatively impacts the growth the sector within Innisfil. ❖ Stakeholders identified the existing transportation network does not effectively connect Innisfil to surrounding communities. As a result, residents must rely heavily on personal vehicles or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ While the business community has confidence in its elected officials, there has not been a sufficient execution of existing municipal strategies. Further, the existing strategies, lack a business centred approach. ❖ The Town’s administrative staff is slow to process files. i.e., processing files to get land serviced. ❖ Stakeholders identified the lack of affordable housing to attract skilled talent as a concern for further business development. This issue is compounded by a lack in rising salaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders expressed a lack of sufficient attainable housing, shovel ready land or general employment land as a concern. ❖ Stakeholders identified there is a gap in labour supply needed to support the business community. There is also a mismatch between skills available and required by industry. ❖ Stakeholders identified the decline in the 19-24 age cohort as a limiting factor for future economic activity.

<p>Uber to move through the region, limiting full workforce participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The cost of living in Innisfil is lower than in the GTA but remains expensive for cohorts of the population. ❖ Stakeholder identified a challenge will be meeting the Town’s economic priorities with limited resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders identified concerns pertaining to the existing Industrial Park including the lack services on the site. There is no sewer available on the site, nor municipal water and internet access is not readily available and access in and out of the site is limited. 	
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3. What does local government support look like for your business currently and into the future? (Businesses only)

Industrial and Commercial Businesses/Employers, Developers and Entrepreneurs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The Innisfil Economic Development department is the most aligned town department with the needs of the business community. The department works with speed and efficiency. Stakeholders expressed the desire for other Town departments to operate with similar efficiency. ❖ Town staff needs to consolidate interpretations of municipal by-laws to limit confusion and delay in processing. ❖ If there remains a financial cost to working with the Town, there needs to be a reduction in time of response and an increase in ability to get through bylaw requirements.
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4. What untapped potential or economic growth opportunities exist that will propel the local economy forward in the next three to five years?

Mayor, CAO, Council, Steering Group, Leadership Team, Project Team	Industrial and Commercial Businesses/Employers, Developers and Entrepreneurs	Regional Institutions, Agencies and Economic Development Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders identified opportunity to invest in agricultural tourism such as cideries and breweries. ❖ The Town has an opportunity to partner with existing amenities to make year-round tourism more attractive in Innisfil. Partnerships should prioritize the following: ❖ Developing the waterfront so it can be utilized year-round for tourism. ❖ Further developing Friday Harbour into year-round destination. ❖ Stakeholders identified there are opportunities with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders identified opportunity to focus less on tech related jobs and place an emphasis on the manufacturing industry. The Tech industry is perceived to take opportunity away from the community (outsourcing) whereas the manufacturing sector aligns more closely with the skills of the community and therefore creates tangible jobs. ❖ There is a significant amount of land to develop. Increasing access to the rail system in Innisfil would also propel the local economy by attracting tourist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Develop Friday Harbour and other tourism amenities into a year-round destination. ❖ Increase retention of international students in Simcoe County. ❖ Encourage the DMZ focusing on priority sector specific programming.

<p>addition of anchor institutions. For example, with the hospital campus and a large industrial business (possible attract a business looking to get out of GTA, but still require transportation network of southern Ontario.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Develop a post-secondary network. There is currently a gap in South Simcoe County. Prioritize the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Medical ancillary – lab techs etc. ❖ Skilled trades ❖ Coordinate and integrate economic development strategy with the support of internal and external stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Innisfil should try to attract more businesses from the GTA. Advertising local advantages and creating new incentives including tax breaks and subsidies. 	
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5. What actions may be needed to achieve/take advantage of these economic growth opportunities?

Mayor, CAO, Council, Steering Group, Leadership Team, Project Team	Industrial and Commercial Businesses/Employers, Developers and Entrepreneurs	Regional Institutions, Agencies and Economic Development Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Coordinate with all levels of government and the private sector on an assortment of projects as most future actions will require support from a collection of stakeholders. The Federal and Provincial government will also play key roles in funding economic initiatives. ❖ Service land in Innisfil Heights as that is where most of the existing employment land resides. ❖ Focus investment attraction efforts to the industries that are more conducive to the success of Innisfil. Begin with attracting one or two anchor companies to Innisfil. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reduce red-tape within the municipal government to create an environment that supports investment in the community. ❖ Improve access and services in the Industrial Park would bring more businesses into the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Focus on improving services of Innisfil Heights. Further investment will lead to increased interest in Innisfil Heights. ❖ Undertake a gap analysis to determine the form of tourism attractions/events that would be effective in Innisfil. ❖ Continue to collaborate with the County of Simcoe and Georgian College in periphery economic development efforts (Research/innovation /entrepreneurship/et c.)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Develop CIPs and policies that would make Innisfil more attractive for investment. 		
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Internal (Town of Innisfil Staff) and External (Business and Community Partners) Stakeholder Workshop Summary

1. What local assets or competitive strengths come to mind when you think of Innisfil’s economy?

Internal Stakeholders	Business and Community Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders identified that natural assets and community infrastructure within Innisfil provide a unique competitive advantage. Innisfil benefits geographically from Lake Simcoe, the Highway 400 system and attractions including the Friday which serve as pulling factors for tourists. Overall, Innisfil is home to well-established settlements, each with its own character and nature, contributing to history and cultural heritage. ❖ Innisfil is home to several sectors including utilities and health care each with strong organizations and success stories. The sectoral map is being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Innisfil is in an ideal location for businesses to operate because of its available land, quality of life, proximity to post-secondary institutions and proximity to vital transportation networks (i.e., Highway 400 System); lots of land, the highway system, proximity to water, through lake Simcoe, offers rural and countryside living. ❖ Innisfil has the reputation for innovation and is an entrepreneurial community. This quality is evident with its municipal staff, business community and support organizations including the DMZ and Innisfil ideaLAB & Library and Nottawasaga Futures.

<p>further strengthened with the expansion of the RVH Hospital and development of its cost-effective employment lands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Innisfil has the space for continued housing development.❖ Innisfil is doing innovative things compared to other municipalities of comparable size. This is illustrated with the expansion of the DMZ to Innisfil, a young workforce, innovative government and utility offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Innisfil is a creative community with robust summer tourism and winter tourism events.❖ The agriculture sector and land base offer opportunity for value-added manufacturing in agriculture.❖ Simcoe County is a leader in selling to local customers, providing opportunity for value-add/product development.
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2. What untapped potential or economic growth opportunities exist that will propel the local economy forward in the next three to five years?

Internal Stakeholders	Business and Community Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Many stakeholders mentioned that talent-focused ambitions would support the growth of the local economy in the next three to five years. A focus on supporting post-secondary institutions and diversifying the housing stock (increasing rental stock) would support the attraction of talent, international students and newcomers. Effectively, with an increased talent pool, businesses will have the necessary skills conducive to their operations as well as attract other industries, notably the retail and service sector. ❖ One stakeholder mentioned the opportunity to build on and market the innovative reputation Innisfil that is known for. Actions should be taken to increasing visibility of the Town’s strength and innovative capacity. ❖ Multiple stakeholders focused on leveraging tech-based infrastructure. Creating an environment that supports the digital economy and remote work/home-based businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Many stakeholders identified the opportunity to attract employers and expand the workforce by continuing to build transportation networks (GO Train/The Orbit and 400 Highway) Build on opportunity through GO Train and The Orbit. ❖ Multiple stakeholders identified tourism as a key proponent of growth. Tourism is a money generator for the town as people come outside of Innisfil and spend locally. There is an opportunity to leverage Lake Simcoe and other amenities to make Innisfil a destination community. ❖ Stakeholders identified a shared understanding of the opportunity for creative uses of employment lands and the need for commercial spaces (office/retail). Additionally, there is an opportunity to investigate opportunities associated with vacant lands/properties near/within Innisfil beach road. ❖ A common theme identified was the opportunity to build on the agriculture sector. Focus on

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A common theme identified was the opportunity to focus on employment-generation through specific sectors including hospital and spin-off life sciences, medical campus and agriculture and food sustainability. ❖ Stakeholders identified the opportunity available with the Phase 3 development Friday Harbour. ❖ Stakeholders identified the opportunity available with shovel-ready land development. ❖ A stakeholder mentioned the need to focus on The Town’s partnership with County to improve infrastructure, including roads and servicing. 	<p>agriculture-based education and workforce. Some activities that would support the sector's continued development would include an agricultural college in the community, restore manufacturing supply chains and leverage investment migration to fund manufacturing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders highlighted the need to focus on innovation, SMEs, start-ups business support, including more collaborative connections with businesses and customer service. Enable peer networking, business connections. Promote local businesses, entrepreneurship and support for sole-proprietorship and micro-business labour force growth. ❖ Invest in broadband infrastructure to enable remote work. ❖ Stakeholders highlighted the need to be an open-minded community that welcomes and enables development and focuses on regular and ongoing communication with community and businesses. ❖ Opportunity to ease red tape (I.e., Development charge) to
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	<p>increase attractiveness of development in Innisfil.</p>
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- ❖ Stakeholders highlighted the need to focus on **branding and marketing.**

3. What do you see as the most relevant challenges or barriers to economic growth and development in Innisfil?

Internal Stakeholders	Business and Community Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders identified the lack of connectivity within the city and region is an ongoing challenge. Inter-municipal transit to employment and residential zones needs to be addressed to create fluidity within the town. Additionally, the ring of privately owned waterfront limits connectivity and quality of life. ❖ A challenge would be the lack of purpose-built inventory. Affordable housing and rental units are lacking within the existing housing stock. ❖ Lack of serviced land was identified as a concern by multiple stakeholders. Service inadequacies include internet and connectivity issues. ❖ Lack of commercial space was identified by one stakeholder. ❖ One stakeholder sentiment identified the challenge of defining priorities. Innisfil has finite resources (time and money). ❖ There is difficulty in creating a shared identity amongst residents. There is a difference between people who have lived 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stakeholders identified the lack of affordable housing and senior housing as a challenge. ❖ Infrastructure such as internet access, public transit, regional roads (Highways), are lacking. ❖ Urban sprawl and farmland loss was identified as challenge. ❖ Workforce retention and the lack of proper availability of skilled people is a challenge. The lack of cultural amenities (no light life economy) can contribute to increased workforce migration. ❖ Workforce requires wrap-around supports including childcare. ❖ Public profile of Innisfil is lacking – for e.g., people do not know Cookstown is in Innisfil.

<p>here vs. people who moved here recently. Need to build on unified community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ The ability to adapt is a challenge. For example, post-secondary institutions need to be able to adapt to changing employer needs and local employers and manufacturers needs to adapt and digitize.❖ A stakeholder identified the influence of macro-factors as a challenge. These include gas prices, economic trends and provincial legal/legislative instability.	
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4. Validating Q2: Economic Growth Opportunities - Results

Internal Stakeholders	Business and Community Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Partnerships with post-secondary institutions/campuses: Enhanced partnerships to ensure skills developed are in line with business needs. ❖ Talent attraction/workforce development: Innisfil will benefit from the presence of post-graduates, international students' talent, faculty, researchers, youth and young professionals. ❖ Digital infrastructure: Innisfil will see increased support for remote work and home-based businesses through broadband and other digital economy/infrastructure. ❖ Sector Development: Innisfil will see employment generation from anchor institutions (i.e., hospital) and spin-off companies. Innisfil will be focused on diversifying economy. ❖ Planning and infrastructure: There will be improve existing infrastructure including Innisfil Heights and Highway 400, including the entire corridor and both sides of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sector Development: There will be a focus on key sectors including Arts and Culture, Tourism, Agriculture and value-add, Health care. ❖ Investment readiness: ❖ Employment land development is a focus. Employment lands are serviced in the short-term, with Innisfil working to create favorable environment for development. ❖ There is an increase in office and commercial development. ❖ Innisfil is investing in transit infrastructure. ❖ Support for SMEs/sole-proprietorships: SME's account for a sizable portion of all business activity. ❖ Focus on innovation-based growth: Innisfil is investing in broadband, green innovation, start-ups and remote work. ❖ Talent attraction: There is a focus on increasing intellectual capital through talent attraction initiatives and projects. ❖ Community-economic development: There is an increased focus on service industry (retail, boutique, big-

<p>highway/commercial corridor and 6th interchange.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Branding and Marketing: The innovative capacity of Innisfil and its amenities are being leveraged to increase awareness and create a sense of place and identity.❖ Supporting for existing business community: Innisfil is working to understand the needs of the business community and act to increase probability of business retention.	<p>box retail, Hotels/lodging, restaurants, sports bars, diversity in food and cuisines) as well as health care, housing and childcare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Community branding/identity: Innisfil is attracting people live there by highlighting assets, both natural and built.
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Community Stakeholder Survey Results

Methodology:

Purpose of the 2023 Community Stakeholder Survey was to:

- Support transparency and accountability in municipal operations
- Inform strategic decision-making
- Ensure community stakeholders are engaged in the project process and key audiences are informed about the project
- Gain feedback from community stakeholders to highlight community priorities, trends and concerns
- Obtain insights into effectiveness of municipal plans and services

Survey Objectives:

- Determine the economic strengths within the Town of Innisfil
- Determine community stakeholder perceptions of the ongoing issues posing as barriers towards the Town's economic development goals
- Providing opportunities for respondents to voice their opinions on economic development-related matters
- Configuring respondents' role within the workplace and impact created from it

Methodology:

- Undertook a mix-mode survey using both online and telephone surveying practices while using a random sampling methodology.
- Targeted 40-50 completes with an anticipated survey length of 10-12 minutes for a survey that was delivered by Computer-Aided-Web Interview (CWAI) and Computer-Aided Telephone Interview (CATI) processes.

- The online survey was available from June 7 to July 14 and a total of 109 surveys were completed both online and telephone.

Key Findings:

- **Economic Development Goals:** 48% of community members agreed that the Town of Innisfil is taking the right actions to meet the economic development needs of the community, while 20% strongly disagreed.
- **Priority Economic Development Goals:** Using Deloitte’s proprietary derived importance methodology, it was found that the top economic development goals among community members include population growth management, public transportation and transportation infrastructure.
- **Opportunities to Voice Opinions:** 79% of respondents agreed that the Town of Innisfil provides sufficient opportunities to voice opinions on economic development-related matters.
- **Role in workforce:** 46% of respondents indicated that they are employed full-time.
- **Location of time spent during work week:** The majority of respondents are located within the Town of Innisfil during the work week.

Detailed Findings:

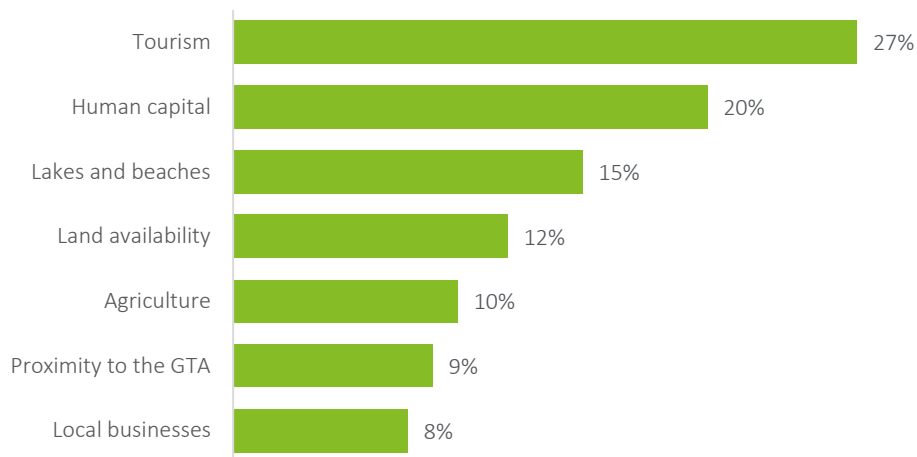
Q1. Which of the following categories best describes your age?

Respondents were screened to ensure they were over the age of 18.

Q3. What is the greatest economic strength of the Town of Innisfil?

When asked to select the greatest economic strength for Innisfil, respondents most commonly mentioned tourism (27%) and human capital (20%).

Figure 73 – Greatest economic strength in Innisfil (N=109)

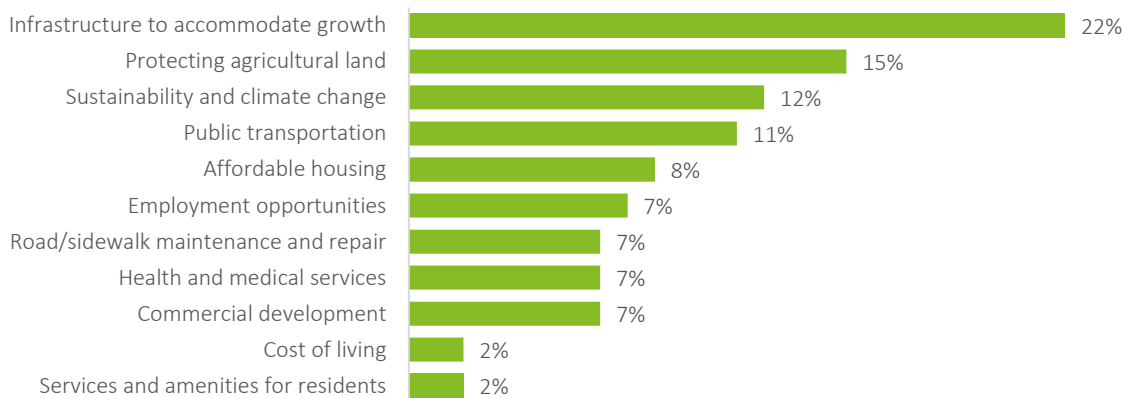


Q4. In your opinion, what is the one economic issue you feel should receive the greatest attention from your Mayor and members of Council in the:

a. Long term (10-25 years)

Infrastructure to accommodate growth was the biggest economic issue community members felt should receive the greatest attention from the Mayor and Council.

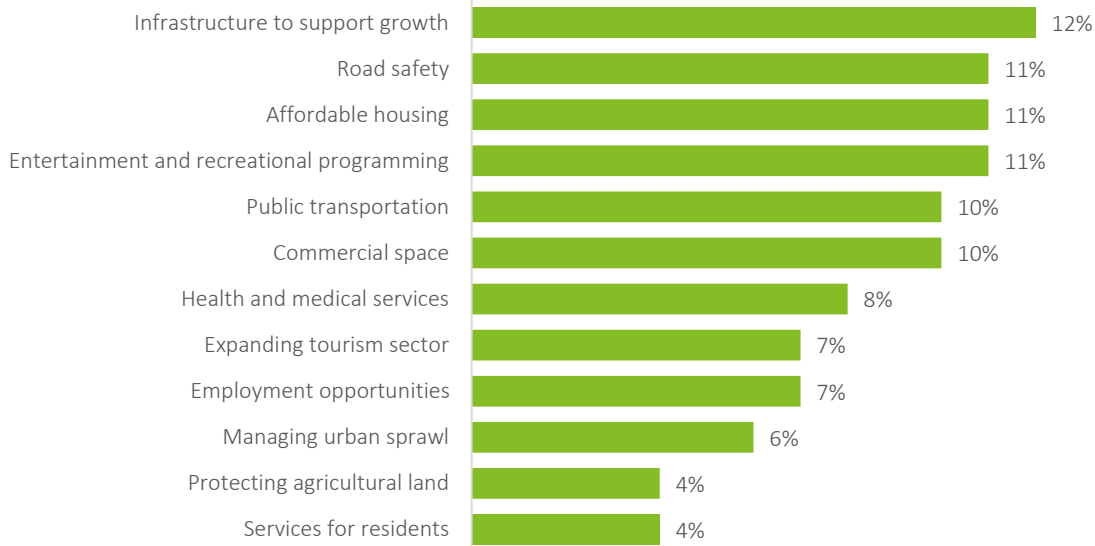
Figure 84 – Economic issue that needs the greatest attention from members of council in long term (10-25 years) (N=109)



b. Short term (1-3 years)

Infrastructure to support growth was most commonly mentioned (12%), followed by road safety (11%), affordable housing (11%) and entertainment and recreational programming (11%).

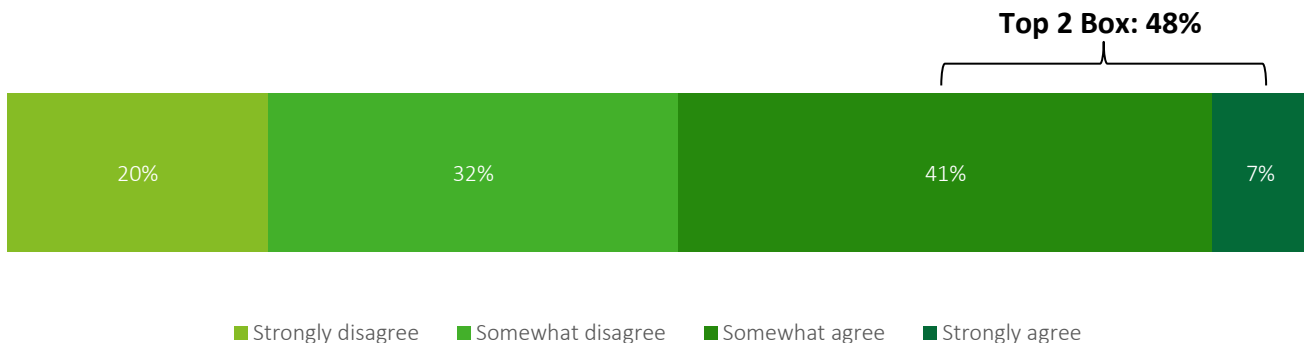
Figure 95 – Greatest economic issue needing attention – Short term (1-3 years) (N=109)



Q5. To what extent do you agree that the Town of Innisfil is taking the right actions to meet the economic development needs of the community?

48% of respondents agreed that the Town is taking the right actions to meet its current economic development needs of the community.

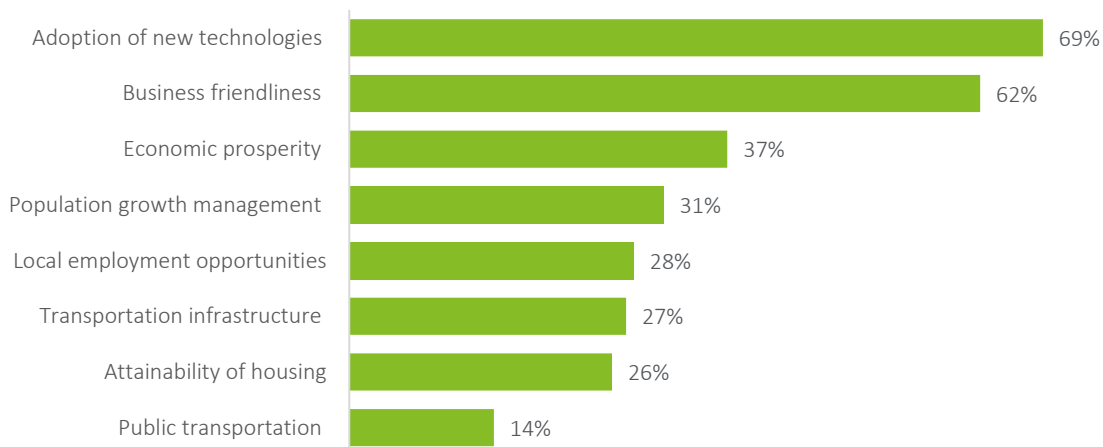
Figure 106 – Extent to which Innisfil is taking the right actions to meet economic development needs of the community (N=109)



Q6. To what extent do you agree that the Town of Innisfil is moving in the right direction to achieve each of the following economic development goals?

Community members agreed that that the Town is moving in the right direction to achieve their goal of adopting innovative technologies.

Figure 117 – Extent to which Innisfil is moving in right direction to achieve the following economic development goals (N=109)



Priority Matrix

Using community members’ ratings of Innisfil’s economic development goals as well as their overall agreement that the Town is moving in the right direction to meet them, a priority matrix was created using Deloitte’s proprietary derived importance methodology. The Priority Matrix consists of three metrics:

- **Level of Importance:** Statistical correlations were used to determine the strength of the relationship between the goal and overall agreement. Attributes with a high importance tend to matter greatly for individual’s overall agreement.

- Performance: The percentage of respondents who somewhat or strongly agreed that the Town is moving in the right direction to achieve that goal.
- Priority rank: This was determined for each attribute based on high levels of importance and low levels of performance. Top priorities are goals where many residents do not currently agree the Town is moving in the right direction based and where there is potential to greatly improve their overall agreement that the Town is taking the right actions to meet the economic development needs of the community.

The top five priority goals include population growth management, public transportation and transportation infrastructure.

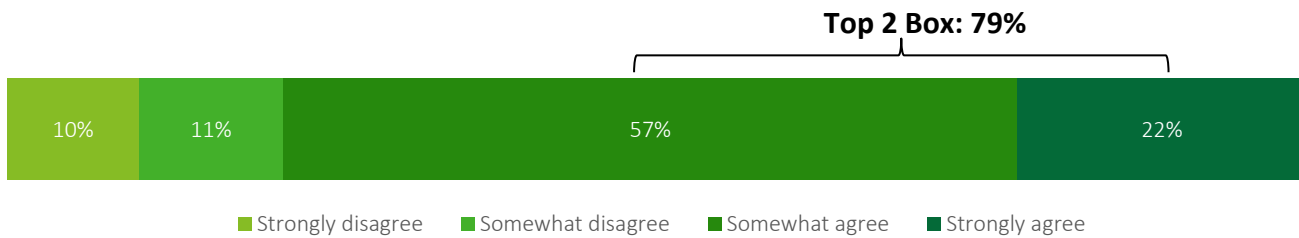
Table 21 – Priority matrix – community ratings

Economic Development Goals	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Population growth management	31%	9.4	1
Public transportation	14%	6.7	2
Transportation infrastructure (roads, active transportation, etc.)	27%	7.8	3
Attainability of housing	26%	7.3	4
Local employment opportunities	28%	7.3	5
Economic prosperity	37%	7.8	6
Business friendliness	62%	8.4	7
Adoption of new technologies	69%	7.3	8

Q7. Do you agree that the Town provides sufficient opportunities to voice your opinion on economic development related matters?

The majority of respondents (79%) agreed that the Town provides sufficient opportunities to voice your opinion on economic development related matters.

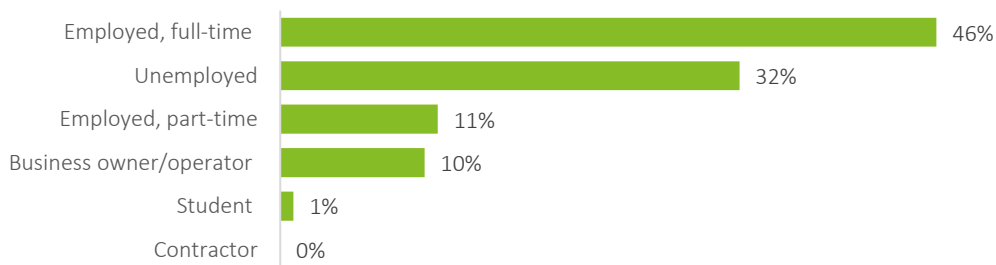
Figure 128 – Extent to which the town provides sufficient opportunities to voice opinions on economic development related matters (N=109)



Q8. Which of the following best describes your role in the workforce?

46% of respondents noted to be employed and in full-time positions within the workforce.

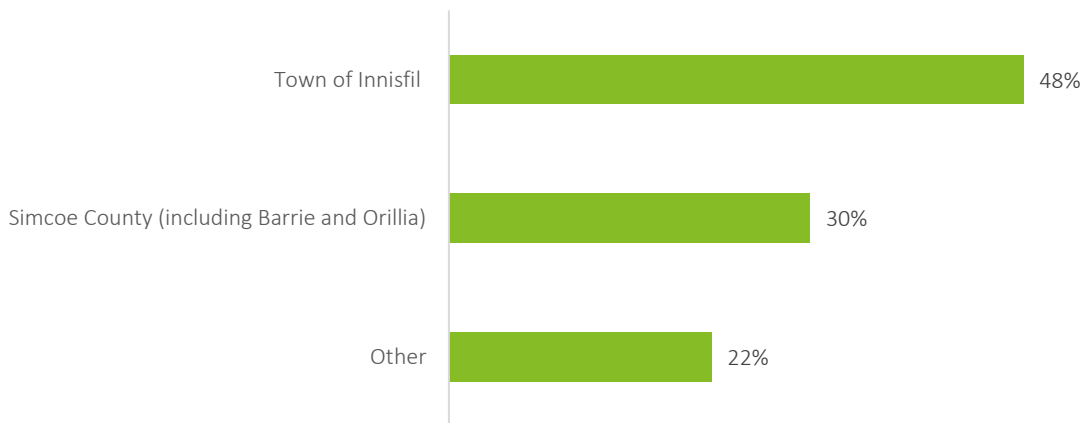
Figure 139 – Role in the workplace (N=109)



Q9. Where do you spend the majority of your work week?

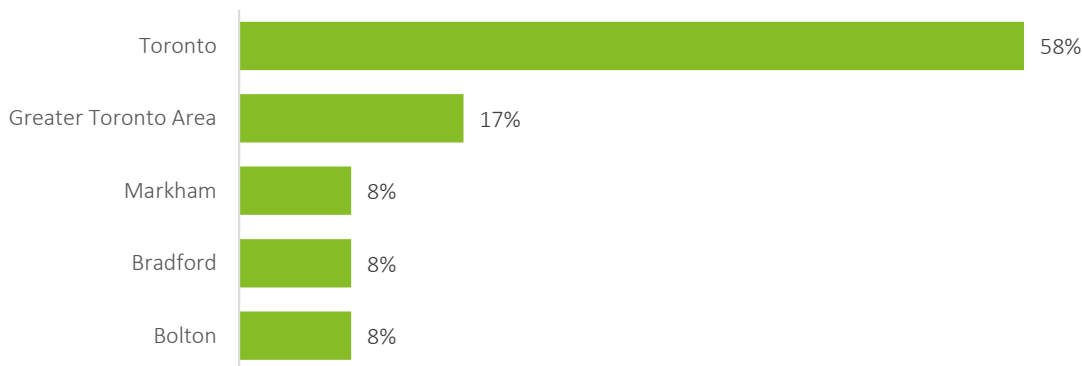
48% of respondents noted to spend majority of their work week in the Town of Innisfil.

Figure 149 – Where respondents spend the majority of their work week (n=73)



Respondents who recorded 'Other' were seen to spend majority of their work week in Toronto (58%).

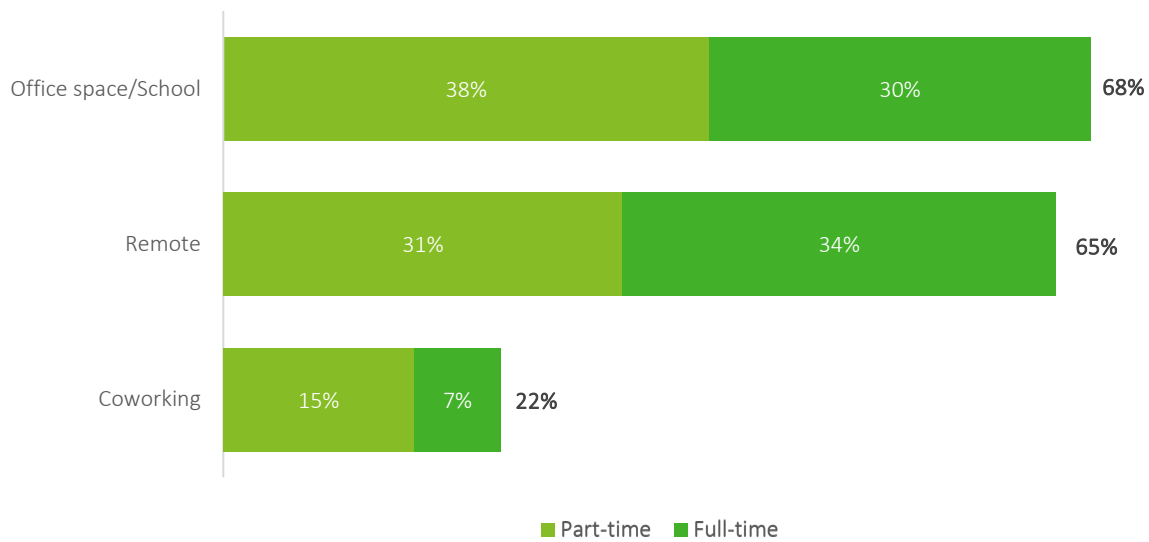
Figure 20 – Respondents who recorded 'Other' from previous question (N=14)



Q10. Please indicate how much time you spend at each location:

When asked to record how much time they spend in the respective location, full-time employees recorded to be working mainly remotely, while part-time employees recorded to be working in an office space/school.

Figure 21 - Amount of time spent in each location (N=109)



Business Survey Results

Methodology:

Purpose of the 2023 Business Survey was to:

- Understand how to best support local businesses
- Ensure business community needs are monitored and addressed
- Engage the broader business community
- Allow for identification of potential expansion or retention opportunities for follow-up on a business-by-business basis

Survey Objectives:

- Determine the economic strengths within the Town of Innisfil
- Determine business perceptions of the ongoing issues posing as barriers towards the growth of local businesses
- Provide opportunities for business owners to voice their opinions on economic development-related matters

Methodology:

- Utilize a mix-mode survey using both online and telephone surveying practices targeting business owners/managers using a random sample methodology
- Target 40-50 completes with an anticipated survey length of 10-12 minutes for a survey that will be delivered by Computer-Aided-Web Interview (CAWI) and Computer-Aided Telephone Interview (CATI) processes
- Online survey was available from June 7 to July 31 and a total of 56 surveys were completed both online and telephone

Key Findings:

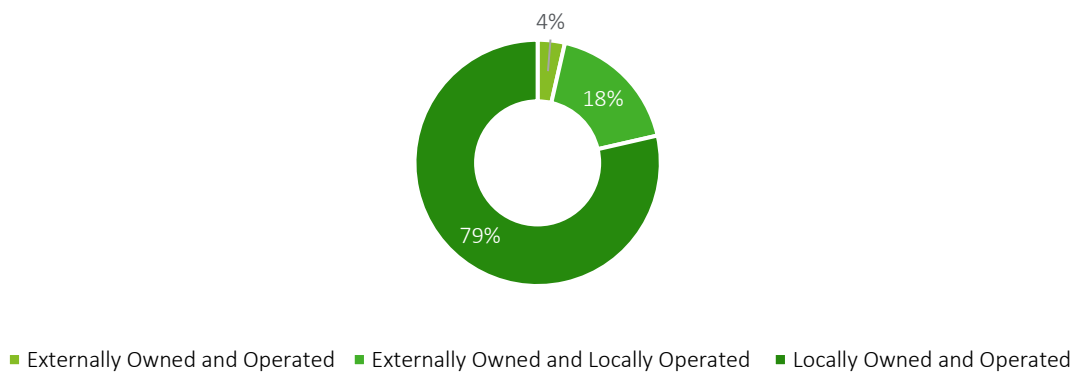
- **Primary Activities:** Retail trade was seen to be the majority of businesses' primary activities (18%), followed by arts and entertainment (14%) and finance and insurance (11%).
- **Terms of lease:** The majority of business owners noted their term of lease being for more than 5 years, with 47% noting their lease to end in 1 to 3 years, providing room for potential expansion.
- **Business Performance:** 95% of respondents noted the total number of their employees have either remained the same or increased, with 96% expecting them to potentially increase even more.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPI):** There was a relatively high satisfaction level among business owners when asked about owning and operating within the Town (82%).
- **Satisfaction Levels:** When asked to rate their satisfaction with the various factors, the factors with highest satisfaction included Cellular phone service (67%), Internet service to support business needs (65%) and Municipal property taxes (53%). Factors in need of improvement included the affordability of industrial space (14%), access to public transportation for employees and staff (14%) and adequate/affordable housing (19%).
- **Economic Strengths:** The greatest strength reported by business owners included business growth (25%).
- **Economic Issues:** When asked to record one economic issue for their business, the majority of respondents recorded Improving infrastructure to be a long-term issue (31%) and the availability of space for rent as a short-term issue (32%).

Detailed Findings:

Q1. Which of the following best describes your business?

79% of business owners reported to be locally owned and operated in the Town of Innisfil.

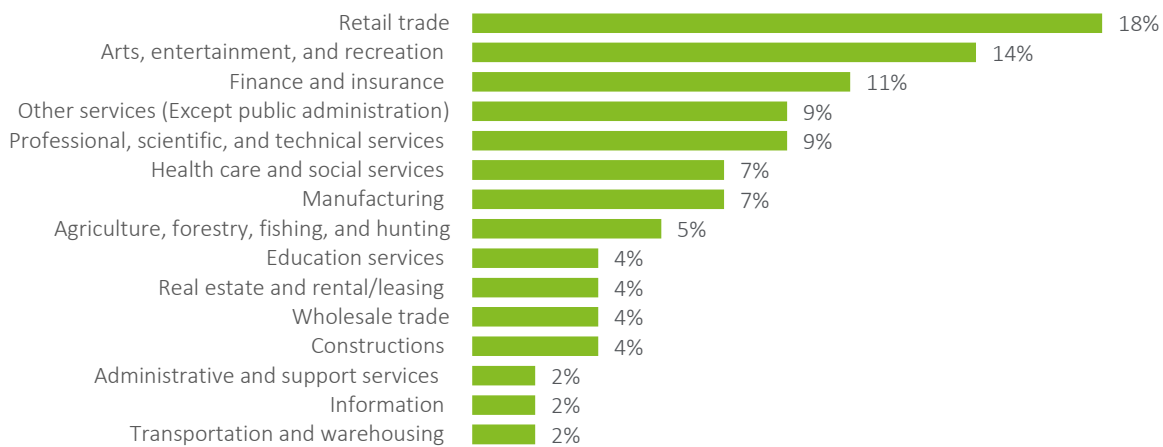
Figure 22 - Ownership (N=56)



Q2. What sector best represents the primary activities of your business?

The survey was able to capture businesses in various sectors within the Town.

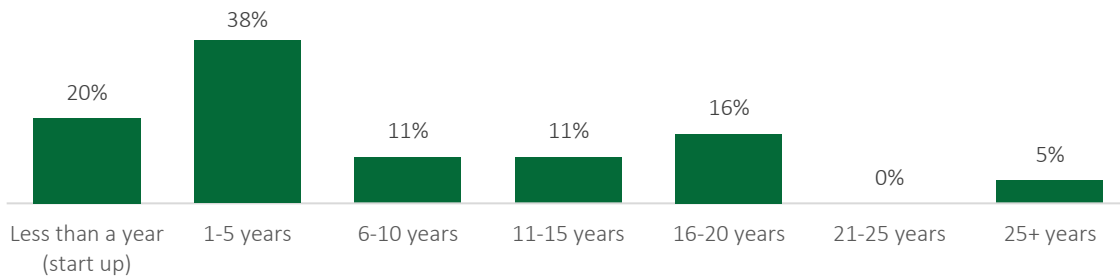
Figure 23 - Sector (N=56)



Q3. How many years, as the current owner/operator, have you been operating this business location in the Town of Innisfil?

Most businesses surveyed are relatively new to the Town of Innisfil (58%).

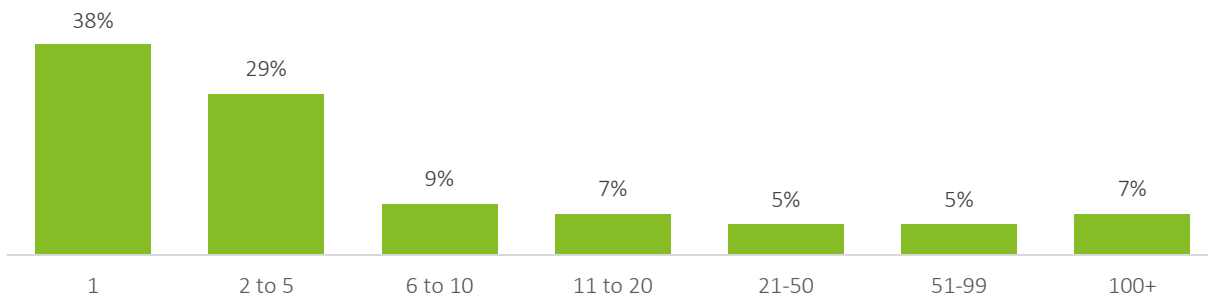
Figure 24 - Years operating in Innisfil (N=56)



Q4. Including yourself, how many full-time employees currently work out of this location?

38% of respondents noted to have 1 full-time employee currently working out of their location.

Figure 25 - Number of full-time employees (N=56)



Q5. Do you currently rent or own your business property?

There was an equal proportion of businesses who own their business property and businesses who rent.

Figure 26 - Rent or own business property (n=46)

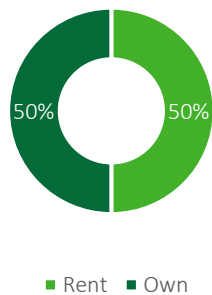
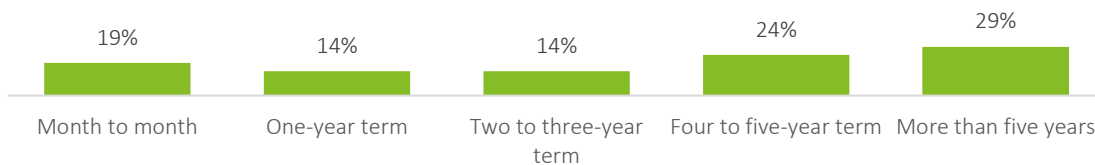


Figure 5: Rent or own business property (n=46)

Q6. What is the term of the lease?

29% of respondents noted to have their lease term for more than 5 years.

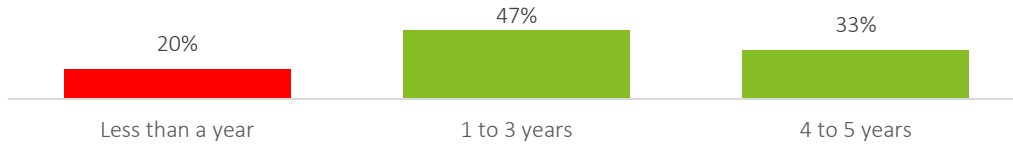
Figure 27 - Term of lease (n=21)



Q7. To the best of your knowledge when will your lease expire?

47% of business owners reported having their lease expire in 1 to 3 years, with 20% in less than a year indicated a triage red flag.

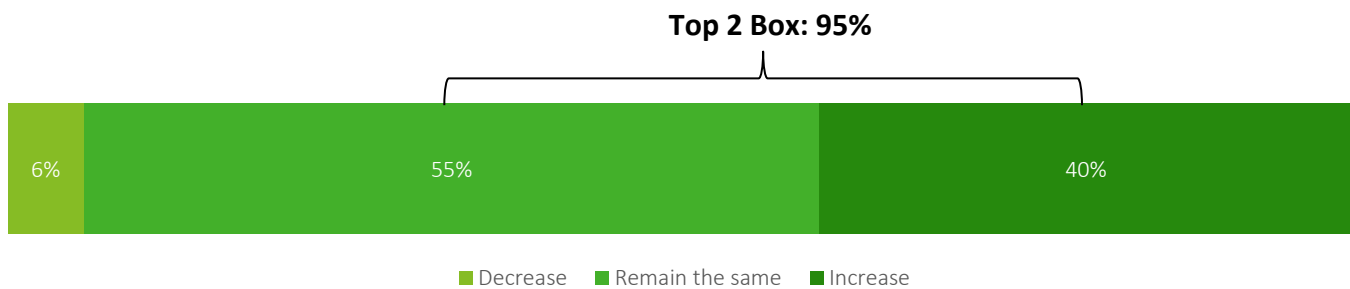
Figure 28 - Lease expiry (n=15)



Q8. Over the past 12 months did the total number of employees in your company:

A total of 95% of respondents noted the total number of employees in their company to remain the same or increase.

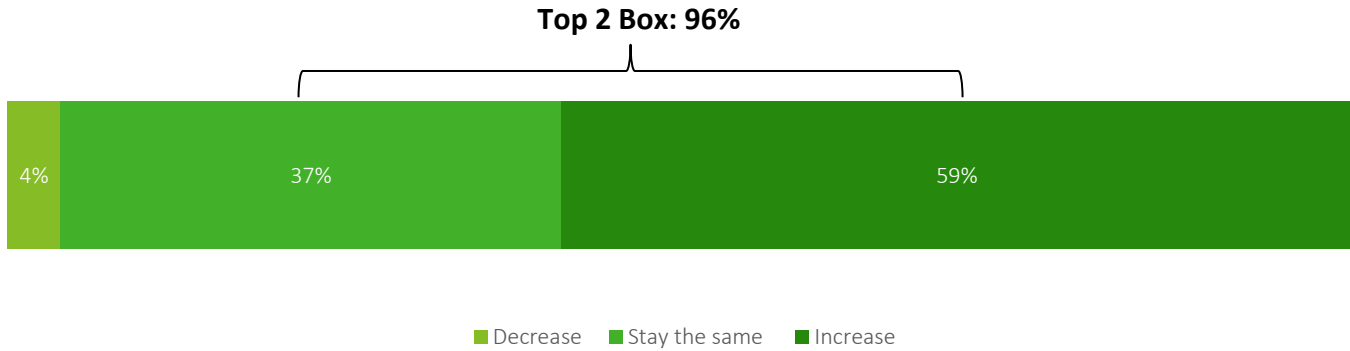
Figure 29 - Total number of employees in company (n=53)



Q9. Thinking about the next 12 months, do you expect the total number of employees in your company to:

When asked about their expectations with the total number of employees in the next 12 months, 96% of respondents indicated their expectation to stay the same or increase.

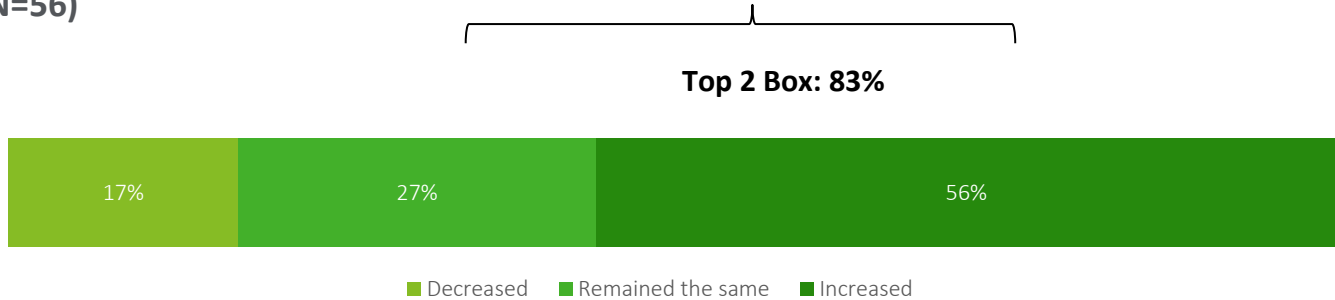
Figure 30 - Expectation of number of employees in next 12 months (N=56)



Q10. Over the past 12 months have your revenues at your business:

83% of business owners believed their revenues have remained the same or increased over the past 12 months.

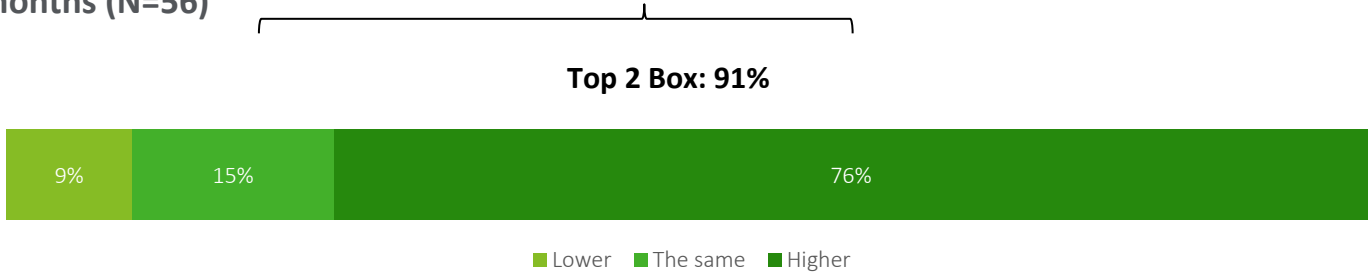
Figure 31 - Revenues at business over past 12 months (N=56)



Q11. What are your expectations for the next 12 months in total revenues compared to last 12 months?

91% of business owners expect total revenues to stay the same and/or increase in the next 12 months.

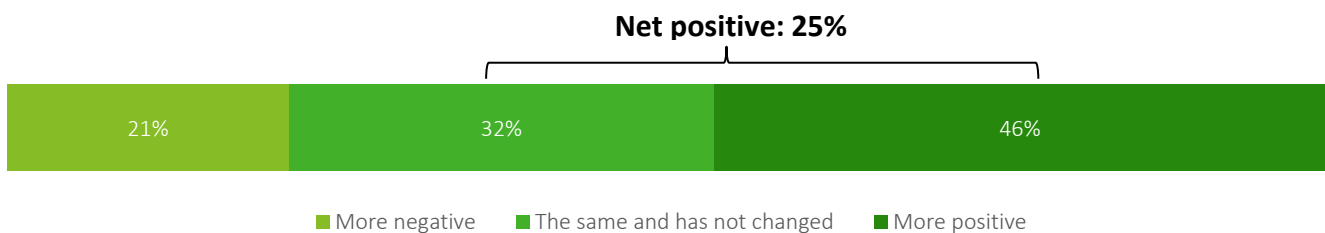
Figure 32 - Expectation of business revenue for next 12 months (N=56)



Q12. Over the past 12 months would you say your attitude about doing business in the Town is:

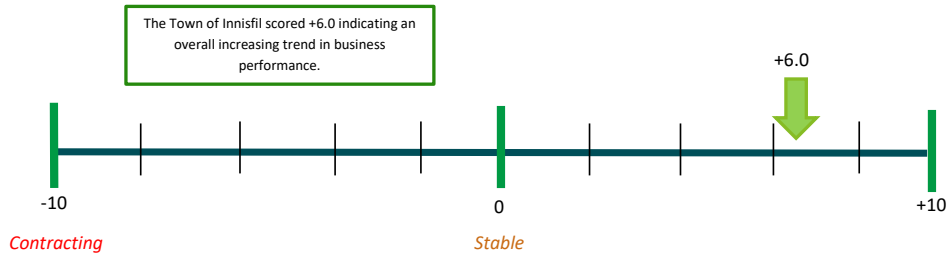
When asked about attitudes about doing business in the town over the past 12 months, respondents noted a net positive score of 25%.

Figure 33 - Attitudes towards doing business in Town (N=56)



Business Performance Forecast

The Business Performance Forecast is a metric created by combining the five business performance questions. It considers the changes in staff, revenue and attitudes among businesses in the region for an overall directional picture of the business climate in the area.

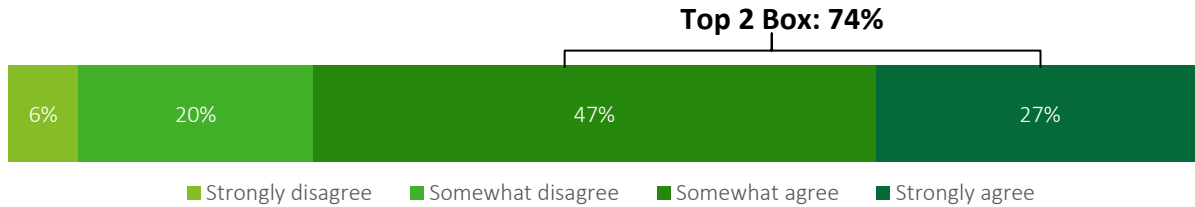


Net Promoter Score

Q13. Please rate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would recommend this Town to another business looking to expand or relocate.

74% of respondents noted to somewhat agree and/or strongly agree to recommend this town to another business looking.

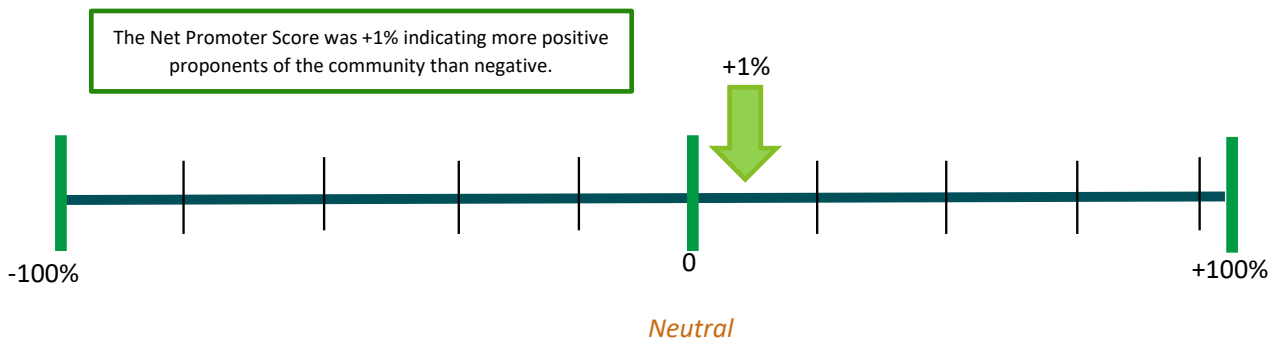
Figure 34 - Recommend this town to another business



Net Promoter Score: Based on response to the following statement – “I would recommend this County to another business looking to expand or relocate.”

Table 21 – Net promoter score description

Group	Definition	Response to question	Percentage
Promoters	Active proponents of the community	Strongly Agree	27%
Passives	Neutral businesses	Somewhat Agree	47%
Detractors	Businesses with a negative opinion that may harm branding efforts	Somewhat Disagree or Strongly Disagree	26%

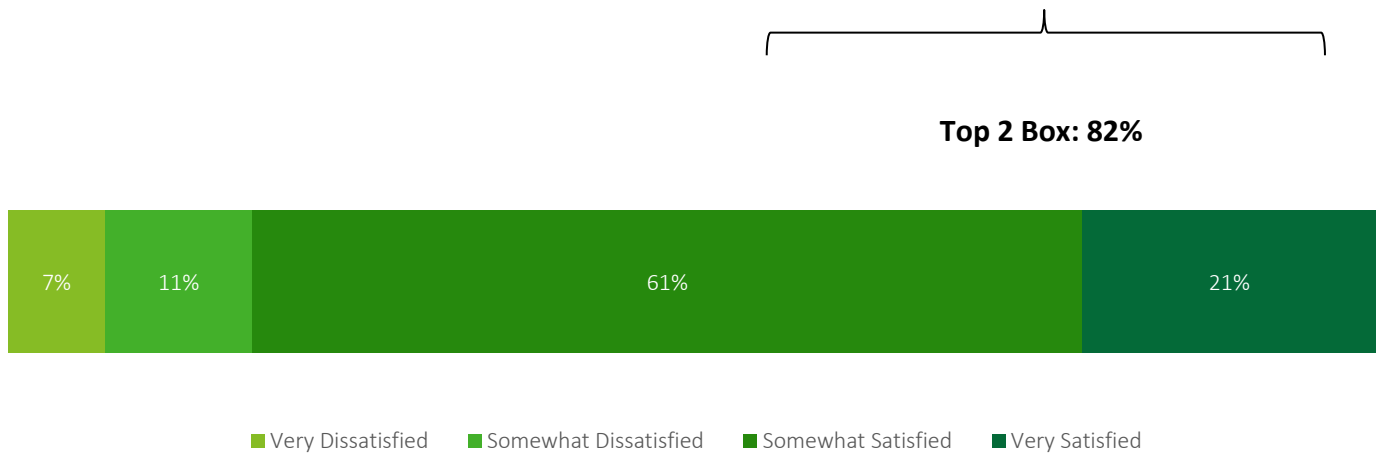


Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Q14: Overall, how satisfied are you with the Town of Innisfil as a place to own and operate a business?

Business owners reported a relatively high satisfaction rate with the Town as a place to own and operate a business (82%).

Figure 35 - Satisfaction with the town to own and operate a business (N=56)

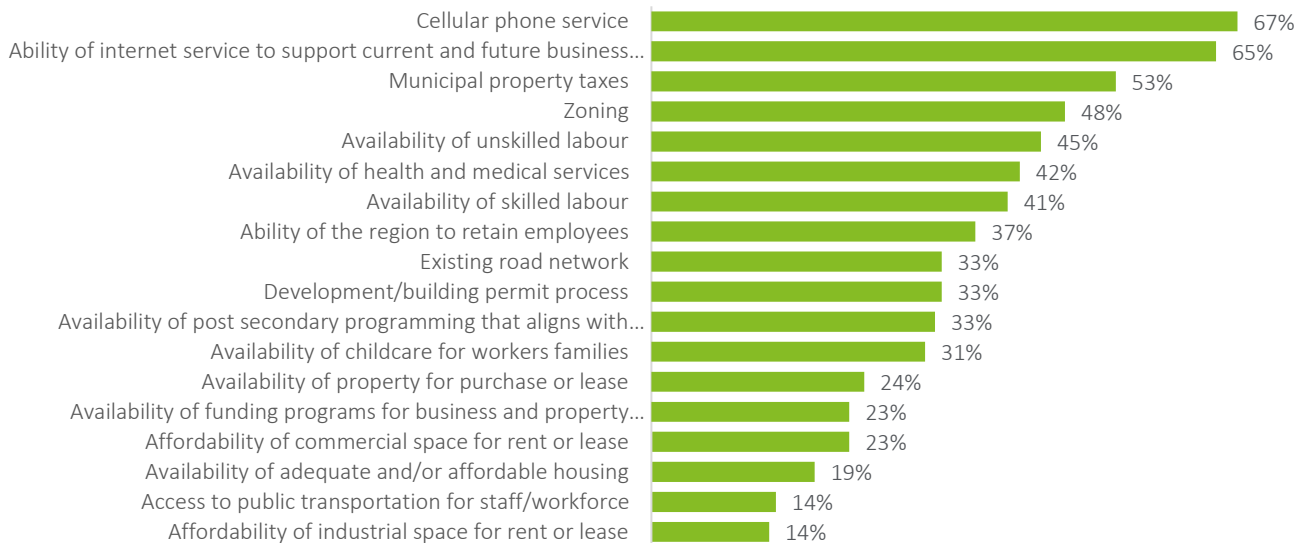


Satisfaction Levels

Q15. How satisfied you are with each of the following factors of doing business in the Town of Innisfil?

Business owners reported high satisfaction rates with the Town’s cellular phone service, internet service supporting their business needs and municipal property taxes. Affordability of industrial space for rent, access to public transportation for staff and adequate housing were deemed as factors needing improvement.

Figure 36 - Satisfaction levels with factors of doing business in Innisfil (N=56)



Priority Matrix

Using businesses ratings of Innisfil’s economic development goals as well as their overall agreement that the Town is moving in the right direction to meet them, a priority matrix was created using Deloitte’s proprietary derived importance methodology. The Priority Matrix consists of three metrics:

- **Level of Importance:** Statistical correlations were used to determine the strength of the relationship between the goal and overall agreement. Attributes with a high importance tend to matter greatly for individual’s overall agreement.
- **Performance:** The percentage of respondents who somewhat or strongly agreed that the Town is moving in the right direction to achieve that goal.
- **Priority rank:** This was determined for each attribute based on high levels of importance and low levels of performance.

The top five priority goals include availability of funding programs for business and property improvement, affordability of industrial and commercial space for rent or lease, availability of property for purchase or lease and ability of the region to retain employees

Table 21 – Priority matrix – business ratings

Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	23%	8.2	1

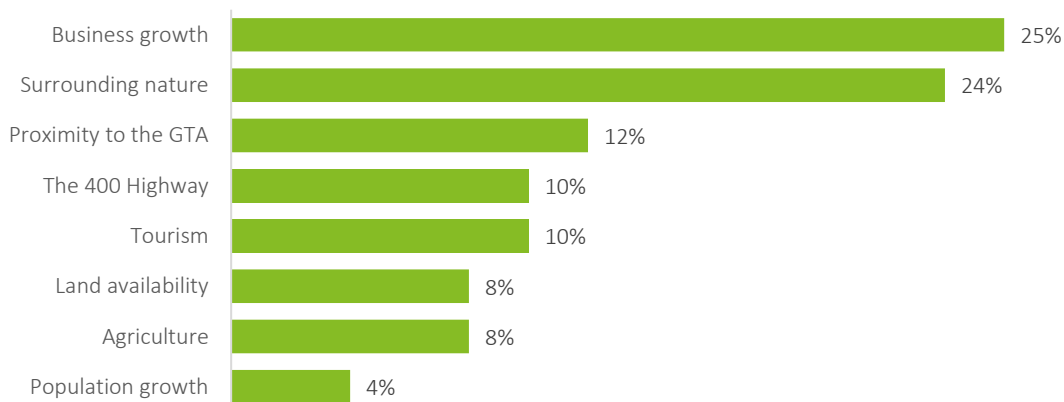
Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Existing road network	33%	9.4	2
Affordability of industrial space for rent or lease	14%	6.2	3
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	23%	6.4	4
Availability of property for purchase or lease	24%	6.4	5
Ability of the region to retain employees	37%	7.4	6
Availability of adequate and/or affordable housing	19%	5.7	7
Development/building permit process	33%	6.7	8
Access to public transportation for staff/workforce	14%	4.9	9
Availability of childcare for workers families	31%	5.7	10
Availability of health and medical services	42%	6.7	11
Availability of post-secondary programming that aligns with business needs	33%	5.7	12
Availability of skilled labour	41%	6.4	13

Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Municipal property taxes	53%	7.2	14
Availability of unskilled labour	45%	5.9	15
Zoning	48%	6.2	16
Ability of internet service to support current and future business needs	65%	7.4	17
Cellular phone service	67%	7.2	18

Q16. What is the greatest economic strength of the Town of Innisfil?

25% of respondents noted business growth to be the greatest economic strength from the Town of Innisfil.

Figure 37 - Greatest economic strength (N=56)

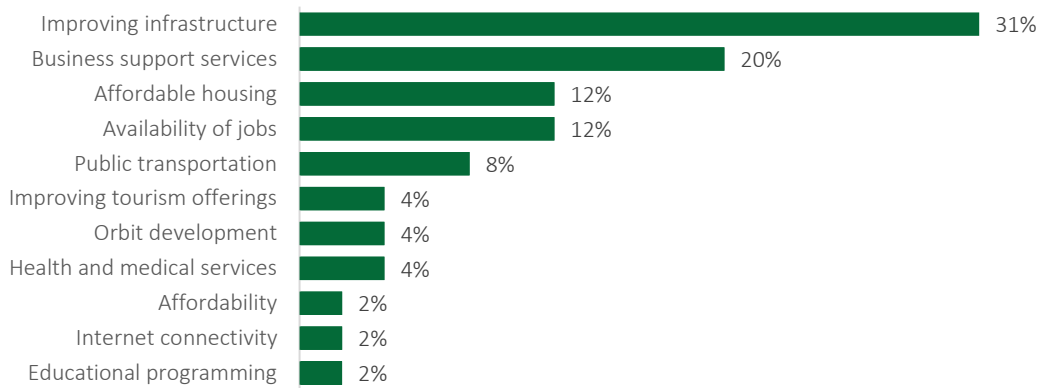


Q17. In your opinion, what is the one economic issue you feel should receive the greatest attention from your Mayor and members of Council in the:

a. Long term (10-25 years)

31% of business owners reported improving infrastructure to be a long-term issue that would need the greatest attention from the members of council.

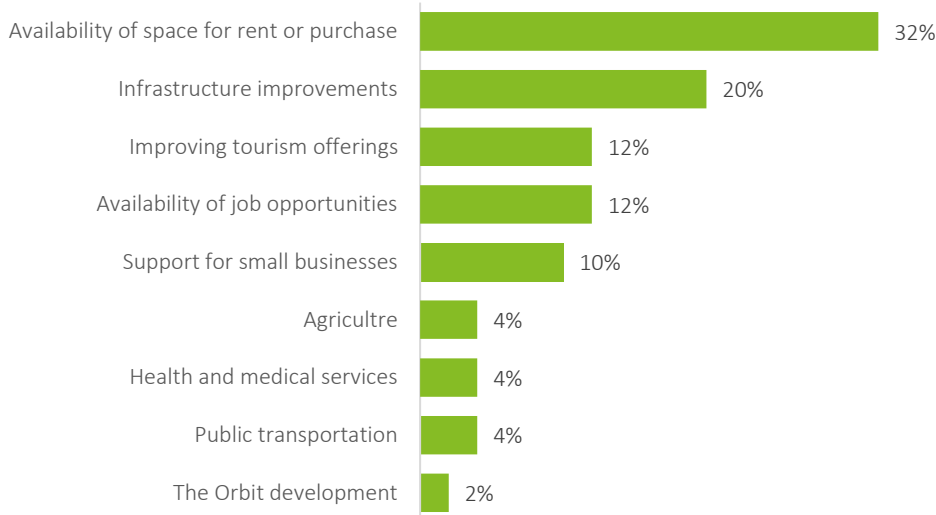
Figure 38 - Long term economic issue that needs greater attention (N=56)



b. Short term (1-3 years)

32% of respondents noted the availability of space for rent/purchase to be a short-term issue needing to be addressed by the Town's council.

Figure 39 - Short term economic issue that needs greater attention (N=56)



Q18. Please indicate how important the following factors are to the future growth of Innisfil:

Support for small businesses, policies supporting local businesses and additional support for entrepreneurs and start-ups were deemed as the most important factors for the future growth of Innisfil.

Figure 40 - Importance of factors related to future growth of Innisfil (N=56)

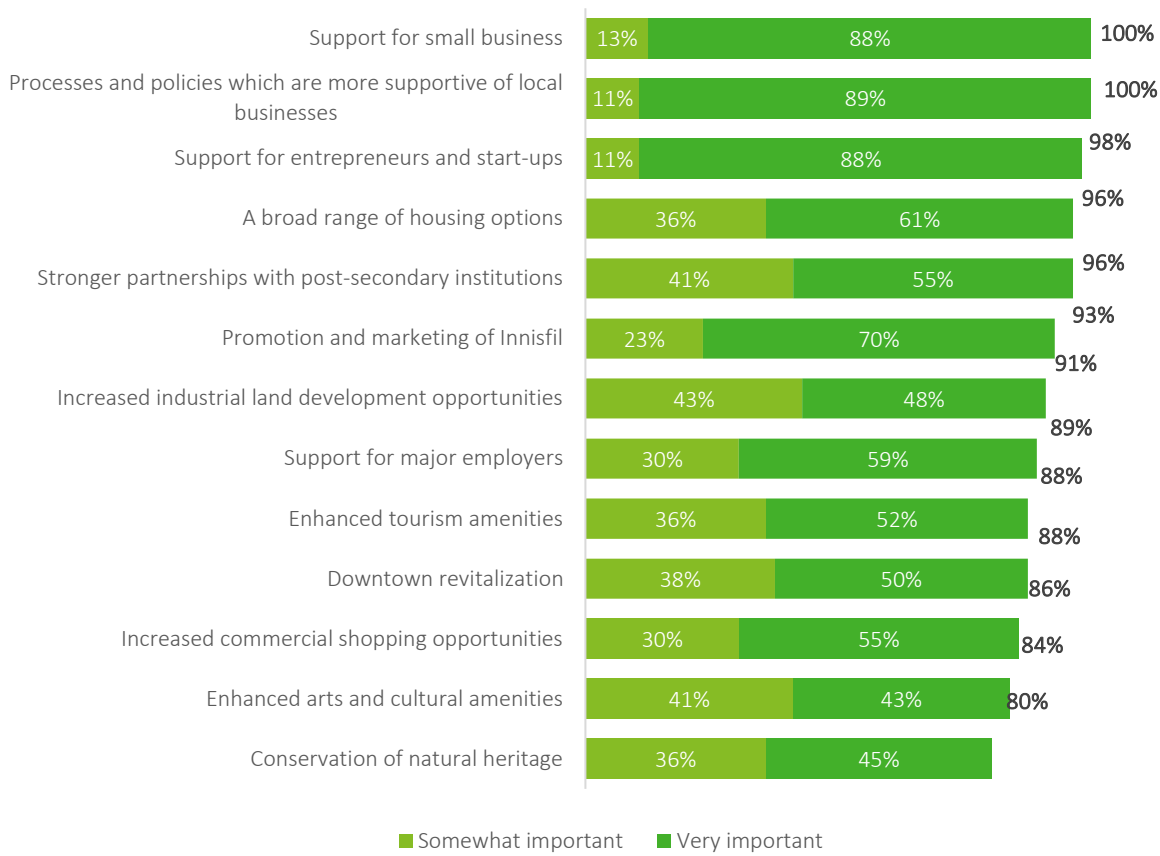
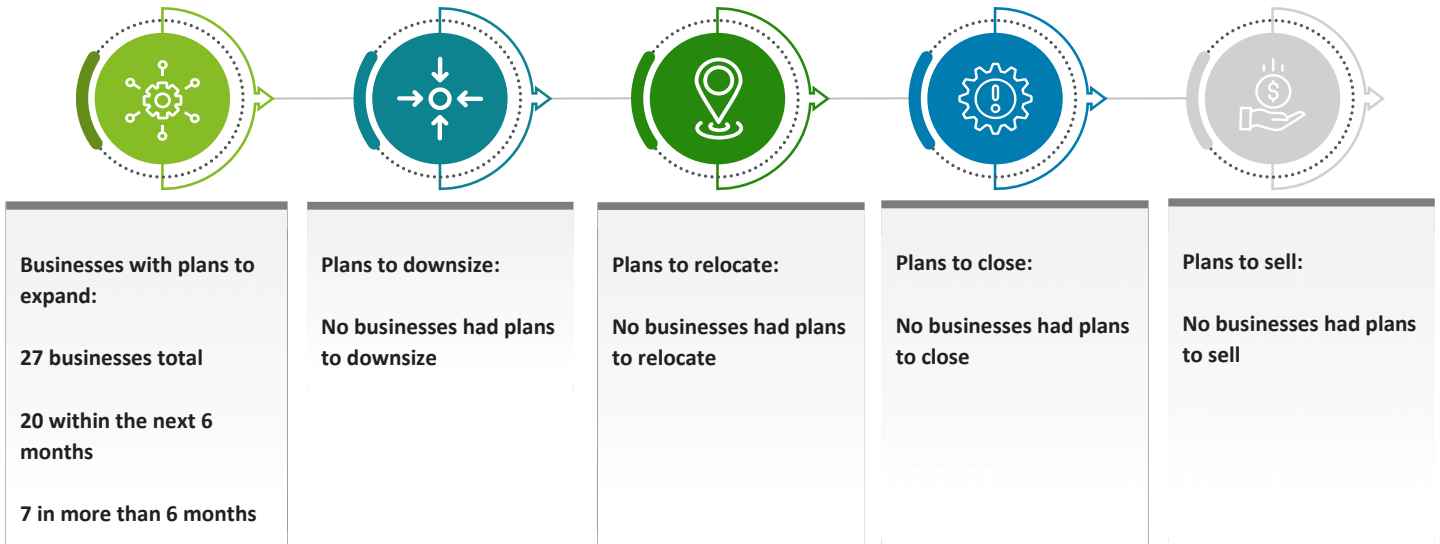


Figure 40 - Future plans – next 24 months (n=27)

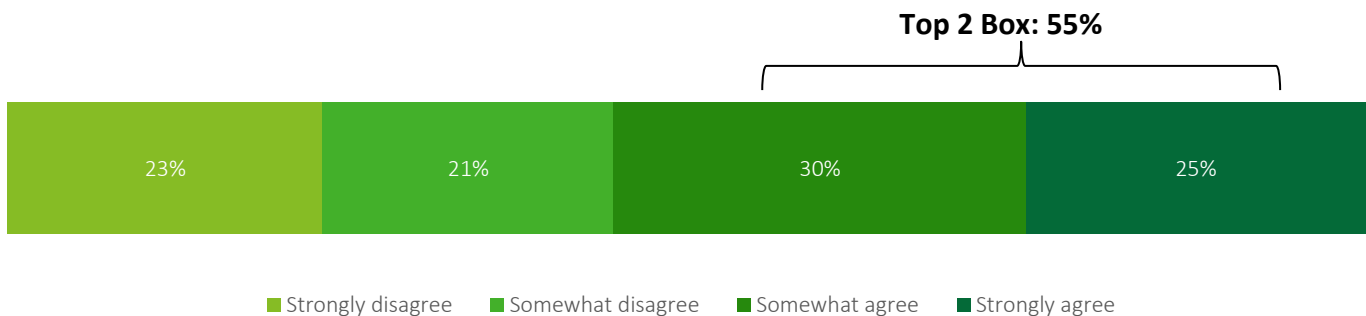
Future Plans – Next 24 Months



Q19. Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I know who I need to talk to at the Town if I have a problem with my business or a business concern I’d like to share.”

55% of business owners somewhat agreed and/or strongly agreed that they are familiar with the resources provided by the Town in the case of any problems or business concerns.

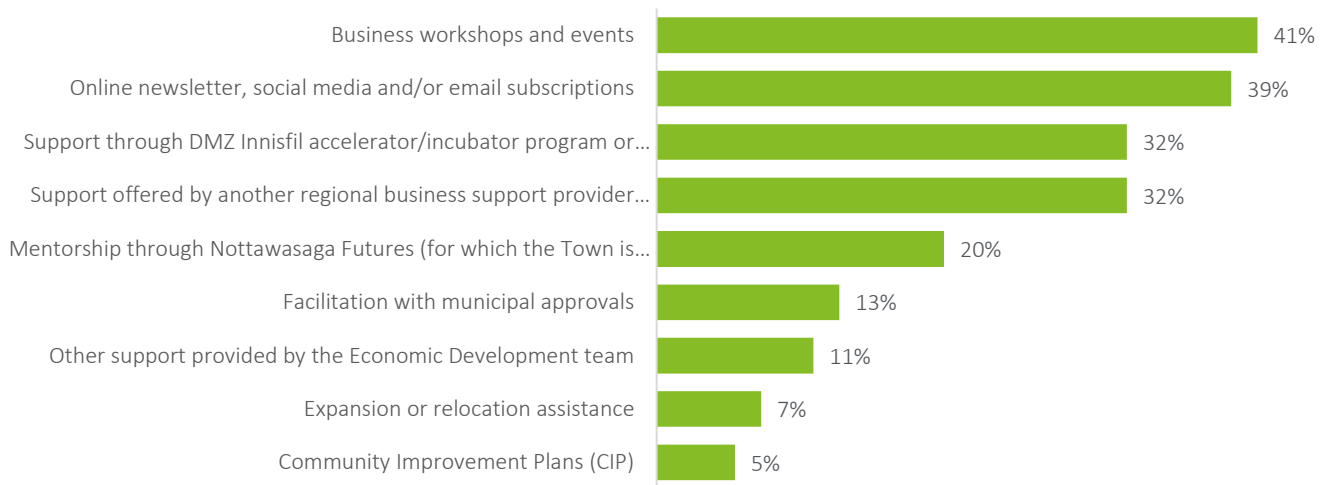
Figure 41 - Agree/Disagree to statement (N=56)



Q20. Has your business accessed any of the following business support funds and/or programs that Innisfil Economic Development offers?

41% of businesses were reported to use workshops and events as support systems.

Figure 41 - Access of business support funds and/or programs (N=56)



Mayor Breakfast Survey Results

1. Which of the following groups would describe you better:

- a. Student: 2
- b. Non-profit organization, government, or economic development partner: 6
- c. Business owner/manager: sole proprietor: 3
- d. Business owner/manager: 1 to 9 employees: 5
- e. Business owner/manager: more than 10 employees: 2
- f. None of the above

Note: One survey responder circled twice

Results – 17 responses in total

2. Please rank the following goals in order of importance (with 1 being the highest):

- 4/17 voted Goal 1 as its top priority
- 6/17 voted Goal 2 as its top priority
- 3/17 voted Goal 3 as its top priority
- 6/17 for Goal 4 as its top priority

- 5/17 voted Goal 1 as its second priority
- 2/17 voted Goal 2 as its second priority
- 5/17voted Goal 3 as its second priority
- 4/17voted Goal 4 as its second priority

- 5/17 voted Goal 1 as its third priority
- 5/17 voted Goal 2 as its third priority
- 2/17 voted Goal 3 as its third priority
- 3/17 voted Goal 3 as its third priority
- 3/17 voted Goal 1 as its fourth priority
- 3/17 voted Goal 2 as its fourth priority

- 6/17 voted Goal 3 as its fourth priority
 - 5/17 voted Goal 4 as its fourth priority
-

Rank 1 = 4 points

Rank 2 = 3 points

Rank 3 = 2 points

Rank 4 = 1 points

Results

- Goal 1: 44 points
- Goal 2: 43 points
- Goal 3: 37 points
- Goal 4: 47 points

Goal 4 (Improving quality life) is the highest ranked goal.
Followed behind Goal 1 (Investment-ready Innisfil)

3. Please rate the following statement: “Innisfil should focus on tourism and culture as an economic development goal.”

- a. Strongly agree: 7
- b. Somewhat agree: 6
- c. Neutral: 3
- d. Somewhat disagree: 1
- e. Strongly disagree: 0

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

- The ability to have strong live work, balance in Innisfil
- DMZ sounds interesting. Could be great in Cookstown
- Lack of health care. No walk-in clinic. How do we attract physicians?
- Surprised there was no plan for expanding or business development
- I don't believe that government should be using tax money to fund private business
- Need more tourism (Canada's wonderland is looking for a new home)
- Health Centre is interesting
- Help accessing grants (Provincial and Federal governments)
- Innovation-enabled economy is an excellent pillar
- identify actions with partnership with Georgian College
- PSE is need for workforce and social development
- Overall, the proposed goals are thorough



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