

Town of East Gwillimbury

Economic Development Strategy

August 2021-2025

An economic development strategy offers a roadmap to a desired future state. It is a tool through which local governments can influence and support the types of development they want to see, seizing the opportunities that larger demographic, economic and social forces reveal. The Town of East Gwillimbury's articulated vision will guide and support sustainable growth. The Town's goal has been set; now, the purpose of the economic development strategy is to identify the opportunities and actions for the Town to successfully pursue the goal in alignment with the communities' values.

Strategic Priorities

Investment Readiness & Infrastructure

Investment readiness and infrastructure are focused on enhancing the ability of the Town to support business investment by implementing and promoting business-friendly policies, increasing awareness of the Town in target markets, and ensuring a selection of investment-ready lands are available to lease or purchase.



Investment Attraction

Attracting new jobs and investment dollars to the Town of East Gwillimbury depends on generating and pursuing leads in target sectors. The Town needs to articulate a clear vision and value proposition focused on traditional and emerging sectors that will drive investment activity and establish protocols to manage the leads.



Business Retention & Expansion

Well-established communication and continually updated key performance indicators through feedback are essential, including business satisfaction, the number of business expansions, new jobs supported, businesses and jobs retained, and investment dollars influenced.



Entrepreneurship Development

Entrepreneurship development means enabling new businesses to launch successfully through business planning, networking, and accessing resources. While incubation, acceleration and technology transfer ensure communities remain competitive by encouraging and supporting structures that facilitate innovation and knowledge sharing.



Enhanced Communications

Enhanced communications will ensure that residents and businesses better understand and are able to provide input on economic development activities and successes. It will also support consistency of messaging around EG's value proposition and advantages.



Sectors in Focus

Economic Development Strategy

A *Target Industry Snapshot* was completed by the consulting firm ROI Research on Investment. This research sought to identify the types of companies (in terms of industry, size, and markets) that were most likely align with EG’s value proposition. The analysis identified specific target sectors where there was a demonstrated benefit to expanding into EG as a result of existing strengths, attributes, and locational advantages. This analysis allows the Town to focus its efforts where they will be most effective in attracting strategic investment and jobs.

Primary Target Sectors

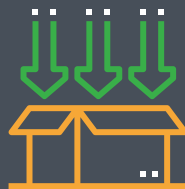


Manufacturing

East Gwillimbury has an existing concentration of manufacturing businesses and a supply of skilled workers in this sector. EG is home to leading companies like Multimatic (Dynamic Suspensions), a global supplier of automotive parts and Inscape Office Interiors, an office furniture company, that provide a solid foundation for continued growth in this sector.

Key Rationale:

- Strong agricultural sector and construction industry base
- Rising demand for HVAC and structural/architectural metals for prefab buildings



Food Processing & Supply Chain

East Gwillimbury benefits from a rural location that combines a strong presence of food growers and agricultural assets with ready access to major urban centers such as Toronto. Freight and logistics firms are among the biggest employers in the region, which presents excellent “take to market” opportunities.

Key Rationale:

- Increased supply chain needs for packaging across Ontario
- Growth of niche food products



Construction Products/Service

Among East Gwillimbury’s most promising sectors are architectural and engineering services, with a concentration of jobs in construction, graphic design, and HVAC mechanics. The Town’s workforce strength lies in assembly workers and material handling occupations with several construction company assets. EG is also home to Kelson, a major employer and a tier-one provider of mechanical systems in the construction industry.

Key Rationale:

- Strong construction industry base
- Opportunity to leverage and grow existing architectural and engineering services



Industry Supply Wholesale Distribution

East Gwillimbury’s key growth location, transportation access, concentration of manufacturing and logistics assets, mix of workforce occupations, and available land make it a prime target for investors in the booming technical distribution center market.

Key Rationale:

- Strong agriculture, construction and logistics sectors
- Concentration of trade skills
- Key locational advantages

Sectors in Focus

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Secondary Target Sectors



Healthcare

Healthcare workers are an integral part of the East Gwillimbury economy. The region is home to four world-class regional hospitals, including Canada's first fully integrated 'Smart Hospital'. Newmarket's Southlake hospital is poised to expand and offers significant growth opportunities for EG as a potential host to a satellite facility.



Education

Education is an essential component of East Gwillimbury's economy; with a high concentration of businesses in educational services and over 1,500 residents employed. Opportunities exist to build a foundation for post-secondary attraction by leveraging strategic partnerships and attracting satellite programs that align with key industry sectors.

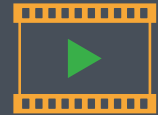
Previous strategies have identified the attraction of a post-secondary institution as a key contributor to achieving the Town's vision of a 'Complete Community'.



Tourism

East Gwillimbury's nascent tourism sector continues to leverage agritourism and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Expanding on these strengths and facilitating strategic investment into accommodation and event space will position the Town to secure a larger slice of Ontario's robust tourism industry.



Film Location Development

East Gwillimbury is well positioned to leverage this expanding industry. Becoming a location of choice for film and television productions creates economic opportunity for local businesses and offers a significant potential return on investment.

By ensuring bylaws and permitting are updated to support film locations and actively updating listings on the Ontario Locations Library, the Town will significantly increase the likelihood of attracting productions.

Framework for Action Plan

The Economic Development Strategy is organized by strategic themes intended to anchor and qualify all objectives and ensuing actions. These recommendations support the stated priorities of the Town of East Gwillimbury and the desired outcomes of the strategic development process.

 <p>Investment Readiness & Infrastructure</p>	 <p>Investment Attraction</p>	 <p>Business Retention & Expansion</p>	 <p>Entrepreneurship Development</p>	 <p>Enhanced Communications</p>
<p>Objective 1.1 Build on the Advantage EG Marketing Platform.</p> <p>Objective 1.2 Initiate a Workforce Development Strategy.</p> <p>Objective 1.3 Leverage strategic partnerships to advance land and infrastructure development.</p> <p>Objective 1.4 Continue to enhance broadband infrastructure.</p>	<p>Objective 2.1 Focus on Primary Target Sectors.</p> <p>Objective 2.2 Build a foundation for investment attraction within secondary target sectors.</p> <p>Objective 2.3 Lead generation and nurturing.</p> <p>Objective 2.4 Promote priority sites.</p>	<p>Objective 3.1 Continue to support and promote the Business Advantage Program for both existing business and prospective investors.</p> <p>Objective 3.2 Support business development and job creation in East Gwillimbury.</p> <p>Objective 3.3 Support downtown revitalization & placemaking.</p> <p>Objective 3.4 Engage EDAC volunteers to prioritize direct support to businesses.</p>	<p>Objective 4.1 Facilitate access to support programming.</p> <p>Objective 4.2 Improve access to capital.</p> <p>Objective 4.3 Develop co-working and incubator space.</p>	<p>Objective 5.1 Design and Implement a business focused communications strategy that highlights municipal growth objectives and the availability of resources to support business expansion and success.</p> <p>Objective 5.2 Design and Implement a resident focused communications strategy that highlights economic growth objectives, community benefits, and program successes.</p>